



**תאנא, ספרא דצניעותא, ספרא
דשקיל במתקלא.**

**It was taught: The Book of Concealment
[is] a book weighed on a scale.**

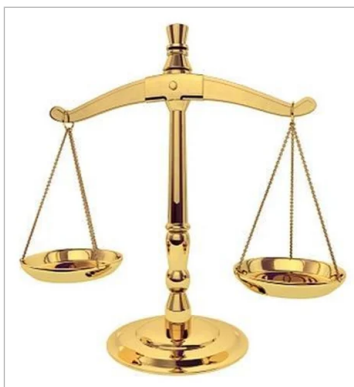
On a *Pshat* level, this part of the *Zohar* is called *Sifra D'Tzniusa, Book of Concealment*, because it deals with the most secretive *kabbalistic* matters, the highest and most abstract knowledge known to man. The scale (*maskala*) reference teaches that every word was weighed for precision on a “holy scale,”¹ so that not a single word is superfluous.

¹ *Mesok Midvash*.

The Vilna Gaon, however, saw more. First, the five words after “*Tanna*” hint to the five chapters of the entire *sefer*. After that, the word “*sifra*” alludes to the *sefirah* of *Chochmah*, which is called *Sefer* by *Sefer Yetzirah*.²

Tzniusa, the GR”A explained, refers to *Radl”a*, the concealed *sefirah* whose light is imperceptible by man. Since the purpose of Creation however is for this sublimely spiritual light to eventually be revealed on some level, it is clothed within the *sefirah* of *Chochmah* like a soul within a body. This *tikun* of light reduction allows the light to descend and create all else that is meant to exist.

Another important part of the *tikun* process was the division within the light of two opposite realities. On the level of *Arich Anpin*, *chesed* and *din*, *male* and *female*, etc., do not have distinct realities because the light is completely unified. It is this distinction that makes our history possible, and free will to make it work.



On the level of *Atzilus*, they became two different and clearly defined realities, *chesed* and *din*. As such, they are compared to the two pans of a scale that hang from a central column (*rachamim*), the *sefirah* of *Keser* when talking about *Chochmah* and *Binah*, and *Da’as* on the level of *Chesed* and *Gevurah*. But really this just refers to the three lines of *sefiros*, *Chesed* on the right side, *Din* on the left side, and *Rachamim* in the middle.

² *Sefer Sefer v’Sippur* in *Sefer Yetzirah* is a reference to *Chochmah*, *Binah*, and *Da’as*.

Therefore, the *Tanna* means with his opening statement that *Atzilus*, which being the level of *Chochmah* is called *sefer*, was created and rectified *b'sod* the *HaMasbkoles*. It is to this that “the book weighed on a scale” refers.³

תאנא, דעד דלא הוה מתקלא דלא הו משגיחין אנפין באנפין.

**It was taught: Until there was a *Maskala*,
they were not face to face.**

What did the creation of the *Maskala* really accomplish? For one, it caused *Abba* and *Imma*⁴ to finally face each other forever, essential for us, and everything we need to survive, to exist.

This requires explanation, a lot of explanation. The *Ohr Ain Sof* is the Source of all light and life, and everything else is a recipient of it. But that light is infinite, and everything created is finite, seemingly making it impossible for the latter to receive the former. Generally, any time something more spiritual enters something less spiritual, it is overwhelmed and destroyed.

³ *Sba'arei Chochmah, Sifra D'Tzniusa*, V. 1, p. 27.

⁴ *Chochmah* and *Binah*, the “they” mentioned

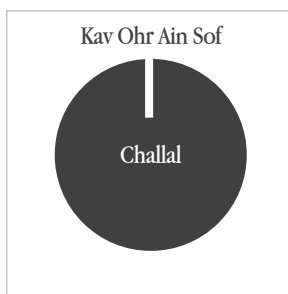
The solution? The *Ohr Ain Sof* created something *Kabbalah* calls *Tzimtzum*, which means *constriction*. And though the words are easy to say, the concept is impossible for a human mind to understand. It means *continuously* constricting the infinite light of God at some location *within* infinity to allow a finite world to exist. . . *without* compromising the integrity of God's infinite light or the finite reality.

It matters less *how* it was done than that it actually occurred. The result was something called the *Challal*, a massively round hollow area devoid of *Ohr Ain Sof* that surrounds it on all sides infinitely. Being completely spiritual there are no physical walls maintaining the shape, only the will of God at all times.



The creation of the *Challal* solved one problem but resulted in another. Too much *Ohr Ain Sof* means nothing can exist, but no *Ohr Ain Sof* also means nothing can exist. This meant allowing only enough *Ohr Ain Sof* to re-enter the *Challal* for the sake of Creation, but not too much that could undo the *Challal*.

The solution was the creation of the *Kav Ohr Ain Sof*—Line of *Ohr Ain Sof*. This allowed a finite amount of infinite light to re-enter the *Challal* and begin the creating process. Anything that will ever exist will be made of this light, which is really just the will of God, no matter how physical a creation it is. Should the light cease, the creation ceases.



One of the most important results of the *tzimtzum* was the creation of boundary. It is this that allows for more than one distinct reality

like up and down, right and left, *chesed* and *din*. Without these, change would be impossible and free will could not exist or have any meaning. A decision is only meaningful if it can have impact, and it can only have impact if it can cause some level of change.

Not only must will have the potential to change reality, it must also be possible to have it independent of the will of other things. But how can anything be even partially independent of the will of God? And if God knows the future, has an ultimate purpose in mind, and makes sure that nothing interferes with its progress, how free can human will be?

There are three potential answers to this question. Some have argued that man therefore has no free will, and that what we call free will is merely an illusion. Others choose to believe that God doesn't exist, or at least does not get involved in the affairs of man. Others yet chalk this paradox up to another miracle of life, meaning that while it may not make sense to us how we can have free will while God has absolute will, it *is* the reality.

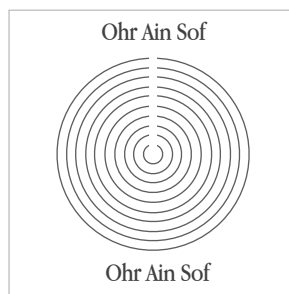
The only reason we can even have these questions is because of *sefiros*. We take it for granted that God's Presence is so invisible to us, but the opposite should be true. Everything that exists is a function of the light of God, and all of Creation exists *within* Him. This means that technically, there really is no where for God to hide. Yet, God is so hidden that some people can even believe they are atheists and use His light to deny that He is the Source of their lives!

But atheists and agnostics co-exist with believers. Each believes that the other has ignored facts and made the wrong decision. The truth is that, though they may physically stand shoulder to shoulder, spiritually and intellectually they are on different planes of reality. *Tzimtzum* is not absolute but occurs in stages, as per the will and design of God.

The method by which God regulates His light is the *sefiros*. The system of *sefiros* is *extremely* intricate and complex, but the idea is relatively straightforward to explain. They work very much like an electrical transformer which receives a high intensity of electricity before reducing it and sending it on its next stage of its journey.

There are ten general *sefiros* connecting the *Ohr Ain Sof* on the outside of the *Challal* to everything within the *Challal*. Their names are (from top to bottom): *Keser* (Crown), *Chochmah* (Wisdom), *Binah* (Understanding), *Chesed* (Kindness), *Gevurah* (Strength), *Tifferes* (Beauty), *Netzach* (Dominance), *Hod* (Glory), *Yesod* (Foundation), and *Malchus* (Kingdom).

Each *sefirah* contains a certain amount and aspect of the *Ohr Ain Sof* which, as the names indicate, results in the revelation of a specific Divine attribute. They are circles within circles, the outermost edge being the boundary of the *Challal*. However, the system replicates itself on each level countless times, resulting in systems within systems within systems, etc. aspects within aspects, etc.



For example, the *sefirah* of *Chochmah* has its own family of ten *sefiros*, the *Keser* of *Chochmah*, the *Chochmah* of *Chochmah*, etc. Viewed as its own unit of ten *sefiros* it is called a *partzuf*, literally, *face*. A face reveals to the outside what is hidden on the inside, as do the ten *sefiros* of any *sefirah*. This gives the unit a different name which, in the case of *Chochmah*, is *Abba*—Father.

As a unit of ten *sefiros*, *Keser* is called *Arich Anpin*, which means *Long Face*. It indicates that this level of *partzuf* is completely *rachamim*—mercy, since a longer face is more patient than a short one, as in the

case of *Zebr Anpin*—Short Face,⁵ which is more *din*—judgment oriented. As a *partzuf*, *Binah* is called *Imma*—Mother, being “mother” to the *sefiros* below that emerged from “her.”

Why call *partzufim* “Father” and “Mother”? Because a human being is physically structured like the *sefiros*, and a family unit acts in the same manner as *partzufim*. The *sefiros* and *partzufim* are the basis of all reality, so all of reality exists and function in similar ways to both.

For example, a human has a right side, a left side, and a middle column (torso). Similarly, there are *sefiros* on the right side (*Chesed*), on the left side (*Gevurah*), and in the middle (*Rachamim*). The human brain consists of three sections, and the *sefiros* of *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah* are considered the three brain sections (*mochin*) in any system of ten *sefiros*.

A man leaves his father and mother and marries his *zivug*—soulmate.⁶ It is this that permits physical intimacy that results in the creation and birth of a new human being that is a physical combination of both parents. Likewise, *partzufim* have *zivugim*—pairings—in order to transfer light from one level to another for the sake of the creation of a new *partzuf* as required by history and the will of God.⁷

It was the original *zivug* of *Abba* and *Imma* that gave “birth” to *Zebr Anpin*, and then the *Nukvab*. It is their ongoing *zivug*, set in place

⁵ The more filtered the *Ohr Ain Sof*, the more *din*-oriented it becomes. Since the light is increasingly constricted, the reality of God becomes less obvious which is essential for the existence of evil which is necessary for free will. This is only possible on the level of the bottom seven *sefiros* which are the basis of *Zebr Anpin* and the *Malchus*.

⁶ *Bereishis* 2:24.

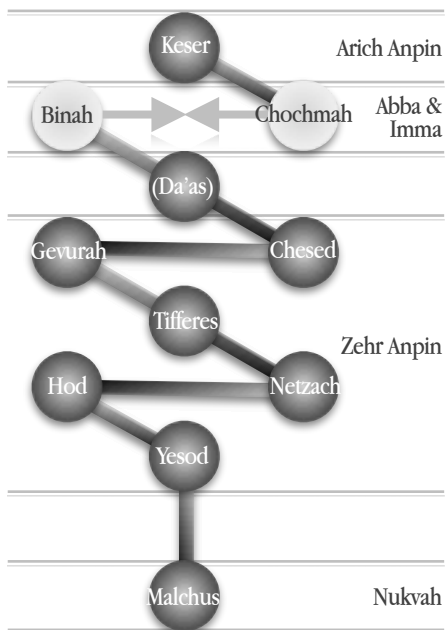
⁷ This can result in something new in history, or just an event itself. This is also the means by which God answers prayers.

from the time of *Tikun Ma'aseh Bereisbis* that maintains them and our world. “*Aim babanim sameichab—the happy mother of children*”⁸ refers to *Binah*, the “mother” of *Zehr Anpin* and his “bride,” *Nukvah*.

Should *Abba* and *Imma* ever turn back-to-back once again (which will never happen), Creation as we experience it would cease to exist. However, for the sake of the will of man, the amount of light that does flow from *Abba* and *Imma* to *Zehr Anpin* and *Malchus* can be increased or reduced based upon the actions of man, just as a child’s behavior can cause parents to restrict the good they give.

Front-to-front and back-to-back postures are easy to understand when it comes to human relationships. When people face one another they can fully communicate and share how they feel. They feel connected and able to share with others, allowing relationships to form or be strengthened, the opposite of what happens when they are back-to-back, or even just front-to-back.

Sefiros however are spiritual entities and spherical. They don’t really have a front or back per se. But it is really a matter of function over form, the latter often being dictated by the former in the material world. In other words, how a *sefirah* functions in terms of transmitting Divine light makes it *k’eehu*—as if—it is facing frontwards or backwards. If light is



⁸ *Tebillim* 113:9.

passed on unfiltered then the *sefirab* is said to be facing the receiver. If it is filtered and reduced in intensity, then it is considered to have its back to the receiver.

This is a deeply *kabbalistic* idea that explains so much on an everyday practical level, so it was reflected in the *keruim* that adorned the top of the *Aron HaKodesh*:

You shall make two golden keruim; you shall make them of hammered work, from the two ends of the ark cover. (Shemos 25:18)

They had the features of a child. (*Rashi*)

It is known regarding the *keruim* that one alluded to God, *may His Name be blessed*, and the second, to the Jewish people, His treasure. [Therefore,] their (the Jewish People's) closeness and clinging to Him, *may His Name be blessed*, or the opposite, *God forbid*, was recognizable by the stance of the *keruim*, which was miraculous and wondrous. If they (the Jewish People) faced straight to Him,⁹ *may His Name be blessed*, then the *keruim* [also] faced each other. If the opposite was the case and they turned their faces to the side somewhat,¹⁰ then it was immediately apparent from the *keruim*. If, *God forbid*, they completely turned their backs [to God], the *keruim* also completely turned away from each other at that time. (*Nefesh HaChaim, Sha'ar 1, Ch. 8*)

⁹ They fulfilled all the *mitzvos* as necessary and avoided sin.

¹⁰ They weren't meticulous in *mitzvah* performance and avoiding sin.

The back-to-back, reduced light stance of the *sefiros* serves two purposes. It does reduce the light and blessing man is able to access, making it easier for people to become confused about the existence of God.¹¹ It causes history to look more random, especially when good things seem to happen to bad people. . . even though God is as much in control of Creation and history as always.¹²

The other reason is to save Creation. The force of evil, the *Klipos*¹³ in *Kabbalah*, feed off the same spiritual energy that good does. Just as evil people use the same technology as good people but for evil purposes, the *Klipos* use energy meant for the performance of good, for evil,¹⁴ destroying much of Creation in the process. Anti-Semitism is evil, but it uses misdirected holy sparks to carry out its evil plans.¹⁵

To limit that possibility, God limits the flow of His light downward by having the requisite *sefiros* stand back-to-back during parts of history. This weakens the flow of *Ohr Ain Sof* into the world of the *Klipos*, limiting their ability to expand and carry out their plans for evil.

¹¹ What the Torah calls *Hester Panim*, the hiding of God's face (*Devarim* 31:18).

¹² *Cbullin* 7b.

¹³ *Klipos* are peels, and they are called this because, like a peel, they spiritually encase a person's heart to prevent them from connecting to God and living by truth.

¹⁴ This is what happens when the energy enters the world and not enough people use it for good. The light is not withdrawn to higher and safe levels in the *sefiros* but taken and used by the *Klipos* to do evil, often against the Jewish People.

¹⁵ Obviously this cannot happen if God does not approve (*Cbullin* 7b). The possibility is built into Creation to further the goals of history, but in a negative way. No one can interfere with God's plan for Creation, just affect, through choice, which path He takes to its fulfillment. This is what the Torah is teaching in *Parashas Bechukosai* and *Parashas Ki Savo* when discussing the blessings for Torah obedience, and the curses for the opposite.

ומלכין קדמאין מיתו.

The first kings died.

Creation occurred in two parts, what the Torah details at the beginning of *Sefer Bereishis*, and what *Kabbalah* discusses in extensive detail regarding what happened *up until Bereishis*.

In fact, according to the *Zohar*,¹⁶ the second verse of the Torah, “*The earth was null and void and darkness was above the face of the deep...*” is actually the *first* verse of the Torah. But it would not make sense on a *Pshat*¹⁷ level because people would wonder how the “earth” could be null and void if it wasn’t created until the “second” verse, “*In the beginning, God made the Heaven and the Earth.*”

So how *could* the earth be null and void if it wasn’t created until the *second* verse? The answer is: the earth of the new first verse is not the same earth of the new second verse. How many earths are there? Like the one we walk on, only *one*. The other earth refers not to terra firma but to the *sefirah* of *Malchus* which is also called *Aretz*—Ground.

The beginning of the discussion is knowing that God made Creation as He did so that man could have free will¹⁸ and the opportunity to use it. And even though the period of free will is going to be minimal compared to the periods of history that will follow it, man’s free will is

¹⁶ *Zohar, Bereishis* 16b.

¹⁷ The simple level of Torah understanding.

¹⁸ *Drushei Olam HaTobu, Chelek 2, Drush 5, Anaf 2, Siman 5.*

still the reason for Creation.

The capacity for free will means the existence of evil. Free will is only meaningful if it is possible to choose the *opposite* of good, which is anything goes against the will of God. The only problem is, everything exists within God, and God is completely good. How and where could evil possibly exist?

The question stands for the time being, but what we do know is that evil *does* exist, and *how* it came into existence. It was the result of a process called *Sheviras HaKeilim*, the breaking of the vessels, the pre-Creation *sefiros* that God “broke” into countless pieces along the way to eventually making Creation as we know it.

It is a long discussion that requires considerable background. The short version is that after the *Kav Ohr Ain Sof* re-entered the *Challah*, it created the first level, the level of *Keser* and *Adam Kadmon*. Ten *sefiros* then went out from *Adam Kadmon* to make all the levels below,¹⁹ and though the top three, *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah* remained intact, the bottom seven²⁰ “broke” along the way.

The Leshem²¹ mentions eleven reasons for the *shevirah*—breaking, one of the main reasons being that they left *Adam Kadmon* incomplete, without all of their internal lights. In fact, what actually occurred was their main lights left their vessels and ascended back to their Source above, while frag-



¹⁹ *Atzilus, Yetzirah, Beriyah, and Asiyah.*

²⁰ According to the *Arizal*, the seven were *Chesed, Gevurah, Tifferes, Netzach, Hod, Yesod, and Malchus*. According to the *Vilna Gaon*, they were *Da'as, Chesed, Gevurah, Tifferes, Netzach, Hod, and Yesod*.

²¹ *Drushei Olam HaTobu, Ma'amar Klalli, Os 1-4.*

ments of the lights, *nitzotzei kedushab*—holy sparks fell below together with all the broken pieces from the vessels.

The names of the *sefiros* that we now use only became relevant after their *tikun*. Prior to their *tikun* and *Olam HaTobu*, the state of null and void mentioned in the new first verse, they had different names:

*These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Children of Israel: Bela ben Beor...Yovav ben Zerach...Chusham...Hadad ben Bedad...Samlab from Masrekab... Shaul from Rechovos...Ba'al Chanan ben Achbor...and Hadar*²². . . (Bereishbis 36:31-39)

The verse says that each king ruled, died, and was succeeded by the next person. Therefore, the pre-Creation *sefiros* are also called “kings,” and they ruled (existed) for a short time before “dying” (breaking), after which they were “succeeded” by the next king (*sefirab*). It is to this that the *Sifra D'Tzniusa* refers when it says, “The first kings died,”²³ and:

The ruling of the “kings” is called by the Arizal, *Olam HaNekudos*.²⁴ But their deaths and their breaking and all that happened to them at that time is called *Olam HaTobu*, and is the *sod* of, “*The land was null.*” (*Drusbei Olam HaTobu, Ma'amar Klalli, Os 4*)

²² Hadar is actually the eighth king, but belongs to the the post-*tikun* period.

²³ These names were not chosen randomly, as the Leshem explains. The Edom of our world is connected to the Edom of the pre-Creation *tobu*—null.

²⁴ Literally, *World of Points*, because of the *sefiros* that came out of *Adam Kadmon* with only one-tenth of their *sefiros* as if they were only single points.

An important part of the breaking process was the creation of *sig-gim*, or spiritual waste. Evident by the different levels of reality and spirituality, the *Ohr Ain Sof* can produce different levels of Divine light, as per the will of God, as always. More refined lights remain holy and protected in higher realms, while the lesser lights can descend to the depths of the *Challal*. The further a light is distanced from its Source above, the more vulnerable it is to abuse, the very basis of evil.

This is how the *Klipos* came into being. The most unrefined light, as a result of *Sheviras HaKeilim*, fell to the “bottom” of Creation and become the *Klipos*. This made evil as we know it possible, and the possibility of free will as a result. Though there were stages between this part of the process and *Tikun Ma’aseh Bereishis*,²⁵ this reality of evil carried over into human history and has been the “inspiration” of every abuse of Creation ever since.

There are three components to most sins, but they can all be traced back to the creation of the *Klipos*. There is the *Klipos* themselves creating the possibility of sin, a person’s *yetzer hara*—evil inclination, and the *Satan*, the “Obstructing Angel” designated to “encourage” sin, later to prosecute a person for it, and then to carry out the punishment if necessary.

The only reason why Creation can be abused in any way is because

²⁵ Such as the 974 Generations mentioned in the *Gemora* (*Shabbos* 88b). They were spiritual beings with free will that existed briefly in *Olam HaTobu* prior to Creation to actualize evil and reduce its intensity. A generation here was not like a human generation lasting twenty-five to thirty years. Rather, each generation came out, immediately sinned, and was quickly destroyed. The Leshem explains that, after being destroyed for their “sins,” the “bodies” were used to build the *challal* of *Gibnom*, and their passion was used to ignite its fire. Though metaphorical, it shows how their existence and destruction was to make sin and *tikun* possible for man. They only existed to make history possible for man.

of intellectual confusion and overriding emotions. The *Klipos* make sure that the means of sin appeal to the body's instinctual drive for pleasure or avoidance of pain. As the wisest man, Shlomo *HaMelech*, taught: "It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for that is the end of every man. . ."²⁶ The *Klipos* have a harder time convincing a person to forget their spiritual nature in a house of mourning than at a feast.

What people call the *yetzer bara*, the evil inclination is, for the most part just bodily instinct. The body exists as a means for the soul to give expression to its will in the physical world. The body has no will of its own, but being vulnerable to damage and destruction it has instinctual reactions to situations that arise as part of protective measure. The problem is when it goes too far.

The *Sitra Achra* is the angel that was created to obstruct the path of a person in order to create moral challenge. He can't make a person sin, but he can certainly make it difficult for them *not* to sin by making a *shidduch* between a person's *yetzer bara* and the environment the *Klipos* promote. All of this is just to create a stage on which man can use free will to perfect himself and the world God gave to him.

The main process of rectification is *birru*; separation of the good from the bad, or the pure lights from the far less pure lights. This is the process that occurred after the "kings" died (broke). All the lights that had descended as a result of *Sheviras HaKeilim* then ascended back to the level from which they originated.²⁷ There the purer lights were used to make the rectified *sefiros* while the less pure lights became the *siggim* and *Klipos*.

²⁶ *Kobeles* 7:2.

²⁷ Specifically, the *Moach Stima'a* (Closed Brain) on the level of *Arich Anpin*.

The process of *birrur* did not end with Creation. It is the basis of everyday life and human history. Even our bodies do it, taking in food, separating the “good” from the “bad,” using the former for nutrition and disposing of the latter. Our bodies filter blood the same way, and our mind does the same thing when making decisions. *Birrur* is the way of Creation.

But all of that just hides what is really be separated out. What makes food good or bad, or blood, clean or unclean? The combination of spiritual light—holy sparks—and *klipos*. We know what is good or bad for the body from seeing what affects the body and how. But that impact is based upon the amount of sparks “ingested” and in need of separation from the *Klipos* enveloping them. It is the spiritual system that drives the mechanical one.

But there is a finite amount of sparks within the *Klipos*. And the free will period of history ends when the last spark has been removed from them:

As a result of the sin of Kayin and Hevel, all the souls (sparks) became mixed together with the *Klipos*, and this is called the mixing of good with evil.²⁸ Since then, the souls have been continuously separated out from within the *Klipos*, just as silver is refined from waste. This separation will continue until the completion of the separation of the souls that fell into the 248 limbs of *Adam*

²⁸ The mixture began before Creation, but the sins of man reverse *tikun* and return sparks separated from the *Klipos* back to them. This is why *Gan Aiden* “disappeared,” and the sins of Kayin and Hevel further reversed the *tikun*. History has been a give-and-take process of *nitzotzei kedushah*, *mitzvos* freeing them from the *Klipos* and sins returning them.

HaBliya'al,²⁹ until the completion of the separation [of the souls from] the bottom of his structure—which is the end of the feet of *Adam d'Kedushab*³⁰—from within the feet of *Adam d'Klipab*. . . Once all the souls will have been separated out completely then *Adam d'Klipab*, which is the waste, will not need to be removed through [some kind of] action because it will collapse on its own and be “absorbed” [to the point] of not being “visible” or “present.”³¹ This is because holiness, which is life [itself], will have become separated from the spiritual waste which, called death.³² [The *Klipos*] will no longer have any life at all and will disappear like smoke, as it says, “*Death will be extinct forever*” (*Yeshayahu* 25:8). They will not become extinct until all of the souls will have been separated out. Thus, the head-letters of [the Hebrew of] “*Death will be extinct forever*” are *Heb-Bais-Lamed* (Hevel), to hint that [this will not occur] until all of the reincarnations of Hevel have been completed. This is through Moshe *Rabbeinu* who reincarnates in every generation to separate out the souls from the waste. Once this has occurred, Moshiach will come and death will be extinct forever.³³ (*Sba'ar HaGilgulim*, Introduction 20)

²⁹ *Devarim* 13:13. This is the *kabbalistic* name for the ten *sefiros* of the *Klipos* which are structured like the ten *sefiros* on the side of *kedushab*.

³⁰ The bottom of the ten *sefiros* on the side of holiness.

³¹ These phrases are used with respect to *Chometz*, which is connected to the *Klipos*.

³² As long as souls remain among the *Klipos* they can draw life from them. Therefore, once all holiness is removed from the *Klipos* they have no source of life and die automatically.

³³ Moshe *Rabbeinu* reincarnates in every generation specifically to help separate out the souls from the *Klipos*, and he will be Moshiach.

זיוניהון לא אשתכחו.

Their splendor was not found.

Splendor here refers to their lights, which were not found where they belong but had ascended and were clothed in the three lines of *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*.³⁴ Specifically, the *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah* of these kings did not come out in *Olam HaNekudim*, only their *sefiros* from *Chesed* through *Yesod*.³⁵

On one hand, *sefiros* are compared to the layers of an onion, a series of concentric circles, *Keser* the outside layer, *Malchus* the inside layer, and the rest of the *sefiros* in-between. On the other hand, they are like a family tree, in which the end of one generation overlaps with the beginning of the next one. This allows for a relationship between the one generation at the next, and the sharing of accumulated knowledge.

In the case of the *sefiros*, the *Malchus* of the upper *partzuf* is “clothed” inside the *Keser* of the lower *partzuf* to connect the two levels so light can flow from the upper level to the lower one. The concept is called *Hislavshus*, from the word *lavush*—clothing, and it is essential and the basis of the entire system from the uppermost parts to the lowest.

Everything depends upon the flow of *Ohr Ain Sof*, and that is a function of *hislavshus*, which controls what flows to where and how

³⁴ *Mesok Midvasb*.

³⁵ *Sba'arei Chochmah, Sifra D'Tzniusa*, p. 155.

much. The only One really controlling all of that is God Himself based upon what suits His purpose for Creation, and the schedule He has for it. Creation was, is, a very precise process, all for the sake of maximizing man's ability to have and use free.

Nevertheless, there are limits to what man can impact. For example, the upper levels of *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*, are too higher up and fundamental to Creation for man to impact them, at least directly. The highest level that our decisions directly affect is the partzuf *Zebr Anpin*. So it was created incomplete so that we could complete it or take away from its completion, all the way up until the final redemption when it will be complete and remain complete henceforth.

What does it mean to be complete? It's a like person who, at birth, has all the physical components necessary for an adult life, head (with brains), torso, and legs. They might be underdeveloped but they are all there. Otherwise, there would be nothing to complete, and growth would be limited or impossible.

Probably the least developed part of a child is the brains. From an early age, the brains are ready to be filled with all kinds of knowledge, but much of it won't happen except through some kind of educational process over many years. A child doesn't even become a *Bar Da'as*³⁶ until age thirteen and from the beginning it has always been about *da'as*.

Likewise, *Zebr Anpin* was only created with six function *sefiros*. *Chesed* corresponds to the right arm, *Gevurah* to the left arm, and *Tifferes* is the torso. *Netzach* corresponds to the right leg, *Hod* to the left leg, and *Yesod* to the reproductive organ. *Malchus* always corre-

³⁶ Lit., *Owner of Knowledge*, meaning that the person can think for themselves and be responsible for their actions.

sponds to the ground.

The *keilim*—vessels—for the lights of *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*, which are the *mochin*—brains—are already there, but not the lights they are meant to contain. When the lights are there, a state called *Gadlus* (Greatness³⁷) is achieved, the brains are fully operational and redemption results. In the Messianic Era, this will be the permanent state of *Zehr Anpin*.

The opposite state is called *Katnus* (Smallness). A *katan* is a child, identified more by his naiveté and lack of intelligence (*mochin*) than his actual physical size. Exile is the result of the state of *Katnus*, of *Zehr Anpin* missing its *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*, as well of all the attendant moral backwardness that overtakes the world. God is just as much in the world as ever, but it is so much more difficult for man to notice it.

This is why the final redemption is spoke about in terms of God filling the world with *Da'as*:

For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the God—as the water covers the seabed. (Chavakuk 2:14)

How? Lights will come down, as part of the redemption process, from *Abba* and *Imma* and fill the head of *Zehr Anpin* with *mochin*. *Zehr Anpin* will finally have its *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*, and be elevated to the state of *Gadlus*. All evil will be gone from Creation and the Messianic Era will continue in full.

But that's at the *end* of history. *Sifra D'Tzniusa* is talking about the *beginning* of history, even prior to *Tikun Ma'aseh Bereishis*. At the end of history, Creation will be perfectly *perfect*. At the beginning of history,

³⁷ *Legadel* is to enlarge or grow up.

it had to be perfectly *imperfect*, so that evil could exist, man could have free will, and Creation could reach its ultimate purpose.