

# 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,<sup>16</sup> 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*<sup>17</sup> 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 will<sup>18</sup> 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

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<sup>16</sup> Zohar, *Bereishis* 16b.

<sup>17</sup> The simple level of Torah understanding.

<sup>18</sup> *Drushei Olam HaTohu*, *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 that 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 *Challal*, 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,<sup>19</sup> and though the top three, *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah* remained intact, the bottom seven<sup>20</sup> “broke” along the way.



The Leshem<sup>21</sup> 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-

<sup>19</sup> *Atzilus*, *Yetzirah*, *Beriyah*, and *Asiyah*.

<sup>20</sup> 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*.

<sup>21</sup> *Drushei Olam HaTohu*, *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 Be'or...Yovav ben Zerach...Chusham...Hadad ben Bedad...Samlah from Masrekab... Shaul from Rechovos...Ba'al Chanan ben Achbor...and Hadar*<sup>22</sup>... (*Bereishis* 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 (*sefirah*). It is to this that the *Sifra D'Tzniusa* refers when it says, “The first kings died,”<sup>23</sup> and:

The ruling of the “kings” is called by the Arizal, *Olam HaNekudos*.<sup>24</sup> 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.*” (*Drushei Olam HaTobu, Ma'amar Klalli*, Os 4)

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

<sup>23</sup> 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.

<sup>24</sup> 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*,<sup>25</sup> 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

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<sup>25</sup> 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..."<sup>26</sup> 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.<sup>27</sup> There the purer lights were used to make the rectified *sefiros* while the less pure lights became the *siggim* and *Klipos*.

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<sup>26</sup> *Kobeles* 7:2.

<sup>27</sup> 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 being separated out. What makes food good or bad, or blood, clean or unclear? 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.<sup>28</sup> 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*

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<sup>28</sup> 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*,<sup>29</sup> 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'Kedushbab*<sup>30</sup>—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.”<sup>31</sup> This is because holiness, which is life [itself], will have become separated from the spiritual waste which is called death.<sup>32</sup> [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.<sup>33</sup> (*Sba'ar HaGilgulim*, Introduction 20)

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<sup>29</sup> *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 *kedushbab*.

<sup>30</sup> The bottom of the ten *sefiros* on the side of holiness.

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

<sup>32</sup> 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.

<sup>33</sup> 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.

**S**plendor here refers to the lights of the seven *sefiros* of *Zebr Anpin* that broke. It was because these lights were “not found” where they belonged (in the head of *Zebr Anpin*) but had ascended and were clothed in the three lines of *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*.<sup>34</sup> Specifically, the *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah* of these kings did not come out in *Olam HaNekudim*, only their *sefiros* from *Chesed* through *Yesod*.<sup>35</sup>

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 and 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.

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<sup>34</sup> *Mesok Midvash*.

<sup>35</sup> *Sba'arei Chochmah, Sifra D'Tzniusa*, p. 155.



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

Nevertheless, there are limits to what man can impact. For example, the upper levels of *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*, are too high 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*<sup>36</sup> until age thirteen and from the beginning it has always been about *da'as*.

Likewise, *Zebr Anpin* was only created with six functioning

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

*sefiros*.<sup>37</sup> *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 corresponds 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* (Greatness<sup>38</sup>) is achieved, the brains are fully operational and redemption results. In the Messianic Era, this will be the permanent state of *Zebr 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 *Zebr Anpin* missing its *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*,<sup>39</sup> 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 *Zebr Anpin* with *mochin*. *Zebr Anpin* will finally have its *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*, and be ele-

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<sup>37</sup> *Sba'arei Chochmah*, *Sifra D'Tzniusa*, p. 168.

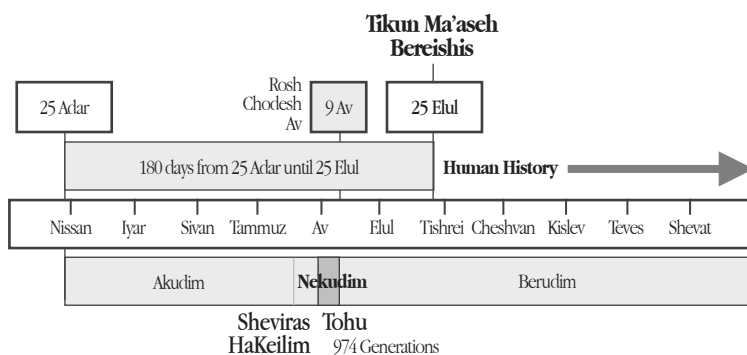
<sup>38</sup> *Legadel* is to enlarge or grow up.

<sup>39</sup> Because of the lack of *zivug* between *Abba* and *Imma*.

vated 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*. The *birrur* of *nitzotzim* from the *Klipos* will be complete and the necessary *tikunim* for that stage of history will already have occurred. But at the beginning of history, Creation had to be perfectly *imperfect*, so evil could exist, man could have free will, and Creation could reach its ultimate purpose.

After the first *sefiros* came out, only the *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah* had all ten of their *sefiros*. Therefore, they did not break. Because the seven *sefiros* below them did not have all their *sefiros*, specifically missing their “splendor,” that is, the *mochin* of *Keser*, *Chochmah*, and *Binah*, they did break, setting in motion all that occurred after *Olam HaNekudos*, during *Olam HaTobu*, *Tikun Ma'aseh Bereishis*, all of history since.



## Year Before Creation

*Drushei Olam HaTobu, Cbelek 1, Drush 4, Siman 5*