

Jewish Mysticism and the Kabbalah: Through a Jungian Lens. Rabbi Mel Gottlieb, Ph.D

Hearing vs. Seeing. Two Creations- Tikunei Zohar. Sinai, Love and Death.

The Princess by the Lake. From Reshith Hokhmah by R. Elijah De Vidas

A Tale of Enlightenment (The Secret Garden, David Meltzer, Editor).

Dream of the Melamed

Mikveh on the Hill.

Creation and Tzimtzum and the Breaking of the Vessels. The Shadow. R. Nachman, 'Love the evil within yourself.' Besamim, chelbana, incense spices.

Ten Sefirot. The Unconscious (The Way of Balance).

Four Worlds. Meditation

Hebrew Letters. Individuation. ('Sin' as necessary for consciousness and growth).

Snake consciousness. (Nachash=Mashiach), Death/Rebirth.. The Copper Serpent, trace to roots, face the shadow, Numbers, 21: 4-9....Balam's Donkey, body consciousness, Numbers, 22-24.

A Jungian interpretation of biblical dreams of individuation and integration of the Shadow. -- Genesis, Ch. 28:11-20: Genesis, Ch. 32:23-33.

Ein Sof- The unknowable source of all being, within which all contrasts and opposites are united. It is the Nothingness/Fullness that is the object of contemplation by the mystics of all traditions. It is not what anyone might think it to be. Ein Sof is also mirrored in the human soul. From this psychological point of view, we can regard Ein Sof as the infinite Plenum of the unconscious, the wellspring of creativity and desire, and the foundation and origin of a self that is essentially beyond the reach of conscious awareness.

Since G-d is beyond conscious knowing (Ein Sof), it creates a thoughtstance where consciousness is increasingly open to unknowingness, diversity and change. In contemplating Ein Sof, we are prompted to confess our ignorance. We are awed by the infinite expanse of being and the MYSTERY of its origins. When one contracts

one's ego to fully permit the emergence of Mystery, one may see the world in a completely new Light, and move to a new unborn meaning and value in one's life and world, the realization of the Light contained in the Sefirot. The Ein Sof may then become a fitting object of contemplation and spiritual awe.

Tzimtzum- is the divine contraction, the concealment and withdrawal of G-d's Presence that makes room for the world. It can be seen as the contraction of the personal ego that enables one to 'let in' the infinite G-d and enables one to be their fullest expression without being subject to interference by inner or outer forces. It may be seen as an archetypal concealment, which separates the ego from the unconscious and creates the characteristics of the personality.

Shivirat Hakeilim- the breaking of the vessels involves the displacement and shattering of the Sefirot and their distribution as 'sparks' of divine light throughout the cosmos.

This 'rupture and repair' notion, Jung believed, anticipated and confirmed his own ideas regarding humanity's role in repairing the damage wrought by creation. (Answer to Job). THIS CHAOS AND DISORDER WAS A PRECONDITION FOR THE GREAT WORK OF THE FORGING OF AN INDIVIDUATED SELF. The psyche develops through its dismemberment and deconstruction. It is only through life crises and the confrontation with mortality, alienation, and the Mystery, that we grasp the chaotic unconscious that is the source of our creativity and renewal. In Kabbalistic terms, it is only when the vessels break that the individual can become truly human. (Rupture and Repair).

Kelipot- The husks capture and obstruct the sparks of divine light, thereby giving rise to the negative realm - the other side (Sitra Achra). This realm comparable to Jung's archetypal 'SHADOW' is part of the divine plenum and must be recognized and given its due. For the Kabbalists and for Jung, EVIL AND NEGATIVITY ARE ALSO AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE SELF, AND THE INDIVIDUAL'S BASER INSTINCTS MUST BE INTEGRATED INTO THE TOTAL PERSONALITY RATHER THAN IGNORED OR REPRESSED, (Nachman). (Only if there is bad, can there be good. Hence, the need for evil (and free will). Rather than 'splitting', one should be cognizant of both good and evil (within and without) and turn evil itself into good. (Zohar- p. 109, Sperling).

Since the Kelipot trapped the light, they symbolize a closed economy of thought, values, and experience, a dogmatic mindset in which the individual is unwilling or unable to change in response to dialogue and experience. As the KELIPOT are thought to be THE ORIGIN OF EVIL, we can infer that to the Kabbalists evil is precisely that which is impervious to dialectics and change. (By way of contrast, Tikkun, which extracts and liberates divine energy from the Kelipot, emends, restores and redeems the world through an open economy of ideas, experiences, and actions and interpretation. The very purpose of the human being is to extract the sparks that one discovers within oneself and with which one encounters throughout life. Encounters with others are uniquely suited to aiding one in raising

the sparks within one's soul and fulfilling one's unique role in the world's redemption.

Sefirot- Luria suggested that G-d is both Ein Sof and Ayin (everything and nothing), that creation is both hispashut (emanation) and tzimtzum (contraction), that G-d both created the world and is Him/Herself created/completed by humanity; that the Sefirot are both the origin of the cosmos and only come into being when the cosmos is shattered (shevirat hakeilim), and then reconstructed by humanity (Tikun). The Kabbalists and Hasidim held that the 'the revelation of anything is actually through its opposite, and that all created things in this world are hidden within His/Her essence in 'Coincidentia Oppositorum,' and that the unity of the world's opposites brings about its completeness (shleimut). (Elior, 163). This is not the Western concept of either/or but the more Eastern affirmative 'both/and.' This proposition may be in opposition to the doctrines of normative Western religion. (Jung, vol. 1, Psychology and Religion, East and West, vol. 1 par. 833).

As we have mentioned since the Sefirot failed to contain the divine light that was emanated into them, each sefira overflowed with divine energy and the lower seven shattered resulting in shards falling through the metaphysical void, each shard trapping a spark of divine light. But the Kabbalists (Luria) held that this was not a one-time occurrence, but rather inherent in all living things and events. Each moment, each entity, each idea has an aspect of rupture (shevira) that must be emended or repaired. This suggests that all conceptions of G-d and world and self are subject to revision, and that indeed it is this repair process that is essential for the completion of G-d and the world and the self.

There are ten Sefirot found in your handout representing three levels of functioning: the intellect, the emotions, and the realm of action. Each of the Sefirot is inteinclusive. Each of the sefirot contains its own opposite within itself or else it would not be able to interact or bond or relate to the other. The right and left columns of the Sephirotic Tree are therefore interinclusive and holographic of necessity. They have their distinctiveness, but they must be able to function in total harmony as the whole universe is actually one aspect, and each aspect is part of the greater whole. This is the unity of the universe that the Lurianic Kabbalah recognizes as the fundamental reality, and it is up to each of us to create these unifications within and without in order to repair the ruptured universe (within our psyches and within the world). Each of the sefirot has open permeable boundaries and potentially interacts energetically with each of the other sefirot, promoting consciousness. Of course, the system can go awry as the ego pursues another agenda, but if there is harmonious interaction, a person is drawn closer to a state of pure being, of interdependent unity as is the timeless mind of G-d. This consciousness brought about through action (Mitzvot-joining) creates a balancing within, returns this balance to the upper world as well, healing the split between the masculine and feminine, restoring an erotic union above which filters back into the world. (Cherubim).

When there is an imbalance in the system, when the opposite (left or right) pillars are overemphasized or expressed in isolation, imbalanced behavior can result.

When the neglected, denied, or repressed energy is not integrated, it can become a shadow element, which eventually must become integrated.

According to the Kabbalah, the final stage of the repair of the world will occur with a balancing of the opposites, a balancing of the masculine and feminine forces, an integration of unconscious and conscious forces in the Psyche. It is called an 'erotic union' in the Zohar and in Jungian terms, an integration of the Conscious and Unconscious. The entire cosmos becomes a pantheistic unity, a 'Messianic restoration.' So 'evil' (imbalance) is viewed as a necessary dynamic in promoting growth, in creating suffering that leads to a shift in values, perception, 'recall,' and eventual wholeness. This dynamic is ever-changing, and energetically in movement throughout the life cycle till death. Once recognized these unconscious primal attributes can be integrated into a psychic whole that is connected and influenced by consciousness. But before the redemption, these attributes function as shadow elements that must be made conscious.

Each person has a special, unique tikun, which is one's unique 'recalled' 'destiny.' The inner voice leads a person towards his or her tikun as do his or her talents, interests, and passion. This return to one's inner calling is a return to the eternal within; it creates an inner harmony. This balancing of the inner life of the individual is also a prerequisite for the unification of the planet as a whole. according to the Kabbalah. Because each person's consciousness is the analogue of all humanity all existence is illuminated to the extent that person is able to achieve balance.

The Four Worlds (Olamot).—The ten sefirot are seen as the inner structure of all reality, both of the individual and the cosmos. Overlaid on this grid of the ten sefirot are the Four Worlds or levels of spiritual awareness. They trace the individual's evolving understanding of G-d. The lowest world is ASSIYAH, where ego identity dominates and we see ourselves as distinct, separate selves. 'I think, therefore I am.' The next stage is YETZIRAH where separateness begins to fade away as we join into the chorus of angels, recognizing that there are higher forms of life, or deeper rungs of perception of which we are also a part. We begin to understand that rung after rung opens up to a deeper and truer way of perceiving reality. Thus we begin to climb the inward ladder finding that we do not have to 'experience' all of the rungs or stages to know that they exist. In the third stage BRIA'AH we see the great vision. We understand that there is only one reality. And that One is the Ein Sof, there is nothing else. The mind is close to bursting with the fullness of the vision, but it is still the mind. It is still 'I' who have this insight. The final stage is called ATZILUT. Here the lines between self and Self no longer exist. In atzilut there is nothing but the flow. The journey through the 'olamot' is seen here as a paradigm for stages in the life of faith. Dov Ber points out that as we truly live through the actualization of the Sefirot, experiencing their dynamic (extremes and balancing) energies, and move up the four worlds, we ultimately surrender our egos, coming to the level of 'nothingness, where all our physical powers and senses become nullified (death) and are reborn into the 'Oneness' of Soul found in Ein Sof (above Keter). This is the attribute of wisdom (chochma). All of creation is the product of this unfolding and development and evolution. Death and new life. It is the unfolding of

G-d's will through the Sefirot, brought into fruition through the human's capacity to integrate the conscious with the unconscious, the divine Archetypes. The seed is planted into the Earth, is nullified and grows into a plant.

Otiyot - The Hebrew Letters. They represent deep symbolic meanings; 70 faces of the Torah. It may be in the words, in the mystery of the shapes, sounds, and meanings of the letters that form a myriad meaning within the words; or in the silent spaces between the letters where the mysteries reside. So the 'hearing' of the words of the Torah read in the synagogue itself becomes an exercise in deep listening, a way of letting ourselves hear that which usually eludes us. In doing so, we open our hearts to the sounds at Sinai and receive the Word. The Hebrew letters call us to shape our lives as individuals and as a community to the revelation within the shards, and we discover meaning in our souls and purpose in healing the world. Contained within the letters is a deep memory of a deep encounter with Soul, with the unconscious, with the G-d within and the mysterious Ein Sof of Unity. As long as we are dominated by the ego's endless cycles of pride and insecurity, we will not achieve inner peace. (Go through first 10 letters. Emet vs. Sheker. 6 vs. 9).

Tikun Haolam- In Tikun the sparks are extracted from matter and raised on high in service of the individual and the world's redemption. Jung was familiar with the symbol of the sparks from the Kabbalah and he came to believe that they were primordial symbols of the collective unconscious (Mysterium, vol. 14). Each individual is responsible, through ethical, spiritual, aesthetic, and intellectual acts for redeeming these sparks of divine energy and contributing to the Tikun of his/her own soul and the world. Only through the activities of the individual in a broken world does the abstract, empty Sefirot become "wisdom, knowledge, kindness, judgment, beauty, splendor, grace and creativity," attaining full concrete reality. So the human being helps create reality, and G-d Him/Herself.

In Jungian terms the sparks represent aspects of the collective unconscious and it is possible to understand the entrapped sparks as libidinous energy bound by neurotic complexes that prevent the individual from actualizing his or her unique personal creative potential. Hillman would say that since Psyche also exists in the world the process of therapy is incomplete if it remains only on the individual/personal level.

The raising of the sparks and tikkun involve the realization of the values that the Sefirot represent and thus a liberation within one's soul. This is what gives meaning to the self, the world and its move toward completion, and the completion of G-d as well, ie., the restoration of the vessels from their broken shattered state of emptiness, filled with ego boundedness to a state of values and divine Light embedded in each of the Sefirot. (Jung, The Red Book, 229B).

(Jung insisted that experience is informed by multiple functions (sensation, feeling, intuition, and thinking), and the excluded aspects of the personality symbolized by the anima, animus, and shadow).

SO in Ein Sof, we are prompted to confess our ignorance; in Tzimtzum we imitate G-d by concealing and withdrawing our ego investments; through the Sefirot we learn things have multiple values and aspects; through the Otiyot (letters) we

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discover the possibilities of multiple interpretations; we come to recognize truth in the opposite of what we at first believed; in Shevirat Hakeilim we find that all our concepts and experiences 'deconstruct'; and finally, in Tikkun, we repeatedly revise our ideas and selves in the service of mending our lives and the world.

According to the Hasidim, the essence of the divine intention is: that all realities and their levels be revealed in actuality, each detail in itself as separated essences, and that they nevertheless be unified and joined in their value. (Elior in Green, Jewish Spirituality, vol. 2, pp.157-205).

Some additional parallels between Kabbalah and Jung.

- 1- The infinite light channeled by the vessels compares to the sexual libido channeled by the ego and superego.
- 2- The shattering of the vessels compares with conflicts that shatter the ability of the ego and the superego to channel the libido in an adaptive way.
- 3- The broken shards trapping and hiding the divine light, with the splitting off of ideas and emotions from the personality, repressed and hidden in the unconscious.
- 4- Repairing the shattering and returning the divine light to its source, with the restoration of the repressed libido, now appropriately channeled for the benefit of the individual.

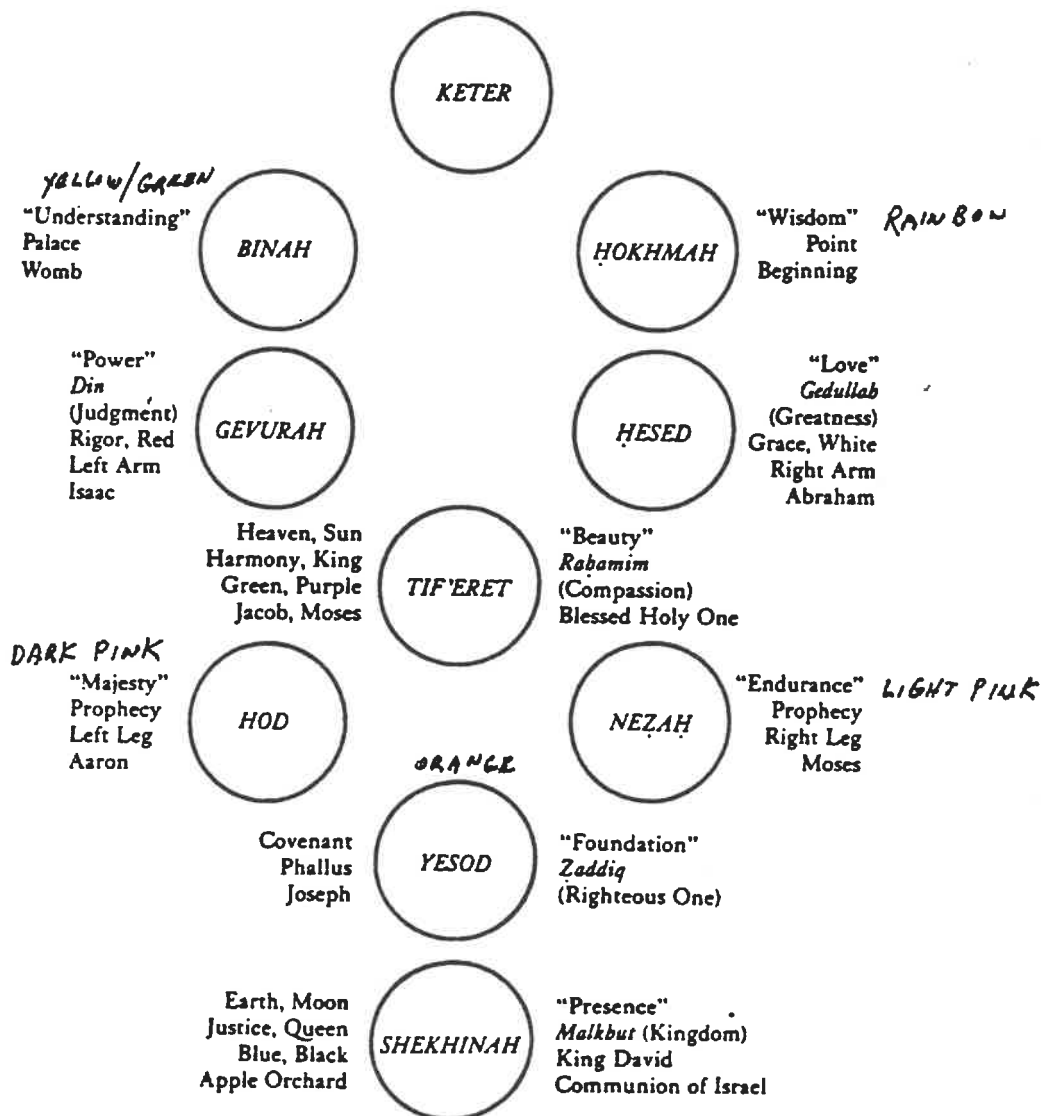
Moshe (lascivious, slothful, depressive yet conscious of all these and thus became the whole man, anav mekol adam) and David (sacrifices unconscious longings to become conscious messianic figure) as examples of Consciousness and integration of opposites –individuation.

BOOK LIST FOR INTRODUCTION  
TO THE KABALLAH

1. Abraham Isaac Kook - By B. Bokser
2. The Jewish Mystical Tradition - By B. Bokser
3. Understanding Jewish Mysticism - By D. Blumenthal
4. Kaballah For The Layman - By P. Berg
5. Jewish Mystical Testimonies - By L. Jacobs
6. Meditation And Kaballah - By A. Kaplan
7. Zohar - By D. Matt
8. Major Trends In Jewish Mysticism - By G. Scholem
9. Path Of The Kaballah - By D. Sheinkin
10. A Kaballah For The Modern World - By Wippler

THE TEN SEFIROT

*BLINDING INVISIBLE LIGHT*



final Mem M	final Mem M	מ	ם	ם	ם	מֶם סּוֹפִית	Mem silent	Alet silent	1	א	א	אֶלֶף	א
Nun N	Nun N	נ	ן	ן	ן	נֶן סּוֹפִית	Bet B	Bays B	2	ב	ב	בֵּית	ב
final Nun N	final Nun N	ן	ן	ן	ן	נֶן סּוֹפִית	Vet V	Vays V		ב	ב	בֵּית	ב
Sameh S	Sameh S	ס	ס	ס	ס	סֶם סּוֹפִית	Gimel G(get)	Gimel G(get)	3	ג	ג	גִּמֵל	ג
Ayin A silent	Ayin silent	ע	ע	ע	ע	עֶן סּוֹפִית	Dalet D	Dalet D	4	ד	ד	דָּלֶת	ד
Pay P	Pay P	פ	פ	פ	פ	פֶּא סּוֹפִית	Hay H	Hay H	5	ה	ה	הָא	ה
Fay F	Fay F	פ	פ	פ	פ	פֶּא סּוֹפִית	Vav V	Vov V	6	ו	ו	וּו	ו
final Fay F	final Fay F	ף	ף	ף	ף	פֶּא סּוֹפִית	Zayin Z	Zayin Z	7	ז	ז	זֶן	ז
Tzadee TZ	Tzadee TZ	צ	צ	צ	צ	צֶדִי סּוֹפִית	Het H	Hess H	8	ח	ח	חֵית	ח
final Tzadee TZ	final Tzadee TZ	ץ	ץ	ץ	ץ	צֶדִי סּוֹפִית	Tet T	Tess T	9	ט	ט	טֵית	ט
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Resh R	Resh R	ר	ר	ר	ר	רֵישׁ סּוֹפִית	Kaf K	Kaf K	20	כ	כ	כֶּף	כ
Shin SH	Shin SH	שׁ	שׂ	שׂ	שׂ	שֵׁן סּוֹפִית	Haf H	Huf H		כ	כ	כֶּף	כ
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Tav T	Sov S	ת	ת	ת	ת	תּוֹ סּוֹפִית	Mem M	Mem M	40	מ	מ	מֶם	מ

H is like ch in challah

H is like ch in challah

## THE VOWELS

Sfardi	Ashkenazi	HEBREW NAME	VOWELS	Sfardi	Ashkenazi	HEBREW NAME	VOWELS	Sfardi	Ashkenazi	HEBREW NAME	VOWELS
oo	oo	קבוץ	·:	A as in bay	A as in bay	צִירָה	··	A as in father	AW	קֶמֶץ	ז
oo	oo	שורק	·	E as in wet	E as in wet	סֶנֶל	·:	A as in father	A as in father	פֶּתַח	-
Silent	Silent	סֶנֶא	·	O as in for	O as in no	חֹלֶם	·	I as in sit	I as in sit	חֵירֶק	·