

Shaar HaYichud The Gate of Unity

By
The Holy Rabbi Dov Ber of Lubavitch

Translated and Annotated by Shimon Markel
Edited by Rabbi A. Markel
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Chapter Twenty Seven

Now, after having explained in a somewhat particular manner about the matter of the lights of *Abba* and *Imma* and their internal and external unifications, as previously explained, we must now explain the specifics of the matter of the lights of *Zeir Anpin*, which are called *Yisrael* and *Yaakov*.¹ [Moreover, we must explain] all the particulars of the unifications of *Zeir Anpin*, which are [either] called a union of *Yisrael* and *Leah* or a union of *Yaakov* and *Rachel* etc, as is known. However, we must first have an introductory understanding regarding the matter of Lights and Vessels (*Orot V'Kelim*), both generally and particularly.²

Now, the explanation of the statement,³ [“He and His life force are one, He and His organs are one”], is known. [That is,] “He and His life force are one” refers to the lights (*Orot*), while “He and His organs are one” refers to the aspect of the vessels (*Kelim*).⁴

Now, both generally and particularly speaking, the aspect of the lights of the ten *sefirot* is called,⁵ “Ten *sefirot* without what”, i.e. without “whatness”. This is as stated,⁶ “He is not of any of these qualities altogether”.⁷ It is solely because of the aspect of the vessels that they are in an aspect of a tangible existence. This is the [meaning of the] statement,⁸ “He brought forth ten vessels which we call ten *sefirot*... to show... and to conduct the worlds with them etc”.⁹

¹ See *Etz Chaim*, (*Shaar HaKelipot*) *Shaar* 48, Chapters 2 & 3.

² All of the above will be explained later at great length, after the explanation of Lights and Vessels (*Orot V'Kelim*). This chapter is an introductory chapter, in which many concepts will be introduced, but not fully explained with their details. However, the main point of this chapter, which is to explain the general differences between Lights (*Orot*) and Vessels (*Kelim*), will be fully explained here.

³ See Introduction to *Tikkunei Zohar* 3b.

⁴ In other words, both the Lights (*Orot*) and the Vessels (*Kelim*) are totally bound with *Atzmoot Ohr Ein Sof*-the Essence of the Infinite Light, and are one with G-d. This matter will be explained in full in the next few chapters. However, before this may be understood, we must fully understand the explanation of Lights (*Orot*) and Vessels (*Kelim*).

⁵ See *Sefer Yetzirah*, Chapter 1, *Mishnah* 2.

⁶ See Introduction to *Tikkunei Zohar* 17b.

⁷ This is to say that the Light (*Ohr*), i.e. the essential vitality of the ten *sefirot*, is completely intangible. This refers to the *Atzmoot Ohr Ein Sof*-The Essence of the Infinite Light, which radiates within the *Kav*-Line. As explained previously, since this light is still entirely bound to *Atzmoot Ein Sof*-The Essential Singularity of G-d, it is therefore an absolute singularity and completely intangible and indefinable.

⁸ See *Tikkunei Zohar* 17a and 17b.

⁹ In other words, it is specifically the Vessels (*Kelim*) which bring the Light (*Ohr*) into a tangible state. This is to say that all tangibility comes about from the aspect of the vessels, rather than from the aspect of the Light, which is an intangible Essence. Because of this, we cannot actually speak of *sefirot* in regard to

Likewise, the fact that, in general, the ten *sefirot* of *Atzilut* are called by four names,¹⁰ *A"V* (72), *Sa"G* (63), *Ma"H* (45) and *Ba"N* (52), [is only in regard to the aspect of the vessels].¹¹ [The name] *A"V*¹² is an expansion [of the four letter name of G-d] with *Yud's*, and refers to *Chochmah*.¹³ [The name] *Sa"G*¹⁴ is [an expansion] with *Yud's* and an *Aleph*, and refers to *Binah*.¹⁵ [The name] *Ma"H*¹⁶ is [an expansion] with *Aleph's* and refers to *Zeir Anpin*,¹⁷ [and the name] *Ba"N*¹⁸ is [an expansion] with *Heb's*, and refers to *Malchut*, as is known.¹⁹ As is known, in the terminology of the *Zohar*, the ten general *sefirot* are only called,²⁰ “The secret of the Holy Name”.²¹ All this is specifically only in respect to the aspect of the vessels (*Kelim*), as is known.²²

the Essential Light. Rather, even the mention of a definition such as “*sefirot*”, is in reference to the Vessels (*Kelim*) within which the Essential Light vests. This is the meaning of the statement of the *Zohar* mentioned above, that “He brought forth ten vessels which we call ten *sefirot*”. That is, the term “*sefirot*” may only be applied to the vessels. The Lights (*Orot*) and Vessels (*Kelim*) and their relationship will now be further explained.

¹⁰ The Divine names may be expanded by spelling out their individual letters as follows; *Alef* (א"ל), *Beit* (ב"י), *Gimmel* (ג"י) etc. The letters Hey (ה) and Vav (ו) each have three possible spellings: *HY* (ה"י), *HA* (ה"א), *HH* (ה"ה), *VYV* (ו"י), *VAV* (ו"א), *VV* (ו"ו). The four letter name of G-d (Y-H-V-H ה-ו-ה-י) may therefore be expanded into several possible spellings depending on the variant spellings of the letters *Hey* (ה) and *Vav* (ו).

¹¹ As will soon be explained, the ten *sefirot* are called by certain names. These names are the vessels for the *sefirot*. The reason for this is because a name draws out the essence and spreads it forth into revelation. This is understood by the fact that when one's name is called out, it draws his essential identity and attention toward the caller. Furthermore, a name is what gives description to something. This is to say that a description is a name. Now, a name is not the actual thing itself. Rather, it brings the essence of the thing to light and defines its specific form. If someone were to go to a craftsman and tell him, “make it for me”, without defining it by name, such as make a chair for me or make a table for me, or at least describing it, the craftsman would surely not know what to make. He would simply not know what is wanted of him. Even if the person who placed the order has a clear picture in his own mind of what he wants, nonetheless, since no description was given, the object will never be made. It is the description of this thing, i.e. its name, which reveals it to the craftsman, and makes it possible for the object to come into actuality. Likewise above, the names of the *sefirot* etc. are the descriptions which contain and bring the G-dly light into revelation and tangibility. Without these vessels of names, descriptions and limitations, the G-dly lights could never materialize and would remain completely beyond tangible comprehension and definition. Now, although these names are mentioned in this chapter, their explanation will only come later in the book.

¹² See *Etz Chaim (Shaar RaPa"Ch Nitzotzin) Shaar 18, Chapter 2.*

¹³ That is, YOD-HY-VYV-HY (י"ו ה"י ו"ו ה"י), expanded with *Yods*. This is the name of 72-A"V (ע"ב) which is its numerical value. This name corresponds to *Chochmah*.

¹⁴ See *Zohar (Ra'ayah Mehemnah) Pinchas 246b.* See also *Etz Chaim (Shaar Ozen Chotem Peh) Shaar 4, Chapter 3.* See also, *Etz Chaim, Shaar HaKlallim, Chapter 8.*

¹⁵ That is, YOD-HY-VAV-HY (י"ו ה"י ו"א ה"י), expanded with *Yods* and an *Aleph*. This is the name of 63-SA"G (ס"ג) which is its numerical value. This name corresponds to *Binah*.

¹⁶ See *Etz Chaim (Shaar Leah V'Rachel) Shaar 38, Chapters 1 and 2.*

¹⁷ That is, YOD-HA-VAV-HA (א"ו ה"א ו"א ה"א), expanded with *Alephs*. This is the name of 45-M"AH (ה"מ) which is its numerical value. This name corresponds to the emotional *sefirot* of *Zeir Anpin*.

¹⁸ See *Etz Chaim (Shaar RaPa"Ch Nitzotzin) Shaar 18, Chapter 3.*

¹⁹ That is, YOD-HH-VV-HH (ה"ו ה"ה ו"ו ה"ה), expanded with *Heh's*. This is the name of 52-B"AN (ב"ן) which is its numerical value. This name corresponds to *Malchut* (i.e. *Nukvah*).

²⁰ See *Zohar Yitro 67b*, and commentaries there.

²¹ This refers to the fact that each of the letters of the Tetragrammaton (ה-ו-ה-י) correspond to the particular *sefirot*. The thorn of the letter *Yod* (י) corresponds to *Keter*. The point of the letter *Yod* (י) corresponds to *Chochmah*. The first *Heh* (ה) corresponds to *Binah*, wherein the point of *Chochmah* (י) is expanded into a

Now, the explanation of the matter is known, that in regard to the statement,²³ “There are three rulers above, the brain, the heart and the liver”, these are the three vessels for the *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, and *Neshamah*.²⁴ The *Neshamah* [vests] within the brain, the *Ruach* [vests] within the heart, and the *Nefesh* [vests] within the liver.²⁵ However, the aspects of the *Chayah* and *Yechidah* [of the soul] transcend the limitations of vessels.²⁶

Now, the aspect of the vessels (*Kelim*) is composed of a beginning, middle and end. [This is to say that] there is the inner [part] of the vessels, the middle [part] of the vessels, and the external [part] of the vessels. [This is in accordance to] what is known regarding the matter of the “248 limbs of the King” which are the nine *sefirot* of *Zeir Anpin*. [That is,] nine times nine equals eighty-one. Then, three times eighty-one, corresponding to the three levels in the vessels – the beginning, middle, and end – equals two hundred and forty three. [Now, with the addition of] the five Kindnesses (*Chassadim*) which spawn growth, it equals two

length and width as depicted by the letter *Heh* (ה). The *Vav* (ו) whose numerical value is six corresponds to the six emotional *sefirot* of *Zeir Anpin*. The last *Heh* (ה) corresponds to the spreading forth of all of the above into action, *Malchut*.

²² In truth, although the vessels are what give tangibility and “somethingness” to the *sefirot*, nonetheless, tangibility and “somethingness” is not actually applicable in the emanated world of *Atzilut* which is still totally infinite and intangible. Rather, “somethingness” is only applicable in the created worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. In other words, in the world of *Atzilut* – Emanation, even the vessels are in an aspect of intangibility and essential G-dliness and are in a way of “Nothingness” (*Ein*), rather than “Somethingness” (*Yesh*). This, is one of the explanations of the statement, “He and His organs are one”. However, the fact that we **do** call them “something” (relative to the lights of *Atzilut*) is because the vessels of *Atzilut* are the *heyulie* source for the expression and influence of actual tangibility and “somethingness”. It is therefore fitting to call them “something” in reference to the influence which issues from them. For example, the G-dly power and source from which the aspect of *Chochmah* of the world of *Briyah* is drawn, is fitting to be called *Chakim* – Wise. This is in accordance with what is known regarding the matter of “You have called them all by names”. Therefore, this concept of “Names” does indeed speak of the vessels of the ten *sefirot* of the world of *Atzilut*. (That is to say, the *sefirot* of *Atzilut* are named according to the influence which is **destined** to issue forth from them etc. This will be more clearly understood at the end of this chapter and the next, where it is explained that the Vessels (*Kelim*) come from the lowest level of the Light (*Ohr* or Form – *Tzurah*).

²³ See *Zohar Terumah* 153a, and *Toldot* 138a. See also, *Zohar Chadash*, *Ruth* 80a.

²⁴ At first, three general Vessels (*Kelim*) are created. These are called the three “Rulers” (*Shleetin*). This is comparable to a King who is the Ruler and representative of all the people in his land. These three “Rulers” are the Brain (*Mocha*), the Heart (*Leeba*), and the Liver (*Kavved*). However, more particularly speaking, they are divided into nine *sefirot*, i.e. three levels, each of which has three levels. These are *ChaBa”D* – which are the intellectual *sefirot* of the “Brain”, *ChaGa”T* – which are the heartfelt emotional *sefirot* of the “Heart”, and *NeHi”Y* – which are the gut emotional *sefirot* of the “Liver”. As will soon be explained, each of these *sefirot* also possesses nine *sefirot*. (*Malchut*, which is the tenth *sefirah* is not counted within *Zeir Anpin*, since it forms its own *Partzuf*-Stature which is called *Nukvah*-The Female, as will later be explained.)

²⁵ The explanations of the particulars of the vessels will only be mentioned generally in this chapter, since they will be explained at great length later in chapter 30. The main point of this chapter is to explain the general difference between Lights (*Ohr*) and Vessels (*Kelim*).

²⁶ The *Chayah* and *Yechidah* levels of the soul are called “*Ohr Makif* – The Encompassing Light” of the soul, which do not vest within the Vessels (*Kelim*) of the Brain, the Heart, and the Liver. In contrast, the *Nefesh*, *Ruach* and *Neshamah* are called “*Ohr Pnimee* – The Pervading Lights” of the soul which do vest within the vessels. The differences between these two will be explained in later footnotes.

hundred and forty eight. This is the general matter of the vessels of *Zeir Anpin*, which are called “The body of the King”.²⁷

In addition [to the “organs”], “He prepared garments for them, from which souls for human beings issue forth”.²⁸ [These “garments”] are the garments of thought, [speech and action], as will all be explained.²⁹

²⁷ This will be explained at length in chapter 30, and will therefore only be explained in short here. The innerness of the vessels is the aspect of the containment and restriction of the light of *ChaBa”D* (the intellect) of that particular vessel and *sefirah*. The middle part of the vessel is the containment and restriction of the light of *ChaGa”T* (the emotions) of that particular *sefirah* and the external part of the vessel is the containment and restriction of light of *NeHi”Y* (the gut emotion) of that particular *sefirah*. As mentioned in footnote 24, there are three general “levels” of the vessels. The first is the three intellectual *sefirot* of *ChaBa”D* – the Brain. The second is the three heartfelt emotional *sefirot* of *ChaGa”T* – the Heart. The third is the gut emotional *sefirot* of *NeHi”Y* – the Liver. Each of these nine *sefirot* also possesses nine *sefirot*, as explained previously regarding the subdivisions of the *sefirot* of *Tikkun*. Therefore, nine times nine equals eighty one ($9 \times 9 = 81$). Now, each of these eighty-one *sefirot* (and sub-*sefirot*), has three parts, inner, middle and outer (*ChaBa”D*, *ChaGa”T* and *NeHi”Y*). Therefore, three times eighty-one equals two-hundred and forty-three ($3 \times 81 = 243$). When the five kindnesses, which cause these “Limbs” to grow, are added, there are two hundred and forty eight ($243 + 5 = 248$). (In the analogy of a human being, these correspond to all the various sub-organs of the three main systems of the body, the nervous system, the cardiac system (which includes the respiratory system) and the digestive system. However, above in G-dliness, these 248 limbs correspond to the 248 positive commandments of the Torah, which are the “Vessels” and vehicles which draw out the Essential Light of G-d. Moreover, it should be noted that there are also 365 veins and arteries in a human being which correspond to the 365 negative commandments of the Torah.) (Obviously, *Atzmoot Ohr Ein Sof*-the Essence of the Infinite Light of G-d has no body or form, whatsoever, and as explained, the Light is “*Bli Mah* – Without Whatness”. Rather, this “form” is only in regard to the vessels, of how the Essential Light of G-d vests within the vessels of *Zeir Anpin* of *Atzilut* and, ultimately, with Creation as a whole. Moreover, as explained in footnote 22, even the vessels of the world of *Atzilut* are completely intangible, and are only the **source** from which actual creation issues forth, as will be explained later.)

²⁸ See Introduction to *Tikkunei Zohar* 17a. The aspect of garments - *Levushin*, and the difference between them and Vessels – *Kelim*, will be explained later. (This parenthesis may be skipped by the beginner who is reading this chapter for the first time. However, it should be returned to later. Parenthetically, although we previously said that the essential light of the soul is an essential light which is completely intangible (*Bli Mah* – Without What), in truth, generally speaking, the souls of the Jewish people are from the “garments” of Thought, Speech and Action, which correspond to the worlds of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*. Therefore, because of this, some Jewish souls will become more greatly aroused by G-dliness than other souls, as explained at length in *Kuntres HaHitpa’alut*. This is because the souls of *Briyah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah* already do have some kind of definitions and limitations. However, this is all in regard to the pervading light of the soul. However, the true essence of the Jewish soul is in the Essential Lights of the world of *Atzilut* and higher. Nonetheless, this generally remains concealed, for it is only in an encompassing fashion, and is only revealed in the greatest *Tzaddikim* – Righteous People.)

²⁹ Now, the particular explanations of all of the above will come later on in the book. However, from all of the above we find that although there are many particular divisions of levels, in general, all of the above can be divided into three general levels or aspects. There is the aspect of the Essential Lights of the soul which transcend and are higher than the limitations of the vessels, i.e. the *Chaya* and *Yechidah*. These are called “*Ohr Makif* – Encompassing Light”. Then there is the aspect of the three general vessels of the Brain (*Neshamah*), the Heart (*Ruach*) and the Liver (*Nefesh*), (which includes all of their particular subdivisions). These are called “*Ohr Pnimee* – Pervading Light” or “*Kelim* – Vessels”. Then there is the aspect of the Garments - *Levushin* (of Thought, Speech and Action), as will later be explained. Let us now continue to understand the general matter of Lights (*Orot*) and Vessels (*Kelim*).

However, [regarding] the general explanation of the matter of lights and vessels, although there are many very different ways [to explain it], it may, nonetheless, generally [be understood as follows]: It is like the spiritual light and vitality (*Ohr V'Chayoot*) of the spiritual [power of] sight, as it vests and integrates in [a way of] physicality, in the physical substance of the eye, [thus creating] the aspect of physical sight.³⁰

³⁰ The difference between Lights (*Orot*) and Vessels (*Kelim*) is like the difference between spiritual Light (*Ohr*) and Vitality (*Chayoot*). The aspect of Light (*Ohr*) radiates in a transcendent manner, in a way of separateness. This is comparable to the light of the sun, as it radiates within a vessel such as a house. There is no actual relation or comparison between the light of the sun and the house at all, and the light does not “contribute” anything to the house, except that it brightens it. However, the house remains a house, exactly as it was before the sunlight radiated into it. This is evidenced by the fact that no profound change comes about as a result of the unification of the light and the house. However, the aspect of Vitality (*Chayoot*) is comparable to the vitality and the life force of the soul as it merges and integrates with the vessel of the body. The life force is drawn down in a way of descent, to the point that there is actually some kind of relationship and comparison between the two. Moreover, from the influx and merging of the life force of the soul with the physical vessel of the body, a profoundly new entity comes into being. For example, from the influx of the Vitality (*Chayoot*) of the soul into the vessel of the Brain, a radical change takes place in that active physical intellect comes about, or if there is an influx of vitality to the eye, physical sight takes place etc. However, it must be pointed out that in the life force of the soul there **also** is an aspect of influence in the way of Light (*Ohr*). This is the aspect of the vitality and life force of the soul, which rests upon the entirety and totality of the body **equally**. This aspect of the soul does **not** come in a way of “closeness” or qualitative comparison to the vessel of the body. Rather, it is similar to the aforementioned analogy of the light of the sun. It rests upon the body in a concealed fashion and does not integrate within the particular organs of the body whatsoever. This is the aspect of a Light (*Ohr*) as opposed to the aspect of Vitality (*Chayoot*). This is as explained (in chapters 9 and 19), that the concept of an *Ohr* – Light, is that it is a revelation of influence, but without change at all. Similarly, although the general life force of the soul is considered a descent in comparison to the essence of the soul as it is prior to its being invested in the body, nevertheless, even after it becomes invested in the body, the soul **also** dwells **upon** it in a concealed manner and remains essentially spiritual and apart. That is, it remains in its essential state, just as it was prior to being invested in the body, with no change whatsoever. (The proof for this is from the fact that a blind person or a handicapped person can give birth to a person who is complete and whole in all his faculties.) This is not the case in regard to the vitality (*Chayoot*) of the soul which merges and integrates within the vessels of the body. In the issuance of vitality (*Chayoot*) there indeed is a change in its radiance from how it was prior to being invested in the body, as compared to how it is after being invested in the body. This matter is so much so that the vitality (*Chayoot*) can actually be called by the name of its corresponding vessel. (It is because of this that it may be called a Vessel (*Keli*) altogether, because when the term “vessel” (*Keli*) is used, it does not refer to a vessel which is empty of light. If this was the case, it could not be called a vessel at all, but would just be called “substance” or “matter” (*Chomer*). Rather, it is called by the term “Vessel” (*Keli*) specifically when it is merged with the issuance of life force and vitality of the soul. It is specifically the integration of the two together which is called a “*Keli* – Vessel”.) This may be understood by a comparison to the light of the [power] of sight as it is within the vessel of the eye. Although it dwells within the vessel of the eye, it nonetheless is in an aspect of transcendence and separateness. For this reason one cannot see in the dark. It is only when the vessel of the eye receives in the way of a rebounding light (*Ohr Chozer*), i.e. when it receives the radiance of the light of the sun (or any other light), that it becomes prepared to receive the spiritual light of the power of sight. That is, the light of the power of sight is then automatically drawn forth into the eye in a way of closeness, to the point that it becomes bound with the vessel of the eye in an inner way. (At first, in the darkness, this power of sight only dwelt upon the vessel of the eye in an external encompassing manner. It is only when it was aroused from below (i.e. by the light of the sun) that it was drawn forth into the vessel of the eye to create physical vision). We find that when these two merge together (i.e. the spiritual power of sight and the physical vessel of the eye), physical vision is born. This is similarly the case with the aspect of the light of the intellect. Although this light dwells upon the brain of an adult, nonetheless, it only dwells there in an encompassing manner (*Ohr Makif*). However, through the intermediary of *Hitbonenut* (Intellectual Toil), the intellectual power and light of the soul is drawn forth in a way of closeness, into the

Now, two aspects are [involved] in this:³¹ The first is a change of existence, from spiritual to physical. [This is to say that] physical sight grasps physicality, which is not the case with the spiritual light of [the power of] sight. This is similarly the case with the light of the spiritual potential power of intelligence which integrates with the physicality of the vessel of the brain, to the point that it is called, *Hitchachmoot*-“Active Intellect”. Likewise, [there is a change of existence] from the [spiritual] potential power to move as it [vests] within actual physical movement. So too, [there is a change of existence] from the spiritual potential power of growth as it becomes integrated and vested in the actual physical growth of a physical plant.³²

The second [aspect] is the matter of the limitation and measure of the substance of the vessel. [This is to say that] it is limited and quantified with [specific] measure. An example [of this is that] physical sight [is only clear] up to sixty miles. Similarly, [both] the matter of active [physical] intellect or physical movements, spread forth specifically with constraints and limitations, until their limited strength expires. For example, the strength of the physical comprehension of the vessel of the brain diminishes and expires due to the limited capacity of the vessel. Similarly, the physical power of movement of the strength of the arm will diminish and expire due to [strenuous] activity, or when lifting a heavy load and the like. This is because of the limitation of the [physical] power to move. (This is not the case with

substance of the vessel of the brain (*Ohr Pnimee*). When these two are found together, intellect is born. This is likewise so with the power of movement of the hand. Although this power of movement dwells upon the hand in a concealed fashion, his hand will not move. It is the intermediary of the desire to move, which forces the power of movement to descend in a way of “closeness” within the vessel of the physical hand, to the point that when these two are found together, physical movement is born. We observe this in the matter of the spiritual power of growth as well. This is to say that although this power dwells upon the earth in a concealed manner, it will not cause anything to grow until it is aroused through the intermediary of a seed being planted in the earth. When one sows a seed into the ground there is an “arousal of the feminine waters” (*Ha’alaat Mayin Nukvin*) from below, which causes this power to descend from above (*Hamshachat Mayin Dchurin*) and be drawn forth, to vest and merge within the physicality of the earth in an internal way, thus causing the seed to grow in actuality.

³¹ From all of the analogies in the previous footnote, we find that there are two main differences between the Light (*Ohr*) which radiates in an encompassing manner (*Ohr Makif*), and the aspect of the Vessels (*Kelim*) which is the aspect of the merging of the light within the vessel in an internal and pervading manner (*Ohr Pnimee*).

³² The first difference between the encompassing Light (*Ohr Makif*) and the pervading light (*Ohr Pnimee*) of the vessels (*Kelim*) is that there is a change of existence, from spiritual and transcendent to physical and pervading. In the essential Light (*Ohr*) itself, there is no change or difference from before it vests within the vessels and after it vests within them, because even after it vests within the vessels it remains transcendent and separate. (The proof that there is no change in the essential encompassing light of the soul was explained previously, in the fact that a blind person can give birth to a seeing person. Likewise, one who is missing a limb can indeed give birth to a complete child. This is because there is no change or difference in the transcendent encompassing light of the soul, which encompasses the “Vessels” of the body.) Moreover, as explained in chapter ten, the essential powers of the soul are completely beyond definition. In other words, the essential light of the power of movement of the soul cannot be called “movement” at all, since there is no movement there whatsoever. The same is true of the power of sight, and all the other essential soul powers. However, in the aspect of the Vitality (*Chayoot*) which is called a Vessel (*Keli*) (i.e. the inner pervading light) there is a descent of the light to the point that its essential spirituality is changed, making it possible for it to be the source of physical influence. In this pervading light of the soul, there are the divisions of the powers of sight and hearing etc. Moreover, there is a change from spiritual to physical.

the essential spiritual potential power of movement, which has no limitation or cessation. This is evidenced by [the fact that] in a sudden panic, one may lift something which [under normal circumstances] is much heavier than his ability [to lift]. This comes from the aspect of the encompassing [lights of the soul], as is known.³³

Now, this is [the general principle] in every matter of “Substance and Form” (*Chomer V’Tzurah*).³⁴ This is to say that aside from the fact that the “substance” comes in [a way of] a change of existence, it also limits the “form”. Nonetheless, the “substance” has a similarity and likeness to the “form”, such as the “substance” of the vessel of the eye [which is specifically suited] for sight or the “substance” of the vessel of the brain [which is specifically suited] for thought, and the like.³⁵

³³ The second difference between the encompassing Light (*Ohr Makif*) and the pervading Light (*Ohr Pnimee*) of the vessels (*Kelim*) is the aspect of the limitation of the vessels, because the essential encompassing Light (*Ohr Makif*) is still completely infinite. The proof for this is from the fact that in a sudden panic, one will be able to lift much more than his physical “vessels” and limbs are normally capable of lifting, or he will be able to run much faster and further than his legs would normally be capable of carrying him etc. This is because there is an additional radiance from the encompassing light (*Ohr Makif*) of his soul, which is infinite. (This is the basis for various forms of martial arts which use various practices to induce the encompassing light of the animal soul to perform feats which would normally be impossible, such as breaking a concrete block with the bare hand.) In contrast, the radiance of light which merges within the vessels is indeed limited according to the capacity of the vessels. This is like the examples given above regarding the limits of the intellectual power of the brain, or the power of movement as it is in the hand, or the limitation of the power of sight as it is in the eye. These limitations are specifically imposed by the vessels. A further proof of this is from the fact that in order to expand these limitations, such as the power of movement (i.e. physical strength), or the intellectual powers of the brain, one must strengthen the vessels specifically. That is, in order for the power of movement as it is invested in the hand to be strengthened, it must be developed through a regimen of exercise. In other words, the capacity of the **vessel** must be expanded to accommodate and draw forth more light from the essential power of movement in an inner manner (*Ohr Pnimee*). The same is true of the intellectual power of the brain. In order for it to be able to contain and accommodate greater intellectual light, the vessel of the brain must be strengthened through *Hitbonenut*-intellectual toil and study.

³⁴ Substance (*Chomer*) and Form (*Tzurah*) is another way of saying Vessel (*Keli*) and Light (*Ohr*).

³⁵ From all of the previous explanations we find that the aspect of the Light (*Ohr*) completely transcends and is separate from the Vessels (*Kelim*), to the point where there is literally no comparison between the Light (*Ohr*) and the Vessels (*Kelim*). However, at first glance there is a contradiction to this from the fact that the Rebbe explains above that the Substance (*Chomer*) of the Vessel (*Keli*) is similar to the Form (*Tzurah*) of the Light (*Ohr*). Moreover, there are several proofs for the similarity between the two. The first is from the fact that these two (the Light - *Ohr* and the Vessels - *Kelim*) become bound with one another to the point that they form a single essential entity, as explained above. A second proof is from the fact that a Light (*Ohr*) will only become bound with a Substance (*Chomer*) i.e. Vessel (*Keli*), which is suited and prepared specifically for that particular kind of light. For example, the spiritual light of sight will vest specifically in the vessel of the eye. However, if the spiritual power of sight were to radiate in the foot, its radiance could not be accepted by the foot, but would rather be rejected, and the foot would not see. Likewise, the opposite is also true. The power to walk will specifically vest within the feet, but will be rejected by the vessel of the eye. A third proof is from the fact that we observe that the growth of the Form (*Tzurah*) specifically comes simultaneous to and in conjunction with the growth of the Substance (*Chomer*), as will soon be explained in this chapter. Rather, the explanation of the matter is that the Form (*Tzurah*), i.e. the Light (*Ohr*), as it is in its essential state, is completely and utterly removed even from the aspect of spreading forth to influence and vest within the vessels (*Kelim*), i.e. the Substance (*Chomer*). The fact that the Substance (*Chomer*) in relation to the Form (*Tzurah*) is called a Vessel (*Keli*) for the Light (*Ohr*), and that the Vessel is similar to the Form as mentioned above, is only in relation to the last and lowest level of the Form (*Tzurah*). However, the actual essence of the Form (*Tzurah*) so completely transcends the aspect of “influence” to become “merged” within the Vessels, that it cannot be grasped and

However, the “substance” is made from the thickening and condensation³⁶ of the spiritual “form”, from its lowest³⁷ level.³⁸ For example, the power of physical growth comes about from the last level of the spiritual [power] of growth. Similarly, the last level of the spiritual life force of the soul becomes vested within the [physical] blood, as stated,³⁹ “For, the blood is the soul”. Likewise, the last level of the light of the spiritual intellect integrates with the “substance” of the vessel of the brain and the last level of the condensation of the spiritual [power] of sight integrates with the “substance” of the vessel of the eye.

Because of this [phenomenon] we observe that the growth of the [physical] “substance” often comes simultaneous to the growth of the [spiritual] “form”, literally as one. For example, the developmental growth of the “substance” of the [physical] body is simultaneous to the developmental growth of the spiritual light and vitality of the “form”, such as [the fact that] the developmental growth and ability of the “substance” of the [physical] brain comes in proportion to the development of the light and form of the [spiritual] intellect, so that when a child matures and the light of his intellect develops spiritually, then automatically, the ability of the vessel of his brain develops [as well]. This is as stated,⁴⁰ “Days speak and many years teach wisdom”. That is to say, the vessel becomes developed in proportion to the light, each and every day until the age of seventy, at which time a person reaches intellectual maturity, as is known.⁴¹ This will suffice for those of understanding.

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contained in vessels altogether. Rather, it only dwells **upon** the vessels, so to speak, in an encompassing fashion, and is therefore called an Encompassing Light (*Ohr Makif*).

³⁶ The three letter root of the word *Hagshamah* is *Geshem* which means condensation or materialization. Because of this the Hebrew word for rain is *Geshem*.

³⁷ The text reads, “from its last level”.

³⁸ This is similar to the explanation in the previous chapter of how the “something of the nothing” descends to become the “nothing of the something”. That is, although the “something of the nothing” is also still an intangible essence, like the aforementioned *Omek Hamoosag* – Depth of the comprehended concept, nonetheless, it is the source for actual tangibility and “something – *Yesh*” of actual comprehension. It therefore becomes the “nothing of the something”, the intangible source for the tangible comprehension. The same is true regarding every matter of the “thickening of the intangible Lights”. Moreover, just as in the example, in order for this “thickening” of the essential intangible light of the intellect to occur, it is necessary for there to be an arousal from above (through *Hitbonenut* – Contemplation and study), so too, with every “thickening” of the intangible Lights of the soul it is necessary for there to be an arousal from below, as explained above in footnote 30.

³⁹ Deuteronomy 12:23

⁴⁰ Job 32:7

⁴¹ This spiritual growth of intellectual maturity is accomplished specifically through the development of a person’s intellect through Torah study. When he studies and draws forth intellectual light from his soul, his brain will develop in conjunction with this spiritual growth, to accommodate the new influx of the inner light of the intellect. In this way, after years of daily Torah study, he will reach a level of true intellectual maturity and wisdom. However, if he does not develop the spiritual light of his intellect through Torah study, his brain will also remain developed.