

The Three Klipot

Passing Through The Storm, The Fog, and The Fire

Chapter 20 of Sefer Yikra B'Shmi

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Previous to this chapter, we have discussed the exercises of how to achieve YKVK consciousness, which is none other than the experience of Ma'aseh Merkava, the Divine chariot. Most people who make use of this system are unaware of their progress, due to the fact that they do not know how to recognize and interpret it. This Chapter presents some of the resulting experiences of this system, and how they are to be interpreted and measured. Remember, all results and experiences are highly subjective in interpretation, relating exclusively to the individual. No one person's achievements or results can be compared to another's, since we all are separate and distinct human beings. Each of us proceeds and perceives in a way which is unique. All I can provide in print is a general guideline, applicable to all. Beyond this one must receive a personal guide or teacher (be he human or angelic) to be individually guided in that path which is uniquely correct for that, and only for that one person. No value judgments must be placed on another's experience as long as the results are from correct, true actions, intentions and techniques.

Learning at the sod level requires the development of the intuitive character within our waking consciousness. It is clearly written in a number of places that the Kabbalistic writings were never meant to be studied academically. Some have even pointed out that what is written in a number of cases, in reality, is very different from what it appears. This can be very frustrating to the intellect, especially to that one who wants to learn this knowledge but has not been properly prepared. But that is why this cryptic approach is taken, as it is written, *"to guard the way towards the Tree of Life"*. One does not have to be a Kabbalist to know that the expansion of human consciousness can be a dangerous thing. Our world is all too full of people with psychotic splits, brought on by having to accept all too powerful realities that are impossible to assimilate without appropriate preparation and catharsis.

Kabbalistic progress requires a radical psychological transformation. Even in Biblical days the prophets were called *"m'shugah"* (crazy). I assure you there was good reason for this. Anyone who is truly aware of their psychic abilities knows how different this makes you from the rest of people. When you can "see" things that others cannot, and "know" things that are beyond the ability of the mind to know, people are frightened by this. When one is cut off from the higher reality, regardless of how complete this breach is at the conscious level, it can never be complete at the unconscious level. Therefore deep down, within each and every one of us, we "know" just how far it is we have fallen from the fullest heights of our spiritual - human potential. This awareness can bring great shame and guilt. So the aspiring descendant before the Merkaba must process this reintegration and must necessarily go through this rectification. This is the beginning of the true meditative experience, and the release of the previously concealed psychic abilities of the soul. The process of reintegration is what is referred to as the three klipot, (referred to in the vision of Yehezkiel), the storm wind, the great fog and the flashing fire.

While I can go into great detail, and describe the three klipot, there is a danger in this. The danger is that when people have such a clear intellectual understanding of a thing, they have, in essence, locked that "thing" into a thought form so rigid that the autonomous "thing" can no longer function in its normal manner. The archetypal spiritual reality thus ceases to be what it is and becomes what we

conceive it to be in the limitations of our conscious minds. In other words, all the while that we have a full grasp of the definition, meaning and structure of a given reality, our intellect prohibits our experiencing that reality beyond the limitations that exist within our minds. The reality of YKVK is far beyond the ability of any human intellect to grasp. This has always been known in prophetic and Kabbalistic circles. Therefore our literature is not written to be explanatory at the intellectual level. All the more so, our literature can be very confusing to the overly intellectual types.

This is why the personality type that can best succeed in this path is one who is grounded to the earth, and not one who spends his/her time within the limited contexts of one's mind. The intellect is at home in the artificial environment we are placed in, outside the Tree of Life. But this is not the home of the human soul. Do not dismiss the need for the intellect, it plays a crucial, and irreplaceable role. Yet, that role is not to be the vanguard of expanding human consciousness, at least not yet, not until Mashiach comes and the rectification completed.

At the beginning of the meditative process, the ability to concentrate one's mind is extremely difficult. Thoughts from all directions keep "popping up" and distract the aspirant from keeping his/her consciousness focused upon the object of the meditation, which at the beginning stages is usually one of the Names of YKVK. Now, what a person meditates on at the beginning is very important, for the development of human consciousness can only proceed along a "road" that is well marked. The object of meditation must act like an anchor, being able to steady the aspirant and have the innate ability by its own autonomous power to guide, even at the unconscious level, the aspirant's mind, to begin the awakening, which is the psychological catharsis. The process of this education in concentration is referred to as the first level of klipah that must be penetrated. This is the "*ruah s'ahrah*", the storm wind.

Being able to focus one's mind completely on one thing at a time generates great mental power. The resurgence of the Jewish spirit can only come about once one has passed through the first phase of klipah and is able to concentrate the mind, and thus his being, onto a single point. Being the Jewish spirit gets lost so many a time, the ability to find it and hold it in one's conscious mind is necessary in order to actualize it. Again, the realization of this experience is not an academic process. On the contrary, the release of one's lost Jewish self identity is usually a very powerful cathartic experience, one that is not possible without the ability to focus the mind.

Yet, once the mind is focused and a singularity of "thought" has been achieved, the development process continues. But in what direction? Once thought has been sharpened and one can concentrate one's attention, the question arises as to what should the now concentrated attention be paying attention to?

For the rational intellect that cannot experience, and thus not grow beyond its own borders, this experience is like a thick cloud of "nothing". This mind, though crystallized, has no reference or focus of being. Yet this is only true in relationship to the conscious mind, guided by the intellect. The purpose of this klipah is to allow the intellectual mind, bound by its limitations to be left behind, so that the soul can proceed to manifest (*kabalat ha'mohin*). Remember, the soul is clothed within the human mind. The mind acts as the soul's garment. Yet, the soul is not the mind. The soul exists far beyond the limitations of the mind. The mind (the human Ego) exists exclusively to give us a context of action and being here in the multi-conscious physical plane in which we live, called this world. Yet, the soul, being that its source is YKVK Himself, cannot possibly be limited to just this existence.

Therefore, step one is building the psychic strength (discipline) necessary to go "beyond". Step two is the process of the movement, from an ego-intellect oriented frame of mind to a higher one. From the point of view of the human mind-intellect, we are now passing through a great cloud which is like a fog. The danger here is that one can get lost and not make it through to the other side. This inability of separation is an all too common experience to the unprepared aspirant. One who is so heavenly minded that they become no earthly good usually gets lost here. Being that their "heads" are always up in the "clouds" their abilities of concentration and attention are usually very weak, and thus, the real

separation of heaven and earth is an unknown reality to them. I have met some meditators who confuse the cloud with the achievement of the experience of the Ayn, the Great Nothing that is the source of all. It is very easy to tell the difference. But again, the difference is seen psychically at a level where this one cannot fathom.

The rite of passage through the great cloud is by that force on the other side that guides us through. That Force has to be YKVK, for any other force will not lead in the same direction. Therefore, once the mind has been disciplined and complete abstract attention is achieved, we are now ready to experience that which comes next, the flaming fire. Once the attention is concentrated on that "something" other than the ego-intellect, then that "something" begins to be experienced.

All of a sudden, images or impressions flash into consciousness. They become the focus of attention. But be aware, do not become attached to them. With time they will not even be a distraction. These flashes are also a necessary stage that must be passed through in order to get into the palaces of the Heavenly King. These images are usually not visual, but are deeply felt impressions. This is the last phase of ego-intellect consciousness, where the ego meets the soul, or if you will, the higher Self.

At this point focus is still centered from below; therefore, the "impressions" are from the soul and how it views the ego-intellect. Based upon one's unity of being with one's personal, and collective racial unconscious, these "impressions" can be mild or devastating. This fire is the supernal mirror of Self that everyone must look into in order to proceed and experience the world of truth with truthful eyes. If one's actions in this world, whether it be from this lifetime or another, are not rectified the "impressions" received here will be a full revelation of that truth. The results can be so devastating that it is here where one can go insane.

When integration is blocked due to guilt, fear, or by simply being overwhelmed, not only can one not go forward, one cannot go back either. It is here that issues must be dealt with. This is why the prerequisites for this phase are concentration and attention. For once we allow ourselves to be detached from these aspects of the ego, we can then proceed. Remember, these "impressions" are received by the ego-intellect. The purpose is to again allow us to separate and to see reality in the light of a higher set of eyes. In the light of the soul all these devastating revelations are seen to have their rightful place and their higher purpose. Seeing with the soul's eyes allows us to accept these things and not be burned by their revelation. Only the one who can perceive this will have the ability to perceive beyond this. This is the beginning of psychic awareness.

The way through the fire is to keep one's focus on the higher reality of YKVK. For as the Source of all things, all things take their context and rightful place within Him. So we are taught, "*I place HaShem before me, always*" (*Tehilim 16,8*). This is the key to ascent. YKVK is always autonomously present in His Name. It is His Name that is the guide through the storm, the fog and the fire. Concentration brings His Name into focus. Attention keeps it there. The distractions, i.e. the storm, fog, and fire, serve to strengthen our attention, and thus our ability to cling to the Name, and to the reality it represents. We follow it out of ego-consciousness into *Neshama consciousness*. It is here that we can "see" YKVK. Yet, even here, our first vision is only a "glow", a *nogah*. Eventually we go beyond this as well and stand before YKVK consciously with full attention. At this point the contact and communication is complete. Now the works of communion can begin. In Midrash Mishlei (Parasha 10), we are taught that YKVK receives no greater pleasure from His creation other than from those who "*gaze upon His Merkava*". For this purpose was the Torah given to Israel.

The purpose and necessity of Kabbalistic study is to take people through this spiritual/psychological transformational experience. The books of the Zohar, the Tikunim, the writings of the Ari'zal and the Ba'al Shem Tov are full of practical psychic advice for the one who knows how to recognize it. **This is why Kabbalists do not encourage the asking of questions. The answers given would be intellectual, from the mind of the Rav to the mind of the questioner. This is not the way to pass on true knowledge. Questions must be answered in a way that motivates the questioner to think and explore for oneself.** The Rav cannot give out knowledge on a "silver platter". Therefore a Rav's

answers may not be intellectually satisfying or comprehensible. The Rav most likely means it to be that way.

Real knowledge is ecstatic, it has the energy of passion and experience. Anyone who has every studied Talmud knows this feeling very well. This is why the word, in Hebrew, for sexual intercourse is "to know" the other. And we are commanded "to know" YKVK. Our relationship must be a supra-rational one, encompassing the fullness of human spiritual energy. The life force of the soul, i.e. the libido, is not meant to be used exclusively on the male - female union below. The libido energy is meant to be used for the primordial union of male and female, which is the union of the soul with YKVK. This is a big secret I reveal to you now. Know that the source of prophecy is from the masculine and feminine sefirot of Netzah and Hod of Atzilut. These are the two thighs of every partzuf. Between them, and on the Tree of Life, immediately below them, is the Yesod which unifies and balances them. Yesod is the genitals in the male and female. It is here that sexuality is manifest. It is here that we meet YKVK by transcending the Malkhut (the physical world) and by translating to the next higher phase of consciousness, and existence. When this is achieved, like two lovers who mutually benefit, so YKVK and our soul benefit. Yet, this benefit is not so limited for it, in turn, benefits the whole world. This is why sod level learning is so crucial. The energy in it is very real, as sexual energy is very real. Yet, sex cannot be a topic of intellectual study. It is something that is done. It is something experienced and felt. Well, so is prophecy.

Promiscuity is always wrong, all the more so when it is spiritual. But true sexual union with our collective soul mate is Oneg, the highest pleasure spiritually possible. This is the union of YKVK and Yisrael. This is the union of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Shekhina. This is the goal of Kabbalah. This will shine the light, and bring Mashiah.

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167
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