

KosherTorah School

for Biblical, Judaic & Spiritual Studies

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An Audio Course in 17 lessons
The Kabbalistic Classic

Etz Hayim (Tree of Life)

by R. Hayim Vital

Taught by R. Ariel B Tzadok

Gate 50, An Overview of the Four Worlds
*Including the topics of natural philosophy,
alternate healing practices, and the concepts underlying them.*

Course Outline

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 1

An Overview of the Four Worlds AbeY'A.

This series of lessons will cover Rabbi Haim's teachings with the commentary Beit Lekhem Yehuda by Rabbi Yehuda Fatiyah.

The four worlds Abeya are explained. The ten dimensional realms of physical space are the ten sefirot of Asiyah. The Malkhut of Asiyah is this physical dimension.

There are four levels of life-force energy, (nefesh/qi), (NaRaNaH), and these correspond to the four forms of life, inanimate, vegetable, animal and man (DaTzHaM). These also correspond to the four forms of matter, fire, air, water and earth (ARMA).

The human being is the microcosm of the macrocosm, all levels and worlds can be accessed through the human mind.

Discussion about parallel dimensions, how they are experienced, and how one travels there. The need for the cultivation of sensitivity to higher, more subtler forms of life-force energy (nefesh).

The secret of Jerusalem and Zion, how these are metaphors for the Partzuf Rahel (the physical world), and its relationship to the Earth's source of life-force energy, Gan Eden. Reference to its physical location, and its energetic function.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 2

The Levels of Souls within Nature and within Man.

The four humors (biles), and ancient understanding of medicine, originally Grecian in origin

became the standard format in the western world for understanding the human body and soul. Even the Kabbalah here uses this format, as did most Rabbis before and after Rabbi Hayim until the discoveries made with modern medicine. Yet, these concepts are very similar in form the modern forms of oriental medicine, which have many a time been validated by modern scientific methods.

The four levels of life, the inanimate, the vegetable, the animal and the human, and their corresponding levels of soul.

The animal soul (nefesh behemit), the glittering shell (klipah nogah), source of the good and evil inclinations, and the Nefesh of Asiyah, the true human soul within us. These are all explained and their relationships and influences defined.

This class gives us insight into the relationship between the physical body and the layers of "astral body" within us, and how each is influenced within us.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 3

The Yetzer HaTov and the Yetzer HaRa.

Are the good and bad inclinations within human beings mere psychological orientations or are they actual external entities of angelic and demonic origins?

This lesson begins with an explanation of what is a life form, what is a soul, what is sentience, what is consciousness, and what is enlightenment. In this context, we can then address the reality of the existence of the angels and demons that cling to us as the two yetzers.

The fall of Adam, the fall of the Da'at and the creation of the Glittering Shell, the Klipah Nogah.

The relationship of the Gevurot forces and the Hasadim forces, how they are supposed to be, and how they are in actuality. How the blemishes in the human soul create imbalance.

The three stages of sefirotic brains (Mohin), ibbur, yenika, and gadlut, and how these correspond to growing levels of consciousness in the growing human soul, from birth through childhood.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 4

The Yetzer HaTov and the Yetzer HaRa. Part 2

The Klipah Nogah, the "glittering shell," the astral body, draws energy from the spiritual Nefesh soul above, and from the animal soul below. As such the Klipah Nogah can be either good or evil. Human maturity is the process of expanding enlightenment. The Yetzer HaTov only enters into consciousness once one manifests the initial signs of adult maturity. Yet, the manifestation of the Nefesh in the vessels of the mind takes place over many years. Souls that can use the power of higher consciousness to overcome the physical desires of the animal soul, can transform the Yetzer HaRa into a subordinate part of the Yetzer HaTov, thus bringing rectification and redemption to the individual human psyche. This lesson is a profoundly practical lesson in human psychology, (one which even Sigmund Freud noticed).

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 5

The Commandments, Psychic Energy & Natural Health, Part 1 (Chapter 4)

The 248 positive commandments and the 365 negative commandments correspond to the 613 aspects of the astral/spiritual body (and not literally to the physical body). The energies

underlying the commandments are the forms and parameters of natural law. It is this energy within the commandments which is called the Yetzer HaTov. Rabbi Hayim quotes medical books to call this the 'body's moisture.' In modern oriental medicine, this would be called the Qi. The Yetzer HaTov corresponds to the Hasadim of the Da'at. Proper observance of mitzvot then gives rise to Qi energy within the body. Visualization techniques of this practices are mentioned and briefly described. More is also discussed with regards to the Gevurot, and how they emanate from an even higher source, and what this means energetically. Mention is also made about women observing positive commandments incumbent upon time, and how and why this is unnatural. Also mentioned in the Jungian understanding of the inner male/female of Anima/Animus.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 6

The Commandments, Psychic Energy & Natural Health, Part 2 (Chapter 4)

The symbolic relationship between spiritual energy and physical body organs. Reference to the Sefer Yetzirah correspondences between space (the physical), time and consciousness. Understanding good and evil best as opposing energy polarities, like positive and negative. Each is "good" in its own way, and each can be "bad" when taken or used inappropriately or misaligned. More about traditional "folk" medicine, with its origins in ancient Greece, (practiced by Maimonides), and how similar it is to modern traditional oriental (Chinese) medicine, which as a system often works as good as, if not better than western medicine. How Qi meditations are a positive factor with regards to neutralizing the yetzer hara, and strengthening the yetzer hatov. The real definition of demons.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 7

The Ten Martyrs and the Three Bodies (Chapter 5)

This chapter asks the question why do the righteous suffer. Discussion revolves around the Ten Martyrs in Roman times, and also discusses from the Zohar (Pikudei 254b) the fate of the four who entered the Pardes. This lesson is expressed using a very deep set of metaphors, such as the drops of semen that emanated from the toes of Joseph, the shattered vessels of the fallen Kings, the Shakh dinim, the elevation of MAN, and the union of MAH and BEN. Most of these concepts are explained in proper detail in our Oztrot Hayim audio series, and is also briefly covered in my e-book Basic Kabbalistic Concepts and Terminologies. While this class does break down and explain all the metaphors used in the text, a full and deep understanding of the material should include a review of the other material.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 8

The Secret of the Hashmal (Chapter 6)

Higher dimensions and lowers dimensions are referred to as the inside and outside of worlds. There are souls, there are angels, and there are daemons (shedim), who are not the minions of Satan, but rather other life forms. They are related to forms of life here on Earth, and interact with galactic forces in the operations of the universe. Secrets of how a Golem is made. The Hashmal is the garment that descends from above, and is in actuality a third body, inside the Klipah Nogah body. Hesed is YHWH, Gevurah is ADNY, they are mouth and tongue, voice and speech, together they are YAHDWNHY. How this is used as a practical visualization technique.

The ascent of the worlds, in consciousness, on Shabat, a taste of Sha'ar HaKavanot. Worlds only ascend in the mind, how is what is explained.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 9

The Source of Soul Types (Chapter 7)

Part 1 – an overall description, in psychological terms, of the metaphors Penimiyut (internal) and Hitzoniyut (external). There are the penimiyut and hitzoniyut of the penimiyut, and then there are the penimiyut and hitzoniyut of the hitzoniyut. Souls emanate from all these levels. Soul levels are personality types, and are defined by interests, intents, purposes and psychological orientations.

There are souls from kedusha (holiness) and there are soul from klipah (husk, shell). Just what is kedusha and klipah is described in proper psychological detail.

This lesson discusses the source of the souls of the righteous, of the normal, of the convert, of the non-Jew, angels and demons (Jewish and gentile demons), and what all this really means. Also discussed is the meaning and purpose of death, and what is the experience of the afterlife in the lower Garden of Eden.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 10

The Source of Soul Types (Chapter 7), Part 2

The nature of energy described magnetically, with polarities, how this is the energetic foundation of what we refer to as Heavenly and Earthly, and as good and evil.

The energetic purposes of sacrifices, readings from the Raya Mehemna of the Zohar (Pinhas 225a). Secrets of the Lion of Fire and Dog of Fire.

Energetic sources of the organs within the human body, explanation of the positive and negative energies underlying these organs, where this energy comes from, and what is its purpose.

A good discussion about energetic medicine as found in the works of Hayim Vital, and how this system is the same one used today in modern Oriental Medicine. Why study of Oriental medicine can assist one in understanding the underlying foundations of Hayim Vital's teachings, and offer to us beneficial health benefits.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 11

The 4 Hayot in Every World (Chapter 8, Part 1)

The four faces of the Merkava, the lion, the bull, the eagle, and the man, are an archetypal patterns that form part of the mechanical operations of the universe.

Originally, the merkava angels were thought of as actual entities, in later Kabbalah they were no longer views as individuals, but rather as concepts.

The four faces serve in the universe, as they do in the merkava chariot. They are the carriers of the One on the throne. In the universe, the Hayot serve as the conduits through which life-force energy passes through the foundational forces that underlie the physical forms.

The difference between souls and daemons, and why daemons are not demons.

Human souls of various levels, levels direct the stream of consciousness, but does not playing a controlling factor on righteous behavior, examples are given.

Initial discussion about the personage of our author Hayim Vital being an eclectic Kabbalist,

and how he was an innovator, not a redactor. Comparison between Hayim Vital and Moshe Cordevero.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 12

The Relationship between Angels, Planets, Dragons & Shedim (Chapter 8, Part 2)

The difference between the Life-Force energy soul (nefesh behemit) and the true soul (Nefesh/Neshama).

The different races of shedim/jenin, the good guys and the bad guys. Why they seek to breed with human beings.

The Teli/dragons, those of Earth and those of Space, how they dwell in the atmosphere, and how it is they who create the real crop circles.

Angels are related to the planets, as are their hosts. Are the angelic hosts the actual inhabitants of the extraterrestrial planets?

The Ishim angels, physically human when they need to be, and astrally human otherwise, examples of the visions of Eliyahu and Rabbi Yehuda the Prince.

How all these entities interact and commune with human souls. The nature and reality of idolatry, and why it is so bad.

Life-force energy (nefesh, qi, prana) is the commodity of value throughout the universe, and is sought after by good and bad alike, this is the reason why Torah prohibits contact with certain types of entities, because they are energy thieves, and they pose a danger to the live of the naive.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 13

Chapter 9 - The different definitions of Nefesh soul.

The Nefesh soul is also called the Animal Soul (Nefesh Behemit). This soul is under the influence of physical matter. It has cravings for sensation, but at the same time, is not malevolent. Its desire for gross physicality is called bad (yetzer hara), but it is not evil, in that it is malicious, and intentionally harmful.

There is also a higher Nefesh soul that emanates from the higher, invisible, physical dimensions of Asiyah. This level of Nefesh emanates from the Ofanim angels who control this domain.

Above all Nefesh, at a specific point in human biological (and psychological) development, there comes into us the Ruah level of soul. This is the emotional component, be it for good or bad. It is this Ruah soul that introduces the emotional content. The evil herein is the malicious intent to intentionally do harm.

Above this, there is yet the Neshama level of school. Although this level is not discussed in the text, we comment on it anyway, in the spirit of Rabbi Vital, the author of the Etz. 50 minute class.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 14

Chapter 10 – The Natural Sciences and the Domain of the Spheres

Part 1 – A review of the relationship of the natural sciences and torah and kabbalah. For Rabbi Hayim they are all one and the same.

The Galgalim are the domain of the heavens, and are not the topic of this chapter.

This chapter deals with our physical universe, which is comprised of Tzurah and Homer, or Force and Form, better known as body and soul. Everything has a level of soul to it. First creation is the Hiyuli, the prima-matter, the fifth element above the form of plasma, the intermediate stage between what we call the physical and the spiritual. The Domem – the inanimate world, elemental forms, the difference between atoms and molecules, the secret of gravity, the lack of will or desire. The Tzomahat – the “plant” world, the domain that seeks to provide sustenance, growth and procreation, the level that forms the function of the reception and processing of nourishment. This level is the beginning of soul consciousness, as we know it, and might very well be what is referred to in oriental medicine as the Qi. Comments about Qi and oriental medicine.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 15

Chapter 10, Science/Kabbalah of the Animal Soul

The animal soul is understood from the classical medical and philosophical texts that were in use for thousands of years by the time Rabbi Hayim references them here. His usage of these texts and concepts shows us an integration and compliment between science and religion that is virtuous for us to copy today.

The animal soul is the moving soul, it moves by desires, not by external compulsion imposed by natural forces.

It is ruled by the physical senses and the powers of the mind, which include memory and imagination.

Once the physical senses experience anything, the mind records its as memory and it can then be ran through the imagination, and embellished, leading to all kinds of thoughts, be they of desire or simply abstract.

Nothing enters into the mind that does not first enter through the senses, examples of this are given.

Discussion also includes the arousal soul, and the nature of the good and evil inclinations and their relationship to the physical senses, and the mental faculties.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 16

Chapter 10, The Human/Speaking Level of Soul

What makes human consciousness different (or higher) than animal consciousness.

Discussion of the action soul, and the investigative soul, the functions, interests and limitations of each of these human levels of consciousness.

How the human soul is similar to, and yet higher than (transcending) the animal soul.

Examples of differences between human perceptions and animal perceptions, and how many human beings consciously focus on animal consciousness as opposed to true human consciousness, and the results of such an imbalance.

The power of abstract thinking, and the definition of true FREE WILL, the difference between choice and free will, the ability to chose between truth and falsehood, between right and wrong.

The method of intuitive reception, the need for an external vessel to receive the internal (unconscious) influx from higher consciousness.

The secret of white fire on black fire, and how the white fire of Torah can be learned, even from a banana.

Etz Hayim 50, Lesson 17 – Series Finale

Chapter 10, The Dream State & Higher Levels of Consciousness.

Why the dream state is a nebulous one, and what level of soul is it that experiences dreams. The difference between the Unclear Mirror (Espekluria Sh'ayna Me'ira) and the Clear Mirror (Espekluria Me'ira), and the different levels of prophecy.

Difference between soul travel in dreams and vision, and astral travel in the astral body.

The Higher domains of consciousness, correspond to the lower levels, everything follows the same, ten-fold, four-fold, and two-fold pattern.

The difference between souls called “servants of God,” and those called “sons of God.”

How all existence, throughout the Multiverse, is part of the great Name YHWH.

The general relationship of Force and Form, body and soul, in all levels of existence.

How even in the highest dimensional plane (Atzilut), there exists its own unique forms of precious metals and gem stones, vegetation, animal life, and of course, human. All these are exist within bothe form (body) and force (soul), yet, within the context of the natural laws that dominate that dimensional plane.

Higher realms of physicality are not the same as our own, even though each lower realm is a reflection of its higher counterparts.

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