

TALMUD ESER SEFIROT

(The Study of the Ten Sefirot)

PART ONE

Tzimtzum and *Kav*; containing two chapters

Chapter One

Explains the issue of *Tzimtzum Aleph*, when *Ohr Ein Sof* became restricted in order to emanate the *Ne'etzalim* and create the creatures; containing five issues:

1. Before the *Tzimtzum Ein Sof* filled the entire reality. 2. The reason for creation was the revelation of His Names and Appellations. 3. The *Tzimtzum* of the *Ohr* around the middle point. 4. The *Halal* that remained after the *Tzimtzum* was *Agol*. 5. Because *Ohr Ein Sof* was even, the *Tzimtzum* was also even. This is the meaning of the *Igul*.

Before the *Tzimtzum Ein Sof* filled the entire reality

1. **Know, that before the *Ne'etzalim* were emanated and the creatures created** ⁽¹⁾, **an Upper Simple *Ohr*** ⁽²⁾ **had filled the entire reality** ⁽³⁾. **There was no vacant place** ⁽⁴⁾, **such as an empty *Avir*** ⁽⁵⁾ **and a *Halal*** ⁽⁶⁾, **but everything was filled with that simple, boundless *Ohr*** ⁽⁷⁾.

It did not have a *Behina* of *Rosh*, or *Sof* ⁽⁸⁾, **but it was all one, Simple *Ohr*** ⁽⁹⁾, **completely even** ⁽¹⁰⁾, **called *Ohr Ein Sof*** ⁽²⁰⁾.

Ohr Pnimi

Bear in mind, that the entire wisdom of Kabbalah is founded on spiritual matters that do not take up time or space. They are not subject to change or absence and all the changes that are spoken of in this wisdom do not imply that the first form becomes absent and is replaced by a different form. The above change Rather implies an additional form, while the first does not move from its place, as absence and change are corporeal conducts.

It is difficult for novice, for they perceive matters by means of corporeal boundaries of time, space, change and exchange. However, the authors only used those as signs to point to their Upper Roots.

For that reason I will make an effort to give every word its spiritual identity, detached of space, time and change. It is upon the readers to memorize the meaning of these words thoroughly, for it is impossible to repeat them every time.

1. The issue of spiritual time is explained thoroughly in *Histaklut Pnimit* Chapter 9, item 33.
2. It refers to the *Ohr* that expands from the *Atzmut* of the Creator. Know, that all the names and appellations that appear in the wisdom of Kabbalah are not at all in the *Atzmut* of the Creator, but only in the *Ohr* that expands from His *Atzmut*. However, we cannot utter even a single word regarding His *Atzmut*, for the rule is that anything we do not attain, we do not know its name. Remember that and you will not fail.
3. It is seemingly perplexing, for it speaks of the time before the *Olamot* were created. Thus, which reality exists here, that the *Ohr Elyon* should fill? The thing is that all the *Olamot* and the *Neshamot* (souls) that exist and that are

destined to be created with all their incidents until the end of their correction, are all included in *Ein Sof* in their full measure and glory.

Thus, there are two rudiments we should discern in reality before us:

1. They are fixed and exist in *Ein Sof* with their full measure and glory.
2. How they are arranged and hang down and innovate before us after *Tzimtzum Aleph* in the five *Olamot*: *Adam Kadmon*, *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira*, *Assiya*.

The Rav writes that the *Ohr Elyon* that extends from His *Atzmut* “**had filled the entire reality**,” meaning the entire reality of the first rudiment, relating to their existence in *Ein Sof* before the *Tzimtzum*. He tells us that the *Ohr Elyon* filled them entirely, until they had no vacant place left where correction and perfection could be added whatsoever.

4. It means that before the *Olamot* were created there was only *Ein Sof*. There weren't a “vacant place,” meaning a place of dearth that would qualify for corrections because the *Ohr Elyon* filled that place. It left no room for the *Tachtonim* to distinguish themselves and add something to His completeness.

Because of the *Tzimtzum* there came about a wanting and a vacant place for the corrections. However, do not be mistaken to think that the book speaks of a corporeal place.

5. This does not refer to corporeal air whatsoever; but there is a spiritual *Ohr* that is called by that name. There are two *Behinot* (features) of *Ohr* in each complete *Partzuf*: *Ohr Hochma* and *Ohr de Hassadim*.

Ohr Hochma is the *Atzmut* of the *Partzuf*, meaning its vitality. *Ohr Hassadim* only operates as a clothing *Ohr* over the *Ohr Hochma* in the *Partzuf* since *Ohr Hochma* cannot permeate the *Partzuf* if it does not wear the *Ohr Hassadim* first.

However, sometimes, when the *Partzufim* are in *Katnut*, they do not have more than *Ohr Hassadim*. You should know that that *Ohr Hassadim* is called *Avir* or *Ruach*. When it is by itself, without *Ohr de Hochma*, it is called “empty *Avir*,” meaning empty of *Ohr Hochma*. Then it waits for *Ohr Hochma* to clothe it and fulfill it.

The Rav tells us that before the *Olamot* were created, meaning in *Ein Sof*, such empty *Avir* did not exist in reality at all, because there was not any dearth there.

6. To understand that word, you must first know the essence of a spiritual *Kli*. Since the *Ne'etzal* receives its sustenance from the *Maatzil*, it necessarily implies that it has a *Ratzon* (desire) and yearning to receive that *Shefa* from Him.

Know, that the amount of that *Ratzon* and yearning is the entire substance that exists in the *Ne'etzal*. Thus, every thing that exists in the *Ne'etzal* that is not that substance, no longer relates to its substance, but to the *Shefa* that it receives from the *Maatzil*.

Furthermore, this substance determines the *Gadlut* and the level of each *Ne'etzal*, each *Partzuf*, and each *Sefira*. The *Hitpashtut* of the *Ohr Elyon* from the *Maatzil* is certainly immeasurable, but it is the *Ne'etzal* that limits the *Shefa*, for it receives no more and no less than its measure of desire to receive. This is the criterion in spirituality, because there is no coercion there; it depends entirely on the *Ratzon*.

For that reason we call this will to receive the “Vessel of Reception” of the *Ne'etzal*. It is regarded as its substance and the reason that it stopped being

regarded as a *Maatzil* and was denominated as a *Ne'etzal*. The *Ne'etzal* is defined by a substance that does not exist in the *Maatzil* whatsoever, for there is absolutely no will to receive in the *Maatzil*, because from whom would He receive?

Now we will explain how there are four degrees in this substance, from *Katnut* to *Gadlut* (of reception). The fourth degree, being the *Gadlut* of the reception, is complete only in *Ein Sof*, before the *Olamot* were created. It is the only one that was subject to the *Tzimtzum*, and we will clarify henceforth that it was emptied of every *Shefa* that she had from *Ein Sof* and remained a vacant *Halal*. This is what the Rav means when he says that before the *Olam* was created, meaning in *Ein Sof*, this vacant *Halal* did not exist.

7. This means that there is nothing that the lower ones can add to it by means of their actions.
8. The terms *Rosh* and *Sof* will be explained below.
9. Meaning without discriminating small and great, every thing is even.
10. Where there is no *Zakut* and *Aviut* by which the degrees are set. These discriminations were established only with the renewal of the *Tzimtzum*.
20. We should ask: since we have no attainment in *Ein Sof*, how then do we know Him by name? After all, each name designates the attainment that we attain in Him, according to the definition of that name. We cannot excuse ourselves by saying that the name merely points to the negation of attainment, for then we should have named Him "Unattainable."

The thing is that that name indicates the entire difference between *Ein Sof* and all the *Olamot* beneath it. The *Tzimtzum* took place after *Ein Sof*. Thus, in every place this force awakens, it restricts the *Ohr* and that ends the *He'arah* in that place.

Hence, any *Sof* and *Sium* in any *He'arah* in any *Partzuf* come solely from the *Tzimtzum*. Moreover, all the beings and their various fillings in the *Olamot* come about and are innovated because of that *Sof* and *Sium*.

It is called *Ein Sof* because the *Tzimtzum* does not apply there, indicating that there isn't any ending there whatsoever. With that we can deduce that this *Ohr* is *Pashut* and completely even, for one depends on the other.

The reason for creation was the revelation of His Names and
Appellations

2. **When it rose upon His Simple *Ratzon* ⁽³⁰⁾ to create the *Olamot* and emanate the *Ne'etzalim* to bring the perfection of His deeds, His names and appellations to light, which was the reason of the creation of the *Olamot*,**

Ohr Pnimi

30. We need not wonder how there is a *Ratzon* in *Ein Sof*, who is higher than any notion, to which we can say, "**rose upon His Simple *Ratzon*.**" You should comprehend what has been said above that in every *Ne'etzal* there is by necessity a will to receive the *Shefa* from the *Maatzil*.

However, in *Ein Sof* it is a "Simple *Ratzon*" because He is One and His Name One. The *Ohr* in *Ein Sof* is called He and the will to receive is called His Name, and they are simple unity without any form of separation.

However, we should not resemble the unity and separation discussed here with corporeal unity and separation that are distinguished by motion, nearness and distance. That is because the spiritual essence does not take up any space.

Having said that, you should know that separation in spirituality occurs only by means of *Shinui Tzura*. Thus, if one spiritual thing acquires an additional *Tzura* that is unlike its current *Tzura*, it stops being one and becomes two separate entities. Their distance from each other is measured by the oppositeness of their forms.

Just as corporeal entities connect and separate through proximity and remoteness, so spiritual entities connect and separate according to their difference and equivalence of form. The *Shinui Tzura* separates them from one another, and the *Hishtavut Tzura* brings them together. Remember that for it is the key element to this wisdom.

Now you will understand the meaning of the aforementioned words “He is One and His Name One,” and the simple unity we are so meticulous about in *Ein Sof*. Indeed this unity is of the wonders of His almightiness.

We have witnessed the difference between the *Maatzil* and the *Ne’etzal* that was formed by *Tzura* of that will to receive that exists in the *Ne’etzal* and not in the *Maatzil*. Because of that *Shinui Tzura* the *Ne’etzal* became separated from the *Maatzil* and acquired its own separate name, meaning *Ne’etzal*, and not *Maatzil*.

The above explanation might mislead us into thinking that *Ohr Ein Sof*, called “He,” is not entirely adherent with *Ein Sof*, called “His Name,” meaning the will to receive the *Ohr* and the *Shefa*, called “He.” That is because the *Ohr Elyon* that extends from his *Atzmut*, called “He” has but one attribute – to bestow - and none of the *Tzura* of the will to receive.

However, *Ein Sof*, called “His Name,” which does have a will to receive, is therefore different from the *Ohr Elyon*, which has no will to receive whatsoever, as has been explained, and we know that *Shinui Tzura* separates. However, the Midrash and the Rav tell us that it is not so. Instead, He is One and His Name One in Simple Unity, means that there is no difference between them.

Although there is necessarily a difference of form between “He” and “His Name,” it is nevertheless completely inactive there. We do not understand it, but it is undoubtedly so. It is said about that, that there is no perception or thought in *Ein Sof* whatsoever, since this matter is above our mind (will be discussed further in the next item).

The *Tzimtzum* of the *Ohr* around the middle point

3. ***Ein Sof* then restricted Himself ⁽⁴⁰⁾ in His middle point ⁽⁵⁰⁾, in the very middle, restricted that *Ohr*, and drifted ⁽⁶⁰⁾ to the sides around that middle point ⁽⁷⁰⁾.**

Ohr Pnimi

40. You already know the meaning of He is One and His Name One. Although there is *Shinui Tzura* with respect to the will to receive incorporated in *Ein Sof*, that still does not create any differentiation between that and the *Ohr Elyon*, and they are in simple unity.

Still, this *Shinui Tzura* has become the reason and the cause for the creation of the *Olamot*, “to bring the perfection of His deeds, His names and appellations to light,” as the Rav says here. The creation of the *Olamot* and

their concatenation down to *Olam ha Zeh*, created and renewed the possibility to give room for work in Torah and *Mitzvot* not in order to receive, but only to bestow contentment upon the Maker.

It is then that the *Neshamot* become able to invert the form of the will to receive in them, which separates them from the *Maatzil*, into the form of the will to bestow contentment upon Him, which is what He wants (see item 90). This is the *Hishtavut Tzura* with the *Maatzil*, called *Dvekut* (adhesion) and unification. It is so because then they have already been stripped from the form of the will to receive and acquired the form of the will to bestow, being the form of the *Maatzil* Himself.

You already know that *Hishtavut Tzura* makes the spirituals become one. For that reason the *Olamot* return to their previous condition.

This is the meaning of the Rav's words, "**When it rose upon His Simple Ratzon to create**, etc." "It rose" means that He increased the purification and *Dvekut* by diminishing the measure of the will to receive imprinted in him in order to equalize the form with the *Ohr Elyon*.

The will to receive in *Ein Sof*, called *Malchut de Ein Sof*, or "His Name," did not have any dearth in *Dvekut* with the *Ohr Elyon* because of its *Shinui Tzura*. However, it embellished himself in order to equalize its form with the *Ohr Elyon* and depart from the great will to receive, called *Behina Dalet*, so as to cleave more strongly to the *Ohr Elyon*.

The proximity of the *Tzura* makes for *Dvekut*. It is expressed in the words "it rose," meaning *Malchut de Ein Sof*, being the *Ratzon Pashut*, rose and cleaved to the *Ohr Elyon*, meaning diminished her will to receive.

This is the meaning of the words of the Rav, "**Ein Sof then restricted Himself.**" It has already been explained above (item 6) that the entire measure of His *Shefa* and *Ohr* and the height of the *Ne'etzal* are measured by the amount of the will to receive in him.

Thus, since the above *Malchut de Ein Sof* restricted herself and diminished her will to receive, the *Ohr* and the *Shefa* departed due to the scantness of the desire. This is the meaning of the *Tzimtzum*. The ascent of the desire caused the departure of the *Shefa* and the *Ohr* from there.

50. It is perplexing, for since there is neither *Rosh* nor *Sof* there, how is there middle? Moreover, are we dealing with a corporeal matter here? The thing is that it has already been explained that there is necessarily a will to receive in *Ein Sof* too. However, it is *Ratzon Pashut*, without discriminations of great and small, because the will to receive there is not regarded as a *Shinui Tzura* that makes any separations. Consequently, it is in no way inferior to the *Ohr Elyon*.

You should know that the *Ohr Elyon* must expand via four degrees before it uncovers that will to receive in its fullest and permanent measure in the *Ne'etzal*. The reason for it is that the will to receive is incorporated in the *Hitpashtut* of *Ohr* from the *Shoresh*, and by that the *Ohr* is considered to have departed from the *Maatzil* and acquired its own name, meaning *Hitpashtut* from the *Maatzil*.

As long as this *Shinui Tzura* of the will to receive was not incorporated in it, it was still regarded as a *Maatzil* and not as *Hitpashtut* that departed and shifted from the *Maatzil*. That is because the only difference in spirituality is the *Shinui Tzura* (see item 6 and *Histaklut Pnimit*).

However, as much as this *Ratzon* became disclosed by the force of the *Ne'etzal*, it still was not permanent in the *Ne'etzal*. It means that the *Ne'etzal* must yearn

to receive the *Shefa* before it is considered that the will to receive appeared by the force of the *Ne'etzal* himself.

This yearning can only be when he does not have the *Shefa*, for only then is it possible to want it in a way that the will to receive will be uncovered through his own strength. It is then that the vessels of reception are completed permanently.

You should also know that any *Hitpashtut* of *Ohr* from the *Maatzil* must consist of a will to bestow, just as it consists of a will to receive. Otherwise, the *Maatzil* and the *Ne'etzal* would have been in oppositeness of form, meaning a total separation, and the oppositeness of form would then depart them from one another as the west departs from the east.

Thus, each *Ohr* that expands from the *Maatzil* must be incorporated of a will to bestow as well, so that the *Ne'etzal* will have proximity of form with the *Maatzil*. When the will to bestow appears in the *Ne'etzal*, a great *Ohr Nimshach* to him from the *Maatzil*, related to that awakening. This *Ohr* is always referred to as *Ohr de Hassadim*.

Hitpashtut Aleph from the *Maatzil*, in which the will to receive is incorporated, is always referred to as *Ohr de Hochma*, or *Ohr de Atzmut*. You should memorize these two types of *Orot*.

The second *Ohr*, being *Ohr de Hassadim*, is much lower than the first *Ohr*, being *Ohr de Hochma*. That is because it is extended by the *Hitgabrut* and the awakening of the *Ne'etzal* by his own force, as he wants to equalize his form with the *Maatzil*, for which reason he intensifies himself and awakens toward the will to bestow.

However, *Hitpashtut Aleph*, being *Ohr de Hochma*, *Nimshach* directly from the *Maatzil* and the *Ne'etzal* has no part in its extension. For that reason it is much higher than it.

For that reason *Ohr Hochma* is regarded as the *Atzmut* and *Haiut* (sustenance) of the *Ne'etzal*. *Ohr de Hassadim* is only considered as *Ohr* for corrections, for the completion of the *Ne'etzal*.

Now you will understand the four *Behinot* and degrees that must be in every *Ne'etzal*. First, the *Ohr* expands from the *Maatzil* as *Ohr Hochma*, containing only the "will to receive." This is *Behina Aleph*.

Then, the will to bestow intensifies in that *Ohr*, and it extends *Ohr de Hassadim*. This *Hitgabrut* is regarded as *Behina Bet*. Then this *Ohr de Hassadim* expands intensively (will be explained below), and this is *Behina Gimel*.

After the above three *Behinot* fully emerge, the force of the will to receive incorporated in *Hitpashtut Aleph* reawakens and draws *Ohr Hochma* once more. This completes the permanent will to receive in the *Partzuf* that appears as yearning, when there weren't *Ohr Hochma* in the *Partzuf* but *Ohr de Hassadim*, after *Behina Gimel*, when the *Ne'etzal* could yearn for *Ohr Hochma*.

It is this yearning that determines the will to receive in him, and completes his vessels of reception, which was absent in *Hitpashtut Aleph*. For that reason the vessels of reception are completed only in this *Behina Dalet*, also called *Hitgabrut Bet*.

Once *Behina Dalet* was completed in *Ein Sof*, the *Tzimtzum* occurred in her, meaning the departure of the will to receive from *Behina Dalet*, causing the departure of *Ohr Ein Sof* from there.

This completes the explanations of the four *Behinot* that must exist in every *Ne'etzal*. *Behina Aleph* is called *Hitpashtut Aleph*, or *Hochma*; *Behina Bet* is

called *Hitgabrut Aleph*, or *Bina*; *Behina Gimel* is called *Hitpashtut Bet*, or *Zeir Anpin*; *Behina Dalet* is called *Hitgabrut Bet*, or *Malchut*.

The two expansions are regarded as males, for they are *Shefa* that extends from the *Maatzil*. *Hitpashtut Aleph* is *Shefa* of *Ohr Hochma*, and *Hitpashtut Bet* is *Shefa* of *Ohr de Hassadim*. The two *Hitgabruiot* (pl. for *Hitgabrut*) are regarded as two females, for they are an awakening of the *Ne'etzal* and the intensification of the *Ratzon* by his own power.

The first *Hitgabrut* is the awakening in the *Ne'etzal* for the will to bestow, which becomes the *Shoresh* for the *Ohr de Hassadim*, and *Hitgabrut Bet* is the awakening of the *Ne'etzal* for the will to receive, which becomes the complete vessel of reception in the *Partzuf*. It is always referred to as *Behina Dalet*.

This *Behina Dalet* is called “The Middle Point” in *Ein Sof*. It is that which the Rav refers to when he says, “**restricted Himself in His middle point.**” It is called by that name for it is a vessel of reception for *Ohr Ein Sof*, which is immeasurable and boundless.

For that reason it is like a point in the interior and the middle of that *Ohr*, while the *Ohr* revolves around it and cleaves to it from all around immeasurably. Only thus can it sustain the *Ohr Elyon* immeasurably and boundlessly.

However, in the vessels of reception after the *Tzimtzum* and below, meaning in the lower *Ne'etzalim*, there are vessels that hold their *Ohr* in their *Pnimit* and *Toch*. It means that the walls of the *Kelim*, being their four *Behinot*, place a *Gevul* and a measurement on the *Ohr* inside them, because of their *Aviut*.

However, in *Ein Sof*, where *Ohr* and *Kli* are in simple unity, meaning He is One and His Name One (see item 30), the *Kli* does not limit that *Ohr* that it holds. Hence, the *Ohr* in it is regarded as *Ein Sof*.

Now we have thoroughly explained the issue of the middle point in *Ein Sof*. We have shown that it does not refer to a corporeal and tangible place and area, but *Behina Dalet*, which is incorporated in *Ein Sof*, is called by that name to indicate its simple unity with the *Ohr Elyon*. Also, the *Tzimtzum* in that middle point has already been explained above (see item 40).

60. The term “spiritual distance” has already been explained in item 30. It has also been explained that there weren't any distance between *Ein Sof* and the middle point, meaning between the *Ohr* and the *Kli*.

However, after it restricted the *Ohr* from the middle point, it uncovered a *Shinui Tzura* from the *Ohr*. That is because the *Ohr* hasn't any will to receive, but the point is indeed a will to receive, which differs from the *Ohr*. Because their *Tzura* is different, they are as far apart from each other as is the difference between them. This is what the Rav meant in the word “**drifted.**”

70. The above-mentioned four *Behinot* are also called “four sides.” The Rav tells us that although the *Tzimtzum* was only in the middle point, meaning *Behina Dalet*, the *Ohr* nonetheless departed from all four *Behinot* as well. It happened because there is no partial in spirituality, and thus it departed from the three *Behinot* as well.

The *Halal* that remained after the *Tzimtzum* was *Agol*

- 4. Then there was a vacant place⁽⁸⁰⁾, *Avir*, and an empty *Halal*, from the very middle point.**

Behold, this *Tzimtzum* was even around that empty middle point⁽⁹⁰⁾, in such a way that that place of *Halal* was *Agol* on every side, completely

even⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. It had not a shape of a *Meruba* (square), a perpendicular angle, for *Ein Sof* too had restricted Himself like an *Igul*, even on all sides.

Ohr Pnimi

80. Has already been explained in items 4 and 5.
90. Meaning without discriminations of great and small. We should not wonder about that, since the *Shinui Tzura* in the middle point had already been exposed by the departure of the *Ohr* from it. Consequently, the smaller measurements were necessarily recognized as well, one smaller than the other.

For example, *Behina Gimel* is purer than the middle point because the measure of her will to receive is less than *Behina Dalet*. Similarly, *Behina Bet* is purer than *Behina Gimel* because her measure of will to receive is smaller than *Behina Gimel*, and *Behina Aleph* is the purest of all, for she has the least will to receive, rendering her *Shinui Tzura* the least apparent.

Thus, we have a differentiation of great and small in the degrees. In that case, why does the Rav say that the *Tzimtzum* was even around that point? The answer is that the *Tzimtzum* did not turn the middle point into a *Sof*. In other words, if the *Ohr* had left the point because of her *Shinui Tzura*, then it would certainly become a *Sof*, meaning the lowest degree.

Then we would also regard the three preceding *Behinot* as more important than the middle point, as one above the other. However, it was not so, for the *Tzimtzum* did not occur due to the *Shinui Tzura* in the point. This cannot be, for we are still concerned with *Malchut de Ein Sof*, in which there is no *Shinui Tzura* between her and the *Ohr*; they are both in simple unity, meaning He is One and His Name One.

The *Tzimtzum* occurred only because His *Ratzon Pashut* wished to create the *Olamot* etc. (see item 40). It means that He wanted that *Hishtavut Tzura* which is destined to appear by the creation of the *Olamot*, meaning the form of reception in order to bestow contentment to the Maker.

There is a great virtue in that: on the one hand, it is complete bestowal, because the *Ratzon* is only to bestow contentment upon the Maker and not at all for one's "self." That makes the *Tzura* completely equal with the *Ohr Elyon* of the *Maatzil*, and in complete adhesion with Him.

On the other hand, it is possible to deepen and increase the vessel of reception indefinitely and eternally. That is because now the form of reception does not produce any *Shinui Tzura*, as it comes from within the will to bestow.

Our sages have said that with an important personality, if she gives the matrimony capital, and he says, "With this I thee sanctify," then she is sanctified. It is written in the Torah "and giveth it in her hand," meaning it is the husband who is to give the matrimony capital.

However, because he is important, the pleasure she receives from him is exactly the same as giving. An important person who receives money from her is similar to him giving her money. It is written in the Torah "and giveth it in her hand," because he receives only in order to bestow contentment to the woman, to honor her with his reception.

We learn from the above that the primary reason for the *Tzimtzum* was the desire for the new form of reception in order to bestow that is destined to appear by the creation of the *Olamot* (see item 40). However, it was not at all by reason of the *Aviut* she felt in the middle point, for there were no *Aviut* and difference there at all.

Hence, the middle point did not become a *Sof* because of the *Tzimtzum*. Thus, it is impossible to distinguish a small matter from a great one. That is why the Rav writes that the *Tzimtzum* was “**completely even.**”

100. It means that there was some image that had to have been made by reason of the *Tzimtzum*, though the *Tzimtzum* was even (as explained above thoroughly), and not because of any *Shinui Tzura*. After the *Tzimtzum* and the departure of the *Ohr* from that middle point, it became apparent that the *Ohr Elyon* is unfit to cleave to it because of her *Tzura* of the *Gadlut* of reception.

Because that became known she fell from the degree she had had in *Ein Sof*, and was now regarded as *Sof*, meaning the lowest possible *Aviut*. Only that middle point remained a vacant *Halal*, unfit to clothe the *Ohr* (see item 6), and the three former *Behinot* in virtue and purity were still fit to clothe the *Ohr* even after the *Tzimtzum*.

We have explained above (previous item) that she did not become a *Sof* for the above reason. This is the meaning of the precision of the Rav when he says that “**that place of *Halal* was *Agol* on every side, completely even.**” He wishes to say that it is not an actual *Sof*, but is like the *Sof* in a round picture, whose *Sof* is in the middle.

You can compare these four *Behinot* to four circles one within the other, like onionskins. The central *Igul* is *Behina Dalet*, surrounded by *Behina Gimel*, surrounded by *Behina Bet*, surrounded by *Behina Aleph*. This way there is no up or down, right or left.

For example, *Behina Aleph* is above all of them in its one half, and below all of them in its other half, and so it is in all the *Behinot*. Therefore, there is not up or down, right or left here. There is no difference between their virtue, and they are all completely even.

It has already been explained (above item) that the reason for the *Tzimtzum* was not the *Shinui Tzura*. This is also the meaning of the precision of the Rav “***Agol* on every side, completely even.**”

Because *Ohr Ein Sof* was even, the *Tzimtzum* too was even. This is
the meaning of the *Igul*

- 5. The reason was that since *Ohr Ein Sof* was completely even, it had to have restricted itself evenly on all sides, and not restrict itself on one side more than on the others.**

It is known in the wisdom of geometry that there is none so even an image as the image of the *Igul* ⁽²⁰⁰⁾. However, this is not the case with the *Meruba* ⁽³⁰⁰⁾, with the bulging perpendicular angle, the *Meshulash* (triangle) ⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾, and all the other images. For that reason the *Tzimtzum* had to have the form of an *Igul*.

Ohr Pnimi

200. Has already been explained in the previous item.
300. If there had been a differentiation of up and down, right and left there, it would appear in the image of a *Meruba*, which contains these four sides, being the four names of these *Behinot*. However, it was not so, but in the form of an *Igul*, which does not contain these discernments.
400. Indicating a degree that has but three *Behinot*, lacking *Behina Dalet*, meaning three sides – up, right and left. It lacks the bottom side, hence the name *Meshulash*.

Chapter Two

Explains how *Ohr Ein Sof* extended a *Kav* to the *Olamot* that were emanated and created in the place of the *Halal* that was restricted; containing five issues:

1. A *Kav* extended from *Ein Sof* into the *Halal*. 2. The *Rosh* of the *Kav* touches *Ein Sof*, not its *Sium*. 3. *Ohr Ein Sof* expands to the *Olamot* through the *Kav*. 4. All the *Olamot* are in the place of that *Halal* that has been restricted. 5. Prior to the *Tzimtzum* there was He is One and His Name One, and the mind cannot attain Him.

A *Kav* extended from *Ein Sof* into the *Halal*

1. After the above *Tzimtzum* there remained a place of *Halal* and vacant, empty *Avir* in the middle of that *Ohr Ein Sof* ⁽¹⁾. Then there was a place for the *Ne'etzalim* and the *Nivraim* (creatures) and the *Yetzufim* (creations) and the *Naasim* (formed).

Then, one *Kav Yashar* extended from *Ohr Ein Sof* ⁽²⁾, from His *Ohr Agol* ⁽³⁾ from above downward ⁽⁴⁾, and hung down into that *Halal*.

Ohr Pnimi

1. Do not be misled into the thought that the *Tzimtzum* of the *Ohr* from the middle point caused any changes in *Ein Sof*. There is no change and absence in spirituality, and all the more so in such a sublime place.

The above *Tzimtzum* became a new essence, in addition to *Ein Sof*. Thus, *Ein Sof* remained in its entire simple unity as before the *Tzimtzum*, as He is one and His Name One.

The *Tzimtzum* on the middle point is perceived as a new *Olam* that came out, from which the *Ohr* departed and left an empty *Halal* as we've explained above. It is in the place of that *Halal* that all the *Olamot* were emanated.

2. We should not perceive this act in its superficial meaning, as a human act, where one does one thing, and then another, while no longer performing the first act. There is no greater materialization than that, because He is not subject to change and episodes.

It is written: "I the Lord do not change." We are not discussing His *Atzmut*, but only the *Ohr* that expands from Him. However, because there is no change and incident and motion in His *Atzmut*, and He is in complete and utter rest, so must be the *Ohr* that expands from Him, as long as it does not reach the *Ne'etzal*, meaning as long as it did not clothe the *Kelim*.

Only then does it come to exit His *Atzmut* and become a *Ne'etzal* that is renewed and receives from Him. We have already explained that this renewal revolves primarily on the *Kli* of the *Ne'etzal*, meaning the will to receive in the *Ne'etzal*. Although this *Ratzon* is spiritual, it is nonetheless a *Hidush Tzura* and an incident, because it is not necessitated in His *Atzmut*.

However, the *Ohr* that clothes it is not renewed, for it extends from His *Atzmut* as existence from existence. The actuation of the *Ohr Elyon* is according to the measure of the *Kli*, meaning the *Kli* is affected and receives from the *Ohr Elyon* as a *Hidush*, which is necessarily an incident.

You should know that all the innovations and the concatenation of degrees regard only impact on the *Kli* and its reception from the *Ohr Elyon*, for only that is subject to change and multiplication. However, the *Ohr* itself is always

in complete rest, as it expands from His *Atzmut*. Understand that well and remember every single word of it for the rest of the study in this wisdom.

According to the above, you can thoroughly understand that the *Ohr Elyon* does not stop shining for the creatures even for a moment. It is not subject to change and innovations, but is in complete rest. The whole issue of the *Tzimtzum* and the aforementioned departure of the *Ohr* regard only the influence on the *Kli* and its reception, meaning the middle point.

In other words, although the *Ohr Elyon* does not stop shining, the *Kli* did not receive any of its *He'arah* because it diminished itself. It diminished its will to receive, so as not to receive in its *Behina Dalet*, being the middle point, but only in its three preceding *Behinot*, whose will to receive is frailer, and where the will to bestow dominates (see item 50).

Thus, the *Ohr Elyon* was not affected by the *Tzimtzum* and did not change its way. Just as it illuminated in *Ein Sof*, so it illuminated during the *Tzimtzum* and after the *Tzimtzum* and in all the *Olamot*, even in *Olam Assiya*. It did not stop shining for a minute, but it is the *Kelim* that make all those changes, for they only receive according to their measure, being the measure of their will to receive.

Now you can understand what the Rav meant in the words, “**one Kav Yashar extended from Ohr Ein Sof.**” It means that the place of the *Halal* itself, meaning the *Kli* that had been emptied of *Ohr Ein Sof* itself, caused the *Hamshacha* of the *Kav* from *Ein Sof*, by reason of the diminution that was renewed in its will to receive.

The measure of its current reception, after the *Tzimtzum* of its *Behina Dalet*, is called *Kav*, meaning relating to its previous reception in *Behina Dalet* that filled the entire place. However, now that she does not have that great will to receive, but only the previous three *Behinot* of the *Ratzon*, whose will to receive is frail. It is regarded as that *Kli* not receiving more of the *Ohr Ein Sof*, but only one *Kav* of *Ohr*.

The entire place of the *Kli* remains empty and vacant from *Ohr* because that minute *Ohr* that she receives now is not enough to fulfill the entire place of the *Kli*. That happened because of the wanting of *Behina Dalet* that diminished it.

We see that the *Ohr Elyon* was not at all stopped by the *Tzimtzum*, and did not change so as to extend the *Ohr* as one *Kav*. Instead, this whole great change happened because of the vessels of reception that were diminished and became unable to receive from *Ohr Ein Sof* more than a very small measure, called *Kav*, according to the measure of her desire. That is because she does not want more than that measure.

3. We have already explained the meaning of the *Agol* (round) image (Chap 1, item 100). He tells us that even after the *Tzimtzum*, the *Ohr Elyon* remained in the form of an *Igul*, meaning without discrimination of degrees. Its four *Behinot* are of equal virtue (there), and the reason is (above item) that the *Ohr Elyon* is not subject to change and incidents. These above occurrences of innovations are only with respect to the *Kelim*.
4. Do not forget that we are not discussing corporeal terms whatsoever. Instead, the more *Zach* is called higher, and the more *Av* is called lower. Anything that can be perceived as *Hitpashtut* of *Ohr* from the *Maatzil* and its permeation in the *Ne'etzal* is regarded primarily as a renewal of the *Shinui Tzura* that exists in the *Ne'etzal*. In other words, it refers to the will to receive that does not exist in the *Maatzil* and was renewed in him.

Because of that, the *Ne'etzal* is considered to be far, *Av*, low, and inferior to the *Maatzil*. It is the *Shinui Tzura* from the *Maatzil* that does all that and separates him from being a *Maatzil* to being a *Ne'etzal*.

You should also know that this *Shinui Tzura*, namely the will to receive, does not appear at once, but is conceived slowly, over four *Behinot*. Its form is complete only in *Behina Dalet*.

It therefore turns out that the entire form of its will to receive is very frail, meaning the first *Behina* of the four *Behinot*. This *Behina* is regarded as the closest to the *Maatzil*, more important, purer and higher, because her *Shinui Tzura* is not as great as in the three *Behinot* that follow.

Behina Bet, whose *Ratzon* is greater than *Behina Aleph*, is regarded as farther from the *Maatzil*, more *Av*, lower and indeed inferior to the first *Behina*. Finally, *Behina Dalet* is the farthest from the *Maatzil*, lower, more *Av* and inferior to all of them.

That is why the Rav writes that the *Kav Nimshach* from above downward, meaning from the first *Behina* to the forth [and not all the way], which is the lowest. The above matter of above and below was renewed with the emergence of the *Kav*. Before the *Kav* illuminated, meaning during the *Tzimtzum*, there was no up or down there (see Chap 1, item 100).

However, after she received the *Ohr* merely as a *Kav*, meaning not in all four *Behinot*, but only in her first three *Behinot*, *Behina Dalet* remained dark, without *Ohr*. Only now did it become known that *Behina Dalet* is low, *Av* and inferior, and that the three preceding *Behinot* are erected on top of her, according to their purity and proximity to the *Maatzil*. However, during the *Tzimtzum*, when the *Ohr* left all four *Behinot* at once, that discernment among the degrees had not yet occurred.

The *Rosh* of the *Kav* touches *Ein Sof*, not its *Sium*

- 2. The Upper *Rosh* of the *Kav* ⁽⁵⁾ extended from *Ein Sof* Himself and touched it ⁽⁶⁾, although the *Sium* of that *Kav*, down at its end ⁽⁷⁾, does not touch *Ohr Ein Sof*.**

Ohr Pnimi

5. Meaning the first *Behina* of the four *Behinot* (see above item).
6. *Behina Aleph*, being the Upper *Rosh*, is the closest to *Ein Sof*, meaning to the *Maatzil*. For that reason she is regarded as touching Him, because the *Shinui Tzura* in *Behina Aleph* is not apparent enough to separate it from the *Maatzil*.
7. “**Down at its end**” implies *Behina Dalet*, the farthest and lowest of them all (Chap 2, item 4). She does not receive the *Ohr Elyon* and is therefore regarded as not touching *Ohr Ein Sof* and as separated from it.

Ohr Ein Sof expands to the *Olamot* through the *Kav*

- 3. *Ohr Ein Sof* extended and expanded down through that *Kav*.**

All the *Olamot* are in the place of that *Halal* that has been restricted

- 4. He emanated and created and made and formed ⁽⁸⁾ all the *Olamot* in that place of that *Halal*.**

Ohr Pnimi

8. It implies the four *Olamot* called *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira*, *Assiya*, which contain all the inner innumerable *Olamot*. These four *Olamot* extend from the four above *Behinot*: *Atzilut* from *Behina Aleph*; *Beria* from *Behina Bet*; *Yetzira* from *Behina Gimel* and *Assiya* from *Behina Dalet*.

Prior to the *Tzimtzum* there was He is One and His Name One, and the mind cannot attain Him

- 5. Prior to these four *Olamot* ⁽⁹⁾, the *Ein Sof* was He is One and His Name One ⁽¹⁰⁾, in wondrous and concealed unity. Not even the angles that are close to Him ⁽²⁰⁾ have the might and the attainment of *Ein Sof*, for there is not a created mind that can attain Him, for He has no place, no boundary, no name ⁽³⁰⁾.**

Ohr Pnimi

9. Called *Atzilut*, *Beria*, *Yetzira*, *Assiya* (see above item), which contain all the *Olamot*. Before all that, meaning before the *Tzimtzum*, these four *Behinot* were considered to be one above the other (see Chap 2, item 4), but as Simple Unity (Chap 1, item 30). The meaning of Simple Unity is that there is no differentiation of degrees or between *Ohr* and *Kli*, but He is One and His Name One (see Chap 1, item 30).
10. “He” implies the *Ohr Elyon*. “His Name” implies the will to receive that is necessarily there (see Chap 1, item 30). His Name is (in Gimatria) *Ratzon*, implying the will to receive.
20. This means that now, after the *Olamot* have been created, even the angles, which are spiritually the closest creations, do not have attainment in *Ein Sof*.
30. Since in *Ein Sof* it is He is One and His Name One, and since there is no place and *Kli* apparent there at all, no mind of a creature can attain Him, for there is no attainment without a *Kli*.