

Theogenesis - *Kabbalah*

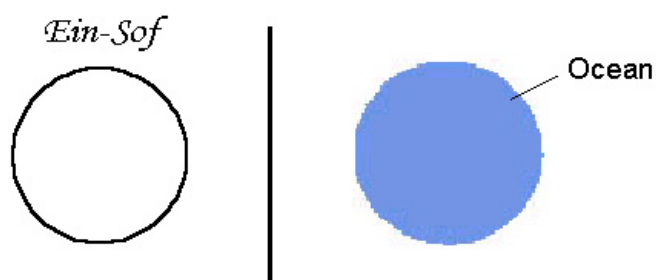
For the kabbalist the universe is not just a creation by God, but also a manifestation of this Gods own development. Just like we develop and grow, so does God.

The state or stage of God in the beginning, the kabbalists describe with the symbol *Ein-Sof*. This first stage is a mysterious boundless state of being of which nothing can be said, since all descriptions will limit and encircle it. However to create an idea or an intuition in the minds of their students the kabbalists describe the state as a *coincidence of all opposites*, like good and evil, above and below, beginning and end, etc. These opposing concepts are not "just words", but are of profound importance when trying to grasp the *Ein-Sof*. Using good and evil as an example, good deeds only exist to the extent that the opposite, evil deeds, exists. If for some reason the deeds that we label evil should cease to exist, the deeds that we label good would also cease to exist. Concepts need a background in order to stand out, and the more clearly the background is, the more clearly the concept stands out, and vice versa. Hence, the concept of *good* only exists because of its opposite, *evil*. The opposites are intimately linked to each other - one cannot exist without the other.



These oppositions did not exist at the stage of *Ein-Sof*. The infinite light of God was everywhere and nothing existed, rather everything existed as a *potential*. The type of existence or being are described as the union of being and nothingness. To illustrate this mysterious and paradoxical stage, which can not be encircled, we will be somewhat disobedient, and illustrate it with a circle. Also we will use an analogy, and compare the stage of *Ein-Sof* to the ocean:

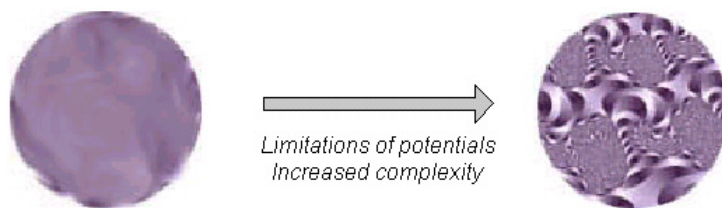
Stage 1



The description of God does not end with the symbol of *Ein-Sof*. The reason is, as mentioned above, that God is also growing and changing according to His own wish. The creator of our universe is a God *who will be whatever He wants to be*, the kabbalists say.

In the state of *Ein-Sof* God has the potential to be *anything at all*, in the new state of being a certain part of these potentials will be purged out, resulting in a more complex state of being. To use an earthbound analogy, the change might be compared to what happens in a high-school class in the first few days of school. At day one the class has the potential to create any kind of social network.

After a few days (or hours) a certain part of these potentials are manifested, leaving other - potential connections - unmanifested. The following conceptual figure might help to give an idea of the change:



The change is at the stage of *Ein-Sof* merely *planned* or *intended*. So how does God move from the inclination to a changed state of being, to the *manifestation* of this change?

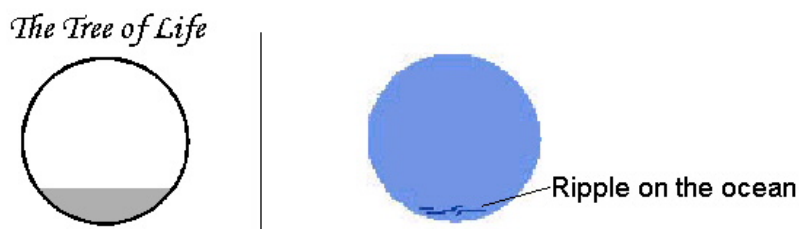
To get to a more complex state of being, a decision must be made of which potentials to be purged out. To do that God must get an awareness of his potential states of being, and then use that awareness to purge out a certain part of these potentials. Since the potential states of being are, as the name implies, only potential, they do not exist. In other words God must get an awareness of *what-is-not*. This is not possible at the stage of *Ein-Sof* where God is everything everywhere, there is only Light and everything simply *is*. For the knower (God) to achieve an awareness of the known (what-is-not), a distinction between the knower and the known is needed. This distinction does not exist at this stage.

God hides from himself

To overcome this problem, God conceals a part of himself from himself, through a process referred to as *Tzimtzum* (hebrew for concealment or contraction). Out of his own being God produces garments to conceal a part of his being. The garments is at this stage in their essence unknowable, but their reflection in the mind of man is *archetypal ideas* or *traits*, referred to as the ten *Sefirot* by the kabbalists. They are Will, Wisdom, Intelligence, Love, Judgment, Compassion, Endurance, Majesty, Righteousness and Submission. These ten *Sefirot* are arranged in a special relation to each other, called the *Tree of Life*. The *Tree of Life* can be thought of as the garments that God creates to conceal a part of his being.

The *Ein-Sof*, illustrated as a circle, is being dressed in garments and becomes the *Tree of Life*. To illustrate that a part of God is concealed at this stage, we will shade a part of the circle. In the ocean analogy it corresponds to a ripple on the ocean. This is stage two of seven.

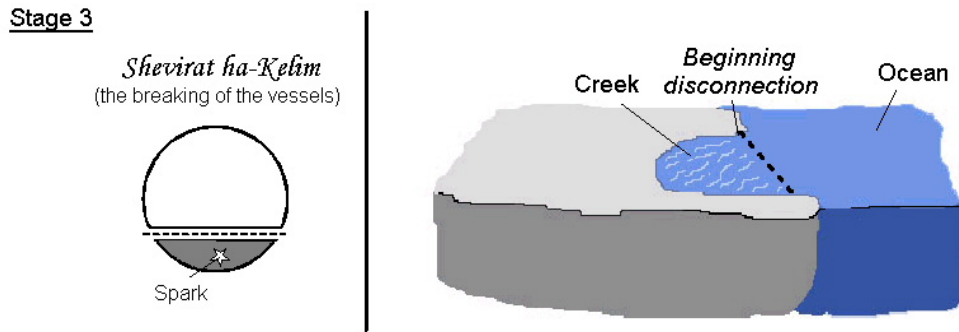
Stage 2



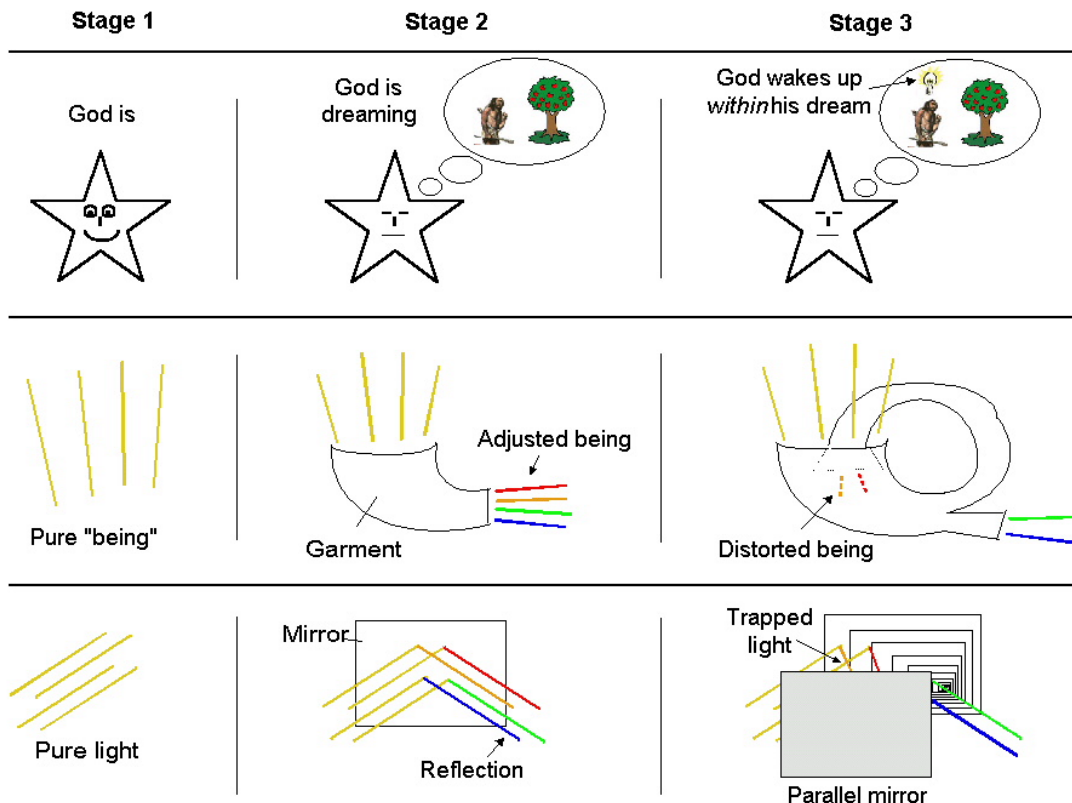
At this point the concealed part is still a part of Gods total being; the ripple can not be distinguished from the ocean.

The cosmic catastrophe

The concealment proces continues until a critical event, known as the Breaking of the Vessels, occurs. Here the concealed part of God, referred to as the vessels, can no longer contain the infinite light of *Ein-Sof*. The garments that are produced out of Gods own being, have become so thick (garments upon garments) that they no longer reflect the kind of being (or existence) they emerge from. They "break off" in a multitude of parts, each trapping a part of Gods being (a "spark"). Using the ocean analogy, the ripple have become a creek where the connection to the ocean are beginning to be blocked. The creek will then no longer reflect the characteristics of the ocean.



A distortion occurs in the vessels that have broken off - a distortion that implies a new type of being. Seen from the viewpoint of the vessels it is a cosmic catastrophe; they are suddenly alienated from their source. Seen from Gods point of view it is a temporary schism needed for further growth. The development in these first three stages might be better understood through this figure:



In stage 1 God simply *is*. In stage 2 the being of God is adjusted or concealed, but it still reflects the essence of the being in stage 1. In stage 3 a distortion occurs that brings a new type of being to life.

The new type of being that occurs within God implies the creation of the universe, with all its galaxies, stars and you name it.



The fractal universe is the "son of necessity", the unavoidable effect of "a loop in Gods mind", a reflection of a reflection. If the creation were not there the part of Gods being that have "broken off" would be lost forever. It would have nothing to "cling to" and would be just like a cry in an empty room. Instead it is entangled in the creation and because God has control of the creation he can also, indirectly, keep track of his alienated part. To use an analogy imagine that you are sleeping and have a dream. In the analogy you are God and your dream is the creation. In your dream, you have a body and you find yourself in surroundings that you recognize, e.g. the house that you grew up in. Also you might meet your parents or other people you recognize. Who are the creator of the house you walk around in? Who are the creator of the persons you interact with in your dream? Who decides what other persons in your dream are telling you? You create all this, and at the same time a part of your consciousness is present within the dream, experiencing the dream from within. Now instead imagine that you have a dream in which there were *only emptiness*: You have no body, there is nothing surrounding you. Only nothingness, blackness. What would that dream be like? Few people would find amusement in such a situation. The creation might be a fall, or a distortion, but it is also a very necessary distortion. The creation is the necessary middlestation for Gods further development as we shall see.



The Kabbalists refer to the creation as *Sitra Achra* (the "Other Side"). The *Sefirot*, which at stage 2 were arranged as the *Tree of Life* are now "out of joint". The new disrupted constellation of the *Sefirot* we will refer to as the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*. In the Kabbalah this is where the celestial Father and Mother turn their backs on one another, thereby disrupting the flow of divine erotic energy in the worlds. In other traditions the event may be described as the separation of the World Parents or the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, but behind the symbols lies the same message: The creation of the world at the price of alienation. Spirit and matter are torn apart, leaving a nameless cry for reunion in both of them.



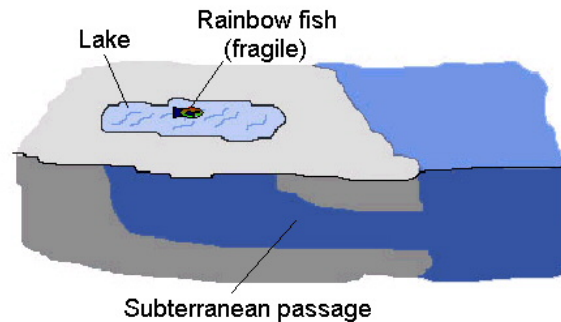
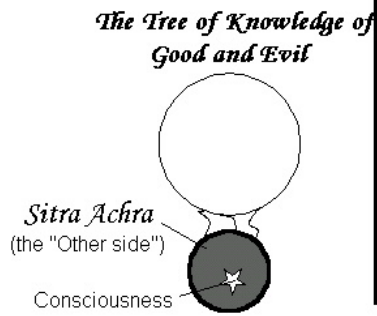
The purpose of man

Now as we recall, the purpose of the *Tzimtzum*, the concealment process, was for God to get an awareness of *what-is-not*. How is this achieved by creating the universe? Does the universe or any part of the universe have an awareness of what-is-not? The answer is yes: A small part of the universe, mankind, have an awareness of what-is-not, and we refer to this awareness as *consciousness*. By using our consciousness we can speculate on an infinite number of things that does not exist; an imagined conversation with someone or a pink elephant painting our house, just to mention a few examples. As the carriers of consciousness, human beings play a key role in the fulfillment of Gods further development.

The price for bringing about our consciousness is an alienation within God himself. We illustrate this alienation as two separate circles, the shaded circle illustrating the creation. The type of being is at this point described by the *Sefirot* arranged in the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*.

In the ocean analogy, the creek have broken off from its source and become a small lake:

Stage 4



In the lake there is a small rainbow fish swimming around, as a symbol of our consciousness. Just as the fragile rainbow fish would not be able to survive in the ocean, our consciousness must be shielded from the infinite light of God. The shield are referred to as *Kelippot* (Husks) in the Kabbalah. The creation, *Sitra Achra*, which are composed of these husks, supply the necessary darkness to hatch our consciousness. Besides the function of a shield the *Kelippot* also imprisons the consciousness at this stage: It is in a state of exile, unaware of its divine roots.

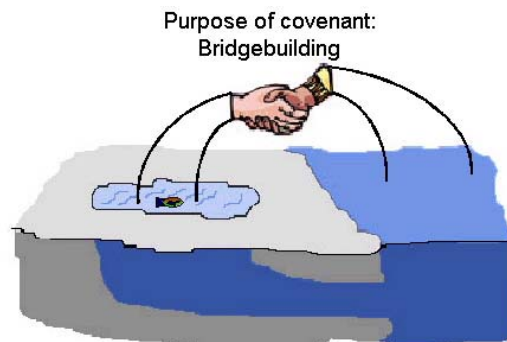
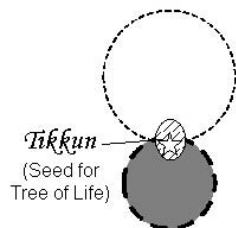
The bridgebuilding

At stage 4 God has an awareness of *what-is-not*: A consciousness that can be used to plan the new type of being he wants to become and once it is planned, manifest this new type of being. However, there is a slight problem: The consciousness are located in an alienated part of Gods being, in man. This was the only way it could be brought forth as we recall. In other words God have placed himself on one side of a wide cleft, and placed an alienated part of himself, human beings, on the other side, and then left the responsibility for the bridgebuilding to... *you!* And me and the rest of humanity. The human race are known for many things, nuclear bombs and poluting the planet among others, but reliability are not exactly one of them. Apparently the creator of the universe is not without a sense of humour..... or risk-taking.



At first sight the situation seems a bit hopeless... however God keeps an ace up his sleeve: To make sure that man would not loose focus on this important task, and become entangled in the creation, God selected a group of people and made a deal with them: No matter what happens around you, you will stay focused on my commandments and in return I will lead you out of this rathole. The group of people are the people of Israel and as we know from historical documents, they accepted: A covenant was made.

Stage 5



In the Kabbalah, the bridgebuilding are referred to as *Tikkun ha-Olam*, the restoration of the world. The bridgebuilding implies that the ten Sefirot, which were "out of joint", are rearranged through conscious contemplation and then made manifest by acting according to this new knowledge. The divine traits and qualities must be (re)balanced and lived out in the individual, as actions in the world. These actions are the *Tikkun* and manifests

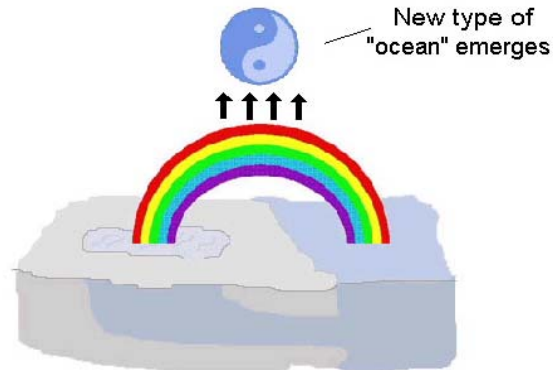
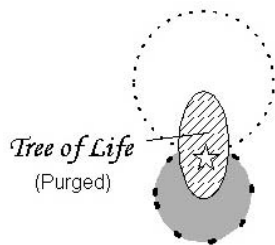


the seeds for what we will refer to as the purged *Tree of Life*. These seeds are the "treasures collected in heaven" that are collected because the person have trust in something beyond what he can see and sense (the *Kelippot*), namely his own nascent awareness of "what he must do". This feeling in his chest other Kabbalists would describe as an awareness of the will of God. In the dream analogy, God is not just aware within his own dream, but has now also become aware of his own roots and the nature of the creation around him. The divine plan has begun to take shape in the alienated part of his mind. The hatced ellipse between the two circles in the figure above, illustrate this new awareness (manifested through actions) that shoots out from within the *Sitra Achra*. The actions based on the rebalanced *Tree of Life*, i.e. based on the wisdom and integrity in the individual, are like



a flower shooting through a crack in the concrete, where the flower symbolises the act of *Tikkun* and the concrete is the surrounding world. If the person is aware of the will of God but does not act according to this knowledge no bridgebuilding are made - instead the energy is offered to the dark realm of *Sitra Achra*. Provided that the person creates the *Tikkun* seeds, they will start to organize into a new type of vessel, the purged *Tree of Life*.

Stage 6

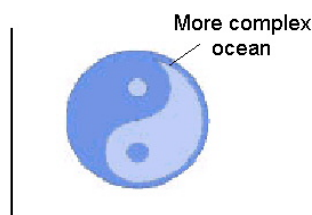
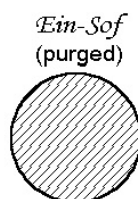


The purged *Tree of Life* are the reorganized *Sefirot* and corresponds to a total new way of being through which God can now express himself. In this way God can be said to give birth to himself.

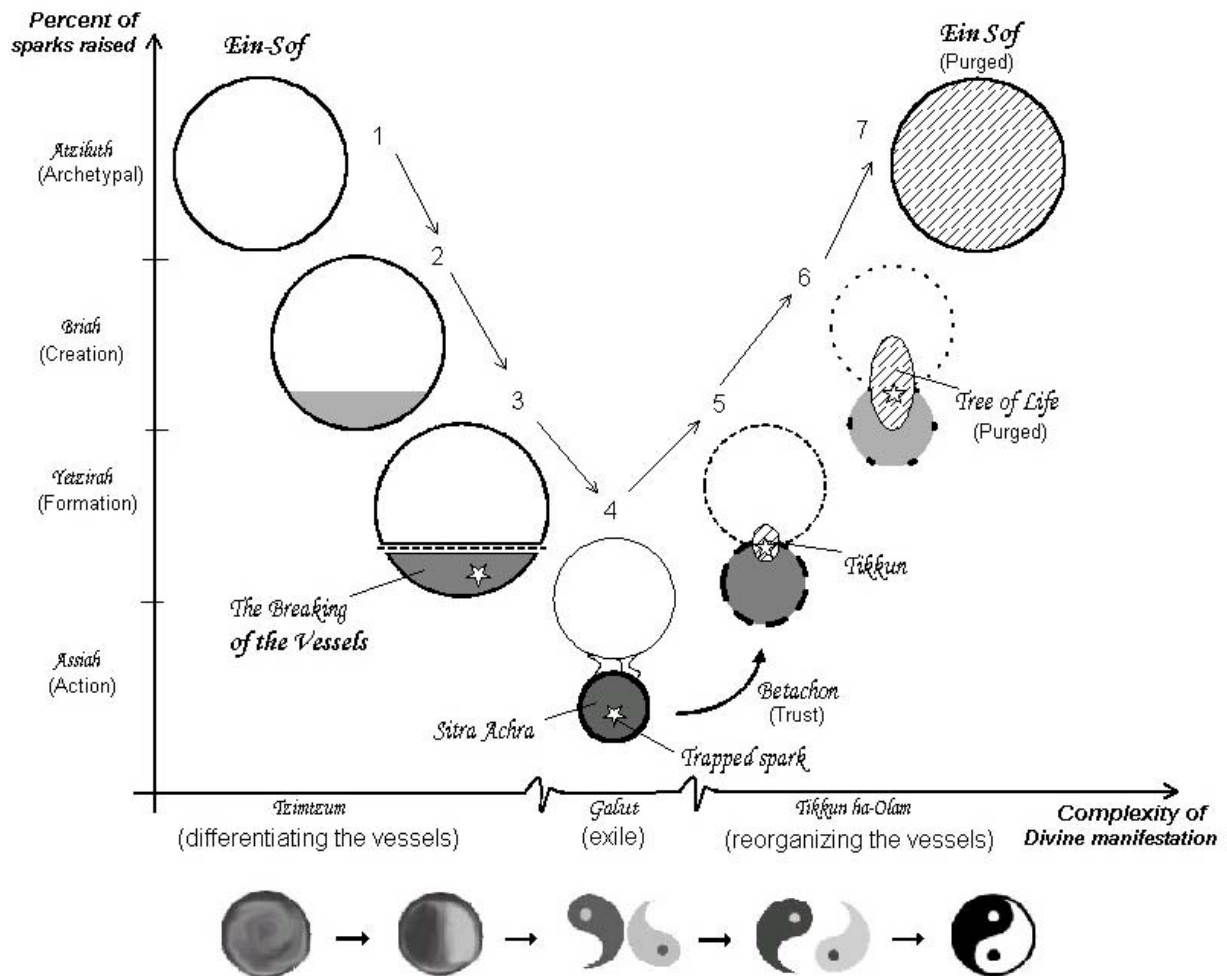


The celestial Father and Mother are now again "face to face", harmony is reestablished on a higher level of complexity and the previous birth pangs are forgotten. Ultimately the *Sefirot* will be dissolved as a garment no longer needed and the goal of the creation process is achieved:

Stage 7



The creation process described above is summarized on the following diagram.



As illustrated above there is a descend during the first four stages, followed by an ascend in the last three stages. In the descend more and more divine sparks (consciousness) are entangled in the creation, as a consequence of the *Tzimtzum* proces. The four different stages in the descend gives rise to four different worlds, where *Atziluth* is the world closest to God and *Assiah*, which is our present world, is the world the farthest away from God. In the ascend the sparks are again liberated, or a better word: raised. The sparks do not flow back to their origin (as "liberation" might imply), but are being organized on a higher level of complexity - they are "raised". The descend and ascend can be thought of as an descend and ascend of Gods attention or awareness, where the awareness in the ascend has been transformed.

Through-out the seven stages there is an increase in complexity as illustrated on the horisontal axis. The increase in complexity leads to a critical point, the Breaking of the Vessels, resulting in our present world which is in a state of exile. The shift to stage 5, which is just as radical as the shift from stage 3 to 4, occurs when the alienated part of God attains the sufficient complexity to be the carrier for the new manifestation of God (the birth of God).