Microcosm Of The World

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With this illustration in mind, we must mention another central Kabbalistic idea vital to the understanding the Zohar.

G-d created man as a microcosm of the world. Man contains the spiritual blueprint for all of existence. Accordingly, the sefirot that make up the spiritual universe find their parallel in man. The right arm parallels the sefirah of Chesed. The left arm, Gevurah. The upper body, Tiferet. The right and left legs parallel Nezach and Hod. And the place of the Brit parallels the Yesod.

Thus, referring back to our illustration of the funnel, the organ of the Brit, the male sexual organ, parallels the spout.

To reach our world of Malchut, the shefa from all of the sefirot must pass through the channel of the Yesod, the spout of the spiritual world. For this reason, the Yesod is said to encompass and include all of the other sefirot. Thus the tikun, (rectification) of the damaged Yesod is called the Tikun Clalli, meaning the all-encompassing tikun.

To give an example, at the time of marital relations, all of the genetic information from every organ and limb of the body has to converge in the channel of the Brit in order to reach the proper destination in the female, who embodies the sefirah of Malchut. The codes of DNA from the brain, from the eyes, the arms, the heart, and the legs, all gather in the Yesod as it unites with Malchut in order for the genetic transference to take place.

Thus, in the physical world, the organ of the Brit, the male sexual organ, parallels the spiritual function of the Yesod, in its being the channel of life force through which the marital union is consummated. In the microcosm of man, the place of the Brit serves the same function as the spout of the funnel.

Due to the parallelism of man and the spiritual worlds, it follows that if a man impairs his Brit through sexual transgression, then his wrongdoing will also damage the parallel spiritual counterpart of the Yesod.

This understanding is based on the principle that whatever man does in this world has a direct and immediate effect on the upper spiritual worlds. The beginning chapters of the book, “Nefesh HaChaim,” describe this phenomenon fully - how our thoughts, deeds, and speech all impact the upper worlds for good and for evil.

Thus by transgressing the sexual laws of the Torah, a person damages the spiritual channel, the Yesod, that brings Divine illumination and blessing into the world. The Zohar emphasizes time and again that sexual wrongdoing brings tragedy and plagues on the individual and on the nation, in this world and in the world to come.

If sexual sins become rampant on a national level, this can cause a total blockage, or the drying up of the channel of the Yesod, bringing destruction and exile to Am Yisrael (the nation of Israel.)

When the Yesod was damaged Above through Israel’s transgressions, it was only a matter of time before the enemy succeeded in destroying its physical counterpart embodied in Zion and Jerusalem below.

From this, we can understand the great importance of Shmirat HaBrit. By conducting one’s sexual life in holiness, the sefirah of Yesod is preserved in its pure, functioning state, insuring that Divine blessing is constantly poured down upon Am Yisrael and the individual Jew.

This is the inner meaning of the verse, “Your sins have withheld good (tov) from you.” (Yirmeyahu, 5:26) In the language of the Zohar, tov is the Yesod. Our sins prevent the Divine illumination that comes through the Yesod from reaching us. According to the Kabbalah, this is the prime inner cause of all of the sufferings we face.