



KABBALAH & SOUND

The Mystery of the ALEPH BET, Sound and Silence

PART ONE:

*“A person needs to ask for the words of the prayer”
(Baal Shem Tov, Amud HaTefilah).*

*“Ten are the numbers, and twenty-two the letters, these are the Foundation of all things. Of these letters, three are mothers, seven are double, and twelve are simple”
(Sefer Yetzirah, 1;2)*

There are three “mother” letters; the Aleph (א) the Mem (מ) and the Shin (ש).

Aleph is also the element of *Avir*/ wind, air. The middle column.

Mem is also the element of *Mayim*/water. The right column.

Shin is also the element of *Aish*/ fire. The left column.

Seven “double” letters

Twelve simple letters

If Aleph is the highest and Tof the lowest, should be the opposite, Aleph should be 400 (many) and Tof should be only 1? The Ramak explains (*Shiur Komah*, 7) that the root of the letters is the *Ein Sof*, beyond numbers, and as the letters are moving away from the Source of unity. The Baal Shem Tov teaches, Aleph is One, Beis is two Aleph... Tof is 400 Alephs

Giver or Receiver: Aleph is open to Beis, so it is the Giver.

Exchange: *At Bash*, for example. Aleph is Tof. From one to 400.

From Aleph till Lamed – half the letters, letters on the side of Chesed, thus Aleph Lamed is E-1 name of Chesed.

From Mem till Tof –second half of letters, letters on the side of Gevurah, thus Mem Tof spell the word Mes/ death.

PATH I:

THE LETTER ALEPH

Shape: Aleph is shaped like two Yuds and a Vav. Yud is 10 so in total 26 –as the name of Hashem. (Rabbi David Ben Zimra. (1470 - 1572) Magen Dovid. Os, See also: HaAgur. Hilchos Tefilin. Levush on Orach Chayim, 36:1.)

Meaning: Aleph means Alefcha / learn.

Numerical Value: Aleph is 1. Also Aleph in numerical value is 111.

PATH II:

THE PATH OF SOUND

Aleph sounds like *Eleph*/1000- in fact, highest number in the letters is 999. (As the final Tzadi is 900)

The letter Aleph starts with Ah.

“Betzael knew the combination of letters that the Creator used to create the world” (Berachos, 55a)

(From “Breathing & Quieting the Mind”)

The four Stages of Creation correspond to the four letters in the essential Name of G-d in the Torah, the Yud-Hei-Vav-Hei, also referred to as Hashem, “The Name”.

- 1) Inner Movement/Desire/Thought — Unity— Yud (י).
- 2) Breath —Souls — Hei (ה).
- 3) Wind — Angels — Vav (ו).
- 4) Speech —Physical world — Hei (ה).

FOUR LEVELS OF CREATION:

Inner movement
Breath
Wind
Speech

THIS CORRESPONDS TO THE FOUR INNER WORLDS:

- Creation from speech, physicality, Asiyah, the world of Actualization.
- Creation from wind within the mouth, angels, Yetzirah, the world of Formation.
- Creation from breath, soul, Beriah, the world of Creation.
- Movement within the mind, thought, Atzilus, the world of Nearness.

THE LETTERS NEED VOWELS.

The Vowels are like the “lights” – the Life force that animates the letter. The letters are like the Body, the “vessel” which without the Light is dead.

There are overall 9-10 Nekudos.

Ten Vowels and Ten Sefiros.

R. Moshe Cordevero, *the Ramak*. (*Pardas Rimonim, Shar 19, Shar 28, Shar Kavanos*).

Here is a list of the vowels and their correlating Sefiros:

1. Kametz (aw) 𐤀 *Keser, deep desire & primordial will*
2. Patach (ah) 𐤁 *Chochmah, wisdom and intuition*
3. Tzeirei (ei) 𐤂 *Binah, reason and cognition*
4. Segol (eh) 𐤃 *Chesed, kindness and love*
5. Sh'va (uh) 𐤄 *Gevurah, strength and boundaries*
6. Cholam (oy) 𐤅 *Tiferes, beauty and compassion*
7. Chirik (ee) 𐤆 *Netzach, victory and perseverance*
8. Kubutz 𐤇 (U- vowel under the letter)
Hod, splendor and humility
9. Shuruk 𐤈 (U—vowel on top of the letter)
Yesod, foundation and relationship
10. No vowels (silence)
Malchus, kingship and receptiveness

“The five Lights (the word Ohr light appears in the first day of creation)...which are Ah / Ei / Oy / Ee / Au (these are the Five Alephs (Ohr starts with Aleph, and it can be pronounced with the five primary vowels- the five primary vowels that are also found in these words.)

*Shemos, 28:11 “PiTuChei ChoySahm”
(Hakdamah, Tikkunie Zohar, 4b)*

Just like in the letters there are two paths to decipher the meaning of the vowels, one is to observe their SHAPE, their MEANING, their NUMERICAL VALUE. The other path is their SOUND.

For example:

Take the vowel *Kametz*.

MEANING: Comes from the word Kamatz –to close the hand, a handful. As in the verse “And the priest shall take a handful” (Vayikra, 5;12) (Hakdamah, Tikkunie Zohar, 5a) It means closed. (Hakdamah, Tikkunie Zohar, 8a)

SHAPE: The shape of the Kametz is a Yud on top of a vertical Vav. (Hakdamah, Tikkun Zohar, 7b) Value is 16. (As the total number of “dots” “lines” in all the other 8 vowels) Since Kametz is Keser, includes all the vowels.

NUMERICAL VALUE: In small numerical value it is 14. (Kuf /1. Mem/4. Tzadik/9= 14) Corresponding to the parts of the hand. There are 14 (as the word Yad) parts in each hand. There parts in every finger and two in the thumb. (Hakdamah, Tikkun Zohar, 4b)

This is one path, the other is SOUND

These vowels are connected to the directions.

The Cholam is a dot Above the letter.

The Chirik, a dot Under the letter.

The Shuruk, where the vowel is placed forward in the middle, in Front of a Vav.

The Tzeirei, two dots Underneath the letter.

The Kamatz, which is line and under the letter.

“After you being pronouncing the letter begin to move your heart and head; your heart imaginatively as it is internal whereas your head literally, as it is external. And move your head –in the direction – as the image of the vowel that you are pronouncing.” (*Chaye Olam Habah. p. 150*).

Why is the Aleph added?

Perhaps, this is also related to a teaching that his student, R. Yoseph Gikataliya. In Shar HaNikud he writes that the letters of Hashem’s name- the Yud(י) - Hei (ה)- and Vav (ו), are also vowels.

Linguistically, these four letters, Aleph (א), Yod (י) Hei (ה), Vav (ו), are called consonantal vowels, one who is reading without actual vowels, when they encounter one of these letters, they understand that there is a vowel sound connected.