

manifestation. **ב** is the first letter in the Book of Genesis and it is followed by the letter **ר** (resh), meaning head. It is also interesting to point out that **א** is the third letter in Genesis, which points to the fact that the work of **ב** and **ר** is to express the spirit of **א** in a focused manner within the world of name and form. Besides being a letter of focused breath, **ב** is attributed to the planet mercury. Mercury is attributed to the focused power of self-consciousness and the personality. **ר** is attributed to the Sun and the soul, while **א** is attributed to the spirit of God and the monad. Translated together **ב** and **ר** mean, “at the head of things or in the beginning.” Thus we find that it is the power of focused consciousness and breath that start the creation story and not the undifferentiated super-consciousness and breath of **א**, which is the invisible causal factor of the soul and personality.

There is a story in the *Zohar*² called the *Alphabet of Creation*³. The entire story is about each of twenty-one letters of the Hebrew alphabet, beginning with the last letter **ת** and ending with the second letter **ב**. Each of these twenty-one letters entreats the Lord of the Universe to create the world through them. Each letter comes forward and pleads his case and each is dismissed for one reason or another. It is not until the letter **ב** presents his case that the Lord of the Universe bestows this honor upon **ב**. **א** never presents her case and is given a different honor, that of being the first letter of the Decalogue⁴.

The *Zohar* makes an exhaustive study and commentary concerning the letter **ב** and the first word of the creation story, to which the *Alpha-Bet of Creation*, alludes. One-hundred and twenty-nine pages of the *Zohar* investigates and discusses the importance of the letter **ב** and the importance of the word **בראשית** (Bereshith). In the Torah, we find that the letter **ב** is oversized compared to the other letters in the word. The resentment concerning the importance of focused sound is repeatedly reinforced throughout the creation story of Genesis.

Not only are the letters of **ב**, **ר** and **א** the first three letters of the first word in Genesis but also the first three letters of the second word, **ברא** (Berah). The word Berah means to cut apart, and this is precisely what

occurs when the spirit of God hovers above the waters and speaks the creative word.

We must remember that the creative word is associated with the spirit of God at a focused point of tension. Thus we find that the creative powers, **אלהים**, (Elohim), translated as God, focuses their power through the breath, **רוח**. So we read further in Genesis that, “**רוח אלהים**”, (the creative powers of the live breath), hovered above the earth that was formless and void. This hovering applied a point of tension upon the chaos or prima materia, which is the face of the waters.⁵

Let us re-cap the points made so far:

1. The Spirit or Breath of God is the fundamental cause of creation.
2. In order to create the manifested world the Spirit must be focused through a point of tension.
3. The point of focus is through the letter **ב**.
4. The letter **ר** stands behind the letter **ב** as a relative cause, just as the soul is the relative cause of the personality.
5. The letter **א** is the relative cause of **ר**, which is the undifferentiated spirit aspect that requires a point of focus and tension in order to be made manifest.
6. The first two words in Genesis contain the pattern of **ברא** intimating spirit soul, and form, applied through a point of tension.

As we continue in the story we find a series of points of manifestation marked by the particular day i.e. First day, Second day etc. It is interesting to note that the word day, **יום**, has the same spelling as the word water. Each day or point of tension yields yet another effect, by the Spirit of God, focused through power of sound, impacting the waters.

At the beginning of this paper the statement was made that sound is the pre-existent to light. We find this idea supported in the creation story on the first day, “**אלהים יהי אור ויהי אור**,” “And God said, ‘let there be light.’” It is through the spoken word, verbum, or sound that light, as we understand it, comes into being. The rest of the creation story unfolds day by day with God saying, “**יהי**,” “let there be” with the response, and it was so.

Sound is a vibratory motion. We must understand this in the context of creation. It is through the vibration within the mind of the ALL that the material world comes into being⁶. It is a continual precipitation from verb or vibration to creative image to electromagnetic pattern to the world physical phenomenon.

The argument for sound being the primary cause of creation has been supported thus far by the first Chapter of Genesis and the Chapter Bereshith in the Zohar. These references are not the only sacred texts that support the idea that the spirit acting through sound vibration is the fundamental cause of all creation.

We have thus far indicated that the spirit or breath projects sound. In the *Sepher Yetzirah*, yet another sacred text, we are given an additional creation story. The story in the *Sepher Yetzirah* deals with a being of infinite potential, יהי. This divine being decides to seal and limit himself within due boundaries. In order to accomplish this he must set in motion a vibratory emanation. The emanation set forth is the spirit, which designed and sealed in just orientation the directions above and below. The above and below is synonymous with the Biblical rendition where the Elohim separated, or created the heavens and the earth. The second emanation is that of the waters which identifies the time with the word days. The final emanation was that of the fire of life, which infused the spirit of God into the form of man.⁷

Dr. Paul Foster Case points out in his work on *Sound and Color* that the early Sanskrit writings tell us of Shabda-Brama, the divinity of sound, which is the root potency of all manifestation.⁸ He also goes on to draw a correlation between what we understand to be prayer from the western conception and the Hindu practice of Mantra. Mantra-vidya is one of the advanced magical practices of the east. The master of such a practice can affect the very nature of substance and either cause or assist in causing a transformation in him/herself or in a student within his/her care.

In 1884, a learned Swami from India wrote a major treatise on the Science of Breath. In this work Rama Prasad identifies five basic modifications of the breath known as Tattwas. Each of the five modifications is identified with one of the five senses as well as one of the five elements. The fifth element is the Quintessence or spirit aspect,

which is the originating modification from which the other four emanate. This fifth modification is known as Akasha and is correlated with the sonorous ether.⁹ The sonorous ether is attributed to sound and the sense of hearing, the ability to perceive sound. Within the nature of this Tattwa the world of name and form is able to perceive sound and modify the nature of the form.

Akasha represents both the subtlest and the grossest expression of the sense of hearing.¹⁰ As in all esoteric teachings there must be a line of demarcation established where that which lies beyond our sensory spectrum and understanding can be placed in some relative context. In this way we may have some frame of reference in which we can begin our approach to that which presently lies beyond our comprehension.

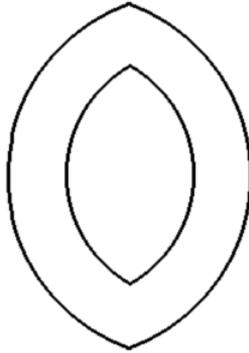
In the study of Qabalah we are presented with the sphere of Kether as an expression of the most elevated state of consciousness that exists. Yet as we look at the descent of this intelligence we see that Kether appears four times, once in each of the four worlds. Kether manifests from the most abstract unknowable reality to a relatively understandable one. One may have an experience of Kether in the world of name and form yet the Kether of the world of creative ideas may elude that individual for the time being. This does not deny the experience of the individual concerning Kether but it does limit the level in which one comes to understand this reality.

Above Kether on the Tree lie the three veils of negative existence. Of this reality Qabalists cringe at the thought of speculation. Once again we can place these concepts in relative terms so we may gain some very limited knowledge concerning that, which is otherwise infinite and unknowable.

This is the work of Akasha.. Akasha is the portal, which allows the descent of the infinite unknowable into some finite knowable form. Thus Akasha is given the attribution of space.

Akasha is like the womb. The vaginal portal from which the child is born is itself shaped like the Vesica Pisces, the form of Akasha. Akasha is therefore the vehicle through which all other Tattvic forms emerge, to which all Tattvic forms return, and through which all transitions from one form to another or one cycle to another or one world to another pass in order to be made manifest.¹¹ With the attribution of Akasha to sound

and space and the waters and days representing time we have the container of creation, time and space, wherein anything is possible.



Akasha-Akasha Tattva Symbol

You can see by the shape of this form that it is similar to the vaginal opening through which a child is born. This has become a universal symbol for the manifestation of all creation. This is the symbol that represents sound, hearing and space.

Thus far, a case has been laid, through the writings of various sacred texts, that the world does indeed stand through the power of sound. Through sound the world of form can be made manifest, preserved, healed, or destroyed. The concept of sound being the foundation of existence has its personal as well as its cosmic implications. If sound is motion and vibration, and sound is the basis of existence then everything that exists must in some way participate in the vibration of sound. If everything participates in the vibration of sound then everything has a basic vibratory frequency, which identifies the unique qualities of that particular phenomenon.

The Kybalion speaks of the law of vibration, as one of the basic principles of existence. The law of vibration is stated thus: *Everything moves, nothing rests, everything vibrates.*¹²

Within the cosmic ocean of space we find graded expressions of certain vibratory forces. These graded expressions can be defined as Microcosmic and Macrocosmic. In the ageless wisdom we have been taught that the lesser is contained in the greater and the lesser is a miniature model of the greater. If this is true then there must be a sympathetic vibration between the Macrocosm and the Microcosm or it would also follow that through intelligent use of sound an individual could bring him/herself, at least for a brief time, into a clear and

sympathetic rapport with the greater life of which the individual is a microcosmic expression. This rapport would include the multiple parts that make up the Microcosm. Each of the multiple parts has a vibratory correlation with one of the multiple parts of the Macrocosm. With this knowledge of corresponding vibrations we can begin to act intelligently in order to bring the Microcosm into alignment or attunement with the Macrocosm.

With the previous foundation laid concerning the pre-eminence of sound we are ready to employ sound for the purposes of personal evolution. Through the intelligent application of sound we can align our inner energies and forces with the greater external cosmic forces.

Notes:

¹ Sepher Moses is the Kabalistic name given to the Book of Genesis.

² Translated by Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon, *The Zohar* (New York: Rebecca Bennet Publications, No date given).

³ Ben Shahn, *The Alphabet of Creation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1954).

⁴ Ex 20 JER (Jerusalem Bible).

⁵ Gn 1:1-2 JER.

⁶ Three Initiates, *The Kybalion* (Chicago: Yogi Publishing Society, 1927).

⁷ Aryeh Kaplan, *Sepher Yetzirah in theory and Practice* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1987).

⁸ Paul Foster Case, *Sound and Color* (Toronto: Builders of the Adytum, 1967), Lesson 1, 1.

⁹ Rama Prasad, *Natures Finer Forces* (Midras, India: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1884).

¹⁰ Dr. Paul Foster, Case, *Sound and Color* (Toronto: Builders of the Adytum, 1967).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Three Initiates, *The Kybalion* (Chicago: The Yogi Publication Society, 1927), 30.