

KABBALAH TODAY

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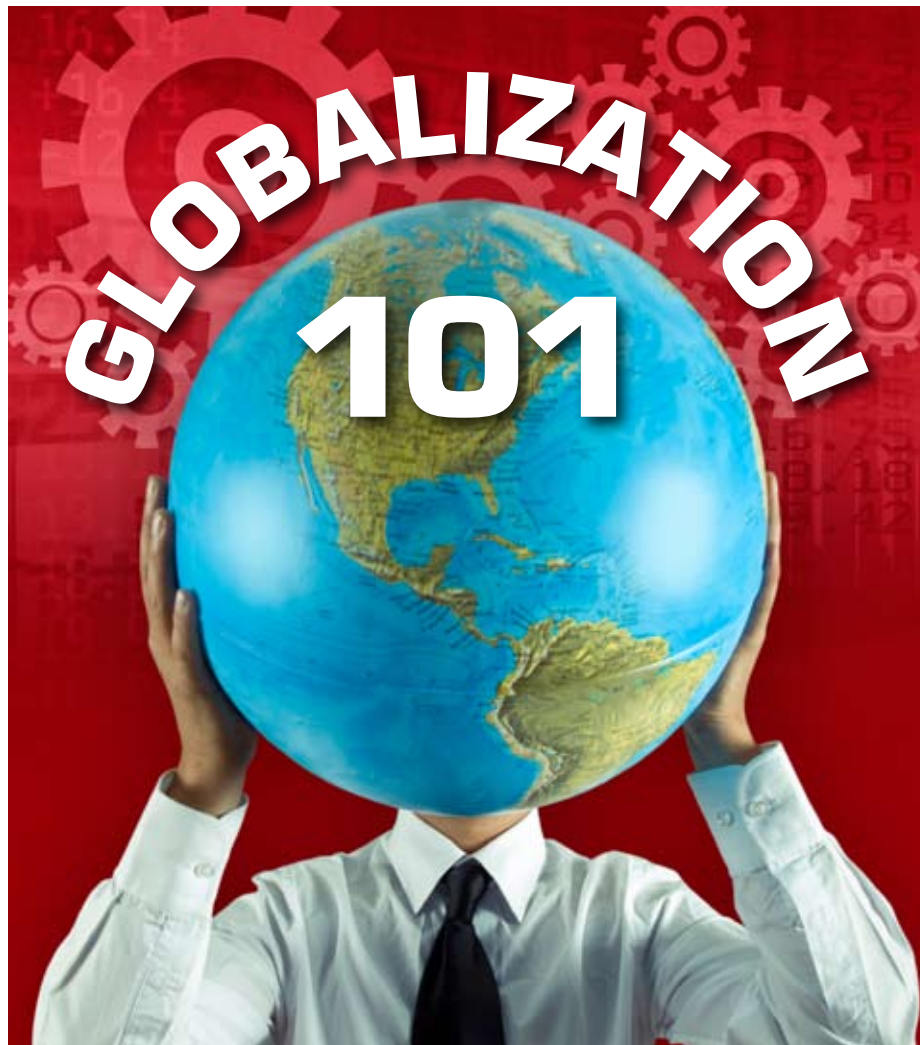
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We live in a globalized world, but few of us know what the word “globalized” actually means, or even more important, how it affects our lives. Welcome to the most urgently needed classroom in the world today

by *Keren Applebaum*

Globalization. This word has only recently been added to our vocabulary and is not yet a clearly formed concept in people’s minds. What is it? “Globalization is the process of transformation of local or regional phenomena into global ones. It can be described as a process of blending or homogenization by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and function together,” is the definition Wikipedia provides.

“Globalization is a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology. This process has effects on the environment, on culture, on political systems, on economic development and prosperity, and on human

physical well-being in societies around the world,” is the definition provided at Globalition101.org.

Kabbalah says, “Globalization is the revelation of a new level of connections between us.”

NOT WHAT YOU’D EXPECT

You would think that shared information, shared joys and troubles, and shared responsibility would be beneficial to us all, but the present financial crisis clearly shows that globalization has only brought us more problems.

Why is this happening? Kabbalah explains that it’s because we are using the integrated global system backwards: instead of learning to work together, we are seeking to dominate and oppress one another.

Editor’s Note

GLOBALIZATION

If we had to find one word to describe the first decade of the 21st century, it would be “globalization.” We have a global economy, global communications and global crises. In this issue, we explore several facets of our globalized world. If you, like so many others, are still unsure what it is all about, *Globalization 101* is for you. It explains what globalization is, and how it differs from our prior worldview.

In *The Changing Nature of Humanity* and *The Divine Conspiracy*, we look at the role of the individual within this globalized world. Society is made up of people, and by their actions, people determine the health of the society. What are the implications for us and the way we live our lives?

Globalization may be a relatively new term, but the idea of breaking down the barriers that separate us is nothing new. *A Wall of Hope* shows one instance where the entertainment industry was prompting us to recognize our interconnectedness more than two decades ago.

Even the way scientific research is conducted reflects our world’s globalization. In *Search of New Frontiers* takes a look at the Large Hadron Collider project in Switzerland – an international collaboration of physicists who have joined together to answer the fundamental questions about our universe and existence.

Finally, if you’re ready for a lighter look at life, check out *Mouse Trap*, an allegory with a message for our new, globalized world.

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“Do not be surprised if I mix together the well-being of a particular collective with the well-being of the whole world, because we have already come to such a degree that the whole world is considered one collective and one society.”

Kabbalist Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam), *Peace in the world*

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This approach has brought us to a sorry place, and now world leaders are scurrying to mend the situation by instituting fairer policies, such as “I’ll scratch your back if you’ll scratch mine.” However, even if we follow this business model, even if we stop lying to each other and start doing “honest business,” it still won’t help. Globalization has brought us to a point where we are like cells in a body. We have become so interconnected that it is useless to do honest business and to create fair global government or a global bank just to save our necks, with the same egoistic calculations in the driver’s seat.

Yet, this is exactly what the world’s political and economic leaders – the G20 – are doing: discussing the creation of a joint, global regulation system. Unfortunately, this will not solve the present economic crisis because the real problem is that we have violated Nature’s all-inclusive law. Our systems mustn’t only be based on fair policies, agreements and honesty; they must also operate as elements of a single system where we consider others as important as we consider ourselves.

Kabbalah cautions us that if we continue building our systems on egoistic laws – even the most open and honest ones, following the rule, “What’s yours is yours and what’s mine is mine,” the system will not work and we will face an even greater turmoil.

IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD, THE RULES HAVE CHANGED

Globalization means that we are discovering our interconnection as parts of a single, global system. As such, we must realize that everything is collective, and the only way to survive is for everyone to care for everybody else. The only things that should be considered “personal” are those necessary for an individual’s existence, while everything else should be the property of all humankind – natural resources, goods and production, education, health care, and everything else. Until we begin to act this way, the crises will not end, and no matter how hard we try to set things right with our egoistic logic, we will continue to suffer one crisis after another.

Kabbalah explains that nature now treats us as a single integral system that follows the law of absolute interconnection of all its parts. No one can escape this law, just as we cannot escape the law of gravity. Essentially, this is the ancient Biblical principle of “Love thy neighbor as thyself.”

One might object that “by doing fair business with others, I already follow this principle.” So what’s the problem? The fact is, even if we create a rational system of interaction between differ-

ent countries following the principle, “What’s mine is mine and what’s yours is yours,” this will create an even greater crisis. Why? Because in doing so, we are still trying to profit from our interconnection. Instead of correcting our use of egoism, we will be increasing it.

As a result, a crisis will arise showing what happens when we try to find a way “around” Nature. Such a crisis will be stronger and more severe than the current one in order to teach us what not to do.

A SMARTER PATH

What does Kabbalah suggest we do instead? It says that we should envision our future form of existence: the functioning of the system of humanity as one integral body. Then, we should immediately put this vision into practice to the best of our ability.

This does not mean we can settle for simply instituting fair distribution. What we can do is accept the principle of “what’s mine is mine and what’s yours is yours” as a first step, while at the same time launching an intensive education effort, in order to teach humanity the laws of our coexistence. This will help people discover that our society is a single body, encouraging them to act accordingly. Only then will we be on the right path, shifting to one of correction, and we will then immediately see the al-

leviation of our suffering.

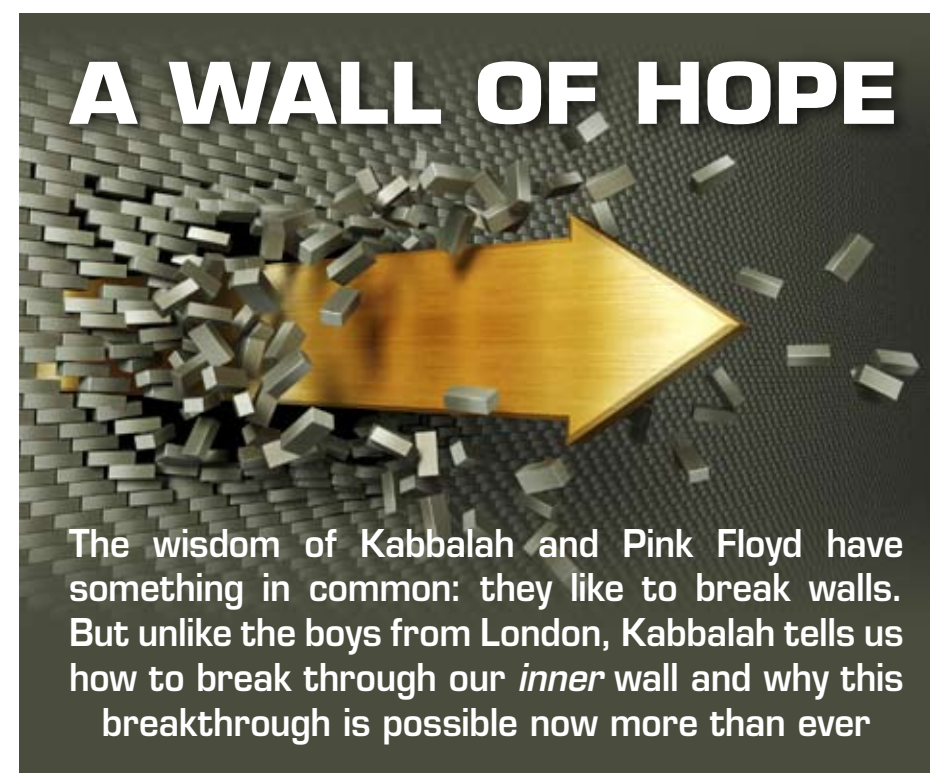
The great 20th century Kabbalist, Rav Yehuda Ashlag, offers this parable: *We have lost our way in the desert and don’t know where to go. Now that we’ve used up all our strength, we’ve realized that it was impossible to avoid wandering in the desert. And now we are discovering the path that we must walk. At the end of the path lies a castle full of all the goodness in the world.*

We are desperate, ready to give up, but all of a sudden, we receive a map from the people who can see everything from above. If we just agree and change our attitude to the world, we will discover that the whole world was created for this path, and we will suddenly find the strength to reach the goal.

Hence, the most practical solution today is to find out about the world we live in to learn about how to exist in an integral system where we are “all in one boat.” In this boat, the salvation of all depends on each individual. Because we live in a global ecology and a global human society, we must learn how to properly incorporate ourselves into this system, where we will all care for each other.

“It would be better for us to take the law of development into our own hands, for then we will rid ourselves of any torment that the developmental history has in store for us.”

Kabbalist Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam), *Peace in the world*



by Asaf Ohayon

“If you intend to slide on the thin ice of modern life, don’t be surprised when a crack appears under your feet,” warned Roger Waters, the leader of the legendary Pink Floyd band, in the beginning of their 1979 masterpiece, “The Wall.”

Waters’ edgy voice was the voice of a whole generation that felt a crack open beneath it, and the first generation that did not want to be educated. It rebelled, shouted, kicked, and stopped playing by the rules, to the sounds of David Gilmour’s electric guitar.

But beyond the harsh indictment against Britain’s strict educational system, “The Wall” was also an allegory about the general condition of humanity. It reflected people’s deep feelings of confusion, fear, and anxiety in the face of new conflicts and challenges. “Break down the Wall!” repeats the choir again and again, and the excited audience responds with a joyous uproar.

But a sober look 30 years later raises the question: Did the wall break after all?

ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

On the outside, it seems that some of the bricks that made up the Floydian Wall have indeed been broken. The iron curtain that separated the East and the West has faded, and the remnants of the Berlin Wall are now a tourist site, while the Great Wall of China is already making its way into the souvenir shop

The world is shrinking into a dense, tightly knit network. With modern technology we can bridge distance and time, which used to separate countries and people. A single click of a mouse now bridges any two points on Earth with one another.

Yet, despite the progress and the cellular and satellite communications connecting us all, something is still missing. There is a growing sense of disorientation, moral degeneration, alienation, violence and terror – the same ailments Waters wrote about almost 30 years ago. These feelings have only strengthened through the years. Somehow, thinking we were removing old walls, we’ve actually been piling up new ones.

COMFORTABLY NUMB

However, all this is only the external layer of the wall that the legendary band had described in song. Waters knew that the wall between us is not external. He was ahead of his time in pointing out that it’s the inner wall, “the wall in our hearts,” that’s the real source of our suffering and confusion.

How was this wall created, and how can it be broken? This is something Floyd didn’t know and didn’t try to explain. Their music burst as a bitter cry from the darkness of modern loneliness, but it couldn’t find the magic hammer that would break the way to the light.

Pink Floyd’s 30th anniversary is fast approaching. Children who grew up

with “The Wall” are now parents to a new generation, wiser and more developed than their parents. They don’t have a sense of purpose and they refuse to continue walking the same worn-out path.

The rebellion of today’s youth is no longer directed against a specific system or institution. The new generation’s lack of interest, alienation, apathy, hyper-activity, loss of values, violence, and most of all – the inability to determine the cause of their frustration – situate them before the real wall: the wall *within* that’s just as impenetrable as it is confusing.

And what about us? How are we dealing with this problem? We are simply going by rote, hoping that our attempts to change this or that framework, or to drug our children into calmness, will suppress the problem.

It is difficult for us to understand that the new questions our children ask offer us an opportunity to find a real solution, questions such as: “Why do we need all this?” and “What is the meaning of life?”

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

The wisdom of Kabbalah explains what Pink Floyd didn’t: It shows us how we can break through our inner wall and why this breakthrough is possible right now.

“At the outset of my words, I find a great need to break the iron wall that has been separating us from the wisdom of Kabbalah and to this day.” This is how the great 20th century Kabbalist, Baal HaSulam, begins his introduction

to one of the most important compositions of our time, *The Study of the Ten Sefirot*. The wall he is talking about is the wall that surrounds our hearts, separating us from the world around us.

The new generation sees that the former generations have failed to make a breakthrough. It is disillusioned with the old approach and understands, albeit unconsciously, that until now we have tried to break the wall with the very instrument that created it: the ego. This is why our attempts were doomed to fail.

To break the wall, we need another method, written by people like Baal HaSulam, who have succeeded in shattering this internal wall, and who tell us about it from their personal experience. Kabbalists, those who broke the ego’s walls, write about the reality they discovered as a result, where we are bonded by love. There are no walls or iron curtains there, and no personal interests, but only feelings of security, peace, and love that fill all people. This reality can be revealed to all of us, here and now.

With “The Wall,” Pink Floyd created the ultimate sound track to modern life. Now it’s time to change the record. The new generation expects a new melody full of hope, carrying the promise of a better life. What we need now is a melody that plays in our hearts, a melody of love and warmth that will enable us to shatter the walls of hatred and alienation that separate us and cause all the suffering in our world. All we have to do is desire to reveal this melody among us. Today, more than ever before, the time and the conditions are just right.

KABBALAH: USER MANUAL

WHAT’S IT ALL ABOUT?

Although we often feel like isolated individuals and see a world of schisms, Kabbalists say that we are all interconnected and interdependent. Much like the cells of a living body, we are all parts of a single entity called “the collective soul.”

Our individual souls are bound together by an Upper Force that can only be described as complete, unconditional love and bestowal. This force not only connects us together, but all other parts of Creation as well – it is Nature’s all inclusive force, “the Creator.”

Those who have developed the ability to perceive this force and the collective human soul are called “Kabbalists.” They explain that this ability lies within every one of us, but remains dormant until we develop it. And from their perspective, it is evident that in the coming phase of human evolution, all people will discover that they are united, will connect to the Upper Force that unites them, and will thereby find true happiness.

To help us get there, Kabbalists gave us the wisdom of Kabbalah – a method by which we can develop our ability to perceive humanity’s collective soul, and connect to the Creator – the Upper Force that enlivens the whole of Creation.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the relationship between Kabbalah, red strings and holy water?

A: There is no relation whatsoever. Red strings, holy water and other products are a lucrative commercial invention created in the past two decades.

Q: Is Kabbalah a religion?

A: No. Kabbalah is a science – the physics of the overall reality. It is a wisdom that reveals the comprehensive reality that is normally hidden from our senses.

Q: Is Kabbalah related to tarot cards, astrology and numerology?

A: No. Tarot cards, astrology and numerology are mystical practices which were mistakenly associated with Kabbalah during the past one hundred years.

Q: What is Kabbalistic meditation?

A: There is no Kabbalistic meditation. Kabbalah teaches a person how to transcend egoism and connect to the quality that prevails in Nature – unconditional love and bestowal.

Q: Are there any amulets in Kabbalah?

A: No. In our world, there are no physical objects that bear any spiritual contents. Amulets can only help a person as a psychological support.



“If man uses science to study nature as Godliness, then it is the wisdom of Kabbalah. However, if man deals with science in order to fill his ego, then this is human wisdom.”

Kabbalist Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam), *The Future Generation*



Exploration has taken mankind to new continents and far-off planets. Now a gigantic underground particle collider will attempt to explore the deepest mysteries of the universe. The billion-dollar question is: Will it succeed, or mark the end of science as we know it?

by Riggan Shilstone

Since the dawn of time, man has been driven to explore his world. Whether it is the exploration of the New World in the 15th century or the search for life on Mars in the 21st, the unknown beckons us with infinite possibilities. Our exploration not only diverts us from the mundane concerns by engaging our imagination with thoughts of what might be, but also promises a brighter future and answers to our deepest questions.

Ever since we conquered the secrets of the readily accessible world, exploration has become the domain of scientists peering into the macro and micro worlds. The far reaches of outer space and the inner workings of the tiniest physical particles are the only places left in our world where we can “boldly go where no man has gone before,” as Star Trek states repeatedly.

THE SUBATOMIC PARTICLE ACCELERATOR – A NEW SCIENTIFIC TOOL

This time, however, rather than seeking to explore new territory, scientists are driven by the desire to unlock the secrets of the universe and of our very existence: Where did the universe come from? What are the building blocks of matter? Is there more to life than what we currently experience? Are there undiscovered principles of nature?

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC), located near Geneva, Switzerland, has

been designed to answer these questions and more. This gigantic, 27 kilometer (16.75 mile)-long instrument can accelerate subatomic particles to 99.999999% of the speed of light. The 8 billion dollar project is a collaboration of over 10,000 scientists and engineers from over 100 countries. It also brings together hundreds of universities and laboratories worldwide that hope that they will be able to generate and study subatomic particles that, until now, were no more than theory.

An experiment called ALICE (A Large Ion Collider Experiment) aims to answer questions about the origin of the universe by recreating - on a minuscule level - the conditions of less than a millionth of a second after the Big Bang. ATLAS (A Toroidal LHC Apparatus) and CMS (Compact Muon Solenoid) will investigate the possibility of other dimensions existing outside of our perception of space, time, and motion.

In fact, the science of Kabbalah investigates these very questions, but its scientific method dates back thousands of years and uses a radically different method of experimentation.

SAME QUESTIONS, DIFFERENT RESEARCH METHODS

Several centuries of conventional scientific research have resulted in vast amounts of data, but each discovery generates new questions. These point to

the need for yet higher levels of knowledge before any phenomenon can be fully grasped. Scientists now recognize that their research is leading them to a primary source of influence that lies outside our world, requiring a drastically different method of investigation.

For thousands of years, Kabbalists have written that the greater part of reality, and the answers to the major questions of life, lie in a dimension beyond the physical world, called “the Upper World.” This dimension contains the origin of everything that exists in our world: every atom, cell, and organism. It contains the causes of every phenomenon in our world, as well as laws of nature that are imperceptible to us in the physical world (similar to the way electromagnetism was unknown to us in the past). There are no material objects in the Upper Worlds, but only forces that affect us and our world.

Furthermore, there is a precise and definite connection between every force in the Upper World (the cause) and its consequence (the effect) in our world. Thus, to study and thoroughly understand any object or phenomenon in our world, we must start by understanding the laws and causes that operate in the Upper World. Then, we can trace their influences downward to see how they impact us in this world, allowing us to see the source and essence of all the complex behaviors and phenomena that baffle us today.

THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE WORLDS

While it is possible to perceive the connections when looking from the Upper World into ours, it is impossible to do the reverse. However, the scientists of our world are trying to do just that - to research non-physical causes and influences from our physical world. With the prolonged stalemate of physics and other physical sciences, scientists are on their way to recognizing that studying the non-physical realm is simply beyond their reach.

It is similar to someone trying to find his way through an enormous maze, where there appears to be no rhyme or reason to the different pathways through the maze. For someone looking at the maze from above, however, the picture is clear: dead ends, hazards, and the path to the exit become obvious. Kabbalists have found the way to rise above the maze of our world, while scientists are still trying to navigate it from within.

Hence, the scientists of this world will not be able to find their way to the Upper World by earthly methods because there is an impenetrable boundary between our world and the Upper World. As researchers approach this boundary, they are discovering that the “unknowns” in their experiments exceed the “knowns.”

THE NEXT STEP FOR SCIENCE: RESEARCH THROUGH THE SIX SENSE

But, one might ask, how then did the Kabbalists discover the Upper World? The answer is, they did it by developing a unique method that enables human perception to surpass our normal abilities, the five senses we were born with. This method allows us to gradually perceive through an additional, sixth sense - a sense that perceives the non-physical and primary part of reality - the Upper World.

However, such perception can never be attained through our inborn five senses. Even if scientists magnify the five senses to super-human levels with such high-tech instruments as the Large Hadron Collider, the difference between the data revealed and our natural sensory capabilities is merely *quantitative* rather than *qualitative*. The instruments simply transform macro and micro measurements, and various physical frequencies, into a range that we can understand and interpret with our normal five senses and our earthly minds. Therefore, these instruments will never be able to encounter and tell us about the Upper World, the realm beyond this world.

On the other hand, projects like the Large Hadron Collider show that scientists are asking the right questions: Where did we come from? Why are we here? What are the forces that control our world?

The problem is, they’re looking for answers in the wrong places. Once science has exhausted all avenues of research in the physical world, it will be ready to experiment with the scientific method of Kabbalah and try a vastly new approach to researching reality. Then, scientists will surely discover new frontiers and find the answers that the world so desperately needs in this turbulent day and age.

“How can we even try to ease one’s mind by promising him equality with all the people? For nothing is further from human nature than that, since one’s sole inclination is to soar higher, above the collective.”

Rav Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam), *Peace in the World*

by Mike Kellog

No one knows what will happen to the economy a second from now. Experts create the most complicated models to try to predict the future based on past experience, but even the most precise statistics are just “icing on the cake,” distracting us from the uncertainty that weighs down on us. More and more, leading economic analysts conclude their articles with a hint: as long as the global markets are uncertain, don’t bet on the future.

What’s really the problem? Can’t we predict what will happen to the systems that we have created? Experts say: “The problem is a combination of too many factors.” However, there is a clearer explanation: the system can no longer continue working as a circular firing squad. Today, in the age of turbo-globalization, you can’t sneeze without the entire system coughing right back at you.

When *Fortune* magazine asked Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve System for nearly twenty years, “What’s going on in the capital markets?” his response was: “It’s essentially part of innate human nature.” He went on to explain, “We have done this time and time again. ... human nature being what it is ... we get the type of markets we have been observing ...” (By the way, he said this back in September 2007.)

However, the problem has grown even bigger now because our situation has changed dramatically: for the first time in history, we have all become an integral system, one whole. This is why none of the old methods - such as regulation - are helping us. We have no choice but to bring our world to equivalence with the new reality. Instead of repeating the old mistakes, let’s use successful, time-tested models as an example. If we look, we will find many wonderful examples of integration and true reciprocity in nature.

THE WISDOM OF NATURE

Take the human body. It is completely dependent on the altruistic behavior of its cells. Each cell works to benefit the organism, keeping only what it needs to continue performing its function. In fact, we are speaking about a law of nature, because every natural system depends on the correct interaction of its parts. As soon as one cell starts harming the organism instead of benefiting it, the rest of the cells unite to help the organism and bring the system back to balance.

Our relationships in the social and business realms must operate by the



Most of us are beginning to notice that something is different about the world: It is “shrinking into a small village” before our very eyes. But what most of us don’t see as easily is that the rules of our interactions have also changed

same laws of nature. The problem is that right now they do not, hence our present crisis. Baal HaSulam, the great Kabbalist of the previous century, wrote: “Every person who breaks the laws of nature deviates from the goal which nature has set for him, and hence nature will punish him mercilessly.”

There are no appeals in nature’s court. Unfortunately, rather than follow nature’s laws, we live by the motto: “Get rich and be bold - no matter at whose expense.” This is what our inner voice whispers to us, and we gladly obey it. And this is where the problem lies. Imagine what would happen if one cell suddenly “changed its mind” and started caring only for itself. Doctors call it “cancer.” Similarly, our present crisis is a symptom of an illness that needs treatment.

HOW DID WE GET CANCER, AND WHERE IS THE CURE?

As soon as humanity ceased being a collection of separate individuals and became a single system, it immediately started being governed by the corresponding laws - the laws of single, in-

tegral systems. We are no longer “forgiven” for the things that we could get away with before. Continuing to live the old way is like jumping off the roof of a skyscraper and hoping for the best. The rules of the game have changed: now, instead of using one another the way separate individuals do, we have to take

care of everyone like the elements of an interconnected system. And until we do it, the crises will continue. There is an effective method that can help us ease the process of changing: social opinion. Everything will become much easier when communication channels, the press, mass media, and the internet will explain to people that we are all parts of one system. In such an arrangement, one individual’s loss is everyone’s loss, and the gain of an individual is everyone’s gain.

The way billions of dollars are being poured into the economy today is like pumping a critically ill person with pain relievers. Instead, we must change our approach at the root, replacing the “I” that currently stands at the center of our worldview, with “the society.” However, this society will not be a mass of separate elements, but a family.

A PERFECT WORLD

Just imagine: everyone around you are your closest relatives, and you sincerely wish all of them to be happy. You help them all, and they feel and behave similarly towards you. In addition, we receive all the assistance necessary to maintain such a lifestyle from our financial institutions.

This is the way to attain balance with nature. The laws operating in a loving family are the very laws that we are now breaking - those of a single, integral, and perfect system. Once we learn these laws and start following them, we will cease being at odds with nature, and it, in turn, will reward us with prosperous social and economic systems.

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“As long as you refuse to take upon yourselves the work of bestowal, then nature and its laws will stand ready to take revenge and will not let go until we accept its authority in whatever it commands.”

Kabbalist Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam), *The Peace*

THE DIVINE CONSPIRACY



If nature were oriented toward self-benefit as we humans are, our bodies would instantly disintegrate. Instead, nature is inherently altruistic, and this is what enables life. But if nature is altruistic for its own benefit, why aren't we?

by Chaim Ratz

The financial collapse is inevitable. In a profit-oriented society, someone will always gain and someone will always lose. And because those who gain become more powerful, it is easy for them to gain more: more money and more power, at the expense of others. This trend exists in all societies on earth, hence the majority of wealth and power is always concentrated in the hands of a small minority.

It would be reasonable to assume that this social deformation is a result of corrupt people, regime, or social structure. But the fact remains that whatever the regime, whatever the social structure, and whomever the people in power, they all perpetuate the same basic pattern by which a small,

wealthy, and powerful minority controls the destiny of the majority.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE NON-PROFIT SOCIETY

This brings up the question: “Can we create a just and sustainable social structure that is not based on the desire for profit?” The answer is “No.” The desire for profit is inherent in human nature; it is the underlying motivation behind everything we do.

In truth, the desire for profit is another way of asking, “What’s in it for me?” Without some gain, we would not be able to lift a finger, much less create a sustainable social structure. In fact, the desire to gain, and especially the desire for superiority is so inherent in

us, it seems as though there is a Divine conspiracy here, a built-in structure, devised in such a way that we cannot defeat it because it is our very nature.

If you examine the writings of contemporary Kabbalists such as Baal HaSulam and others, you will find that they’ve all acknowledged this conundrum and have been pointing out this inherent flaw in human nature for centuries. Moreover, Baal HaSulam stated that if we do not find an alternative motive for action, we will end up in total chaos. The resulting political turmoil will produce fascist regimes, and the consequent collisions between countries will culminate in a third and even a fourth nuclear world war.

While these predictions seemed far-fetched when they were first written, about 60 years ago, today they seem far too likely for us to brush them off.

SHARING THE WEALTH

The crisis, according to Kabbalah, is not in the breakdown of the monetary system. The crisis is simply a symptom of our inherent self-centered nature. Therefore, the solution to all crises, including the current one, is to change our nature from profit-oriented to sharing-oriented.

If we could just change our orientation from self-benefit to collective-benefit, we could not only create a naturally collaborative society, but the collective itself would guarantee the well-being of every individual within it. In other words, we would not have to fend for ourselves; the whole of society would do that for us, and we, in turn, would do so for the whole of society.

In such a society, all regulating mechanisms, armed forces, law enforcement, and tax collection will be redundant. Crime will not exist because no

one will want to hurt another person. On the contrary, people will wish only to share and give. Naturally, a huge amount of resources and people will be freed to engage in socially beneficial enterprises. Within a few years, the world will be so profoundly different that we will look back to our former days of exploiting others in disbelief, marveling at how blind we once were!

MAN: UNIQUE IN THE UNIVERSE

To change human nature from inherently egotistical to inherently integral, we need a method that is unrelated to us and not subsidiary to our current selfish *modus operandi*. This is where the wisdom of Kabbalah comes to our aid. Kabbalah is a science that shows how the already-existing integral structures in nature apply to individuals and to human society at large.

In the whole of nature, humans are the only self-centered being. Atoms, molecules, cells, and organs all collaborate in greater systems than themselves. So do plants and animals. Everything in nature is perfectly fitted to its place in the system - except man.

You might ask, “Then why were we built in contrast to the system to begin with?” The answer is, “There is no other way to learn about a system while you are in it.”

The purpose of our lives is not to dominate others, but to understand and become consciously integrated in the inclusive nature through caring for others as we care for ourselves. The wisdom of Kabbalah is the wisdom of integration. Its techniques allow us to gradually learn our place in the universe. Step by step, it ushers us towards integrating with it.

“Evil is nothing more than self love, called egoism, since it is opposite in form to the Creator, who hasn't any will to receive for Himself, but only to bestow.”

Kabbalist Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam), *The Essence of Religion and Its Purpose*

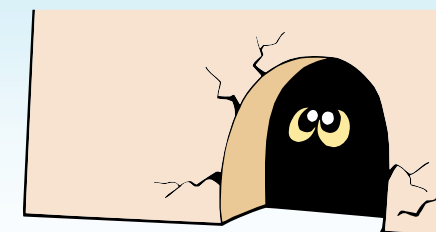
KABBALAH TODAY

KIDS

THE MOUSE TRAP

by Joy Blumenfeld

A little mouse learns a big secret about life, which can help us all



A mouse looked through a crack in the wall and saw the farmer and his wife open a package. “What food might this contain?” the mouse wondered. But when it was opened, he was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning, “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!”

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, “Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it.”

The mouse turned to the sheep and told him, “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!” The sheep sympathized, by saying, “I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse.” Then he added, “However, there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers.”

The mouse turned to the cow and said, “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!” The cow said, “Wow, Mr. Mouse. I’m sorry for you, but it’s no skin off my nose.”

Disappointed, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer’s mousetrap alone.

That very night, a sound was heard in the house - like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey.

The farmer’s wife rushed to see what was caught, but in the

darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail was caught by the trap. Suddenly, the snake bit the farmer’s wife.

The farmer rushed her to the hospital for help, but when she returned home she had a fever.

Everyone knows that the best way to treat a fever is with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard to get the soup’s main ingredient.

But his wife’s sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them all, the farmer had to butcher the sheep.

Still, the farmer’s wife did not get well and one day, she died. So many people came to her funeral that the farmer had to slaughter his cow to provide enough meat for everyone.

Meanwhile, the mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall, shaking his head sadly.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn’t concern you, remember: when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.



We are all involved in this journey called LIFE. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to support each other.

Each of us is a vital thread in another person’s tapestry; our lives are woven together for a reason.

WHAT IS THE SPIRITUAL ROOT OF GOOD AND EVIL?



EXTRAS

Lately there are so many “bad” things happening in the world - bad economies, natural di-

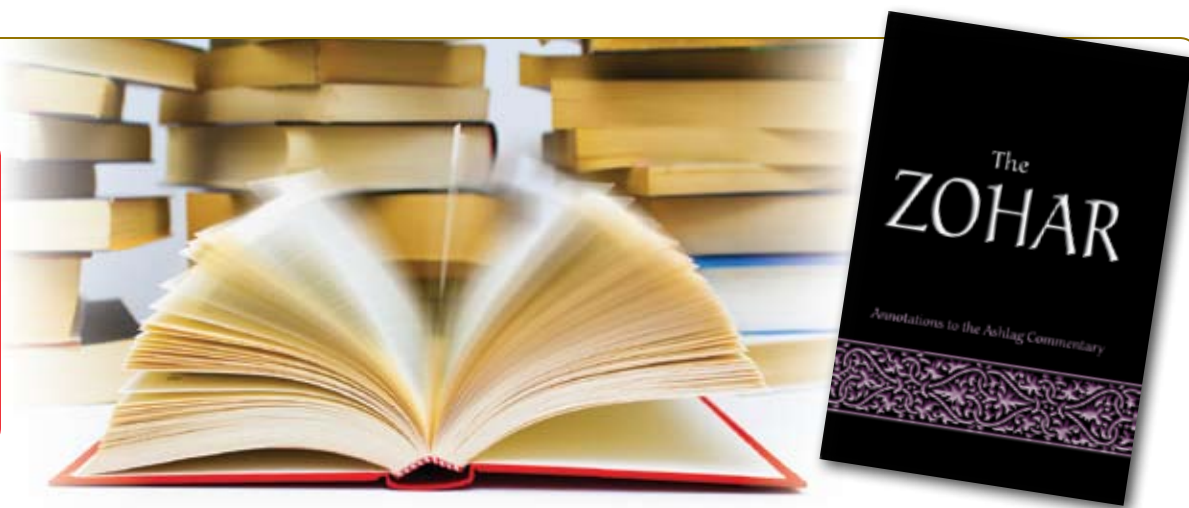
sasters, terrorists, wars, and so on. We all wish that things would just be “good” already - good weather, good bank accounts, a good, peaceful planet, and so forth.

The masterpieces or literature and art explore the drama of the opposing forces of good and evil (remember *Swan Lake*?). To most of us, there’s no question that good and evil are opposites, two extremes.

However, as unlikely as it may be, good and evil only appear to be opposites! Beyond our limited perception of these two forces, they actually share the same spiritual root, because the root of everything in existence is the one, unique

Creator. This root can only be described as the single force that governs everything, a force of absolute bestowal and love.

Only we, human beings, perceive this force dually, depending on whether we are with it or against it. Being “with it” means that our attitudes match the attitude of this force. When we adopt an attitude of love and bestowal for all people, we become attuned to the unique root of nature and can feel it the way it really is - true perfection. When we are “against it” - when our attitude is egoistic and self-centered - we perceive this unique root as the exact opposite, cruel and harsh. The choice is always ours.



FROM THE ZOHAR – ANNOTATIONS TO THE ASHLAG COMMENTARY CONCEALMENT AND REVELATION OF THE CREATOR

Since the Will of the Creator is to grant each human being a free will, then the concealment of the Creator from His creations is necessary. Only if He is hidden can we argue that we can aspire of *our free will* to attach ourselves to the Creator—to act for His sake, without any trace of self-interest.

The entire process of self-correction is possible only when the Creator is concealed from us. As soon as He reveals Himself to us, we immediately become His servants and fall under the control of His thought, grandeur and power.

At that point, it is impossible to determine what our true thoughts are. Thus, in order to allow us to act freely, the Creator has to conceal Himself.

On the other hand, to give us a chance to break free from the blind slavery of egoism, the Creator must reveal Himself. This is so because a human being obeys only two forces in this world: the force of egoism—the body, and the force of the Creator—altruism.

It follows, then, that the alternation of the two states is necessary. These states are the concealment of the Creator from us when we perceive only ourselves and the egoistic forces governing us, and the revelation of the Creator when we feel the power of the spiritual forces.

In order for one who is still under the influence of egoism to perceive the closest Upper Object (the Creator), the Creator must equalize some of His qualities with those of the lower being—the person seeking a connection with the Creator.

He will endow some of His altruistic qualities with egoistic attributes, and can then come into balance with the person seeking connection with Him.



www.kabbalahbooks.info

About Bnei Baruch

Bnei Baruch is a non-profit organization committed to sharing the wisdom of Kabbalah in order to raise humankind's level of spirituality. Its founder and president, Kabbalist Rav Michael Laitman, PhD, was the disciple and personal assistant to Rabbi Baruch Ashlag, son of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag [author of the *Sulam* [Ladder] commentary on *The Book of Zohar*].

Bnei Baruch provides individuals of all faiths, religions, and cultures with the precise tools they will need to embark on a fascinating journey of self-discovery and spiritual ascent. Its teaching method focuses primarily on the inner processes that people experience, each at his or her own pace.

In recent years, a massive world-wide search for the answers to life's questions has been gaining momentum. Society has lost its ability to perceive reality as it is, and in its place, superficial and often misleading concepts have appeared. Bnei Baruch reaches out to all those who are seeking awareness beyond the ordinary, who wish to understand their true purpose for being here.

Bnei Baruch's approach to understanding our experience of life on earth is both practical and reliable. By studying Ashlag's method, based on authentic writings, we can overcome the trials of everyday life, and initiate a process by which we will move beyond our present boundaries and limitations.

In addition to *Kabbalah Today*,

Bnei Baruch offers a variety of avenues for further study. Among them are: Kabbalah TV (www.kab.tv), the Online Kabbalah Education Center (www.arionline.info), and www.kabbalah.info, the largest, most comprehensive Kabbalah site on the Internet.

Bnei Baruch welcomes people of all ages and lifestyles to engage in this rewarding process.

About Kabbalah Today

In 1940, Kabbalist Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag (Baal HaSulam) published the first and, as it turned out, the last issue of his Kabbalah paper *HaUma* (*The Nation*). Its aim was to introduce the ancient wisdom of Kabbalah in a contemporary style and language. The paper was shut down by the British Mandate authorities after having received malicious (and false) information that the journal propagated communism. Nevertheless, the goals for which *The Nation* was published are even more valid today than ever.

Kabbalah Today continues the spirit of *The Nation*. It is a Kabbalah paper that shares the ancient wisdom of Kabbalah in a contemporary style, and aims to reach people from all walks of life. Its sections provide readers with a wide variety of content, presented in different styles and approaches, while guaranteeing that the material is true to authentic Kabbalah texts such as *The Book of Zohar*, *The Tree of Life*, and the writings

of Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag.

No prior knowledge is required to read *Kabbalah Today*.

It is our hope that you will enjoy reading *Kabbalah Today* as much as we enjoy making it.

Sincerely,
Kabbalah Today editorial staff

If you wish to share your comments and feedback with us, please write to:
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Editorial Staff

Executive Editor: Asaf Ohayon

Editorial Board: Chaim Ratz, Tony Kosinec, Keren Applebaum, Riggan Shilstone, Michael R. Kellogg, Mark Zimmerman

Copy Editor: Claire Gerus

Graphic Design & Layout: Galina Kaplunovich, Olga Ohayon, Eugene Nemirovski, Baruch Khovov

Distribution: Ilya Ioffe

Printing: Eugene Levit

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Bnei Baruch Association
PO Box 1552

Ramat Gan 52115, Israel

E-mail: info@kabbalah.info

Web: www.kabbalah.info

Telephone: +972-3-9226723

Fax: +972-3-9226741

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