

# 7

## THE WORLD HE PLACED IN THEIR HEARTS

“Well, congratulations to you Jay,” I exclaim, “you actually hit upon one of the first principles of Chassidic philosophy—the correlation between the cosmic celestial order and the human psychological anatomy. This phenomenon is based on the opening portion of the *Torah*, Genesis, where it states that a human was created in the image of G-d. Did you ever wonder what that means? In what way are we created in G-d’s image? Are we miniature G-ds with G-dly powers? Obviously, not.”

The microcosmic  
order of human  
behavior mirrors,  
the Divine system  
of creation and  
vice versa.

“Speak for yourself, Danni,” interjects Jay, never having lost his raw sense of humor. “Okay, sorry for interrupting, back to your point please,” he prompts.

“The meaning of the statement,” I continue, “is that the microcosmic order of human behavior mirrors, as it were, the Divine system of creation and vice versa. Chabad philosophy, in particular, stresses the analogy between the way human action derives from thought and emotion, and the way in which the universe is spawned into existence. When one studies the human behavioral progression, one gains unprecedented insight into the descending order of the Divine creative energy.

“There is a sequence by which a fleeting idea is nurtured into a fully-fledged thought invested with emotion and, eventually, turns into decision and action. Others only see the final stage of the process, the behavior. But, its essential meaning lies way back, in the first flash of thought that set the process in motion.

“The same is true on a cosmic scale. The world that we see with our

eyes is only the last stage in the chain of descent-Hishtalshelus. Like human action, the macrocosmic ‘World of Action’-‘Olam Ha’asiyah’—tends to mask the preceding worlds, from where it stems and to which it owes its very origins. The latter includes a series of contractions and concealments, known as Tzimtzum, something we’ll get to in due time.

“But, if we were to travel backwards and inwards, we would reach the originating reality—the four metaphysical worlds described in Kabbalah: Assiyah-Action, Yetzirah-Formation, Beriah-Creation, and Atzilus-Emanation. Perhaps we would even reach back beyond the first thought to the personality that conceived it—Ein Sof—which is, of course, infinitely wider than any specific intention into which it is directed.

“This macrocosmic reflection of the Divine order of creation is the meaning of King Solomon’s cryptic words in Ecclesiastes: ‘The world He placed in their [mans’] hearts...’<sup>20</sup>

“By contrast, analyzing the Divine process of creation, as depicted in Jewish mysticism and interpreted through Chassidic philosophy, one acquires deeper insight and understanding of his or her own essential being and modus operandi.”

Our intense conversation is brought to a halt as a flight attendant interrupts with beverage service. Both of us were lost in the discussion, forgetting for a moment where we were. “That’s actually profound stuff, Danni,” says Jay. “I mean I didn’t understand everything you said, but the little that I did, makes a lot of sense.

Chassidic  
discipline  
reveals insights  
into the human  
psychological  
and emotional  
dimension