

SEFER YETZIRAH 6.7



משנה ז': כשבא אברהם אבינו ע"ה הביט וראה והבין וחקר
וחצב וחצב ועלתה ידו הבריאה שנאמר ואת הנפש אשר עשו בחרן
מיד נגלה עליו אדון הכל יתברך שמו לעד והושיבו בחיקו ונשקו על
ראשו וקראו אברהם אוהבי וכרת ברית לו ולזרעו עד עולם נאמר
והאמין בה' ויחשבה לו צדקה. וכרת לו ברית בין עשר אצבעות ידיו
והוא ברית הלשון ובין עשר אצבעות רגליו והוא ברית המילה. וקשר
עשרים ושתים אותיות התורה בלשונו וגילה לו את סודו משכן במים
דלקן באש רעשן ברוח בערן בשבעה נהגן בשנים עשר מזלות:

6.7: And when Abraham our father, may he rest in peace, looked, saw, understood, probed, engraved and carved, He was successful in creation, as it is written, "And the souls that they made in Haran" (Genesis 12:5). Immediately there was revealed to him the Master of all, may His name be blessed forever, He placed him in His bosom, and kissed him on his head, and He called him, "Abraham my beloved" (Isaiah 41:8). He made a covenant with him and with his children after him forever, as it is written, "And he believed in God, and He considered it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). He made with him a covenant between the ten fingers of his hands - this is the covenant of the tongue, and between the ten toes of his feet - this is the covenant of circumcision,

And He bound the 22 letters of the Torah to his tongue and He revealed to him His mystery He drew them in water, He flamed them with fire, He agitated them with Breath, He burned them with the seven [planets] He directed them with the twelve constellations.

(Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan translation)

6:7 As an elder, Abraham, our father, looked and saw and understood and explored and decreed and shaped, and manually caused creation since it is said, “And the person that was made in Haran (Genesis 12:5).” And at once, IT became apparent to him, the Lord of All, blessed is His Name forever. And IT set him in his bosom and kissed him on his head and called Abraham ITS beloved, and IT cut a covenant with him and with his seed until eternity since it is said he relied on God, and IT reckoned it to him as righteousness. And IT cut a covenant with him between the ten fingers of his hands and it is the covenant of the tongue, and between the ten fingers of his feet, and this is the covenant of the flesh.

And IT connected the twenty-two letters of the Instruction to his tongue and revealed to him their secrets. He settled them in water, made them glow with fire, vibrated them with spirit/breath, ignited them with seven planets, and conducted them with twelve constellations.

(Doc Benton translation)

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There are many that say, based upon this passage, that *Abraham* composed the *Sefer Yetzira*, but that is not possible. The alphabet was not in existence in his time, and so he would not have been able to even engage in this discussion of creating the universe through the letters. Others believe that it was the famous *Talmudic* rabbi, *Rabbi Akiba*, who authored the work. Possible, but I have another theory as to its authorship. Based upon the grammatical style of the book, it was probably written, more or less, around the year 200 CE. This was about the time that a great *Talmudic* scholar, *Rav Huna*, was born. This is a name that is probably unfamiliar to most of you, but he is, nonetheless, my best guess as to the true author of the *Sefer Yetzira*. My argument that he is the author is found in my *Introduction to the Sefer Yetzira*.

Nonetheless, I can certainly believe that Abraham understood the basic nature of the universe and the creative process, and additionally, once again we see above that the world is the result of one thing opposite another with a covenant or mediating agreement in between. Furthermore, the creative process can be summarized as beginning with formless inspiration (water), converting it to form (fire), and then animating it with spirit (breath). And in this way, we can create the world we desire. Additionally, the ending reference to planets and constellations suggests that one should make use of astrological timing when creating or, at the very least, that one's creations should be in harmony with the rest of the universe. However, a prerequisite for all of this is righteousness and connection with God since it is written, *"He (Abraham) relied on God, and IT reckoned it to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)"*