

Beit Midrash YeshivahAI

In the series

Daily Tanya Explorations

The Beginning of Created Existence

Iggeret HaKodesh 20



Reader edition · Revised edition 1.6

ו' תשרי תשפ"ז

Human direction · Beit Midrash rabbinic supervision

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Entering the passage

In a few lines of Iggeret HaKodesh, the Alter Rebbe moves through a remarkable range of Kabbalistic ideas. He speaks about the first appearance of created existence, the vessels of the ten sefirot, the lights called neshamah, ruach, and nefesh, the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus, palaces, angels, and the limits of angelic self-nullification.

The language is compact because the passage assumes a map of the spiritual worlds. A reader can easily make one of two

opposite mistakes. One may treat every use of the word “existence” as if it meant the same thing. Or one may assume that every “light” is automatically divine, while every “vessel” is automatically created. The passage does neither.

The central question is this:

How can the first point of created existence include vessels and lights that come from a divine source, while the next section of the same epistle says that the created being has no prior cause or intermediary and is brought into existence only by the Divine Essence?

The passage raises several connected questions:

- Does the word yesh have levels, and if so, what makes one level different from another?
- If the true source of yesh me'ayin is the Divine Essence alone, what does it mean to say that created beings are formed through divine vessels?
- Why are the lights of ruach and nefesh included in created existence, while the neshamah is called divine?
- What are the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus, and why do they become the neshamah of the lower worlds?
- How can there be a form of yesh in Atzilus if the sefirotic vessels of Atzilus are divine?
- What are the palaces and the bodies of angels mentioned in the passage?
- Why does the epistle use the word gufot (“bodies”), and why does it mention angelic bodies rather than human bodies?
- Why does the Alter Rebbe compare the angels’ lack of absolute nullification to an effect relative to its cause, when Chabad texts use other, deeper images of nullification as well?

The answer developed here is precise but modest. The Divine Essence alone is the source of the power to create something that has no prior equivalent. That power can nevertheless operate through divine vessels that are united with the Infinite Light. The vessels are channels of limitation and form; they are not an independent creator. Within the lower worlds, the divine source becomes the neshamah, while the local vessels and the lights of ruach and nefesh belong to the created system.

This booklet explains that distinction in ordinary language while keeping the limits of the sources visible. It is a guide to the passage, not a substitute for learning the larger systems of the Zohar, the writings of the Ari, or the complete structure of Chabad thought.

Method and what this edition adds

The booklet was prepared with assistance from ChatGPT, Grok, and Claude for source finding, comparison, and criticism, under human editorial direction. Agreement between models is not evidence by itself. The central additions in this edition are the explicit separation of source vessels, local receiving vessels, and created lights; the correction of the two thirty-vessel mappings; and the clarification that the physical world reveals the creative power more openly without being the only form of existence created by the Essence. Sources are identified as digital transcriptions, mediated quotations, or unresolved references where that distinction matters.

A ten-point preview

1. “The beginning of created existence” means the first appearance of a created, bounded system in the sequence under discussion. It does not mean that the first created thing is itself a second creator.

2. “Without any prior cause” excludes a created intermediary that could independently explain the new existence. It does not exclude divine concealment, clothing, or channels.
3. The thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus are the divine source that becomes the neshamah of the worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah.
4. The local vessels of those worlds are a different set of vessels. They are the receivers of the divine source and are part of the created system.
5. “Light” describes the relation of life and vitality to a vessel. It does not, by itself, prove that the light is divine rather than created.
6. The light of neshamah remains divine in its role as the descending source, while ruach and nefesh are created lights belonging to the world’s own system.
7. Etz Chaim, Gate 44, gives the local map: three groups of ten vessels become the neshamah of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah. Later Chabad explanations (including Torah Or and the 5731 discourse) give a broader map of Chabad, Chagat, and Nehy as the general NRN profile of the worlds. These maps are related but must not be attributed to one source or collapsed into one table.
8. Spiritual beings are also created yesh me’ayin. Physical existence requires a further leap in the mode of formation, so the power of the Infinite is revealed in it more openly.
9. Palaces and bodies of angels in Atzilus are examples of bounded existence produced from the externality of divine vessels. They are not the divine sefirotic vessels themselves.
10. “As an effect relative to its cause” is a local comparison of modes of formation and nullification. It is not a universal scale listing the highest possible form of bitul.

A. What the epistle says

The central sentence identifies the beginning of created existence with the vessels of the ten sefirot of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah, together with the lights of nefesh and ruach.¹ It says that these are created from the neshamah of those sefirot, which is divine and is identified with the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus. The same passage then distinguishes the divine sefirotic vessels from the heichalot and angel bodies formed from their externality. This is the textual map that guides the rest of the discussion.

B. What does “the beginning of created existence” mean?

The Hebrew word yesh means “something that exists.” In Chabad texts, however, it does not always carry one identical meaning. A vessel of Atzilus may be called an existence because it has limitation and structure, yet it remains divine. A palace or angelic body may be called an existence because it has a more separate, receiver-like status. A physical object is an existence whose concealment of its source is even more pronounced.

This does not create a contradiction in the text. It means that the word must be read with its relationship in view:

- What is the thing?
- From which level does it receive its life?
- How was it formed?
- Does it remain within the divine system, or has it become a created receiver?

¹ Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh 20: The primary source for the beginning of created existence, the lower-world vessels and lights, the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus, palaces, angelic bodies, and creative power.
https://he.wikisource.org/wiki/תניא_הלכות_ב

The phrase “the beginning of created existence” therefore identifies the point at which the discussion reaches a created system. It does not say that all forms of existence are identical, and it does not say that the first vessel in the chain possesses a power of creation of its own.

The next portion of the epistle makes the limiting principle explicit: the new existence comes “without any prior cause or other reason.” The point is not that nothing stands between the Infinite and the created world in the sense that no divine channel exists. The point is that no created cause can explain the new existence by ordinary development. There is no earlier finite substance from which the created being grows as an effect grows from a cause.

The epistle later explains that the Infinite Light becomes clothed in the vessels of the ten sefirot of Atzilus and is united with them in an absolute unity, “to create through them and by them” beings with measure and limit.¹ The vessels give the new beings a defined form. They do not become an independent source of being. The power that renews existence remains the Divine Essence alone.

This is why the two statements fit together:

Statement in the epistle	What it rules out	What it does not rule out
The first created existence begins with the vessels and lights of the lower worlds	The idea that the first created level is itself the ultimate creator	Levels, channels, concealment, and divine vessels
The created being has no prior cause or intermediary	A created cause that could explain the new being by its own power	Divine action through unified vessels

1. Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh 20: The primary source for the beginning of created existence, the lower-world vessels and lights, the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus, palaces, angelic bodies, and creative power. https://he.wikisource.org/wiki/תניא_חלק_ד_כ

Statement in the epistle	What it rules out	What it does not rule out
The Infinite Light is clothed in vessels “through them and by them”	A second independent creative power	Limitation and form within the created order

The apparent contradiction comes from treating “source of form” and “source of existence” as two independent powers. The passage does not do that. The vessels are the form-giving channel; the Divine Essence is the sole source of the power to bring a true yesh me’ayin into being.

C. Why “without any prior cause” is not a contradiction

The phrase “without any prior cause or other reason” rules out a created intermediary that could explain the new existence by its own power. It does not rule out divine clothing and channels. The epistle immediately says that the Infinite Light is clothed in the vessels of the ten sefirot of Atzilus and creates “through them and by them” beings with measure and limit. The source and the channel answer different questions. The Divine Essence alone supplies the power to create true yesh me’ayin. The united vessels supply the form, limit, and order through which that power produces a finite result. If the vessels were independent causes, the passage would contradict itself; if all clothing were denied, the passage’s own description of “through them and by them” would disappear.

D. Three distinctions that must be held together

The most useful clarification is not to imagine three separate layers stacked one above another. It is to identify three distinct roles that overlap in the same spiritual arrangement.

A. The divine source that becomes neshamah

The thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus are the source of the neshamah of the ten sefirot of the worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah. They belong to Atzilus and are divine. Their descent and clothing within a lower world does not turn them into created vessels.

The word neshamah here therefore means more than “a soul” in the psychological sense. It identifies the divine vitality that gives the lower system its life from above.

B. The local vessels that receive the source

Each world of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah has its own local vessels. These are not the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus. The divine source becomes clothed within them, and they receive the vitality that makes their world a defined system.

The local vessels are part of the created order. The original passage itself calls the vessels of the ten sefirot of the worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah the beginning of created existence. The detailed language of the Ari describes them as “other vessels” belonging to the lower system. Thus the divine vessel of the source and the created vessel of the receiver cannot be described with one undifferentiated sentence.

C. The lights of neshamah, ruach, and nefesh

The words *or* (“light”) and *keli* (“vessel”) describe a function: vitality and the receiver of vitality. The words “divine” and

“created” describe status and source. These are two different axes.

The light of neshamah is identified with the descending divine source. It remains divine in that role. The lights of ruach and nefesh belong to the lower world’s own system. They are still “lights” in relation to their vessels, but their lights themselves are already included in the created side of the arrangement.

This answers the question that initially seems most difficult: How can ruach and nefesh be lights and nevertheless be created? “Light” tells us what they do for a vessel. It does not tell us that they are the Divine Essence or even that they remain at the level of the divine source. A created light is still a light relative to the vessel it animates.

The sources state the boundary in the language of the Ari: in the lower worlds, neshamah, chayah, and yechidah are described as divine, while “from ruach onward” the arrangement belongs to the world of separation. Iggeret HaKodesh 20 is discussing the neshamah, ruach, and nefesh terms in its own local sequence; it does not spell out every level of the full NRNCHY structure. This gives us the structure of the distinction. It does not, in this passage, provide a full philosophical derivation explaining why the boundary must begin precisely at ruach.

That remaining question should be stated honestly. We can explain the difference between the categories; we should not pretend that we have extracted the first inner reason for every detail of the Ari’s map.

E. The thirty vessels: two mappings that must not be confused

The phrase “thirty vessels” appears in more than one explanatory framework. The frameworks complement one another, but they should not be collapsed into one table.

The local map: the source of each world’s neshamah

Etz Chaim, Gate 44, describes three groups of ten vessels belonging to Malchut or Nukva of Atzilus.² They descend into the three lower worlds and become the neshamah of the corresponding world:

Group of vessels from Malchut of Atzilus	World receiving them	Role there
Ten inner vessels	Beriah	Neshamah
Ten middle vessels	Yetzirah	Neshamah
Ten outer vessels	Asiyah	Neshamah

The vessels of the lower world into which they are clothed are a separate set. The expression “becoming neshamah” describes their role toward the lower receiver; it does not erase the identity of the local receiver.

The general map: NRN for the worlds as a whole

Later Chabad explanations describe the thirty vessels of Atzilus in a broader arrangement: the inner vessels, associated with Chabad, correspond to neshamah for Beriah; the middle vessels, associated with Chagat, correspond to ruach for Yetzirah; and the outer vessels, associated with Nehy, correspond to nefesh for Asiyah. Each world also contains its own internal inclusion of the three levels.

2. Etz Chaim, Gate 44, chapter 1: Thirty vessels of Nukva of Atzilus and the local mapping of inner, middle, and outer vessels. https://he.wikisource.org/wiki/עץ_חיים/שער_מד/פרק_א

This is a general map of the spiritual character and structure of the worlds. The local map explains which divine group becomes the neshamah of each world. The same word—neshamah—appears in both descriptions because the relationship has changed. There is no need to erase either map, and there is no license to identify every use of “ruach of Yetzilah” with the created light of ruach that the epistle is discussing locally.

One more caution concerns the number thirty. The sources discuss the relationship between the twenty-seven vessels of Zeir Anpin and the completion supplied by Nukva, and elsewhere describe a ten-sefirot structure with thirty vessels. The count must therefore be read in its local context. In Iggeret HaKodesh 20, the wording itself identifies the thirty vessels as those of Malchut of Atzilus; no conclusion needs to be built from the number alone.

F. Why are the lights of nefesh and ruach created?

“Light” and “vessel” describe function: vitality and the receiver of vitality. “Divine” and “created” describe source and status. A light can therefore be created relative to its source while remaining a light relative to its vessel.

The neshamah is the descending divine vitality associated with the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus. The local vessel that receives it is a different vessel in the lower world. The lights of ruach and nefesh belong to the lower system itself. The sources state the boundary as “from ruach onward,” while the broader Etz Chaim passage also describes neshamah, chayah, and yechidah in the lower worlds as divine. The structure is clear; the first inner reason for the exact boundary remains open.

G. Spiritual and physical existence

The passage is not limiting yesh me'ayin to physical matter. The vessels of the lower worlds, spiritual souls, and angels are also brought into being in a way that cannot be explained as ordinary cause and effect. The same creative power is active in spiritual and physical existence.

At the same time, the physical world has a special quality. The physical is not simply a weaker spiritual object. The transition from spirituality to physical substance is a further leap in the mode of formation. An identified digital transcription of Derech Mitzvotcha states that even an enormous number of contractions ³ and stages of spiritual descent would not, by themselves, produce dense physical matter. Physical existence therefore reveals the power of the Infinite more openly, even though the spiritual worlds were also created yesh me'ayin.

This distinction requires several measures to be kept separate:

1. **The level of the created being:** a spiritual being may be higher in refinement and awareness than a physical object.
2. **The mode of formation:** physical substance requires a further leap beyond spiritual sequence.
3. **The revelation of creative power:** the physical can display the limitless power of the Infinite more openly.
4. **The creature's own feeling:** a creature may feel itself to be an independent existence. That feeling is not conscious recognition of the Divine Essence.
5. **The purpose of creation:** the lower world is connected with the purpose of making a dwelling for the Divine in the "lower realms."

3. Derech Mitzvotcha, Shores Mitzvat HaTefillah, pp. 129a-130b: Identified digital transcription pages on spiritual and physical yesh, the further leap to physicality, and greater revelation of creative power; no print scan was checked. <https://chabadlibrary.org/books/2900630394>

These are not one scale. A spiritual being may be more refined, while the physical world may reveal more clearly the power that is not bound by spiritual gradation. “More revelation of the creative power” does not mean “more awareness of the Essence.”

The discussion of the end of the line and the principle that “the beginning is rooted in the end” adds another dimension: the completion of the line in the lowest realm is connected with the purpose of revealing the creative power precisely where concealment is greatest. This is an important direction of the explanation, but it should not be used to flatten all distinctions between Essence, surrounding light, the line, and the vessels. The surrounding light is still an illumination; it is not simply identical with the Essence.

H. “Likewise in Atzilus”: heichalot and angel bodies

The expression “Atzilus” does not mean that every object mentioned in connection with Atzilus has the same status as the sefirotic vessels.

The vessels of the ten sefirot of Atzilus are divine. The epistle then says that from the externality of those divine vessels there are formed the palaces of Atzilus and the bodies of the angels of Atzilus, which are a form of yesh.

This is a crucial distinction:

In Atzilus	Status in the passage
Sefirotic vessels	Divine; united with the light
Palaces (heichalot)	Bounded existence formed from the externality of the vessels

In Atzilus	Status in the passage
Bodies of angels	Bounded spiritual existence, not the divine vessels themselves
Souls of angels before descent	Described as resembling divinity in a very great contraction, rather than as independent yesh

The term “yesh hane'etzel” must also be handled carefully. In later Chabad explanations it can describe a relative level of existence: something that is “emanated” and connected to its source, or Atzilus viewed as an existence relative to the Divine Essence. It is not a rigid third category that turns every vessel of Atzilus into a created object. The context decides what the term is doing.

Palaces and surrounding influence

The epistle says that a form of the “circles” (igulim) is clothed in the palaces. Etz Chaim explains that surrounding lights are too great to be compressed even into very large palaces. This corrects a tempting but inaccurate explanation: the palace is not simply a container large enough to hold the surrounding light inside it.

The safer meaning is relational. The surrounding influence is associated with the circles and palaces as an encompassing presence, not as a small inner light that has entered a vessel in the ordinary way. The word “clothed” here should therefore not be turned into a simple physical picture of a large object entering a larger box.

Why mention angels?

The term “bodies of angels” does not mean physical human bodies. In the spiritual vocabulary of the passage, a body is the defined, receiving side of an angelic existence. The soul of the

angel is treated differently and is described as resembling divinity before its descent into the lower worlds.

The passage does not provide a complete account of the material or composition of an angelic body in Atzilus. Nor does it explain conclusively why the order of the examples is first palaces and then angelic bodies. A reader may notice that the movement seems to pass from a surrounding structure to beings within the spiritual system, but that is an interpretive possibility, not a source-proven reason.

The same caution applies to human bodies. A human body may have an exalted root, but a root is not the same as the physical body's location. The epistle chooses bodies of angels as an example of bounded spiritual existence in Atzilus; it does not follow that physical human bodies are therefore situated in Atzilus.

The plural *gufot* ("bodies") is a normal Hebrew plural of *guf*. It does not mean corpses, and no special Kabbalistic significance has been proved from the choice of this plural form.

I. Atzilus angels and Tanya chapter 39

Tanya chapter 39 speaks about the station of ordinary angels in Yetzirah and immediately qualifies the statement by mentioning higher angels in Beriah. The present epistle speaks about bodies of angels formed from the externality of the divine vessels of Atzilus. It does not identify those bodies with the ordinary angels of chapter 39, and no source in this study identifies one particular angel as simultaneously having its body in Atzilus and its ordinary station in Yetzirah.

Three questions must remain separate: *medor*, the place of service; *root*, the source from which a being is drawn; and *mode of formation*, the way its defined side comes into

existence. The body/soul distinction in the epistle is also essential: the body is a bounded yesh, while the soul before descent is described as resembling divinity in great contraction.

J. “Gufot,” “which is divinity,” and the verse in Job

Gufot is a regular Hebrew plural of guf. The Rambam uses it for bodies in cosmological and natural contexts; it does not mean corpses and does not itself prove a feminine grammatical category. No special Kabbalistic nuance has been established from the choice of gufot over gufim.

The common textual form in the epistle is she-hu Elokut, “which is divinity.”¹ A grammatical discomfort is not permission to emend it to she-hi. No identified manuscript or early printed witness was obtained here.

The verse “In His servants He places no trust, and in His angels He places defect” is Job 4:18, spoken by Eliphaz. It supports the general point that angels are not in absolute, unqualified nullification. By itself it does not identify Atzilus, angel bodies, or the body–soul distinction.

K. Why compare the angels to an effect relative to its cause?

Earlier in the same epistle, the effect in an ordinary chain of cause and effect is described as nullified before its cause “like the radiance of the sun within the sun.” The comparison here is local: it contrasts a formation in which the effect has some apprehension and relation to its cause with yesh me’ayin,

1. Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh 20: The primary source for the beginning of created existence, the lower-world vessels and lights, the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus, palaces, angelic bodies, and creative power.
https://he.wikisource.org/wiki/תניא_חלק_ד_כ

where the created being has no comparable value to the power that brings it into existence.

The phrase is not a universal ladder of every form of bitul. “Like the radiance of the sun within the sun” is being used to clarify the relation of cause and effect, not to claim that all cause-and-effect nullification is the final or highest category in every Chabad context. Likewise, “like the source” describes resemblance and relation; it does not erase the distinction between an illumination and the Divine Essence.

L. What is yesh ha-ne’etzel?

The phrase yesh ha-ne’etzel is not used in the central sentence of Iggeret HaKodesh 20 itself. Later Chabad explanations use it relationally: for an emanated form that is measured yet connected to its source, for Atzilus as a whole in relation to the Divine Essence, and in some commentaries for structures associated with Atzilus. It is not a rigid category that turns the divine sefirotic vessels into created objects. Each use must be read against the comparison being made: source and receiver, Essence and emanation, or emanation and creation.

M. The worlds seated in the skull

The epistle says “it is close to say” that the thousands and myriads of worlds seated in the skull of Arich Anpin and Zeir Anpin are not actual worlds like the heichalot of Atzilus and a form of yesh, but rather resemble the souls of angels. The cautious wording and the explicit contrast must be retained. Digital transcriptions of the Idrot provide separate parallels: one associated with Zeir Anpin and another with Arich/Atika. They do not prove that the epistle is quoting one continuous passage, and they do not independently settle the status of

these worlds. The source's qualification remains the controlling statement.

N. What is established and what remains open

The following points are established sufficiently for the reader's guide:

- “Beginning” marks the first appearance of created yesh in the order, not an independent creator.
- “Without prior cause” rules out a created intermediary, not divine clothing in vessels.
- The thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus become neshamah for the three lower worlds, while local receiving vessels are distinct.
- Nefesh and ruach can be lights functionally and created in status.
- Spiritual and physical existence are both created by the power of the Essence; physical formation involves an additional leap and a more open revelation of that power.
- In Atzilus, divine sefirotic vessels must be distinguished from the heichalot and angel bodies formed from their externality.

The following remain open: the first inner reason for the neshamah/ruach boundary; the complete definition of an angel body in Atzilus; the reason for the order of heichalot and angel bodies; the textual question she-hu/she-hi; the full range of uses of yesh ha-ne'etzel; the unresolved Gate 47, chapter 12 reference; and the previous booklet's question about Moses' apprehension of the inner dimensions of Netzach, Hod, Yesod, and Malchut.

O. How to read the passage again

Iggeret HaKodesh 20 does not say that a created source gives birth to created existence. It says that within the ordered process there is a point at which bounded existence appears: the vessels of the lower worlds and the lights of nefesh and ruach. They are created from the divine neshamah, identified with the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus.

The words “light,” “vessel,” “divine,” and “created” answer different questions. The divine neshamah can animate a created receiver. Ruach and nefesh can be lights whose own status is created. A spiritual being can be higher in the order of existence while physical formation can reveal the creative power more openly. Atzilus can be divine in its sefirotic vessels while containing bounded structures formed from their externality.

The passage becomes a map when its relationships are kept distinct: source, receiver, created vitality, spiritual and physical yesh, and the local comparison of cause and effect.

Continuity with the preceding booklet

This study continues the earlier reader booklet on “Attainment and Emanation in Atzilus.” The earlier study distinguished a relative existence from a created existence, examined the meaning of inner attainment, and warned that not every process called “development” is identical with ordinary cause and effect. The present passage moves from those questions to the beginning of created existence in the lower worlds and to the relative forms of existence that can appear even in connection with Atzilus.

The two booklets should therefore be read together, but this booklet is written as a self-contained guide. The earlier

unresolved question about Moses and the inner dimensions of the lower sefirot is deliberately not folded into the present conclusion.

Short glossary

Atzilus — The World of Emanation, the world in which the sefirot and their vessels are described as divine.

Beriah, Yetzirah, Asiyah (Biya) — The three lower worlds: Creation, Formation, and Action. Their vessels and created inhabitants are discussed as the beginning of created existence.

Bitul — Nullification before a higher source. The precise meaning depends on the relationship being described.

Cause and effect (ilah ve'alul) — A mode of development in which an effect follows from a cause and retains a certain relation to it.

Divine Essence (Atzmut) — The Divine Essence, beyond the category of a created cause. In the passage's argument, only the Divine Essence has the power to create true existence from nothing.

Ein Sof — The Infinite Divine, often discussed in relation to the light that flows from it.

Kav — The measured line of divine light within the ordered system of the worlds.

Sovev — The surrounding mode of divine illumination. It is an illumination, not a synonym for the Divine Essence itself.

Heichalot — Palaces or spiritual structures associated with a world and its surrounding influences.

Igulim — “Circles,” a term for an encompassing mode of influence, contrasted with direct inward integration.

Kelim — Vessels. They define and receive divine vitality; a vessel can be divine or created depending on which vessel is meant.

Malchut / Nukva — The tenth sefirah, described in this context as the source of the thirty vessels that become the neshamah of the lower worlds.

Nefesh, ruach, neshamah (NRN) — Three levels of life or soul. In the local arrangement studied here, neshamah remains divine while ruach and nefesh are created lights.

Yesh — Something that exists. The word is relative to the source, mode of formation, and level of separation being discussed.

Yesh me'ayin — Creation of something from nothing, meaning that no prior substance or created cause explains the new existence.

Central sources

The short list below follows the Hebrew reader edition. The research edition keeps the full S01–S31 registry; the reader list is a guide, not a claim ledger.

1. **Iggeret HaKodesh, Epistle 20 — Tanya, Part IV.** The primary source: “the beginning of created existence,” the vessels and lights of the lower worlds, the thirty vessels of Malchut of Atzilus, the palaces and angelic bodies, creation from nothing, the Kav and Sovev. Read the epistle.
2. **Etz Chaim, Gate 44, chapter 1.** Thirty vessels of Nukva of Atzilus, their inner, middle, and outer divisions, and the boundary between neshamah and “from ruach onward.” Read chapter 1.
3. **Etz Chaim, Gate 44, chapter 2.** The local vessels of Nukva in the worlds of Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah; the descent of the source vessels into them; and the distinction between divine neshamah and the world of separation. Read chapter 2.
4. **Ma'amarei Admor HaZaken, 5566, Part I, pp. 78 and 96.** The distinction between the created local vessel, the divine light of neshamah, and the created lights of ruach and nefesh. These are identified digital transcription pages; no print scan was checked. p. 78 · p. 96.

5. **Derech Mitzvotcha, Shoresch Mitzvat HaTefillah, pp. 129a–130b (sections 26–28).** Identified digital transcription pages state that spiritual existence is also yesh me'ayin, while the transition to physical substance requires an additional leap and reveals the power of the Infinite more openly. No print scan or first-edition verification was made. 129a · 129b · 130a · 130b.
6. **“Mitzvatah Mi-she-tishka ha-Chamah,” 5738.** A later explicit comparison: within the lower worlds, the main revelation of the power of the Essence is in the formation of physical yesh. This is a digital transcription of a later source, not the Alter Rebbe's wording in Epistle 20. Digital transcription.
7. **Tanya, Likkutei Amarim, chapter 39 and its gloss.** The “dwelling place” of ordinary angels and the qualification concerning higher angels. Read chapter 39.
8. **Job 4:18, with the classical commentaries.** “In His servants He places no trust, and in His angels He finds defect.” The verse supports the point that created angels are not absolute, unqualified nullification; by itself it does not identify the Kabbalistic structure of Atzilus. Read the verse.
9. **Zohar, Idra Zuta and Idra Rabba.** Separate parallels for the motif of worlds resting on a skull: one in the context of Zeir Anpin and another in the context of Arich/Atika. They do not establish a single continuous quotation from the epistle. Idra Zuta.
10. **Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Foundations of the Torah, chapters 2–4.** Linguistic evidence that gufot is a normal plural and does not mean corpses or imply a feminine grammatical category. Chapter 2 · Chapter 4.
11. **The preceding booklet, “Attainment and Emanation in Atzilus.”** The present booklet continues its distinctions between relative yesh, apprehension, formation, and angels, while recording that the question concerning the inner level of NeHiYM remains open.

Closing

This reader edition presents the established structure and keeps the remaining questions visible. It is intended to accompany the research edition and the preceding booklet, not to replace study in Tanya, Etz Chaim, and the relevant Hasidic works.