

The Midat Hayom

Torah encompasses infinitely more than halacha, law, doctrine, history, philosophy. Torah is beyond any static document, words or texts. Torah is a context for reality, an ever-branching and unfolding *way* of viewing life, the *Way of the Lifetree*, the *Way of God (Derech Hashem)*; a path through the existential tangles of life. Our lives, too, encompass infinitely more than halacha, law, doctrine, history, philosophy etc. Our lives, as Creation itself, are endlessly complex works-in-progress, beyond static solutions.

Fulfilment knows no shortcuts and long-term happiness eludes pursuit. Yet both magically emerge within a devoted and resolute quest for fundamental understanding and for actualising the full richness of life's potential. The Quest for fundamental understanding and for actualising the full richness of life's potential is an unfolding way, the *Way of the LifeTree*, the *Way of God*.

Within the Way lies the sequence of Creation itself, the matrix of God's direction of the cosmos, and the bedrock of human psychology, relationships and wholeness. The *Way of the LifeTree* demands realistic, faithful, and uncompromisingly rigorous exploration. *The double-edged Sword guards the Way of the LifeTree (Bereshit 3:24)* against wishful thinking, subjective projections, obscure mysticism, fashionable catchwords or vacuous spirituality.

This matrix is a coherent system of astonishing complexity that develops all the multiplicity of interconnections between its elements. The contribution of *kabbala* to the Way was the elucidation of the *sefirot*, the 'number system' (*sefirah* actually means 'number'!) included in the *Derech Hashem*. Working at low resolution this simple framework can be applied to each element of the framework itself to yield greater resolution and more details, details that can themselves be again elucidated by applying the same framework at the greater level of resolution yielding yet more details at yet higher resolution, ad infinitum. This can be done to whatever arbitrary level of 'filling in the map' one desires.

Thus any one of the *sefirot* is definable only in terms of the details of the full framework of the seven *sefirot*. This is how the forty-nine days of the *Sefirat haOmer* leading to Sinai are built of seven *sefirot*: They are each defined in terms of the interrelating seven *sefirot*, giving us a total of $7 \times 7 = 49$. That is also why the *sefirot* cannot be defined in advance, for their definitions emerge from their own interconnecting nature.

Each installment that makes up the Midat Hayom shiur series is another point on a complex graph that is recursively defined so it essential that you go in order. If you then build patiently one by one, day by day, you will be rewarded with a full pattern in the end.