

Prologue for Zadkiel

The Archangel Zadkiel is the ruler of the Sixth Choir or Hall of Heaven. He is the instrument of divine justice, but justice tempered with compassion. It was Zadkiel who held back Abraham's hand and spared the life of Isaac. Zadkiel acted not from his own will but as the instrument of God. Yet despite this impartiality, in this act he was the embodiment of mercy. Zadkiel was the agent of compassion steeled with purity of intent that enabled Abraham's complete surrender. That surrender of Abraham fueled a transformation that rendered a terrible wrong into an affirmation of what is most true. A sacrifice of self that gave the traditions of the Books four millennia of life.

It is in Zadkiel's Sixth Chamber that justice and righteousness are most perfectly expressed and made manifest. Every impulse towards fairness and act of justice are inspired by the passage of Zadkiel through the chamber and awakened in human hearts.

The profound reality of Zadkiel and the Sixth Heaven where he presides is known through the lens of many different cultures. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Hermeticism, Gnosticism all acknowledge this sacred space that is indistinguishable from its ruler. The Romans recognized Jupiter, the king of the gods, in the Sixth Chamber, as did Dante in the Paradiso of his Divine Comedy. In Cantos 19 and 20, Dante described the 6th sphere as the final resting place of all just rulers who through the imperial eagle announce with one voice the justice of God.

The Ayyavazhi Hindus acknowledge the 6th loga or heaven as the Sivaloga atop Mount Kailash in the Himalayas on the Tibetan border, the dwelling place of the supreme god, Shiva sometimes called Parameshwara. Shiva is alternately called "The Destroyer" and "The Transformer" who breaks the bonds of attachment, dispels ignorance, and breaks identification with inner and outer forms. Shiva destroys to clear the way for new creation. The Cosmic Dancer who performs the Dance of Bliss gracefully undulating his four arms; his 3rd eye gazing hypnotically from his forehead; a snake, a symbol of kundalini, is coiled around his neck, and a silvery cool crescent moon rests atop his head as an incarnation of the Grail. On the mountaintop, Shiva lives with his wife, Parvati, the Great Goddess, and their son, Ganesh, the god of prosperity, who surely has a special affinity for our school.

All these seemingly divergent forms are merely different guises of a reality more profound than the sleeping human intellect can grasp. But hidden in these currents and no less powerful or pervasive in its impact is the sure signature of Zadkiel shining through all illusory forms. As the Voyager's Quatrain unequivocally states, "All phenomena is illusion."

The great Vajrayana sage, Milarepa, seeking to establish Buddhism in Tibet engaged in a magical battle with the Bon shaman, Naro-Bon-chung to win the heart of the Tibetan people. It is said they battled for many days with no clear victor. The final

and decisive stage of the battle was a race to the top of Mount Kailash, the same mountain associated with Shiva. Milarepa won, but in a gesture of generosity and compassion tossed a snowball to Naro-Bon-chung. A gesture understood to symbolize the syncretic integration of the new dispensation of Buddhism with the old shamanic Bon tradition. There could hardly be a more perfect expression of the Archangel Zadkiel's righteous compassion and sense of justice that transcends ego.

Zadkiel's mystery is the reconciliation of weakness and strength. Just as he stayed the hand of Abraham and showed how the sacrifice of faith could yield transformation, Zadkiel slips weakness from its karmic chains and reveals its new form as a unique and singularly creative manifestation that is the true and strong expression of the One.