

# The Dwelling

As we explained last week, the movement inwards is comprised of a gradation of levels- each more external than the next.

The most exterior of the interior is what the Arizal describes as *heichal*, or the dwelling.

When conjuring up feelings of warmth and safety we imagine our homes. The concrete edifices which man has utilized to protect themselves from the extremes of the outside signifies the utilitarian nature of the human beings' manipulation and control of inanimate objects. The home, in any of its manifold forms serves to shield the transient subject from the horrors of the uncontrollable.

When examining the dwelling from this perspective, the harsh and harrowing outside, the Lacanian Real, the Levinasian *there is*, the uncontrollable otherness of being which resists man's infinite drive to integrate and reduce the foreign to the same is enforced. Were it not for the home man would be sentenced to the insidious nature of *outside-ness*.

However, the dwelling serves a further, more internal purpose as well. The walls and windows that serve to protect also serve to enclose. Within the walls of the home the person finds himself in the state, described by Gaston Bachelard in his *Poetics of Space*, of at-homeness. Safe and warm within the confines of one's own space, the subject is able to be, to engage being itself. The state-of-mind within the home is that of memory. A familiar step, a corner, or crevice throws us back into the stream of the ancient-days. The intimacy of the home cradles us and reminds us of innocence, of a past so present that the temporal bounds of *outside-ness* fall away as we enter into the time of memory and playfulness.