

# Chapter 1

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## Background

### FROM TENTS TO TEMPLES TO RABBINICAL SECTS

The universal mystical spirituality of the children of Abraham is a robust, precious, and little known heritage upon which the fabric of the Judaic, Christian, Islamic, and perhaps even the Tantric religions are woven. In this book, that heritage is called the Mystical Qabalah.<sup>1</sup> Within the context of Rabbinical Judaism, this mystical tradition has come to be known as the Jewish Kabalah, and in Islam, as Sufism (Arabic *tasawwuf*). The Christian Cabala emerged from the mystical side of Christianity, which developed as a parallel tradition to Pauline dogma as it diverged and became estranged from its Judaic roots. The Christian Cabala evolved as a way to harmonize Jewish kabbalistic doctrines with Christian theology. The precise usage of the word *Qabalah* to denote the ideas and practices of the esoteric teachings and the secrets of the **Torah** emerged from the circle of Yitza'aq the Blind (1200CE), and was used in the same context by Eleazar of Worms (beginning of the thirteenth century).<sup>2</sup>

The word *Qabalah* (קבלה lit. receiving, also “welcoming of God”) alludes to a dynamic state of direct communication and mystical union of the individual soul with the Divine. In that sense, it is synonymous with the Sanskrit word *Yoga* (lit. union with or absorption in the Divine). The rich spiritual potential of the Mystical Qabalah has long been obscured and overshadowed by the preponderant visibility of the Magical or Practical Qabalah, whose disciples pursue power as a tool of their own will. The wonderful possibilities for deep spiritual awakening, intensified devotion, and selfless service to the Divine Will offered by the Mystical Qabalah have also been made difficult to access by the strict *halachic* barriers and obfuscating intellectual hurdles erected by Rabbinical Jewish Kabbalists.

The formal prohibition against the study and practice of the Qabalah was lifted in 1540 CE through the efforts of the medieval Jewish Kabbalist Abraham Azulai. The prohibition had been instituted largely in reaction to the disastrous consequences of the false Messiah Shimeon Bar Kochba, who led a revolt in 135 CE that resulted in a short-lived independent Jewish state.<sup>3</sup> Over a century after Azulai, a sense of fear and taboo regarding the Qabalah arose strongly once again among the rabbinate in reaction to the troubling popularity of the apostate Sabbatai Zevi. Zevi was ascribed messianic stature by his “prophet” Nathan of Gaza, and embraced as such by several million followers spread across the Middle East. The phenomenon of Zevi was further compounded by the widespread hermetic adulteration of Jewish qabalistic teachings by European occultists, and a growing tendency among Christian Cabalists to attempt to establish that the true hidden meaning of the Qabalah supports the efficacy of Christian dogma.

The widespread anti-qabalistic sentiment promulgated by both the rabbinical and Pauline orthodox authority has been accompanied by a considerable amount of misinformation and fear mongering. Even those rabbis and Talmudic scholars who do not regard the Mystical Qabalah as evil and malicious echo the injunctions that it should only be studied by married Jewish men over the age of forty who have studied the *Torah* and *Talmud* for many years. In all fairness, it should be noted that there are a substantial number of Chasidim and other religious Jews who embrace and encourage the study and practice of the Jewish Kabbalah without distinction of age or gender. However, they represent a very small minority, and firmly regard the Qabalah as the exclusive property of Orthodox Judaism. The overall result is that the vast majority of contemporary Jews, most of whom are not orthodox, have little knowledge of their own immensely rich mystical tradition.

The lingering barriers and attitudes of exclusivity regarding the study of the Jewish Kabbalah serve to perpetuate a long standing sexist and elitist mindset that discourages individuals from pursuing direct mystical experience outside the context of orthodox religious observance as established by the Pharisees subsequent to the Diaspora.<sup>4</sup> These attitudes also serve to

solidify the position of orthodox rabbis as intermediaries and authorities in the dispensation of the Jewish religion. The authority of the Pharisees evolved from the growing prominence of the academies of Jewish learning that started to appear in the late fifth century BCE under the tolerant regime of the Persians, after hundreds of years of Assyrian and Babylonian repression. The word *Pharisee* comes from the word *parush*, meaning ‘one separated’ i.e. one who withdraws himself out of motives for piety. Among the Jews thus separated, there arose not only differences in social customs, but also in doctrinal views—and specifically, an oral tradition. This oral tradition not only outlined a rigorous routine of lifestyle and conduct, but also created special learning and knowledge that was the exclusive domain of the members of the sect. In this way, a community of such learned men developed. Their special knowledge drew an excess of reverential regard from the masses of people who were not privy to it, for which Master Yeshuvah (Jesus) and later Master Muhammad chastised them. The masses hence became the laity outside of this elite community of Pharisees.

The intense and complicated levitical focus of the rabbinical sect developed from the codes of behavior and traditions institutionalized by the priesthood (*kohanim*) of the centralized Temples in Jerusalem. The strict codes reflected the extraordinary level of levitical purity that had to be maintained to enact the high level rituals performed in the First Temple, which housed the Ark of the Covenant. Within that context, the priests needed to be like angels who attend the Throne of the Lord **יְהוָה**. The *kohanic* codes had a significant impact on the development of the Pharisaic rabbinate centuries later. They were redacted much later in the *Talmud Yerushalmi* and *Talmud Babli*, which contain voluminous commentary garnered from over four centuries of rabbinical dialectic.

The *Talmud* is composed of the *Mishnah* and the *Gemara*. The *Mishnah* is a collection of scriptural exegesis attributed to various heralded Palestinian rabbis, many of whom were associated with rabbinical academies from the fifth through second centuries BCE. The tractates of the *Mishnah* were edited and codified circa 220 CE, and form the core of the *Talmud*. The bulk of the *Talmud*, called the *Gemara* (lit. completion), is a

collection of discussions among later Palestinian and Babylonian rabbis regarding passages and topics in the *Mishnah*. The *Gemara* of Jerusalem was formally compiled circa 430 CE, and the *Gemara* of Babylon circa 530 CE. The *Talmud Yerushalmi* is composed of three volumes and the *Talmud Babli* has sixty-four volumes, reflecting the relative complexity of the environments and cultural milieus in which they developed.

The Pharisaic rabbinate emerged as the dominant sect in Judaism, occupying the seat of its orthodox authority. It peaked with the virtual political and economic control of the Temple of Jerusalem by the Sadducees and Pharisees in the Hasmonean period, after the liberation of Jerusalem by the Maccabees. The many warnings and stern admonitions pronounced by a succession of Hebrew prophets went unheeded. When Master Yeshuvah came, he berated the widespread corruption and abuse of power among the Sadducees and Pharisees, and struck out against the moneychangers within the Temple (which had become the biggest bank in the Middle East). The dominance of the Pharisaic rabbinical sect solidified even further in the Diaspora after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. Except for the Karaite and Sabbataian movements, this dominance has remained largely unchallenged to this day, though cracks in the wall are starting to appear.

Few Jews give much thought to the idea that the religion of their desert Hebrew forebears might have been radically different in practice than Rabbinical Judaism. The word “rabbi” is not to be found in the Hebrew *Torah* and only finds limited usage in the entire *Tanakh* (*Torah*, *Prophets*, and *Writings*), where it is used to denote tribal leaders and other authorities.<sup>5</sup> Master Yeshuvah told his disciples not to take the title “rabbi,” and taught that the Lord יהוה is the only true Rabbi.<sup>6</sup> The anthropological and linguistic elements that shaped the nomadic Israelite tribes are topics of much conjecture and dialogue among Ancient Near Eastern scholars from a variety of disciplines. The first book of the *Torah* (called *Torah B’reshith*) says that Abraham came from “Ur of the Chaldees.” What were the history, ethnic composition, and cultural and religious milieus from which Abraham came? How was his faith influenced by the cosmologies of the Sumerians, Egyptians, and Canaanites? Was

the original Hebrew alphabet developed before Abraham's time as a way to alphabetically represent Sumerian cuneiform glyphs? Or, did it originate in the mystical manual on the Hebrew letters ascribed to him, called the *Sefer Yetzirah* (**Book of Formation**)? As the vehicle for a fresh expression of the universal mystical spirituality promoted directly in the face of widespread idol worship, how did Abraham and the Israelite tribes practice their religion?

The life of the early Israelites would have had much in common with all nomadic tribes who dwelled in tents under the starry skies of the desert savannas of Canaan and the Sinai Peninsula. Such tribes were largely extended families who tended their flocks and engaged in the labors necessary to feed and clothe themselves. It is likely that the religious observances of the Hebrews would have involved quintessential spiritual practices dating from antiquity and found in all monotheistic religions. These practices include: ablution, prostration, invocation of Divine Names, devotional singing, prayer offerings, ritual use of sacraments and sacred regard for the elements, community-building rituals based on the mystical significance of rites of passage and seasons of nature, and the special treatment of guests. In the *Torah*, there are numerous accounts of holy figures ascending to and worshipping at power spots on special mountains. There are also several accounts of the ritual use of a stone *lingam*, over which was poured a libation of oil or perhaps milk. Numerous passages in the *Torah* also poignantly allude to the experiential transformation of individual consciousness in Divine Union, and the presence and importance of mystics and awakened souls throughout the history of the Hebrews and Jews.

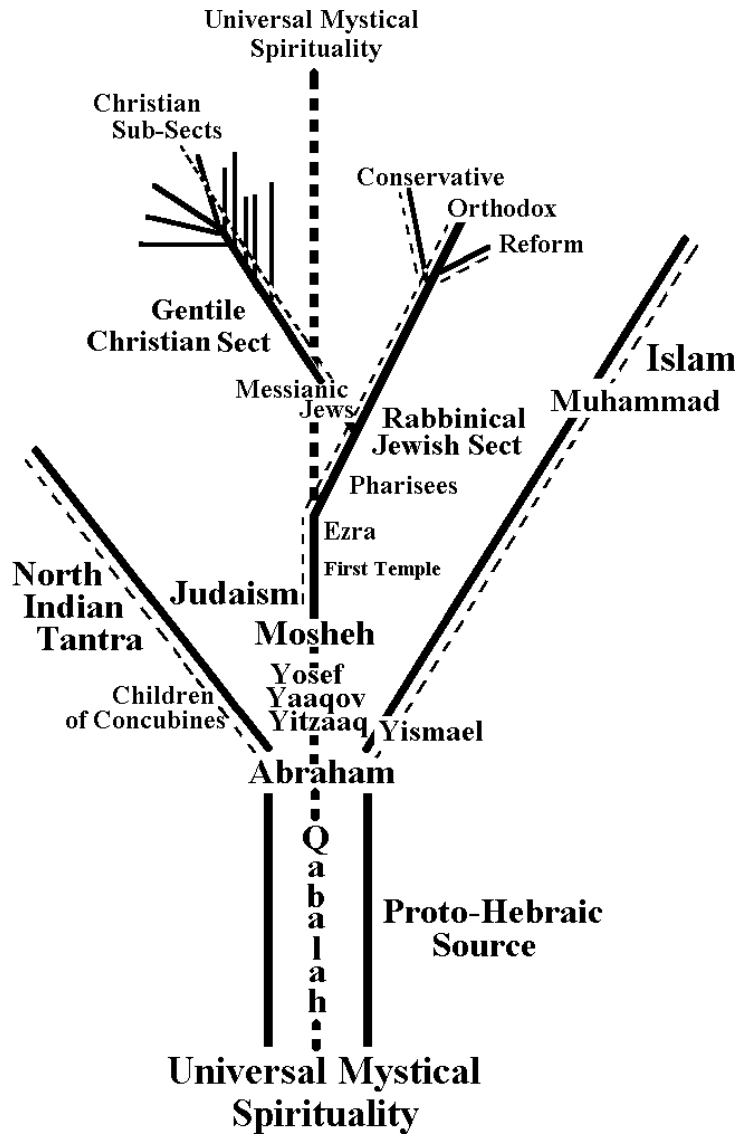
The monotheism of Master Abraham did not simply mean that there was only one God, but rather that *the Divine Source alone exists*. Hence, the mystical focus of the early Hebrews would have centered upon the universality and pervasiveness of the Divine Source within all beings on all planes of existence. Group ritual would have underscored and celebrated this relationship. There were no synagogues and no rabbis: there were tents and there were revered elders. There was not yet an ever-more complicated code of behavior used as a fence to stave

off the adulteration and dilution of their culture and traditions. The biggest impact on their routines of life would have come from dramatic changes in weather patterns, extraordinary natural disasters such as drought and earthquakes (the Sinai Peninsula is situated among massive tectonic faults), and violent dynastic changes in the city-states around which they wandered and dwelled. Perhaps conditions in Ur in Southern Iraq warranted that Abraham leave and migrate along the ancient silk route into Syria. The idea of “Jewish Renewal” i.e. the return to the roots of Judaism has recently come into vogue. But a real return to the roots of Judaism would be a return to the religion of the ancient desert Hebrews.

### **WHAT IS THE MYSTICAL QABALAH OF THE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM?**

The Mystical Qabalah of the children of Abraham reflects an ancient mystical transmission that preceded and supersedes any of the individual religious vessels through which it has been filtered and colored. Orthodox Jews sometimes refer to this transmission as the “Noachic Kabbalah,” linking it in name to Noah who survived the Great Flood. Outside the rigid myopia of compartmentalized religious dogma, the Hebrew, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and perhaps even the Tantric traditions, can be seen as branches of a single tree. These branches all share a common trunk and roots: the universal mystical spirituality of the absolute unity of the Divine, and the primacy of love, surrender, and discrimination as the means for spiritual awakening from dualistic sleep. Each of the branches is built around variations of the same totality archetype anchored in the same negatively existent substratum. Yet, the religious teachings of the different branches have somehow evolved so that the variations have become mutually exclusive. While the Mystical Qabalah stands as the very foundation of the Hebrew, Christian, and Islamic religious dispensations, few contemporary rabbis, priests, or imams study its ideas or engage in its practices within the context of their respective faiths.

FIGURE 1.1 Tree of the Children of Abraham



The ideas and practices of the Mystical Qabalah find their counterparts (albeit differently clothed) in virtually every other mystical tradition, all of which present their own unique version of the same universal teachings. Like every other mystical tradition, the Mystical Qabalah presents a worldview that is ultimately rooted in a negatively existent Mysterious Unknown about which Nothing can be said, a “One without a second.”<sup>7</sup>

And, like every other mystical tradition, the Mystical Qabalah contains three seemingly contradictory operative perspectives that correspond to three levels of awareness. Vedantic philosophy calls these three levels of awareness dualistic (*dvaita*), qualified non-dualistic (*vasishtadvaita*), and unqualified non-dualistic (*advaita*).<sup>8</sup>

Within the context of the Mystical Qabalah, the dualistic level of awareness sees the Lord יהוה and His/Her Creation (i.e. matter and spirit) as separate. It is also called the “Fall of Adam.” This is the vantage of the normal waking state of most humans. An aspirant with this perspective would generally have a predominant mood toward their Chosen Ideal, regarding themselves as a servant to their Divine Master, or as a child to their Divine Father or Mother, etc. The qualified non-dual level in the Qabalah regards the Creation as a Great Unity in the Name יהוה rooted in the negatively existent substratum. From this perspective, the Mysterious Unknown (called *Ayn* lit. “Nothing” in the Qabalah), which is Itself eternally devoid of attributes, exists in divine sport as always possessed of all attributes. In this respect, Sufism distinguishes between the Divine Essence (*fana*) and the Divine Attributes (*fala*), and Mystical Christianity between the Father and the Son. In Hindu mystical scriptures, this is called *Swagatabheda*—literally “a difference within Itself.” This “difference” is said to spontaneously arise as a sort of whim of the Divine to know Itself.

In the Mystical Qabalah, the “difference within Itself” is alluded to by a doctrine that distinguishes the Mysterious Unknown (*Ayn*) as having two aspects described as “Faces.” One is called “Vast Face,” denoting a station of infinite consciousness devoid of differentiation and manifest activity. The other is called “Small Face,” denoting a station of finite consciousness encompassing all differentiated, manifest activity. Small Face is also the immense I-ness of the Divine Personality endowed with all possible attributes. When this I-ness is turned outward to the Creation in the Lower Worlds, it is stationed in the consciousness that “I am All.” When this I-ness is turned inward and centered in the Upper Worlds, it has the exclusive awareness that “I am Nothing (*Ayn*).” In this sense, Vast Face can be thought of as a Cosmic Mind in which an infinite number of Small Face waves



of ideas can arise from and return to Nowhere like a dream, and in which all Name and Form emanate, manifest, and dissolve. In the Qabalah, the Lord יהוה is the immense I-ness that knows Itself as Pure Being in the unmanifest supernal realm, and pervades everything from *Elohim* down to the lowest creature in the lower worlds of manifestation. This supreme, unifying I-ness is worshipped in Christianity as *Christos*, in Islam as *Allah*, and in the Tantras as the Divine Mother *Kali*. It is worshipped in Hinduism as *Ishvara*, in Tibetan Buddhism as *Vajradhara* or *Avalokiteshvara*, in Taoism as the Divine Mother *Kwan Yin*, and in the Polynesian *Kahuna* tradition as the Goddess *Pele*.<sup>9</sup> An individual with this level of awareness directly perceives the innate identity of themselves and all beings with that One Indwelling Spirit. The perspective of unqualified non-dualism in the Qabalah is that the *Ayn* alone exists and all separate existence is illusory, that a manifest Creation on all its levels has no basis in Reality, and that all the shells of embodied existence are empty.<sup>10</sup>

It cannot be underscored strongly enough that these three distinctions exist only within the finite human intellect. They are not mutually exclusive doctrines, but represent a gradation in consciousness. All aspirants will be attracted to one of these perspectives according to their natural spiritual constitution and stage of development. One who embraces the awareness of a simple devotee i.e. who worships the Name and Form of his/her Chosen Ideal as separate from themselves, would not be attracted to and may even strongly reject a non-dual perspective that denies such separation or any real existence to Name and Form. Conversely, one who has the innate sense that the Root Reality has two aspects, one without attributes and the other an intelligent, unified source of all attributes, would not find any sensibility in either a purely dualistic or a purely non-dual perspective. In practice, we find that the vast majority of aspirants in these latter days resonate with the first two categories. Few souls have the concentration, discrimination, discipline, and force of will to pursue a purely non-dual path.

Among Qabalists, as with aspirants in all other mystical traditions, we find that the apparently disparate distinctions described above give rise to philosophical arguments and irresolvable debates. All of these viewpoints are valid within the context of their own yogic practices, and we should not judge or condemn anyone for adhering to any one of them over the others. Any one of these perspectives taken to their ultimate end will arrive at the same experience of Pure Being that transcends all such distinctions.

The Mystical Qabalah summarily involves the ascension of the Central Column of the Tree of Life to progressively unite with the consciousness of Small and Vast Face, and to pierce the profound spiritual mysteries alluded to in the *Torah* and other primary sources. Many religious students of the Qabalah confuse the intentions of the Mystical Qabalah with the necessity to cultivate a high degree of levitical purity and righteousness required to ascend the Column of the Right on the Tree of Life, which is called the “Way of the Angels of *Elohim*.” Such levitical purity is not required to the ascend of the Central Column of the Tree, and the rigid rabbinical restrictions regarding the study of the Qabalah only within the context of orthodox *halachic* observance are not necessarily relevant to the purely yogic intentions of the Mystical Qabalah. The distinctions and terms regarding the different paths up the Tree will be explained in more detail in subsequent chapters.

Among the primary written works of the Mystical Qabalah of the children of Abraham, few remain that are entirely faithful to their original versions. Many of them are replete with corruptions, and have taken on additions and commentary often undifferentiated from the original texts. Despite extensive evidence brought forth by linguistic experts to the contrary, most orthodox and fundamentalist adherents in each of the respective branches of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam regard their respective scriptures as completely intact and unviolated reproductions of the originals. Many English translations of the scriptures are flawed by dogmatic distinctions and/or a low level of understanding. Many of the commentaries on the primary texts, and much of the secondary material available, are built

upon expositions of earlier writers who possessed little direct mystical experience of what they wrote.

In rejecting the orthodox prohibitions regarding the study and practice of the Mystical Qabalah, it would be reasonable and balanced to point out that there is some inherent danger in the *overzealous* pursuit of qabalistic disciplines. Many of the problems arise when aspirants are misled by unqualified teachers, have pre-existing mental imbalances, or when aspirants engage in activities related to the side columns of the Tree of Life. Problems can also manifest when individuals underestimate the power of the root mantra and do too much too soon. On the other hand, relatively few problems have been seen in individuals who have the guidance of a qualified mentor and engage in a slow and steady progression through the purely yogic disciplines associated with the Mystical Qabalah.

## **MYSTICAL QABALAH AND PRACTICAL/HERMETIC KABBALAH**

The Qabalah is traditionally traced back to Adam and Eve. It has been maintained in its purest forms by unbroken lineages of known and mostly unknown masters, saints, and prophets over thousands of years. The practices of the Mystical Qabalah, passed down from teacher to student, generally involve a variety of yogic disciplines that are rooted in scriptural revelations and primary texts. The highest intentions and experiences of the Mystical Qabalah correlate with those of all other mystical traditions. At the same time, and without contradiction, each mystical tradition has its own unique totality archetypes, scriptures, Messiahs and great souls, and styles of observances.

The disciplines of the Mystical Qabalah are distinct from those practiced by magicians, wizards, and sorcerers who seek to acquire creative and/or destructive power, depending on what paths they traverse on the Tree of Life. The occult disciplines of wizards and magicians are often called the Practical, Hermetic, or Magical Qabalah. Practical Qabalah has its ancient roots in the “Thirteen Enochian Keys” of Enoch son of Qain, along with a highly eclectic admixture of material taken from Egyptian, Mesopotamian, and other non-Hebrew sources. It is important

not to confuse Enoch son of Qain with Enoch son of Yared. The former Enoch was the grandson of Adam and the son after whom Qain was said to name a city.<sup>11</sup> Enoch son of Yared was the great, great, great, great grandson of Adam, and the one who “walked with *Elohim*” and was transformed into *Metatron* (מטטרון).<sup>12</sup> The “Thirteen Enochian Keys” of Enoch son of Qain are reflected in such works as **The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage**, the **Greater and Lesser Keys of Solomon**, and medieval grimoires such as the **Armadel**, **Goetia/Lemegeton**, etc.<sup>13</sup> The primary text of the Mystical Qabalah that appears to occupy a central place of importance in the Hermetic Qabalah is the *Sefer Yetzirah* (**Book of Formation**). However, from what is written in many of the books of Hermetic Qabalah, it is apparent that the structure of the Tree of Life, nature of the Inner Court, and function of the letter-gates as explicated by the *Sefer Yetzirah* are widely misunderstood.

The two most prominent contemporary schools of Practical or Hermetic Qabalah are the Golden Dawn and the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.), which still exist and continue to attract followers today. The Golden Dawn was founded in the late nineteenth century in the heyday of the Victorian Period. The document reputed to be at the foundation of the Golden Dawn system was the **Cypher Manuscript** attributed to Fraulein Sprengel. The **Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage** was also an important document for the Golden Dawn and a significant influence on the controversial Aleister Crowley, who broke with the Golden Dawn and formed the Order Templis Orientis. The O.T.O. was founded primarily upon works of sexual mysteries and Masonic Charters, and incorporated the Abramelin material at a later date. Until very recently, almost all books in English on the subject of the Qabalah, regardless of their title or professed subject, could be traced to members of these orders or to orders that evolved from them. While these two orders (and their respective leading lights—MacGregor Mathers and Aleister Crowley) gained the most notoriety and “product packaging” among recent Practical Qabalists, more powerful Magical Qabalists do exist, and have existed unknown to the world at large.

## MYSTICAL QABALAH AND RABBINICAL JEWISH KABBALAH

Only a very small percentage of all Jews study their own mystical tradition. The vast majority of people who do study the Jewish Kabbalah are mainstream orthodox and Chasidic Jews of European descent. It is but a footnote for most conservative and reform Jews, though there is a resurgence of interest among those in the Jewish Renewal Movement. The vast majority of the written works of Jewish Kabbalah originated or “reemerged” within the last 800 years. Rabbinical Jews spend many years studying the voluminous Babylonian *Talmud* in order to learn and carefully adhere to the detailed *halachic* interpretations of how to fulfill the 613 “*mitzvot*,” or righteous deeds, prescribed in the extant version of the Ezra *Torah*. They generally regard the current version of the *Torah* to be the exact original, faithful in every detail to the one penned by Master Mosheh. Hence, they consider every word and every line to be irrefutably “delivered by the hand of God.”

Like all traditional religions that center primarily upon a conventional, dualistic understanding of scriptures, the principal intention of the majority of religious Jews is to cultivate purity and righteousness for the redemption of their souls and to “secure a place in heaven in the company of the righteous.” From a qabalistic perspective, this would correspond to ascending the Tree via the Column of the Right “Way of the Angels of *Elohim*”) to become like angels and gain access to the lower heavens. While many contemporary religious students of the Jewish Kabbalah make pretense to mystical aspirations, it has become more of an intellectual exercise than the active pursuit of mystical awakening for most of them. The small minority who do aspire to mystical awakening are an eclectic group. They range from mainstream orthodox Jews to the sect of Chasidus founded by Israel ben Eliezer (1698-1760), known as the *Baal Shem Tov* (“Master of the Good Name”), and Nachman of Breslav.<sup>14</sup> The bulk of the mainstream orthodox Jewish Kabbalists focus primarily on the *Sefer HaZohar* (**Book of Splendor**) and the *Etz HaChayyim* (**Tree of Life**). They engage in practices of spiritual refinement (*avodah*) and meditation (*devekut*, “cleaving to God”) gleaned from the writings left by

Abraham Abulafia, Azriel of Gerona (disciple of Yitza'aq the Blind), Chayyim Vital (recorder of the teachings of Yitza'aq Luria), Dov Baer (Mezheritsker Maggid and successor to Israel ben Eliezer), Nachman of Breslav, and others. These practices include a variety of visualization techniques, breathing exercises, movements coordinated with the permutation and combination of Hebrew letters, mantric intonation of sacred phrases, meditative prayer, and chanting devotional songs.

A central contemplative practice among the Lubavitcher Chasidim who study the Jewish Kabbalah is called *Hitbonenuth*. *Hitbonenuth* is a practice involving intense directed thought within the context of proper intention (*kavanah*). The process of *Hitbonenuth* and how it differs from passive thought-meditation is described in detail in a Hebrew manuscript roughly 200 years old, titled *Ma'amorim Ketzarim*, written by the first Lubavitcher Rebbe Schneur Zalman of Liadi.<sup>15</sup> *Hitbonenuth*, as described by Rabbi Zalman, “requires intense mental exertion to increase one's awareness of the open, simple and revealed meaning of an idea, to scrutinize and elaborate on a concept's many details, facets and ramifications, and not to allow the mind to contract and settle on one point alone.”

Rabbinical Jews often feel that any qabalistic practice outside the context of religious Jewish observance is not legitimately connected with the mystical tradition of the children of Abraham. They generally regard such Qabalah as either hybrid variants adulterated by admixtures of ideas from other mystical traditions, or as the purview of occultists and the Practical Qabalah. This is not surprising. The orthodoxy in all organized religions has historically viewed the study and practice of mystical ideas as a threat to their authority. At the same time, in order to cull new members from older, often indigenous populations, they have on numerous occasions absorbed and assimilated mystical ideas and holy observances that posed no serious threat, and with which the newcomers could identify and feel comfortable. To see a clear example of this, consider how many of the so-called “pagan” traditions (ignorantly labeled as satanic witchcraft by fundamentalists) were assimilated into orthodox Western Christianity.<sup>16</sup>

The rabbinate responded in a similar manner to diffuse the powerful influence and popularity of the Karaite movement, which originated in Persia. “The Karaites arose in reaction to and as a revolt against Rabbinical Judaism in the eighth century CE, and were not fully put down until the fifteenth century CE. From its earliest beginning, it (the Karaite revolt) spread throughout the Jewish Diaspora into every stratum of society. ‘Karaism’ derives from the Hebrew word *karah* (lit. to read) i.e. to read the **Torah** without the intervention of rabbis. They rejected the **Talmud** as a conspiracy of the rabbis to separate ordinary people from the simplicity of the **Torah**. For them, the **Torah** was the sole source of religious laws. Karaites created different oral laws to deal with modern life. Many Talmudic dietary laws were abolished and the use of *tefillin* (phylacteries) was abandoned. In response to the threat that the Karaites posed to their authority, the Jewish rabbis were able to prevent a final schism in Judaism by co-opting many acceptable Karaite ideas and reforming abuses. Gradually, the Karaite revolt dissipated and ceased after almost 700 years.”<sup>17</sup> It is also relevant to note that the Karaites attacked the provocative anthropomorphism of the qabalistic doctrines.

While few contemporary Jews know anything about the Karaites, the impetus for their revolt is similar to conditions in modern Judaism. Many Jews today feel ambivalent about and tenuously connected to Rabbinical Judaism. Many orthodox Jews regard the Conservative and Reform branches of Judaism as “heretical sects,” declaring them to be Jews only in the biological sense. In recent decades, an extraordinary number of people born and raised by Jewish parents have set out to explore the ideas and practices of other mystical traditions, as if in search of traces of their own. We hear the colloquialisms “HindJews” and “Jewdhists,” reflecting the many Jews who have passionately embraced the Hindu and Buddhist mystical traditions. Some Jews, who seriously studied and engaged in the meditation practices of other mystical traditions, have recently come back to Judaism only to discover or see in a new light their own Mystical Qabalah. This has been one of the major factors involved in the Jewish Renewal Movement.

As a final note, anything that runs counter to an ingrained sense of religious identity can be perceived as a threat to that identity. Those with an orthodox or fundamentalist viewpoint may therefore feel uncomfortable with or disturbed by the universal perspective of this book, perhaps dismissing it outright as New Age synthesis or ashram spirituality. Each of the religious vessels through which the universal mystical spirituality has been filtered and uniquely clothed is a precious asset to be respected and afforded its “place at the table.” At the same time, none of them should assume that they have been assigned an exclusive licensing agreement or that only their watch tells the correct time.

### MYSTICAL QABALAH, MYSTICAL CHRISTIANITY, AND THE CHRISTIAN CABALA

Mystical Christianity is an outgrowth of the same universal spirituality found in the Hebrew tradition as the Mystical Qabalah. Christianity began as a sect of Judaism that sprang from the messianic advent of Master Yeshuvah, who was born a Jew and lived in a Jewish culture. All of his apostles and early disciples were also Jews. Master Yeshuvah, as with every appearance of Messiah, brought a fresh transmission of universal mystical spirituality clothed in the context of the historical setting, cultural milieu, environment, language, characteristic worldview, and prevailing body of discourse among the people to whom it was being delivered. The mainstream of Jews at the time Master Yeshuvah appeared had been expecting a savior of the Jewish people who would deliver them from Roman oppression through an apocalyptic process. This contrasted with the Jewish mystical community, which had been anticipating a messianic advent with the spiritual mission of reuniting Israel with their Lord יהוה, and a returning to the true religion of the children of Abraham. Master Yeshuvah himself clearly asserted that he had not come as an innovator to replace the tradition with a new teaching, but as a reformer who had come to fulfill the *Torah* and the prophets, and to renew the ancient faith that had faded into decay.



“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law (i.e. *Torah*) or the prophets; I have not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.”<sup>18</sup>

But what began as a small Jewish sect centered around a Jewish Messiah and understood in contemporary Jewish terms, not Greek or Roman, came to be transformed into a major religion composed almost exclusively of Gentiles. In the process of this transformation, the legacy of the Jewish heritage upon which Christianity was founded was largely modified and assimilated into the Greek language and Hellenistic worldview. As the new religion of Christianity emerged estranged from its Jewish roots, it developed in accordance with Roman political organization and social conventions. When Christians later “brought civilization” to the indigenous tribes of Western Europe, they adapted Christian theology to the languages and cultures of those tribes, and absorbed many of their conventions and observances as a means to facilitate and expedite their conversion. The resultant version of Western Christianity thereby evolved into a historical phenomenon significantly different than Near Eastern Christianity, and even farther removed from its Judaic roots.

Today, a growing body of scholars is questioning many aspects of Christianity that have been popularly held for a long time. A picture is emerging that shows that the history, theology, and practice of Christianity have been directly effected and shaped by dominant factions, resulting in the marginalization and suppression of the mystical element as being in opposition to accepted doctrine. As soon as Paul entered the picture, a dichotomy arose among the early Christian devotees between those coming from a traditional Jewish background and the growing group of Gentile Christians. In this regard, it is interesting to consider the letter written by Master Yeshuvah’s brother James, the leader of the Jerusalem Church, as an indicator of the opposition that emerged to some of Paul’s central teachings.<sup>19</sup>

The diversity of perspectives of the early followers of Master Yeshuvah was later replaced by the monolithic homogeneity imposed by emperors to make Christianity a uniform religion throughout their empires. As the Pauline Gentile faction grew in numbers and power, and the Catholic Church of Rome assumed orthodox authority over Christianity, it absorbed and codified Mystical Christianity in much the same way that Rabbinical Judaism assimilated and obscured the Mystical Qabalah. The essential Jewishness of early Christianity was virtually wiped out by the massive revisionism of the Pauline Gentiles. We will have to wait for further windfall discoveries of source documents to be able to establish a clear picture of what happened during the earliest stages of Christianity after the departure of Master Yeshuvah.

Like the Hebrew Qabalah, Mystical Christianity has remained alive through lineages of accomplished souls who ascended its paths and passed on its teachings and practices. A new generation of Christians is seeking to revisit the mystical origins of Christianity. This interest has been fueled by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the recovery of an almost intact copy of the long-lost **Gospel of Thomas** at Nag Hammadi,<sup>20</sup> and a growing interest in the enigmatic **Revelation of John** spurred by the advent of a new millennium. Many Christians are also finding new meaning and inspiration in the testimonials left by Christian saints and mystics of their experiences on the Path. These documents, along with new interpretations of the teachings of Master Yeshuvah in the *Peshitta*, are reinforcing the understanding that the mystical element flourished in the early church, and that the entire history of Christianity is replete with mystics.

Many of the ideas and practices of the Mystical Qabalah are reflected in those of Mystical Christianity. The mysteries of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion have long been compared with the mystical significance of *Pesach* (Passover). The sacraments of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist have their roots in the sacramental use of bread and wine that goes back to the earliest Hebrews and beyond. Ablution with water, lighting of candles, prostration, rituals that celebrate the mystical significance of the rites of passage, and rituals associated with

changes of season, planting and harvesting are other fundamental elements Christianity shares in common with its Hebrew, Judaic, and Islamic cousins. A more in-depth look at the core ideas of Mystical Christianity within the context of the universal Mystical Qabalah will appear later in the book when the *Peshitta* and the **Revelation of John** are discussed in more detail.

Starting in the late fifteenth century CE, a movement arose among some Jewish converts to Christianity in Spain to ascribe a distinctly Christian context to the hidden meanings of qabalistic doctrines. This movement gained momentum from speculation among Florentine Platonists that the Qabalah contained a lost revelation that explains the secrets of the Catholic faith. This cross-pollination led to the emergence of a distinctly Christian Cabala founded by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494). Pico's writings, and subsequently those of John Reuchlin (1455-1522), caused a sensation in Christian intellectual circles and ignited an interest in this previously unknown esoteric Jewish tradition that spread across Italy, Germany, and France. In the sixteenth century CE, the appearance of qabalistic texts in Latin translation enhanced attempts to draw further parallels between esoteric Jewish doctrines and Christianity. Guillaume Postel translated and published the *Zohar* and *Sefer Yetzirah* into Latin even before they were published in Hebrew. Latin texts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were influential in standardizing "Cabala" as the spelling commonly associated with the Christian perspective to qabalistic doctrines.<sup>21</sup>

In the seventeenth century CE, the center of Christian Cabala moved to England and Germany, where its status was boosted by the theosophical writings of Jacob Boehme and the landmark qabalistic compendium of Christian Knorr von Rosenroth.<sup>22</sup> Von Rosenroth and Athanasius Kirchner extrapolated the qabalistic allusion of *Adam Kadmon* to be a reference to Jesus as the primordial man in Christian theology. In the final phase in the development of the Christian Cabala in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it became permeated with alchemical symbolism and conjoined with the emerging doctrines of theosophy. This in turn greatly influenced the development of Freemasonry.

## MYSTICAL QABALAH AND THE MYSTICAL TRADITION OF ISLAM

Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam is a primary branch stemming from the religion of the children of Abraham. Like Master Abraham, the Prophet Mohammed was faced with the task of leading his people away from the worship of idols and back to the universal mystical spirituality of a divine singularity. If you remove the clouds of dogmatic theocracy that now often overshadow the depth and beauty of that transmission, Islam probably more closely resembles in some ways the original Hebrew religion than does Rabbinical Judaism. The mystical tradition (Ar. *tasawwuf*) at the core of Islam is called Sufism by Westerners, and those who walk its path are called Sufis, dervishes, and faqirs. The appellation “Sufi” is thought by some to have been derived from the word *suf* (Heb. and Ar. pure wool), reflecting the rough patchwork wool robes worn by the early Sufi ascetics to reflect the quality of spiritual poverty (*faqira*). In their literature, the Sufis have a variety of other names and eloquent titles by which they refer to themselves, such as “Possessors of the Kernel” and “Community of the Bench.” The tradition itself is also given a variety of prominent epitaphs, such as *Haqiqah* (“Way of Truth”), reflecting the goal of union with the singularity of the Divine Essence. As it is written:

“The highest Truth is that I ALONE AM.”<sup>23</sup>

“Everywhere you look, there is the Face of *Allah*.”<sup>24</sup>

Several centuries after the birth of Islam, a number of informal private Sufi teaching circles in Iraq and Persia grew in numbers and organized into orders (*tariqa*). Soon thereafter, dozens of other orders, most of which evolved as sub-branches of the initial ones, arose throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, India, East Africa, and Spain. Sufi influence continued to expand with the spread of Islam throughout the world. The various orders trace their lineages to, and are generally named after, extraordinary Sufi masters who lived at different times and came from different locales. The Naqshbandi take the name of their order from Khaja Bahaudin Naqshband of Central Asia (1318-1389), the Qadiri from Abdul Qadir of Gilan (1077-1166), the Chishtiya from Abu Ishak Chishti of Syria, etc.<sup>25</sup> All genuine

orders have a record of their chain of spiritual transmission (*silsilah*) passed down from one spiritual preceptor, called a *shaykh* in Arabic and a *pir* in Persian, to another. All of the *silsilah* trace back to the original *silsilah* of the Prophet Mohammed through Abu Bakr or the fourth Kalif Ali. Some of the chains of initiation are still anchored in living masters who transmit the genuine *b'rakha* (blessing of spiritual potency) of mystical gnosis to their aspirants (*mureed*). Others have become “a name without a reality.” Congregations of Sufis convene with their *shaykhs* in specially designated halls (Persian, *khanqah*; Arabic, *zawiya*; Turkish, *tekke*). Sufis are, with a few notable exceptions, devout Muslims. Yet, Sufism is generally eschewed and viewed with suspicion by the Sunnite and Shiite Islamic orthodox authorities. Like the vast majority of mainstream Muslims, Sufis generally do not participate in or endorse the extreme agenda of radical ultra-orthodox fundamentalists.

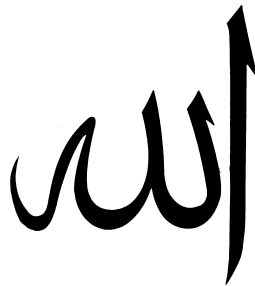
In addition to the *Qur'an*, the Sufis have a rich and prolific mystical literature filled with sublime mystical allusions and brilliant allegories. Like the Chasidim, teaching stories and sayings are important vehicles for the transmission of Sufi teachings. The *Mathnavi* of Jalal ad Din ar-Rumi (d.1273) is often called the “*Qur'an* of Persia,” which opens with the story of the reed that has become separated from its reed bed.<sup>26</sup> The Sufis are also known for the exquisite spiritual love poetry of Hafiz, Kabir, Ra'bia, and others.<sup>27</sup> The **Conference of the Birds** (*Mantiq at-Ta'ir*) by Farid ad-Din 'Attar, **Yusuf and Zulaika** by Jami, and the **Rose Garden** (*Galistan*) by Sa'adi are masterful works of mystical allegory.<sup>28</sup> All Sufis use the symbol of the rose as an allusion to contemplative practice.<sup>29</sup> Sufism has also been enriched by numerous mystical commentaries, such as the **Niche for Lights** (*Mishkat al Anwar*) by Al Ghazzali (d.1111), and the recorded teachings of Sufi masters such as Rumi, Ibn 'Arabi, al-Suhrawardi, Ibn 'Ata Allah, Al Bayazid Al Bistami, Al Junaid of Bagdad, Abdul Qadir al Jilani, Al Hallaj and others.<sup>30</sup> Western alchemy was derived in great measure from the writings of a number of Sufis concerning the mystical analogy of the purification and transformation of metals into the stone of unity, known as the “Philosopher’s Stone.”<sup>31</sup>

The mystical worldview of Sufism, as delineated in the *Qur'an*, is basically identical to the qabalistic worldview rooted in the *Torah*. As with the Qabalah, someone new to the study of Sufism will find a plethora of specialized and abstract terminology used to describe its mystical worldview. The challenge is further exacerbated by the fact that there are equivalent words for Sufi terminology in Persian, Arabic, and Turkish. The Sufis have their own version of the Tree of Life, names for the four worlds, terms for the various bodies or shells, and terms for states (*hal*) and stations of consciousness (*maqam*) that correspond closely to those in the Mystical Qabalah. The name for the Divine Presence dwelling among embodied souls in the worlds of matter, for instance, is called *Shekhinah* in the Qabalah and *Sakinat* in Sufism. It is also used in the *Qur'an* (*Surah* 2:249) in the same context as it is found in *Torah Shmoth* 24:22, when referring to the Divine Presence residing between the Kerubim over the Ark of the Covenant. The doctrines identified earlier as dualism, qualified non-dualism, and pure non-dualism are differentiated in Sufism as three phases on the Path, known as *makhafah* (way of fear), *machabah* (way of love), and *ma'rifah* (way of knowledge). The activity in these three phases can be correlated respectively with the yogic practices associated with *karma yoga* (way of purification through selfless service), *bhakti yoga* (way of devotion), and *jnana yoga* (way of direct knowledge of the Divine Source). The mystical teachings, literature, and history of the Sufi orders are subjects of extraordinary breadth far beyond the range of this book, and have been documented in critical detail by other authors.<sup>32</sup>

Like Mystical Qabalists, Sufis have a wide range of spiritual practices. They are known to vary their teachings and the practices they prescribe according to circumstances. They maintain the view that it is the alchemy between the teacher and those being taught that produces a teaching that is appropriate for the particular time, place, and people involved. Sufis have their own lists of Divine Names or Attributes, which they recite as a regular component of their spiritual practices. One list is composed of ninety-nine Names, and another one of a thousand and one. Many of the Names in the *Sefer HaShmoth* (**Book of**

the Names) are also found in the *Qur'an*. In the same way that the Name יהוה is a central element in the meditation and ancillary practices of many Qabalists, most Sufi meditation practices center upon the Name *Allah*, the principal Divine Name in the *Qur'an* (see Figure 1.2). The Name *Allah* is found in the *Sefer HaShmoth* (Book of the Names) as *Aleh* (אלה lit. these), with one Lamed ל instead of two. The addition of the second Lamed ל extends the Name into Asiyah (qabalistic World of Activity).

FIGURE 1.2 Name *Allah*



The silent and oral recitation (*dikhr*) of the “Affirmation of Unity” (*La Illaha Il Allah*), which is the root mantra at the foundation of Islam, is a core practice of all Sufis. The various orders can often be distinguished by the way that they do this. Moses Maimomades, the oft-cited author of **The Guide for the Perplexed**, regarded the Affirmation of Unity of the *Qur'an* as essentially equal to the Affirmation of Unity of the *Torah*, “*Shem Ayin Yisrael יהוה Elohenu יהוה EchaD.*” Maimomades made this declaration actually believing this to be the case, and not just because the alternative was death. Sufis are also known for movement practices, called dervishes, which vary from order to order.<sup>33</sup> These dervishes usually involve some combination of movement, breath, and repetition of Divine Names. The Jewish Kabbalist Abraham Abulafia may very well have adopted some of the head movements he employed with letter visualization practices from the Sufis who were his contemporaries in Spain.<sup>34</sup>

## HEBREW QABALAH AND NORTH INDIAN TANTRA

Some Qabalists believe that the Semitic mystical tradition reached well beyond the geographical boundaries of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. Archeological evidence has shown that the trade routes between the Tigris-Euphrates and the Indus Valleys were actively traversed as early as 10,000 BCE.<sup>35</sup> When the Indian Buddhists went to China, they were made privy by its rulers to old Chinese texts that described voyages of large junks from the South China Seas to India (at a time when the Saraswati River still ran all the way to the sea), to the Sinai Peninsula, down the western African coast, and beyond. In ancient times, traders were largely the principal conduits for transmitting a variety of information among diverse cultures, including mystical information. It is highly likely that such information traveled to and from the Indus Valley and the Sinai Peninsula along such ancient merchant routes. The arm of historical certainty as yet does not reach very far back in human history, but more and more information is coming to light that confirms worldwide sea travel by ancient Chinese, Mediterranean, and Indonesian cultures long before the relatively recent “discoveries” made by Western Europeans.

In the *Lech Lecha* section of *Torah B’reshith* (the **Book of Genesis**, named “*B’reshith*” after its first word **בראשית**), several generations of Abraham’s children by Keturah and a number of his concubines are listed. Abraham divided up the branches of his family, “giving them gifts” and sending those children by his concubines “east to the east country.”<sup>36</sup> One interpretation of this passage holds that “east country” refers to an area in Syria or Jordan. Another theory postulates that these children of Abraham emigrated east to India over long established sea or overland trade routes, where they established the monotheistic religion of *Shiva/Shakti* long before the invasion of the Aryans down from the Persian steppes. The sea route could have gone through the Gulf of Aqaba, down the Red Sea, through the Gulf of Aden along the coast of Yemen and Oman, across the Arabian Sea to the mouth of the Indus River, and up into the Indus Valley. In India, this religion is called *Tantra*, and is often referred to in the West as “*the Tantras*.” When the Aryans invaded Northern India in the fourteenth



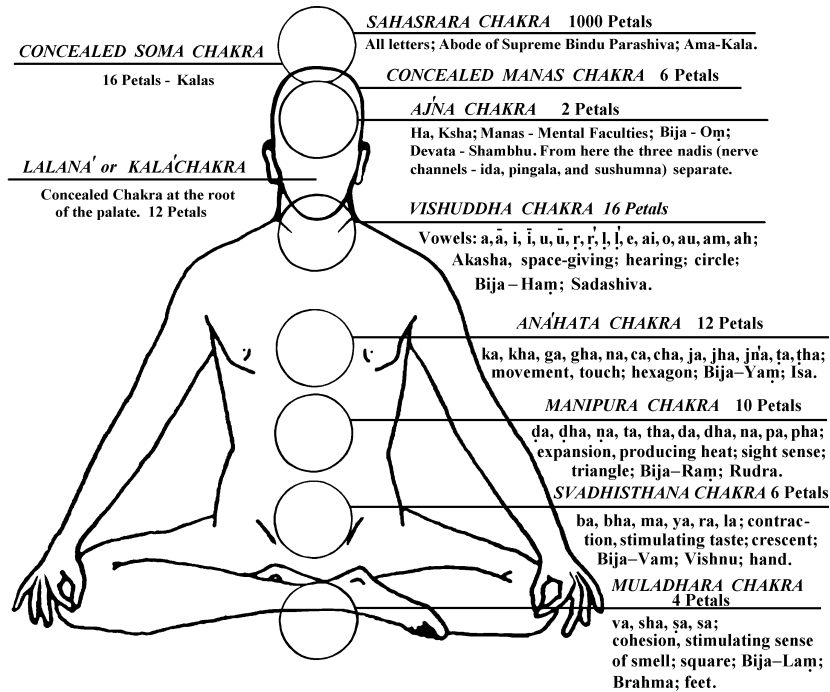
century BCE, they encountered a dark-skinned people inhabiting the Sandya Hills above the Indus Valley, for whom the Tantric traditions and rituals of *Shiva/Shakti* were centuries old.

The Tantric tradition is one of the most poorly understood and misrepresented of the world's mystical traditions. The written books of the Tantras (called *Tantra Shastra*), such as the *Mahanirvana Tantra* and the *Satchakracidrupini*, are distinct from the Vedic/Upanishadic literature of the *Sanatana Dharma*.<sup>37</sup> Many of the primary names of the Divine in the Tantras, such as *Shiva* and *Kali*, are also found in the Hebrew *Torah*. The map of the Sefiroth (lit. Spheres) in the Tree of Life (*etz ha-chayyim*) and the map of the *Chakras* (lit. Wheels) of the Tantras have much in common. The *Kundalini* spoken of in the Tantras and the *Shekhinah* of the Qabalah appear to have the same function. The *Kundalini* is described as a coiled snake asleep at the base of the Chakric Tree. On page 12 of the **Introduction to Tantra Shastra**, Sir John Woodroffe says:

“*Kundalini* means ‘coiled.’ Hence, *Kundalini*, whose form is that of a coiled serpent, means ‘that which is coiled.’ She is the luminous vital energy (*Jivashakti*) which manifests as *prana* [ed. same as *qi* in Chinese, and *ruach* in Hebrew]. She sleeps in the *Muladhara Chakra* [Sefirah Kingdom], and has three and a half coils corresponding in number with the three and half *bindus* (knots). When, after closing the ears, the sound of Her hissing is not heard, then death approaches.”<sup>38</sup>

Both the Chakric Tree (see Figure 1.3) and the qabalistic Tree of Life (see Figure 3.5 on page 89) have three structural channels. The central channel on the Chakric Tree is called the “*Shushumna*.” The central channel on the qabalistic Tree is denoted as the “Central Column.” The side channels on the Chakric Tree are called the “*Ida*” and the “*Pingala*,” and on the qabalistic Tree, the “Columns of the Right and the Left.” The side channels play a much more prominent role in the Qabalah than they do in the Tantras.

FIGURE 1.3 Chakra System



Information obtained from Sir John Woodroffe's annotated translations of *Sat Chakra Nirupana* and *Paduka-Panchaka*, published as *The Serpent Power*, Ganesh & Co., Madras, 1981, 12th Edition.

The *Kundalini*, as *Chitshakti* (the energy of consciousness), awakens and ascends the Chakric Tree, opening the Chakric lotuses along the *Sushumna* on Her way to unite with Her Husband *Shiva* in the *Ajna Chakra* at the forehead. The ascent by the *Kundalini* is also called the *Satchakrabheda*, the "Piercing of the Six Centers." In the *Chintamanistava*, attributed to the incarnate sage Sri Shankaracharya, it says:

"This family woman (*Kundalini*), entering the royal road (*Shushumna*, Central Column of the Tree), taking rest at intervals in the secret places (*Chakras*, *Sefiroth*), embraces the Supreme Spouse (in the *Ajna Chakra*, forehead center) and makes the nectar to flow (in the *Sahasrara Chakra*, Sefirah Crown/Above)."<sup>39</sup>

The ascent of the Tree of Life by the *Shekhinah* is called *Shabat* (שַׁבָּת, Sabbath). The *Shekhinah* is said to be in exile in the Lower Worlds. On the Sabbath, She ascends via the *Sefiroth*

(Spheres) of the Central Column of the Tree of Life and unites with Her Husband Lord יהוה in the Upper Worlds. This is echoed in the song of Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria, commonly found in Hebrew prayer books:

*“Lekah Dodee Likraht Calah Penay Shabat  
neQabalah.”*

(“Come my Beloved to meet the Bride, Face of Sabbath to receive.”)<sup>40</sup>

The meditation practices employed by both Mystical Qabalists and Tantrikas involve a coordinated use of *mantra* and *yantra*. *Mantra* are sequences of Divine Names having great intrinsic power to transform consciousness, and *yantra* are visualizations that correlate directly and specifically to the *mantra*. Anthropomorphic descriptions of the Lord יהוה are usually allusions to mysteries and to states and stations of consciousness. Such anthropomorphic allusions are likewise profuse in the Tantras. The Hindu and Tibetan Buddhist Tantric traditions are particularly noted for their explicit sexual allusions to mystical states. Similar allusions are found in the *Idra Zuta Qadusha* (Lesser Holy Assembly) and other qabalistic literature. Also, some Qabalists engage in potent yogic sexual practices similar to those performed by the Virabhava Tantrikas and Chinese Taoist alchemists.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, the sexual disciplines (which are just one component of the Tantric tradition overall) are poorly understood, dangerous, and have long suffered from corruption and exploitation. While there is a plethora of material to compare between the Qabalah and the North Indian and Tibetan Buddhist Tantra, it is well beyond the scope of this book.

## MYSTICAL QABALAH, PHYSICS, AND ASTROPHYSICS

A number of elements in the qabalistic teachings regarding the “Work of the Chariot” (*ma’aseh merkabah*) and the “Work of the Creation” (*ma’aseh b’reshith*) provide rich opportunities for comparison with the ideas and models of modern physics and astrophysics. For instance, it has been particularly popular in some recent books to compare the Lurianic doctrine of the

expansion of light in the envacuuous, circular Contraction (*Tzimtzum*) to the modern astrophysical model of the Big Bang. In the Big Bang model, this universe originated in a quantum fluctuation that generated an immense explosion of tremendous mass ( $10^{58}$ , or in the more technical parlance,  $10E58$  grams) contained in an infinitesimally small space ( $10E-33$  cm). As the universe expanded and cooled, clouds of plasma accumulated through which gravity waves passed and ignited thermonuclear fires that generated suns. The suns eventually consume a critical amount of mass through the process of nuclear fission, whereby they either burn out or assume new forms. The universe continues to expand in a four-dimensional space-time continuum until it reaches a point where it starts to contract and return to its original condition. The expansion of the “Everlasting Arms” that connect the six Directional Sefiroth to one another around the periphery of the double pyramid Tree of Life delineated in the *Sefer Yetzirah*, and the movement of the *Chayot* in the Chariot of the **Book of Ezekiel** allude to the same idea. In the Hindu holy books known as the *Vedas*, we find another analogy to modern cosmology in the comparison of the Creator to a spider that weaves a web and then retrieves it back into its body.

The mentor in the Work of the Chariot Trust speculated further on the correlation between *Torah B’reshith* 1:1-4 and modern scientific cosmology. His exegesis is presented in Appendix B. It is based upon a different breakdown of the letter sequence of the first line of *Torah B’reshith*. This breakdown includes an alternative rendering of the first word of the *Torah* as “*Bara-shith*” i.e. “IT created Six,” reflecting the six symmetry breaks of modern quantum physics.<sup>42</sup> Some other authors have also speculated on the correlation between qabalistic formulations and the components of particle physics.<sup>43</sup>

Another core idea in modern cosmology that finds its counterpart in qabalistic doctrine is that time is relative and subject to compression and expansion. The first chapter of *Torah B’reshith* describes the “Seven Days of Creation.” In *Zohar B’reshith*, it says that the entire cycle of Creation is contained in the first verse of *Torah B’reshith*. In this light, it can then be said that the Hebrew calendar of seven thousand years spans the entire life of this universe in matter, which is currently estimated

to be twenty billion years. The implication of this idea is that the sequence of events in *Torah B'reshith*, all of which are assumed to occur in one plane of existence, actually manifest as a nonlinear space-time sequence occurring in more than one plane. Time-space is exponentially expansive in each successive plane of existence. Perhaps the reader has had the experience of an elaborate dream that seemed to span a long period of time, maybe years, only to wake up and find out that it actually occurred in a manner of minutes. Consider also the oft-told story of a person seeing their entire life “pass before their eyes” in a near-death episode.

From the perspective of a multi-plane, time-space sequence of events, one could conceive of the Great Flood described in the parable of Noah in *Torah B'reshith* as an allusion to a great solar cycle spanning approximately six billion years in matter. During that cycle, the Sun consumes its mass and eventually expands into a Red Giant, enveloping the planets that it had created, including the Earth. Then, the Sun (known as *Elohim* in Hebrew and *Brahma* in Sanskrit) contracts its mass, reconstitutes its core, and spins off a new planetary system in which life is created and evolves. Within the qabalistic worldview, the forty days that Noah is said to have spent in the Ark occurs two planes removed in the World of B'riyah (Creation). The genetic information regarding Noah and his wife and all fauna and flora thereby existed in a formless state, as vibrational signatures in the World of B'riyah (Creation). This information then reemerged with the regeneration of life on the planetary mass in the World of Asiyah (Activity in Matter). This extraordinary idea is also found in ancient Sanskrit texts in the account of the incarnation of *Vishnu* as *Matsya* the Fish, where the Flood is called *Pralaya* (“Dark Night of *Brahma*”).



## Chapter 2

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# Sources of the Mystical Qabalah

### INTRODUCTION

The primary texts that are largely the source for the core ideas, meditation practices, and all the various forms of the Tree of Life in the Mystical Qabalah are listed below. Primary texts include those revealed through messiahs, prophets, and great masters. Secondary texts are commentaries upon primary texts. During and since the Middle Ages, European Jewish Kabbalists, especially in Spain, Lithuania, and Poland, wrote a considerable body of secondary qabalistic literature. For the purposes of this book, however, we will limit our attention to earlier primary works, with the notable exception of the *Etz HaChayyim* (**Tree of Life**) of Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria. The Lurianic material has wide regard among contemporary religious students of the Jewish Kabbalah, and yields some unique forms of the Tree of Life not found in the earlier primary texts.

The Work of the Chariot study group focused upon the following primary texts:

- the *Sefer HaTorah* (**Books of the Law**, so-called “Five Books of Master Mosheh”)
- the *Sefer HaShmoth* (**Book of the Names**) of Master Adam
- the *Sefer Yetzirah* (**Book of Formation**), manual on the Hebrew letters written by Master Abraham
- the *Sefer HaZohar* (**Book of Splendor**), five volume exegesis on the *Torah* dictated by Rabbi Shimeon Ben Yochai; and more specifically, the *Zohar*'s innermost core texts, the *Sifra Detzneyutha* (**Book of THAT Which is Concealed**), the *Idra Rabba Qadusha* (**Greater Holy Assembly**), and the *Idra Zuta Qadusha* (**Lesser Holy Assembly**)

- the *Ma'aseh Merkabah* (“Work of the Chariot”) material from the *Nabiyim* (**The Prophets**), the remaining remnants of the **Seferim HaChanokh (Books of Enoch ben Yared)**, and the *Shi'r Qoma* (**Measure of the Divine Body**) from the *Sefer Raziel HaGadol* (**Book of the Secrets of Raziel the Great**)
- the *Qur'an*, the song of *Allah* transmitted through Master Mohammed
- the *Peshitta* (**Gospels**, including the **Gospel of Thomas**) describing the life and teachings of Master Yeshuvah, and the **Revelation of John**
- the *Etz HaChayyim* (**Tree of Life**) dictated by Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria to Chayyim Vital.

### **SEFERIM HATORAH (BOOKS OF THE LAW)**

The five component books of the *Torah* (תּוֹרָה) are conventionally known outside of Judaism as **Genesis**, **Exodus**, **Leviticus**, **Numbers**, and **Deuteronomy**. In this book, the five books of the *Torah* shall be named according to their traditional titles. Hence, the first book is called *Torah B'reshith* (“**In the Beginning**” or “**By the First**”). The second book is called *Torah Shmoth* (**Names**). The third, fourth, and fifth books are respectively titled *Torah Vayiqra* (“**And He Called**”), *Torah B'midbar* (“**In the Wilderness**”), and *Torah Doverim* (“**Words**”).

Most religious Jews regard the present version of the written Hebrew *Torah* to be a faithful copy of an original penned by Master Mosheh. They therefore regard every one of the 304,805 letters and their crownlets, and every word in the order that it appears in the scrolls to be the manifestation in the Lower Worlds of the unmanifest supernal *Torah* (*Torah Qadmah*).<sup>1</sup> By contrast, few biblical scholars and specialists in ancient languages share this assessment. In their view, linguistic analyses and other factors support the argument that the version that we have is a patchwork quilt containing words and phrases from a variety of languages from different periods, with threads dating back into deepest antiquity. Most non-orthodox biblical experts regard the present version of the Hebrew *Torah* to be a compilation of



writings by several Jewish writers working in successive periods starting circa 1000 BCE. Their work appears to have been combined and assembled in a final redaction in the fifth century BCE (though no scrolls from that time have yet to be found).

Whether the present version is the cumulative work of multiple writers or not, tradition ascribes the final redaction to Ezra the Scribe. The compilation required the writer(s) to collect, record, and assemble a large corpus of material from disparate sources. It is impossible to know how much of the text was passed down over the many centuries in written form, but it still would have been susceptible to errors of transcription, omission, etc. It is likely that a substantial amount, if not the majority, of the information was handed down as an oral tradition of teaching stories that skillfully mingled historical facts with miraculous acts. Such a rendition would have been even more vulnerable to corruption, embellishments and outright fictionalization. While it is highly unlikely that the current version of the *Torah* is an accurate version of the Ezra compilation, the living tradition of the Mystical Qabalah provides us with keys by which we can mine for the original treasures still embedded within it. Ultimately, the divinely infused life of Master Mosheh was a vehicle for the renewal and enlivenment of the underlying mystical spirituality regarding the absolute unity of existence and the primacy of unconditional devotion and love for the Divine that had faded in the hearts of Israel.

Despite arguments from religious Jews, there is extensive archeological evidence of a much older Hebrew alphabet, called *Gezer* or *Sinatic* (after Mt. Sinai), as the original and most ancient Hebrew (see “Hebrew-English Transliteration” facing page 11). Sinatic Hebrew is in fact the oldest known alphabet, suddenly appearing about the time of Abraham (circa 1850 BCE). The original Sinatic Hebrew became virtually extinct after the decimation of Lachish circa 701 BCE. The Sinatic alphabet could have evolved as an alphabetic representation of the twenty-six Sumerian cuneiform ciphers, the world’s oldest known non-alphabetic language.<sup>2</sup>

By the time the current *Torah* was redacted, the original Sinatic Hebrew alphabet had long been extinct. After hundreds

of years of religious and cultural repression under the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans, the original biblical Hebrew had faded from the memories of the Jews. As a solution, the final redactor (i.e. Ezra) chose to record the *Torah* in a new alphabet that would be more recognizable to the generations of Jews who had long forgotten the original. It was derived by using the twenty-two letter format of the old Hebrew alphabet, with letter forms synthesized from the familiar alphabets of the Palmyrene and Nabataen dialects of Aramaic extant in Palestine at that time (Figure 2.1 on page 58). Since Ezra is credited with the final redaction of the reconstructed *Torah*, this alphabet shall henceforth be referred to as “Ezra Hebrew.”

The oldest existing scrolls of the Hebrew *Torah* were written many centuries after the time of Ezra, so we can not be certain that the ones we have now are completely faithful to the original ascribed to him. Historically, there are three parallel textual traditions that have contributed substantially to the way the *Torah* is composed and translated. Most Jews now read the Masoretic version of the *Torah*. The Masoretic Hebrew text dates from the fourth century CE and the earliest surviving copy is from the tenth century CE.<sup>3</sup> The Greek translation of the *Tanakh*, called the *Septuagint*, was made under Ptolemy in the third century BCE, and the oldest copy is centuries older than the oldest full Masoretic text.<sup>4</sup> The *Septuagint* became the authoritative text for Christianity as it became estranged from its Jewish roots. The *Samaritan Torah* evolved during the period after the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE, and forcibly resettled many different peoples there. The three source versions vary in a number of details.

The Masoretes created the first system of vowels placed below the Hebrew consonants in the sixth or seventh century CE, thereby moving to standardize the pronunciation of the words and formalizing the structure of the grammar. Until then, even though the pronunciations and meanings had been passed down orally for centuries, the way Hebrew verb roots are parsed left considerable room for ambiguities. As early as the first century BCE, scribes began employing conventions to reduce such ambiguities. The conventions generally involved inserting consonants as vowels to aid reading.<sup>5</sup> Then, between the sixth

and twelfth centuries CE, the Masoretes and Tiberians edited the definitions of many of the Hebrew words found in the *Torah*.

The letterforms of the Sinatic and Ezra Hebrew alphabets bear little physical resemblance to one another, though they share the same twenty-two-letter format and have the same names for the letters. Hence, the Sinatic Hebrew letter Alef א transliterates with the Ezra Alef א, the Sinatic Beyt ב with the Ezra Beyt ב, and so forth. Sinatic letterforms are basically built from the letters Alef א and Ayin ע. Ezra Hebrew letter forms are built upon variations of the letter Yod י. Both alphabets have letters which overtly or covertly contain other letters, such as the Tav ט contained in the Sinatic Alef א or the Beyt ב contained in the Ezra Alef א (as described in the *Sefer Bahir*).<sup>6</sup> Unlike the Ezra alphabet, Sinatic does not have final letters, which were developed much later as a means of showing separation between words in crowded scrolls. The final letters became significant in the Ezra alphabet when given extended numerical value in *gematria* or qabalistic numerology.<sup>7</sup>

The sudden appearance of the original Hebrew was paralleled several hundred years later by the sudden appearance of Brahmi Sanskrit in the Indus Valley. Sinatic and Brahmi have many similar letterforms, and both were replaced by later alphabets claimed in present times to be the originals (i.e. Sinatic replaced by Ezra and Brahmi replaced by Deva Negari). Some Qabalists and Tantrikas maintain that there is a parent alphabet, called the “*Gan Aden Alphabet*” (גן עדן, Garden of Eden), from which both Hebrew and Sanskrit are derived. A speculative representation of the *Gan Eden Alphabet* composed of twenty-two families of letters with an aggregate of seventy members is seen in Figure 2.2 on page 59. There is also said to be a *Gan Aden Torah*, an unbroken sequence of letters that may be broken into words and sentences in innumerable ways. Hence, the written *Torah* is one such “translation” of the unbroken letter sequence, minus the letters and *anusvara* that were not included in the Hebrew alphabet.<sup>8</sup> A book called the *Tiqunim HaZohar* (“Perfections of Splendor”) discusses seventy ways of translating the first six letters of the *Torah*.<sup>9</sup> The *Torah* contains many power names, mantra, and visual imagery suitable for use in yogic meditation. Examples of these mantra and imagery will

be discussed later in the book, in the detailed section on the meditation practices of the Mystical Qabalah.

FIGURE 2.1 Aramaic, Palmyrene, and Nabataean alphabets

PHONETIC VALUE	EARLY ARAMAIC			PALMYRENE	NABATAEAN
	8th Century B.C.E.	6th Century B.C.E.	4th Century B.C.E.		
'	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄 𐤅 𐤆
b	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋 𐤌
g	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑
d	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖
h	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛 𐤜
w	𐤝	𐤞	𐤟	𐤠	𐤡 𐤢
z	𐤣	𐤤	𐤥	𐤦	𐤧
h	𐤨	𐤩	𐤪	𐤫	𐤬 𐤭
t	𐤮	𐤯	𐤰	𐤱	𐤲
y	𐤳	𐤴	𐤵	𐤶	𐤷 𐤸
k	𐤹	𐤺	𐤻	𐤼	𐤽 𐤾
l	𐤿	𐥀	𐥁	𐥂	𐥃 𐥄
m	𐥅	𐥆	𐥇	𐥈	𐥉 𐥊
n	𐥋	𐥌	𐥍	𐥎	𐥏 𐥐
s	𐥑	𐥒	𐥓	𐥔	𐥕
'	𐥖	𐥗	𐥘	𐥙	𐥚
p	𐥛	𐥜	𐥝	𐥞	𐥟 𐥠
s	𐥡	𐥢	𐥣	𐥤	𐥥 𐥦
q	𐥧	𐥨	𐥩	𐥪	𐥫
r	𐥬	𐥭	𐥮	𐥯	𐥰
š(sh)	𐥱	𐥲	𐥳	𐥴	𐥵
t	𐥶	𐥷	𐥸	𐥹	𐥺 𐥻

Reprinted from *The Alphabet "A Key to the History of Mankind,"* (Vol. I, II), by David Diringer, Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1968.

FIGURE 2.2 Gan Eden Alphabet

	T	E	S	D		T	E	S	D
1	A	א	א	अ	T= English Transliteration	M	מ	מ	
2	A'	א'	א'	आ	E= Ezra Hebrew Letter	MH	מח	מח	
					S= Sinatic Hebrew Letter				
					D= Deva Nagari Letter				
3	V	ו	ו	व		12			
4	VH	וה	וה			N	נ	न	
5	V	ו	ו	ब ] with		NH	נה	भ ] with	
6	BH	בח	בח	भ ] with		NN	ננ	न ] with	
						NNH	נח	नח ] with	
7	J			ज		13			
8	JH			ח		'SH	שח	W स	
9	G	ג	ג	ग ] with		'SH'	שח'	W' स'	
10	GH	גח	גח	घ ] with		S	ס	श ] with	
						SH	שח	ष ] with	
11	D	ד	ד	द		14			
12	DH	דח	דח	ध		F	פ	फ	
13	DD			ड ] with		P	פ	फ	
14	DDH			ढ ] with					
15	H	ה	ה	ह		50	R	र	
16	HH	הה	הה			51	RH	रह	
17	CH	ח	च ] with			52	RR	रर ] with	
18	CHH	חח	छ ] with			53	RRH	ररह ] with	
					70 MEMBERS				
					22 FAMILIES				
					HEBREW minus 14	16			
					SANSKRIT minus 16	54	a	अ	
19	Z	ז	इ			55	a	आ ] with	
20	ZH	זח	इ ] with			56	a	आ ] with	
21	TZ	זט	इ ] with			57	a	आ ] with	
22	TZH	זחט	इ ] with			58	a	आ ] with	
23	T	ת	त			17	i	इ ] with	
24	TH	תח	थ ] with			59	i	इ ] with	
25	T	ת	ट ] with			60	i	इ ] with	
26	TH	תח	ठ ] with						
27	Y	י	य			18	u	उ ] with	
						61	u	उ ] with	
28	K	כ	क ] with			62	u	उ ] with	
29	KH	כח	ख ] with						
30	Q	ק	क ] with			19	e	ए ] with	
31	QH	קח	क ] with			63	e	ए ] with	
						64	e	ए ] with	
						65	e	ए ] with	
32	L	ל	ल ] with			20	o	ओ ] with	
33	LH	לח	ल ] with			66	o	ओ ] with	
34	LL	לל	ल ] with			67	au	औ ] with	
35	LLH	ללח	ल ] with						
36	LRI	לרי	ल ] with			21	-	VISARGA	
37	LRI	לרי	ल ] with			68	-	ः	
						69	-	ः	
						22	-	ANUSVARA	
						70	-	ः	

### **SEFER HASHMOTH (BOOK OF THE NAMES)**

It is said, “The *Sefer HaShmoth (Book of the Names)* is as much like a book, as the Sabbath is like the regular days of the week.”<sup>10</sup> On the one hand, the *Sefer HaShmoth* is a book of Divine Names of fundamental importance to qabalistic meditation and magical/occult practices. As such, it is a valuable key that can help open locks guarding the mysteries that lay hidden in Hebrew (and Arabic) qabalistic books, and provides Names of Power by which one can light the entire Tree. Secondly, it is the primary source of “Angelic Tree Language,” comprised of one series of Tree-maps that allude to distinctly different paths of ascension through the planes of consciousness, and a second series that allude to different stations of perfected souls who have completed the ascension.

It is said that Adam gave the book to his son Seth and it was then passed down the generational line to Enoch son of Yared. When Enoch ascended and “walked with *Elohim*,” he took the book with him. The *Sefer HaShmoth* came back into the world again with the Covenant of Abraham.<sup>11</sup> Abraham gave the book to Ishmael, Isaac, and his offspring by his concubines.<sup>12</sup> Isaac’s copy was handed down to Master Mosheh and was later sealed in the vault of the first Temple of Jerusalem. Buried in the Temple vault, access to the book was limited to those who had the psychic skill to “see/read” it in Yetzirah (Astral World of Formation), and the strength to survive the impact of its power without shattering their shells.<sup>13</sup>

The powerful *Sefer HaShmoth* resurfaced in the early 1970’s, when it was transmitted through the gentleman responsible for the creation of the Work of the Chariot Trust. For a series of nights, he would awaken in the early hours and record the succession of Sinatic Hebrew Divine Names and Trees of Life he would see as intense light patterns, using the level of psychic mediation described in the *Sefer HaZohar (Book of Splendor)* as “One-Twentieth Cloudy Mirror.” (The various designations regarding the mirror of consciousness in the *Zohar* refer to different degrees of vision. “Clear Mirror” denotes the consciousness of Messiah. “Dull” or “Cloudy Mirror” denotes the vision of Prophets. “One-Twentieth Cloudy Mirror” denotes

the conscious dream state and “One-Sixtieth Cloudy Mirror” the normal dream state.) He assembled the sequence of Names into a book as he was instructed, with one Name on each page. The Names are followed by the series of Angelic Tree Language. The Work of the Chariot Trust subsequently published Sinatic Hebrew, Ezra Hebrew, and English versions of the *Sefer HaShmoth* in 1971-72. Most of the Working and Perfect forms of the Tree of Life that appeared in those books had never been seen before. The complete list of Divine Names contained in the Work of the Chariot edition is provided in Appendix A. All of the various Trees diagrams are included in the seven chapters of this text.

### SEFER YETZIRAH (BOOK OF FORMATION)

The *Sefer Yetzirah* (Book of Formation) attracts heated debate about its authorship and date of origination. Many scholars attribute a medieval or Hasmonean date to the book. It is not in the scope of the present work to delineate the varied opinions that attribute a medieval date to the book’s inception. The references to the “Book of Abraham” in the *Qur’an* (see *Surahs* 87:19 and 53:37) may allude to this book or some version of it. If that is the case, since the *Qur’an* predates the medieval period by centuries, it would at least substantiate that the *Sefer Yetzirah* is not of medieval origin.

The Work of the Chariot Trust version was made using all six known textual sources.<sup>14</sup> Some of the versions contain considerable addenda whose language points to the Hasmonean period, circa 130 BCE, and later. The additional material was left out of the redaction the Work of the Chariot used as the basis for its translation. Based upon astronomical information in the book itself, the Work of the Chariot translator attributed authorship of the *Sefer Yetzirah* to Master Abraham in the nineteenth century BCE. An adjunctive note to the translation points out that the Procession of the Equinoxes acts as an unforgeable clock, allowing us to determine that the correspondence of the constellations given in the sixth chapter to the twelve Hebrew months (with no variations in the six texts considered) occurred during the time of Abraham, circa 4000 years ago. Allowing for

an optimal variation of plus or minus 800 years ago, it is still not anywhere within the range of medieval times. A check on the data logs of the old Chaldeans, Egyptians, and Greeks indicated that no one had astronomical knowledge of the Procession (until about 1700 CE).

The *Sefer Yetzirah* is the first mystical manual on, and possibly the source text for, the original Hebrew alphabet. Its chapters explain the significance of the twenty-two letters and ascribe various attributes to them. It is second only to the *Sefer HaShmoth* as the most prolific source of distinct forms of the Tree of Life. The first chapter of the book is the earliest known textual source for the six-pointed symbol known as the “Star of David.” The Six-Pointed Star has come to be seen as a flat, two-dimensional symbol of two interlocking triangles. The *Sefer Yetzirah*, however, presents the Star as a three-dimensional, six-pointed form of the Tree of Life comprised of two interfacing pyramids. The *Sefer Yetzirah* provides one of the two vastly different sets of names commonly found in the Qabalah for the spheres (called *Sefiroth*) on the Tree (the other set comes from the *Sefer HaZohar*). The names for the Sefiroth in the *Sefer Yetzirah* are based on elements (Spirit of Living *Elohim*, Air, Fire, Water), on four “Celestial Heads of Messiah,” and on the six directions. These and the other correspondences that the book gives for the spheres and gates on the Tree will be discussed in detail later in the book.

Like the three innermost core texts of the *Sefer HaZohar*, the *Sefer Yetzirah* stands out within primary qabalistic literature for the depth, terseness, and obscurity of its language, and for its wealth of mystical allusions. For a Mystical Qabalist, the book’s power and value are valid independent of academic considerations regarding its origins. The full range of ideas and allusions presented in the *Sefer Yetzirah* will be discussed in the course of this book.

### SEFER HAZOHAR (BOOK OF SPLENDOR)

The *Sefer HaZohar* (Book of Splendor, often referred to simply as “the *Zohar*”) is a five-volume mystical exegesis written in Rashi Aramaic on the five books of the *Torah*. Like



the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the date and original author of the *Zohar* are subjects for academic debate. Many qabalistic scholars, such as Gershom Scholem, believe the *Zohar* to be a new work produced by Moses De Leon, circa 1250 CE in Spain.<sup>15</sup> Others believe that it was dictated by its pivotal figure Rabbi Shimeon Ben Yochai to his son Rabbi Abba in the first century CE, while they and their group of rabbis hid in caves for thirteen years in Piquin, Israel to avoid Roman persecution. Hence, there are also those who would take the intermediary position that De Leon redacted and published a work that had a much earlier time of origin.

The text of the *Zohar* is presented as a series of dialogues among a group of rabbis. These rabbis were the embodiments of the various Sefiroth (spheres) on the Tree of Life. Hence, the “flavor” of the respective Sefirah (sphere) colors each rabbi’s remarks and questions. Like the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the *Zohar* has its own distinct set of names for the Sefiroth, most of which come from the *Sefer HaShmoth*, and are later echoed in the *Torah* and *Ketuvim* (Writings). Those names may be described as various qualities of the Divine, such as Wisdom, Beauty, Glory, and Mercy. The Zoharic names for the Sefiroth are the most commonly known and used among all types of Qabalists.

The body of the five volumes of the *Zohar* emanates from a core of three extraordinary texts. The innermost layer and heart of the *Zohar* is a small text called the *Sifra Detzneyutha* (**Book of THAT Which is Concealed**). This book contains the single greatest exposition on the negatively existent Mysterious Unknown (called *Ayn*, and also “The NOT”) among all written works of the Mystical Qabalah. The next layer of the core of the *Zohar* is a text called *Idra Rabba Qadusha* (**Greater Holy Assembly**), or simply *Idra Rabba*; and the third layer of the core is called *Idra Zuta Qadusha* (**Lesser Holy Assembly**), or simply *Idra Zuta*. The *Idra Rabba* and *Idra Zuta* expand greatly upon the anthropomorphic allusions introduced in the *Sifra Detzneyutha*. The “Greater Holy Assembly” is the entire Tree of ten Sefiroth. The “Lesser Holy Assembly” is the upper seven Sefiroth only. The profound ideas and wonderful mystical allusions presented in the three core texts will be discussed in detail later on.

### **MA'ASEH MERKABAH (CHARIOT) LITERATURE**

Among the principal works of the written Qabalah, significant material is devoted to the description of the Celestial Chariot (מרכבה, *Merkabah*), or “Throne of Glory of *El Shadai*.” The Chariot is generally an allusion to the Tree of Life, and especially to the four Sefiroth in the central matrix of the three-dimensional Tree of Perfection. These four are collectively referred to as the “Inner Court” of the Tree. The Lord יהוה is variously said to be “riding in the Chariot” and “seated upon the Throne” in the similitude of a man (i.e. *Adam Kadmon*, the “Celestial Man”). In the *Ketuvim* (Writings) of the Jewish scripture (called *Tanakh*), this material is concentrated in the books of **Ezekiel** 1-3, 8, 10 and **Isaiah** 6. Specific verses in these books yield a three-dimensional, six-pointed form of the Tree similar to the one delineated by the *Sefer Yetzirah*. Each of these Tree forms contains distinctly different representations of the four Inner Court Sefiroth. The Chariot Tree will be described in more detail when all the forms of the Trees yielded by the respective primary texts are presented in Chapters Four and Five.

The most prolific descriptions of the *Merkabah* appear in the **Books of Enoch**. Enochian literature takes its name from Enoch son of Yared. Enoch was “a righteous man in his generation” and “walked with *Elohim*.”<sup>16</sup> It is believed that in ancient times there may have been as many as 100,000 volumes of Enochian literature, nearly all of whose last remains were lost in the fiery destruction of the Great Library of Alexandria. This literature was virtually unknown from the fourth (when banned by Hilary, Jerome, and Augustus) until the late nineteenth century CE, when three manuscripts deemed as authentic Enochian material were discovered. Two of the manuscripts, **I Enoch** and **III Enoch**, were in Ethiopian translation: these were found in what was once Abyssinia, the domain of King Solomon’s infamous lover, the Queen of Sheba. The third manuscript, called **II Enoch** and the “**Book of the Secrets of Enoch**,” was preserved in two Slavonic versions: these were found in Russia and Serbia. **I Enoch** and **II Enoch** were translated by R.H. Charles. H. Odeburg translated **III Enoch** (“**Hebrew Book of Enoch**”).<sup>17</sup> The **Books of Enoch** that are mentioned here should not be confused with the “Canons of Enoch,” which were discovered

and translated into European languages in the early nineteenth century. These latter books, which influenced Romantic artists and poets such as Thomas Moore, William Blake, and Lord Byron, are from a different tradition.

The authorship and dates of origin of the remaining Enochian books are obscure. The three manuscripts cited, replete with errors of addition, corruption, and omission, may well be the remnants of volumes given to Sheba by King Solomon and subsequently handed down through generations. At the very least, biblical scholars agree that the **Books of Enoch** are the most important Apocrypha and Pseudoepigrapha pre-dating the Christian era. It has been well established that all New Testament authors were more or less influenced by them.<sup>18</sup> The translations of the three **Books of Enoch** had been long out of print by the time the Work of the Chariot Trust republished them in the early 1970's.

The texts address a wide range of topics. There are numerous messianic references, extensive angeologies and demonologies, elaborate descriptions of the various heavens and hells, lists of Divine Names, lists of names of *Metatron*, and allusions to mystical states associated with ascending the Tree. The most prominent Merkabah sections describe the ascension and transformation of Enoch ben Yared into *Metatron*, known as "The Youth" (נַר, *Nar*) to whom the Lord יהוה revealed the deepest secrets, and whom the Lord יהוה made the "operational manager" of this universe.<sup>19</sup> *Metatron*, chief of the angels, is referred to in the *Tanakh* (notably in **Proverbs** 22.6 and **Job** 32.6), as well as the *Zohar* (I.223b). **III Enoch**, the "**Hebrew Book of Enoch**," contains a long discourse on the ascension of the Celestial Chariot by Rabbi Ishmael, the last High Priest before the destruction of the first Temple of Jerusalem. The ascension of Rabbi Ishmael drew vigorous protests from some of the high angels, who objected to the admission of his relatively impure human spirit to the supernal World of Emanation (called *Atziluth*). When high angels get too close to the supernal Sefiroth in the World of *Atziluth*, their wings burn. The ascension by Rabbi Ishmael of the Celestial Chariot is a narrative allegory for the mystical ascent of the Central Column of the Tree.

Another obscure but important treatise included among Merkabah literature is the *Sefer Raziel HaGadol* (**Book of Raziel the Great**),<sup>20</sup> which contains a subtext within it called the *Sh'ir Qoma* or “**Measure of the Divine Body**.” The *Sh'ir Qoma* presents copious lists of Divine Names and, uniquely, a series of dimensions ascribed to the “Divine Body” or *Yosher* (יֵשֶׁר, lit. upright) form of the Name יהוה (Figure 2.3). All current Hebrew texts of the *Sh'ir Qoma* come from a single text, the corrupt edition published by Eleazer of Worms in Amsterdam in 1701 CE. The dimensions given in that text do not yield a reasonable image. The Work of the Chariot Trust published the first, and until recently only, English translation of the *Sh'ir Qoma*, and included it in its edition of the **Books of Enoch**. The translator adjusted the dimensions so that a reasonable *Yosher* is produced, and the overall size correlates roughly to the currently accepted size of the sidereal universe.

The “*Sh'ir Qoma*” is the vision of the Creation as a unity in the Name יהוה. It is seen when returning from the negatively existent roots of the Tree, looking down at the Sefirah in the throat center from the Sefirah at the crown of the head. The *Yosher* is a distinctly anthropomorphic form of the Name יהוה. It is encircled by the *Leviathan* (לִיַּיָּתָן) of Vast Face, described as a “snake devouring its tail.”<sup>21</sup> The *Leviathan* acts as a circular “fence” around the *Yosher* and defines the field of superimposition. It also displays the ubiquitous mystical principle that “the end is contained in the beginning.” An obscure teaching says that the *Yosher* drips out from *Leviathan's* fang. This is paralleled in the Tantric tradition, where *Shiva* is described as swallowing the “poison” of *Maya* and holding it in his throat. In the *Sifra Detzniyutha*, we find the verse:

“The engraving of all engravings appears as a long serpent.

And extends this way and that. The tail is in the head.

The head goes around to the shoulders. Passing and indignant.

Guarding and concealing, revealing itself in a thousand short days.”<sup>22</sup>

FIGURE 2.3 Ezra Hebrew *Yosher* in the *Tzimtzum* surrounded by *Leviathan*



### THE PESHITTA AND THE REVELATION OF JOHN

Unlike Master Mosheh and the Prophet Mohammed, Master Yeshuvah did not record a revelation to be handed down after his departure from human form. He did not come to start a new religion, but to fulfill and revitalize an old one. Master Yeshuvah was a Jew born to Jewish parents; a messianic messenger and redeemer awaited and yearned for by faithful Jews. His life was his message, and it can only truly be understood in Jewish terms. Upon interrogation, the Head Rabbi could find no fault in him. What was there to dispute? When asked what the first of all commandments was, Master Yeshuvah (like Rabbi Hillel did a century before him) unhesitatingly pronounced it to be the *Shema*, the Affirmation of Unity from *Torah Doverim* upon

which the entire Jewish religion is built. In order of importance after the *Shema*, he cited the root injunction from **Torah** to love and acknowledge the innate divinity of all beings:

“*Shem Ayn Yisroel יהוה Elohenu יהוה EchaD*  
*Vuh-ahavta et יהוה Elohenu,*  
*Buh-khol levavkha,*  
*Oo-vuh-khol nafshekha,*  
*Oo-vuh-khol muhodekha.”*<sup>23</sup>

“Name *Ayn* Israel YHVH Thy *Elohim* YHVH One.  
 And you shall love YHVH Your Elohim  
 With all your heart, with all your soul, and with all  
 your might.”

Followed by,

“*Vuh-ahavta leh-re'akha kamokha.*”  
 “And thou shall love your neighbor as your Self.”<sup>24</sup>

But when one reads the stories of Master Yeshuvah’s life and teachings as explicated in the four **Gospels** of the conventional **Peshitta**, it is no longer a Jewish story that is found there, but preponderantly an admixture of theology developed almost exclusively by Gentiles. Master Yeshuvah had come to reestablish and enliven the universal mystical spirituality that was always present in Judaism, but had become largely forgotten and covered by the dross of worldliness and contortions of interpretation. But, his simple and clear message of the absolute unity of all existence, and spiritual awakening through unconditional love and surrender to the Divine, was obscured almost immediately after the passing of his close disciples. A virtual divorce of Christianity from its Jewish roots ensued. Fragmented communities of Christians with different and competing views and agendas quickly crystallized, some composed largely of Palestinian or Hellenistic Jewish Christians, and others of Gentiles from a wide variety of backgrounds whose only knowledge of ancient scripture came from the Greek **Septuagint**. Starting about forty years after Master Yeshuvah appeared to pass from his physical body, a variety of narratives attributed to close disciples began to appear. In addition to the four accounts that were canonized by the emerging orthodoxy into the **Peshitta**, the **Gospel of Thomas**, the **Gospel of Peter**,

the **Gospel of Philip**, the **Secret Gospel of Mark**, the **Gospel of Mary Magdalena**, and other works are still extant in whole or part.

Are the four books contained in the current version of the *Peshitta* accurate renditions of the life and teachings of Master Yeshuvah, as recorded by four of his closest disciples? That would be highly unlikely. Until the **Gospel of Mark** appeared several years after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, virtually all information concerning Master Yeshuvah was passed down as an oral tradition, largely in the form of sayings (*L. logia*) attributed to him. Oral traditions are notoriously prone to distortions and embellishments. In the next thirty years, different communities of Christians produced narratives in the name of Matthew, Luke, John, and also Thomas. The **Gospels of Matthew** and **Luke** could well have been intended to be stand-alone replacements for the **Gospel of Mark**. The **Gospel of Matthew** includes 601 verses contained in **Mark**, either word for word or with carefully crafted changes. Some investigators attribute an additional source for the **Gospel of Luke**, dubbed the “Q Source.” Support is growing to include the **Gospel of Thomas** in the *Peshitta* as one of the original canonized Gospels.<sup>25</sup>

The single most prominent source that all four shared was the Greek translation of the *Tanakh*, called the **Septuagint**, which the Christians had transformed into a book about Master Yeshuvah well before any of the gospel narratives appeared. While the Qumran community and other pre-Christian groups read oracular meanings into the *Tanakh* in a more general sense, the Christians did so in a very specialized way. Long held traditional Jewish meanings for verses in the *Tanakh* were replaced by forced interpretations that supported Master Yeshuvah as the fulfillment of the *Torah*, the writings of the prophets (especially those of Daniel, Isaiah, Micah, and Hosea), and the historical accounts of the kings of Israel. Numerous investigators have pointed out obvious mistranslations and misunderstandings of verses from *Tanakh* that were appropriated and customized for the biblical justification of gospel narratives. Finally, for various reasons, all of the primary religious texts have suffered from corruption, errors in transcription, omissions,

and additions as they were passed down over the centuries. The earliest texts of the canonized **Gospels** only go back to the fourth and fifth centuries CE.

So, does this mean that the essential teachings of Master Yeshuvah are lost to the world? Definitely not! Again, it is important to remember that Master Yeshuvah did not come to deliver a new message but to renew an old one. He did not come to replace the **Torah**, but to demonstrate its essence through his life. Hence, the Hebrew scriptures, even without interpretations skewed to support a developing theology, and the Mystical Qabalah provide us with the necessary keys to identify the many gems placed in the setting of the quasi-fictionalized gospel narratives. The **Gospels of John** and **Thomas**, in particular, make it clear that the teachings of Master Yeshuvah were firmly rooted in the continuum of Shemite mystical spirituality.

Secondly, there are universal characteristics of messianic appearances that cross all religious boundaries. From time to time in the histories of all religions, the One Ineffable Ground of Being has taken human form to reawaken faith, revitalize the universal teachings upon which they are all based, and renew the efficacy of the succession of Gatekeepers who keep those teachings alive within the respective traditions. Every one of these Messiahs is a manifestation with full power, omniscience, and omnipresence of the same Divine Source, and yet every one is utterly unique and extraordinary. While many of the appearances of Messiah are accompanied by a written revelation or set of teachings, in each case it may be said that the message they came to bring was demonstrated most directly and most poignantly by their lives. And while each of those life stories was unique, they all shared a number of things in common that we may apply in considering the divine life of Master Yeshuvah. These commonalities will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three in the section on the nature of messianic appearance within the context of the Mystical Qabalah.

Finally, like every living tradition, the spiritual power of the transmission does not depend primarily upon the written documents, but in the *b'rakha* (spiritual blessing) of Perfect Trees and the grace of the Divine to quicken one's Holy Spirit



(*Ruach Ha Qodesh*). Mystical Christianity has maintained a continuous lineage of known and mostly unknown saints and mystics over the centuries, who have faithfully passed on the essence of Master Yeshuvah's mystical spirituality. Despite later distrust and suppression by Pauline orthodoxy, mysticism flourished in the early church. Master Yeshuvah taught one set of teachings openly to the public, and another set of secret teachings privately to his most advanced disciples. The **Gospels** themselves attest to this, and Clement of Alexandria wrote about such a secret teaching as late as the third century CE.

Of all the Christian mystical literature, the most enigmatic and passionately discussed is the **Revelation of John**. It opens with a description of John's vision of the Ancient of Days with fiery eyes and a two-edged sword coming from His mouth, etc. The text then goes on to delineate a series of seven sets of seven images. These images have long been regarded as allegorically depicting a linear series of events all occurring in the physical plane, leading to the reemergence of Christ, his vanquishing of Satan, and His ascension as the Lamb of God to the Throne on High in the new Jerusalem. However, from the perspective of the Mystical Qabalah, the series of images listed in the **Revelation** provide an allusion for the process of mystical awakening through the four worlds in the ascension of a specialized version of the single-column "Tree of Life of the Treasuries of the House of *Elohim*." The series of images from **Revelation** are presented in the qabalistic Tree format in Chapter Six.

## THE QU'RAN

The *Qur'an* is the final revelation of the Lord יהוה (as *Allah*) to the children of Abraham. It was transmitted through the Prophet Mohammed, the "Seal of the Shemite prophets." The only prophet yet to come is the reappearance of Eliyahu (Elijah), who will herald the final messianic advent of *Allah* as "The Last," which the *Qur'an* calls the "Day of Judgment" (*Yom Ah-Din*). The *Qur'an* encompasses 6,666 verses in 114 titled *surahs* (chapters) of varying length. Master Mohammed lived at a time when a substantial number of Jews, Christian, and Sabaeans lived on the Arabian Peninsula among a general population of

idol worshipping Arabs. Master Mohammed is thought to have had significant interaction with religious teachers from all of these groups, as well as, from the Hanifites, and the highly educated Persian Zoroastrians who ruled many parts of the peninsula. A large amount of critical evidence, beyond the scope of this book, concludes that this interaction substantially impacted the content of the *Qur'an*.

The Jews had immigrated to the Arabian Peninsula via the well-traveled trade routes across the Red Sea long before Master Mohammed was born. They were largely centered in Mecca and Medina, and included a substantial number of religious teachers well versed in Talmudic *halacha* (interpretations of verses in *Torah*) and Midrashic commentary (i.e. on the *halacha*). The Sabaeans are thought to have been among the earliest inhabitants of Syria, and only a little is known of their history, culture, and spirituality. The Christian inhabitants consisted largely of the descendants of “heretics” who had been expelled from the Roman Empire. These Arabian “desert fathers” possessed numerous apocalyptic and pseudo-epigraphic texts. But it is suspected that they had limited knowledge of the *Peshitta*, and that the bulk of the material related to the Prophet Isa (Master Yeshuvah) and Miryam (Mary) in the *Qur'an* was derived from Jewish sources. The Hanifites were an Arabian faith community largely concentrated in Mecca, Medina, and a few other cities, who had rejected idolatry previous to the birth of the Prophet. They professed to be in search of the original religion of Abraham. In the *Qur'an*, Master Mohammed repeatedly applies the term “*hanif*” to the disciples of the religion of Abraham. Before and during Master Mohammed’s life, Persian kings ruled many parts of the peninsula. The Persian inhabitants were generally well educated, and their tales and songs became widespread among the Arabian tribes.

The poetic and narrative style of the *Qur'an* is strikingly different from the *Tanakh*. The *Tanakh* is a diverse anthology whose component pieces were written at different times for religious instruction by a number of different consummate storytellers. Their work was selectively preserved and handed down as the best of their kind, culminating in their inclusion in the Ezra redaction of the *Tanakh*. The *Qur'an* was a totally new

work, delivered in a very short period of time in a specific historical climate and cultural milieu. It was an inspired scripture delivering a fresh transmission of the universal mystical spirituality of the religion of Abraham. It was intended to bring the descendants of Ishmael out of their long decline into idol worship, as well as, lead the Jews and the Christians back to the spiritual truth that had become buried under orthodox conventions, fictionalized narratives, forced meanings, and outside cultural distortions. While characters in the *Torah* are highly developed and distinct, those in the *Qur'an* come forth with little development and repeat the same fundamental axioms. While biblical narratives are complete stories rich with dramatic action, the narratives in the *Qur'an* are fragmentary, with incidents and scenes from Jewish and Christian history introduced abruptly, with little dramatic sense, and often lacking important points that would enhance the reader's understanding.

However, the unique and complex circumstances into which the Prophet brought forth his new dispensation didn't require that he repeat the entirety of the biblical narrative. There was a long history of hostilities and distrust among the various Arab tribes. The Jews and the Christians had been estranged for centuries. His fragmentary approach was enough to give the Arabs a sense of ownership of the religion of their ancestors, while providing a vehicle to carry the core mystical concept of the absolute unity of all existence at the roots of all the traditions. The 114 *surahs* of the *Qur'an* are typically divided into those revealed in the early period in Mecca, those revealed in the middle period in Medina, and those that came in the later period in Mecca. As a rule, the shortest and most mystically potent *surahs* are associated with the early period in Mecca. Longer *surahs* from later periods were more loosely structured, allowing the Prophet to make changes as circumstances unfolded, and insert new verses as he deemed appropriate. Thus, the *Qur'an* presented both an opportunity to reestablish the unitive mystical spirituality of the children of Abraham in general, as well as, gave the Prophet the guise of revelation to resolve many tribal disputes.

The core mystical ideas of the *Qur'an* and Sufism are essentially identical to those of the *Torah* and the Mystical Qabalah. As the Mystical Qabalah is predicated upon the

negatively existent “Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things,” called *Ayn* (“Nothing”) and *Lo* (i.e. “The NOT”), the *Qur’an* refers repeatedly to the Divine Essence as *La* (also “The NOT”). Like the Qabalah, the Face of God is a prominent component in Sufi mysticism, and like the *Torah* (as well as, virtually all other mystical traditions), the *Qur’an* has allusions to both Vast and Small Face. For instance, in “The Light” *Surah*, allusions are given for the Tree of Life, for Small Face as “light upon light,” and for Vast Face as “darkness upon thick darkness.”<sup>26</sup>

“*Allah* is the light of the heavens and the earth.  
The similitude of His light is that of a niche,<sup>27</sup>  
within which is a lamp.<sup>28</sup>  
The lamp is within a glass orb.<sup>29</sup>  
The glass, as it were, a shining star,<sup>30</sup>  
Lit with the oil of a blessed olive tree,  
NOT of the East, NOT of the West.  
Its light luminous even though fire touches it not,  
Light upon light.”<sup>31</sup>

and, later in the *surah*,

“Or like darkness upon a vast ocean,<sup>32</sup>  
Covered with waves upon waves,  
Over them clouds,  
Darkness upon thick darkness.<sup>33</sup>  
And whoever *Allah* gives NOT- Light, has  
NOT- Light in all.”

In Islam, Judaism and Christianity are regarded as revealed religions, and therefore given protected status. In the *Qur’an*, there are a number of references to the Jews as the “People of the Book (i.e. *Torah*)” whom Muslims are exhorted to honor and respect. In the “Most High *Surah*,” the *Torah* is called the “Book of Mosheh” and the *Sefer Yetzirah* (**Book of Formation**) is referred to as the “Book of Abraham.” The *Qur’an* also has beautiful *surahs* devoted to the Prophet Isa (Master Yeshuvah), to whom is ascribed the exalted stature of *rasool* (prophet of the highest degree), and to Isa’s mother Miryam (Mary). It is interesting to note that in the history of Miryam, Master Mohammed speaks of Miryam, sister of Aaron the High Priest

and Master Mosheh, as the same Miryam who became the mother of Master Isa 1570 years later. Scholars frequently point to this as an erroneous ascription. However, from the perspective of reincarnation, was Master Mohammed inferring that the later Miryam was a reincarnation of the former, much in the same way as John the Baptist is identified as a reincarnation of Prophet Eliyahu in the *Peshitta*?

### THE *ETZ HACHAYYIM* (TREE OF LIFE) OF RABBI YITZA'AQ LURIA

Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria (1534-1572 CE) is a highly esteemed Jewish Kabbalist who lived in Safed in Israel. He is widely known as “HaAri” (The Lion). The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 set into motion a tide of momentum that led to Safed becoming a center for the revitalized study of the Jewish Kabbalah, in which Luria was a central figure. Rabbi Luria dictated the *Etz HaChayyim* (Tree of Life) to his student Chayyim Vital. It is composed of ten “Branches” and is deeply rooted in the *Zohar* (Book of Splendor). It is clearly the most intellectually complex of the principal works of written Qabalah, and attracts the lion’s share of interest amongst present-day (non-occult) Qabalists.

The text of the *Etz HaChayyim* describes the emanation of the “smooth and simple” Light of the Endless (אֵין סוּף אִוֵר, *Ayn Sof Or*), from Its unmanifest condition into the pattern of the Sefiroth of the Tree of Life within the “Sphere of Contraction” (צִמְצוּם, *Tzimtzum*).<sup>34</sup> In the *Etz HaChayyim*, the Central Column of the Tree is called the *Kav* (כַּב, Line of Light), and the names used for the Sefiroth are exclusively Zoharic. The Lurianic cosmogony elucidates a system of *partzufim*, or “veils,” positioned on the Tree. The *Etz HaChayyim* is a source for several unique forms of the Tree of Life. One form renders the Sefiroth as a pattern of ten concentric circles, like “layers of an onion.” Two other Trees are set upon a version of the vertical arrangement of the letters of the Name יהוה mentioned in the description of the *Sh’ir Qoma* (Measure of the Divine Body). These Trees will be presented in a later chapter.

Luria is particularly noted for his doctrine of the *Shevirat HaKelim*, or the “Shattering of the Vessels.” This doctrine widely influenced many Qabalists who followed, including Sabbatai Zevi and the Baal Shem Tov (the father of Chasidism). The core idea of the *Shevirat HaKelim* is that the universe was shattered at the moment of creation (mirroring the Big Bang Theory). From this inflationary event, “holy sparks” flew off in all directions. Some returned, and others became embodied in all forms of matter. From this arose the idea of *Tikkun Olam*, or the “Perfection of the World,” in which all the holy sparks return to the state of unity that preceded the creation of the universe. A parallel in Chaos Theory is the concept of a “disturbed system” that strives to revert to a former condition of quasi-stationary equilibrium. The Work of the Chariot Trust published the first English translation of all ten Branches of the *Etz HaChayyim* in 1973.

## CONCLUSION REGARDING THE PRIMARY TEXTS

The primary texts of the Mystical Qabalah are books of power not intended for superficial consumption. Such books are alive, full of light, with hidden gates and abundant treasures. The life, light, and secrets of any book of power must grow like seeds in the mind. With proper cultivation under suitable conditions, those seeds bear fruit over time. With repeated recitation and perhaps the scribing of a text, one can feel the patterns and identify the key phrases, power names, imagery, and diagrams upon which the book is built. When you properly intone and scribe the key power names and phrases, and visualize the principal imagery and diagrams, you activate deep archetypes in the mind. These archetypes expand in one’s consciousness and trigger associations and flashes of perception.

## Chapter 3

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# Core Teachings of the Mystical Qabalah

### INTRODUCTION

The core teachings of any mystical tradition constitute the infrastructure of its worldview, and thereby form the basis and backdrop for its spiritual practices. All mystical worldviews are at once unique and yet identical. Since they are open ended, and provide a ladder for the finite human intellect to connect with an infinite Ground of Pure Being that is inherently unfathomable to that intellect, they are usually composed of allegories and allusions transmitted by messiahs, perfect masters, and great sages. Like a ladder that is used to climb up to the roof of a house and then as the means to come back down, a mystical worldview is intended to act as a vehicle for the awakening consciousness to ascend through the planes of existence to unite with the Divine Essence. The worldview becomes a frame of reference for the mind to come back into once the soul returns as an individuated being.

The elements of the qabalistic worldview are combined in the grand allusion of the Tree of Life. The Tree emanates from the Mysterious Unknown in its negatively existent roots, and descends through the planes of existence via a series of spheres connected by gates. All mystical traditions have ways for the human intellect to make a distinction between passive and active aspects of the Mysterious Unknown. In the Qabalah, they are respectively called “Vast Face” and “Small Face.” The relationship between the two Faces is portrayed in the Tree of Life. Like most other mystical traditions, the Qabalah has a variety of special Names for each of the two aspects, and a principal Name for the active aspect upon which the entire religious tradition usually centers. In the following sections of this chapter, the core teachings of the Mystical Qabalah that constitute its worldview are presented in detail.

## THE AYN, VAST FACE, AND SMALL FACE

### THE AYN

The Mystical Qabalah describes the roots of the Tree of Life as an ultimate, negatively existent substratum of pure Being that is Self-conscious and all blissful. It is described as “negatively existent” in relation to the “positively-existent” four worlds of the Tree of Life. The three roots of the Tree are named:

- *Ayn* (אֵין lit. Nothing; pronounced “ai-n” as in ‘nine’),
- *Ayn Sof* (אֵין סוּף lit. Without End, or Endless; pronounced “sof” as in ‘sofa’), and
- *Ayn Sof Or* (אֵין סוּף אוֹר lit. Endless Light, or Light of the Endless; pronounced “or” as in ‘oar’).

But these are only distinctions in human thought. The negatively existent Absolute Being, or shall we say “Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things,” alludes to a depth of consciousness beyond Name and Form, and beyond the finite and supernal aspects of the Tree of Life. Individual consciousness cannot usually sustain this experience at length. In fact, most souls do not return from the experience in the roots. Their shells of embodied existence (*qlifoth*) dissolve completely, and they pass from their physical sheath (i.e. die). In Qabalah, the negatively existent Absolute Being is also called the “NOT” (לֹא, pronounced “lo” as in “below”).

The experience of the “NOT” finds Its counterpart in every mystical tradition. The Sufis refer to the experience as *fana ‘l fana* (*fana* means “extinction”). The Hindus call it *nirvikalpa samadhi*. The Buddhists call it *nirvana*, *sunyata* (emptiness), *satori*, and *anuttara samyak sambodhi* (full enlightenment). The *Qur’an* refers to the Mysterious Unknown by the same terms used in the *Torah*. In Arabic, the word for the NOT is “La”: this is written ل, which is virtually identical to the Ezra letter Ayin א. The shape of the Sinatic letter Ayin א is also suggestive—it is a circle. Within qabalistic literature, the foundational concept of the negatively existent “NOT” (לֹא) is most strongly and directly portrayed in the *Sifra Detzniyutha* (**Book of THAT Which is Concealed**).



The main body of the text begins:

“The Book of THAT Which is Concealed is the book of the balancing in weight.

Until NOT (לא, *Lo*) existed as weight, NOT (לא) existed as seeing Face-to-Face.

And the Earth (הארץ, *HaAretz*) was nullified,

And the Crowns of the Primordial Kings were found as NOT (לא).

Until the Head (ראש, *Rosh*), desired by all desires, Formed and communicated the Garments of Splendor. That weight arises from the place which is NOT Him.

Those who exist as NOT (לא) are weighed in *Yah יה*.

In His body exists the weight.

NOT (לא) unites, and NOT (לא) begins.

In *Yah יה* have they ascended; who NOT (לא) are, and are, and will be.”<sup>1</sup>

The first chapter of Lao Tze’s *Tao-Te Ching* opens with verses that address the Mysterious Unknown and Its two aspects:

“1.1 The Tao that can be trodden is NOT, the enduring and unchanging Tao. The name that can be named is NOT, the enduring and unchanging name.

1.2 Conceived of as having no name, It is the originator of Heaven and Earth; conceived of as having a name, It is the Mother of all things.

1.4 Under these two aspects, It is really the same; but as development takes place, It receives the different names. Together we call them the Mystery. Where the Mystery is the deepest is the gate of all that is subtle and wonderful.”<sup>2</sup>

## VAST FACE

In all mystical traditions, the “Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things” is spoken of as having both inactive (impersonal) and active (personal aspects). These two aspects are called “Faces” in Qabalah. When referring to the inactive aspect, represented by the letter Ayin א, the *Zohar* (**Book of Splendor**)

speaks of “Vast Face” (אַרִיךְ אַנְפִּין *Arikh Anafin*, also אַפִּים אַרִיךְ *Arikh Afim*). It is also known as *Al* (עַל lit. upon), *Shomer* (שׁוֹמֵר, Witness, Guardian), *Atiqa* (עֲטִיקָא, Hidden One), Supernal Israel, the Ancient of Days, and other Names found in the *Sefer HaShmoth* and the *Torah*.<sup>3</sup> In the *Sefer Yetzirah* (**Book of Formation**), the Ayin ך is alluded to as the “Organ of Nakedness.” “Head” (רֹאשׁ, *Rosh*), a word that occurs in the fifth line of the first verse above, is also a Name of Vast Face. Ayin ך means “eye,” and in the *Idra Rabba Qadusha* (**Greater Holy Assembly**) it says:

“This is the tradition: Were the Eye closed even for one moment, no thing could subsist. Therefore, It is called the Open Eye, the Holy Eye, the Excellent Eye, the Eye of Fate (מִזְלָא, *mazal*), the Eye which sleeps not nor slumbers, the Eye which is the Guardian of all things, the Eye which is the substance of all things.”<sup>4</sup>

Also,

“And He Himself, the Most Ancient of Ancient Ones, is called *Arikh Anafin*, Vast Face, and He who is more external is called *Ze'ir Anafin*, or Small Face, in opposition to the Ancient Eternal Holy One, the Holy of Holy Ones.”<sup>5</sup>

And,

“The Ancient One is hidden and concealed.  
Small Face is manifested and NOT manifested.  
The manifested is written in the letters.  
The NOT on its level is hidden in the letters,  
And He (הוּא, *Hu*), the NOT (לֹא), is settled in  
*Yah* ך,  
The upper ones and the lower ones.”<sup>6</sup>

On the Tree, Vast Face is associated with the uppermost center at the crown of the head called Sefirah Crown/Above. Sefirah Crown/Above is a condition of Pure Being, a supernal station of superconsciousness that witnesses the singular modification “I AM” or simply “I.” Even this singular modification disappears in the negatively existent roots of the Tree. The *Sefer Yetzirah* teaches that the spheres (Sefiroth) of the Tree emanate in pairs. Sefirah Crown/Above emanates with its polar opposite Sefirah Foundation/Below. The tension between these two Sefiroth

manifests the descent of the Central Column of the Tree. The unmanifest Pure Being of Vast Face in Sefirah Crown/Above is reflected in the abysmal mirror of Sefirah Foundation/Below as veils of illusion appearing as planes of existence (see Figure 3.5 on page 89). These planes are unmanifest in the most sublime World of Atziluth (Emanation). The attributes of the *Ayn* are reflected in this mirror as the immense I-ness of Small Face as the Creator, Sustainer, and Destroyer of the universe. The energy of consciousness of Small Face manifests the planes of existence in the lower three Worlds of B'riyah (Creation), Yetzirah (Formation), and Asiyah (Making, Activity). Like Sefiroth Crown/Above and Foundation/Below, the two central Sefiroth Knowledge/First and Beauty/Last emanate as a pair, and represent two opposite stations in the consciousness of this Small Face I-ness. When the immense I-ness is centered in Sefirah Knowledge/First, It has the singular awareness that “I am Nothing;” when centered in Sefirah Beauty/Last that “I am All.” The composition of the Tree and the four worlds will be discussed in further detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

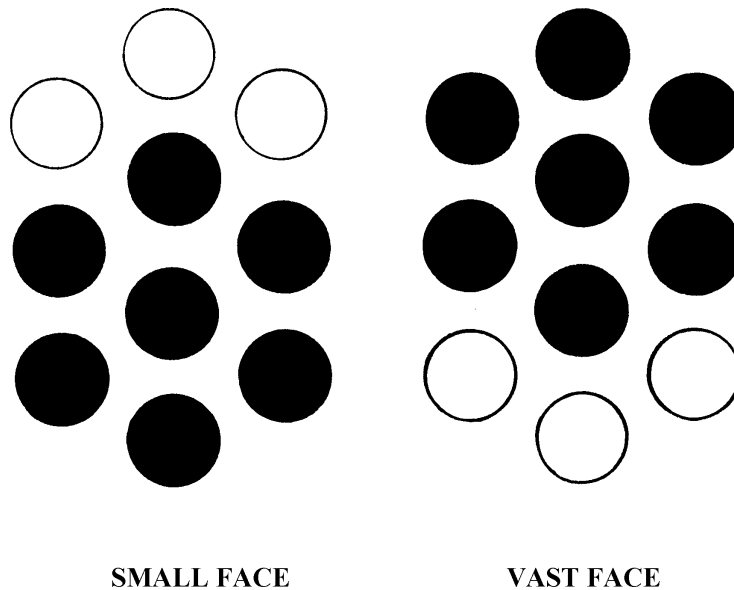
### SMALL FACE

When referring to the active aspect of the NOT (לא), the *Zohar* speaks of “Small Face” (זעיר אנופין *Ze'ir Anafin*, also זעיר אפנים *Ze'ir Afim*), represented by the letter Alef א. Small Face is the power of the *Ayn* (אין) to superimpose billions of illusory universes (and their apparent sustenance and dissolution over time) upon the Vast Face of the Deep. The generation of universes is brought about by the balanced tension between Vast and Small Face, or between the Ayin ע and the manifest Alef א of Unity. In the *Sifra Detzniyutha*, this tension in the Tree is called “weight” and the “balancing in weight.” The relationship between Vast and Small Face is depicted in the Tree of Life. (Figure 3.1) Some of the most important Names of Small Face are YHVH יהוה, *El אל* (pronounced “ale,” opposite of *Lo לא*), and *Adonai אדני* (Lord, Master).

Each universe has its own Small Face who—like a dreamer who knows he/she is dreaming—creates, sustains, and dissolves the Creation moment by moment by moment. Our sense of time is formed by our imperfect perception of the higher planes of

existence. Our hopes for the future and our memories of a past (also created, sustained, and dissolved moment by moment) instill the impression that time is onflowing. To access the consciousness of Vast Face, one must renounce Small Face (in whose dream you are a creature) for release from the dream universe. Hence, it is “only through the Son (Small Face) that one can know the Father (Vast Face).”<sup>7</sup>

FIGURE 3.1 Relationship Between Small and Vast Face in the Tree of Life



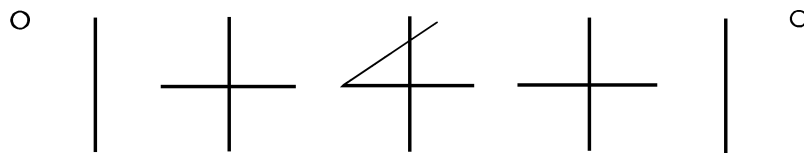
The Small Face Alef א is known as the “manifest Alef א of Unity.” Qabalists (and Sufis and Tantrikas) take the allusion of the alphabet quite literally, and see the universe as built from combinations and permutations of the letters that emanate from and return to the Alef א of Unity. In Sanskrit, the Alef א of Unity is called the *Om*kara ॐ. The Alef א of Unity/*Om*kara ॐ has unmanifest (Vast Face) and manifest (Small Face) aspects. As it is written:

“By the First It created *Elohim Eth* (אח i.e. the twenty-two Hebrew letters in the Upper Worlds) the Heavens and *VuhEth* (אח i.e. the twenty-two letters in the Lower Worlds) the Earth.”  
*(Torah B’reshith 1:1)*

In its unmanifest, inactive aspect in the roots of the Tree, the Alef א of Unity/*Omikara* ॐ is the undifferentiated source from which emanate the supernal Hebrew/Sanskrit letters in the uppermost center of the Tree of Life (Sefirah Crown/Above). At this point, the unmanifest letters stand alone and have not combined into Names. The letters vibrationally differentiate when the Alef א of Unity becomes manifest in the throat Sefirah Knowledge/First. Each letter bears a characteristic root vibration or seed sound (Sans. *bija*). The Alef א of Unity/*Omikara* ॐ is therefore called the “Seed of Seeds” (*Bija of Bijas*). Vocalization of the seed sounds is enabled by the vowels in the throat Sefirah Knowledge/First. The vowels also empower the undifferentiated Names in the supernal Sefirah Wisdom/East to become manifest with a characteristic vibrational signature in the World of Creation (see Figure 3.5 on page 89).

The Sinatic Alef is written by scribing the vertical line first (Central Column), from the top point (Sefirah Crown/Above) downwards (see Figure 3.2). Then the horizontal line is scribed from right to left (Column of the Right). Finally, the diagonal line is drawn from the left end-point of the horizontal line upward to the right across the vertical stroke (Column of the Left). The Columns of the Left and Right are opposite reflections in the clear mirror of the Central Column. In the *Etz HaChayyim* (Tree of Life), the vertical stroke is called the Line of Light (כב, *Kav*). The Alif in Arabic uses only this vertical stroke, reflected in the principal Working Tree in the Sufi tradition that only uses the Central Column. The Cross is the Christian Alef +, with the diagonal stroke of the Column of the Left removed.

FIGURE 3.2 Evolution of the Alef of Unity



The second line of the first verse of the *Sifra Detzneyutha* (Book of THAT Which is Concealed) says, “Until NOT (לא) existed as weight, NOT (לא) existed as seeing Face-to-Face.” This is the condition where Small Face is turned toward Vast

Face and therefore is not active in manifesting a universe.<sup>8</sup> We find this condition further described:

“And when *Ze'ir Anafin* looks back upon Him (*Arikh Anafin*), all the inferiors are restored in order, and His Countenance is extended and made more vast at that time. But not for all time is it vast like unto the countenance of the More Ancient One.”<sup>9</sup>

The “weight” referred to in the first verse of the *Sifra Detzniyutha* is the single combination of all the Sefiroth on the Tree. Weights are the individual Sefiroth. The Primordial Kings allude to the unmanifest “Alef Worlds” or witness states of Vast Face in Sefirah Crown/Above. The “Crowns of the Primordial Kings” are the Sefiroth in the supernal World of Atziluth (Emanation), and the “Garments of Splendor” are the manifest Sefiroth in the successive three worlds. In the *Torah*, “Earth” (אֶרֶץ, *Aretz*) is a synonym for the Sefirah Malkuth/Kingdom. Hence, the phrase “And the Earth was nullified” infers that matter was absorbed and disappeared.

The *Sifra Detzniyutha*, and in smaller measure the *Idra Rabba Qadusha* (Greater Holy Assembly) and *Idra Zuta Qadusha* (Lesser Holy Assembly), also contain some wonderful verses pertaining to the allusions of the “beards” of the two Faces. The hairs of the beards are the Atziluthic letters evolving into Divine Names in the World of Creation. The beards each have nine formations or strands manifest in Small Face, with four more inside the Skull of Vast Face as the Hidden Brain. The strands of the Names of Vast Face generally convolute to the Atziluthic letter Ayin ך, and those of Small Face to the Atziluthic letter Alef א. The beards of the two Faces with their nine respective “formations” of Names are shown in Figures 3.3 and 3.4.

“The Beard of Faith, NOT (אֵל), is mentioned because it is the most precious of all.

It egresses from the ears round about the face,  
The white locks [strands of Names] ascending and descending,

Separating into thirteen of that most splendid of splendors.”<sup>10</sup>

“The formations of the Beard are found to be thirteen,

That is the upper one [Vast Face].

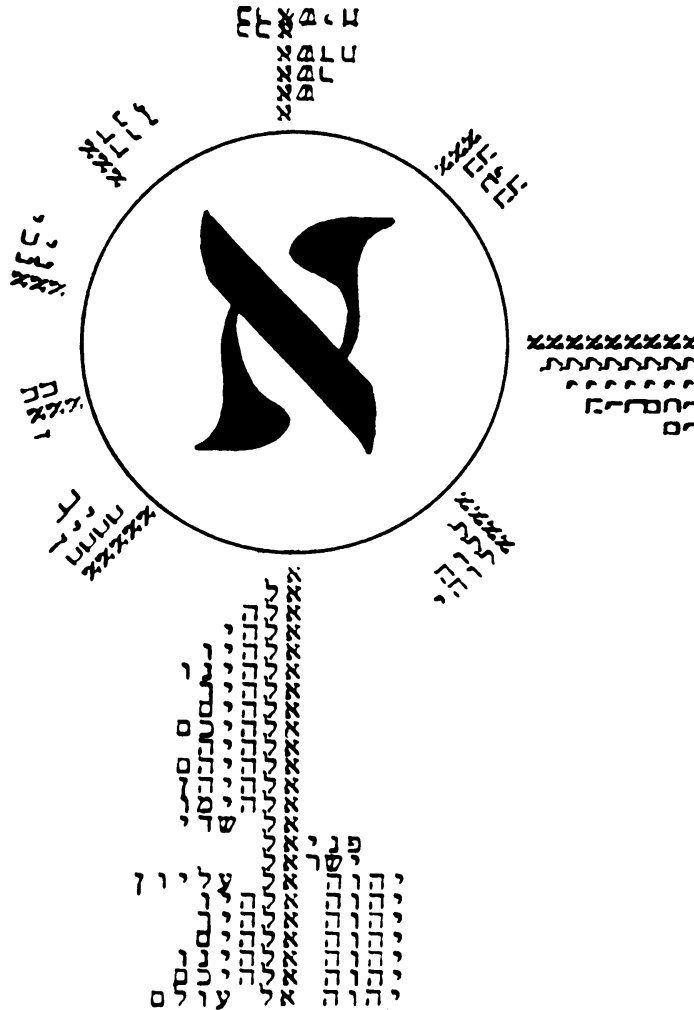
In the lower one [Small Face] they are beheld in nine.”<sup>11</sup>

“Each hair is said to be the breaking of the hidden fountains that issue forth from the Hidden Brain [Vast Face].”<sup>12</sup>

“And all those threads [i.e. convoluting Names] go out from the Hidden Brain and are disposed in the weights [i.e. Sefiroth].”<sup>13</sup>

FIGURE 3.3 Vast Face Beard (*Sifra Detzniyutha*)



FIGURE 3.4 Small Face Beard (*Sifra Detzniyutha*)

### CONCLUSION

In speaking of two “Faces,” it must always be remembered that we are talking about an absolute unity that is only differentiated by human thought, and can only be directly experienced in higher states of consciousness. Generally, mystical traditions are very fluid and flexible in assigning gender to Vast and Small Face. In most mystical traditions, both Vast and Small Face can take either the masculine or the feminine gender. Within a particular tradition, one may find Vast Face referred to in the masculine and Small Face in the feminine, and/or vice versa. The two Faces may also be



both masculine or both feminine. In the Qabalah, for instance, we find many references to the white-haired ancient father and the raven-haired youthful king. We also find the ancient mother and the maiden *Shekhinah* (שכינה).

In virtually all traditions, we can also find many impersonal names and references to Vast Face that are neither masculine nor feminine. However, Small Face, as the active principle, is always named and referred to personally as masculine and feminine. It is cogent to note that the *Torah* commands us to “Honor thy father and thy mother.” While this is commonly understood to refer to one’s earthly parents, its higher meaning enjoins us to honor our Divine Father and Mother.

The great and beloved nineteenth century Bengali saint Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa offered several useful analogies to the relation between Vast and Small Face (static and active aspects of the Divine). These included the relation between milk and its whiteness, a gem and its sparkle, a flame and its power to burn, and the Sun and its rays.<sup>14</sup> An old Vedic analogy compares God to a spider that spins a web from and retrieves it back into its own body. An analogy in Qabalah cites the relationship between the letters of the alphabet and the vowels: without the vowels (active aspect), the letters (inactive aspect) cannot be pronounced. In the Tantra, it is said that “without the vowels, *Shiva*’s bones can’t dance.”

Another analogy that illustrates the nature and relation of the two Faces is presented in the parable of the rope and the snake:

“A man was walking down a road in the country at dusk. Just as he turned a corner, he encountered what appeared to be a large snake. His whole body gripped with fear, and without thought, he jumped back to avoid getting bitten. As he looked at the snake, he noticed that it wasn’t moving. He picked up a rock and threw it at the snake, and still the snake didn’t move. He thought, ‘Perhaps the snake is dead.’ This thought diminished his fear, and he inched closer to the snake to get a better look. As he neared the snake, he was amazed and relieved to find out that it wasn’t in fact a snake at all: it was a rope that he mistook for a snake.”

In this story, there had to be a rope in the first place for the man to have mistaken it for a snake. The “snakiness” was a superimposition upon the rope that only existed in the man’s mind. Such is the nature of the Creation, which is a collective illusion. The “snakiness” of Small Face is an illusion superimposed upon the reality of the “rope” of Vast Face. This illusion of a “difference within Itself” is a play of the Divine arising from an unfathomable whim.

## THE QABALISTIC TREE OF LIFE

### INTRODUCTION

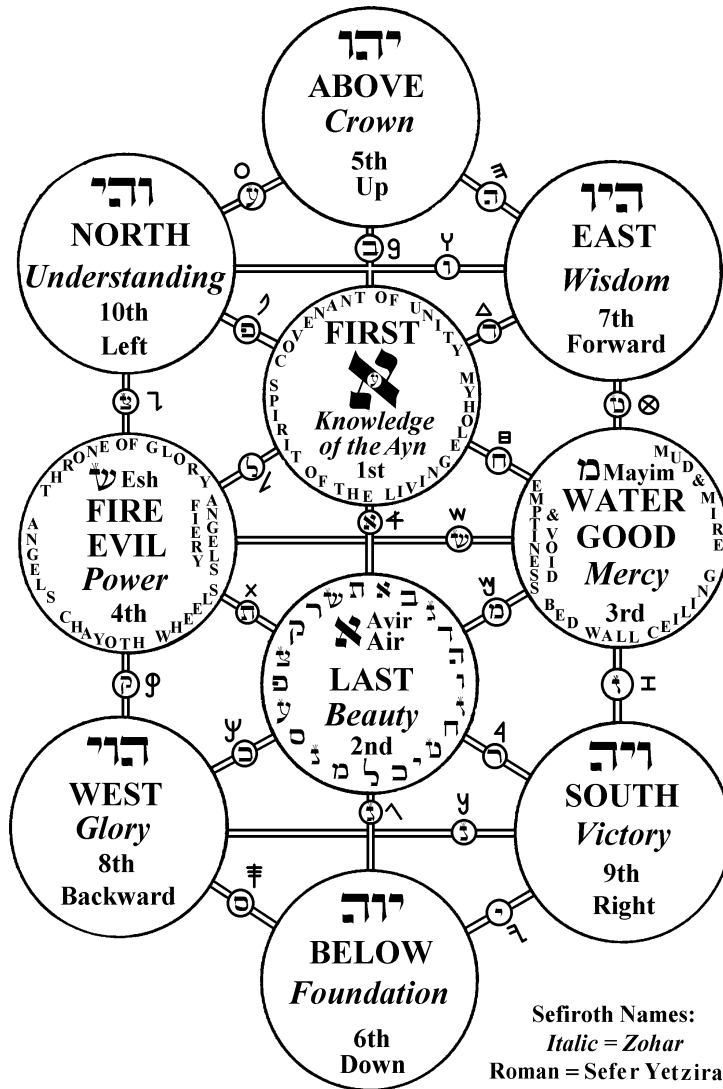
Virtually all books on the subject of the Qabalah feature one or more forms of the map of consciousness known as the “Tree of Life.” The Tree of Life objectively represents the physio-spiritual entirety of both the individual soul, or Microcosm “created in the image of *Elohim*,” and the Divine Soul, or Macrocosm as the “Body of Celestial Man (*Adam Kadmon*, אדם כדמוֹן).” Thus, the Hebrew word *adam* (אדם, lit. man), like the word *purusha* in Sanskrit, denotes both the individual person and the Supreme Persona of the Divine Self.

“And upon the likeness of the throne was the appearance of Adam upon it from above.”<sup>15</sup>

As touched upon earlier, the Tree of Life is the qabalistic equivalent of the Tantric Chakras (see Figure 1.3 on page 48) and Sufi Latifas.<sup>16</sup> The Sefiroth of the Tree of Life, the Chakras, and the Latifas represent the same succession of centers or stations of consciousness that correspond to various nerve plexi along the spinal column and cerebrum. The Chakric and Sufi Trees have only one format, with all of their centers in a single vertical row. In contrast, there is a considerable variety of Trees of Life in the Qabalah. Some are flat and linear with one, two, or three vertical columns; some are flat and circular; and yet others are three-dimensional. Almost all books on the Qabalah contain only diagrams of flat Trees. Most of those flat Trees have a straight vertical trunk called the “Central Column,” flanked by two parallel side branches called the “Side Columns,” or the “Column of the Right” and the “Column of the Left.”

A pattern of ten circles connected by lines is superimposed upon the three columns (see Figure 3.5). The circles are known individually as “*Sefirah*” (sphere) and collectively as “*Sefiroth*” (spheres).

FIGURE 3.5 Ten Intangible Sefiroth



There are two very different sets of names for the same Sefiroth. One rarely used set comes from the *Sefer Yetzirah*, and one widely known and used set comes from the *Zohar*. So that the reader will get familiar with the parlance of both books, the

Sefiroth will hereon be referred to by both sets of names. The Zoharic name of each Sefirah will be given first, followed by the one from the *Sefer Yetzirah*. The Yetzirathic names are each preceded by the qualifying phrase “Depth of” (*Omehq*), but for the sake of brevity this designation will usually be dropped when referring to them. The two names will be separated by a forward slash e.g. Sefirah Crown/Above, Sefirah Wisdom/East, and so forth. Also, for the sake of brevity, the Zoharic Sefirah Knowledge (of the *Ayn*) will be referred to simply as Sefirah Knowledge. The Sefiroth are said to be emanations from the unmanifest, undifferentiated Divine Source. They form a set of four self-consistent worlds or planes of existence within which creatures can exist due to the relative orderliness and smoothness of change. The *Sefer Yetzirah* tells us that the Sefiroth emanate as pairs of opposites, such as East and West, Crown and Foundation, and Water and Fire.<sup>17</sup>

The Sefiroth are linked among one another by “gates.” Each of the interconnecting gates is associated with a specific Hebrew letter. The *Sefer Yetzirah* is the primary source for the teachings regarding the nature of the letters and their distribution among the Sefiroth on the Tree. The gates connecting the Sefiroth are doors that allow our consciousness to travel from one plane of existence to another. For example, all living beings pass through two gates connecting three Sefiroth every day and night. The physical plane, which is the waking state of dualistic consciousness in most human beings, is represented by the Sefirah at the very bottom of the Tree called “Kingdom” (there is no equivalent in the *Sefer Yetzirah*). When we go to sleep at night, we first move through the Gate of the letter Beyt ב that links Sefirah Kingdom to Sefirah Foundation/Below, and into the *Geviyah* (astral shell) in the World of Formation. All people do this every night, and the vast majority experience it as an unconscious state of REM sleep. However, if the gate is crossed while maintaining awareness, it will be experienced as a conscious dream state. Sefirah Foundation/Below is the point of departure from which we may enter the psychic states by passing through one of the gates into the side columns, or enter even higher levels of consciousness by moving further up the Central Column into Sefirah Beauty/Last.

When we pass through the next gate up the Central Column of the Tree, called the Gate of the Gimel ג, we move into the Sefirah Beauty/Last. Almost all people experience Sefirah Beauty/Last as deep sleep, and pass through the two gates and among the three lower centers unconsciously. Some individuals are able to transit to and from these three lower centers consciously, and there are those who can dual process information from the waking and astral states simultaneously as a matter of course.

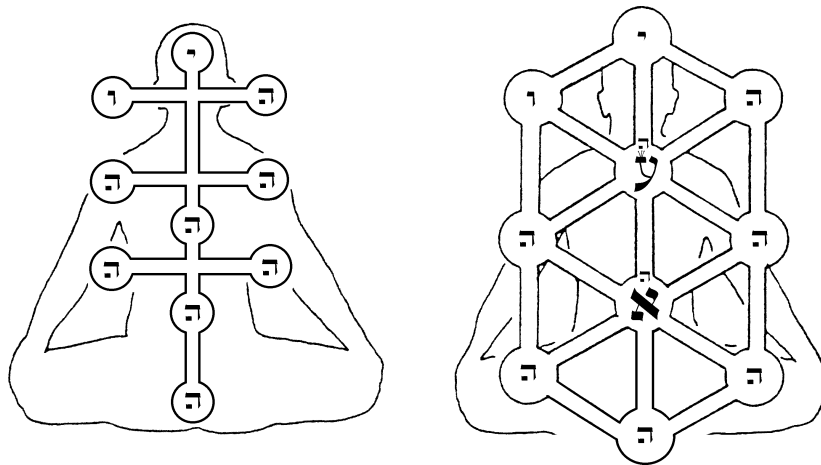
### THE COMPOSITION OF THE TREE OF LIFE

The three columns of the Tree and their respective Sefiroth are said to emanate from or be anchored in the substratum of the unmanifest, undifferentiated negatively existent roots. The Central Column emanates from the negatively existent roots through a single point in the uppermost Sefirah, called “Crown” in the *Zohar* and “Above” in the *Sefer Yetzirah*. In the initial event at the genesis of the universe, the unmanifest Light of the Endless enters the *Tzimtzum* (circular Contraction) through that point in the supernal World of Atziluth (Emanation), triggering a quantum fluctuation that generates the Big Bang and subsequent inflation of the universe. It then descends through the successive three worlds, thereby manifesting the complete Tree. The Central Column is called the “Line of Light” (*Kav*) in the Lurianic doctrine presented in the *Etz Ha Chayyim*.

With the expansion of the Tree, the universe is created by the Celestial Head of Messiah called “The First,” and sustained in the Tree as a balanced tension between Vast and Small Face.<sup>18</sup> The extension of the Central Column is precipitated and sustained by the tension between the two Sefiroth Crown/Above and Foundation/Below, which emanate as a pair of opposites. The Central Column is said to be a “clear mirror.” As the Central Column extends, the Column of the Right and the Column of the Left manifest as opposite reflections in the clear mirror of the Central Column. The remaining Sefiroth emanate as pairs of opposites in the two side columns, and the four qabalistic worlds manifest as self-consistent planes of existence. The four qabalistic worlds will be discussed in the next section.

These three distinct columns play a prominent role in the different ways the Tree can be ascended. When the spiritual energy (called *Shekinah* in Hebrew and *Kundalini* or *Chitshakti* in Sanskrit) awakens, it ascends the Tree of Life in various ways, expanding and moving the consciousness through successive planes of existence. Each different path up the Tree is known as a “Working Tree.” The entire spectrum of Trees of Life is also known collectively as “Angelic or Enochian Tree Language.” Angelic Tree Language consists of various types of “Working Trees” and “Trees of Perfection” (Figure 3.6). Mystics seeking union with the Divine, saints, wizards, and white and black magicians ascend the Tree through different Sefirothic patterns. A Working Tree, infused with the power of a suitable Name of God, mantra, or other invocation, automatically directs the changes in consciousness of the traveler along its characteristic pattern of gates. Different forms of the Tree, called “Trees of Perfection,” allude to enlightened yogis, transcendent devotees, saints and Messiah. In this book, all the various types of Working Trees and Trees of Perfection will be presented.

FIGURE 3.6 Fallen and Perfect Trees on the Human Body



The Tree provides the finite intellect with a frame of reference for all possible experiences. Each Sefirah is itself a complete Tree present in all planes of existence. The entire Tree, *as well as each individual Sefirah*, is therefore an open-ended ladder from the waking state all the way into the Light of the Endless (*Ayn Sof Or*,

(אֵין סוף אור). A great secret of the gates is that they are stationed in the Light of the Endless. Hence, by closing off both ends of any gate, consciousness automatically expands into the Light of the Endless. This is why the experience in the gates can be more unsettling than in the relatively stable and orderly Sefiroth.

Another significant component of the Tree of Life is called the “Inner Court.” The Inner Court of the Tree, also known as the “Throne of Glory of *El Shadai*,” generally refers to a grouping of four Sefiroth in the center of the Tree of Perfection. The Inner Court is most clearly seen in the three-dimensional, double pyramid Trees of the *Sefer Yetzirah* and the Merkabah literature. In the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the four Sefiroth of the Inner Court are called Spirit of Living *Elohim*, Air, Water, and Fire; and alternately, Depth of First, or simply First, (Depth of) Last, (Depth of) Good, and (Depth of) Evil. In the *Zohar*, they are the Sefiroth Knowledge, Mercy, Power, and Beauty. Each set of these four Sefiroth corresponds respectively with the three Mother Letters Alef א, Mem מ, and Shin ש, and the letter Tav ת of the Holy Temple. In the flat forms of the Tree, the Sefirah Mercy/Water moves into the Column of the Right and Sefirah Power/Fire moves into the Column of the Left (see Figure 3.5 on page 89).

The four Sefiroth of the Inner Court are also shown as corresponding to the four ‘Celestial Heads’ of Messiah of the Lord יהוה. These four Heads are functionally instrumental in creating, maintaining, and dissolving the manifest Small Face universe. In the *Sifra Detzniyutha*, the action of the Head of Messiah “First” (*Reshith*) to emanate and manifest the Sefiroth is described as Small Face turning outward from Vast Face. On the contrary, when the Small Face Universe is dissolved by the action of the Head of Messiah called “The Last” (*Acharit*), the side columns collapse and the Sefiroth return to their unmanifest condition in the roots of the Tree.<sup>19</sup> With the dissolution of the Small Face universe, the two “Faces” are said to return to the condition of “seeing Face-to-Face.” The four Heads of Messiah and the nature of the messianic advent of the Lord יהוה will be discussed more fully in a later section.

In addition to the four Sefiroth of the Inner Court, the Tree has six “Directional Sefiroth.” In the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the six directional Sefiroth are aptly named “Above, Below, East, West, North and South.” In the *Zohar*, they are respectively called “Crown, Foundation, Wisdom, Glory, Understanding, and Victory.” In the Merkabah literature, four of the Directional Sefiroth are correlated with *Chayot* (חַיִּימוֹת, Living Beings, sing. חַיִּימוֹת, *Chayah*), and are also referred to as the “Legs of the Throne.”

“And *Elohim* said the waters will swarm with the movement of *Chayah*.”<sup>20</sup>

“And the *Chayot* ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.”<sup>21</sup>

“And out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four *Chayot*.”<sup>22</sup>

The nature of the Directional Sefiroth is most easily understood in the three-dimensional Trees, since humans live and move in a three dimensional space. On the flat Trees, their function with regard to directionality is less apparent, since such Trees emphasize the three-column structure, and two of the Inner Court Sefiroth are pulled into the side columns.

In a way, it could be said that the twenty-two letters are the most salient aspects of the Qabalah. The alphabet is etched deeply in the minds of most Jews from the time they are children. But while most Jews know the Hebrew letters, relatively few are aware of their function and nature within the context of the Qabalah. As mentioned earlier, the most ancient and prolific source regarding the mystical nature of the individual Hebrew letters is the *Sefer Yetzirah*. In the *Sefer HaShmoth* (**Book of the Names**), the letters are seen most prominently as the formulaic components of Divine Names and within the context of the Angelic Tree Language, but no further elaboration is given about them. In the *Sefer Yetzirah*, on the other hand, the individual letters are introduced in their role as the infrastructure connecting the ten Sefiroth. They are identified according to type i.e. Mother, Double, Simple, how they correlate to various aspects of the human body and to nature, and how they relate to one another. Most contemporary books on the Jewish Kabbalah and Practical Qabalah assign the letters to the gates differently than the *Sefer Yetzirah*, and often in accordance



with the teachings of Luria recorded posthumously by Vital. Such discrepancies do not necessarily imply a dichotomy of opposing views, as there is flexibility for setting up the gates on the Tree in different ways. However, some such patterns can be problematic, and it is generally recommended to work with the assignments from the *Sefer Yetzirah*. The discussion of the letter-gates will continue in Chapter Five when the Trees from the *Sefer Yetzirah* are highlighted.

### THE FOUR QABALISTIC WORLDS

The Qabalah describes four “worlds.” These four worlds are respectively called *Atziluth* (אֲצִילוּת, World of Emanation), *B’riyah* (בְּרִיאָה, World of Creation), *Yetzirah* (יְצִירָה, World of Formation), and *Asiyah* (עֲשִׂיָּה, World of Activity or Making). The World of Atziluth is also called the “Supernal World.” It is rooted in the Sefirah Crown/Above and correlates with the letter Yod ך in the Name יהוה. In Atziluth, the twenty-two Hebrew letters are yet unmanifest, and are said to “stand alone ablaze the crown of the King Most High.”

“The Ancient One is hidden and concealed.

Small Face is manifested and NOT manifested.

The manifested is written in the letters;

The NOT on Its level is hidden in the letters.

Twenty-two letters that are concealed,

Twenty-two letters that are manifest.

A concealed Yod ך, a manifest Yod ך.

The concealed and manifest are balanced in weight.”<sup>23</sup>

The World of B’riyah is rooted in the supernal Sefirah Wisdom/East, and correlates with the Upper Heh ה in the Name יהוה. In the World of B’riyah, the Word of God (known in the Qabalah as the “Alef of Unity”) becomes manifest, whereby the letters vibrationally differentiate and combine to form Divine Names. In B’riyah, beings are formless and exist as vibrational signatures.

“Two stones (letters) build two houses, three stones build six houses, four stones build twenty-four houses, five stones build one hundred and

twenty-five houses, six stones build seven hundred and twenty houses, seven stones build five thousand and forty houses. From here go out (i.e. extrapolate) and think what the mouth is unable to speak and the ear is unable to hear.”<sup>24</sup>

The World of Yetzirah is commonly known as the Astral World. It is rooted in the supernal Sefirah Understanding/North and correlates with the letter Vav ם in the Name יהוה. In Yetzirah, the Names of B’riyah interact and manifest the forms of the divine archetypes, which are latent and undifferentiated in Sefirah Understanding/North. Beings in Yetzirah have both Name and Form.

Finally, in the World of Asiyah, there is the apparent solidification of the Yezirathic forms in physical matter. The World of Asiyah is rooted in the Sefirah Knowledge/First in the Upper Worlds and is represented on the Tree by the Sefirah Kingdom. The Sefirah Kingdom is associated with the *Shekhinah* and the Lower Heh ה in the Name יהוה. The four worlds are represented as a continuum by the Tree of Life. They are successively connected to one another by the letter-gates, which allow consciousness to move to and from them.

Many people find it difficult to grasp the idea of the four worlds contained in the Tree. The difficulty often stems from the fact that the four worlds can be assigned to groupings of the Sefiroth on the Tree in its flat, vertical form. At the same time, each Sefirah contains a complete Tree that extends through the four worlds. The relationship between the Tree and the four Worlds is displayed in Figures 3.7 and 3.8. Each figure contains two different forms of the Tree. The diagrams in which the throat Sefirah Knowledge/First is visible, and there is no anal Sefirah Kingdom, are Trees of Perfection. The Trees in which the Sefirah Kingdom is visible and the throat Sefirah invisible are Working or Fallen Trees. The difference between Perfect and Working Trees will be discussed in detail in the section “The Tree of Life and the ‘Fall of Adam’ ” on page 99.

In Figure 3.7, the qabalistic worlds are associated with successive sets of Sefiroth down the Tree. Figure 3.8 shows the four worlds as concentric circles of successively smaller diameter within each Sefirah. The outermost circle of each Sefirah, starting from Crown/Above, corresponds to the Tree of the World of Atziluth. The second circle within each Sefirah, starting from Wisdom/East, corresponds to the Tree of the World of B'riyah. The third and next smaller circle within each Sefirah, starting from Sefirah Understanding/North, corresponds to the Tree of the World of Yetzirah. The final and smallest set of concentric circles, representing the seven Sefiroth of the World of Asiyah, completes the Tree in the four worlds.

FIGURE 3.7 Four Worlds in the Fallen and Perfect Trees (1)

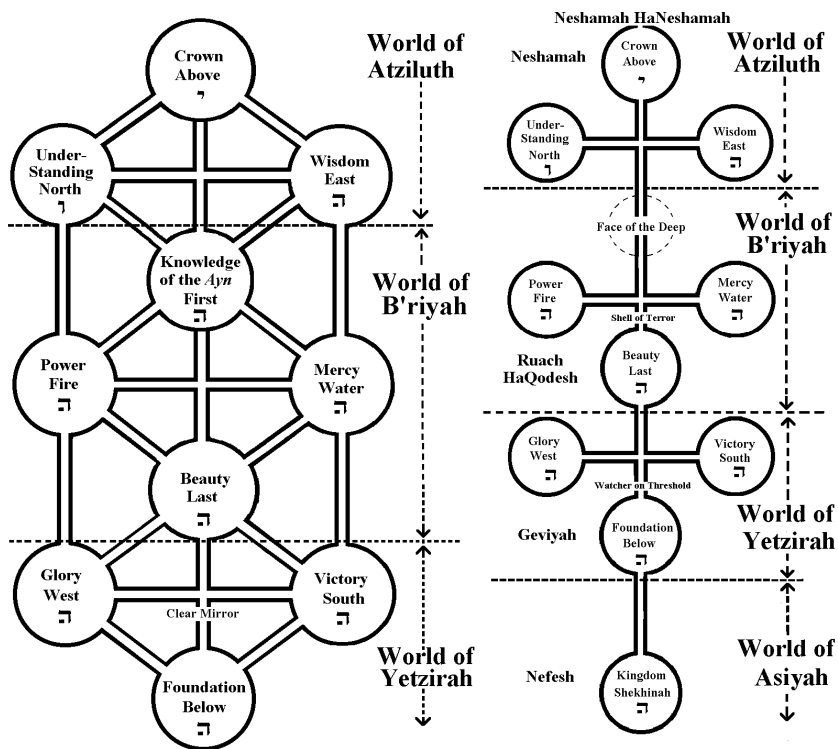
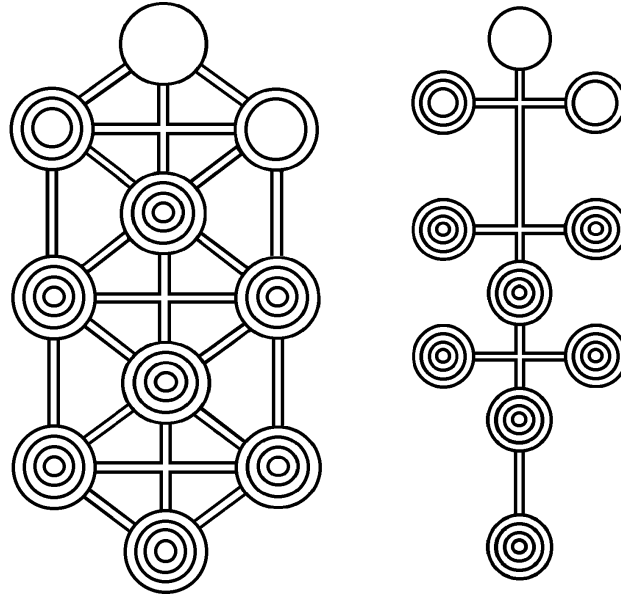


FIGURE 3.8 Four Worlds in the Fallen and Perfect Trees (2)



### THE QLIFOTH (SHELLS OF EMBODIED CONSCIOUSNESS)

Consciousness manifests substantially in the four worlds as different shells of embodied existence (קליפות, *p.qlifoth*, *s.qlifah*). The *qlifoth* of embodied human consciousness correlate with the *qlifoth* of divine consciousness embodied as the planes of existence. The qabalistic *qlifoth* can be correlated with the Vedantic *sharira* (bodies) and the Vedic *koshas* (sheaths).<sup>25</sup> As the empowered substance of consciousness manifesting in the four worlds, the *qlifoth* co-exist like the layers of an onion in reverse, differing from one another in size, density, and rate of vibration. Each *qlifah* makes its imprint on the next, denser shell. One might also envision the analogy of each shell casting a shadow that materializes as a successively denser shell. In ascending the Tree, the individuated consciousness expands through the successive shells, with their respective states and stations, and their associated powers. What happens when you ascend the Tree shall be described in a later section in this chapter, and the experiences in the various shells shall also be treated in more detail in Chapter Six.

The *qlifoth* also correlate with the four letters Yod י, Heh ה, Vav ו, Heh ה (and hence, we are formed “in the image of *Elohim*”). The physical shell in the World of Asiyah, infused with vital energy (*רוח ruach*; in Chinese, *qi*; in Sanskrit, *prana*), is called the *Nefesh* (נֶפֶשׁ), and is represented by the Lower Heh ה. The astral shell, called the *Geviyah* (גֵּוִיָּה), is the embodiment of consciousness in the World of Yetzirah (Formation), and is represented by the Vav ו.<sup>26</sup> The Upper Heh ה is associated with the bliss-filled *Ruach Ha Qodesh* (רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, Holy Spirit) in the World of B’riyah (Creation). The Yod י corresponds to the witness consciousness of the *Neshamah* (נִשְׁמָה, Divine Soul, equates to Hindu *Atman*) in the supernal World of Atziluth (Emanation). The “back of the *Neshamah*,” or consciousness in the roots of the Tree, is called the *Neshamah Ha Neshamah* (נִשְׁמָה הַנִּשְׁמָה Soul of the Soul) and *Yechidah* (יְחִידָה, Singularity).

The *qlifoth* have “holes” in them and revolve around one another like the spheres in a Chinese puzzle ball. The holes can randomly line up and give a perceptive flash of the Light of the *Neshamah*. As the shells continue to move, the line-up of the holes is disrupted and the flash ends. Most humans bury such flashes as traumatic experiences. Purification of the shells through the repetition of a root mantra over time gives the ability to accept such flashes as a desirable experience, making it possible to sustain the experiences much longer. This is the most significant advantage of “taking the Name” (i.e. repetition of root mantra) over random flash techniques.

### THE TREE OF LIFE AND THE “FALL OF ADAM”

The Tree of Life is a universal map for the evolution of both Divine and individual consciousness in the planes of existence. It contains mysteries that manifest at both the macro- and microcosmic levels. One of the mysteries delineated in Tree of Life is the “Fall of Adam.” This Fall is portrayed in the difference between “Working” and “Perfect Trees” (see Figure 3.6 on page 92). Working Trees are so-named because they represent different ways of ascending the Tree. The primary source for all the different types of Working Trees is the *Sefer*

**HaShmoth.** Working Trees are also known as “Fallen Trees.” In the Fallen Trees, the Sefirah Knowledge/First has become invisible and “fallen” into position as the anally centered Sefirah Kingdom dangling at the bottom of the Tree. There is no equivalent for the Sefirah Kingdom in the *Sefer Yetzirah*, since it only has Perfect Trees in which the throat Sefirah is visible and there is no Sefirah at the anal center.

At the macrocosmic level, the Fall of Adam is seen as an apparent differentiation in the states of matter in the Tree of Asiyah. For example, matter can exist in a collapsed condition at the core of black holes as the Sefirah Knowledge/First. Or, it can exist in an expanded manner as mostly hydrogen atoms in Sefirah Kingdom. It is critical to keep in mind that Sefirah Kingdom and Sefirah Knowledge/First are one, not two. It is like looking at one object from two sides. At the microcosmic level in the Perfect Tree, the universe is perceived by human consciousness in Sefirah Knowledge/First as a perfect spiritual unity in the mind of God (i.e. Vast Face). In the Fallen Tree, human consciousness is dualistic in Sefirah Kingdom, perceiving the material universe as differentiated from the spiritual. The Fall is an illusion sustained in individual consciousness by the Lord of the Universe via His/Her power of obscuration, sustained through five limitations: temporal limits, spatial limits, attachment to particular things, limited knowledge, and limited agency. The predominant Hebrew Name for the active aspect of the *Ayn* as the Creator, Sustainer, and Destroyer of the Creation is the four letter formula ה' ו' ה' ׀ (vocalized by some as “Yahweh,” and more commonly as “Jehovah”).<sup>27</sup> The Fall of Sefirah Knowledge/First into Kingdom is also reflected in the duplication of the letter Heh ה in יההה. The Upper Heh ה is the latent or unmanifest condition of all Mayic (illusory) possibilities in the form of an infinite number of waves of ideas, and the Lower Heh ה is their apparent finite manifestation in matter.

Most books on Qabalah show only what is known as the “Composite Tree of Life” (see Figure 3.9). The Composite Tree is obtained by superimposing all the Working Tree paths. This form of the Tree is often erroneously thought of as being a workable path in itself. However, as all the Sefiroth on the Composite Tree are connected among one another, it offers no

specific route up the Tree, and is consequently not effective as a working path. Names from *Tanakh* and the qabalistic tradition that have been attributed to the gates between the Sefiroth of various working paths are listed in conjunction with the Composite Tree diagram in Table 3.1 on page 102.

In many contemporary books on Qabalah, the Composite Tree is shown with gates connecting the Sefirah Kingdom to Sefirah Victory/South and to Sefirah Glory/West. This is not correct. When Sefirah Knowledge/First “falls” and becomes Sefirah Kingdom, it takes the Gate of the Beyt כ with it, which thereby connects Kingdom only to the Sefirah Foundation/Below. No other gates connect to Kingdom in the Fallen Tree. The reader might also take note that the Composite Tree shows gates connecting Sefirah Power/Fire with Sefirah Wisdom/East (Gate of Samael), and Sefirah Mercy/Water with Sefirah Understanding/North (a Gate on the Way of the Saint). These gates are not usually seen in Tree diagrams.

FIGURE 3.9 Composite Tree

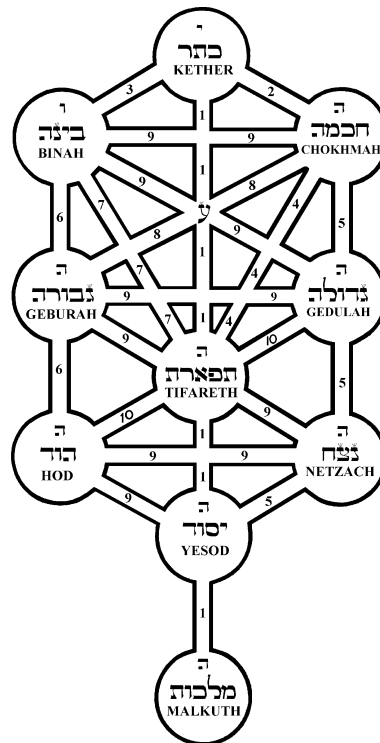


TABLE 3.1 Gate Names on the Composite Tree

Gate	Gate Name
1	Gates of יהוה Elohenu, Central Column
2	Gate of the Excellent Servants of Everlasting Action
3	Gate of the Unclean Servants
4	Gate of Messiah
5	Gates of the Ruler (Royal Gates), Right Column
6	Gates of Destruction, Left Column
7	Gate of Doom (Fate)
8	Gate of Samael
9	Gates of the Saint
10	Gates of the Wizard

### יהוה — THE “PERFECT NAME FROM NOT”

The single most important Name of Small Face in the Hebrew religion is YHVH יהוה. It is with this Name that most mystical qabalistic meditation and magical rituals are performed. The four letters Yod ך Heh ה Vav ם Heh ה correspond respectively to the four qabalistic Worlds of Atziluth (World of Emanation), B’riyah (World of Creation), Yetzirah (World of Formation), and Asiyah (Activity or Making). The relationship between Vast and Small Face is perfectly displayed in the Name יהוה. The Name יהוה portrays the active (sexual) tantric union between masculine (yang) and feminine (yin) aspects of Vast and Small Face in the Upper and Lower Worlds. The Yod ך and Upper Heh ה are the respective masculine and feminine (or yang and yin) aspects in the Upper Worlds. The Yod ך, which emanates in Sefirah Crown/Above, is essentially a witness state the size of the whole universe. The World of Atziluth is thereby rooted in Sefirah Crown/Above. The Upper Heh ה, which emanates in Sefirah Wisdom/East, is the latent condition of all Mayic (illusory) possibilities. The World of B’riyah is rooted in the supernal Sefirah Wisdom/East. In Chapter Two of the *Sifra Detzniyutha*, the Heh ה is equated with the nostrils of Vast Face, through which the cosmic breath “rushes forth.”



“The breath of the hollow pillar (nose) of the Ancient One unto Small Face.

Without the breath, It exists as NOT (לא).

In Heh ה, It is manifested (i.e. B’riyah).

The Heh ה above, the Heh ה below.

As it is written, “*AHH Adonai Elohim* (אלהים אהה ארני).”<sup>28</sup>

And in Chapter Three of the *Sifra Detzniyutha*, we find:

“In the cohesion of the attached, in the breath of the weights is יהו.”

The superior Yod ך is adorned with the wreath of the Ancient One [i.e. the Ayin ף of Vast Face], the supernal envelope that is clear and concealing.

The superior Heh ה is adorned with the breath that comes forth in order to animate from the openings of the hollow pillar [i.e. the nose].

The superior Vav ך, the lamp of heavy darkness, which is adorned by its sides;

The letters then extend and are included in Small Face.

Just as they dwelled in the skull,

They are found to be extending into the whole body in order to establish all.”<sup>29</sup>

The Vav ך and Lower Heh ה represent the action of the consciousness of Small Face in the Lower Worlds. The Vav ך emanates from the feminine Sefirah Understanding/North and is masculine (yang) in the lower planes. The World of Yetzirah is rooted in this supernal Sefirah. The Lower Heh ה emanates from Sefirah Knowledge/First and is feminine (yin) in Asiyah (World of Activity or Making) as the Sefirah Kingdom. In Qabalah, the feminine aspect of the Spirit of Small Face in the lower worlds is called *Shekhinah* (שכינה lit. abiding, community). In the first chapter of the *Sifra Detzniyutha* is found the verse,

“Just as the Heh ה is found to be the *Shekhinah*.”

*Shekhinah* has many Names in the *Torah*, such as Bride (כלה, *Kalah*), Queen (מלכה, *Malkhah*), She (היא, *Hya*, pronounced “hee”), and Glory or Honor (כבוד, *Kavod*). It is through the interaction of the Vav ו and the Lower Heh ה that messianic appearances are manifested in the Lower Worlds. The action of the Spirit of Messiah in the World of Yetzirah resonates through the Vav ו. The Lower Heh ה is the presence of the Spirit of the Lord יהוה as the *Shekhinah* throughout the material Creation, or “Earth” (ארץ, *Aretz*). Actually, the Lord יהוה is referred to in the feminine about 10-15 percent of the time in the *Torah*, though often mistranslated or ignored. It is important to note that, despite the medieval injunctions of the rabbinate, the ancient Qabalah is not sexist. The Mystical Qabalah establishes the unity and equality of the male and female aspects of the Lord יהוה (“Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother”), and offers “equal opportunity” to become “Masters of the Name” and great servants of our Lord.

Among books on the subject of the Qabalah, there is some confusion regarding how the letters Yod י, Heh ה, and Vav ו are respectively ascribed to the supernal Sefiroth. Many authors ascribe only the upper tip of the Yod י to the Sefirah Crown/Above and the rest of the letter with Sefirah Wisdom/East. The Upper Heh ה is thereby associated with Sefirah Understanding/North and the Vav ו with the Sefirah Knowledge/First. This confusion may stem from the fact that most writers are not familiar with the Tree of Perfection, and may not clearly comprehend the nature of the relationship between Sefirah Kingdom and Sefirah Knowledge/First. The confusion may also arise from the fact that the Tree spans the four worlds, and at the same time, each Sefirah is a complete Tree. However, the *Sefer HaShmoth* and the *Sifra Detzniyutha* in the verses cited above clearly ascribe the Yod י entirely to Sefirah Crown/Above, the Upper Heh ה with Sefirah Wisdom/East, and the Vav ו with Sefirah Understanding/North. The Lower Heh ה and the World of Asiyah are associated with the seven lower Sefiroth beginning with Sefirah Knowledge/First.

It may help to visualize the Ezra letter Yod י as an eddy spinning around a still centerpoint. This still centerpoint is the infinitesimally small point (smaller than the Planck Constant

of  $10^{-34}$ cm) in Sefirah Crown/Above, where the Light of the Endless enters the *Tzimtzum* (Contraction) and descends as the Central Column of the Tree. If you could magnify this point and make it visible, you would see that it is not in fact a point, but rather a circle i.e. the “wreath of the Ancient One which adorns the superior Yod.” This is where the Yod ך is rooted in and emanates from the negatively existent roots. The two end points of the Yod ך are respectively the supernal Sefiroth Wisdom/East and Understanding/North, the uppermost sources for the two side columns of the Tree.

### יהוה AND THE NATURE OF MESSIANIC APPEARANCE

In all mystical traditions, the concept of Messiah and messianic appearances in the Lower Worlds is the pinnacle of all mysteries, unparalleled in its sublimeness, inscrutability, and controversy. Reflecting the apparently conflicting perspectives of dualism, qualified non-dualism, and pure non-dualism discussed in Chapter One, there are three distinct and seemingly incompatible views of the mystery of Messiah. Some unquestioningly embrace the idea that the immutable Divine Essence spontaneously manifests and sports in human form while retaining full power, omniscience, and omnipresence, and yet remaining unfettered by the laws of *mazal* and the limitations of relativistic illusion. From this perspective, such singularly exalted beings are said to appear from time to time throughout human history to deliver fresh dispensations of the universal mystical spirituality at the root of all religions. Another perspective regards such extraordinary souls as the rarest Masters i.e. the “Friends” or “*Rasools*” of God who lead demonstrative lives and perfectly reflect the divine attributes. This second view also embraces the idea that the active aspect of the Ancient One manifests, sustains, and dissolves the Small Face universe through the “Heads” of the Celestial Messiah in the Sefiroth of the Inner Court of the Tree. And finally, there are those who reject both the ideas of a corporeal and a Celestial Messiah outright, regarding all Name and Form as illusory and only the negatively existent *Ayn* as real.

The reader should not find it surprising that the proponents of these three different views of Messiah are prone to argue for the veracity of their perspective over the others. Previously, it was mentioned that the three different approaches to the mystical worldview are not in conflict, but represent gradations of distinction that exist only in human intellect. The three views of Messiah are likewise such gradations of perspective, all of which are relatively valid and reflect different spiritual constitutions. The Lord of All does appear to sport in human forms. And, the dream of the Small Face universe is projected and withdrawn through the action of the Celestial Messiah. And, all Name and Form are finite illusory manifestations, or shadows, of infinite undifferentiated Being.

Messiahs come as World Teachers when righteousness fades, and the message of the absolute unity of existence and the primacy of unconditional love, discrimination, and renunciation as a means to intimately know God becomes obscured by the conditioned impressions of conventional religions. Such extraordinary beings remind us in a lively way of our innate divinity and of the spiritual awakening that is our birthright.

“Whenever there is a decay of righteousness (*dharma*) and an ascendancy of unrighteousness, I manifest Myself; and for the protection of the virtuous, the destruction of the vicious and for the establishment of righteousness, I manifest Myself in age after age.”<sup>30</sup>

By appearing in a human form, Messiahs are able to perfectly portray divine qualities through the medium of human life in a way that can be comprehended by the finite consciousness of humans. In this way, it is said that the message of a Messiah *is* their divine life. Messiahs also perform other important functions. The deterioration of righteousness is often paralleled by deterioration in the gatekeepers, who have the responsibility of echoing the message of the Messiahs and pointing humanity to the “Open Gate.” Sometimes, Messiahs “wind the clocks” i.e. lead the transition from one Age to another, or vanquish powerful demons that threaten the stability of the Small Face universe.

Some Messiahs appear to be completely or partially veiled from awareness of their true identity until awakened to it by a Perfect Master who has incarnated to do so, or through a supra-conscious experience of the Divine. Master Mosheh was dramatically changed by his experience of the “Burning Bush.” The *Qur’an* also tells us that Master Mosheh was “guided” by Al Khidr, often referred to as the “Green One” or “The Jew.” The Perfect Master John baptized Master Yeshuvah in the Holy Spirit. The monk Tota Puri struck the Bengali *avatar* Sri Ramakrishna in the center of his forehead with a sharp rock. It immediately sent him into a *nirvikalpa samadhi* that lasted for six months and culminated twelve years of intense spiritual practices, after which Ramakrishna commenced his activity as a World Teacher.

The mystery of Messiah (Heb. *mashiach*) has been an important component of the Hebrew faith since ancient times. Yet, in the mainstream of modern Judaism, “Messiah” is a concept rarely referred to or discussed, except among the Chasidim. Most Jews are skeptical (if not cynical) that the Lord יהוה takes human form. Many religious Jews unequivocally deny such a possibility, even though there are a number of instances in the *Torah* where there is a strong inference that the Lord יהוה did so. As an example, the eighteenth chapter of *Torah B’reshith* begins with:

“The Lord יהוה appeared to him [Abraham] by the terebinths of Mamre...[as one of the] three men standing near him.”<sup>31</sup>

Sometimes we find all of these mysterious strangers popularly portrayed as angels. However, later on, after Sarah laughs at hearing she would conceive, we read that one of the three speaks to Abraham:

“Then the Lord יהוה said to Abraham, “...is anything too wondrous for the Lord יהוה? I will return to you at the same season next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”<sup>32</sup>

And the Lord יהוה, through the form of this man, also goes on shortly thereafter to describe the fate of Sodom and Gemorrah. It then says that the other two men went on from there while

Abraham remained standing before and conversing with the Lord יהוה in the form of the third man. At the end of the conversation, in which Abraham pleads for mercy for Sodom, it says:

“When the Lord יהוה had finished speaking to Abraham, He departed...”<sup>33</sup>

The Shemite qabalistic tradition teaches that the Lord יהוה as the Celestial Messiah has a four-fold nature and function. All four aspects are mentioned and alluded to in numerous ways and places in the *Tanakh*, the *Peshitta*, and the *Qur'an*. In the Qabalah, the four aspects of Celestial Messiah are described as four “Heads.” The four Heads correspond respectively to the four Sefiroth of the Inner Court of the Tree and to the three Mother Letters Alef א, Mem מ, and Shin ש, and the letter of the Holy Temple, Tav ת. The four Heads emanate in pairs and represent the differentiated action of Small Face in manifesting, sustaining, and dissolving the Creation. In the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the Celestial Heads of Messiah are:

1. “Depth of First” (עומק ראשית, *Omehq Reshith*), corresponding to the letter Alef א. Also simply called “The First,” active in creating.
2. “Depth of Last” (עומק אחרית, *Omehq Acharit*), corresponding to the letter Tav ת. Also simply called “The Last,” active in dissolving.
3. “Depth of Good” (עומק טוב, *Omehq Tov*), corresponding to the letter Mem מ, active in sustaining, manifested in the Lower Worlds as Master Mosheh.
4. “Depth of Evil” (עומק רע, *Omehq Ra'a*), corresponding to the letter Shin ש, active in sustaining, manifested in the Lower Worlds as Master Yeshuvah.

The four letters are also said to be the filters through which the Lord יהוה incarnates. The Name *Reshith* is contained in the first word of the first line of *Torah B'reshith*, which could be translated “By the First.” The Hebrew formulae for the names *Reshith* (ראשית) and *Acharit* (אחרית) contain many letters in common. The letter formula of Master Yeshuvah's name (יהשוה) clearly displays the filter of the Shin ש in the middle of the Name יהוה (see Figure 3.10). The Hebrew formula for the Name Mosheh משה is Mem מ (Water), Shin ש (Fire), Heh ה

(*Shekhinah*). The reverse of Master Mosheh's Name, Heh Shin Mem **השמ**, is *HaShem* (lit. "The Name," an epitaph of **יהוה**). It is also interesting to note that in the Sinatic Hebrew alphabet, the letterform of the Shin is contained in the letterform of the Mem.

The full implications of the Lord **יהוה** manifesting in human form as Master Mosheh have faded into esoteric obscurity. The penultimate storytellers of *Torah Shmoth* have relayed to us: the spectacular story of the liberation of the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery<sup>34</sup> and the High Magic of *Pesach* (**פסח**, *Passover*), the attempt to make Israel a "nation of prophets and priests," the ultimate drama on Sinai, and the meticulous construction of the Tabernacle containing the Ark. Many wonderful teachings about the nature and significance of Messiah in the Hebrew and Jewish traditions have been lost, suppressed, distorted, or watered down. Hence, Jews generally regard Master Mosheh as a kind of "holy magician," and have lost almost all awareness of the significance of Master Yeshuvah having come to renew the core mystical teaching of the Jews within the context of Judaism. Considering that many Christians themselves are confused by contradictions, inter-sect differences, and fundamentalist rigidity in Church dogma, it is not surprising that most Jews refute any credibility for Master Yeshuvah as being a messianic appearance of the Lord **יהוה**.

FIGURE 3.10 Hebrew Name *Yeshuvah*



When Master Yeshuvah came, the Jews were waiting for the messianic advent of the Lord **יהוה** as *Acharit* (The Last), who was expected to liberate them from Roman control and give the Jews dominion in Palestine. *Acharit* has been described as riding a white horse and wielding a fiery sword (Figure 3.11). When Master Yeshuvah's actions did not match the characteristics of *Acharit*, he was rejected by the pundits and religious politicians

(but not by many of the people). Furthermore, Master Yeshuvah threatened to undermine the spiritual authority of the Pharisees and the economic authority of the corrupt Sadducees, at a time when the Temple of Jerusalem was the biggest “bank” in the trade-rich Middle East.

In the **Gospels of Matthew** 11:14 and **Mark** 9:11-13, Master Yeshuvah specifically identifies his cousin, John the Baptist, as the reincarnation of Eliyahu HaNabi (Elijah the Prophet). In *Tanakh*, it is said that Eliyahu will again incarnate to announce the final messianic advent of the Lord יהוה. In the Qabalah, Eliyahu is said to be the incarnate form of the letter Tzade ט (letter-gate on the Column of the Left on the flat Tree). The Tzade ט is “at war with” the letter Zayin ז (letter-gate on the Column of the Right). The Zayin ז incarnated as Yezebel, who was subsequently vanquished by Eliyahu; and then as Salome, whose infamous nude dance resulted in the beheading of John the Baptist.

So, the mainstream of religious Jews deny Master Yeshuvah as a messianic appearance of the Lord יהוה within the context of Judaism. They greatly revere, but do not generally ascribe messianic stature to Master Mosheh, ignore the massive commonalties with Islam, and wait for *Acharit* who will bring the Jews to the Great Sabbath. Mainstream religious Christians politely respect Master Mosheh, but certainly have no sense of him as a Messiah. They feel no connection with the Prophet Mohammed and Islam, regard Master Yeshuvah as the exclusive and only incarnation of the Lord יהוה, and are waiting for “The Last” to appear as the “Second Coming of Master Yeshuvah” who will vanquish Satan (סמאל, *Samael*) and take (only) twice born Christians to Heaven. Mainstream religious Muslims, who officially don’t believe in the possibility of Messiah (notwithstanding their tradition of the “Hidden *Maghdi*,” and the messianic beliefs of some Sufis),<sup>35</sup> have an ambiguous respect for Master Mosheh and the “People of the Book.” They regard Master Yeshuvah (called *Isa* in the *Qur’an*) as an “immaculately conceived” master of the highest rung. They are waiting for “The Last” to take action on the “Day of Judgment” (*Yom Ah-Din*), when *Allah* will resurrect the souls of the faithful in Paradise.



FIGURE 3.11 *Acharit* Wielding a Sword Riding a White Horse



Many details found in the *Torah*, *Peshitta* (Gospels), and *Apocrypha* regarding the nature, lives, experiences, powers, and teachings of Master Mosheh and Master Yeshuvah find parallels in those of Messiahs in other traditions. Messianic appearances are called *avatara* in Sanskrit. The Hindu tradition contains beautiful and profound descriptions of the life dramas and teachings of the ten incarnations of *Vishnu*, including Rama, Krishna, Narasimha (lit. Man-Lion), and Matsya (the Fish, who is said to have appeared to Noah during the Flood). Hindus also ascribe messianic stature to Chaitanya (sixteenth century CE), Ramakrishna (1836-1886), Shirdi Sai Baba (d.1918) and Satya Sai Baba (1925-present). They assign such status as well as to incarnations of the Divine Mother i.e. the Goddess, such as Saradamani Devi (1853-1920), Anandamayi Ma (1896-1982), Amritanandamayi Ma (1953-present, known widely as “Ammachi”), and others. Buddhism provides detailed descriptions of the incarnations of the Buddha, and of the one to come called Maitreya. The sage Lao Tze, to whom is ascribed the *Tao-Te Ching*, was the revered divine incarnation who sired the development of Taoism. And Zoroaster

was the messianic wellspring who transmitted the *Zend Avesta* and originated the tradition passed down through the Farsis.

In studying the lives of these many diverse Messiahs, one notices the many instances where they persevered through challenges and travails. Master Mosheh suffered at the hands of the Egyptians and was excommunicated and sent into the desert. Master Yeshuvah was ridiculed by those in authority, and eventually tortured and apparently crucified. Master Mohammed was forced to prevail in tribal warfare, and at one point had to escape from Mecca to Medina. Master Rama was banished to the forest for fourteen years and forced to battle the demon Ravana to win back his kidnapped wife Sita. Master Zoroaster was poisoned. Master Ramakrishna, Master Satya Sai, and Devi Ammachi were all thought to be crazy by their families. Master Satya Sai was taken to a false healer who poured acid on his head. Devi Ammachi was sent away from her home as a youth to survive alone without support. And in every instance, these exalted beings demonstrated by the way they lived and responded to these challenges the very teachings they were trying to impart—their lives were their messages!

## Chapter

6

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# Meditation and the Mystical Qabalah: Foundation

## INTRODUCTION

All types of mystical yogic practices address one of the two Faces of the NOT (כֹּל), or both. Vast Face Yoga is impersonal in nature and views all Name and Form as illusions projected by, and in, Mind. It uses the process of discrimination between the Real and the Illusory to renounce all experiences and changes in consciousness through all planes of existence, until individuated consciousness dissolves and merges in the undifferentiated Ground of Pure Being i.e. *Ayn* (אֵין). Small Face Yoga, the yoga of devotion and selfless service, is personal in nature and regards the multiplicity of Name and Form as a Great Unity in Small Face. It is characterized by unconditional love and surrender to one's Small Face Chosen Ideal, intimacy, compassion, sense of beauty, ritual, and mental renunciation. By far the most common meditative practices in Small Face Yoga in all mystical traditions involve root mantra, visualizations, and often breathing exercises.

“So remember (*dikhr*) the Name of *Allah* and devote thyself with a complete devotion.”<sup>1</sup>

The great sage of Arunachala Sri Ramana Maharshi<sup>2</sup> taught:

“The eternal, unbroken, natural state of abiding in the Self is *jnana* [knowledge of the *Ayn*]. To abide in the Self, you must love the Self. Since God is verily the Self, love of the Self is love of God and that is *bhakti* [devotion to One Small Face]. *Jnana* and *bhakti* are thus ultimately one and the same.”<sup>3</sup>

## USE OF ROOT MANTRA IN MEDITATION

The Tree of Life and Divine Names are two distinct patterns. A particular Name will empower a Tree in a particular way.

Different Names can be put on the same Tree, and the Tree will be colored differently in accordance with each Name's letter formula. The *Sefer HaShmoth* (**Book of the Names**) designates especially powerful Names that will light the whole Tree. The most common meditative practice of Small Face devotional yoga in all mystical traditions is the repetition of a root mantra combined with an appropriate visualization. In Hebrew, it is called *zakhor*; in Arabic, it is called *dikhr*; and in Sanskrit, it is called *japa* and *namasmarana*.

Root mantra are sacred utterances upon which entire religions are built and sustained. A good yogic mantra or string of power names gives the individual consciousness an encoded ladder that will systematically move it through successive levels of the Tree. A well-structured root mantra usually combines a principal Name of Small Face with an appropriate name of Vast Face. It also includes built-in mechanisms to ensure smooth and natural transitions between the planes of existence and stations of consciousness, and into the roots of the Tree. In the Mystical Qabalah, most such root mantra involve the Name יהוה.

“It is very good for a person to depict the letters of the Name יהוה before the eyes of the mind.”<sup>4</sup>

Repeating a mantra over time creates a sympathetic vibration in the mind. It purifies desires, intensifies unconditional love and surrender, and naturally cultivates and enhances discrimination, same-sightedness, renunciation, and one-pointed concentration. True mantra have an intrinsic power to purify the shells (*qlifoth*). The One Name of Small Face that naturally appeals to each aspirant is called their “Chosen Ideal.” Through years of practice and divine grace, the mind of the meditator literally becomes the mantra that is repeated, and everything in the universe is seen as a form of their Chosen Ideal. The intention of repeating a root mantra that includes a Small Face Chosen Ideal is to get the consciousness of Small Face—the male and female active principle of the *Ayn* (אין). Small Face is the power of the *Ayn* to project, preserve, and dissolve a unified Small Face universe. It is also the immense I-ness of the Divine Personality endowed with all possible attributes. When this I-ness is “turned outward” to the Creation, it is stationed in the consciousness that “I am All.” When we awaken to the consciousness of Small Face, we

realize that we (and all beings) have always been Small Face, not a little individual plagued with suffering.

Once a meditator unites with the consciousness of Small Face, there are two options. One is to remain fixed in it for the remainder of this Small Face universe. The second option is to renounce it—meaning you renounce the consciousness of creating, sustaining, and dissolving the universe. In renouncing the consciousness of Small Face, expansion into the undifferentiated consciousness of Vast Face is automatic. The immense I-ness is now turned “Face-to-Face” and united with Vast Face in the awareness that “Nothing alone exists.” Here we learn that *Small Face has one great secret - that there is no creation, no destruction, no one in bondage, no one seeking liberation, no one liberated.* If our mental matrix survives the experience of the negatively existent roots, we would be able to reemerge as an individuated being in the Small Face Creation as a Tree of Perfection. As a Perfect Tree, the Sefirah Kingdom would have returned to its position as the visible Sefirah Knowledge/First, and the whole universe is perceived as a Great Unity in Small Face. Actually, the Sefirah Knowledge/First is always there, but in a fallen state we do not see it, and matter and spirit are perceived as separate in Sefirah Kingdom.

## CYBERNETICS AND THE MYSTICAL QABALAH

### SMALL FACE AND THE HUMAN BRAIN

Taking a modern perspective that combines neurology, cybernetics, and Jungian ideas, Small Face is a Great Unity in the sense that it is a totality archetype, a quintessential fractal that permeates in its entirety every atom of the manifest universe. All possible Small Face totality archetypes are stored in the cerebral cortex of the human brain as the computer equivalent of “compressed files.” A compressed file is a large amount of information configured with optimum efficiency into a minimum amount of storage space. Each individual has a natural affinity for a particular totality archetype due to the karmic impressions (San. *samskaras*) which color their lifestream. The composite human brain is an organic, carbon-based computer with four

distinct sub-brains. The underlying 0 level of the brain is a bit count of on-off neurons, similar to the 0 level of a computer with on-off diodes. The on-off condition is set by the resistance (in ohms) of each electrochemical synapse to the next neuron. There are multiple branch points (on the order of 10) off of each neuron, so 9 of the 10 channels are high resistance (1 megohm) and one is low resistance (.01 megohm). The information flow follows the low resistance channel.

Some  $10^{11}$  bits of RAM (read and write memory) are stored in the 100 billion cells of the fourth brain (cerebral cortex), linked by 100 trillion synaptic connections. There are also some  $10^{10}$  bits RAM and ROM (read only memory) in the first three brains (commonly referred to as the “reptilian brain”): the medulla, the cerebellum, and the midbrain. This is where the automatic ROM is stored, permitting automatic and semi-automatic physical functions. Our brains have a pictorial readout similar to a TV scan. The reason for this is that logic, speech, and words formed recently in our evolution. Access to information was needed immediately in the form of complete pictures e.g. “this is a sabre tooth tiger, compare what you see with the inner brain picture recalled for a sabre tooth tiger, and RUN!” This has to be done quickly in order to survive, so the people who were able to do it survived and those who could not died out. The usual picture unit is stored in a dissipated way throughout the cerebral cortex. The reason for this is that if a part of the brain is injured and its function impaired, most of the information would still be intact and could be retrieved by the root reconstructing pattern with some bits missing.

The  $10^{11}$  bits in the fourth brain have to be replenished constantly or they become chaotic. The electrochemical neuronic synapses are replenished by writing the same information over them, which generates the illusion of an ongoing, orderly continuity superimposed over an unperceived negatively existent substratum. And who replenishes the bit stream in the fourth brain? Small Face! This is the basis for the qabalistic teaching that Small Face creates, preserves, and dissolves the universe moment by moment by moment. At the microcosmic level, this means all memories of the past and all hopes for the future, all that you know to be you, is replenished moment by moment. At

the collective level, anyone or anything can be significantly changed, inserted, or removed from the universe by Small Face at any time. Since all memories and projected futures regarding that person or people would likewise be changed, this could occur without anyone necessarily knowing that it happened. If this is the case, consider the implications regarding the anticipated messianic action of *Acharit*...

All totality archetypes are stored in the fourth brain in the “ONE File.” This Unity File is the deep background of brain activity, defined as impressions of past karmic activity and offering standard solutions and standard situations derived from deep memory. A lot of this deep background is contained in genetic coding that is hardwired at the moment of conception. In deep time, all of the brain’s “files” merge into the archetype of the totality i.e. the brain ends up with just the ONE File. The information of a compressed file in a computer is sealed into its storage site with a specified code. In computer parlance, a file of information that is compressed and locked this way is called a “zipped file.” A zipped file is sealed by what is called an executable command. When you activate the executable command, the entire file is opened. In mystical terms, activating the appropriate executable command in the form of a root mantra opens the zipped totality archetype. When we use a specific root mantra to trigger the executable file of a respective Small Face totality archetype, we gradually alter the currents in our synaptic bits by a process of fractal reprogramming. This results in an overall change in the way an individual perceives the Small Face universe. Hence, when you open a totality archetype, it fractalizes and becomes the entire universe in your individual consciousness.

### **THE QABALISTIC “HOLODECK”**

In the science fiction television series “Star Trek,” the Starship Enterprise has an interesting recreational facility called the “Holodeck” that appears in numerous episodes. The Holodeck is essentially an empty room with a three-dimensional grid superimposed upon the walls. The grid provides a triaxial frame of reference for the ship’s computer to project a three-dimensional hologram. A crew member directs the ship’s

computer to generate a hologram that portrays a specific narrative theme, into which one or more actual crew members can enter and interact on an apparently real time basis. The computer can be directed to modify or end the scenario at any time. A contemporary hologram is a two-dimensional image that is made to look as if it is three-dimensional. It is generated by shining lasers on an object from a number of different directions simultaneously. In the Holodeck, a three-dimensional hologram is made to appear as four-dimensional i.e. actively changing over time within a consistent set of parameters, with the computer refreshing the bits from moment to moment.

Keeping in mind that analogies are only approximations in thought intended to enhance understanding, it is interesting to compare the Holodeck with the qabalistic worldview. The qabalistic worldview describes the universe as a Small Face totality-dream in the Mind of Vast Face. From that perspective, the space outside the ship would correspond to the negatively existent roots of the Tree (i.e. *Ayn*). The walls that form the Holodeck would represent the circular *Leviathan* of Vast Face surrounding the *Tzimtzum*. The empty space of the Holodeck would correspond to the vacuum within the *Tzimtzum*.

By the will of Vast Face through the action of Small Face, the *Kav* (“Line of Light”) enters the *Tzimtzum* through the point of the Sefirah Crown/Above. The *Kav* is the clear mirror of the Central Column of the Tree, from which the two side columns are opposite reflections. The grid in the Holodeck would therefore correspond to the pattern of ten Sefiroth that constitute the Tree. The point in the grid with the spatial address  $\langle 0,0,0 \rangle$  would correspond to Sefirah Crown/Above i.e. the point to which all other points in the grid are referenced to determine their relational addresses. The grid by itself, without a hologram projected upon it, corresponds to the Sefiroth in the World of Emanation. When a human directs the computer to project a hologram upon the grid infrastructure, the ensuing illusion of a three dimensional environment that can change over time would thus correlate to the Sefiroth extending through the four worlds. The hologram as formless on-off bits in the computer’s memory would correspond to the Creation in the vibrational World of B’riyah. The 3-D hologram as a manifest assemblage of subtle



sound and form patterns would correspond to the Creation in the World of Yetzirah. Finally, the registration and interpretation of those patterns as substantial through the human sensory organs would correspond to the World of Asiyah.

What role do the humans play in this configuration? They would correspond to the immense I-ness of Small Face manifesting and experiencing the manifold attributes of Its own Divine Personality within the empty dream space of Vast Face. The humans create the physical environment of the Holodeck. They create the computer, which is an extension of the human mind. They choose the thematic content of the holographic narrative, which is an extension of the human imagination. And, they enter into, interact with, modify, and terminate the hologram at will while constantly remaining aware that it is only an illusion. And, from where does the hologram come from? Nowhere (*Ayn*)! Of what is it made? Nothing (*Ayn*)! Where does it go when it ends? No Place (*Ayn*)!

### **VAST FACE-CENTERED APPROACH TO ASCENDING THE TREE**

Some aspirants by nature do not have any attraction for the active, personal Small Face. They do not seek the consciousness of Small Face as a goal, or even as an intermediate stage up the Tree. Such aspirants focus directly on Vast Face and seek to establish a connection in their consciousness to the negatively existent substratum in the roots of the Tree. Holding on to the banner of *Neti, Neti*-“NOT (לא) This, NOT (לא) This,” they renounce all Name and Form and all experiences in the waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep states as illusory. The exceptional strength of concentration and force of will that are requisite to engage in Vast Face practices make them suitable for only a small percentage of aspirants. Such practices are also generally more appropriate for monks who have literally renounced the world and live away from the din and temptations of modern civilization. In the primary mystical literature of all traditions, the allusions and teachings regarding Vast Face are especially obscure and characteristically paradoxical. The practices of Vast Face meditation will be discussed in more detail in a later section of this chapter.

## HEBREW ROOT MANTRA AND THE NAME יהוה

As mentioned earlier, almost all the root mantra in the Mystical Qabalah involve the One Small Face Name יהוה. The Name יהוה is called the “*Shem HaMeforesh*” or “Brilliant Name of Fire.” It is often simply referred to as “*HaShem*” (lit. “The Name”), reflecting its central importance. The Name יהוה is conventionally translated in scriptures as “Lord.” Within the context of Hebrew grammar, the “word” יהוה is usually cited as a future tense third person form of the verb root הוה (lit. “to be”).<sup>5</sup> Some regard the word as a composite that combines the past, present, and future tense forms of the verb root.

Orthodoxy has proclaimed the pronunciation of the letter-formula יהוה as a Name to be blasphemous. When the Name יהוה is encountered in the *Torah* or when chanting prayers, religious Jews will either pause in silence out of respect or substitute another power name, traditionally “*Adonai*” (אדוני lit. my Master). In the Latin Vulgate edition of the *Tanakh*, Jerome set the precedent of changing the pronunciation of the Yod ך to “J” and using the vowels from *Adonai* to produce the anglicized variation “Jehovah.” Jehovah is the way that most contemporary non-Jews pronounce the Name יהוה. The Name יהוה is sometimes pronounced “*Yahweh*,” reflecting the tradition that the High Priest in the Temple of Jerusalem made a monosyllabic pronunciation of the Name יהוה on *Yom Kippur* (Day of At-One-ment). The halachic prohibition specifies to avoid pronouncing the four letters of יהוה as a Name. If one is inclined to follow their prohibition, one can use the Atziluthic version wherein the letters are considered to be standing alone, and therefore pronounced individually—“Yod (as in ‘code’),” “Heh (as in ‘day’),” “Vav (as in ‘love’),” “Heh.” The “V’s” in the Vav are pronounced by gently touching the upper bicuspid to the lower lip. The Atziluthic version can be regarded as the most powerful way of pronouncing the Name, because it reflects the condition of the letters in the Sefirah Crown/Above.

Among the religions of the world, only Rabbinical Judaism does not pronounce its principal One Name of Small Face. In contrast to the rabbinical prohibition against pronouncing the letter-formula יהוה as a Name, it is interesting to note that there

are a number of instances in the *Torah* where it specifically states that the Lord יהוה was invoked *by Name*. Hence, it could be inferred that it was a common practice to do so among ancient Hebrews.

“And to Seth, in turn, a son was born, and he named him Enosh. It was then that men began to invoke the Lord יהוה *by Name*.”<sup>6</sup>

“From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel...and he built there an altar to the Lord יהוה and invoked the Lord יהוה *by Name*.”<sup>7</sup>

“So he [Yitza’aq] erected an altar there [Beersheba] and invoked the Lord יהוה *by Name*.”<sup>8</sup>

### PRIMARY MANTRA FROM THE TORAH

A variety of root mantra of particular importance to the mystical Qabalah are found in the *Torah*. Some of the most prominent ones are:

1. The first part of the first of the Ten Commandments: “*Anokhi Yod Heh Vav Heh Elohekha*” (אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ) lit. “I AM YHVH your God”).<sup>9</sup>
2. A shorter version of the first Commandment: “*Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh* (אֲנִי יְהוָה) lit. “I AM YHVH”).<sup>10</sup>
3. The Affirmation of Unity—the “*Shema*” or “*Shem Ayn*.” “*Shem AYN Yisroel Yod Heh Vav Heh Eloheynu Yod Heh Vav Heh EchaD*” (שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד) lit. “Name *Ayn* Israel YHVH our *Elohim* YHVH One”).<sup>11</sup>
4. The Vast Face mantra at the root of *Pesach* (Passover): “*Shomer Mah MeLylah*” (שׁוֹמֵר מַה מִּלַּיְלָה) lit. “Watcher WHAT of the Night”).<sup>12</sup>
5. The Vast Face mantra: “*Ani Ayn*” (אֲנִי אֵיךְ) lit. “I AM the *Ayn*”).
6. The Vast Face mantra: “*Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh*” (אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה) lit. “I will be, THAT, I will be”).<sup>13</sup>

To take a mantra in meditation involves repeating it silently or out loud, usually in combination with an appropriate visualization. The visualization can be “seen” in the heart center Sefirah Beauty/Last (approximately at the thoracic cavity), or in

front of the eyes. One can perform the visualization with eyes closed or open. It was cited that “Brilliant Name of Fire” (*Shem HaMeforesh*) is a descriptive title for the Name יהוה. Hence, in using a root mantra centered upon the Name יהוה, the process of creative imagination is used to visualize the Name as “dancing letters of fire” against a solid black, circular background. The black circular background represents the Contraction (*Tzimtzum*). The black circular background can be placed against a light blue background as the negatively existent Endless Light (see Figure 6.1).

FIGURE 6.1 Horizontal Ezra יהוה on the *Tzimtzum* surrounded by *Leviathan*



Compared to the Hermetic and Religious Qabalah, the Mystical Qabalah is relatively fluid. Within certain parameters, it allows considerable flexibility in the choice of practices and how

they are performed. While we are all familiar with the color of fire, there is no rigid prescription prohibiting an individual from using other colors such as white, red, gold, or even black for the fire letters. One might also prefer to use a different color for the solid circular background. A meditator may visualize the linear form or the *Yosher* (upright) form of the Name יהוה as dancing letters of fire. We could see the Name as flaming Ezra Hebrew letters or as flaming Sinatic Hebrew letters. More instructions for meditations that employ the Hebrew root mantra are provided in Chapter Seven.

The mantra “*Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh*” is found in numerous places in the *Torah* and it is especially recommended for its simplicity and proven effectiveness. The word *Ani* (אני) is now a common word in colloquial spoken Hebrew. It has come to mean “I am,” and is used when referring to oneself in the context of conventional speech. In the *Sefer HaShmoth* (**Book of the Names**) and in biblical Hebrew, *Ani* is a power name of Vast Face, and thereby refers to the Divine Self as Pure Existence. When “*Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh*” is used as a mantra in meditation, the ladder of the four letters of the Name יהוה will move the consciousness of the meditator up the Tree and through the four worlds. Then, the Yod ך of יהוה becomes the Yod ך of *Ani*, and the consciousness of the meditator merges with the witness states of Vast Face in the negatively existent roots of the Tree. In the roots of the Tree, the Nun ך and Yod ך in *Ani* אני exchange places: *Ani* has now become *Ayn* אין, the Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of the Thing.

The mantra “*Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh*” is versatile in that it can be built upon. Any additional Divine Name, attribute, or gatekeeper, to which the mind of an aspirant is attracted, can be added to *Ani* יהוה. Examples are: *Ani* יהוה *Shekhinah Belimah* (שכינה בלימה, Intangible Presence), *Ani* יהוה *Ahavah* (אהבה, Love), *Ani* יהוה *Echad* (אחד, Unity), *Ani* יהוה Avraham (אברהם, Master Abraham), etc. The visualization used can be modified according to what is added to the mantra. The visualizations could be simple or complex. For instance, with “*Ani* יהוה *Shekhinah Belimah*,” one could visualize Queen *Shekhinah* seated upon the stump of a tree in the middle of a beautiful forest. The left side of Her body is dressed in rags

(corresponding to the state of dualistic exile) and the right half in royal vestments (corresponding to *Shabat*). Her hands are in Her lap, palms upward, and She has a crown on Her head around which is the twenty-two Atziluthic letters. To Her immediate right and left are trees representing the Side Columns of the Tree of Life. The full moon shines above the trees in the night sky above Her. The flaming letters of the Name יהוה shimmer in Her heart center, cradled just above Her hands. Brilliant gold light shines forth in all directions from Her body, Her face veiled by the light.

The “*Shema*” is the best known and most revered root mantra in the Jewish religion. According to the *Zohar*, it should be pronounced “*Shem AYN Yisroel Yod Heh Vav Heh Elohenu Yod Heh Vav Heh Echa---D.*” In the *Torah*, the letters Ayin ע (in “*Shem Ayin*” שמוע) and Dalet ד (in “*Echad*” אחד) are greatly enlarged. Together, they make the secret root Name “OD” עו (pronounced “ood”), the literal meaning of which is often said to be “Eternity.”<sup>14</sup> In this root mantra, *Shem Ayn* שמוע is the NOT (לא), the negatively existent Mysterious Unknown, the Hidden of Hidden Ones. *Yisroel* (ישראל) is the Supernal Israel, the witness states (Alef Worlds) of Vast Face in Atziluth, and the Name יהוה is the Small Face totality archetype. *Elohenu* (אלהינו, our *Elohim*) refers to the creative aspect of Small Face in general, and the consciousness of our local Star (Sun) in particular. The mantra then returns to the station of Small Face with the repetition of יהוה. It climaxes with *EchaD* (אחד), alluding to the Great Unity of Vast and Small Face. In using the “*Shem Ayn*” for meditation, one can visualize the Name יהוה as dancing letters of fire on a black circular background against a light blue background, as previously described.

The root mantra and holiest utterance in the *Qur'an* is “*La Illaha Il Allah (Hu).*” Maimomades the “Rambam” asserted that this utterance and the “*Shem Ayin*” are essentially the same.<sup>15</sup> “*La*” is the NOT (לא), “*Illaha*” is Vast Face, “*Il*” is the “glue” between Vast and Small Face, and *Allah* is the Small Face totality archetype. *Hu* refers to the visible Sefirah Knowledge/First in the throat center seen from the Sefirah Crown/Above in Atziluth on a Perfect Tree. *Allah*, the most important Name of Small Face in Islam, is also a “Brilliant Name of Fire.” An aspirant attracted to

*Allah* as their Chosen Ideal would repeat a root mantra containing the Name *Allah*, and would visualize *Allah* as dancing letters of fire on a background as described above. Sufis, the Qabalists of Islam, call the process of “taking the Name” or repeating root mantra “*dikhr*” (lit. remembrance), which is the equivalent of the Hebrew word “*zakhor*” (זָכַר) in the context of the Mystical Qabalah.

“Unify the Holy Name  
Bind the Knot of Faith,  
Bring blessings to the proper place.”<sup>16</sup>

### THE MOODS OF DEVOTIONAL YOGA

The moods of the yoga of devotion to Small Face vary. Some devotees may have a strong emotional sense of being creatures in the Lord יהוה's (or any other Small Face Chosen Ideal) dream-universe. Others may feel like servants of the Lord יהוה the Master; or like the Lord יהוה's dear friend, sister, or brother; or like the Lord יהוה's wife, or husband, or secret paramour. Devotional Yoga can bring to the forefront the highest fruits of each mood, and spill over into relations with family, friends, teachers, lovers, and strangers. Devotional Yoga seeks a personal, intimate relation with the Divine, infused with devotional passion and fulfilling one's deepest emotional needs.

Some of the clearest and most detailed accounts of the experiences associated with devotional moods are found in the teachings of the Vaishnavas of Bengal in Northern India. The Vaishnavas are ardent devotees of Vishnu's incarnations, especially Rama, Krishna, and Chaitanya. In Vaishnava teachings, the moods of love are called *bhavas*, and they are taken to their highest possible spiritual expression in *bhava samadhi* (lit. devotional mood union). *Bhava samadhi* is ecstatic absorption in one's Chosen Ideal in the context of a particular mood. The highest (and rarest) of the *bhavas* in the Vaishnava teachings is called *madhura bhava* (lit. Sweet Mood). The *madhura bhava* is the female mood of the wife/paramour toward God-the-Husband or Secret Beloved, characterized by *prema* (ecstatic love). In Vaishnava literature, the *madhura bhava* is embodied in Radha, a principal consort of Sri Krishna, and in

Sita, wife of Rama. All of the devotional moods are found variously among devotees in all mystical traditions relative to their respective Chosen Ideals.

Within the mystical community, there are some aspirants who have awakened to a condition of permanent awareness in the lower astral states of the World of Yetzirah. Most such individuals access this station of consciousness by exiting the waking state; some are able to access it while simultaneously maintaining an operative awareness in the waking state. Either way, there is some danger that attachment to this type of psychic ability can be an entrapment that inhibits further spiritual growth. Among advanced devotees, there are some who awaken to a condition of continuous awareness of their Chosen Small Face Ideal within the context of a particular *bhava*. As with the lower psychic condition described above, most access this state by exiting their bodies in sleep or trance. A smaller number are seen to maintain a simultaneous awareness in the waking state of Asiyah, and the higher astral states of Yetzirah. Hence, while in the waking state, they may literally see the form of their Chosen Ideal everywhere, in everything. While this station is more desirable than entrapment in the lower psychic states, it can still present a temptation to become addicted to the bliss of this experience, preventing further progress up the Tree. Overcoming such an addiction is no small task, and often requires the intervention of an advanced spiritual mentor. Also, frequent intense *ananda samadhis* can be especially taxing to the nervous system of most humans.

### VAST FACE MEDITATION PRACTICES

Some souls, possessed of extraordinary strength of mind and personal resolve, are not attracted to meditation on God-with-Name-and Form, but rather are naturally inclined to meditate on Vast Face—God-without-Name-and-Form. In other traditions, Vast Face meditation is practiced among the Shaivites and Advaita Vedantins in India, the Theravada, Tendai, Shingon, Tibetan, Ch’an, and Zen Buddhists, and the Wu Wei (Non-Action) Taoists.<sup>17</sup> The Shaivites envision the pure consciousness of Vast Face as *Shiva*, and the energy of that consciousness as



His consort the Goddess *Kali*. The Vedantic philosophy of *advaita* (non-duality) regards all Name and Form as illusory, and that *Brahman* (i.e. the *Ayn*) alone exists. Theravada, Hinayana, Tendai, Shingon, Tibetan, Ch'an, and Zen Buddhists perform variations of Vast Face meditation practices taught by Gautama Buddha (regarded as the eighth incarnation of *Vishnu* by Hindus) and other *bodhisattvas* (souls who reach enlightenment but remain incarnate to teach and help others awaken). The Buddha practiced *jnana yoga* (lit. union through direct perception of the *Ayn*) and taught *ashtanga yoga* (lit. eight-limbed yoga of concentration and discrimination). He sat under the Bodhi Tree, renouncing all experiences on all planes of existence. Seeing that all the *koshas* (Sanskrit word for shells of embodied existence) were empty, he perceived the ultimate Truth of Pure Being in *nirvana*. The Vast Face Taoists follow "quietist practices" that lead them to Stillness in the Tao. The principal mood, or *bhava*, of Vast Face Yoga is called the "*shanti bhava*" (peaceful mood).

Vast Face meditation practices include letting the mind rest in its natural state, following the breath, using specialized Vast Face mantra and visualizations, and contemplating paradox e.g. Zen *koans*. Verbal practices include chanting and contemplating non-dual centered scriptural texts such as the *Upanishads* of the Hindu Rishis, the Buddhist *Prajna Paramita*, and the Qabalistic *Sifra Detzniyutha*. The "Neti, Neti" ("NOT this, NOT this") process of discriminating Self-inquiry is used to discern the Real by negating the Unreal. The yogic instructions of Sri Ramana Maharshi, for instance, emphasized a process of inquiry as to the real nature of "Who am I?":

"Who am I? The gross body that is composed of the seven humors (*dhatu*s), I am not. The five cognitive senses that apprehend their respective objects i.e. sound, touch, color, taste, odor, I am not. The five cognitive organs i.e. speech, locomotion, touch, excretion, and procreation, with their respective functions, I am not. The five vital airs (*prana*, etc.), I am not. Even the mind that thinks, I am not. The neiscience too, which is endowed only with the residual impressions of objects, and in which there are no objects and no functions, I am not. After negating all the above as 'Neti Neti,' that

Awareness which alone remains—that ‘I am.’  
The nature of that Awareness is Existence-  
Consciousness-Bliss.”

And,

“Like silver is in mother of pearl, the world, the individual Soul, and God are appearances in the True Self. These three appear at the same time and disappear at the same time.”<sup>83</sup>

In the *Zohar* (**Book of Splendor**), *Shir HaShirim* (**Song of Songs**) attributed to King Solomon, and elsewhere, the Hebrew Small Face is described as “raven-haired” and “black-bearded.” Vast Face conversely is frequently referred to as the “white-haired, white-bearded, hoary Ancient of Days.” For example:

“White are His garments, and His appearance is the likeness of a Face vast and terrible.”<sup>18</sup>

“...the Head of Days, His Head white and pure as wool. And His raiment indescribable.”<sup>19</sup>

In the *Mahanirvana Tantra*, we find *Shiva* described as:

“He who is white as camphor and the jasmine flower, the Omnipresent One.”<sup>20</sup>

In Sir John Woodroffe’s book **The Garland of Letters**, we find the translated inscription:

“She [Small Face as Divine Mother] stands upon the white, corpse-like *Shiva*. He is white because He is the illuminating, transcendental aspect of Consciousness. He is inert because He is the changeless aspect of the Supreme, and She the apparently changing aspect of the same. In truth, She and He are One and the same, being twin aspects of the One...”<sup>21</sup>

In the *Torah*, there are a variety of images alluding to the station of Vast Face, such as “Darkness *AL* (עַל lit. upon) the Face of the Deep”<sup>22</sup> We also find a prominent image of the Ancient of Days in the **Revelation of John**, described as having “fiery eyes and a two-edged sword coming from His mouth” (Figure 6.2). Then, there is the reference to “darkness upon thick darkness” in the “Light *Surah*” of the *Qur’an*.<sup>23</sup>

“Or like darkness in a vast ocean [Vast Face],  
Covered with waves upon waves,

Over them clouds, darkness upon thick darkness  
 [i.e. Face to Face].  
 And whoever *Allah* gives NOT- Light has NOT-  
 Light in all.”

The “Night of Power” *Surah* in the *Qur’an* also alludes to the direct experience of Vast Face consciousness:

“In the name of *Allah*, the Merciful, the  
 Compassionate,  
 Truly, We have sent This [Vast Face Name] in the  
 Night of Power [Vast Face *samadhi*].  
 And What [Vast Face Name] is the Night of Power.  
 The Night of Power is better than a thousand nights;  
 The angels and the Spirit descend in It by the will of  
 their Lord.  
 It is peace for all until the rise of dawn.”

The prize of the yoga of knowledge/realization of the *Ayn* (אֵין) is called “*nirvikalpa samadhi*” (lit. union with God-without-qualities) in Sanskrit. *Nirvikalpa samadhi* is the complete extinction of individuated consciousness in union with the Mysterious Unknown. Swami Vivekananda, a great disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, wrote the following “Hymn of *Samadhi*.”<sup>24</sup>

“LO! The Sun is not, nor the comely Moon, all  
 Light extinct;  
 In the great Void of space floats shadow-like the  
 image universe.  
 In the Void of Mind-involute there floats the fleeting  
 universe,  
 Rises and floats, sinks again ceaseless, in the current  
 ‘I.’  
 Slowly, slowly, the shadow multitude enters the  
 primal womb,  
 And flows ceaseless the only current. ‘I AM, I AM.’  
 Lo! ‘Tis stopped, even the current flows no more,  
 Void merged into Void - beyond speech and  
 mind;  
 Whose heart understands, he knows the Truth.”

FIGURE 6.2 Ancient of Days (*Peshitta*)



When the connection is opened via *nirvikalpa samadhi* to the substratum of the *Ayn*, everything disappears, including the idea of the substratum. You discover that none of this ever existed, none of this ever happened. It's like waking up from a dream. When you wake up from a dream, where does the dream you were having go? All the programming is completely shattered by this realization, always. You can only continue by leaving a copy of your program in Small Face BEFORE you access the

negatively existent substratum. You continue as this program. The old self is totally gone, like a salt doll dissolved in the ocean. To even conceive of this is very difficult. Hence, most people who have an interest in spiritual awakening are more comfortable at focusing their yogic effort on changing their consciousness, and thereby their universe, into a unitive Small Face totality archetype. Indeed, only a small percentage of spiritual aspirants have the mental constitution and strength to pursue Vast Face consciousness, without first establishing their consciousness in a Small Face totality archetype. Through a process of discrimination, Small Face devotees can get to Vast Face consciousness by renouncing their Small Face Chosen Ideal. In practice, most find that they are unable to renounce that One who has become most dear to their hearts, and who is seen as literally filling their entire universe.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ASCEND THE TREE OF LIFE?

### INTRODUCTION

In ascending the Tree, the individuated consciousness expands through the successive shells, with their respective states and stations, and associated powers. Consciousness in the *Geviyah* (astral shell) gives control over the dream state and lower psychic states, and can afford such powers as astral projection, clairvoyance, precognition, and “reading” the Earth’s Akashic Record.<sup>25</sup> The *Nefesh* (physical body in the waking state of the World of Asiyah) shuts out the bulk of information coming from the *Geviyah* (astral body) because the *Nefesh* vibrates at a much slower rate. The station of the *Ruach Ha Qodesh* (Holy Spirit, causal body) in the Sefirah Beauty/Last is normally experienced as deep sleep. The awakening of consciousness in the *Ruach Ha Qodesh* in the World of B’riyah is usually experienced as an ecstatic and exclusive experience of one’s Small Face Chosen Ideal. In Sanskrit, this experience is called “*ananda samadhi*” (bliss union) and “*salvikalpa samadhi*” (God-with-Qualities union). This vision is often filtered through the astral senses of the *Geviyah* in Yetzirah, so that the form of the Small Face is actually seen and heard. Since there is still

separation between individual and divine consciousness in the *Ruach HaQodesh*, the individual is also aware of him/herself in this vision. The awakening of the *Ruach HaQodesh* generally liberates the soul from further incarnations of the *Geviyah*. Upon passing from the *Nefesh* (i.e. dying from the physical body), the soul retains its separation and resides in ecstatic bliss “at the feet of their Beloved” for the duration of the Small Face universe.

Through discrimination and the renunciation of a dualistic relationship with one’s Small Face Chosen Ideal, the individual consciousness can continue to expand and ascend the Central Column, cross the Abyss of the invisible Sefirah Knowledge/First, and merge with the *Neshamah* (Divine Soul) in the Sefirah Crown/Above in the World of Atziluth. This is experienced as a witness state the size of the Small Face universe. In merging with the *Neshamah*, all separation between the individual and Small Face dissolves. By renouncing the manifestation of Mind-generated universes, “Face turns toward Face” and the universe vanishes like waking up from a dream. Consciousness thereby automatically moves into the *Neshamah HaNeshamah* (Soul of the Soul), merging with the negatively existent witness states of Vast Face in the roots of the Tree. In the Qabalah, the unmanifest witness states of Vast Face are called “Alef Worlds,” in distinction to the manifest “Beyt Worlds” of Small Face. Hence, we see that *Torah B’reshith*, the *Zohar*, the *Sefer Yetzirah*, and the *Qur’an* all begin with words whose first letter is Beyt.<sup>26</sup> The station in the roots of the Tree is also called the World of the *Yechidah* (Singularity).

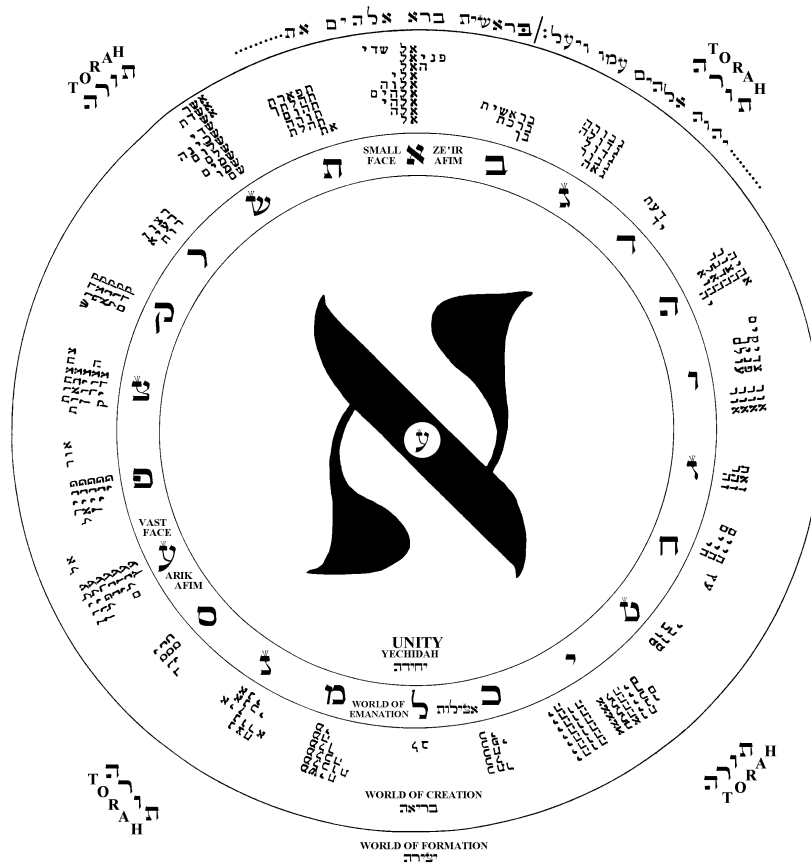
“Therefore, the Secret of Secrets is what men can neither know nor comprehend, nor can they apply their rules of science to It.”<sup>27</sup>

“The Head (*Rosh*, ראש) of Above, the Holy Ancient One, Mystery of All Mysteries, Head of All Heads, the Head which is NOT (רא), a Head which is in NOT (רא), known as NOT (רא); what is knowable in the Head is NOT (רא) connected with Wisdom and NOT (רא) connected with Understanding.”<sup>28</sup>

Figure 6.3 displays the generation of the *Torah* emanating from the unmanifest singularity of *Yechidah*. This diagram shows the *Ayn* (אין) projecting the unmanifest Alef א of Unity, from

which emanate the twenty-two supernal letters in the World of Atziluth. The Names in the World of B'riyah subsequently evolve from the twenty-two letters in Atziluth. The Names in Figure 6.3 include all the Names in the *Sefer HaShmoth*. The totality of Names in B'riyah form the basis for all possible breakdowns of the unbroken letter sequence of the *Gan Eden Torah* in the World of Yetzirah. The beginning of the first verse and the end of the last verse of the written *Torah* in the World of Asiyah are seen atop the perimeter of the outer circle.

Figure 6.3 Generation of the *Torah* in the Four Worlds



"GENERATION OF THE TORAH"  
*Torah HaDoverim* 33:27 מוענה אלהי קדם ומהחה זרעה עולם:  
 "As a dwellingplace for the eternal El, and underneath are the everlasting arms."  
 Book of the Names 7

When a mystic goes into complete extinction of the differentiated self in *nirvikalpa samadhi*, his/her body becomes

cold and corpse-like, with heat only at the crown of the head. Normal humans cannot sustain this experience for very long without shattering the shells. The average person gets several momentary flashes of consciousness in the higher centers in their lifetime, but usually buries them deeply as traumatic experiences. Meditation gradually desensitizes the mind to accept such flashes as legitimate yogic experiences, thereby making it possible to sustain the experience much longer. In **Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master**, Swami Saradananda relates the dramatic account of Master Ramakrishna sustaining and surviving six months of unbroken *nirvikalpa samadhi* after being struck on the forehead with a sharp rock by the *sannyasin* Tota Puri.<sup>29</sup> The *Qur'an* alludes to the Vast Face *samadhi* experience of the Prophet Mohammed as the “Night of Power,” described as “better than a thousand nights.” The *Torah* also makes references to the Vast Face *samadhi* experiences of Mosheh and Abraham:

“And Mosheh knew THAT-NOT; the skin of His Face shone.”<sup>30</sup>

“As the sun set, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a great darkness descended upon him.”<sup>31</sup>

“And I will put you in a cleft of the rock while I pass by you.

And I will take My Hand away and you shall see My Ultimate,

And My Face of NOT (לא) shall be seen.”<sup>32</sup>

### ASCENT OF THE TREE VIA THE “PATH OF יהוה ELOHENU”

In ascending the Central Column on the Way of יהוה *Elohenu* (see Figure 6.3), the consciousness of the traveler first moves from the waking state of the *Nefesh* in Sefirah Kingdom into the dream state of the *Geviyah* in Sefirah Foundation/Below. This is done by passing through the Gate of the Beyt כ that connects Sefirah Kingdom to Sefirah Foundation/Below. Most people do this every night and experience it as an unconscious state of REM sleep. However, if the gate is traversed while maintaining awareness, it will be experienced as a conscious dream state from which one can move further up the Tree. Sefirah Foundation/Below is the point of departure from which we may either enter the psychic states by passing through one of



the gates into the side columns, or into higher states of consciousness by moving further up the Central Column.

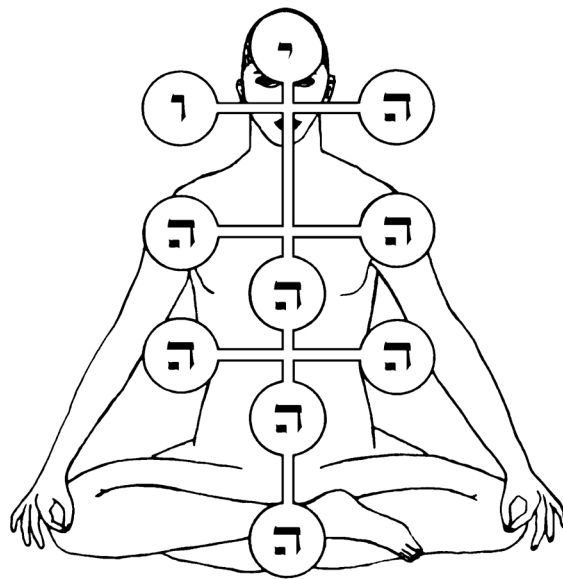
From Sefirah Foundation/Below, the traveler on the Way of **יהוה** *Elohenu* moves through the Gate of the Gimel **ג** into the *Ruach HaQodesh* (Holy Spirit *qlifah*) in Sefirah Beauty/Last. Sefirah Beauty/Last in the World of B'riyah is experienced every night by almost all humans as deep sleep. In consciously passing through the Gate of the Gimel **ג**, the awakening of consciousness in the *Ruach HaQodesh* in the heart Sefirah Beauty/Last is accompanied by great bliss. The individuated consciousness sustains the constant and exclusive experience of its Chosen Small Face Ideal. This vision often filters down through the astral senses of the *Geviyah*, so that the Chosen Ideal is seen and heard. Attachment to the bliss experience of Small Face in the *Ruach HaQodesh* must be renounced if the aspirant is to further ascend the Tree. At that point, the experience may deepen further into the formless World of B'riyah through Sefirah Beauty/Last, or continue to move up the Central Column of the Tree.

The Gate of the Gimel **ג** is a mirror upon which collects the residue of karmic impressions (San. *samskaras*) of many lifetimes. Hence, in the beginning stages, when we move consciously into Sefirah Foundation/Below, we will often next see the “Watcher on the Threshold” in the mirror of the Gate of the Gimel **ג**. The Watcher is actually the reflection of our own reincarnating *Geviyah*. People typically run in fear from their Watcher when they encounter it in their dream state. But, the *Geviyah* is a plastic medium subject to change. Repeating the Name of one's Chosen Small Face Ideal (e.g. the Lord **יהוה**) cleanses the *Geviyah* of the seeds of impure desires and spiritual ignorance that have crystallized during past life activity. With the purification of the *Geviyah*, the Watcher is replaced by the reflection of the Form of one's Chosen Small Face Ideal, or by a high level gatekeeper, or may even become transparent i.e. clear. When the reflection in the mirror of the Gimel **ג** is transparent i.e. cleared of reflection, the soul becomes invisible to the gatekeepers in the side columns of the Tree, and all paths can be traversed without conflict or obstruction. Such a soul is “Master of the Tree.” A good tip is: if you awaken in the *Geviyah* in Yetzirah and become aware of the Watcher, instead of running from it, ignore any intrepidation you feel and proceed to go right through it.

Many people get side tracked by attachment to psychic powers that can come when they awaken in their *Geviyah* and elect to move from Sefirah Foundation/Below into either of the side columns. One is well advised to resist that temptation, and eschew such powers when they arise. They will generally go away in a few weeks by simply ignoring them.

As mentioned previously, some people develop simultaneous awareness in the waking state and the astral states. This can be quite disconcerting until one becomes comfortable with it. One condition that should be looked for is when a person has uncontrollable “outs” i.e. they have sporadic events in which they shoot out of their physical body, which thereby goes limp. If this starts to happen, it is a flag that one should decrease the intensity or take a hiatus from spiritual practices. This can also happen to women during sexual intercourse through the hyperstimulation of the nerves at the interior end of the vagina. Such sexually caused or tantric outs can send the woman into a blissful state of *ananda samadhi*. Repeated *samadhis* of varying duration generated this way can dangerously strain the nervous system and, despite the lure of prolonged states of ecstasy, should be approached with caution and temperance.

FIGURE 6.3 Way of יהוה *Eloheinu* Superimposed on the Human Body



Other than the Watcher on the Threshold in the Gate of the Gimel ג, and the “Shell of Terror” reflected in the Gate of the Alef א. between Sefiroth Beauty/Last and Realization/First (described as the experience of “getting close to the Throne”), the gates of the Central Column are open and colorless. It does not have gatekeepers who must be satisfied to proceed further. The usual early response to the experience of the Shell of Terror is extreme fear due to the ego’s false identification with the mortal physical shell i.e. “I am going to die, I am going to die.” Regarding this, **Proverbs** says: “The fear of (or reverence for) the Lord יהוה is [at] the beginning of wisdom.” “Beginning” is the Sefirah Knowledge/First, and “wisdom” is the Sefirah Wisdom/East. When the ego is dehypnotized, allowing for its proper identification with Small Face, then fear is replaced by love and the traveler is able to move through the Shell of Terror without fearing the extinction that is to follow. If consciousness becomes temporarily distracted into the Right or Left Columns, it has no recourse on the Tree of יהוה Eloheinu but to return to the Central Column, since there are no gates connecting the Sefiroth vertically up the Right and Left Columns.

After passing into Sefirah Beauty/Last, the next step in ascending the Central Column in the Way of יהוה Eloheinu is to pass through the Gate of the Alef א. The Gate of the Alef א connects Sefirah Beauty/Last with Sefirah Crown/Above, traveling across the Face of the Abyss of the invisible Sefirah Realization/First at the throat center. In Qabalah, the Gate of the Alef א is called the “Sword Bridge.” It is called *sirata* (“straight path”) in the *Fatiha* (The Opening) of the *Qur’an*, and *chinuvad* (“connecting link”) in the *Zend Avesta* of the Zoroastrians. The *Peshitta* describes it as “strait is the gate and narrow is the way.” By maintaining the balance between the Sefiroth Mercy/Good and Power/Evil, and then between Wisdom/East and Understanding/North, the pilgrim may pass through the Shell of Terror, cross the Abyss, and enter the supernal World of Atziluth in Sefirah Crown/Above. Balance can be maintained by staying focused on the Name יהוה as the experience deepens, whereby the letters of the Name will disappear sequentially.

In passing through the Gate of the Alef א, the consciousness of the traveler awakens in the supernal shell of the *Neshamah*

(Divine Soul, equates to Sanskrit *Atman*). In the *Neshamah*, the traveler merges with the consciousness of Vast Face in the World of Atziluth, and all differentiation between individual and divine consciousness dissolves. Consciousness in the *Neshamah* is experienced as a witness state of pure Self-awareness that fills the entire Small Face universe. By renouncing attachment to the experience of this dream universe, consciousness automatically moves into the *Neshamah HaNeshamah* (Soul of the Soul, equates to Sanskrit *Paratman*) in the negatively existent roots of the Tree.

In the Mystical Qabalah, it is said that “spiritual life begins with the realization of the *Ayn* (אין!)” When (and if...) a soul reemerges from complete extinction in the Divine Essence in the roots of the Tree, it returns to consciousness in Sefirah Crown/Above. The individual is thereby remanifested in Small Face as a Tree of Perfection, and perceives the entire Creation as a mind-generated unity dream of Vast Face in the Name יהוה. Such an awakened soul is no longer subject to the illusion of the Fall into dualistic consciousness of Sefirah Kingdom.

# Chapter 7

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## Meditation and the Mystical Qabalah: Practices

### INTRODUCTION

As mentioned earlier, the Practical and Religious Qabalah generally demand rigorous adherence to prescribed routines of practices and behavior. The Mystical Qabalah, on the other hand, allows each individual to select mantra, visualizations, and practices that appeal to their minds and hearts. This flexibility does have defining limits. This chapter addresses those practices which have proven to work well with a low rate of problems. Regardless of which mantra and practices are selected, the reader is cautioned to start small and progress slowly and steadily. Generally speaking, a Mystical Qabalist may choose to engage in a very simple routine of practices, perhaps only involving the repetition of one particular root mantra with its attendant visualization. Or, he/she may choose to engage in a more elaborate routine, performing a combination of primary and auxiliary practices that evolve over time. The only guidelines are:

- sincerity of purpose,
- purity of intention,
- renunciation of the fruits of one's efforts,
- whole-hearted surrender to the reality and will of one's higher Self,
- discrimination between the Real and the Unreal,
- vigilant remembrance of the Divine within oneself, and in all beings.

By anchoring a stable, unified worldview in the substratum of the *Ayn*, we “use One thorn (Small Face) to remove another (dualistic delusion).” Therefore, do not be rigid about your chosen system of belief, or fall prey to pride if you get some

results. In truth, we do little to bring about the condition of spiritual awakening, and all depends upon the grace of Small Face in whose dream we are creatures. By engaging in the various practices, we try our best to make our hearts and minds fertile soil for the Divine Gardener to plant and nourish the seeds of our spiritual unfoldment. Once a person becomes a Tree of Perfection and no longer maintains a dualistic mindset, he/she sees that all worldviews are superimpositions upon the *Ayn*, and that ultimately, “**Nothing** (*Ayn*) **alone exists.**” This does not mean that such a soul cannot ascribe to different mindsets when stationed in different planes of existence. Hence, when in the waking state, such a one may maintain the attitude of a simple devotee regarding all as the riches of the King. When in *ananda samadhi*, he/she sees that Small Face has become all. When merged in the supernal effulgence, there is the singular modification that “I AM the Truth.” In *fana il fana* (Ar. extinction of extinction), even the “I AM” disappears.

## MEDITATION PRACTICES

Before you meditate, prepare both your external and internal environments. The external environment is the setting in which the meditator practices, and the internal environment is the mind. The practices that each aspirant employs is a matter of individual choice. It is important to develop “inner listening” skills to connect with and “hear” the Divine guidance that issues from within, or sometimes, through surprising external sources. As a mystic on the Path, your individual life is your current yogic teaching story by which the Divine leads you through karmic lessons and the process of spiritual growth. So, be vigilant throughout the course of your days and in your dream state for those moments when God is communicating with you. Once on the path, there are no coincidences, no accidents. Try to make your meditation a routine part of your life. It is best if you can do it at approximately the same times each day, and it is important to be regular and not to allow laziness to excuse yourself from practice even when you are tired or busy. A little bit of concentrated, high quality practice is better than a lot of low-quality, unfocused practice.

It is also important to use common sense in the process of maintaining a routine of spiritual practices. For example, if you take food late at night, especially if it is rich or spicy, there is a good chance that your mind will be agitated or sluggish while meditating before going to sleep. Taking such food late at night may also impact your dream state, and your mental condition during your meditation the following morning. Some people feel that psychotropic drugs enhance spiritual practices or even facilitate spiritual progress. However, many high level yogic masters from all mystical traditions have warned that this is not the case. Immoderate use of such substances can, in fact, dull the mental instrument, diminish the quality of meditation, obstruct conscious dreaming, and destabilize the nervous system.

The following sections discuss how to prepare the external and internal environments for meditation. A simple routine of meditation practices involving a root mantra and complimentary visualization, as well as, a more elaborate routine of practices will be presented. These two examples will typify a Small Face-centered practice. This material will be followed by a Vast Face-centered routine of meditation, for those who do not have an attraction to focusing on God-with-Form. Some additional visualizations and walking meditation practice will be discussed later. Customize your own routine according to what appeals to you, and experiment with some of the auxiliary practices.

### **THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

Create a dedicated place where you will engage in your practice on a regular basis. By having a dedicated place that is quiet and peaceful, you can build up over time an increasing spiritual power there, which can enhance your practice in that site. If space permits, it is ideal to dedicate an entire separate room, where one maintains a shrine and in which one engages only in spiritual activities, thoughts, and speech. If space does not permit the spiritual dedication of an entire room, then at the very least try to have a comfortable, quiet place in your home where you can regularly meditate without interruption. The ringing of a phone or other loud noises can be quite a shock to the nervous system when it has been highly sensitized in meditation, so try to insulate yourself from such noises and interruptions. Since many places

are unavoidably noisy, one may find it useful to use earplugs to baffle extraneous noise. Since the room is to be completely dedicated to the Lord יהוה, it would be appropriate to attach a *mezuzah* (small encased scroll) on the right doorpost. Jews have placed *mezuzim* on their doorposts since ancient times to distinguish their households as Jewish, as a talisman to ward off evil, and as a device to trigger remembrance of the Divine when entering and leaving a house. The central element in the *mezuzah* scroll is the Affirmation of Unity, the *Shema*.

A shrine should be installed, if possible, on the eastern wall of the room. It is said that shrines are spiritually alive and “build themselves.” A shrine within the context of the Mystical Qabalah is an utterly personal construct. It is not an altar as it is construed within the context of the Practical Qabalah, but a place where you go to honor and commune with the Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things, however you envision or think of Him and Her or It. If your shrine centers upon Small Face, such as the Lord יהוה, then you may choose, as many do, to have a place to put flower and incense offerings. It is also propitious to light a candle and keep it burning during your meditation and devotional activities. And, of course, your mother taught you to be careful with fire. One may also choose to keep a small bowl of water on the altar, as well as, any other articles that you feel are appropriate. Even if you commonly wear shoes in the rest of your home, you should remove them before entering your shrine room, which you can think of as “God’s room.” Try to leave the world outside before entering it. You may want to make ablution before entering God’s room. It is quite sufficient to wash your hands and face. In many traditions, people also wash their feet and wipe a little water on their heads.

If you are focusing on the Lord יהוה as your Small Face Chosen Ideal, then you might want to place an image on the wall that displays the Name. A previous section described the visualization of the Sinatic or Ezra Hebrew Name as dancing letters of fire (of various colors according to one’s choice) against a solid circular background. One can use either the horizontal or *Yosher* form of the Name יהוה. Place the solid black circle of the *Tzimtzum* against a solid light blue background, which represents the negatively existent Light of the



Endless. Constructing the letters and the light blue background of the *Tzimtzum* from “day-glo” colored material, which glows when a black light is shined upon it, is an interesting enhancement. If you elect to do it this way, remember that it is unhealthy to expose your eyes directly into the blacklight. With the black light on, the *Tzimtzum* becomes very three-dimensional. The Name יהוה seems to come off the wall, and the *Tzimtzum* appears to be floating in a soft blue charged light. Even without the black light, the day glo letters are quite vibrant.

Create a soft, comfortable place to sit on. It is helpful to elevate your buttocks by sitting on an extra pillow, small piece of foam, or *zafu* (raised pillow used by Zen meditators). You may or may not choose to support your back against a wall. If you do let the wall support your back, you may want to put something soft between your back and the wall, and you may wish to augment support to your lumbar spinal region. Try to maintain good posture while you are meditating. Keep your spine and your head upright but not rigid. It is good to cross your legs, but it is not necessary to maintain the severity of a “lotus position.” The operative words here are “upright but comfortable,” so that you can engage in extended meditation without being distracted by your body. (If you are unable to sit with legs crossed on a flat surface, you may elect to sit in a chair.) Place your hands comfortably on your knees, palms down or up. You can alternately place them in your lap, with either the fingers of the two hands entwined or with the back of your right hand resting in the palm of your left. If you choose to use prayer beads, then play them with your right hand and place your left hand on your left knee or in your lap. Many people keep a special shawl or wrap at their meditation seat to wear during their meditation. Jews may elect to wrap themselves in their *tallit gadol* (large prayer shawl).

### THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Preparing your internal environment for meditation is even more essential than preparing your physical environment. Whether you have a dedicated place, or just sit upright on your bed or in a comfortable chair, and even if you are employing the most bare-bones routine of practices, proper mental focus is critical. When a person first sits to meditate, they often bring

some measure of mental agitation to the session. Perhaps they had a stressful day, or experienced some emotional upset within the context of their personal or professional relationships. Maybe they awoke from a disturbing dream or had a night of restless sleep. It is therefore very important to take the time, before you start to engage in your chosen meditation practice, to calm the mind and truly relax. Recalling the words of the Beatles song “Tomorrow Never Knows,”

“Turn off your mind, relax, and float down  
stream.”<sup>1</sup>

The most common way to calm the mind and invoke a relaxation response is to employ a breathing practice for a brief period of time. When a person is agitated, their breathing becomes shallower and less oxygen gets to the brain. Hence, it is very helpful to preface one’s meditation session with a breathing practice. One such practice in the Mystical Qabalah is to silently use the two syllables “*Yah Hu*” in coordination with the breath. *Yah* is the B’riyatic pronunciation of the first two letters of the Name יהוה. *Hu* (הוא) commonly means “He,” and is associated with the throat center. Inhale gently and slowly through your mouth. Quietly draw the breath in with the syllable “yah,” and allow the air to fill down into your abdomen. Feel the inhaled syllable draw divine light in through the forehead center. Let that *YH*-Light continue downward to the throat center. When you come to the end of the inhale, let it turn seamlessly into the exhalation, and breath out with the syllable “hoo.” As you exhale, feel the *Hu* breath descend out from the throat center and move down to fan the flames of the letters of the Name יהוה in the heart center. Continue to inhale and exhale gently while intoning the respective syllables for a minute or two. You may find it useful to connect the breath intonations with the mental sensation of ocean waves gently breaking on the shore and then pulling back out, or with a wind rhythmically sweeping through a valley.

After you are done breathing the syllables audibly through your mouth, you can continue to do so silently while breathing through your nostrils. Breathing in and out through your nostrils, you will find that you instinctively press your tongue gently up against the hard palate. Furthermore, breathing in and out through your nostrils in this manner is appropriate for meditation

practices. This is also the healthiest way to breathe. If you do not already breathe through your nostrils down into and out from the lower abdominal area as a matter of habit, practicing it while meditating will help you to do so. Perform the breathing practices in a comfortable manner, without strain. Don't overfill your lungs on the inhalations, or exhale until every last bit of air is pushed out. You might also find it desirable to slowly chant for a while before you engage in a breathing practice. You could use "Yah Hu," or any other Divine Names that appeal to you. Place the tip of your tongue gently against the hard palate behind your upper teeth. Take a breath in through your nose. Let the tongue drop down and intone the syllables.

### SIMPLE ROUTINE OF SMALL FACE-CENTERED MEDITATION

If you are looking for the bottom line of Mystical Qabalistic practice, the statement "Chant the Name of God and wake up; the Holy One is the only Teacher, so get off your Gatekeeper's back" pretty much sums it up. Through the repetition of a Small Face root mantra over time, and the grace of the Lord יהוה, the mind of the meditator is gradually transformed and awakened to the underlying Reality, the root Cause, the Dreamer of the Dream. As everyone learns in early childhood,

"Row, row, row, your boat, gently down the stream  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily, life is but a dream."

If life is but a dream, then who is the dreamer? Answering this question is the purpose of all Small Face meditation in all mystical traditions. In the Mystical Qabalah, the Dreamer is the Lord יהוה, and the Dreamer and the Dream are One. Love, lover, and beloved are One. Knowledge, knower, and That which is known are One.

Since the Lord יהוה is the active aspect of the Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things (*Ayn*), then He/She/It is the Teacher at the root of all teachers. This lies at the heart of the admonition not to get attached to, or become the slave of, any earthly teacher. This does not mean that we should not love, honor, and revere holy people, especially those who have been brought to us by the grace of God to help us on our path. Rather,

we should understand that whatever is holy, wise, righteous, and loving in such a soul is the reflection, through them, of the Divine. It is to that Divine Source that we should ultimately cling and offer our unconditional devotion. Thus, there is the injunction to “get off your Gatekeeper’s back,” because that guide is only the one who is pointing you to the open gate and urging you to go through it. This is wonderfully framed in Zen Buddhism by the story of the *roshi* who points to the moon with his finger, and admonishes the aspirant not to confuse the finger with the moon.

In regard to a simple routine of meditation practice, having calmed the mind with a short period of breathing as described above, the meditator would then commence the repetition (*zakhor*, remembrance) of the root mantra that appeals to their mind. Earlier, a number of the root mantra found in the *Torah* were highlighted, including “*Ani יהוה*” and the Affirmation of Unity i.e. the “*Shema*.” Let’s say that you have decided to take “*Ah-ni Yod Heh Vav Heh*” as the mantra you wish to use. Sit in a relaxed and posturally sound position, and begin to slowly repeat the phrase. Try to get into a comfortable rhythmic cadence.

As you repeat the mantra, visualize the Hebrew letters of the Name יהוה as dancing letters of fire against a solid circular background, surrounding which is a light blue background. See that visualization either within your heart center or “before your eyes.” You may choose to see them either as Sinatic Hebrew letters or Ezra Hebrew letters. You may elect to see the horizontal version of the Name יהוה or the vertical *Yosher* form (Figure 2.3 on page 67, Figure 6.1 on page 168, Figure 7.1 on page 194, and Figure 7.2 on page 195).

It is possible to do this with your eyes open or closed. See the letters in the color that appeals to you—fire orange red, white, gold, etc. While you could use different colors for the circular *Tzimtzum*, black is recommended. Do not make the act of visualization a stressful process, and don’t expect to literally see what you are visualizing right away. Visualization is a skill that requires cultivation. It begins as an act of creative imagination. Over time, with diligence and grace, it deepens into something much more real.

When you first begin to do mantric meditation, you will notice that thoughts continue to rise in your mind while you are silently repeating the mantra. Do not struggle to stop your thoughts: just let them rise and disappear in your mind, like seeds that gently burst and dissipate. The mantra gives a part of your mind an anchor, so that the procession of thoughts floats by without taking you with it. You will probably have lapses in your visualization. Whenever you find your attention drifting off course, just try to be diligent about bringing your mind back to the task at hand, without letting the tricky voice of self-criticism steal your attention.

The reader is again reminded how important it is to limit the amount of mantric repetition you do in the beginning. Go slowly, and increase the amount in small increments over a substantial period of time. Each individual should test the water to determine how much they are comfortable doing at the onset, and how much and how often to increase the amount. When you start silent mantric repetition, limit the duration to ten to fifteen minutes when you awaken in the morning, and that much again before you go to sleep. If you tend to wake up very groggy, you may wish to apply some cold water to your face before you begin, so that you do not fall back to sleep while sitting up. This is not an uncommon occurrence. If you have a hard time staying awake while you are meditating before you go to sleep, you may wish to do your practice a little earlier while you are still alert.

Increase the sessions by five minutes or less per month, according to what feels right for you, until you are sitting for a maximum of forty-five to sixty minutes. Also, as mentioned before, begin your practice of mantric repetition with a slow, rhythmic cadence. You may wish to increase the speed of the repetition as time goes. As you get more advanced, the repetitions can become quite rapid, amounting to thousands of repetitions per session. When you come to the end of your session of silent chanting, don't stop and get up abruptly. Cease chanting and just "listen" to the quietness, allowing the power that you have generated to soak in. Bring closure to your practice by bowing in your heart to your dear Lord and offer Him/Her the fruits of your yogic efforts. You may wish to engage further in prayer at that time. Having finished your prayer, arise from your meditation seat

and begin your day, or lie down to begin your sleep period. If you are starting your day, try to not talk or engage in frenetic activity. If you are going to sleep, you might try falling asleep on your back if you can, as this will help stimulate conscious dreaming.

FIGURE 7.1 Horizontal Sinatic Name יהוה on the *Tzimtzum*

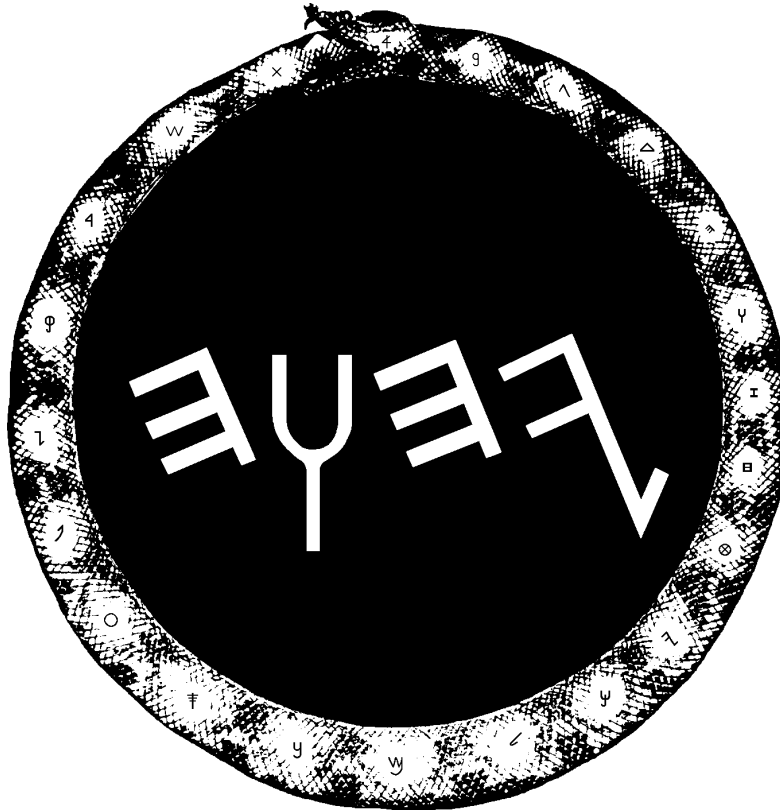
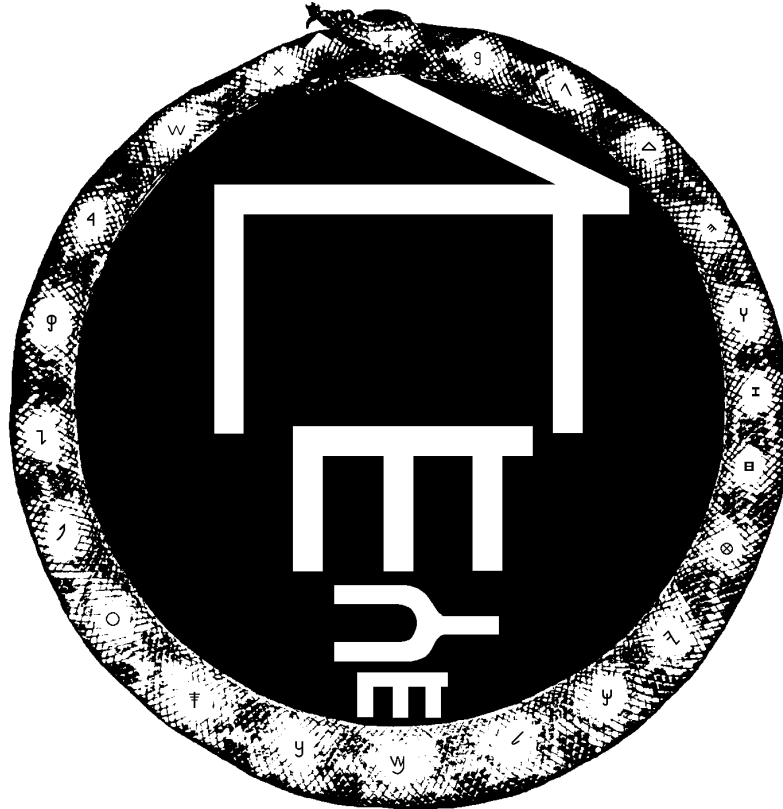


FIGURE 7.2 Sinatic *Yosher* on the *Tzimtzum*

### ELABORATE ROUTINE OF SMALL FACE-CENTERED PRACTICES

The previous section described an example of a simple routine of practice. The mantric meditation that was described is THE core Small Face-centered practice of the Mystical Qabalah. It is quite powerful in and of itself, and has proven quite effective. There is no particular mandate to engage in a more complicated routine, and the power of one's practice is not a function of its complexity. However, as stated earlier, the Mystical Qabalah has the flexibility that allows each person to

customize and evolve a routine of practices, within certain parameters. So, by way of example, this section presents a more elaborate process.

In a more elaborate routine of practices, as soon as you open your eyes in the morning, before all else, mentally praise the Lord and give thanks for another day of embodied human life and the grace of being on the path of spiritual awakening. If you have been sleeping with a partner, silently acknowledge their inherent divinity as the Lord **יהוה** or Queen *Shekhinah*, respectively. Attend to any calls of nature, and then make ablution, washing your hands and face, and if you wish, your feet. After making ablution, proceed to your dedicated room or spot where you have your shrine. At the doorway, touch the fingers of your right hand to your lips, then to the *mezuzah* on the doorpost, and then to your heart. Bow to the shrine and then enter. Go to the altar and kneel down before your shrine, briefly casting your gaze successively upon all the objects there, and finally upon the image of the Name **יהוה** in the *Tzitzum* against the blue Light of the Endless.

The next step is to make prostration. Before people walk, they crawl; first on their bellies, then on their hands and knees. Long before that, the fetal position is experienced in the womb. Prostration blends postures that are deeply embedded in human consciousness. Placing the forehead to the Earth is a primordial act of reverence, unification, and extinction. The religious act of prostration is found in some form in virtually all faiths. As practiced in Islam for instance, prostration (*sujud*) is a central component in the ritual of prayer (*salat*) that is performed five times every day. Buddhists are well known for performing long series of continuous prostrations in the course of making pilgrimage to a holy site, or when circumambulating such a site. Devout Hindus are often seen prostrating before shrines and in “taking the dust” of their Guru’s feet. Christian priests and nuns make prostration in the form of the Cross, with arms stretched out to the sides.

Prostration beautifully portrays the drama of individuated consciousness alternatively manifesting and becoming extinct. In the alternating manifestation and extinction of individual



consciousness, we can see perfectly reflected the macrocosmic manifestation and dissolution of the One-Small-Face-Universe. Prostration is practiced in all the world's mystical traditions as an act of reverence, remembrance, and humility. Perform your acts of prostration with a focused intention, dwelling upon the act of extinction in the Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things as you place your forehead to the ground, and the act of manifestation of the Small Face universe as you rise back up.

Next, light the candle while intoning the Sabbath blessing:

*“Baruch atah Yod Heh Vav Heh Elohenu Melech  
haOlam,*

*Asher kiddeshanu buhmitzvotav vitzivanu  
luhhadlich ner shel Shabat.”*

Lighting a candle with this blessing is appropriate because, for a Mystical Qabalist, there are no regular days of the week, and every day is *Shabat*.

Then, take some incense, stand up before your shrine, and seal the six directions with the permutations of the Name יהוה. This practice is derived from the thirteenth verse of the first chapter of the *Sefer Yetzirah (Book of Formation)*:

“Three letters from the simple ones (Yod ך, Heh ך, Vav ך);

He sealed Air through three and set them into His great Name יהוה and sealed through them six extremities:

Five: He sealed (Sefirah) Height and He turned upward and sealed it with יהוה;

Six: He sealed Abyss and He turned downward and sealed it with ךוה;

Seven: He sealed East and He turned forward and sealed it with ךוה;

Eight: He sealed West and He turned backward and sealed it with ךוה;

Nine: He sealed South and He turned right and sealed it with ךוה;

Ten: He sealed North and He turned left and sealed it with ךוה.”

Light the incense. Facing East (i.e. front), look upward. Point the incense above the head and circle its tip. Intone the letters “YOD HEH VAV” יהוה while visualizing them as “letters of fire.” Continue to point and circle the incense in successive directions, and invoke and visualize their respective sequences of letters:

Below/Down - “YOD VAV HEH” יהוה; then,  
 East/Front - “HEH YOD VAV” יהוה, then  
 West/Behind - “HEH VAV YOD” יהוה;  
 South/Right - “VAV YOD HEH” יהוה, then  
 North/Left - “VAV HEH YOD” יהוה.

Having sealed the six directions, once again kneel before the shrine and make a flower offering. Hold the flower between your thumb and forefinger in front of your thoracic center, with your left hand palm up cupped beneath it. Make a final prostration, rise, and go to your meditation seat. After sitting down, settle into an appropriate posture and wrap yourself in your prayer shawl. Chant the Divine Names from the *Sefer HaShmoth* (see Appendix A). Then, perform the breathing practice described earlier for a short while to further calm the mind and relax the body. At this point, if you have an embodied teacher, focus on their image for a short while and the Name יהוה ablaze in their heart. If you do not have an embodied teacher, you could similarly focus on the image of one of the Hebrew patriarchs (or matriarchs), or on any Messiah, saint or spiritual master for whom you feel an affinity. You may then wish to use one or more of the ancillary visualizations discussed in a later section. The ancillary visualization, which may or may not be accompanied by the repetition of the root mantra, is followed by the commencement of the silent repetition of the primary root mantra “Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh” as described above. When you have completed the silent chanting of “Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh,” silently or audibly chant the *ShemAyn* ten times,

“*Shem Ayn Yisroel Yod Heh Vav Heh Elohenu Yod  
 Heh Vav Heh EchaD*”

Upon the final repetition of the *ShemAyn*, draw out the last syllable of “*Echad*” and let it turn into “*OD*” (pronounced “ood,” lit. Eternity, synonym for *Ayn*). Sit still for a short while and soak in the energy of your meditation. Finish the seated session with a

prayer, offering the fruits of your efforts at the Lord's "feet."  
Your prayer might be something like:

"Dear One, beloved of my soul, my all in all, my very own,

Please accept this meditation and the fruits therefrom as a sincere offering of love and devotion.

Thou art all life, and I gratefully surrender this life at Thy holy feet.

Thou art my provider and my protector, Thou art my guide and my healer.

I humbly pray that I may become worthy of Thy grace and useful in service to Thy purposes.

Gracious One, do not let me live this life spiritually in vain.

Fill this heart, mind, and soul with pure love, unconditional devotion for Thee; renunciation of the fruits of all work unto Thee; vigilant remembrance of Thee, and whole-hearted surrender unto Thee.

Awaken this soul to its divinity, and the divinity of all beings, and grant that it not remain deluded by Thy world-bewitching play of illusion.

And at the moment this life comes to an end, please grant me the vision of Thy Glory, as my last breath carries Thy holy Name.

Beloved Lord, thank you for this day of life. Please accept every worthy thought, word, and deed as a humble offering of love and devotion, and please forgive me for all that are not.

*Ay-men* (anagram for "El Melech Ne-ehman" lit. *El Faithful King*)"

Having completed your prayer, unwrap the prayer shawl, stand up and walk up to your shrine. Kneel down and make a final prostration. Rise from the prostration and gaze upon the image of the Name יהוה in the *Tzimtzum* for a while. Rise up, bow, and walk backwards several steps from the shrine. Turn and proceed to the door. At the doorway, take one final look at the image and bow. Touch the fingers of your right hand to your lips,

then to the *mezuzah* on the doorpost, and then to your heart. Turn and walk away and begin your day. Again, try if possible not to engage in trivial conversation or frenetic activity for a while after you leave the shrine room.

This more elaborate set of practices has been framed within the context of a morning ritual. You could ostensibly repeat the same ritual at night before retiring, or with modifications according to personal taste. The range from the most simple routine to the elaborate gives the reader a blueprint of possibilities rather than a mandate for cookie cutter replication. It is important to maintain a consistent schedule of practice and, at the very least, to engage in regular repetition of the root mantra and a modicum of selfless service.

### SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES IN THE COURSE OF SMALL FACE YOGA

If you have a natural attraction for God-with-Name-and-Form, and your natural inclination is for devotional yoga in relation to a Small Face Chosen Ideal (e.g. the Lord יהוה), you will usually have a distinct set of experiences in relation to this Central Column path. It is not unusual for an aspirant to start noticing some subtle changes not long after commencing their meditative discipline. Events in your life will start feeling less accidental, less coincidental, and they will give you more of a sense that God is teaching you through your lifestream and your relationships with others.

It is also not unusual for aspirants to notice subtle differences in their sleeping and dream life. It is a good practice to try to stimulate conscious dreaming. By falling asleep on your back while repeating the mantra, or holding on to some thought or image, you may start to experience consciously leaving your body and being awake in your *Geviyah* (astral body) in Yetzirah (World of Formation). This can be somewhat unsettling in the early stages, until you get accustomed to the experience and more familiar with the process. Try not to panic. At first, you will likely try to move around in your *Geviyah* the same way that you move in your physical body. You will try to move your legs and arms as if to walk, and feel unable to do so. This is because

moving around in your *Geviyah* is mentally directed: that is, you “will” yourself to move, whereby you float or “fly.” This is why many people report the sensation of flying in their dreams.

Once you get accustomed to being awake in your *Geviyah*, it becomes possible to travel (and see and hear at) considerable distances, move through apparently solid objects, make contact with beings who dwell in this plane, and even “read” the Earth’s Akashic record. A variety of psychic abilities can awaken. This can be quite stimulating, and is potentially an addictive distraction. If such abilities do arise in the course of your spiritual awakening, it is generally recommended that you renounce and ignore them in order to avoid the potential pitfalls. When you awake in your *Geviyah*, it is best to commence the same meditation practice of repetition of root mantra and visualization that you do in your waking state. The *Geviyah* is a potent platform from which to engage in *zakhor*. Here you do not have the distractions of your physical body, such as an itchy nose or achy knees.

When consciously going through the Gate of the Gimel ♁ into the World of Yetzirah, the experience of the Watcher on the Threshold can be unnerving. The Watcher is a mirror that reflects the imprint of residual impressions and *mazal* accumulated over many lives. *Mazal* (Sanskrit *karma*) is a process of cause and effect, described by the adage, “As ye sow, so shall ye reap.” This implies that the circumstances into which you have taken birth and the ensuing stream of life experience is effected by what you have done previously. It is quite typical for people to run from this experience. Over time, the process of mantric repetition clears this “encrustation,” whereby you can see the reflection of your Higher Self as your Chosen Ideal. The mirror may become clear. When you come to the experience of the Watcher, keep chanting the Name. Fight the impulse to flee, and will yourself to go directly through it.

In consciously going through the Watcher, you move into the *qlifah* of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaQodesh*) in Sefirah Beauty/Last in the World of B’riyah (Creation). This is normally experienced as deep sleep. Here, you can have the experience of *ananda samadhi*—bliss absorption in your Small Face Chosen

Ideal. In this experience, as generally filtered through the astral senses of the *Geviyah*, there is the exclusive vision of yourself “at the feet of,” so to speak, your beloved Small Face Chosen Ideal. For a Mystical Qabalist, this would be the Lord יהוה. This experience is accompanied by great waves of bliss that can get quite intense (and potentially addictive).

For one reason or another, you may find yourself unable or unwilling to become active in your *Geviyah*. Most people will sporadically become conscious in their dream state, and be blessed with more or less occasional ecstatic visions originating from the dream state. The frequency of such experiences is not a testimony to one’s spiritual advancement. Some people have one profound experience that changes and effects them for their entire life. Others have numerous experiences, but still seem to regress to baser ego states and cling to a long shopping list of desires. Your spiritual advancement will be reflected in the emergence of higher qualities of character that results from the decreased identification of the ego with your lower nature. The qualities include unconditional love and devotion toward your Chosen Ideal, seeing the whole world and all beings as one’s own, renunciation of the fruits of work, the desire to engage in selfless service, etc.

The experience of *ananda samadhi* with the Small Face Chosen Ideal is generally the goal of Small Face yoga. This experience will permanently establish the fractal reprogramming of the cerebral cortex. The spiritually awakened mind of the aspirant is firmly stationed in the awareness that the manifest Creation is a unity in their Small Face Chosen Ideal, even in the waking state of Sefirah Kingdom. Generally, one so established will have a particular *bhava*, or devotional mood, toward Small Face. It may be that of servant to the Lord as Divine Master or King/Queen, child to the Lord as Divine Parent, parent to the Lord as Divine Child, or lover to the Lord as the Divine Beloved. The play of the Holy Spirit in the awakened soul is, indeed, a wondrous mystery. For the vast majority of people in this “Dark Age of *Kali*,” *samadhi* experiences will initiate in the dream state in Yetzirah. This dream state *samadhi* is called *shushupta samadhi* in Sanskrit. Individuals who have such experiences open in the waking state are rare in these latter days. Hence, it is

also quite rare to find individuals who sustain *bhava samadhis* in their waking states.

Having become firmly established in Small Face, the aspirant is freed from taking further birth in a human body, and no longer generates new *mazal* that must be mitigated. He/she has become a Tree of Perfection after the Alef. They will pass through the rest of their life absorbed in their love and devotion for their Small Face Chosen Ideal, and engage in service to their Lord as embodied in all beings. When the *Nefesh* falls away at the end of their life, they will make the transition into a bliss-filled experience of their Small Face Ideal, which will endure for the remainder of the Small Face universe. This experience comes to an end when “Face turns to Face,” and the manifest Creation on all planes is dissolved in the substratum of the *Ayn*.

As a Mystical Qabalist, your beloved Lord יהוה is your guide, your “guru.” He/She will unfold your spiritual path and inspire you to do what is right for you. It is most beneficial to spend time in the company of holy people. While it is of course desirable to find extraordinary souls within the same mystical tradition that naturally interests you, it is also valuable to spend time in the presence of any genuine saint and master from any tradition. It is also important to seek out and keep the company of other people who, through divine grace, are actively involved in spiritual growth, and with whom you can pray, meditate, sing, and discuss spiritual ideas.

### ADDITIONAL SMALL FACE VISUALIZATIONS

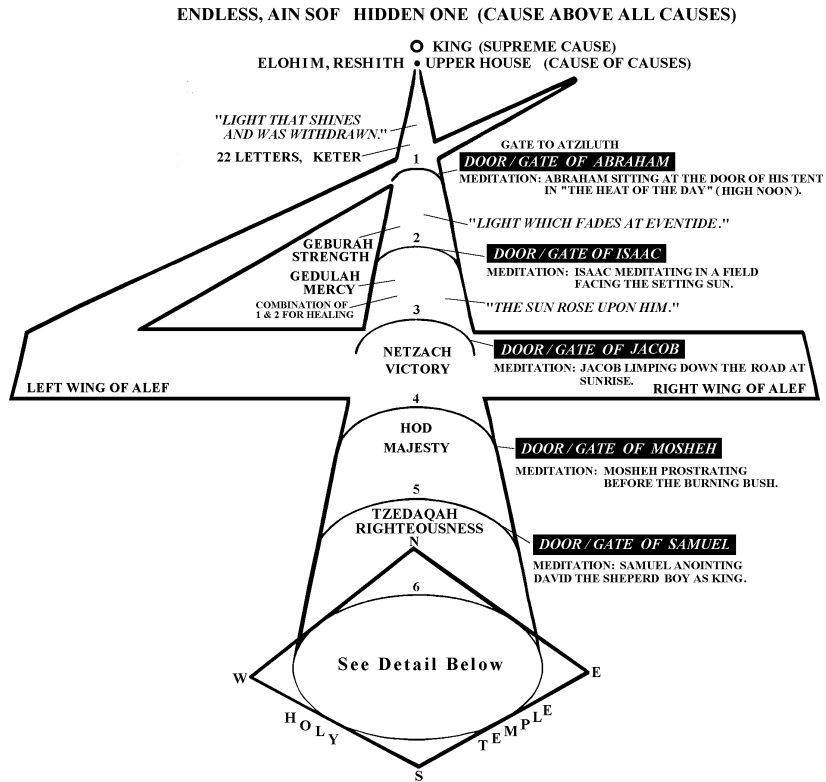
The primary texts of the Mystical Qabalah have a wealth of allusive imagery that can be used in an active process of creative imagination, in conjunction with Small Face-centered meditation practices. The *Sefer HaShmoth (Book of Names)* contains numerous Fallen and Perfect two-dimensional Tree diagrams. The *Sefer Yetzirah (Book of Formation)* has several two-dimensional Trees, and the double-pyramid three-dimensional Tree of Life. It also has the two hundred and thirty one two-letter permutations of the “Wall,” the array of the “Sunset,” and the “Battle.”

The *Tanakh* (**Torah**, **Prophets**, and **Writings**) is especially replete with imagery. The **Torah** gives us Adam and Chava (Eve) and the Garden of Eden, Noah and the Great Flood, the stories of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, the life saga of Master Mosheh and the liberation from Egyptian slavery, the extraordinary sequence of events in the desert of Sinai, the Ark of the Covenant, and more. In *Zohar B'reshith* 21a-21b, several verses in the **Torah** are cited as meditation images for Abraham (“sitting at the door of his tent at noon”),<sup>2</sup> Yitza’aq (“meditating in the field at sunset”),<sup>3</sup> and Ya’aqov (“limping down the road at sunrise,” after wrestling with *Paniel* all night).<sup>4</sup> The reader is referred to Figure 7.3. The books of the **Prophets** yield images such as King David the Golden One whirling in ecstatic absorption before the Ark of the Covenant as it was brought to Jerusalem (**II Samuel**), Jeremiah bearing a yoke upon his neck, Ezekiel ascending in the fiery chariot, the Merkabah visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, etc. The books of the **Writings** provide our imaginations with images from the travails of Job, the story of Yonah in the belly of the Leviathan, Daniel in the den of lions, and other spiritual gems.

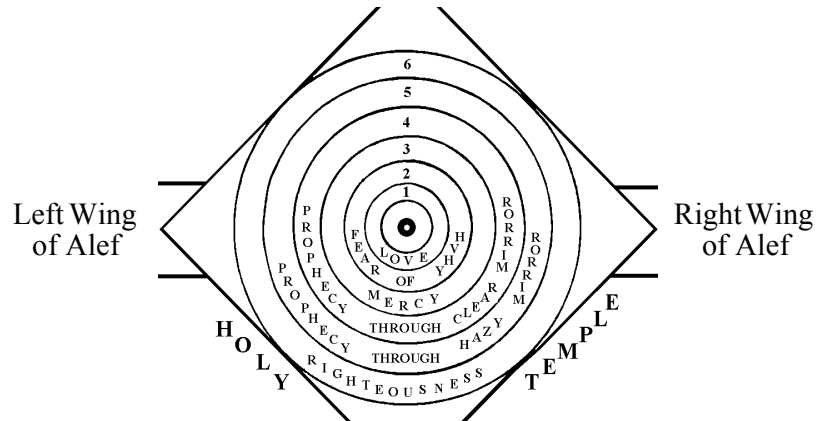
One might envision the *Shekhinah* seated in a forest setting as described earlier in Chapter Six, or as the “Presence of *Shadai*” stationed between the Kerubim atop the Ark of the Covenant, or as the Divine Mother in exile wandering in the Lower Worlds to look after Her children, or as the Bride of the Lord יהוה on the wedding day of Shabat. You could imagine yourself prostrating before the “Burning Bush” of the flaming Name יהוה, perhaps offering your head (i.e. your mind) in your right hand, and your heart (i.e. your unconditional love) in your left hand. Any of the images from the primary texts can be used as an adjunct to one’s meditation routine. As mentioned previously, you can add the name of any of the patriarchs, matriarchs, prophets, sages, or Messiah to the root mantra “*Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh*.” You can visualize one or more of the images before meditation, or in conjunction with it.



FIGURE 7.3 Alef of Unity—Commencement of Thought on the Hidden One



Detail of Figure 7.3. Looking up the Central Column from Below on the Alef of Unity



### VAST FACE-CENTERED MEDITATION ROUTINE

Small Face meditation practices involving God-with-Name-and-Form are best suited for most people. All of the root mantra that have been mentioned above include mechanisms for making the transition into Vast Face, if by chance one has the presence of mind to renounce the blissful experience of Small Face. However, in practice, most people will find that they are unable to do so. Even fewer individuals in these latter days have the innate mental and spiritual constitution to ignore Small Face completely and engage in solely Vast Face-centered practices. While Small Face meditation practices use a process of directed imagination to unite all experiences in the realms of Name and Form, the aspirant on the path of the Tree of Perfection after the *Ayin* cultivates dispassion and discrimination to systematically renounce and negate every experience, until the individuated consciousness dissolves in the *Ayn* like a “salt doll walking into the ocean.”

Hence, exercises which cultivate discrimination (Sanskrit *viveka*) and one-pointed concentration (Sanskrit *samyama*) are a central element in the Vast Face practices of most mystical traditions. Such practices might involve the use of inscrutable imagery (e.g. the *koans* found in some schools of Zen Buddhism), open-ended questions (e.g. “Who am I”), or strings of thought intended to lead the mind beyond finite rationality. Consider the following examples:

1. Imagine objects of increasingly larger size until greater than the size of the Multiverse:  
Physical Body→Earth→Sun→Galaxy→Universe→  
Multiverse→Pure Energy beyond Multiverse.
2. Imagine objects of increasingly smaller size until smaller than the size of the smallest nucleonic particle:  
Physical Body→Fertilized Cell→Atomic Nucleus→  
Planck Dimension in One Atomic Nucleus→Beyond  
Planck Dimension (logic stops).

The Mystical Qabalah and the Tantra both have distinct male and female allusions for both Small and Vast Face. In the Mystical Qabalah, and most notably in the *Idra Rabba Qadusha*

(**Greater Holy Assembly**), Small Face is alluded to as a black-haired and bearded male youth. Vast Face, often called *Atiqah* (Hidden One) in qabalistic texts, is distinguished by the contrary image of the white-haired and bearded Ancient of Days. Qabalah also alludes to Small Face as *Shekhinah*, Holy Queen and Divine Mother, and to Vast Face as the Ancient Mother. In the Tantra, Small Face is alluded to as the black-bodied Goddess *Kali*, who is seen emerging from the chest of Vast Face—the inert, ashen-white form of *Shiva*. Their union underscores the fact that the difference between the two Faces is only distinguished by human thought. The Tantra also has Small Face images of *Shiva* as *Rudra*, and female images of Vast Face such as *Mahakali*. These variations reinforce the flexibility within mystical worldviews to present aspirants with a range of viable options for their Chosen Ideals.

A shrine room dedicated to the practice of Vast Face-centered meditation might look different from one that centers upon Small Face. If a *Tzitzum* is placed upon the wall of the altar, it may be devoid of content and bear only the surrounding Vast Face image of Leviathan, surrounded by the clear blue Light of the Endless. Another object that might be included in a shrine to Vast Face is a smooth vertical stone, called a *lingam* in the Tantric tradition. The *lingam* represents the erect penis, and is symbolic of the yang or “male” potency of Vast Face. As part of the Tantric ritual involving a *lingam*, the priest or celebrant pours milk or some other special liquid mixture over the stone. The reader may certainly find it odd to include an apparently Tantric article of worship on a Mystical Qabalistic altar. However, the ancient Hebrews had a ritual similar to the anointing of the *lingam*, which is mentioned prominently on a number of occasions in the *Torah*. Two different chapters in *Torah B'reshith* mention two separate instances of a ritual performed by the Patriarch Ya'aqov, in which he “anointed with oil” and “poured a libation over” the stone pillar he erected at *Beth El*.<sup>5</sup> This obviously important component of the ancient Hebrew religion is conspicuously absent from modern Judaic ritual.

Relative to external ritual, it may appeal to the Vast Face aspirant to make ablution before entering the shrine room. He/she may then also want to perform prostration before the altar,

light a candle and burn incense, and offer a flower to the Ancient of Days. In essence, these are acts of devotion to God-without-Name-and-Form. At this point, if a stone *lingam* is included as a central feature on the altar, one would pour milk or an unguent oil over it, and intone the mantra: “*Yod Heh Vav Heh, Yod Heh Vav Heh El Rachum vuh Chanun Arikh Afim*” (“YHVH YHVH El Merciful and Compassionate (who is) Vast Face”).

In Vast Face Yoga, the internal environment is prepared as in the Small Face routine. After you don a shawl and become comfortably seated, intone a Vast Face root mantra out loud, followed by some breathing practice to calm the mind and relax the body. At this point, you may wish to visualize your teacher, if they have one, or any Gatekeeper to whom you feel a connection. You can then proceed to consciously follow or witness the breath, allowing the consciousness to move progressively deeper, and ignoring all thoughts and images that arise in the mind. This is a common practice in many mystical traditions. Vast Face meditation can also involve the repetition of root mantra, combined with visualizations of allusions that are specific to Vast Face. In the Mystical Qabalah, three of the most prominent Vast Face root mantras are: “*Ani Ayn*” (lit. “I am Nothing”), “*Shomer Mah Mehlylah*” (lit. “Watcher WHAT of the Night”), and “*Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh*” (lit. “I will be THAT I will be”). While remaining conscious of the breath, silently repeat the root mantra. If you wish to visualize an allusory image in conjunction with the mantra, you can picture the image of the Leviathan encircling the empty *Tzimtzum* (described above), or see the white-haired Ancient of Days or Ancient Mother. The images can be seen either in front of the eyes or in the forehead center. Your eyes can be open or closed.

Since Vast Face-centered aspirants are not focusing on a form or attribute of Small Face, they will generally experience Sefirah Beauty/Last as formless and empty in the World of B’riyah. If the bliss of *ananda samadhi* with Small Face does arise, it is renounced and ignored as an illusion. They will then continue to move up the Central Column through the Gate of the Alef ❖, over the Face of the Abyss of the invisible Sefirah Knowledge/First, and into the World of Atziluth in Sefirah Crown/Above. From Atziluth, the movement into the roots of the Tree is

seamless. In merging with the negatively existent roots, everything, including the idea of the substratum, disappears in the experience of complete extinction (*fana il fana* in Sufism, *nirvikalpa samadhi* in Vedanta). The realization arises that none of this ever existed, none of this ever happened. It's like waking up from a dream.

When the connection is opened up to the negatively existent substratum, all the programming in the neuronics of the cerebral cortex is completely shattered by this experience, always. You can only continue by leaving a copy of your programming in Small Face at the edge of the Great Void BEFORE you access the negatively existent substratum, with any changes that you wish to make “to the file.” You continue as this program if/when you reenter the Small Face Creation as a differentiated being. The old self is totally gone upon movement into the roots, like a salt doll dissolved in the ocean. You can also place an executable code in the “Silver Cord” of the *Geviyah*, which establishes a vibrational affinity between the “Salt Doll” copy you leave in Small Face and the “Stone Doll” in the *Ayn*. The process of creating a copy of yourself is very deep, and difficult to describe.

## ANCILLARY PRACTICES OF THE MYSTICAL QABALAH

### INTRODUCTION

Meditation, complementary practices, and rituals such as *Pesach* (Passover) are laboratories for mystical scientists. In the Mystical Qabalah, meditation and remembrance (*zakhor*) of Names of Power are the foundation for everything else. They purify and strengthen mind and bodies, cultivate focus, allow control over the dream state, and temper the shells so they can channel massive power without shattering or cracking badly. Ancillary practices appropriate for the Central Column might include:

- Chanting the Names of Power in the *Sefer HaShmoth*,
- Intoning powerful verses and root phrases from the *Torah* and other primary sources,

- Observance of *Shabat* (שַׁבָּת, Sabbath) and *Pesach* (פֶּסַח, Passover) from a mystical perspective,
- Messiah practices,
- Devotional singing (Sanskrit *bhajan*),
- Acts of selfless service.

### CHANTING THE *SEFER HASHMOTH* (BOOK OF THE NAMES)

As mentioned earlier, the *Sefer HaShmoth* is a book of Names of Power. In the edition published by the Work of the Chariot Trust in the early 1970's, each page had one Name written on it. A complete listing of the Names of Power in the *Sefer HaShmoth*, including the Romanized pronunciation, Sinatic letter formula, numerological value, equivalent English meaning, and a location in *Tanakh* is included in Appendix A. The reader is invited to “construct” his/her own *Sefer HaShmoth* in the intended format by scribing the Names in Hebrew, one Name to a page, and binding these pages together. The *Sefer HaShmoth* is “read” by successively invoking the name on each page preceded by יה (pronounced “Yah,” the two-letter form of the Name יהוה)—e.g. יה Eshdat, יה Echad, יה Ahavah, יה Qadosh, and so on.

### THE MARRIAGE OF KING MESSIAH AND HIS SABBATH BRIDE

In the Hebrew tradition, *Shabat* (Sabbath) is celebrated as the holy wedding day of the Lord יהוה King Messiah, Most Precious and Enduring, with His Divine Bride *Shekhinah*, Queen of the Universe. In the well known words of Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria,

*“Lekah Dodee Likraht Kalah Penay Shabat  
NeQabalah.”*

(“Come, my Beloved, to meet the Bride, Face  
Sabbath to receive.”)<sup>6</sup>

During the “regular days of the week,” Queen Mother *Shekhinah* wanders the worlds of illusion “in exile.” She is described as dressed in rags, lamenting Her separation from Her Beloved Husband, while nurturing Her children in the Valley of Shadows. But, when *Shabat* comes, the worlds are filled with the

Light and Love of King Messiah, who comes to receive His Bride (*Kalah*) and transform the children into angels.

“*Shekhinah Belimah* (שְׁכִינָה בְלִימָה, Intangible Presence),

*Kalah LuhAhavah* (כָּלָה לְאַהֲבָה, Bride of Love),

*Kalah LuhTorah* (כָּלָה לְתוֹרָה, Bride of the **Torah**),

*Malkhah HaShabat* (מַלְכָּה הַשַּׁבָּת, Queen of the Sabbath),

*Kavod Leh YHVH* (כְּבוֹד לַיהוָה, Glory of the Lord יהוה).”<sup>7</sup>

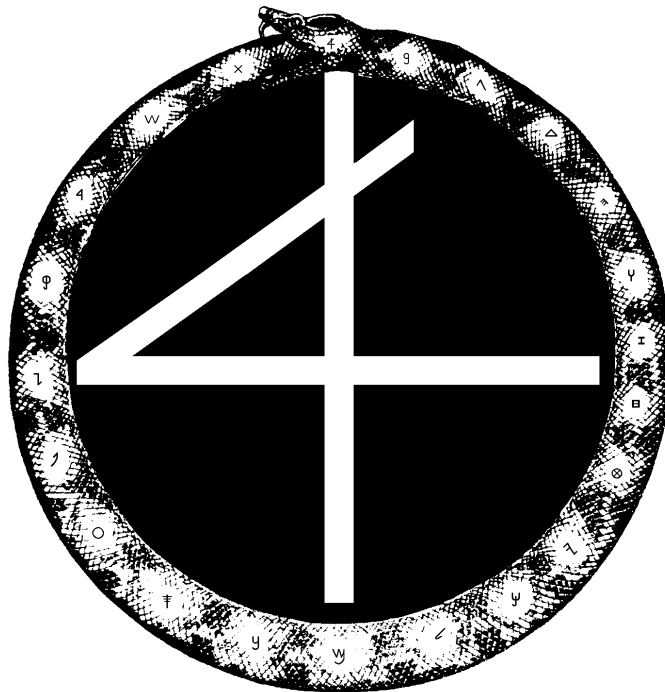
*Shabat* is at once both an individual and macrocosmic event. In each of us, the *Shekhinah* wanders in a fallen state (Sefirah Kingdom), until *Shabat* comes and our consciousness unites with the One True Spouse יהוה. Our Tree thereby becomes perfect (Kingdom returns to its position as the Sefirah Knowledge/First). God is the true spouse. The Lord יהוה is the Husband, and the Lord יהוה is the Bride. Hence, genuine Qabalists are sometimes referred to as “Husbands of *Shekhinah*” or “Brides of *Adonai*.” Each individual should therefore meditate upon the wedding of King Messiah and His Sabbath Bride as something going on in their own consciousness, and at the same time, in the whole universe. All marriages allude to this Divine Union. If married, husband should honor wife as the embodiment of the *Shekhinah*—he should “meet the Bride.” And wife should honor husband as the embodiment of the Lord יהוה King Messiah, as in the refrain of “Come, my Dear One...” Alas, for some, *Shabat* never comes and every day is regular. But, as has been said, **there is the secret in Qabalah that there are no regular days, only *Shabat*!** This is always so for a true Master of the Name. Hence, as one’s yoga advances, *Shabat* starts spilling over into the regular days until they disappear.

### PRACTICES RELATED TO MESSIAH

Messiah (מְשִׁיחַ, pronounced *Mah-shee-ach*, lit. Savior, Little Prince), the consciousness of the Lord יהוה incarnate with full power in the Lower Worlds, is perhaps the ultimate spiritual mystery in Qabalah and in all mystical traditions. These incarnate appearances have allowed humankind to directly experience the

attributes, actions, and nature of Small Face as the “All-Pervading Person,” the aggregate of all beings, “eternally pure, eternally, awake, and eternally free.” These extraordinary beings are the ultimate sources for the transmission of spiritual teachings, the verification of yogic experiences, the empowerment of gatekeepers, and the liberation en masse of souls.

FIGURE 7.4 *Reshith*, Manifest Alef of Unity on the *Tzimtzum*



If someone has a natural, burning attraction for a particular form of Messiah, it would be natural for him or her to focus on that form as their Chosen Ideal in the context of yogic practice. Devotional yoga that centers upon a Messiah can employ the same meditation method of mantric repetition combined with the appropriate visualization explained earlier. In the context of the Qabalah, all Messiahs are seen as incarnations of the Lord יהוה. Hence, any Name associated with Messiah can be added to the root mantra, “*Ani Yod Heh Vav Heh*” e.g. *Ani יהוה Reshith* (ראשית, The First), *Ani יהוה Acharit* (אחרית, The Last), *Ani יהוה Mosheh* (משה) *Ani יהוה Yeshuvah* (ישׁוּבָה), *Ani יהוה*



*Re'iyah* (רֵעִיָּא, Shepherd), or *Ani יהוה Ahavah* (אהבה, Love). Since the *Torah* is said to embody all four “Heads” of Messiah, one could also use “*Ani יהוה Torah*” (אני יהוה תורה).

For *Reshith*, one may visualize the manifest Alef א of Unity filling the universe within the “fence” of the Vast Face Snake-Devouring-Its-Tail (Figure 7.4). For *Acharit*, one can use the image of the letter Tav ת riding a white horse with a letter Zayin ז-handled sword as seen in Figure 3.11 on page 111. With Master Mosheh and Master Yeshuvah, use one or more of the powerful images found in the *Torah* and *Peshitta*, such as Master Mosheh prostrating before the burning bush, or Master Yeshuvah delivering the Sermon on the Mount. Another root mantra for Master Yeshuvah, in use among Eastern Orthodox Christians since the second century CE, and prominent in the Catholic Mass is “*Kierie Eleison Christe Eleison*” (“Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy”).<sup>8</sup> The “Our Father” prayer that Master Yeshuvah instructed his disciples to embrace might also be incorporated in one’s practices. As a Jew addressing Jews, it is highly likely that Master Yeshuvah would have spoken such a prayer in Hebrew. Hence, it might be said as follows:

#### The Lord’s Prayer

אבינו אשר בשמים, קדוש שמך:

*Avinu asher bushamayim, qadosh shamekha.*

תבוא מלכותך, יעשה רצונך, כבשמים כן בארץ:

*Tavo malkhutekha, ya'ase ratzonekha  
kebashamayim ken ba'aretz.*

את לחם חקנו תן לנו היום וסלח לנו על חטאינו

*Et lechem chukenu ten lanu hayom, vuh-salach lanu  
al chatainu*

כפי שסולחים גם אנחנו לחוטאים לנו ואל

*Kehfi shesolchim gam anachnu lachotim lanu vuh-al*

תביאנו לידי ניסיון כי אם חלצנו מן הרע:

*Tevi'enu lidai nisayon ki im chaltzenu min hara.*

כי לך הממלכה הזבורה והתפרת

*Ki lecha hamamlacha haguhoora vuh-hatifareht*

לעולמי עולמים: אמן:

*luh-'ohlamai 'ohlamim. Ah-men.*

Finally, there is the practice of looking for Messiah in everyone's eyes. This practice requires complete faith that Messiah will one day appear for you. Such faith is founded on the wisdom that anything is possible for the Lord of All, and that since the universe is created moment by moment, Messiah can come for any one of us at any time (*Barukh HaShem*). In the Hindu holy book, the *Bhagavad Gita*, there is the verse:

“Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me,  
Adore Me and make obeisance to Me;  
Thus uniting yourself to Me and utterly depending  
upon Me,  
You shall come to Me.”<sup>9</sup>

### DEVOTIONAL SINGING

Devotional singing and chanting is common to virtually all the world's mystical traditions. Hebrew, Arabic, and Sanskrit holy texts are all traditionally chanted and not simply read. All Sufi orders have sacred *dikhrs* and songs. Gregorian chants are balm for the soul. The sacred Hawaiian hulas are sung. Singing devotional songs and sacred chants with your whole heart and a focused mind is a unique and wonderful means of uplifting the soul and bringing “Heaven to Earth.” A good devotional song carries us above our fears and worldly concerns, and fills us with joy. Some songs just seem to get deeper and deeper, and when the singing stops, the air is charged with spiritual energy. Success comes from the intention of one's heart and the grace of God, not from the quality of one's voice.

### WALKING MEDITATION

In addition to the practice of seated meditation, many mystical traditions have some form of walking meditation. This can also be done within the context of the Mystical Qabalah. While walking, you can repeat a root mantra coordinated with the pace of your steps. While doing so, you could also visualize your Chosen Ideal as alive and awake in the hearts of every living being you see. Over time, this process can change the way one regards and interacts with people, and help counter tendencies to engagement in judgement. Also, this process can help heal rifts with those whom we love by elevating the way we

think about them, and invoking their deeper nature to change the way they feel about us. While walking (or dancing), you could alternately see everyone (including yourself) as living *Yosbers* (upright forms of the Name יהיה), or as living Trees of Life. If you live near the shore of an ocean or a large body of water, you could walk along and dwell upon the idea of a Vast Face Ocean of Endless Light. Sitting quietly before it, you could focus upon the sound and rhythm of the waves. Going to that body of water on a cloudless full moon night, you could meditate upon the reflection of the moon in the water. The practices of the Mystical Qabalah are fluid and flexible, and provide fertile opportunity for us to use our imaginations in a creative and personally meaningful way.

### SELFLESS SERVICE

Most faiths, and many sects within each faith, often find much to disagree about. But, all of them teach that *helping people is good*. Masters and saints in all mystical traditions encourage selfless service as an important part of any Small Face spiritual discipline. In Judaism, selfless service is called performing a *mitzvah*, a good deed. In India, it is called *seva* (pronounced, “save-ah”). In Buddhism, it is called *dana* (pronounced, “donna”). Volunteering one’s time to bring some company and joy to isolated elderly, feeding the hungry and homeless, visiting and actively listening to people who are confined by their disabilities or illnesses. All of these, and many other ways of giving of yourself are humbling, help purify the ego, and provide a poignant reminder of the impermanence and inevitable suffering of embodied life. Truly, this type of giving is a gift to the giver. It puts faith into action. It is an act of living *zakhor* (remembrance of the Divine). Whatever service you voluntarily engage in, it is important to remain conscious of the Divine embodied in the person or people whom you are serving, and to offer the fruits of your efforts at the feet of the Lord.



## *Glossary of Terms*

**Abyss:** refers to the Sefirah Knowledge/First on the Fallen Tree; also called “Face of the Deep.”

**Acharit** (Hebrew: The Last): the fourth and final Celestial Head of Meshiach L’יהי” corresponding to the filter of the letter Tav.

**Adam Kadmon:** anthropomorphic allusion to Vast Face as the Celestial Man “created (i.e. World of B’riyah) in the image of *Elohim*”; depicted in Merkabah literature as riding upon the Celestial Chariot, or seated upon the Throne of *El Shadai*. Adam, as the archetype of the first man in the Garden of Eden, reflects the male (yang) aspect of Small Face in the Lower World of Yetzirah, with Chavah (Eve) representing the feminine (yin) aspect of Small Face as the energy of consciousness. With the allusion of the eating of the apple of the knowledge of good and evil, the action drops down into the World of Asiyah, and consciousness becomes dualistic.

**Adonai** (Hebrew: My Master): a principal Name of Small Face in the Qabalah.

**Advaita** (Sanskrit: Non-duality): one of the three world views in Vedantic spiritual philosophy, which perceives all Name and Form as illusory, and only *Brahman* (i.e. *Ayn*) as real and existent.

**Affirmation of Unity:** refers to the proclamations of the absolute unity of existence at the foundation of Judaism and Islam. In Judaism, it is the verse in the *Torah* known as the “*Shema*.” In Islam, it is the verse in the *Qur’an*, “*La illaha il Allah*.”

**After-the-World Sequence:** a version of the Taoist Trigram Tree that is the equivalent of the qabalistic Fallen Tree.

**Ajna Chakra:** the forehead-center on the Chakric Tree, portrayed as a lotus with two petals. Corresponds to the Sefiroth Wisdom/East and Understanding/North on the qabalistic Tree, the *Latifa Khafiya* on the Sufi Tree, and the Upper Tan on the Taoist Tree.

**Alef of Unity:** Small Face; the Word of God manifest in Sefirah Knowledge/First and unmanifest in the negatively-existent roots of the Tree.

**Alef Worlds:** unmanifest witness states of Vast Face in Sefirah Crown/Above.

**Allah:** the principal Name of Small Face in Islam.

**Anahata Chakra:** the thoracic center on the Chakric Tree, portrayed as a lotus with six petals. Corresponds to Sefirah Beauty/Last on the qabalistic Tree, the *Latifa Siriya* on the Sufi Tree, and the Middle Tan on the Taoist Tree.

**Ananda** (Sanskrit: Bliss): one of the three innate aspects of Vast Face as *Sat-Chit-Ananda*.

**Angelic Tree Language:** an array of Fallen and Perfect Trees of Life sourced in the *Sefer HaShmoth (Book of the Names)*, so-named because angels are said to see humans as “walking Trees;” also called Enochian Tree Language.

**Asiyah** (World of Activity, Making): the fourth and densest of the four qabalistic worlds, rooted in the Sefirah Knowledge/First and associated with the *Nefesh*.

**Atiqa** (Hebrew: Hidden One): a prominent Name of Vast Face in the Mystical Qabalah.

**Atziluth** (World of Emanation): the first and most sublime of the four qabalistic worlds, rooted in the Sefirah Crown/Above and associated with the *Neshamah*; also called the Supernal World.

**Avalokiteshvara** (Sanskrit: Thousand-Armed *Ishvara*): a principal Name of Small Face in Buddhism, especially in Tibet where He is called *Vajradhara* and *Chen Re Zig*.

**Avir** (Hebrew: Air, Atmosphere): element corresponding to the Mother Letter Alef and with the “Father” Space.

**Avodah** (Hebrew: Worship, Prayer): directed prayer.

**Ayn** (Hebrew: Nothing): deepest of the three negatively-existent roots of the Tree of Life.

**Ayn Sof** (Hebrew: Endless): second of the three negatively-existent roots of the Tree of Life.

**Ayn Sof Or** (Hebrew: Endless Light or Light of the Endless): third of the three negatively-existent roots of the Tree of Life.

**B'rakha** (Arabic: Blessing): direct spiritual transmission in Sufism.

**B'rakha** (Hebrew: Blessing): direct spiritual transmission in the Qabalah.

**B'rith Yachid** (Hebrew: Covenant of Unity): an appellation of Small Face in the World of Atziluth in the center of the Inner Court of the three-dimensional Perfect Tree in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**B'riyah** (Hebrew: World of Creation): second of the four qabalistic worlds, a formless world of vibrational signatures.

**Bar Mitzvah** (Hebrew: "Son of Righteous Action"): Jewish rite of passage generally occurring at age 13, when a Jewish youth intones the blessings and reads from the *Torah* for the first time before the congregation; said to be "*nachus*" (i.e. a gift from the youth to his/her parents).

**Battle**: a meditation image from the *Sefer Yetzirah* depicting a state of tension between the two aspects of each Double Letter, and between six pairs of Simple Letters.

**Beard of Small Face**: an image which comes from the *Sifra Detzneyutha* involving nine strands of convoluting Names emanating from the letter Alef.

**Beard of Vast Face**: an image which comes from the *Sifra Detzneyutha* involving nine strands of convoluting Names emanating from the letter Ayin.

**Before-the-World Sequence**: form of the Taoist Trigram Tree from the *Shuo Qua*. Correlates with the qabalistic Tree of Perfection.

**Beyt Worlds**: worlds of manifestation in Small Face.

**Bhakti** (Sanskrit: Devotion): unconditional love for a Small Face Chosen Ideal in Hindu Yoga system.

**Bhava** (Sanskrit: Mood): spiritual mood toward one's Chosen Ideal e.g. child to the Lord as one's Divine Mother or Father, servant to the Lord as one's Divine Master, parent to the Lord as one's Divine Child, friend to the Lord as the Dearest Friend, wife to the Lord as one's Divine Husband, husband to the Lord as one's Divine Wife, etc.

**Bhava Samadhi** (Sanskrit): ecstatic absorption of varying length in a particular spiritual mood toward one's Chosen Ideal; may occur in waking or conscious dream state.

**Bija** (Sanskrit: Seed): Atziluthic form of the Sanskrit letters.

**Binah** (Hebrew: Understanding): Zoharic name for the third Sefirah at the top of the Column of the Left on the Tree, supernal root of the World of Yetzirah; also called Sefirah North in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**Borders**: a descriptive term for the Simple Letters as the peripheral gates that connect the Directional Sefiroth to one another.

**Brahma** (Sanskrit): creative aspect of Small Face in the *Sanatana Dharma* tradition of India, whose consort is the Goddess *Saraswati*. Corresponds to *Elohim* in the Qabalah.

**Brahman** (Sanskrit): a principal Name of the negatively-existent Mysterious Unknown in the *Sanatana Dharma* tradition of India; synonymous with *Ayn*.

**Central Column**: the middle pillar of the Tree of Life, described as a clear mirror in which the two side columns are polar reflections.

**Chakra** (Sanskrit: Wheel): one of seven centers on the single-column Tantric Tree of Life, portrayed as lotuses with differing numbers of petals.

**Chasidim**: mystically oriented sect of Rabbinical Jews tracing its origin to Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, known as the "Baal Shem Tov."

**Chayah** (Hebrew: Holy Being, pl. Chayot): angelic allusion corresponding to the action of the six Directional Sefiroth on the Chariot *Shadai* Tree.



**Chitshakti** (Sanskrit: Energy of Consciousness): a synonym for Kundalini.

**Clear Mirror:** non-mediated perception of and communication with Divinity; a term for the Central Column of the Tree of Life and the station Messiah.

**Cloudy Mirror:** Zoharic term referring to a level of psychic mediation.

**Column of the Right:** masculine side pillar of the flat version of the Tree of Life, one of two polar opposite reflections in the clear mirror of the Central Column.

**Column of the Left:** feminine side pillar of the flat version of the Tree of Life, one of two polar opposite reflections in the clear mirror of the Central Column.

**Composite Tree:** Fallen Tree upon which has been placed all of the gate patterns from all the different paths of ascension; not in itself a working path.

**Da'ath** (Hebrew: Knowledge, Realization): Sefirah at the throat center on the qabalistic Tree. Corresponds to the *Vishuddha Chakra* on the Tantric Tree, and the *Latifa Ruhiya* on the Sufi Tree.

**Dana** (Pali): Buddhist term for selfless service.

**Devekut** (Hebrew: Cleaving, Adhering): qabalistic meditation.

**Dharma** (Sanskrit: Spiritual Path): spiritual transmission embodied in a religious tradition.

**Dikhr** (Arabic: Remembrance): repetition of Divine Names and root mantra in Sufism.

**Directional Sefiroth:** the six Sefiroth assigned to the six directions of above, below, east, west, north, and south in the *Sefer Yetzira*.

**Double Letters:** term for the seven Hebrew letters which have two different pronunciations and aspects that are portrayed in a state of polar tension in the image of “The Wall” in the *Sefer Yetzira*. These letters link the Directional Sefiroth to the Inner Court of the Tree.

**Dvaita** (Sanskrit: Dualism): one of three perspectives in Vedantic spiritual philosophy that views the Divine Essence as separate from the Creation.

**Elohim** (Hebrew: God): creative aspect of Small Face. The term is both singular and plural, thereby referring to the consciousness of the local star (i.e. the Sun), as well as, all stars.

**Esh** (Hebrew: Fire): element corresponding to the Mother Letter Shin, the father Energy, and a name for the second Sefirah on the Column of the Left in the flat version of the Tree in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**Eti, Eti** (Sanskrit: “This, This”): process of unifying all experiences in Small Face in Bhakti Yoga.

**Etz HaChayyim** (Hebrew: Tree of Life): a map of consciousness through the four qabalistic worlds, comprised of ten spheres connected by a total of twenty-two gates, and rooted in a negatively-existent substratum. Corresponds to the system of Chakras in the Tantra, and Latifas in Sufism.

**Everlasting Arms**: a descriptive term for the Simple Letters in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**Eye of Hashmal**: term for Vast Face in the *Idra Rabba*.

**Ezra Hebrew**: the alphabet devised in the fifth century BCE and attributed to Ezra, which replaced the original Sinatic Hebrew alphabet as the script in which the *Tanakh* is written.

**Face-to-Face**: a phrase in the *Sifra Detzneyutha* describing the condition whereby Small Face turns inward to Vast Face, and the Small Face universe disappears.

**Fala** (Arabic): Divine Attributes of Small Face.

**Fallen Tree**: in Angelic Tree Language, a form of the Tree of Life in which the Sefirah Knowledge/First is invisible as an Abyss, and appears to have “fallen” into position as the Sefirah Kingdom.

**Fall of Adam**: fall from unitive to dualistic consciousness, the fall of the Sefirah Knowledge/First into position as the Sefirah Kingdom.

**Fana il Fana** (Arabic: Extinction of Extinction): in Sufism, a term alluding to the dissolution of individuated consciousness in the ultimate experience of Vast Face in the negatively-existent roots of the Tree. Corresponds to *nirvakalpa samadhi* in the Hindu Yoga system, and *satori* in Zen.

**Faqir** (Arabic: mendicant): a term for a Sufi reflecting the ideal of spiritual poverty.

**Galgolim** (Hebrew: Wheels): qabalistic term for reincarnation, envisioned as the rotation (or migration) of the *Geviyah* through successive physical bodies (*Nefesh*) in the World of Asiyah.

**Gan Eden** (Hebrew: Garden of Eden): an archetype and an idyllic place in Sefirah Beauty/The Last in the World of Yetzirah.

**Gan Eden Alphabet**: the source alphabet in the astral World of Yetzirah from which differentiate both the Hebrew and Sanskrit alphabets in the World of Asiyah.

**Gate**: a passageway associated with one of the Hebrew letters that dynamically links one Sefirah to another on the Tree of Life.

**Gate of the Alef**: letter-gate that crosses the Abyss of the invisible Sefirah Knowledge/First on the Fallen Tree, and which connects Sefirah Beauty/Last to the visible Sefirah Knowledge/First on the Perfect Tree. Called *Sirata* in the *Qur'an*, and “straight is gate and narrow is the way” in the *Peshitta*.

**Gate of the Beyt**: the letter-gate into the World of B'riyah, and the Beyt Worlds that falls when Sefirah Knowledge/First becomes Sefirah Kingdom. This gate connects Sefirah Kingdom to Sefirah Foundation/Below on the Fallen Tree, and Sefirah Knowledge/First to Sefirah Crown/Above on the Perfect Tree.

**Gate of the Gimel**: letter-gate that connects Sefirah Foundation/Below to Sefirah Beauty/The Last along the Central Column; described as the mirror of the “Watcher on the Threshold.”

**Gemara** (Hebrew: Traditions): dialectics regarding the interpretations of the written law in the *Mishnah*, subsequently redacted into the *Talmud*.

**Gematria** (Hebrew): a type of qabalistic numerology.

**Geviyah** (Hebrew): name of the shell of embodied existence corresponding to the astral World of Yetzirah.

**Halacha** (Hebrew: Adopted Opinions, Religious Rules): traditional interpretations and applications of the written law, specifically the *Torah*.

**Haqiqah Latifa** (Arabic): crown center on the Sufi Tree Corresponds to the Sefirah Crown/Above on the qabalistic Tree, and the *Sahasrara Chakra* on the Tantric Tree.

**HaShem** (Hebrew: “The Name”): a shortened form of *Shem HaMeforesh* (lit. “Name of Brilliant Fire”), an appellation for the Name יהוה.

**Heads of Mashiach**: four aspects of Messiah L’YHVH corresponding respectively to the four Sefiroth of the Inner Court of the Tree, and to the three Mother Letters and the Tav of the Holy Temple.

**Hi’iaka** (Hawaiian): term for the Sefiroth in the Kahuna tradition portrayed as female companions or aspects of the Divine Mother Pele, same as Tantric *dakinis*.

**Hitbonenuth** (Hebrew): Chasidic contemplative practice of directed concentration.

**Hochmah** (Hebrew: Wisdom): a supernal Sefirah at the top of the Column of the Right on the Tree of Life; supernal root of the World of B’riyah. Corresponds to Upper Heh in Name יהוה.

**Holy Temple**: appellation for the Double Letter Tav in the Double Pyramid Tree, which connects the Inner Court to the Directional Sefiroth via the six other Double Letter gates.

**Ida** (Sanskrit): one of the two side channels of the Chakric Tree. Corresponds to the Column of the Right on the qabalistic Tree.

**Idra Rabba Qadusha** (Hebrew: Greater Holy Assembly): name of one of the three core texts of the *Sefer HaZohar*, and a term for all ten Sefiroth of the qabalistic Tree of Life.

***Idra Zuta Qadusha*** (Hebrew: Lesser Holy Assembly): name of one of the three core texts of the ***Sefer HaZohar***, and a term for the seven upper Sefiroth of the Tree.

**Inner Court**: a term for the four Sefiroth at the center of the three-dimensional form of the Tree of Life, two of which move into the side columns on the flat version of the Tree.

**Ishvara** (Sanskrit): a principal name of Small Face in the Vedas.

**Japa** (Sanskrit): continuous repetition of a mantra in the Hindu tradition. Corresponds to *zakhor* in the Qabalah and *dhikr* in Sufism.

**Jinn** (Hebrew): angels of destruction, demons.

**Jivashakti** (Sanskrit): energy of consciousness manifest in the embodied Soul.

**Jnana** (Sanskrit: Knowledge): the path of direct perception of Vast Face in the Hindu system of yoga.

**Kahuna** (Hawaiian): one who holds the hidden knowledge.

**Kalah** (Hebrew: Bride): a synonym for *Shekhinah* as the Bride of the Lord יהוה on *Shabat*.

**Kali** (Sanskrit: Dark One): a principal Name of Small Face in the Tantric tradition; a form of the Goddess.

**Karma** (Sanskrit): law of cause and effect, synonymous with Hebrew word *mazal*.

**Kav** (Hebrew: Line of Light): synonym for the Central Column in the Lurianic description of the emanation of the Tree in the ***Etz HaChayyim***.

**Kavanah** (Hebrew: Intention): focused intention within the context of spiritual practice.

**Kerubim** (Hebrew): high class of angels who guard the Throne of *Shadai* in the Merkabah Tree.

**Keter** (Hebrew: Crown): the uppermost Sefirah on the Tree of Life. Corresponds to the center on the top of the head and the *Sahasrara Chakra*.

**Ketuvim** (Hebrew: Writings): the books which comprise the Writings in the *Tanakh*.

**Khafiya Latifa** (Arabic): the forehead center on the Sufi Tree corresponding to the level of the Sefiroth Wisdom/East and Understanding/North on the qabalistic Tree, the *Ajna Chakra* on the Tantric Tree, and the Upper *Tan* on the Taoist Tree.

**Khanqah** (Arabic): meeting hall in which Sufis gather to receive instruction and engage in spiritual practices.

**Kohan** (Hebrew: Priest): a member of the Israelite priesthood who enacted the rituals in the Temples of Jerusalem.

**Kundalini** (Sanskrit): energy of consciousness portrayed as a snake asleep in three and a half coils at the base of the spine in the *Muladhara Chakra*; corresponds to *Shekhinah* in qabalistic teachings.

**La** (Arabic: NOT): a term referring to the Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things, synonymous with *Ayn*; first word in the “Affirmation of Unity” in the *Qur’an*.

**Latifa** (Arabic): series of seven centers on the Sufi Tree. Corresponds to the Sefiroth on the qabalistic Tree of Life and the Chakras of the Tantric Tree.

**Leviathan** (Hebrew: Behemoth): fence of Vast Face portrayed as a snake-devouring-its-tail around the circumference of the *Tzimtzum*.

**Lingam** (Sanskrit): the erect penis as a symbol of *Shiva* and the potency of Vast Face.

**Lo** (Hebrew: NOT): a synonym for the *Ayn*, referring to the negatively-existent Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things.

**Ma’aseh B’reshith** (Hebrew: Work of Creation): qabalistic secrets regarding the generation of the Creation by the Divine.

**Ma’aseh Merkabah** (Hebrew: Work of the Chariot): qabalistic secrets regarding the Tree of Life as the Divine Chariot; also, a general term for esoteric speculations.

**Madura Bhava** (Sanskrit: Sweet Mood): the spiritual mood of lover/wife to the Lord as the Beloved/Husband.

**Maghdi** (Arabic: Hidden One): term for the One-to-Come i.e. Messiah, in the Shi'ite Muslim tradition.

**Mashiach** (Hebrew: Anointed One): in the Upper Worlds, the four Celestial Heads of Small Face by which the Creation is manifested, maintained, and dissolved. In the Lower Worlds, the play of the Small Face in human form as World Teacher to renew the spiritual transmission of the absolute unity of the Divine and the primacy of love, discrimination, and selfless service as the means for spiritual awakening.

**Malkhuth** (Hebrew: Kingdom): name for the lowest Sefirah on the qabalistic Fallen Tree. Corresponds to the *Muladhara Chakra* on the Tantric Tree, and the *Latifa Qalabiya* in the Sufi Tree. The fallen form of the Sefirah Knowledge/First, and the waking state in most humans. This Sefirah is associated with the *Shekhinah* in exile.

**Manipura Chakra** (Sanskrit): solar plexus center on the Chakric Tree, portrayed as a lotus with ten petals. Corresponds to the Sefiroth Victory/South and Glory/West on the qabalistic Tree, and the *Latifa Qalbiya* on the Sufi Tree.

**Maya** (Sanskrit: Illusion): the illusory power of the *Ayn* (called *Brahman* in the Hindu system) to appear as a universe of Name and Form.

**Mayim** (Hebrew): the element of water corresponding to the Mother Letter Mem.

**Mazal** (Hebrew: Fate): the law of cause and effect, synonymous with *karma* in Hindu system.

**Menorah** (Hebrew): candle holder used during the eight days of Chanukah, symbolizing the Tree of Life.

**Merkabah** (Hebrew: Chariot): an allusion to the Tree of Life in general, and especially the Sefiroth of the Inner Court.

**Metatron** (Hebrew): name given to Enoch ben Yared when he ascended and "walked with Elohim;" name for operational manager of this Small Face universe.

**Middle Tan** (Chinese): middle of three primary centers on the Taoist Tree of Life corresponding to the thoracic center, the Sefirah Beauty/Last, and the *Anahata Chakra*.

**Mishnah** (Hebrew: Oral Teaching): a collection of oral laws redacted in the two versions of the *Talmud*.

**Mitzvah** (Hebrew): meritorious deed; righteous action in accordance with precepts of the *Torah*.

**Mother Letters**: a designation for the three letters Alef, Mem, and Shin in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**Muladhara Chakra** (Sanskrit): anal center on the Chakric Tree. Corresponds to the Sefirah Malkhuth on the qabalistic Tree and the *Latifa Qalabiya* on the Sufi Tree.

**Mureed** (Arabic): a Sufi aspirant who has received the *b'rakha* of a spiritual preceptor within the context of a specific chain of transmission.

**Nabiyim** (Hebrew: Prophets): the books of the Prophets in the *Tanakh*.

**Nafsiya Latifa** (Arabic): the lower abdominal center on the Sufi Tree. Corresponds to the Sefirah Foundation/Below on the qabalistic Tree, the *Svadisthana Chakra* on the Tantric Tree, and the *Tan Tien* on the Taoist Tree.

**Nar** (Hebrew: "The Youth"): a name for *Metatron*.

**Nefesh** (Hebrew): the physical shell of embodied existence in the World of Asiyah.

**Neshamah** (Hebrew: Soul): the shell of embodied existence in the World of Atziluth. Corresponds to *Atman* in the *Vedas* and *Purusha* in the *Puranas* and *Tantra Shastra*. Small Face as the One.

**Neshamah HaNeshamah** (Hebrew: Soul of the Soul): negatively-existent shell corresponding to consciousness in the roots of the Tree.

**Neti, Neti** (Sanskrit: "Not This, Not This"): words from the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* for the process of negating all experiences on every plane of existence in *jnana yoga*.



**Nirvikalpa Samadhi** (Sanskrit): ecstatic absorption in God-without-Qualities, in which individuated consciousness dissolves like a “salt doll walking into the ocean.”

**Nirvana** (Sanskrit): ultimate experience of enlightenment in Buddhism. Correlates with *fana l'fana* in Sufism, *nirvakalpa samadhi* in Hindu Yoga, and *satori* in Zen.

**Ofanim** (Hebrew): high class of angels on the Merkabah Tree of Chariot *Shadai*.

**Olam** (Hebrew: World): one of four planes of existence in the Qabalah.

**Omehq** (Hebrew: Depth): appellation for the Atziluthic Sefiroth in the *Sefer Yetzirah* e.g. Depth of First, Depth of Last.

**Omkara** (Sanskrit): the first manifest sound from which are derived all other sounds; also called *Pranava* and *Nada Brahman*; corresponds to the qabalistic Alef of Unity.

**Open Gate**: appellation for the Central Column of the Tree in general, and the Gate of the Gimel in particular.

**Organ of the Tongue**: a term for the Alef of Unity, and the root of Small Face in the throat center of the Sefirah Knowledge/First in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**Organ of Nakedness**: a term for the Ayin of Vast Face in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**O.T.O.**: Order Templis Orientis, a school of the Practical Qabalah that was a breakout group from the Golden Dawn.

**Pagan**: Latin-based appellation given to the indigenous spiritual traditions of Western Europe that preceded the colonization by Christianity.

**Paniel** (Hebrew: Face of *El*): name of Vast Face; the angel with whom Ya'aqov wrestled in the *Torah*.

**Partzufim** (Hebrew: Veils, Curtains, Faces): a term prominent in Lurianic teachings for Vast Face, Ancient Father, Ancient Mother, Small Face, and the *Shekhinah*. Correspond to the letters in the Name יהוה and the four qabalistic worlds.

**Parush** (Hebrew: Withdraw): root of the word Pharisee i.e. one who withdraws from the world in pious isolation.

**Pele** (Hawaiian): principal name of Small Face in the mystical tradition of the Hawaiian Kahunas.

**Pesach** (Hebrew: Passover): a ritual delineated in *Torah Shmoth* which, in its exoteric aspect, portrays the night the Angel of Death “passed over” i.e. spared the first-born children of the Israelites preceding the release from Egyptian slavery.

**Pharisees** (Hebrew): Rabbinical Jewish sect that opposed the priesthood and the Sadducees and eventually assimilated orthodox authority after the Diaspora. The Pharisees maintained that, in addition to the written *Torah*, God had handed down an oral tradition at Mount Sinai. They believed that the soul was immortal and that all actions in this world affected the person's future in the World to Come.

**Pingala** (Sanskrit): one of the two side channels on the Chakric Tree. Corresponds to the Column of the Left on the qabalistic Tree.

**Pir** (Persian): title for the spiritual preceptor in Sufism.

**Pralaya** (Sanskrit: Night): a solar night in which *Brahma* sleeps. Corresponds to the Great Flood in the *Torah*.

**Prana** (Sanskrit: Vital Energy): subtle energy responsible for all life. Corresponds to *ruach* in Hebrew and *qi* in Chinese.

**Prasadam** (Sanskrit): food that has been made holy by the “touch” of the Divine; the ritual of offering food to the Divine to make it holy.

**Purusha** (Sanskrit): pure undifferentiated Spirit. Corresponds to the *Neshamah* in the Qabalah.

**Qabalah** (Hebrew: Receiving, Acceptance, Hearing): direct perception of and communion with the Divine. The mystical system at the root of the spiritual traditions of the Children of Abraham.

**Qalabiya Latifa** (Arabic): the anal center on the Sufi Tree. Corresponds to the Sefirah Kingdom on the qabalistic Tree, and the *Muladhara Chakra* on the Tantric Tree.

**Qalbiya Latifa** (Arabic): the solar plexus center on the Sufi Tree. Corresponds to the Sefiroth Victory/South and Glory/West on the qabalistic Tree, and the *Manipura Chakra* on the Tantric Tree.

**Qi** (Chinese: Vital Energy): subtle energy responsible for all life; corresponds to *ruach* in Hebrew and *prana* in Sanskrit.

**Qlifah** (Hebrew: Shell, pl. Qlifoth): shell of embodied existence corresponding to a respective qabalistic world or plane of existence.

**Qwan Yin** (Chinese): principal Name of Small Face as the Divine Mother in Taoism; Chinese adaptation of *Chen Re Zig* as a feminine Deity.

**Reshith** (Hebrew: The First): one of the four Celestial Heads of Messiah associated with the manifestation of the Small Face universe; name for the throat Sefirah in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**Ruach** (Hebrew: Spirit, Vital Energy): term used in the *Sefer Yetzirah* to denote both the pervasive consciousness of *Elohim*, and for the vital animating energy corresponding to *prana* in Sanskrit and *qi* in Chinese.

**Ruach HaQodesh** (Hebrew: Holy Spirit): the shell of embodied existence corresponding to the World of B'riyah; bliss body. Small Face as the Many.

**Ruhiya Latifa** (Arabic): the throat center on the Sufi Tree. Corresponds to the Sefirah Knowledge/First on the qabalistic Tree, and the *Vishuddha Chakra* on the Tantric Tree.

**Sadducees** (Hebrew): one of the groups who vied for power during the Hasmonean period. They viewed the priests as the only authoritative representatives of Jewish law, did not believe in the immortality of the soul, and denied that there was a divine reward/punishment system in a life after this life.

**Sahasrara Chakra** (Sanskrit): crown center on the top of the head of the Chakric Tree, portrayed as a lotus with one thousand petals. Corresponds to the Sefirah Crown/Above on the qabalistic Tree, and the *Latifa Haqiqa* on the Sufi Tree.

**Salat** (Arabic): sequence of Islamic prayers performed five times a day.

**Salvikalpa Samadhi** (Sanskrit): ecstatic absorption in God-with-Qualities wherein the individuated consciousness is still present.

**Samskaras** (Sanskrit: Impressions): residual impressions of previous lifetimes imprinted on the mirror of the Watcher on the Threshold, and hard wired in the deep memory of the brain.

**Samyana** (Sanskrit): one-pointed concentration.

**Sanatana Dharma** (Sanskrit): the spiritual tradition of the Hindu *Vedas*.

**Satori** (Japanese): direct perception of the Truth in Buddhism; enlightenment.

**Sefer Yetzirah** (Hebrew: **Book of Formation**): book on the Tree of Life and the mystical significance of the Hebrew letters written by Abraham.

**Sefer HaZohar** (Hebrew: **Book of Splendor**): name of a five volume exegesis on the *Torah*.

**Sefirah** (Hebrew: Sphere, pl. Sefiroth): one of ten stations on the qabalistic Tree of Life.

**Septuagint**: Greek translation of the *Tanakh*.

**Seva** (Sanskrit): work in the world performed as selfless service to the Divine.

**Shabat** (Hebrew: Sabbath): the wedding day of the Lord יהוה and the *Shekhinah*; the day of rest and celebration in conventional Judaism.

**Shanti Bhava** (Sanskrit: Peaceful Mood): a spiritual mood associated with Vast Face.

**Shaykh** (Arabic): spiritual preceptor in Sufism.

**Shekhinah** (Hebrew: Divine Presence, Neighborhood): a central Name for the feminine aspect as the energy of consciousness of the Lord יהוה, associated with the Lower Heh and the Sefirah Kingdom. Corresponds to *Sakinat* in the *Qur'an*, and to *Kundalini* in the Tantra.

**Shell of Terror:** a term for the experience of “getting close to the Throne” i.e. to the awesome power of Small Face, when moving through the Gate of the Alef toward the Abyss of the invisible Sefirah Knowledge/First.

**Shem HaMeforesh** (Hebrew: “Name of Brilliant Fire”): an appellation of the Name יהוה, reflecting its appearance as dancing letters of fire.

**Sheol** (Hebrew): a central name for qabalistic hells.

**Shevarit HaKelim** (Hebrew: “Shattering of the Vessels”): a central tenet in Lurianic Qabalah which says that at the moment of Creation, there was an explosion which shattered the Totality into holy sparks which will reunite over time.

**Sh’ir Qoma** (Hebrew: “Measure of the Divine Body”): synonym for the *Yosher* form of the Name יהוה; name of a section in the *Sefer Raziel HaGadol*.

**Shiva** (Sanskrit: The Auspicious): a principal Name of Vast Face in the Tantric tradition.

**Shushumna** (Sanskrit): the central channel of the Chakric Tree. Corresponds to the Central Column of the qabalistic Tree.

**Sifra Detzniyutha** (Aramaic: **Book of THAT Which is Concealed**): first of three core texts at the root of the *Sefer HaZohar*.

**Silsilah** (Arabic): the chain of spiritual transmission in Sufism.

**Simple Letters:** the twelve Hebrew letters that link the Directional Sefiroth to one another in the *Sefer Yetzirah*.

**Sinatic Hebrew:** original Hebrew alphabet that appeared circa nineteenth century BCE.

**Sirata** (Arabic: “Straight Path”): name for the Gate of the Alef over the Abyss of the invisible Sefirah Knowledge/First on the Fallen Tree in the “Opening” *Surah* of the *Qur’an*.

**Siriya Latifa** (Arabic): thoracic center on the Sufi Tree. Corresponds to Sefirah Beauty/Last on the qabalistic Tree, the

*Anahata Chakra* on the Tantric Tree, and the Middle *Tan* on the Taoist Tree.

**Small Face:** God with attributes; active aspect of the *Ayn* that manifests, preserves, and dissolves universes; in Hebrew, *Ze'ir Afim* or *Ze'ir Anafin*.

**Sufi** (Arabic): conventional term for the mystics of Islam.

**Sujud** (Arabic): term for the Islamic practice of prostration.

**Sunset:** a meditation image in the *Sefer Yetzirah*, which includes all of the correlations for the 22 letters of the alphabet contained in the text.

**Sunyata** (Sanskrit: Emptiness): term in Buddhism for the extinction of individuated consciousness in the Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things.

**Surah** (Arabic): term for chapter in the *Qur'an*.

**Svadisthana Chakra** (Sanskrit): lower abdominal center on the Chakric Tree, portrayed as a lotus with six petals. Corresponds to the Sefirah Foundation/Below on the qabalistic Tree, the *Latifa Nafsiya* on the Sufi Tree, and the *Tan T'ien* on the Taoist Tree.

**Swagatabheda** (Sanskrit: "A Difference within Itself"): a concept central to the vasishtadvaitic perspective in Vedantic philosophy.

**Talmud** (Hebrew): two sets of books, one called *Talmud Babli* and the other *Talmud Yerushalmi*, which contain the redactions of the halachic dialectics of the early rabbis

**Tanakh** (Hebrew): acronym for *Torah* (The Law), *Nabiyim* (Prophets), and *Ketuvim* (Writings).

**Tan Tien** (Chinese: Field of Cinnabar): lowest of three primary centers on the Taoist Tree of Life. Corresponds to the Sefirah Foundation/Below on the qabalistic Tree, the *Svadhastana Chakra* on the Tantric Tree, and the *Latifa Nafsiya* on the Sufi Tree.

**Tantra** (Sanskrit): mystical tradition of Northern India, centered upon *Shiva/Shakti*.

**Tariqa** (Arabic): Sufi term for the mystical path.

**Tefillin** (Hebrew: Phylacteries): two sets of small boxes within which there are partitions containing small scrolls bearing verses from the *Torah*, and most notably, the *Shema*. Rabbinical Jews affix the tefillin to their the foreheads and left arms several times daily within the context of daily prayers.

**Torah** (Hebrew: Law): the first five books of the *Tanakh*, ascribed to Master Mosheh in Rabbinical Judaism.

**Torah Qadmah** (Hebrew: Eternal *Torah*): unmanifest, supernal *Torah* in the Upper Worlds.

**Tree of Perfection** (also Perfect Tree): several types of Trees in Angelic Tree Language in which the Sefirah Knowledge/First is visible, and in which there is no Sefirah Kingdom. These Trees correspond to awakened yogis and saints, and Messiahs.

**Trigram**: glyph composed of three solid or broken lines. The eight permutations of the solid and broken lines correlate to the Directional Sefiroth plus two of the Sefiroth from the Inner Court (Water and Fire) on the qabalistic Tree of Life

**Tsawwuf** (Arabic): more traditional name for the mystical tradition of the Sufis.

**Tzadiq** (Hebrew: Saint, pl. Tzadiqim): an awakened servant of the Lord יהיה who has ascended the Tree via the Path of the Saint. A qabalistic tradition says that “36 Righteous *Tzadiqim* are the foundation of the world.”

**Tzimtzum** (Hebrew: Contraction): an envacuous circular area from which the Light of the Endless has been withdrawn, wherein the Tree of Life is emanated and the Small Face universe is manifested; a central idea of Lurianic cosmology derived from the *Sefer HaZohar* and presented in the *Etz HaChayyim*.

**Upper Light**: synonym for the *Ayn Sof Or* (Light of the Endless) in the *Etz HaChayyim*.

**Upper Tan** (Chinese): uppermost of three primary centers on the Taoist Tree of Life. Corresponds to the forehead center, the Sefiroth Understanding/North and Wisdom/East on the qabalistic

Tree, the *Ajna Chakra* on the Tantric Tree, and the *Latifa Khafiya* on the Sufi Tree.

**Vasishtadvaita** (Sanskrit: Qualified Non-dualism): one of three world views in Vedantic spiritual philosophy in which the Divine is innate in all beings.

**Vast Face**: God without attributes; inactive aspect of the *Ayn* in the Mystical Qabalah; in Hebrew, *Arikh Afim* or *Arikh Anafin*.

**Vedas** (Sanskrit): one of the primary texts of the Hindu religion.

**Vijnana** (Sanskrit: Intimate Knowledge of God): realization of the Mysterious Unknown both as Vast Face and Small Face.

**Virabhava** (Sanskrit: Hero Mood): the heroic mode of Tantric worship.

**Vishnu** (Sanskrit): a primary Divine Name in the Puranic tradition of India. Within the context of the synthesis of three complete spiritual traditions into one, *Vishnu* is regarded as the aspect of the Divine that sustains the Creation.

**Visuddha Chakra** (Sanskrit): throat center on the Chakric Tree, portrayed as a lotus with sixteen petals. Corresponds to the Sefirah Knowledge/First on the qabalistic Tree, and the *Latifa Ruhiya* on the Sufi Tree.

**Viveka** (Sanskrit: Discrimination): within the context of Hindu Yoga, the process of discerning the Real from the Unreal.

**Wall**: a meditation image in the *Sefer Yetzirah* involving all possible permutations of pairs of Hebrew letters in forward and reverse order, yielding a total of 462 combinations.

**Wasifa** (Arabic): Divine Names used in Sufi spiritual practices.

**Watcher on the Threshold**: a synonym for the Gate of the Gimel; the collective residual impressions amassed from past incarnations.

**Way of the House of the Treasuries of Elohim**: a single-column Working Tree that involves the exclusive use of the Central Column of the Tree.



**Way of the Angels of Destruction:** a Working Tree that involves the exclusive use of the Column of the Left.

**Way of the Angels of Elohim:** a Working Tree that involves the exclusive use of the Column of the Right.

**Way of Messiah:** a Working Tree that requires an overwhelming love and one-pointed devotion for a form of Messiah or the *Torah*. In ascending the Central Column, when the heart Sefirah Beauty/Last awakens, the entire Tree lights up.

**Way of the Saint:** a Working Tree that uses all three columns of the Tree; opposite pattern of ascent from the Way of the Wizard.

**Way of the Wizard:** a Working Tree that uses all three columns of the Tree; opposite pattern of ascent from the Way of the Saint.

**Way of YHVH Eloheinu:** a Working Tree that involves the exclusive use of the Central Column.

**Weight:** collective term used by the *Sifra Detzneyutha* for the balanced tension among all the Sefiroth on the Tree of Life.

**Working Tree:** a synonym for the Fallen Tree in Angelic Tree Language; a specific way that the Tree is ascended.

**Yantra** (Sanskrit): visual image corresponding to states and stations of consciousness.

**Yechidah** (Hebrew: Unity): term for the negatively-existent roots of the Tree; alternative name for the *Neshamah HaNeshamah*.

**Yetzirah** (Hebrew: Formation): one of the four qabalistic worlds, rooted in the supernal Sefirah Understanding/North; the astral plane; the yang aspect of the Name יהיה in the Lower Worlds. Corresponds to the letter Vav.

**YHVH** (Hebrew: “He/She/It will be”): the principal Name of Small Face in the Mystical Qabalah, and the holiest Divine Name in Judaism.

**Yoga** (Sanskrit: Union): direct perception of and union with the Divine.

**Yom Ah-Din** (Arabic: Day of Judgment): appellation for the fourth Head of Celestial Messiah as The Last in the *Qur'an*.

**Yosher** (Hebrew: Upright): vertical, highly anthropomorphic version of the Name יהיה.

**Zakhor** (Hebrew: Remembrance): the qabalistic practice of the repetition of Divine Names or mantra.