



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE KABALAH

WILLIAM WYNN WESTCOTT

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THE DOGMATIC KABALAH

"The great doctrines of the Theoretical Kabbalah," says Ginsburg, "are mainly designed to solve the problems of (a) the nature of the Supreme Being, (b) the creation of the Universe and of our world, (c) the creation of angels and man, (d) the destiny of the world and of men, and (e) the import of the revealed law."

The Kabbalah confirms the following Old Testament declarations: the Unity of God, His incorporeal form (Deut. chap. iv., v. 15.); eternity, immutability, perfection and goodness; the origin of the world at God's will, the government of the Universe, and the creation of man after the image of God. It seeks to explain by Emanations the transition from the Infinite to the finite, the multitude of forms from a unity; the production of matter from spiritual intelligence; and the relations existing between Creator and creature. In this theosophy,--ex nihil nihilo fit; spirit and matter are the opposite poles of one existence: and as nothing comes from nothing, so nothing is annihilated.

The following seven Kabbalistic ideals are of the greatest interest to students of the origin and destiny of the world and mankind.

- (1) That God, the Holy One, the Supreme Incomprehensible One, the AIN SUPh, the Greek apeiros, (Zohar iii. 283) was not the direct Creator of the World; but that all things have proceeded from the Primordial Source in successive Emanations, each one less excellent than the preceding, so that the universe is 'God Manifested,' and the last and remotest production is matter, a privation of perfection.
- (2) That all we perceive or know of, is formed on the Sephirotic type.
- (3) That human souls were pre-existent in an upper world before the origin of this present world.

(4) That human souls before incarnation dwell now in an Upper Hall, or Treasury where the decision is made as to what earth body each soul or ego shall enter.

(5) That every soul after earth life or lives must at length be so purified as to be reabsorbed into the Infinite God.

(6) That one human life is seldom sufficient; that two earth lives are necessary for almost all to pass; and that if failure result in the second life, a third life is passed linked with a stronger soul who draws the sinner upward into purity: this is a form of the scheme of Re-incarnation, Transmigration of souls, or Metempsychosis.

(7) That when all the pre-existent Souls who have been incarnated here have arrived at perfection, the Evil Angels are also to be raised, and all lives will be merged into The Deity by the Kiss of Love from the Mouth of the Holy One, and the Manifested Universe shall be no more, until again vivified by the Divine FIAT.

It has been suggested by some learned authors that these Kabalistic ideas resemble those of the Alexandrian philosophy and of the Gnostics, embodying notions derived from the Pythagoreans, the Platonists and from Indian Brahmanism and Buddhism.

Let us more fully consider the conceptions of the Divinity. Isaac Myer writes :--God may be regarded from four points of view; as the Eternal One, or AIN SUP, Ain Suph; as AHIH, Aheie, I am; as IHVH, Who was, is and will be; and as ALHIM, Elohim, God in Nature, called Adonai or Lord.

In the English Old Testament the word IHVH is translated Lord, and Elohim by God: Boutell calls Jah a contraction of Jehovah.

The Jehovah of the Old Testament,--as a tribal Deity of personal characteristics, demonstrating His power and glory to a chosen people; oppressing other nations to do them service, and choosing as His special envoys and representatives men whom our civilisation would have condemned as not high enough for Spiritual power, is not represented in the Hebrew Secret Doctrine.

The Kabalah, indeed, is full of Jehovah, IHVH, the Divine Four-Lettered Name, the Tetragrammaton, but it is as the Name of a group of Divine Conceptions, of Emanations from a central Spiritual Light whose presence alone is postulated; from Absolute God there is a series of Emanations extending downward to reach Jehovah, Who is the Divine One of Binah, the Supernal Mother; other stages of Emanation lead to The Elohim, the group of Holy Spiritual attributes, associated with the Sixth Sephira, the Sun of Tiphareth.

After another manner, Jehovah is the group of the Emanations from the Deific source, called the Ten Sephiroth, "The Voices from Heaven." These Ten Sephiroth, of which the First is a condensation of the Supernal Glory from the Ain Suph Aour, the Boundless Light, appear as a Rainbow of the Divinity in a First World, or highest plane above human conception, that of Atziluth; by successive reflections, diminishing in brightness, a plane is reached which is conceivable by man, as of the purity of his highest spiritual vision. The grouping of the Ten Divine Qualities, upon this plane, into a Divine Tetrad, is symbolised by Yod Heh Vau Heh, the Tetragrammaton, the Kabalistic Jehovah, not the Yahveh of the exoteric books, but the original of that God, whose reflections of a nation's patron is formulated in the Old Testament: it is "The Ineffable Name," never pronounced, its true sound is lost, and the Jew replaces it by Adonai, ADNI; it is unpronounceable because its real vowels are unknown; it ceased to be spoken before the vowel points were introduced. (Note;--there are no extant Hebrew works with vowel points earlier than the tenth century.--A. E. WAITE.)

We find that the Kabalah contemplates a period when Chaos existed, a period of repose and absence of manifestation, when the Negative reigned supreme: this is the Pralaya of the Hindoos. From passivity there proceeded action by Emanations, and Manifested Deity arose. From Ain, repose, the Negative, proceeded Ain Suph, the No-Bound, the Limitless, the Omnipresence of the Unknowable; still condensing into manifestation through Emanation, there appears the Ain Suph Aur, "The Boundless Light," which coalescing on a point appears as Kether, the Crown of Manifestation. Thence follow the Sephiroth, the Holy Voices, upon the Highest World; they concentrate into a divine conception, a stage of Spiritual existence which

man attempts to grasp, and by defining, to limit, bound and describe, and so creates for his worship a Divine personality, his God; and the Jew named Him, --Jehovah.

By gradual stages of development, each farther from the source, there arise the powers and forces which have received the names of Archangels, Angels, Planetary Spirits, and the guardians of man; still farther from God, we obtain the human Souls, which are as Sparks of Light, struck off from the insupportable Light of Divinity, which have been formulated into Egoity to pass through a long series of changes and experiences by which they make the circuit of a Universe; they endure every stage of existence, of separation from the Divine fountain, to be at last once more indrawn to the Godhead, The Father, whence they emerged upon a pilgrimage; they follow a regular succession of evolution and involution, even as the Divine passes ever along in successive periods of outbreathing and inbreathing, of Manifestation and of Repose.

Of Divine Repose, or Chaos, the human intellect can form no conception, and only the highly spiritual man can conceive any of the sublime and exalted stages of Manifestation. To the worldly man such notions are but dreams, and any attempt to formulate them leads only to suspicions of one's sanity. To the metaphysician these ideals supply a theme of intense interest; to the theosophist they supply an illustration drawn from a foreign source of the Spiritual traditions of a long-past age, which lead one to accept the suggestion that these Spiritual conceptions are supplied from time to time by a Great Mind of another stage of existence from our own. Perhaps they are remnants of the faiths and wisdom of a long-vanished era, which had seen the life-history of races more spiritual than our own and more open to converse with the Holy Ones of higher Spiritual planes. Spiritual wisdom can only be attained by the man, or earthly being who becomes able to reach up to the sphere above; a Spiritual Being above us cannot reach down and help those who do not so purify themselves that they may be fit to rise up to the higher planes of existence.

The chief difficulty of the beginner as a student of the Kabbalah, is to conquer the impressions of the reality and materiality of so-called matter. The Kabbalah teaches that one must entirely relinquish the apparent knowledge

of matter as an entity apart from Spirit. The assertion that matter exists, and is an entity entirely different from Spirit, and that Spirit--the God of Spirits--created it, must be denied, and the notion must be torn out by the roots before progress can be made. If matter exists, it is something, and must have come from something; but Spirit is not a thing, and creative Spirit, the highest Spiritual conception, could not make matter, the lowest thing, out of nothing: hence it is not made, and hence there is no matter. All is Spirit and conception. Ex nihilo nihil fit. All that does exist can only have come from Spirit, from Divine Essence. That Being should arise from non-being is impossible. That matter should create itself is absurd; matter cannot proceed from Spirit; the two words mean that the two ideas are entirely apart; then matter cannot exist. Hence it follows that what we call matter is but an aspect, a conception, an illusion, a mode of motion, a delusion of our physical senses.

Apart from the Kabalah, the same truth has been recognised by a few exceptional Christians and Philosophers. What is commonly known as the "Ideal Theory" was promulgated 140 years ago by Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland; it is nearly identical with the Kabalistic doctrine of all things being but Emanations from a Divine source, and matter but an aspect. Other philosophers have discussed the same theory in the controversy of Nominalism versus Realism: does anything exist except in name? Is there any substratum below the name of anything? Need we postulate any such basis? All is Spirit,--says the Kabalah,--and this is eternal, uncreated; intellectual and sentient on our plane; inhering are life and motion; It is self-existing, with successive waves of action and passivity. This Spirit is the true Deity, or Infinite Being, the "Ain Suph," the Cause of all causes, and of all effects. All emanates from "That," and is in "That." The Universe is an immanent offspring of the Divine, which is manifested in a million forms of differentiation. The Universe is yet distinct from God, even as an effect is distinct from a cause; yet it is not apart from Deity, it is not a transient effect, it is immanent in the Cause. It is God made manifest to Man. Matter is our conception alone; it represents the aspect of the lowest manifestation of Spirit, or Spirit is the highest manifestation of matter. Spirit is the only substance. "Matter," says a Kabalist, "is the mere residuum of

emanation, but little above non-entity." The Hindoo philosopher called matter a Maya, a delusion.

As already remarked the Supreme Being of the Kabbalah is found to be demonstrated in more than one aspect. At one time the Inconceivable Eternal Power proceeding by successive Emanations into a more and more humanly conceivable existence, formulating His attributes into conceptions of Wisdom, Beauty, Power, Mercy and Governance; exhibiting these attributes first in a supernal universality beyond the ken of all spirits, angels and men, the First Word of Atziluth; then formulating a reflection of the same exalted essences on the plane of the Pure Spirits also inconceivable to man, the Second Word of Briah. Again is the reflection repeated, and the Divine Essence in its group of exalted attributes is cognisable to the Angelic Powers, the Third or Yetziratic World; and then finally the Divine abstractions of the Sacred Ten Sephiroth are by a last Emanation still more restricted and condensed than the latter, and are rendered conceivable by the Human intellect; for man exists in the Fourth World of Assiah in the shadow of the Tenth Sephira--the Malkuth, or Kingdom of the World of Shells or material objects. Small wonder then at the slightness of the ideal man can form of the Divine.

At other times we find the metaphysical abstract laid aside, and all the wealth of Oriental imagery lavished on the description of God; imagery although grouped and clustered around the emblem of an exalted humanity, yet so inflated, so extravagantly magnified, that the Heavenly man is lost sight of in the grandeur and tenuity of the word painting of the Divine portrait. Divine anthropomorphism it may be, but an anthropomorphism so tenuous by means of its grandeur, that the human elements affording the bases of the analogy quite disappear in the Heavenly Man of their divine reveries.

Permit me to afford to you an example of one sublime, deific dream:--

"In this conformation He is known; He is the Eternal of the Eternal ones; the Ancient of the Ancient ones; the Concealed of the Concealed ones; in His symbols He is knowable although He is unknowable. White are His garments, and His appearance is as a Face, vast and terrible in its vastness.

Upon a throne of flaming brilliance is He seated, so that he may direct its flashing Rays. Into many thousand worlds the brightness of His face is extended, and from the Light of this brightness the just shall receive worlds of joy and reward in the existence to come. Within His skull exist daily a thousand myriads of worlds; all draw their existence from Him, and by Him are upheld. From that Head distilleth a Dew, and from that Dew which floweth down upon the worlds, are the dead raised up in the lives and on the worlds to come."

The God of the Kabbalah is "Infinite Existence": He cannot be defined as the "Assemblage of Lives," nor is he truly the "totality of his attributes." Yet without deeming all lives to be of Him, and His attributes to be universal, He cannot be known by man. He existed before He caused the Emanations of His essence to be demonstrated, He was before all that exists is, before all lives on our plane, or the plane above, or the World of pure Spirits, or the Inconceivable existence; but then He resembled nothing we can conceive, and was Ain Suph, and in the highest abstraction Ain, alone, Negative Existence. Yet before the manifest became demonstrated, all existence was in him; the Known preexisted in the Unknown, Who is the "Ancient of Days."

But it is not this dream-like aspect of poetic phantasy exhibited in the Kabbalah that I can further bring to your notice. Let us return to the Philosophic view of the attributes of Deity, which is the keynote of the whole of the doctrine.

The primary human conception of God is then the Passive state of Negative Existence AIN--not active; from this the mind of man passes to conceive of AIN SUPH, of God as the Boundless, the Unlimited, Undifferentiated, Illimitable One; and the third stage is AIN SUPH AUR--Boundless Light, Universal Light--"Let there be Light" was formulated, and "There was Light." The Passive has put on Activity; the Conscious God has awaked. Let us now endeavour to conceive of the concentration of this effulgence, let us formulate a gathering together of the rays of this illumination into a Crown of glorified radiance, and we recognise KTR, Kether, the Crown, the First Sephira, First Emanation of Incomprehensible Deity, the first conceivable attribute of immanent manifested Godhead: also named ADM OILAH, Adam Oilah, The Heavenly Man, and Autik Yomin, The Ancient of days. The devout

Rabbi bows his head and adores the sublime conception. He is represented in the Hebrew Old Testament by the Divine Name AHIH, Aheieh, "I am" (Exodus iii. v. 4).

The conscious God having arisen in His energy, there follow immediately two further Emanations, the Trio shining in the symbol of a radiant triangle. ChKMH, Chokmah, Wisdom, The King, with the Divine Name IH, Jah is the Second Sefhira; BINH, Binah, Understanding, The Queen, and the Divine Name IHVH Jehovah is the Third Sefhira,--the Supernal Triad" is demonstrated.

Then follow GDULH, Gedulah, also called CHSD, Chesed, Mercy, with the Divine Name AL, El; and its contrast GBURH, Geburah, Severity, also called Pachad, Fear, with the Divine Name ALH, Eloah; and the reflected triangle is completed by the Sixth Sefhira, the Sun, named TPART, Tiphareth, or Beauty, with the name ALHIM Elohim; considered as a triangle of reflection with the apex below. The third triangle may be considered as a second reflection with the apex below; it is formed of the seventh, eighth, and ninth Sephiroth; NTzCh, Netzach, Firmness or Victory, with the name Jehovah Sabaoth; HUD, Hod or Hud, Splendour, with the name Elohim Sabaoth; and ISUD, Yesod, Foundation, with the name AL ChAI, El Chai.

Finally, all these ideals are resumed in a single form, the Tenth Sefhira, MLKUT, Malkuth, the Shekinah, the Kingdom, also sometimes called Tzedek, Righteousness. The whole Decad form "Adam Kadmon," "The Archetypal Man," and the wondrous OTz CHIIM, "Tree of Life." In the ancient figures of Adam Kadmon we see Kether, the Crown, over the forehead; Chokmah and Binah are the two halves of the thinking brain; Gedulah and Geburah are the organs of action, the right and left upper limbs; Tiphareth

is the heart and the vital organs of the chest; Netzach and Hud are the lower limbs right and left; Jesod refers to the digestive and reproductive organs and abdomen; and lastly Malkuth is compared to the feet as a basis or foundation of man upon this earth or lowest plane: see the plate of The Adam Kadmon, Archetypal Man, or The First Adam.

These Triads were looked upon as formed of a Principle of Union and a male and female potency, and thus a Balance, MTQLA, Methequela, exists.

Almost as old as the Kabalistic doctrine of the Sephiroth, the Intelligences, or Emanations, are the peculiar forms in which they were represented in diagrams which resume all Kabalistic ideas, and are emblems of these views on every subject. Every Deific conception can be thus demonstrated, and also the constitution of the Angelic Hosts, the principles of Man's Nature, the group of Planetary Bodies, the Metallic elements, the Zigzag flash of the Lightning and the composition of the sacred Tetragrammaton, the Mystical Jehovah, IHVH, Yod, Heh, Vau, Heh, numbering 26. See Plates I., II., III., IV., V., and VI. This Decad of Deific Emanations is to be conceived as first formulated on the Divine First plane of Atziluth, which is entirely beyond our ken; to be reproduced on the Second plane of pure Spirit, Briah; to exist in the same Decad form in the world of Yetzirah, the Third or Formative plane; and finally to be sufficiently condensed as to be cognizable by the human intellect on the Fourth plane of Assiah, on which we seem to exist. From our point of view we may regard the "Tree of Life" as a type of many divine processes and forms of manifestation, but these are symbols we use to classify our ideals, and we must not debase the divine Emanations by asserting these views of the Sephiroth are real, but only as conceivable by humanity.

For example, the Kabbalah demonstrates the grouping of the Ten Sephiroth into Three Pillars; the Pillar of Mercy, the Pillar of Severity, and the Pillar of Mildness between them: these may also be associated with the Three Mother Letters, A, M, Sh; Aleph, Mem and Shin. Then again by two horizontal lines we may form three groups and consider these Sephiroth to become types of the Three divisions of Man's Nature, the Intellectual, Moral, and Sensuous (neglecting Malkuth, the material body), thus connecting the Kabbalah with Mental and Moral Philosophy and Ethics. By three lines again we consider the Sephiroth to be divisible into Four Planes., upon each of which I have already said you must conceive the whole Ten Sephiroth to be immanent. By a series of Six lines we group them into Seven planes referable to the worlds of the Seven Planetary powers, thus connecting the Kabbalah with Astrology. (W. Gorn Old has recently published a volume called "Kabalistic Astrology.")

To each Sephira were allotted in Briah an especial Archangel, and in Yetzirah an army of Angels; these connect the Kabbalah with Talismanic Magic. There is also a close relation between the old Kabbalistic theology and Alchemy; each Sephira of Assiah becomes the allegoric emblem of one of the metals: and there is a special Rabbinic volume named "Asch Metzareph" entirely concerned with Alchemy; its name in English meaning is "Cleansing Fires." (My English translation can be obtained.) A. E. Waite in his work on the Kabbalah states that Rabbi Azariel ben Menachem in his "Commentary on the Sephiroth" allots a particular colour to each one, but these do not agree with the colours given in the Zohar, where we find Kether called colourless, Tiphareth purple, and Malkuth sapphire-blue.

These Ten Sephiroth are thought of as being connected together by "Paths," Twenty-two in number, shown on the Diagram; they are numbered by means of the letters of the Hebrew Alphabet, each of which being equally a letter and a number. The 22 Trumps of the pack of Tarot cards (Tarocchi) are also related to these Paths. The 22 Paths, added to the 10 Sephiroth form the famous "Thirty-two Ways" by which Wisdom descends by successive stages upon Man, and may enable him to mount to the Source of Wisdom by passing successively upward through these 32 Paths. This process of mental Abstraction was the Rabbinic form of what the Hindoo knows as Yoga, or the Union of the human with the Divine, by contemplation and absorption of the mind in a mystical reverie.

Frequently quoted Kabbalistic words are: Arikh Anpin, Makroprosopos, the Vast Countenance which is a title of Kether the Crown, Deity Supreme; Zair Anpin, Mikroprosopos, the Lesser Countenance is the Central Sun, Tiphereth, a conception that has something in common with that of the Christian Christ, the Son of God. (The former was represented by a face in profile, the latter by the full face. M. Mathers). Binah is the Supernal Mother, Aima. Malkuth is the Inferior Mother, the Bride of the Mikroprosopos. Daath or Knowledge is the union of Chokmah and Binah, of wisdom and understanding. Merkabah was the Chariot Throne of God of the vision of Ezekiel mentioned in his chapters i. and x.; it rested on wheels and was carried by Four Cherubim, the Sacred Animal Forms, which resembled the

Man, Lion, Bull and Eagle, which were related to the Four quarters of the World, and to Four types of humanity.

The Four Letters Yod, He, Vau, He, or as we say IHVH, of the name we call Jehovah, are allotted and distributed by the Kabalistic doctrine among the Sephiroth in a peculiar manner, forming the mysterious conception of the Tetragrammaton, that awful name of Divine Majesty which might never be uttered by the common people, and whose true pronunciation has been for many centuries confessedly lost to the Jews and has never been known to the Christians.

The views of the Kabalists on Cosmogony are not easy to explain, but as before said the Supreme Boundless God, the "Ain Suph" was not the direct Creator of the World, nor was the world made out of nothing.

The highest Trinity of "The Crown, King and Queen" having arisen by Divine Emanation, its powers descended and expanded into the Seven Lower Sephiroth, and produced the Universe in their own image, a decad of forces, as a whole constituting the ADM QDMUN Adam Quadmun, or Adam Kadmon, the Primordial or Archetypal Man; the world produced is the existing Universe of which we have cognizance. The universe is called the "Garment of God": this lower world is a copy of the Divine World, everything here has its prototype above. (Zohar ii. 20.)

Some Kabalistic treatises speak of earlier worlds created before the conjunction of the Divine King and Queen; these perished in the void; these lost worlds are referred to in Genesis 36, v. 31-40, as "The Kings of Edom who reigned before Israel," they are said to have perished one after the other; these worlds were convulsed and were no more known.

Having considered the Divine Emanations, and the origin of the Universe, I must refer to the spiritual beings of the Four Worlds. In the First purest and highest World of Atziluth there dwell only the Primary Ten Sephiroth of the Adam Oilah or Archetype, perfect and immutable.

In the Second World of Briah reside the Archangels headed by "Metatron" related to Kether, in solemn grandeur; He is the garment of Al Shaddai, the visible manifestation of God; the Number of both is 314 (Zohar iii. 231a). The

word Metatron meant "The Great Teacher." It has a curious resemblance to the Greek words met thronon, beside or beneath the throne of God; but this derivation is fanciful. He rules the other Archangels of the Universe, who govern in their courses all the heavenly bodies, and the evolutions of the dwellers on them: He is, according to the Kabalists, the efficient God of our Earth,--the Greek Demiourgos. The other Arch-Angels are according to Macgregor Mathers, Ratziel, Tzaphkiel, Tzadquiel, Kamael, Michael, Haniel, Raphael, Gabriel, and Sandalphon.

In the Third World of Yetzirah are the Ten hosts of Angelic beings, a separate class for each Sephira; they are intelligent incorporeal beings, clothed in a garment of light, and are set over the several heavenly bodies, the planets, over the elemental forces, and over seasons, times, etc.; they are the officers of the great Arch-Angels. The Hosts of Angels of the Sephiroth are Chaioth ha kodesh, Auphanim, Arelim, Chashmalim, Seraphim, Melakim, Elohim, Beni Elohim, Cherubim, and tenthly the Ishim who are the Beatified Souls of men and women.

The Fourth World of Assiah is filled with the lowest beings, the Evil Demons, Kliphoth or Qliphoth, the cortices or shells, and with all so-called material objects, and to this world belong men, the Egos or Souls imprisoned in earthly human bodies. This world also has its ten grades, each one more far from the higher forces and forms, each one more dark and impure. First come THU, Tohu, the Formless; and BHU, Bohu, the Void, thirdly ChShK, the Darkness, of the early universe, and from these our world was developed and now exists; then come seven hells, whose dwellers are evil beings representing all human sins; their rulers are Samael or Satan the angel of death, and Lilith, the Asheth Zenunim, the Woman of whoredom, and this pair of demons are also called "The Beast," see Zohar ii. 255; Samael had also an incommunicable name, which was IHVH reversed; for Demon est Deus inversus.

The whole universe only became complete with the creation of Man, called the Microcosm, the Earthly Adam; a copy of "The Archetypal Man" after another manner; he has principles and faculties and forms comparable to all the Sephiroth and Worlds, although his material body dwells on the Assiatic plane.

From God, the Angels and the World, let us pass to consider more fully what the Kabbalah teaches about Man, the human Soul or Ego.

It has already been explained that the Doctrine of Emanation postulates successive stages of the manifestation of the Supreme Spirit, which may be regarded as existing on separate planes. Now the Ten Sephiroth condense their energy into a formulated Four-parted group of Three Spiritual planes, and a plane of so-called Objectivity, or of Matter. These Ten Sephiroth, and the planes, each contribute an essence which in their totality, in ever-varying proportion, constitutes Man. At his origin there was formulated what the scientists might call "Archetypal Man," and what the Kabbalists named Adam Kadmon, ADM QDMUN. Primeval Man, the Greek protogonos. Successive stages of beings of this type pass along the ages through a descending scale, offering the individual every variety of experience, and then along an ascending scale of redevelopment until human perfection is attained, and ultimate reunion with the Divine is the result of the purified Soul having completed its pilgrimage.

Before we consider Man in his present state we must note the views of the Kabbalah upon Man in his primal state.

Man was the final Word of Creation, he was a resume of all forms, and so transcended the angels in his faculties. The first man had no fleshy body, no material envelope: Adam and Eve were clothed only in ethereal forms, and were not subject to appetites or passions, they dwelled in Light in the GN OiDN, Garden of Aidin, of Eden, of pleasant peace (Zohar ii. 229b). The man and the woman before their descent to this world were as one,-- androgynous; at incarnation they were separated into sexes. The first human pair broke the first commandment, they sinned and were doomed to a complete descent into matter; the Lord God made them "coats of skin," He gave them material bodies, and with these came the need of food, and the passions required to bring forth a succession of earthly bodies.

Yet man is still the copy of God on earth; his form is related to the Tetragrammaton of Jehovah IHVH, for in a diagram, Yod is as the head, Heh the arms, Vau the body, and the final Heh the lower limbs: (see Zohar ii. 42a). The first pair were tempted by Samael, the allegorical Personality of

the lower tendencies, which give the craving to experience earth life and take a part in its continuous changes of force and form. They did what they knew would imperil their purely psychic existence, they sank fully into material forms, they took on the grossness of Malkuth, and so were separated from the Sephirotic Tree, from the Higher Potencies, which have no taint of matter. All matter is ever changing its form, and so their bodies must be changed; their bodies died, and so must the bodies of all incarnated Egos; at death the personality passes away to a rest, and then to a further experience of life, or to a sphere of punishment, or to a realm of bliss.

In their earthly forms they brought forth bodies like their own, and God sent down other souls to dwell in them, to experience earth life, its sins and sufferings; and to pass a probation by which they also might fall, but yet may rise to regain a share of man's lost estate and finally to rise up through the Sephiroth to a reunion with the Divine Essence.

Remember that the Sephirotic Crown was First, then came Chokmah, a masculine Potency, and then Binah, a feminine one; from their union arose the created universe of angels, men and earth: but 'as above so below,' so we have in Genesis a Man formed, then succeeds a Woman, and from them all others.

In the " Commentary on the Creation of Genesis," still allegorical like Genesis itself, it is stated :--"There is in Heaven a treasury called GUP, Guph, and all the Souls which were created in the beginning, and hereafter to come into this world, The Holy One placed therein: out of this treasury The Holy One furnishes children in the womb with Souls."

A further commentary in symbolic language narrates how The Holy One perceiving a child's body to be in formation, sends for a suitable Ego to inhabit it.

"The Holy One, blessed be He, beckons to an Angel who is set over the disembodied souls, and says to him, 'Bring me such a soul': and this is being always done since the world began; the soul appears before the Holy One and worships in His presence, to whom the Eternal One says :--'Betake thyself to this form.' Instantly the soul excuses himself, saying, 'Oh Governor of the World, I am satisfied with the world in which I have been so long: if it

please Thee, do not force me into this foul body, for I am a Spirit.' The Holy One, blessed be He, answers: 'The world I am about to send thee into is needed for thee, it is to pass down through it that I formed thee from myself.' And so the soul is forced to incarnate and sink into the world where matter will imprison him, where he must suffer, but where he may overcome and from whence he must rise again. The Zohar adds the statement: "and whatever the man learns and displays on earth life, he knew before his incarnation."

This is a parallel doctrine to the Buddhist scheme of Re-incarnation with Karma as God-eternal law, relentlessly compelling the individual Ego to a new earth life.

Christian Ginsburg states that a "Transmigration of Souls" was the belief of the Pharisees in the time of Josephus; and this dogma was held by many Jews up to the ninth century of our era. The Caraites have accepted it ever since the seventh century. St. Jerome says it was a doctrine of the early Christian Church taught only to a select few believers, and Origen was of opinion that without transmigration, the incidents of the struggle between Esau and Jacob before birth, Genesis 25, v. 22, and the reference to Jeremiah in the mother's womb could not be explained, Jer. i. 5.

The Kabbalah then teaches that the Egos have come out from the Spirit Fountain, suffer incarnation again and again until experience and perfection have been attained, and ultimately rejoin the Divine Source: Zohar i. 145, 168; ii. 97.

Now what is it that dwells for a time in this 'Coat of Skin,' as Genesis in chapter 3, v. 21, calls it, this so-called material body? It is a Divine Spark, composed of several elements derived from the symbolic Four Parts of Jehovah, and from Three Worlds, and these are seated in the Fourth World of Effects, the Material Universe. Now it is no doubt true that in the several Kabbalistic schools, the numbers and names of these Essences vary, but the basal idea remains the same: just in a similar way the principles of Man's constitution, as stated in different Hindoo books, also vary, but the root idea is the same in them all.

The Human Principles may be stated as Three in a fourth--the body; or as Five, recognising Astral form and material body; or as Seven, subdividing the divine principle; or as Ten, comparable to the Sephiroth. To explain these fully would take a long essay and would require many Hebrew abstruse words, a difficulty to those who are unused to them: two systems will suffice as an illustration.

From Yod, the Je of Jehovah, comes the highest over-shadowing of the Divine, comparable to the Atma of the Indian philosophies. From He, the ho of Jehovah, comes Neshamah, the Buddhi of the Hindoos, the spiritual soul. From Vau, the v of Jehovah, comes Ruach, the Manas of the Hindoos, Intellect and Mind. From the final He, the ah of Jehovah, is derived Nephesh, the Kama of the Hindoos, the appetites and passions.

These are all implanted in the Astral shell, which moulds the physical body, the instrument which acts upon material objects.

The Human Soul is again conceived of as distributed through several distinct forms of conscious manifestation related to the "Ten Sephiroth": the several Kabalistic treatises give several groupings, which are all relevant one to the other, the most usual one being a triple division, into Nephesh, the passions referred to Malkuth; Ruach, the Mind, Reason, and Intellect referred to the group of Six Sephiroth lying around the Sun of Tiphereth; and Neshamah, the spiritual aspirations associated with the Supernal Triangle of the Queen, King and Crown.

These Human principles function upon Four Worlds,--Divine, Moral, Intellectual and Emotional respectively: and either of these essences may dominate a man, and they do, in fact, exist in constantly varying proportions. The highest principle overshadows the others, and the central ones may reach up to the higher; or by neglect of opportunities, or by vicious actions, may fall lower and lower, so as to approximate to the seeming matter of the body. As the Neshamah draws one to Spiritual excellence, so the Nephesh leads down to physical enjoyment.

In another form of symbolism the Kabalist tells us a man has two companions, or guides; one on the right, Yetzer ha Tob, to good acts, he is from the higher Sephiroth; and one on the left, Yetzer ha Ra, encouraging

the appetites and passions, temptations to evil, is an agent of Samael and of The Beast. Man is in a very unfortunate position according to the Zohar 95 b, for it is there said that the Evil Angel joins him at birth, but the Good Angel only at the age of 13 years.

As to Death, as we have already learned, the man's Ego or Soul, unless the life has been superexcellent, has to be re-born in another form, but at death, as all religions agree, great changes occur. According to the Kabbalah, the visible material body, the Guph, decays, and the Animal aspect of the soul, the Nephesh, only gradually fades away from it: the Ruach, the Human aspect, passes away from the Assiatic plane, and the Neshamah, the spiritual soul, returns to the Treasury of Heaven, to the Gan Oidin, or of Paradise, perfected to a Spiritual world beyond the plain of rebirths. The "Sepher jareh chattaim" says that a man is judged in the same hour in which he dies; for the Shekinah, a Presence of the Divine One, comes near him, with three Angels, of whom the chief is Dumah, the Angel of Silence: if the soul is condemned, Dumah takes it to Gai-Hinnom, or hell, for a period of punishment before the next incarnation; if approved, the Soul passes to an Oidin or Heaven. In the end of the present manifestation of the Universe, all souls will have become perfected by suffering, have been blessed in Paradise, and will be in reunion with the God from Whom they came forth.

The Kabbalistic theory of man's constitution, origin and destiny is very different from the modern Christian view, but differs from the Indian schemes more in manner of presentation than in principle, and these two may be fitly studied side by side and each will illuminate the other. There is, indeed, no sharp line of cleavage between the Western mystic doctrines, the Kabbalism of the Middle Ages related to the Egyptian Hermeticism, and the Indian Esoteric Theosophy. They differ in language nomenclature, and in the imagery employed in the effort to represent spiritual ideas to mankind; but there is no sufficient reason for any condemnation of either school by any other. The world of intellectual culture is wide enough for both to exist side by side, and the mere fact that they are philosophic Systems in any way comprehensible to men is evidence that either can be composed of pure and unveiled truth, for we are still only able to see as in a glass darkly, and

must make much further progress before we can hope to see God face to face and know Him as He is.

We must be content to progress, as students have ever done, by stages of development; in each grade the primal truths are re-stated in a different form; they are revealed or revealed in language and symbolism suitable to the learner's own mental condition; hence the need of a teacher, of a guide who has traversed the path, and who can recognise by personal communion the stage which each pupil has attained. There is no royal or easy path to high attainment in Mysticism. Unwearied effort, combined with purity of life, is of vital importance. The human intellect can only appreciate and assimilate that which the mind's eye can at any time perceive. The process cannot be forced. Mystic lore cannot be stolen. If any learner did appropriate the knowledge of a Grade beyond him it would be to him but folly, disappointment and darkness.

Students have often been offered a doctrine, or assertion, or explanation, which their intellect has rejected as absurd, or as sheer superstition; which same dogma they have later in life assimilated with every feeling of esteem. Occultism in this resembles Freemasonry; we are either admitted to the hidden knowledge, or we are not; and if we are not admitted, we never believe any secret of its ritual even if it be offered to us. The secrets of Occultism are like Freemasonry; in truth they are to some extent the secrets that Freemasonry has lost. They are of their very nature inviolable; for they can only be attained by personal progress; they might be plainly told to the outsider, and not be understood by him. For if anyone has been able to divine and to grasp such a secret, he will not tell it even to his dearest friend; for the simple reason that if his friend is unable to divine it for himself, its communication in mere words would not confer the hidden knowledge upon him.

The whole Kabalistic theories are of a nature similar to the secrets of Freemasonry; there was much doctrine that was never written nor printed: these works often describe imagery which seems folly, and contain doctrines that at first seem absurd; yet they enshrine the highly spiritual teachings which I have shortly outlined. The mere reading of these volumes is of little avail; the spiritual eye needs to be opened to see spiritual things;

and the great Kabalists of old did not cast pearls of wisdom before the ignorant or the vicious, nor suffer the unclean to enter the Temple of Wisdom. The serious student must make strenuous efforts to attain to the higher life of the True Occultism, then perchance in a distant future, a record of temptations avoided, and of a life of self-sacrifice may serve as Signs and Pass Words to secure admission to the Palace of the Great King.
