

Moses Cordovero. Pardes Rimmonim (The Orchard of Pomegranates)

Provisional working translation by Stephan Claassen, 2024-25.

For this translation I have studied the readings and interpretations of the Pardes (in French) by Michael Sebban of Beit Ha-Zohar (Paris, France; <http://beithazohar.com>)), which were very insightful and helpful, and also the English translation (October 2024) of (most of) the Pardes Rimmonim by Elizeu Antonio de Souza (which is less detailed and which leaves out important details). I made decisions in the present translation following my own judgement. All shortcomings and mistakes are my full responsibility.

Gate 1. Chapter 1.

The First Gate which is called “Ten and not nine”.

It is well-known and eminent that all those who engage in this hidden wisdom unanimously consent that the number of the Sefirot is ten, and there is no disagreement at all in this matter.

And see, this is one of the matters on which a covenant was made with the wisdom of the Sefirot, and see, among is is the Book of Formation (Sefer Yetzirah) which is attributed to Abraham our father, peace be upon him. But there are some who attribute it to Rabbi Akiva, yet this is not agreed upon.

And see, the words of this book are profound and lofty, and they are hidden from the eyes of the intellect, [from] the glance of those who look carefully. And even if there are many different interpretations of it, we still, in all of its parts, need those who explain. And nevertheless we will explain its matters with all that is within the possibility of the limitations of our meagre intellect.

And this is what it says: “*Ten Sefirot without what-ness, the number of ten fingers, five opposite five, and the single covenant corresponding in the middle, in the word of the tongue and in the circumcision of the genitals.*” [Sefer Yetzirah 1:3] Until here the citation.

It came up in our mind not to explain this verse, because its depths and its secrets are hidden from us, as they are certainly above our intellect, and there is no person who can descend to the depth of its language except Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, peace be upon him, and Rabbi Akiva, peace be upon him, “whose abode is not among the mortals” [Daniel 2:11]. But because of the obligation that is upon us we will interpret it with strenght of hand. And what should be examined more closely?

The first is that it says “Ten Sefirot without what(-ness), the number”, which in truth is superfluous, because it would be proper to say: “Ten Sefirot without what(-ness) corresponding to fingers”; why [does it then add] “number”? Secondly: it says “five”, why should it read thus [that is: making the transition from talking about the Sefirot to that of numbers]? The third is: according to its matters there are eleven of them, since they are “five against five” plus the covenant in the middle, which makes [a total of] eleven. The fourth is that its saying “with the word of the tongue and with the covenant of the genitals” seems to

show that there are two harmonizers, but why two? The fifth is: what is its intention to elucidate to us whether they correspond to the fingers, because this seems to be unrelated to the topic at hand. The sixth: the moment that it descends to explain by means of [bodily] limbs, it would have been proper to explain all the limbs to which the Sefirot allude, as we will explain in the Gate of the Soul (XXXI), chapter 4, with help of HaShem.

And it is said that the author of this book intended to conceal in this chapter the entire wisdom of the Sefirot and to compel it. And he says that they are “Ten Sefirot”, and because of his saying that they are ten [a number], he will draw out a little on the topic of limitation and corporeality.

After they have been divided into number he says that they are “without what(-ness) [BeliMah]”, the explanation is [that Belimah consists of] two words: without [Beli] what(-ness) [Mah], and the intention is: without quiddity/essence. Because although the sentence of our mouth has not abstained from saying [that the Sefirot are] ten, the true believe is that they are Belimah, without quiddity/essence. And the intention [is] that they do not have an essence that is comprehensible to human beings, because they are not limited and grasped, as they are without limit or corporeality. And that which does not have corporeality is not grasped except with the heart of the wise among the people of Israel by way of vision as in prophecy. And the reason for the number ten, at the same time them being without what(-ness) will be explained in the Gates that follow, with help of HaShem.

And he says “*the number of ten*” etc. so that we will not come to say under great pressure, due to the limitedness of our knowledge, that in reality there is nothing but the simple One, therefore he says that they are of the reality of number.

And the expression for the Sefirot is an expression of number, as number governs them even if they are without what-ness. And the evidence for this is that their name, “SeFiRot” (ספירות) has the meaning of number (miSPaR, מספר), as we have explained. And to establish that they are number and that their number is ten, he says: “*the number of ten fingers*”. And Scripture says: “*When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers*” (Psalm 8:4).

And see, from scripture it is established that the creation of the heavens and their forces is through the fingers, which are other names for the Sefirot of the Supernal King.

And see, there are 10 fingers. And if this is so, the conclusion is that the Sefirot, with whom the world was created, they [are] 10.

“Five opposite five”. There is a difficulty to it that Scripture says: “*Further, My hand founded the earth, and My right hand measured out the heavens*” (Isaiah 48:13). See, we find that the heavens are the work of the hand of G-d [as probably an abbreviation was used in the original manuscript, it would also be possible to read אֶחָד, “the work of *one* hand”] which are five fingers, and they are only five Sefirot and not ten. To this he says: “Five opposite five”, because if the heavens are the work of a hand of G-d [or: of one hand], and the earth is the work of a hand of G-d [or: of one hand], we see that for sure the two of them together are ten

[fingers], and this is “five opposite five”, five from the right hand and five from the left hand, the right hand for making the heavens, the left hand for making the earth.

“and the single covenant corresponding in the middle”. There is a problem to it, as from this topic there is no necessity, because we could say that they [= the fingers] are five or that they are twenty. And factually there are twenty fingers, ten on the hands and ten on the feet, their sum [being] twenty. [And thus we could say about the Sefirot also]. What you could say [is] that the ten “fingers” that are on the feet, they are shadow and resemblance of the ten that are on the hands, but there are always only ten Sefirot, but that the allusion is that the ten Sefirot in [the world of] Beriah are shadow and clothing for the ten Sefirot that are in [the world of] Atsilut, as we will explain in the Gate of Atsilut, Beriah, Yetsirah, Asiya [Gate XVI], with help of HaShem.

If thus, we might say that they are always only five, and the five left ones are shadow for the five right ones, and the Sefirot they are always only five, or the conclusion is drawn again and we might say that they are twenty. To this [= to avoid these interpretations] it is necessary that the two of them are in one house, in his saying “and a single covenant” etc.

And the general principle of the matters is, as we have found unity and a unifying covenant between five and five, that we will find that the five right ones and the five left ones are one matter and one subject, that their sum is ten Sefirot. Which we did not find between the ten [fingers] of the hand and the ten on the feet, since we have seen that they are two [different] arrangements, each one [an arrangement] of ten, one shadow and clothing of the other. And the harmonizers between five and five are: the tongue - harmonizing between the fingers-, and: the covenant of the genitals - between the ten that are on the feet -.

And on the Sefirot, on the subject that they are “five opposite five”; in this matter the commentators have given two explanations. The first [explanation] is that the Sefirot are arranged in two arrangements. The first arrangement is: Keter, Chochmah, Binah, Gedolah, Gevurah, these are five, and they say that they serve to direct the upper ones. And Tif’eret, Netsach, Hod, Yesod and Malchut, this is the second arrangement, to direct the lower ones. And although there is no subject telling [us] that they serve to direct the upper ones nor the lower ones, this is [nevertheless] accepted among us. Nevertheless on the subject of the division of the Sefirot, they [= the commentators] have aimed rightly, because this is the opinion of Rashbi of blessed memory in some places, especially on the subject of the Tefilin, because the four portions [texts in the bayit] of the head are Chochmah and Binah, Gedolah and Gevurah, and [of the bayit] on the hand they are Tif’eret, Netsach, Hod and Yesod, thus its explanation in the Zohar (Parashat Vaetchanan, III.264a). And if these matters involve intense meditation, because it is written that the four portions are the four letters [of the Tetragram; see Tikkunei haZohar (Haqdamot) 3a] , if this is so, it [then] follows for us that the Sefirot are divided into two arrangements according to the words of the commentators.

And thus on the subject of the chariots in the Sefirot, its explanation in the Tikkunim (Tikkunei haZohar, Haqdamot 3; Tikkunei Zohar Hadash 111) [is] that the face of Adam on the throne is Chochmah (חכמה) [also spelt as] כח מה, power of What (מה), as the numerical value of Adam (אדם) [מה and אדם both have the numerical value of 45], the eagle [is] Binah,

the lion Chesed and the bull Gevurah; this is the chariot up high. And below it is a second chariot, [where] the face of Adam [is] Tif'eret, and Netsach, Hod and Yesod [are] lion, bull and eagle [respectively] this is the second chariot. And upper Keter complements everything above, and Malkut complements everything below. See, this divides the Sefirot in two arrangements as we have mentioned.

And besides these there are many [other] indispensable things [to mention], but we will not make it long [here] so as not to stray from what we intend.

And see, along the line of this explanation we will [now further] explain this Mishna [from Sefer Yetsirah]. Which is that Tif'eret is "a single covenant" which rises very high with the mystery of Da'at, and is connecting the upper ones to the lower ones by means of its going upwards in the three first Sefirot and its harmonizing the arms, and emanating in the Netsachs [= Netsach and Hod] and in Yesod and Malkut. See that there is "*the single covenant ... in the word of the tongue and in the circumcision of the genitals*" "*...corresponding in the middle...*", [its] explanation: in the middle of the ten upper fingers, the harmonizer is Tif'eret who is called "the word of the tongue" as I will explain.

And he says: "a single covenant" because the subject of the covenant is the subject of divorcing and cutting, and by means of the cutting of this matter the knot of the covenant is made, and this is the subject of the covenant.

And some read יחוד "union" where some read יחיד "single", and all amount to the same thing, although best chosen is יחוד "union", because by means of the covenant it is the union, which is the knot of the matter, its force and its union. And some want to connect "the word of the tongue" to Binah, but according to our method it will be explained [to refer to] Tif'eret, although "tongue" is [also] another name for Binah, though not for Tif'eret. This being so, he does not say "tongue" but "word of the tongue", which is the Sound and the Voice that goes out from the tongue, meaning to say: by means of the tongue. And see, the Sound is the sum of water, Fire and Air, as is well-known, and these are the three aspects of Tif'eret, as Air is the harmonizer between the Water and Fire of Chesed and Gevurah [respectively]. And see, he does not aim at the actual limb which is the tongue, since then it would become problematic as they [the Sefirot] would be eleven with the harmonizer, but the harmonizer is the Voice which is Tif'eret, in the mystery of its ascent to Binah, which is the tongue which is the Shofar, as from there the Voice goes out, the sum of Water, Fire and Air, and this is the aspect of Tif'eret that rises upwards between the three first ones [Keter, Chochmah and Binah] and harmonizes between Gedolah and Gevurah, indicating the connection of the five upper ones with the five lower ones, and as we will explain in the Gate of the Arrangements of the Special Names [Gate XXI] with help of HaShem.

"And the circumcision of the מעור (genitals)", this is the covenant of the circumcision, and the explanation of מעור just as [in] "as the embracement (מער) of a man and his companion" (1 Kings 7:36), as our Sages, may their memory be a blessing, have explained: "as the embracement (מער), as the union of a man with his wife" [Talmud Bavli, Yoma 54a/b], who is the woman. And the intention is the unity that exists between the ten fingers of the feet by means of the genitals that are unifying them. And this explanation is necessary, as "the word of the tongue" is the one unifying the ten fingers of the hands, and "the circumcision of the genitals" unifies the ten fingers of the feet, from what he explains in the sixth chapter [of

Sefer Yetzirah], and this is what it says: “He cut for him the covenant between the ten fingers of his feet, and between the fingers of his hands, and this is the covenant of the tongue.”, end of citation. And see, this mishna has [now] been explained in the manner of the explanation which the commentators gave on the subject of “five opposite five”.

Gate 1. Chapter 2.

Further, we will clarify this Mishna through a different explanation which the commentators have given on “five opposite five”, and it is more fitting and accepted, and it is also recognized as such in the words of Rashbi [Rabbi Shimon bar Jochai] of blessed memory in many places.

And the subject [is] five from the right and five from the left, the five from the right [being] the five Sefirot whose main inclination is towards the side of Chesed (Mercy) which is the right, and they are Keter, Chochma, Gedolah [here the Sefira Chesed is called Gedolah, as not to confuse it with the side of Chesed], Netsach and Tif’eret. And the five on the left, they are the five Sefirot whose main inclination is towards the side of Din (Judgement) which is the left, and they are Binah, Gevurah, Hod, Yesod and Malkut. And if it so that the essence of Tif’eret is [being] the central axis, if this is so, its essence is [still] Chesed as is known, as it is below, opposite Chesed, and its inclination is to the right. And Binah in its aspect is connected to Din (Judgement), as it is called “Performer of mighty deeds” [Morning Service, the Blessings of the Shema], because judgements are aroused from it, as we will explain in the Gate of Essence and Conduct [Gate VIII] chapter 6. And thus on Hod, it is said “And my splendor (Hod) was turned into destruction” (Daniel 10:8), [and] “all day misery (דוה)” (Lamentations 1:13), [misery has] the characters of Hod (הוד). And Yesod also thus the essence of its inclination is to the side of Gevurah, and thus Rashbi of blessed memory clarified in the Tikkunei haZohar (Tikkun 13, page 29b) an the ninth blessing etc., and this is its citation: “And the righteous one/Tsaddik [indicating Yesod] receives from the left, and the central pillar [indicating Tif’eret] receives from the right”.

And he further explains there (in Tikkunei Zohar Hadash, first Tikkun 28)] on this subject itself, and it says: “The righteous one/Tsaddik is he that moves to the left, [and] he is Isaac (יצחק), endpoint (קץ) of life (חי), living (חי) of the worlds/(or: eighteen (חי) worlds), attached to the left etc.”. And although this citation in its context needs a lengthy explanation and appropriate reflection, anyway from the generality of his words it follows for us that for Yesod the essence of its inclination [is] to the left, contrary to Tif’eret. And this subject is possibly the reason for the two harmonizers, apart from other reasons that there are for this matter, as we explain in the Gate of the Harmonizers [Gate IX], chapter 4, with help of HaShem.

And for Malkut similarly its essence is Judgement (Din), as its name is well-known in the mouth of all Kabbalists, which is “Degree of Weak Judgement”. And although there are some places that are apparently opposed to this subject, anyhow these words are absolute foundations, as nails inserted, and the rule is rule of truth.

And see, these Sefirot are as the arrangement of two hands, the right hand: they are Keter, Chochmah, Gedolah, Netsach, Tif’eret; and the five from the left [are] the left hand: Binah, Gevurah, Hod, Yesod, Malkut.

And see, Tif'eret is "the covenant of the tongue", because it is the one that harmonizes between Judgement (Din) and Mercy (Chesed), as is known. And it certainly belongs to the [same] species as the ten themselves. And thus "the covenant of the genitals", even if its essence is in Yesod, see, according to this it will also allude thus to Tif'eret, because "the body [referring to Tif'eret] and the covenant [of circumcision], we consider them as one" as is explained with the words of Rashbi of blessed memory in the Tikkunim [Tikkunei HaZohar] many times. And see, according to this it is found that between ten [fingers, in the world of Atsilut] and ten [toes, in the world of Beriah; see chapter 1 above] there is no harmonizing as there is between five and five, as we have explained above in Chapter 1. And see, this mishna has [now] been explained [with] a second explanation by means of what the commentators have explained on "five opposite five".

We will further explain this mishna [with] a third explanation of "five opposite five" in a way different from what was shown to us [until now]. Let one choose for oneself. And it [the explanation] is that when he says "five opposite five" he does not intend the fingers [which were already] mentioned, because he has moved away from the subject of the ten towards explaining to us the harmonizing between Judgement (Din) and Mercy (Chesed), and [towards] the arrangement of the harmonizing, and [towards] the subject of the need of [this] harmonizing. And to this he says that they are "five against five" [and] that Tif'eret harmonizes between Chochmah and Binah in the mystery of Da'at when it rises towards Keter, as we will explain in more detail in the Gate of the Harmonizers [Gate IX] with help of HaShem. See, the two of them are one opposite one: Chochmah opposite Binah, as this one [Chochmah] is the root of Chesed [Gedolah] and this one [Binah] the root of Gevurah. Furthermore Tif'eret harmonizes between Gedolah and Gevurah, as is known, and Rashbi, of blessed memory, explained it in the Tikkunim (Tikkun 30, page 75b) on the verse "and it was evening and it was morning, [one day]" [Genesis 1:6], and this is what it says [there]: "And God called the firmament 'heavens'" [Genesis 1:8]. "And God called", this is the Upper Mother, "the firmament 'heavens'", this is the Pillar of the Center, which is between right and left, and perfects them both. This is what is written: "and it was evening and it was morning" and these are the evening of Isaac and the morning of Abraham" – end of citation.

And although amidst the plain meaning of the words of the saying there is evidence for our intention, nevertheless 'now that it has come to our hands, let us say a small word on it', so that 'it will' not 'depart without staying overnight' [allusion to Babylonian Talmud, Chullin 91b]. And we need to examine it minutely. Firstly: its saying "'and God/Elohim called" this is the Mother', because hitherto we have not heard this, since all Elohim in the parasha of the Work of Creation refers to Binah. Secondly: what is his intention in saying 'Mother' instead of 'Binah', which is its better-known name? Thirdly: his saying 'Pillar of the center which is between right and left', and as after he said 'Pillar of the center' we don't know the intention that it is in the middle of right and left – which are Gedolah and Gevurah – unless it is required to explain it and to prolong with 'which is etc.'. Fourthly: that as soon as he gets down to the explanations that 'it is between right and left', why not say Tif'eret 'which is etc.' and keep silent of 'the Pillar of the center', which appears to be double. Fifthly: his saying that 'it is between right and left and perfects both of them', it ['it perfects both of them'] is double, as this is implied by 'which is between right and left'. Sixthly: his saying 'this is what

is written: “and it was evening and it was morning”, apparently there is no evidence at all for his intention in the biblical verse.

And let us say that Rashbi, peace be on him, found a difficulty in the verse “and God/Elohim called the firmament ‘heavens’”, because ‘firmament’ is Tif’eret and ‘heavens’ is also Tif’eret, if this is so, what is the intention of the verse in saying “and God/Elohim called the firmament ‘heavens’”, that ‘firmament’ and ‘heavens’ are not the same thing? And he answers to this and says: ‘God/Elohim, this is the upper Mother’. The explanation: as already saying you know that all Elohim which is [mentioned] in Bereshit [the first parasha of Genesis] is with Binah, and this Elohim [in the mentioned verse] is with Binah on the side of its aspect together with the lower ones, as it is the influencer, in other words: the one causing the emanations to emanate, and therefore it is called Mother, and this is what it says: ‘this is the upper Mother’. ‘[to] the firmament ‘heavens’, this is the Pillar etc.’ Explanation: Tif’eret has two realities. The first one is from the side of Chochmah, and this is a prestigious reality that is approximately somewhat the mystery of the Line of Compassion/Rachamim, which is what is emanated from Keter and extends itself to Chochmah, as we will explain in the Gate of the Arrangement of Atsilut [Gate V] with help of HaShem. And this is the reality for which Moses our teacher, of blessed memory, is the vehicle, as is explained in the Tikkunim (Tikkunei HaZohar, Tikkun 13, page 29a). And this is what it says: “And Jacob certainly [is] the likeness of the Pillar of the center from the exterior side. And see, Moses was [also] there. But he [is] from the interior side, and that one [= Jacob] from the exterior side (that one [= Jacob] from the body and this one [=Moses] from the soul)” – end of citation.

And see, this reality, which is its aspect in the property of Compassion/Rachamim, without carrying [the side of] Chesed/Mercy and Din/Judgement with it [thus: not totalizing/mediating the two sides], he will give the name ‘soul’ to the reality [of Tif’eret] that is being regenerated out of the mixing and the carrying. And this soul is called ‘firmament’. And we can call [firmament, רִקְיעַ] by means of Tseruf [that is: re-arranging the letters inside a word] יִרְקַע , “foundation/stretching of Yud”, which is the reality [of Tif’eret] that is stretched and is expanded from Keter by means of Yud which is Chochmah. And this reality he clarified with his citation ‘Pillar of the center’, wanting to say: the pillar and the middle Line which does not have any totality at all from Chesed/Mercy and Din/Judgement, but it is [only] between the two of them, and this is what he says: ‘which is between right and left’. And by means of Binah [indicated by ‘Elohim’] this ‘firmament’ is arranged, and they have clothed it [in] the totality of Fire (אש) and Water (מים) which is what is called ‘heavens’ (שמים), and this is “[He] establishes the heavens with understanding [תבונה, referring to Binah].”(Proverbs 3:19). And the aspect that is totalizing this reality is Binah, who is called ‘Mother’, which is the reality of the Heh (ה), which is [built up from] three Wavs (ו) [that is: one can see the letter ה as a composition of three ו, one left, one right and one (turned 90 degrees) above them] which are the three Lines Chesed/Mercy, Din/Judgement and Rachamim/Compassion, as will be explained in the Gate of Reality [Gate XIV]. And therefore he says: ‘totalizes/perfects both of them’, explanation: from the side of the Mother [it] totalizes the right and the left which is the garment that clothes and crowns the prestigious reality. And there is to this subject a proof from the book of the Zohar, parasha Yitro [Zohar II.84a]. And this is what it says: ‘In the biblical verse “Go out and gaze, o daughters of Sion [...] at the crown with which his mother

crowned him” [Song of Songs 3:11]. What is “at the crown”? Rabbi Isaac said: as what is written: “And Saul and his men encircled David” [1 Samuel 23:26]. Because he is crowned with white, red and green, with all colors that are totalized in him and are turned around him. Rabbi Yehuda said: “...at the crown with which his mother crowned him”. What is “the crown”? As is written: “Israel, with you I will glorify myself (פאר) [Isaiah 49:3], and it is written: “and the house of my splendor (תפארת, Tif’eret) I will glorify (פאר) [Isaiah 60:7]’ – end of citation.

And the explanation: King Solomon, with whom there is peace, he is Tif’eret, and Yesod is his peace. And the crown is the reality [of Tif’eret] that is called ‘heavens’, which surrounds his simple reality that is called ‘firmament’ [and] which emanated from Chochmah. And this corresponds to “at the crown with which his mother crowned him”, [his mother] who is the Elohim that was mentioned in our present discussion. And therefore he said earlier [in our text]: ‘which is the mother’, which is Binah, the mother of the children. And “crown” is an expression of surrounding and covering, as the subject: “And Saul and his men were encircling David”, which corresponds to surrounding. And the explanation: as this crowning is with three colors, which are white from the side of Chesed [here the Sefira Chesed/Gedolah] and red from the side of Gevurah, and green composed from both of them, which is the mixture that is mixed by means of the ‘man of the interspaces’ [an allusion to 1 Samuel 17:4] [which is] Tif’eret. And in order that we shall not err, saying that white and red are not in the reality of Tif’eret but only green [is in it], [therefore] he says: ‘and all of them are included in him and are turned around him’. Explanation: King Solomon, who is the spiritual aspect from the side of Chochmah – which is also called King Solomon, as I will clarify in the entries of the special names with help of HaShem – he is surrounded by the three colors, and they are actually turned around him. And he is white in the property of its aspect towards Chesed[Gedolah], and red in the property of its aspect towards Gevurah, and green in the aspect of both of them in the equilibrium of the mixture. And all of them are surrounding him and are crowning him.

And Rabbi Yehuda explained “the crown” with a different explanation that adds to [that of] Rabbi Isaac, and he says that it is not only this [explanation] but “the crown” is the totality of all six extremities [Chesed/Gedolah, Gevurah, Tif’eret, Netsach, Hod and Yesod], as in the property of this aspect is the special name of Tif’eret fitting, which is from the expression ‘ornaments’, as “the ornaments of the headgears” [Exodus 39:28 (the Hebrew text incorrectly refers to Ezekiel here)], and its explanation is: branches, intending to say that it branches out into six extremities, and the six extremities are its [= Tif’eret’s] branches. And this is what he says: “Israel, with you I will glorify myself” [Isaiah 49:3]. And the explanation is: Binah is speaking to Tif’eret, who is called Israel, that she [= Binah] is ornamenting herself with it [= Tif’eret] and is branching out in branches.

And he brings further proof from the biblical verse “and the house of my splendor I will glorify” [Isaiah 60:7], as she [Binah] is branching herself out and is ornamenting herself with her branches. And it intends to say: the house of Tif’eret above is Binah, as also there is its [= Tif’eret’s] resting place, as he [= Tif’eret] “is extending from one side to the other side” [Exodus 26:28], from the side of the heavens which is Binah to the side of the heavens which

is Malkut. And just as Malkut is the house for Tif'eret so also is Binah [the house for Tif'eret], and this is “the house of my splendor I will glorify”. Explanation: she [= Binah; the Hebrew text mistakenly has “he/it”] is branching out with the branches of Tif'eret which are a measure for it [= Tif'eret]. Or it intends [to say] that Malkut is a house for Tif'eret. And Binah says: ““the house of my splendor”” which [= the splendor] is Tif'eret, ‘[is] from my side’, because from the side of Binah it [= Tif'eret] totalizes the ornaments, and similarly for its house that is Malkut, it is possible [for Binah to say that] ‘I will branch out’ in the mystery that she [= Binah] totalizes the six branches from its [Tif'eret's] side, that it is clothing itself six in six [שש here could also allude to ‘fine linen’, which is used in the construction of the Mishkan, Exodus chapters 25 and further], and this corresponds to “with the crown”, which is this ornament and garment. Until here [the explanation of Rabbi Yehuda].

And this is what was intended in the biblical verse “And God/Elohim called”, as it is the Mother who is crowning “to the firmament” [with] the crown that is called ‘heavens’. And he brings in a proof to this from the biblical verse: “and it was evening and it was morning, one day”. And the explanation: evening [refers] to Isaac and morning to Abraham. In their totality together Tif'eret is becoming a reality and clothes itself, which is called “one day” which corresponds to ‘heavens’. And the totality of ‘heavens (שמים)’ corresponds to ‘day’, as it [consists of] fire (שם) and water (מים) [see earlier in this chapter for the Hebrew word ‘heavens’ thought as consisting of ‘fire’ and ‘water’], evening and morning. And to this he says ‘one day’, being united and uniting the two aspects [of Tif'eret]. And we could say that from there come the 12 hours. [The letter] Wav ו, referring to Tif'eret] can somewhat be seen in Milluy [filling out its pronunciation in Hebrew characters] [as] וואו, which has the same numerical value as אחד ‘one’ [namely: 13]. And its explanation: the two unifying faces/aspects, Wav from the right side [is] one face, Wav from the left side [is] one face, and the Aleph in the middle [thus forming וואו] unifies the two faces together. And this corresponds to ‘one’, and the two Wavs correspond to the twelve hours [of a day; the numerical value of each ו is 6], Wav from the rising of morning until mid-day, which is Chesed[/Gedolah], [and] Wav from noon until night, Gevurah, and this [together is] ‘one day’. And it is not necessary to expand [on this]. And it had already been possible to add [further] evidence to the subject of Tif'eret's harmonizing between Gedolah[/Chesed] and Gevurah, but since it is a simple and agreed-on matter [we have not done so]. And it is only necessary for us to understand this saying in its composition, and it follows for us [now] that Tif'eret harmonizes between Gedolah[/Chesed] and Gevurah, and the two of them are one ‘opposite’ one.

Gate 1. Chapter 3.

Tif'eret further harmonizes between Gedolah[/Chesed] and Hod, and between Gevurah and Netsach, and the reason is that Gedolah and Netsach are the right side [which is] Chesed/Mercy, and Gevurah and Hod they are Din/Judgement, the left, and they need harmonizing. And there is some proof to this in the words of Rashbi of blessed memory in the book of the Faithful Shephard [Raya Mehemna, Zohar Parasha Pinchas, III.244a], this is what it says: ‘And in the first redaction: “I have gathered my myrrh with my balsam...”[Song of Songs 5:1], right arm with left thigh. “my honeycomb with my honey”[ibidem], Jacob and

Rachel. “my wine with my milk” [ibidem], left arm with right thigh. Chesed with Hod, these are the right arm with the left thigh. Jacob and Rachel, the Pillar of the Center with Malkut. Gevurah with Netsach, these are left arm with right thigh. And why are there two of his attributes here? Because it is a secret which he will thus express. David said here: “Your priests will be clothed in righteousness and your devout ones will rejoice [Psalms 132:9]. It is written there, [but] ‘and your Levites will rejoice’ it should have said. The Holy One, blessed be He, said: ‘it is not customary to change my attributes, but after you have invited me, I must do after your wish.’ From this we are taught that the master of the house, when he invites even the king, the king must do after his [= the master of the house’s] wish. And because of this we have been taught: “all what the master of the house will say, do” [Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 86b]. And this being so, it is a fitting secret, etc.’ End of citation.

And what there is to arouse in this saying is [first] the lengthiness of its expression, and the repetition of the subject in not [very] different words. In his saying ‘right arm with left thigh, Chesed with Hod’ etc., [even] if we, until now, had not heard that the two arms are: Gedolah the right arm, Gevurah the left arm, and [about] the two thighs that they are: Netsach the right thigh, Hod the left thigh, why is there need for this lengthiness in the explanation of the plain matters? Second [note]: Essentially he could have used a short and clear expression in his saying [, such as]: “my myrrh with my balsam”, Chesed with Hod. “my honeycomb with my honey”, the pillar of the center with Malkut. “my wine with my milk”, Gevurah with Netsach. And he could have kept quiet about thighs and arms, so that there would have been no need to explain them afterwards. Third [note]: that essentially this saying [is] in parasha Pinchas (Zohar III.241a/b), as thus he said: ‘and in the first recension’, explanation: in the Zohar, because that is the book that precedes this [book/saying]. And there in parasha Pinchas he does not lengthen, nor in whole nor in part, but [gives] only the first part of the saying. And it says thus: “I have mixed my myrrh with my balsam”, right arm with left thigh. “my honeycomb with my honey”, Jacob with Rachel. “my wine with my milk”, left arm with right thigh’ – until here the citation. And although he adds there [that is: in Raya Mehemna, Zohar III.244a] to the subject of harmonizing [that] the special name “my myrrh” is Chesed, and “my balsam” [is] Netsach as we will explain, nevertheless he does not further add to the subject of clarification of the words. And one needs to find out why he does not use this relation here [Zohar III.241a/b].

Fourth [note] on his saying ‘Jacob with Rachel’. And he does not say ‘body [= Tifer’et = Jacob] with the female [= Malkut = Rachel]’, the limbs in the same way and with the same treatment as the limbs which he assigned to the other Sefirot.

Fifth [note]: After he goes down to the explanations of his works in what he says: ‘And they are, etc, it would have been fitting to say: ‘right arm with left thigh, Chesed with Hod’, as this is the normal order, and not to let the explanation precede the [original] text [that needs to be explained] by his saying ‘Chesed with Hod, right arm with left thigh etc.’, and similar for them all.

Sixth [note]: And what difficulty does he find in: ‘And why are there two of his attributes here’. And what is difficult [is] that sometimes Netsach is suckling from Gevurah and similarly Hod from Chesed, but most of the time Netsach is suckling from Chesed and Hod from Gevurah. But sometimes it occurs, because of the assimilation and influencing that Netsach is suckling from Gevurah, and Hod from Chesed. And therefore each one is composed of them all, so that they all consent to a single action and a single emanation. And therefore is it possible that the two opposites become equalized, even Gevurah with Chesed.

And we will explain that Rashbi, of blessed memory, found difficulty in the scriptural verse, because it was proper for it to say: ‘I mixed my myrrh and my balsam, I ate my honeycomb and my honey, I drank my wine and my milk.’ Why [does the verse use the words] “with” [instead of ‘and’], because it [appears to be] superfluous? And to this he answered that there above the verse that is before us (what is printed in parasha Wayikra, page 4b and further) he said: “My myrrh with my balsam”, Chesed with Netsach. “my honeycomb with my honey”, Gevurah with Hod. “my wine with my milk”, body and covenant.’ [I did not find the exact citation but a slightly longer paraphrase in Zohar III.4a]. And see, with this parts of our questions are reconciled, because he says ‘with’ ‘with’ to unite these attributes in the mentioned manner, but because this answer is not satisfying, when the intention of the biblical verse is only [to teach us] that Chesed is united with Netsach, Gevurah with Hod, and Tif’eret with Yesod, if this is all so [it would be more fitting to] be silent of ‘with’ and ‘with’. And from the matter it is taught that it says that when they are being united their customary ways are in this, as three are uniting themselves with three. To this he says: ‘And in the earlier recension’, its explanation: in the Zohar, in parasha Pinchas, a different and more than extended explanation was given, and this is it: ‘right arm with left thigh’, of which the intention is: Chesed *with* its being [of] the line of Chesed/Mercy [the right axis], being united with Hod *with* its being [of] the line of Din/Judgement [the left axis]. And thus Gevurah *with* its being [of] the line of Din being united with Netsach *with* its being [of] the line of Chesed. And now there will be no difficulty in why he said ‘with’ ‘with’, which is necessary because it is not their customary way in this. But because it is contrary to their habit and nature, therefore it is necessary to say ‘with’ ‘with’, to teach us that this order is contrary.

And the reason that he speaks in the Zohar with special names of the limbs (arms, thighs), and [does] not [mention] the attributes by their names. [This is] because it is difficult for him, since after he clarified that the Sefirot are turned over into what [is] not the [normal] order, that [that is: mention the Sefirot by their regular names] would be impossible. Because the [normal] route of suction of Netsach is from the right, and thus it is below Chesed [in] the line of Chesed/Mercy. And the route of suction of Hod is from the left, and thus it is below Gevurah [in] the line of Din/Judgement. How is it [then] possible that they change their function? That would be impossible. And to clarify this subject for us in bold rhetorical language he uses in his expression arms and thighs, to tell you that just as the arms and thighs are adhering together and are connected with the body, and by means of the body it unites the right arm with the left thigh, and similarly the left arm with the right thigh, and the body is the medium that unites them and couples them together. Similarly the subject [functions] above by means of Tif’eret, which is the one that branches out in six extremities, and these

extremities are its limbs. Just as the limbs are branches for the body, so are the extremities limbs and branches for Tif'eret. And therefore, by means of this it is possible for these Sefirot to be mixed in this mixture, and this is possible, and not impossible. But [even] if this is so, we have not yet escaped the question 'why are there two of his attributes here', as we will explain.

And see, explained is the reason that he is forced to say 'arms' and 'thighs' and not the attributes themselves with their names. But Rashbi of blessed memory, in the book of the Faithful Shepherd (Raya Mehemna) [the later recension] intends to bring the citation of the first recension, transferring it to his expression itself, which is "I have mixed my myrrh with my balsam", right arm with left thigh. "my honeycomb with my honey", Jacob with Rachel. "my wine with my milk", left arm with right thigh', until here the citation of the recension. And he adds in the clarification the rest of the saying. The intention is to clarify to us exactly [with] his fine expression when he says 'right arm with left thigh' etc., that the subject on the side of Scripture is [some recensions have אלא ("except/but") here instead of לא ("not"), which I have followed] on purpose, that Chesed unites itself with Hod, and not that Hod unifies itself with Chesed. He intends to say that the dwelling-place of Chesed will be in Hod and the root is Chesed. And similarly with Gevurah, that its dwelling-place is in Netsach, and the root is (Netsach) [other reading: Gevurah; there is some confusion here and below on what exactly is the 'root'], and not the inverse. And similarly Tif'eret in Malkut below. For if we would say that the root above are lower ones in the upper ones, the reason of 'why are there two attributes here?' would not be established. Because if this would be so, you would find that the bride and her bridesmaids would go up to the house of the bridegroom and his groomsmen. And if this would be the case, it would not be proper for the bride to change any custom of the bridegroom at all, because she is lodging in his house. But here it is what is correct: Chesed in Hod, Gevurah in Netsach, Tif'eret in Malkut. And they are three upper ones in three lower ones. We will find the bridegroom lodging with his groomsmen in the house of the bride with her bridesmaids. And since he is in the house of the bride, it is proper that he will accustom himself to the will of the bride. And it is in her hand to change the custom according to her will as to what is better in her eyes. And with this subject there is an answer to the question 'why are there two attributes here?', as we will explain with help of HaShem. And this is what Rashbi of blessed memory intended, to explain to us the fine point of its expression in having the clarification of the word precede the word itself, in his saying: 'Chesed with Hod, right arm with left thigh' [in his explanation in Raya Mehemna, Zohar Parasha Pinchas, III.244a], and not the inverse. To awake us to the fine point of its expression, because with intending intention he uses the expression of 'arms' and 'thighs', and not the expression of the attributes 'Chesed' and 'Hod' etc. To teach that this mixing is by means of the body. And this he intends when he has the expression of 'Chesed' and 'Hod' precede that of 'arm' and 'leg' as if he says: examine carefully! Because it had already been possible to shorten the expression saying 'Chesed' and 'Hod', the expression of the attributes and not [using] the expression of the limbs. But [he uses the expression of the limbs] "to give you understanding" (Daniel 9:23). Because the mystery of this mixing, which seems to be turned, is [actually] aligned by means of the body which is Tif'eret, the middle one, as we have explained. But on the contrary: 'arm' and 'thigh' [are] clarification of Chesed and Hod, and [it

is not so that] Chesed and Hod are clarification of 'arm' and 'thigh'. And to this we will answer that with Jacob and Rachel there was no need to change their names into the name of limbs, because there is no modification in their subject and their unity, but [it is] as customary: Tif'eret on [in the same line of] Malkut, and therefore he does not alter them.

And further we understand that in the expression of the first recension [Zohar III.241a/b] he says: 'right arm in/with (ב) left thigh' and similarly 'left arm in/with (ב) right thigh', and he does not say 'with' (עם), 'with' (עם), but [he speaks] in brief. And in this saying [here, Zohar III.244a] in his explanation he clarifies 'Chesed with (עם) Hod' etc., and he [now] says 'with' 'with'. 'And why are two of his attributes here?' Explanation: it is right if it is this what they are clarifying, as there is only a modification of the attributes concerning the influx and the sucking only, which we would have thought in the explanation 'right arm in/with (ב) left leg', that its intention is on the influx only which Chesed influences in Hod, and similarly which Gevurah influences in Netsach, there is no difficulty for us at all that thus [is] the way of the attributes that the ones suck from the others. But according to what he explains in this saying 'right arm in/with (ב) left thigh', explanation: 'with' (עם) really [they are really together], which is that Chesed unifies itself downwards into Hod, and Gevurah downwards into Netsach. If this is so, it is [still] difficult 'why the two attributes [are] here'. As according to the way of the real unification, this is not the way of unification of the Sefirot, as Netsach connects itself with Chesed, and Hod with Gevurah, as we will explain in the Gate of the Thigh of Jacob [Gate XVII], with assistance and help of HaShem, in the chapters 3 and 4.

And the meaning according to the influx, even if it is that Chesed can influence in/with Hod, yet Hod will perform its [natural] action which is an action of Din/Judgement, even if it will not perform [it] with the strength as it would be when it would suck from Gevurah, and there is in this no [need for] fear, since there is [here] no modification of the attributes [the way the attributes act remains the same, although the intensity may differ].

Truly [however] in real union there is doubt because the activity of Judgement/Din is abolished from everything. Since when Gevurah wishes to act with Judgement/Din, Netsach will conquer that Judgement/Din and will not allow it to act, in the mystery of the unity. And therefore it is difficult 'why the two attributes [are] thus', as it is a modification of the attributes and a restraint of Judgement/Din, and this is not convenient. And this is not the natural order, that which was told to David: "On account of David, your servant etc." [Psalm 132:10] he changed and extended the power of Compassion/Rachamim. As even if the joy [רינה, referring to the previous verse (Psalm 132:9) mentioned in the beginning of the current chapter] is from the side of Judgement/Din as is known, he [= David] wanted that it would be from the side of Chesed/Mercy, and this will be explained further in the Gate of the Whatness and the Conduct [Gate VIII], with help of HaShem, in chapter 6.

And similarly concerning Tif'eret, since it came to the house of Malkut as it says: "I have come to my garden, my sister, my bride" [Song of Songs 5:1]. When this is so, it is that it behaves itself according to her [= Malkut's] will, even with modification of the attributes, to extend the power of Compassion/Rachamim further. And this is what is called 'Chesed in/with Hod, Gevurah in/with Netsach and Jacob in/with Rachel, because they [are] three

upper ones in/with three lower ones by means of Jacob the bridegroom who has come to the house of his bride Rachel as we have explained. But if it would have been so that the bride would go up to the house of the bridegroom, it would not have been convenient to change, as it is not the natural order to change [in those circumstances].

And see, we will end the clarification of the saying, and may good taste and knowledge go out for us, as Tif'eret also harmonizes between Gedolah[/Chesed] and Hod, and between Gevurah and Netsach.

Gate 1. Chapter 4.

Being that in the previous chapter we were compelled out of the [Zohar-]saying mentioned in it [to learn] that it is Tif'eret which is harmonizing between Gedolah[/Chesed] and Hod, and between Gevurah and Netsach, and the subject was a bit strange to [our] hearing ear. We said to compel this discourse further and to explain the matters, to show that they are not far from the intellect and not strange, as the matter is very close to us.

And the subject [is] in what is well-known, that Tif'eret receives from Gedolah[/Chesed] and Gevurah, and influences Netsach and Hod.

And there is no doubt as to that which Tif'eret influences in Hod, that there must in this influx be part of the influx from Gedolah[/Chesed], which Tif'eret received from it, as we have explained, and similarly what Tif'eret influences in Netsach, [that] there must be in this influx part [of the influx] from Gevurah.

And there is no doubt that the influx that is being influenced from Tif'eret in Netsach and Hod with its [=Tif'eret's] mixture, is not really [identical to] what it received from Gedolah and Gevurah. Indeed the middle mixing will be mixed by means of Tif'eret, becoming equal to Gedolah and to Hod, and similarly becoming equal to Netsach and Gevurah, and if this is so, it is found that this harmonizing is to some extent a continuous matter. And at times it happens [concerning] Tif'eret that its root if its receiving needs to be from Judgement/Din of Gevurah, to influence in Netsach for a need in the world for Judgement, for punishment and as what follows in these subjects. Or because it receives the most part from Gevurah, it will influence to Netsach to sweeten Judgement. And similarly at times Tif'eret will receive the most part from the side of Mercy/Chesed, and it will influence to Hod to sweeten Hod. And this intermixture and what follows from it will be explained in the second chapter of the Gate of the Channels [Gate VII], with help of HaShem. And the matters are straightforward for someone who understands and pleasing to the finders of knowledge.

We will further add instruction to this matter and we need [to add] the subject on which all learned ones agree concerning the colours of the Sefirot, that the colour of Netsach is red leaning to white, and the colour of Hod is white leaning to red – thus far its statement.

And see, they explain about Netsach that it is red, inclining to white, explanation: being red from the side of its receiving from the side of strict Judgement of Gevurah by means of Tif'eret the harmonizer, as we have explained, and because of this Judgement it will be red. But from the side of the majority of its sucking from the side of Mercy – as there is its house –

its leaning will be towards white, to whiten the redness, to return it to white, and this is “leaning”, as its direction is that its majority is white. And similarly the subject inverted for Hod, because it is white by means of its sucking from Mercy by means of Tif’eret the compromiser and mediator between them. But because the root of its sucking is from the side of Gevurah – because there is the root of its leaning and its [natural] place – it needs to be leaning to white and harmonizing Compassion to the side of Judgement.

And see, we have found according to this [that] Tif’eret is mediating with its colour, which is whitened and red, between Gedolah and Hod, and between Gevurah and Netsach.

And the subject of these colors will be explained in the Gate of the Colors [Gate X], with help of HaShem. Praise and thanks to the Bestower of good on the guilty ones, Who has rewarded us with all good. To HaShem, and may He give us light to give force to this matter with three reliable witnesses: with the words of the Rashbi of blessed memory, with the opinion of the Kabbalah, and with the words of the learned ones. The general principle of the matters [is that] the places that need harmonizing are ‘five opposite five’: Chochmah opposite Binah, Gedolah opposite Gevurah, these are two opposite two, Gedolah opposite Hod, Gevurah opposite Netsach, these are two opposite. These are [in total] four opposite four. Furthermore Yesod is harmonizing between Netsach and Hod as will be explained in the Gate of the Harmonizers [Gate IX] in chapter four. This makes ‘five opposite five’. In truth, there are only two harmonizers between five and five, which are Yesod and Tif’eret. How? Yesod [harmonizes] between Netsach and Hod, and Tif’eret between Gedolah and Gevurah, between Gedolah and Hod, between Gevurah and Netsach, and between Chochmah and Binah with the reality hidden in the mystery of Da’at as will be explained in the mentioned Gate [Gate IX]. And with this preamble the mishna [Sefer Yetzirah I.3] will be understood [of] which we [are] in its explanation, which says: ‘five opposite five’, because the truth is that they are five as opposite five and the covenant of unification standing in the middle, as the harmonizers are mediating and directing between the extremities. And the ‘word of the tongue’ is Tif’eret, and it is called ‘word of the tongue’ because it is by means of Binah, which is the tongue, that it rises upwards to harmonize between Chochmah and Binah in the mystery of Da’at, as will be explained in the mentioned Gate [Gate IX]. And similarly by means of it [= Binah] it mediates between Gedolah and Gevurah, as we have explained at the end of Chapter 2 [of the present Gate I]. And the ‘circumcision of the genitals’ is Yesod, the second harmonizer.

And see, with this matter we will settle the subject further and we will answer exactly that which we asked, which was that they are ‘five opposite five’ and the harmonizer [added makes] them eleven. Because we are not here in [the realm of] the number of the Sefirot, but [in the realm of] the number of the harmonizing, as we have explained, and there is no need to elaborate [on this here].

And see, we have explained this mishna in the version that is most often published in books and commentators. Although the Ramban, of blessed memory, appears to have had a different version [of this mishna in his commentary], nevertheless we will not worry but consent to [the version in] the majority of the books. And when the researcher will look into the [different]

versions he will find that this version [= our version] is more accurate, and further that we cannot verify that this commentary is [actually] by the Ramban, based on what is seen in it.

Gate 1. Chapter 5.

After we have travelled from the mountain of HaShem, a high and steep mountain, [which is] the previous mishna [of Sefer Yetsirah], and with it we were compelled to [accept] the opinion of the kabbalists [namely that] the number of the Sefirot is ten and not more. We will [now] go “to the mountain of myrrh” [Song of Songs 4:6], the second mishna after it, although it is the fourth one from the start of the chapter. And this is what it says: ‘Ten Sefirot without what[-ness]. Ten and not nine. Ten and not eleven. Understand with wisdom/Chochmah, and become wise with understanding/Binah. Examine with them and investigate from them, and know and think/count of them, and establish the matter completely, and return the Formator to His foundation.’ [Sefer Yetsirah I.4] – End of citation.

We have agreed not to arouse on this mishna a general principle, its words being by themselves without arrangement, and the citation says: “Explain me!”. And its shallowness does not tolerate a general principle instead of what is raised and given in it, and we will write what God will place in our mouth on the subject. ‘Ten and not nine’, and its explanation.

And it is that its intention is to warn us for the mistake, so that we will not say that Keter does not belong to the Sefirot that we can think, as it is En Sof - which it is not -, as it [En Sof] is dwelling above the above. And [it is] not as many think, that En Sof would be among the number of the Sefirot, and that it would be Keter. And this thought we will invalidate in the Gate of Is En Sof Keter? [Gate III], with help and support from HaShem. And ‘may the all-Merciful save us from this opinion!’ [Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 84b]. But verily they are ten besides the Emanator. Because if this was not so, the emanated Sefirot would be found to be nine. And this is not appropriate, but the emanated [Sefirot] are in reality ‘ten and not nine’. Further an explanation that came to warn us so that we would not err to exclude Malkut from the number [of the Sefirot], as there are some who believe in an opinion close to this. And ‘may the all-Merciful save us’ likewise ‘from this opinion!’ But it [= Malkut] is together with them in the Emanation/[the world of Atsilut]. And even though it is not in their harmony, as we will explain in the Gate of the Diminution of the Moon [Gate XVIII] with Heaven’s help. And close to this explanation is the explanation of Rashbi, of blessed memory, in the book of the Faithful Shepherd/Raya Mehemna [Zohar III.277b, parasha Ki Teitzei], and this is what it says: ‘And there are other masters of the secrets of the Torah, masters of the Attributes, who inherit souls from the side of Holy Malkut, which is totalized of ten Sefirot. Because everyone who inherits and merits it [such a soul from the side of Malkut], merits the ten Sefirot without separation, “ten and not nine”, since if they would be inheriting only Malkut, there would be nine [Sefirot] in separation from it, and because there is no separation there, the author of Sefer Yetsirah says: “ten and not nine”. And if you say that it[s number] rises above ten, see, the Explicit Name א"ו ה"א י"ד [the Tetragram in its principal miluy, using the letter א, sign of unity] consists of] ten [letters], י"ד/Yud [ten] which is united with it [= Malkut] does not rise above ten, and because of this “ten and not eleven”’. End of citation.

The intention of this saying, that he says: 'and there are others' [is] that higher than this subject he said [that] there are among the people of action those who have a soul which is a Mother from the side of [the world of] Beriah/Creation, and this subject will be explained in the Gate of the Soul [Gate XXXI] with help of HaShem. And now he says that there are 'other masters of the secrets of the Torah', which are those who are occupied with the divine Torah and its secrets. And because it is possible to say that one calls 'masters of the secrets of the Torah' those who are occupied with the secrets of halachot, exegeses, aggadot, rules, judgements and punishments, according to only the simple meaning [Peshat] of their words. And hereto he says that if the salary of these is double and [again] doubled and this [salary] is [then] the representative degree. Nevertheless they are not worthy of the height of this soul until they arrive at the secrets of the Sefirot which are the mystery of Divinity. And these [last ones] are called 'masters of attributes'. And they are called thus by reason of [the fact that] all occupation of the sages in Kabbalah is in the attributes and their subjects. And he says that these inherit a soul from the side of Malkut itself, not from the side of Metatron [the] servant [of the Master]. And not from the side of the Mother as has been mentioned there. And he says that he inherits a soul totalized out of ten. And [he says this] because there is [apparently] a difficulty for him: perhaps the other soul also might be thus totalized out of ten, or perhaps this soul [from Malkut] might not be totalized out of ten?

And from where do we have the ability to divide between one soul and the other, even when this soul will be more important than that one? And to this he will force, as with Malkut he intended to say that it is 'from the side of [...] Malkut' [and that] it [= the soul] is [then] by necessity totalized out of ten. By reason that the Sefirot will not be separated and they are connected and united, and when we mention Malkut, the remaining Sefirot are necessarily attached to it. What is not the case with the soul from the side of Metatron or Mother as they are from the world of division [from lower worlds: Mother is in the world of Beriah/Creation, and Metatron in the world of Yetzirah/Formation], since they descend from [the world of] Atsilut/Emanation. And it is not obliged by this obligation except in [the world of] Atsilut, but not in them [= the other worlds]. And because of this a soul will not be totalized out of ten unless [it is] from the side of Malkut. And when we say that the soul [is] from the side of Metatron or Mother, [and that] it is not totalized out of ten, it is not the intention that in it [= the soul] are not totalized ten according to its meaning, as it is not possible that a proceeding action from above is not totalized out of all ten. Because if [this would be] so, one would see [the world of] division.

And this is exactly the reason [concerning] those who have defects, such as those lacking hands, and it seems as if they are defective and reveal the vice of their actions, that they have made a holy place unfit and have separated [it] and therefore their soul does not extend in the body into these limbs, and this is its defect and its lack, and everything [follows the principle of] according to the place of their violation, similarly so their defect. And the defect, that [starts] from the beginning of [the world of] Creation/Beriah [downward], shows its deficiency in the turn of the Gilgul/cycle of souls, as we will explain the subject of the limbs in the Gate of the Soul [Gate XXXI] in chapter 7 with help of HaShem.

And never in the world it is possible [that there is] a soul or an activity in which not all ten Sefirot are totalized. And even when it is decided saying [that] a soul is from the side of Metatron, or from the side of Mother, its intention is not [to say] that they are not from above, God forbid. Because all the souls are proceeding from above. And the subject [is] as we will explain in the mentioned Gate [of the Soul, Gate XXXI] in chapter two, with help and support of HaShem. And always it is totalized out of ten, and they are never separated, as we have explained.

And what is [the difference] between souls from Malkut and the other souls? It is that the other souls are [also] totalized out of ten, [yet] that the ten does not show itself concretely in these, but the intention is that they are totalized in it, and it is in itself totalized out of ten. But the soul from the side of Malkut is being emanated from the ten Sefirot which are in Malkut, with Malkut showing in it [the soul] all ten Sefirot and unites itself with them.

And this subject will be clarified further in the Gates that will follow with help of Hashem. And this subject [is] on the Sefirot themselves as there is a big difference between our saying that 'Malkut is totalized out of ten' [on the one hand], and [on the other hand] when we say that it is in unity with the essence of the other Sefirot, because it is not the same matter. Because the advantage of the Sefira when it is totalized is not [the same] as when it is being improved by uniting itself with the essence of the Sefirot, as this [last] is when [the] Sefirot will reveal themselves in it in reality, and this is being explained. And this is when in his saying [it says] 'totalized out of ten Sefirot'. And the explanation: as the intention in his saying 'totalized' is not just [being] totalized according to the nature of the Sefirot but 'as ... who inherits it ... merits the ten Sefirot without separation'. Explanation: he is himself worthy of the ten Sefirot in their reality by means of the ten Sefirot revealing themselves actually in it, as we have explained.

And [on] the subject of his saying 'who inherits it and merits it'. Explanation: that there are two matters which are needed in order to merit this important soul. The first one from the side of his preparation from the side of his father at the moment of procreation at the moment of conception, as our Sages of blessed memory have said: '... he who sanctifies himself at the moment of sexual intercourse etc.' [Babylonian Talmud, Shevuot 18b], and after his father has sanctified himself herewith, when this his very good intention will go up, he will merit a holy soul from a lofty place, and according to the measure of his holiness thus his conduction will rise up. And this is well-known in the Zohar and in the Talmud many times in many places.

And [in] their saying: meriting worthy sons, the intention is that he does extend to his sons a soul from a high place regarding that they will be worthy. And this is called an inheritance from his father, and this he intends in his saying 'and he inherits (it)'.

Further secondly he needs in himself worthy deeds pleasant in the eye of his Creator, so that this soul will not depart from him, and this will be explained further in the Gate of the Soul [Gate XXXI] chapter 3, with help of HaShem.

And on this second [matter] he says: 'and he merits it', explanation: he that merits with his deeds this holy soul. 'he merits the ten Sefirot without separation'. Explanation: as we have

explained that as the soul [is] from the substance of Malkut, see it necessarily follows that this soul is 'totalized out of the Sefirot', explanation: from the substance of the ten Sefirot that are in it [=Malkut], because it unifies itself with the ten Sefirot and it is in no way separated from them. And this is what he says: 'merits the ten Sefirot without separation', he intends to say: [these are] unified in Malkut without being separated from it. And this necessarily follows from the words of Sefer Yetzirah which says 'ten and not nine'.

And when it would have been possible to say that the soul, which is necessarily a part from Malkut, could be separated, as its expression: "and blew into his mouth" (Genesis 2:7), everyone who blows, is blowing from his substance, and if this is so, the way of the part will be precious to the whole, because as the soul that is being emanated out of it [= Malkut] is being separated from the other parts of the Sefirot, similarly Malkut is being separated, God forbid, from the other Sefirot. And this is not possible, because if it would be so, the left over Sefirot would be nine, to this it [Sefer Yetzirah] said: 'ten and not nine', that there will never be less than ten, and therefore it is necessary that the soul is being totalized out of ten, and that the Sefirot are totalized in it [= the soul] substantially, just as it is [the case with] Malkut itself, as everything that is in the part, is [also] in the whole.

'And if you say that it rises above etc.' Explanation: there is a difficulty for him [in] that it is said that they are ten besides Malkut, and according to this it was already possible to say that Malkut is being separated from the rest, and nevertheless they [all] are ten. And to this he brings in: 'the explicit name etc.' Explanation: the Explicit Name is a name of four [letters], as we will explain in the Gate of the Four-letter Name [Gate XIX], and this name is in the attribute of Tif'eret, and it [= the name] is the masculine uniting itself with Malkut, who is the feminine, and it [= Tif'eret] is uniting itself with her [= Malkut]. And this name teaches with its full form (miluy) that is the Domain of the Unique [indicated by the letter א, thus applying the miluy form with א], [that] its height [is] ten and its width four, which is יה"ה and this is its width, and its height is ten: יו"ד ה"א וא"ו ה"א , see [there are] ten [letters], as it never rises above ten. And if it would be that there were ten besides Malkut, see, when the name has united itself with Malkut, there will be eleven: ten above, and one uniting itself with the feminine [and this is not possible] To this it says in Sefer Yetzirah: 'ten and not eleven'.

And see, we have completed the explanation of the passage [from the Zohar], and we have written intentionally an explanation of the mishna 'ten and not nine, ten and not eleven'. We will further be able to explain 'ten and not eleven', [so as that] it intends to warn us against bringing into the number of the emanated entities [= the ten Sefirot] the throne that is designated to the [world of] Beriah/Creation as will be explained in the Gate of the Four Worlds [Gate XVI] with help of HaShem. And similarly it intends to warn us against bringing into the number of the emanated entities the king, prince of faces, Metatron, as although his name is as the name of his Master, he is only [of the world of] Yetzirah and not [of that of] Atsilut, as we will explain in the aforementioned Gate with help of HaShem. And all these explanations are in the explanation of the mishna, since it speaks in terms of affirmation and negation: 'ten', see [it is] an affirmation, 'and not nine', see [it is] a negation, and similarly 'ten and not eleven'. And its intention is to necessitate this number, that it is ten, and to negate all that is of the side of error, which would add to the [number] ten or would diminish it.

Gate 1. Chapter 6.

They have given us another explanation of this mishna [from Sefer Yetzirah] in the book of the Faithful Shepherd [Raya Mehemna] [Parasha Ki Tisa, Zohar II.187b], and this is what it says: ‘The commandment to give “*a half-shekel with the holy shekel*” [Exodus 30:13]. The Faithful Shepherd said: ‘What is a half-shekel [a biblical weight-measure]? It is similar to a half-hin [a biblical liquid measure]. And this is Wav exactly placed between two He’s [reading the Hebrew consonants “hin” as “He’s”]. The stone to weigh with, it is a Yud [with the numerical value of 10], twenty gerah [another biblical weight-measure] [is] a shekel, it is Yud Wav Daleth (יוד) [this is the name of the letter י (Yud) spelled out in Hebrew characters, which has the numerical value of 20]. “*And the wealthy one shall not increase*” [Exodus 30:15], this is Central Pillar [= Tif’eret], it will not increase on ten (י). As thus it is said in Sefer Yetzirah ‘Ten Sefirot without what-ness, ten and not eleven.’ “*and the poor one shall not decrease*” [Exodus 30:15], this is the Righteous One [= Yesod], he will not decrease from ten, as it is said: ‘ten and not nine’, and a half-shekel, it is ten’. End of citation.

And it is necessary to examine this citation minutely.

Firstly his saying ‘What is a half-shekel? It is similar to a half-[hin] etc.’. Explanation ‘a half-hin’ is Tif’eret [the Wav] which is ‘exactly placed between two He’s.’ Truly with ‘a half-shekel’ it does not fit to explain thus ‘exactly placed between’, as we do not know between what [the half-shekel is placed].

Secondly his saying ‘the stone to weigh with, it is a Yud etc.’. See, according to the meaning [it follows] that Yud Wav Daleth (יוד) is twenty. And how does he say that one should not subtract from nor add to the ten, is it not that יוד [with value twenty], with its half being ten, and see: ten has been added to ten and that makes twenty! And according to his explanation one should not add to the ten [Sefirot] any Sefirah, not even Tif’eret nor Tsaddik [= Yesod], but he mentioned these which are ‘the wealthy’ and ‘the poor’, and the more so [concerning] all the others.

Thirdly his saying ‘the stone to weigh with, it is a Yud’, and how do they weigh with this stone, whereas it is *twenty* gerah and the weight needs to be ten, which is only a half-shekel. And if we say that his intention is to say as if it were to weigh with this stone and it is a complete stone, if this is so it is a lengthy expression, and he could have said ‘the stone to weigh with, it is a Yud Wav Daleth, and it is twenty gerah’. Why does he say ‘the stone to weigh with, it is a Yud, twenty gerah [is] a shekel, it is Yud Wav Daleth’, which is repetition and lengthening.

Fourthly his saying ‘and a half-shekel, it is ten’, as there appears to be no link with it [= what is said previously in the citation]. And further that it is contrary to what we have explained, as above he spoke the explanation: ‘a half-shekel’ which is ‘exactly placed between’ [= the Wav] and now he says ‘a half-shekel it is Yud’, which is that the meaning of ‘half-’[the Aramaic word] has half of a shekel as its meaning.

And see, to comprehend this saying we need to introduce the subject that the Sefirot are ten from above towards below, and ten from below towards above, is as the resemblance of a spark of the sun coming and reaching a polished mirror, and the light turns and returns towards its source, similar the subject with the Sefirot, as they come from above downwards until Malkut, and there is the station of the light, and it returns to its source by way of journeys [= in stages], as just as they are ten from above downward, similarly then are ten from below upward, and we will this discourse in more length in its own Gate [Gate 15], with help of HaShem.

And see, this mystery is explained within the form of the [letter] א (Aleph), which is י (Yud) above, [and] י (Yud) below, to reveal the source of the light from above downward, and from below upward, and they [= the two Yud] are the upper waters and the lower waters, as we will explain in the Gate on the entries of the special names [Gate XXIII] in the entry 'water'.

And see, the ו (Wav) that is between the two י (Yud), is Tif'eret, the one who unites the upper waters and the lower waters, and this is 'a half-shekel' which is situated exactly between the shekel which is the complete measure, the measure of Atsilut/Emanation: ten from above downwards and ten from below upwards, and it [the Wav/Tif'eret] is situated exactly between and the medium between the two Yud which are 'twenty gerah', the 'shekel'. And now the meaning of a half-hin [the two "He's"] and the meaning of a half-shekel are all one [and the same] matter. And [thus] the first contradiction is solved [the Wav is placed between two Yud]. 'The stone to weigh with, it is a Yud'. Explanation: this stone has always the shape of י (Yud), which is called 'stone', and all 'stone' refers to the essence of Yud as we will explain in the Gate on the entries of the special names [Gate XXIII] in the entry 'stone', with help of HaShem.

And see, this stone to weigh 'a half-shekel' with, as 'a half-shekel' is ten, as we have explained, therefore the stone with which one weighs it [= the half-shekel] is the form of a י (Yud) which is ten. 'twenty gerah, the shekel it is Yud Wav Dalet'. Explanation: when he says: 'twenty gerah, the shekel it is Yud Wav Dalet' in its fullness [the name Yud spelled out in Hebrew characters], he points to twenty [its numerical value is twenty] which are the two Yuds: Yud [10 Sefirot] from above downwards, and Yud [10 Sefirot] from below upwards.

And see, its half [of twenty], which is Yud/ten, in its plain meaning it is the stone to weigh [with]. And when it is [spelled out in] full it is the complete shekel which is twenty gerah, ten from above downwards and ten from below upwards, as we have explained. "*And the wealthy one shall not increase*", this is the Central Pillar, it will not increase on ten etc.'. Explanation: needless to say [that this holds for] the rest of the Sefirot but even the "wealthy one" [Tif'eret], which is more wealthy in emanation and in totality than the rest of the Sefirot, nevertheless it must not increase [this] totality above ten Sefirot because they are ten and not eleven. And therefore it must not increase totality above ten because of its wealth, but its wealth will be in the increase of emanation/influx and light, or that it being totalized out of ten [by] many totalizations, but it never increases on the sum of the ten. "*And the poor one shall not decrease*", this is the Righteous One, he will not decrease from ten, etc.' Explanation: Yesod, even if it so that it is being called 'needy one' because of its poverty (in the time of

exile indicating that it is not its nature)) as its saying (Isaiah 57:1) “*The righteous one perishes* etc.”. And it is needy and poor. And he says that even if it is poor, its poverty cannot decrease from ten Sefirot, the general rule [being] that one is not to decrease from them, according to the subject ‘ten and not nine’, but its poverty is in the diminution of its emanation/influx, or [in] the diminution of its totalization out of the ten, yet not that it decreases from them [= the ten Sefirot], but that it does not add many totalizations out of ten [out of ten. Truly one is not to decrease from the aforementioned ten, in order that it will not be less than ten. As it is impossible to say that there is a place being removed [from the ten] because of one of them [lacking], but they [the Sefirot] are always ten. ‘And a half-shekel, it is ten’. Explanation: now, according to when we have explained that the wealthy one, which is the Central Pillar which is actually a half-shekel in the middle between the two Yuds, which are ‘a shekel [it is] twenty gerah’, if this is so, ‘a half-shekel’ is ten, and ten is ‘a half-shekel’. And if this is so, since Scripture has come to teach us that ‘the wealthy one’, which is Tif’eret, is not worthy to increase on ten, if this is so, how does he say ‘the wealthy one shall not increase ... from a half-shekel’, and it [= the wealthy one] is itself a half-shekel, and how has he given proportion to the wealthy one who is Tif’eret with the half-shekel which is Tif’eret in reality, to this [=to clarify this] he says: ‘and a half-shekel, it is ten’. Explanation: Despite of what we have explained above, that Tif’eret is the one that is called ‘a half-shekel’ because of it being medium/in the middle, nevertheless “Scripture does not depart from its literal meaning” [Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 63a], that it [= Tif’eret] is called thus in its aspect [of being] between the shekel, and cutting it in two, and a half-shekel is ten. And now he says; ‘the wealthy one shall not increase’ never in its essence which is ‘a half-shekel’ which is that it is cutting the shekel in two and making each one out of ten. Thus far the explanation of the saying. And learning from it we have found the explanation of the mishna ‘ten and not nine, ten and not eleven, which has come to teach us on the subject of the general rules of what is totalized, that one is not to ‘increase... from the ten’, as we have explained.

And now we will return to clarify the rest of the expression of the mishna, which says: “understand with wisdom, and be wise with understanding” etc. And the commentators have explained that the intention is to unify Chochmah with Binah and Binah with Chochmah. Further they explained that the intention is that the root of Chochmah is in Binah, and the root of Binah is in Chochmah. Further they explained that when one extends the emanation to Chochmah, it will be for the sake that it [Chochmah] will go to Binah, and when one extends [the emanation] to Binah, “give it [the emanation] the power of Chochmah” [Ramban on Sefer Yetzirah 1:4:5]. And although the commentators have explained these matters and what follows from them, yet [the words of] their explanation are not appealing. Since why does it warn us now on these subjects with Binah and with Chochmah, but not with the other Sefirot, because sure, as we are bound to unite the three first ones, the unity of the seven [Sefirot] that are below them is similarly an obligation to us.

And further why is Keter [the uppermost Sefira] not brought into this union in some of the explanations? Further its saying “analyze with them” etc., and the commentators have explained when you analyze properly, you will know that the mentioned Chochmah and

Binah are the root of Gedolah/Chesed and Gevurah, “and examine carefully from them”, explanation: when you examine carefully you will find that Gedolah/Chesed and Gevurah are the root of Netsach and Hod, as these are extending from them. And [afterwards] it says: “establish the matter on its strength”, “matter” is Malkut, “its strength [בִּזְרֹתָיו]” as “his staff”, and thus Targum Onkelos (on Exodus 21:19) [translates “his staff” in Aramaic], and this is Yesod. “And return the formator on its base”, and “return [הָשִׁב]” corresponding to repentance [תְּשׁוּבָה], to give its strength in Tif’eret which is its base with the name “formator”, and the base of Tif’eret are Netsach and Hod.

Until here the words of the commentators, although we have chosen the selected and precious that is their commentaries.

And it is that this subject is not satisfactory for us because this is not the nature of the author [of Sefer Yetzirah]’s way of expression.

And further, what peculiarity [is there] in its making us now hear these subjects and novelties, because this is the way of those who pray, not of those who write, and we have nothing to learn and new from it.

Therefore it appears to me [that I must explain it in a different way and] to explain that Chochmah is a reception [something that one receives, thus not an activity] and the instruction that man has learned from his master. Aptly “they transmit him the chapter headings” [Babylonian Talmud, Chagigah 13a]. And Binah is the reflection and the supplement which man is reflecting and supplementing out of himself from the general principles and the chapter headings that have been transmitted to him. And now this is its intention in its saying: “understand with wisdom”, it means to say: consider well with what you have learned from your master the wisdom of the attributes [= the Sefirot], which they did not transmit [itself but] only the chapter headings. And it is necessary for man to understand with it one matter from another, that is as what our sages of blessed memory said [Babylonian Talmud, Chagigah 13a]: they say this matter only to a wise one and he understands from his knowledge [this verse combines the three principles Chochmah (“wise one”), Binah (“understands”) and Da’at (“knowledge”)].

See that man needs to compare a matter with [another] matter and to produce a matter from [another] matter, in order that he will have a fertile intellect, and not an impotent intellect.

And it says “Be wise with/in understanding/Binah”, explanation: when you are begetting and comparing with your intellect and you understand, it is necessary that you make it [= your intellect] wise and interpret it with what the sages have received and with the shortness of their words, [so] that the subject will be included to you in addition, sometimes much, sometimes a little, “*and do not rely on your understanding/Binah*” [Proverbs 3:5].

“and examine [בְּחִינָן] in them”, this wants to say: into the substance of the Sefirot, which corresponds to “in them”, into their what-ness will be the examination/aspect [בְּחִינָה] by way of solely “going and returning” [Ezekiel 1:14], and by way of humility and being attentive to the glory of your Creator, Who makes wise the simple ones, and this is: “in them”.

Truly in deeds that are extended out of them [the Sefirot] the subject will be with strong investigation and with good knowledge, with carrying and giving and with great speculation.

And as this examination is in the deeds that are extended towards us out of the essence of the Sefirot, it says: “investigate *from* them”, wanting to say: in that which is extended “from them” and not into their substance which corresponds to “in them” as it said above.

And “establish the matter on its strength”. Explanation: establish the subject on its authority and descend to the profundity of the explication, so that it will be proven to you without any doubt.

“And return the formator on his base”. Explanation: your whole intention in any case will be that the King of Kings, the En Soph, blessed be He, will be gazing at “his base”, which are his thrones which are the ten Sefirot, and the whole intention will be on the subject of the unification of the emanated entities that are set apart, in the emanator, and [the unification] of the emanator in the emanated things.

Or it wants [to say] “Establish the matter on its strength”, just as the commentators have explained, that it corresponds to the unification of Malkut in Yesod, and that one is not allowed to separate them by believing [they are] nine, God forbid!, but [they are] ten with Malkut.

“And return the formator on his base”, that the Sefirot are the base and a throne for him, and He is the Lord distributing/emanating as a king on the throne (הַכֶּסֶּא), and he is not in the number of the throne [the numerical value of הַכֶּסֶּא is 86, which is the same number as that of God/Elohim אֱלֹהִים]. Until here the explanation of the mishna.

And see, it has been explained in these chapters that the Sefirot are ten, not less and not more, and that there is in this matter no doubt, God forbid!, but this is the truth in the heart of all kabbalists.

Gate 1. Chapter 7.

After we have occupied ourselves in the previous chapters with the state of our beliefs that are accepted by all kabbalists, that the Sefirot are ten, not less, not more, in this chapter we want to safeguard the student against from the place of confusion and error, and this is the question asked to rav Hai Gaon [the last of the Geonim of Pumbeditha, lived 939-1038]. And those who asked said: “Will our teacher instruct us, as we have found that our sages of blessed memory [taught] the Thirteen Attributes which Moses, our teacher of blessed memory, received [Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 17b, based on Exodus 34:6-7]. And [we found] that Abraham our father of blessed memory in the book that our sages of blessed memory attributed to his name, which is Sefer Yetzira, counts there ten Sefirot. And we need to learn from his [= your] holy mouth whether the ten Sefirot are the thirteen Attributes. If this is so, we find thirteen Attributes, [but] we do not find thirteen Sefirot. Or are the thirteen Attributes [something] on themselves and the ten Sefirot [something else] on themselves? We need your teaching and are waiting for your answer. Until here the citation of the question.

And see, the rav explained to them that the thirteen Attributes are the branches of the descendants that go out from the ten upper ones [which] are called Sefirot, these opposite these with three hidden ones, heads of heads [general principles]. And [even] if they do not have reality for you [in the Torah], there is a tradition for them by those that preceded us, man [receiving] from the mouth of man until [it was received] from the mouth of the prophets of blessed memory. And the descendants, these are the works called attributes, and the roots, which are the parents, are called Sefirot, not because it is [that their name might refer to] number (מספר) etc. And we have not copied his whole answer because we will dwell longer on it and clarify the explanation broader in the Gate of Purity [Gate XI] chapter 1, with help of HaShem.

And now it is appropriate that we say that the intention of the rav, in his saying ‘with these heads of heads etc.’ is not that his answer to them would be that there are thirteen Sefirot. Because if that would have been the intention of the rav, he could have settled the root of their question for them, [by saying] that what is in Sefer Yetzira, where it says ‘ten and not eleven’, [that] this is not traditional law (Halacha).

And since we see that the Gaon did not hasten to settle the expression nor to reject it, [this means] that it is seen that he reckons the three hidden ones not to be Sefirot – [and thus to avoid] that we could have said that they [= the Sefirot] are thirteen, as they [= the three hidden ones] are only hidden powers, [more] fine realities than the reality of the Sefirot, just as we will expand [our] clarification there [in Gate XI, chapter 1] with help of HaShem.

And just as there is for us no distress from what we have found, that there are [the] ten [Sefirot] of [the world of] Atsilut/Emanation, and the ten of [the world of] Beriah/Creation, and [the] ten of [the world of] Yetzira/Formation, and [the] ten of [the world of] Asiya/Action, similarly it is not difficult for us that there are hidden realities, because surely the Sefirot they are always only ten. And when we encounter hidden realities, they are sources for the revealed ones. And if it is so that the revealed ones are a shadow of the upper [hidden] ones, and they never ascend from ten, and do not decrease from ten, and the three [“heads of heads”] are sources as we will explain there in the clarification of the words of the Gaon, with help of HaShem.

Further there is a place for erring in a Baraita of R. Simon the Righteous, and Rav Hamai Gaon copied it in the Book of the Meditation which he wrote, and this is the citation: ‘And each of these thirteen powers has a known name. And there their degree [is] one above the other. 1. Primordial Air, 2. Primordial Wisdom/Chochmah, 3. Wonderful Light, 4. Hasmal (חשמל)/Amber, 5. Cloud, 6. Throne of Brightness, 7. The big wheel that is called Hashazit (חזזית), the place of origin of the vision (חזיון) of the visionaries, 8. Cherub [name of an angel], 9. Wheels of the Chariot, 10. The Encircling Air, 11. Curtain, this is the Throne of the Honor, 12. The place of the souls that is called Chambers of Gedolah/Greatness, 13. The mystery of the upper arrangement which is called Palace of the Upper Holy One. And these are the thirteen powers that are revealing themselves from hidden upper Keter which is called Artisan’. End of the citation for our [current] subject.

And the truth is that the apparent meaning is that it counts the order of the Sefirot, and thus it is that there are ten Sefirot. And the first one is Primordial Air, and this is Keter, as its thus name is well-known and it will be explained in the Gate of the Special Names (Gate XXIII). The second one is Primordial Wisdom and this is Chochmah/Wisdom itself. Third Wonderful Light which is Bina, Fourth Hasmal which is Chesed, Fifth Cloud [is] Gevurah, Sixth the Throne of Brightness which is Tif'eret, Seventh Hashazit which is Netsach and it is one of the prophets of truth, Eighth Cherub which is Hod, Ninth Wheels of the Chariot which is Yesod, Tenth the Encircling Air which is Malkut.

From here onwards they are not among the Sefirot, but degrees which are beneath the Sefirot. And some explain that they are three sorts of emanation that are in Malkut, but not [of the degree of the] actual emanation. But to us it seems that his intention is that they are three sources hidden in Malkut, as there has come an allusion to it, just as three upper ones were alluded to hidden in Keter, thus they [here] came in it [= Malkut] unveiled. And here is not the place for this subject, but [it is] in the Gate of Purity [Gate IX] and in the Gate of Atsilut, Beriah, Yetzira Asiya [Gate XVI], with help of HaShem.

And on the subject of the three remaining ones, see in the words of Rabbi Simon the Righteous, blessed be he, that they are [called] “11. Curtain, 12. The place of the souls that is called Chambers of Gedolah/Greatness, 13. The mystery of the upper arrangement which is called Palace of the Upper Holy One.” It appears to us in his expression, when the meditation is considered well, that he does not speak on the subject of the Sefirot, but on the powers of the Sefirot, and particularly that he calls the eleventh one “Curtain” of which the explanation is: a place of interruption, and it is a curtain and a screen between Atsilut/Emanation and the other matters that are below Atsilut/Emanation, and he calls it Throne of the Honor, as it is the throne that encompasses many thrones, and among us it is the subject of the base expressed as [the world of] Beriah/Creation, as will be explained in the Gate of Atsilut, Beriah, Yetzira, Asiya [Gate XVI], with help of HaShem.

And see, it is known that the souls are hewn from below the Throne of the Honor, and although it is that, according to the truth, they are emanated from above the Throne, yet they hewn from below the Throne, as the “hewing” is a special name for the [world of] Yetzirah/Formation, as will be explained in the aforementioned Gate [Gate of Atsilut, Beriah, Yetzirah Asiya, Gate XVI].

And see, the [world of] Yetzirah/Formation is below the [world of] Beriah/Creation, [and] it is found that the place of hewing of the souls is below the Throne of the Honor which is below the [world of] Beriah. And therefore this degree below the Throne of the Honor is called Place of the Souls and similarly [it is called also] the Rooms of Greatness/Gedolah, which are actually the rooms of the Garden of Eden.

And below this [world of] Yetzirah/Formation [is the world of] Asiya/Action and this [world] is referred to by the expression “mystery of the upper arrangement”, and this is the arrangement of serving [angels] in the mystery of the [world of] Asiya/Action who are below [the world of] Yetzirah/Formation. This is what appears to us on the subject of the Baraita of Rabbi Simon the Righteous.

And see, the subject of the thirteen attributes has been settled, and according to [this] master [Hai Gaon] or according to [the other] master [Hamai Gaon], the Sefirot are always ten. And however on the subject of the question which they asked the Gaon, [that is] if the thirteen attributes are Sefirot or not, we have proof that they are not an allusion to the Sefirot according to the argument [it might seem] of [Hai] the Gaon. And the proof [is] that they are called “thirteen attributes of Compassion”, and see, among the Sefirot there are attributes [the axes] of Judgement/Din, such as Gevurah and Hod. Therefore what is clear to us in this is that the thirteen attributes are the twelve boundaries which are the twelve permutations [of the Tetragram YHVH], and they are twelve, and [added to them] the place that surrounds them, which is the name that encompasses them, they are thirteen. And they are in each of the three places which are Dragon/תלי and Sphere/גלגל and Heart/לב, [Sefer Yetzirah 6:2] and the sign [=acronym] is TGL/תג"ל. And besides that there are further thirteen hidden ones [permutations of the name YHVH], and they are in Keter.

And what is suitable to extend on the clarification of the subject of this sermon will be explained in the Gate of the Details of the Names [Gate XXIII] with help of HaShem, as that is its place, in the explication of the name of seventy-two letters.

And see, Rabbi Nehunya ben HaQana of blessed memory, is perfecting this speculation, as he counted thirteen attributes in Keter, as I will cite him in the Gate of What-ness and Governance [Gate VIII] in chapter 3, with help of HaShem. And similarly also the Rashbi of blessed memory wrote thirteen Attributes of Compassion in Ze'ir Anpin (“the Small Face”) and thirteen Attributes in Arikh Anpin (“the Long Face”). Certainly it is seen that their opinion is contrary to the opinion of the [Rav Hai] Gaon of blessed memory.

And the place for the explanation of the thirteen attributes is not here, as it will be explained in a book of itself [possibly referring to his book *Tomer Devorah*, Palm-tree of Deborah], if HaShem will decree [us] life. And the aim among us in this is to strengthen the belief of the Kabbalists, that one should not believe in adding to the ten Sefirot nor in subtracting from them, as it is “...a tent that will not wander, will not set out...” [Isaiah 33:20], ten and not eleven, and he who increases or lessens, is sinning and brings evil upon himself. And we ask from God to rescue us from errors.

Gate 1. Chapter 8.

After we have been confirmed on the subject of the number of Sefirot, it is proper that we will explore if they are necessary from the side of philosophy or not. And to this we will say that they are necessary because of several reasons. The first one [is] since we are believing in [divine] providence, and even in individual providence, we are obliged to say that He is watching over [creation] from the side of the Sefirot, because the simple [=undivided] one, reason of all reasons and the cause of all causes, is removed from [any] change and from [any] attributes. It wants to say: wise, righteous, listening, and the rest of the attributes that the philosophers remove from Him. And similarly restrictions of the body and of corporeality, as for example “*And HaShem descended...*” [Genesis 11:5], and similarly “*And the appearance of the glory of HaShem [was] as a consuming fire...*” [Exodus 24:17], and similarly “*and I saw HaShem sitting on a throne...*” [Isaiah 6:1], and similarly “*And the glory of HaShem*

filled the tabernacle” [Exodus 40:34], and similarly “*and they saw the God of Israel and under his feet...*” [Exodus 24:10], and similarly what is said in Daniel (7:9) “*and the Ancient of Days sat, his garment white as snow*”, and similarly the writings on the finger of God [Exodus 31:18], the ears of HaShem [Exodus 11:18], the hand of HaShem [Exodus 7:5], the eyes of HaShem [Exodus 15:5], as these subjects, which have entered into Scripture, are instructing about the boundary and about the corporeality, and similarly about the attributes.

And this, on the simple one regarding the aspect of its essence and its simpleness, it is not possible to say such about this [one], except when we regard the aspect of its attributes, as will be explained in the Gate of the Essence and the Vessels [Gate IV] and in the Gate of the Denominations [Gate XXII], with help of God.

And see by means of the attributes, there will be changes and Judgement/Din and Compassion/Rachamim, not in its aspect itself, as will be explained in the mentioned Gate.

And see because of this aspect, in order that we will not deny the roots of our faith in the simple one[-ness], in the reality of its simplicity that it is removed from the attributes that imply the body and corporeality, and we are compelled to believe in Providence which is also itself [belonging] to the roots of [our] faith, and therefore it is necessary for us to believe in the Sefirot, so that not some roots of our faith would be contradicting others, as we have explained. And this is the reason or are the reasons compelling believing the Sefirot and they are proofs forced partly because of the Torah by way of philosophy.

Truly by way of philosophy, apart from support and influence [for the Sefirot] from the Torah, the commentators have further written down many proofs, but as our way is not in this philosophy, we will not copy them [here] at all.

Further, these attributes have been explained [as] ten, their mystery and their subject [are found] in scripture. The three first ones are explained in the words of Job to his friends, as he says (Job 28:12): “*And Chochmah/Wisdom from where/מֵאֵי is it found, and this one/זֶה [is] the place of Binah/Understanding*” In this verse he explains the order of the three first [Sefirot] which are called There Is Not/אין, Chochmah, Binah. The first one, he says that Chochmah/Wisdom is emanated from the first Sefira which is called There Is Not/אין [=Keter], and this is [when he says] “*And Chochmah/Wisdom from There Is Not/אין it is found*”. And יא which consists of א [which is] יא/There Is Not, and י [which is] Chochmah, and “this”/זֶה is the “*place of Binah*”, by which Binah is emanated. And truly, from the emanation of There Is Not/אין he does not speak of it at all, as even that which is emanated is called There Is Not/אין, and the more so He who emanates [is called thus].

And see, the seven [Sefirot] which extend from them have been explained in the words of King David of blessed memory in Scripture as is said (I Chronicles 29:11) “*To you (לְךָ), HaShem, is Gedolah/Greatness, and Gevurah/Might, and Tif’eret/Splendor, and Netsach/Triumph, and Hod/Majesty as all (כָּל) in the heavens and on the earth, to you (לְךָ), HaShem, is the Kingdom...*” The words “*To you, HaShem*”/ לְךָ ה' are a special name for the three first ones, and Binah/Understanding is called “*To you*”/ לְךָ as it makes [the numerical value of] 50 as [is] the number of the Fifty Gates of Binah/Understanding. And [as for the

words] לך and כל, the letters are the same. And Yesod/Foundation, when it is receiving from Binah, from the Fifty mentioned Gates [of Binah], is called כל/all, and it is as the resemblance of the seal that is turning over from לך to כל, and the reason is that the Fifty Gates are alluded to in the word לך and in the word כל because the Gates are Fifty in the mystery of Binah/Wisdom extending to Hod/Majesty, which are five Sefirot [that is: Gedolah[/Chesed], Gevurah, Tif'eret, Netsach, Hod], and each one [of them] is comprised of ten, see [this makes five times ten is] fifty, and they are three [Sefirot] on two [Sefirot]: Gedolah/Chesed, Gevurah and Tif'eret, they are a [vocalization mark] Segol [consisting of three points: two above, and one below] or a [cantillation mark] Segolta [the inverse of the Segol: one point above, two below], they are ל/30. Netsach and Hod they are a [vocalization mark] Tsere [consisting of two horizontal points] or a [vocalization mark] Shewa [consisting of two vertical points], see [this is] ך/20, see [together] this is לך as their order [from the point of view of Binah]

And [from the point of view of Yesod it is] כל in the mystery of the seal turning over, what was above has returned to below. And the other subjects on the [Fifty] Gates [of Binah] will be explained in the Gate of the Gates [Gate XIII] with help of HaShem. And Gedolah, this is Chesed, and Gevurah, this is Pachad/Fear, and [further there are] Tif'eret and Netsach and Hod.

“as all (כל) in the heavens and on the earth”, this [כל] is Yesod, as Targum Onkelos [I did not find this in Targum Onkelos nor in Targum Jonathan] *“which unites between the heavens and the earth”*. Explanation: the one that is uniting Tif'eret, which is called “heavens”, and “earth”, which is called Malkut, and this is Yesod.

And Malkut is not explained properly in the verse, but it says: *“To you, HaShem, [is] the kingdom (הממלכה)”*, because, as for Malkut, its [normal] place is above Netsach and Hod and Yesod, but because of the diminution [of the moon] it descended downwards, therefore it [=the verse] did not want to mention it, except by means of the unification, to teach [us] that its place is in the heavens, but that it [= the place] was cast down from the heavens to earth, and after this it says *“To you, HaShem, [is] the kingdom”*, to explain its virtues and adornments in itself, and yet it returns and unites it to its upper root by saying *“To you (לך), HaShem, [is] the kingdom”*, *“To you (לך)”* is Binah, as we have explained [above]. *“HaShem [the Tetragram]”* is Tif'eret. *“the kingdom (הממלכה)”* is Malkut according to its meaning. And this is its reality together with its husband [= Tif'eret], two kings sucking from one Crown/Keter.

Gate 1. Chapter 9.

After we have, in the previous chapters, been engaged in the necessity of the existence of the Sefirot and their number, it is [now] proper that we will know if someone who denies the subject of the existence of the Sefirot should be called ‘disbeliever’ or not. And we will say that such a person’s mistake in this subject will be in one of two aspects. The first aspect [is] someone who does not know about them at all, not because he, if there would be revealed to him secrets of wisdom, would deny them, God forbid, but because he is not accustomed to them, and the “gates of light” [perhaps referring to this classic work by the 13th century Spanish kabbalist Joseph Gikatilla] have not been revealed to him.

For this man, for sure, it is proper that he is not called ‘disbeliever’ or ‘denier’. And the proof to this [is] that, see, even on the subject of removal of the corporeality from the Simple True, blessed be He, the Rambam has said in the Book of Knowledge (of the Mishneh Tora), The Laws of Teshuvah Chapter 3, that the man who believes that the Simple One is corporeal and has a form, is an infidel. And he includes him among the category of infidels. But the Ra’avad [Rabbi Abraham ben David of Posquières], of blessed memory, questions him [the Rambam] and this is what it says: “Abraham [= the Ra’avad] said: and why does he call this one a infidel? Many greater and better than this one followed this opinion because of what they saw in the Scriptures and [even] more of what they saw in the words of the Aggadot which are confusing the thoughts” [Hasagot HaRa’avad on Mishneh Torah, Repentance 3:7:1], until here [the citation].

See, that the Ra’avad, of blessed memory, criticizes him [the Rambam] when he says that the one who says that the Godhead is corporeal is a heretic. But it is not proper to think that the opinion of the Ra’avad is that such a one is *not* an infidel, as for sure, he who makes the Godhead bodily is a heretic. Truly their difference of opinion depends on the fact that the Rambam, according to what is seen from his citation, holds that the one who says that the Godhead possesses substance, is a heretic, and even if it is so that this mistake is by reason of his not being accustomed to the godhead, and seeking after the plain meanings of Scriptures and Midrashim, and has not descended to their profundity, to understand their subject according to their form.

And to this the Ra’avad, peace be with him, reached him and spoke against him, and said that a man such as this one, who in all its subjects serves God and walks on the roads of the Torah in honesty, and [yet] because of the shortness of his comprehension believes in the corporeality [of the Godhead] should not be called a heretic, [even] though he for sure is wrong. Because his intention is not towards evil, God forbid.

But the one who knows his Creator, and to whom the gates of the introductions [of knowledge] have been revealed with the removal of the corporeality [of the Godhead], and [even so] does not acknowledge the truth and is insolent, and is [still] saying that the Godhead is corporeal, such a one verily should be called a heretic, and also according to the opinion of the Ra’avad of blessed memory.

And thus it is said on the subject of the Sefirot, as for sure he who does not know about them, and believes in the simple Godhead without knowledge of the Sefirot, it is not suitable that such a person is called an unbeliever, God forbid, nor a “cutter of the saplings” [indication for those who err in the Kabbalah], God forbid. As if it would have been thus, it would have been fitting that when man was knowing [how to] understand with the education of the commandments, they would [also] educate him on the subject of belief in the Sefirot and on knowledge about them, what we do not find thus.

But on the contrary, they have said that it is fitting to hide them [= the Sefirot] and “they are not giving these matters except to the modest etc.” [Kohélet Rabbah 3:11]. What is not so concerning the subject of the reality of God and His unity, and the subject of the Tora from the heavens, and the prophecy of Moses, and many [more] roots of [our] faith. As when the

child is called “knowing”, father and mother teach it about them and reveal it the simple meaning of the matters. As our sages of blessed memory speak in tractate Sukkah [Babylonian Talmud, Sukkah] (42a) “[if he] *is knowing how to speak, his father is teaching him Torah and the Kiryat Shema*”. And they asked in the Gemara: “What is the Torah?” and they said: “Moses commanded us the Torah etc.” [Deuteronomy 33:4] and “Kiryat Shema” is “Hear, Israel” [Deuteronomy 6:4].

And see that they chose these two verses to be that in them are included most aspects of the roots of the Torah. In the verse “*Hear, Israel*” is comprised the existence of God which is “*HaShem*”. Further that He is supervising and even [with] individual supervision [of ourselves, and of every detail], and this is the explanation of “*our God*”. As although his existence is necessary from the viewpoint of the whole world completely, and He was, is and will be, and he brings into being all beings, which is the explanation of the name of four letters [= the Tetragram] in its written form. And although he is the master of all worlds, upper and lower, and this is the explanation of pronouncing it [= the written Tetragram] as Lord/Adonai, and from this follows necessarily His supervision comprising the whole world. Yet nevertheless [He is also] “*our God*”, explanation: he is supervising us in particularity. “*HaShem is one*” makes the unity necessary. And already they explained in the Gemara (Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 13) that man needs to focus on the word “one”, that He is king above and below and in the four directions. And with this it is necessary that He has no body, as corporeality is not found in different places at the same time. Further they explained “*one*”, explanation: not as the counted one etc. [as there are one, two, three etc.], as we will explain in the Gate of the Essence and the Vessels in Gate IV in chapter 5 with help of HaShem.

And in the verse “*Moses commanded us the Torah*” is contained the root of the Torah from heaven, and prophecy, and the prophecy of Moses, and this is “*Moses commanded us the Torah*”, as is well-known.

Reward and punishment [is contained] in its saying “*possession of the congregation of Jacob*” [Deuteronomy 33:4], as HaShem desired Israel [/Jacob] for the sake of his/its righteousness and left them as inheritance His Torah. And this is his intention in telling them [in order to teach the children] these two verses, because when the boy grows up, he will start to roam about in his mind on these words and he will ask his father and his grandfather their reasons and subjects [of these two verses]. And they [= father and grandfather] will reveal him and introduce him to the subjects of the corners of the Torah, bit by bit according to his understanding as it will be able to hold [these new subjects]. This is what is found in the essence of the roots [of Faith]. What is not the case with the upper Sefirot, to the contrary, they have concealed their mystery from every eye, and they do not reveal them except to particular selected ones in a generation. And see, from here [there is] evidence that someone who does not perceive the subject of the Sefirot should not, because of this, be called an unbeliever or a “cutter of the saplings”, God forbid. Verily it will be right for us to say about one who has not [yet] inherited to see the lights in his days, and has not tasted the sweetness of the Torah nor the nectar of her pleasant words. And see, he dies without wisdom and has not seen the good.

The second viewpoint, these are those to whom the subject of the Sefirot and their existence has been revealed, but they deny them because the wickedness of their disposition [which they think], as they became familiar with exterior wisdoms and were supplied with gentile children. And these persons, when they are not called unbelievers or heretics because [of the fact that] they confirm all subjects of the Godhead, yet they are called unbelievers because they deny the explanations of the Oral Torah. And the first from three [types of] unbelievers is someone who denies an explanation from the explanations of the Oral Torah, as the Rambam has written in the mentioned chapter [Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuva, Chapter 3 Law 8], and such a one also contradicts the words of our Sages of blessed memory.

And apart from that he has these [errors], he further adds a [more grave] transgression to his sin, as from the denial of the Sefirot he will proceed [further] to unbelief, as we are [actually] compelled to [believe in] the principles and corners of the Torahs [both the written and oral Torah], that from [the principle that] the One is Simple [as we established in the previous chapter of this Gate], he [= the one transgressing] does not attribute to it change, [but then] how does He look upon subjects that involve change? And similarly, as He is One, how does He look after the classes of species as that will necessitate plurality, as is known? And to [be able to explain] this, he is forced to believe in the Sefirot, and if [he does] not, he will be an unbeliever, God forbid. Just as many have erred in the departure from individual guidance and in these subjects, of which it is not necessary to bring them up [here] in writing.

And see, without him willing we will force him into confirmation of the Sefirot, or he will be called an unbeliever. And on this the way shall be forced that someone who says that he has no occupation in Kabbalah and does not want to make directions in his prayer, except [he thinks, this is only reserved for] a possessor of the Lights, as many have thought, for sure such a one will be called erring, as when man comes to speak on the Simple One in relation to its aspect of its existence, [but] without its existence and its aspect in relation to the Sefirot, he will be found perverting His actions completely.

As the En Sof in relation to the aspect of its essence is simple and does not have changes so that He changes Himself from Din/Judgement to Rachamim/Compassion, and that He acts according to [His] will, and that He may change from [one] will to [another] will by means of the prayer [of human beings], if not in relation to His aspect to His Sefirot, which are all His Providences, and by means of them [= the Sefirot] there will be change of Din/Judgement and Rachamim/Compassion.

And the investigator should not press to enter in these our matters opposite the camp to understand the subject of the changes and the Providence, as it will bring him damage and not profit, truly we will explain the subject in length in the Gate of the Essence and the Vessels [Gate IV] with help of HaShem.

The end of the matter [is]: man is obliged to believe in the Sefirot in order to be correct on the roots of faith and its corners, as it is not possible to uphold the corners of the Torah except with them, which means: by means of them, as by means of them the Emanator does the changes, and it does not bring Him no change at all from this, God forbid!, as is being

explained in length in the mentioned Gate [is הנהמדר here a printing error, and should read הנהנוכר]. And we ask forgiveness from God [for all our mistakes in the study of the Kabbalah].

Gate 1. Chapter 10.

After we have been busy with the subject of the Sefirot and the necessity of their existence, and the subject of the devotion to them among the wise ones, it is necessary for us to know their what-ness and their general names, which is agreed upon among the commentators, and especially in the words of Rashbi of blessed memory. And this is it: The first one [is] Keter/Crown, the second one Chochmah/Wisdom [which one receives], the third one Binah/Distinction, the fourth one Gedolah/Greatness or Chesed/Generosity, the fifth one Pachad/Fear or Gevurah/Force, the sixth one Tif'eret/Adornment, the seventh one Netsach/Victory, the eighth one Hod/Splendor, the ninth one Yesod/Foundation, and the tenth one [is] Malkut/Kingdom. And these Sefirot are [the] ten names which are not to be erased, and the[se] names and the Sefirot are all one matter, as the spirituality of the names are themselves the Sefirot.

Keter is [the name] אהי"ה, and it is found in Scripture only three times in one verse (Exodus 3:14) *"And God said to Moses: 'I am who I am' (אהי"ה אשר אהי"ה)", and He said: 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: "אהי"ה has sent me to you.'"* But the reason why it did not come [to be written more often] in the Torah, and other dilemma's that are in this explanation, it will be explained in the Gate of the [Divine] Names [Gate XX], with help of HaShem.

And the name of Chochmah is יה"/Yah, and there is much written of them in the Torah, doubled in the Prophets and tripled in the Writings. In the Torah it is written: *"My refuge and strength [is] Yah/יה"* [Exodus 15:2], and similarly *"because a hand is on the throne of Yah/יה"* [Exodus 17:16]. Doubled in the Prophets: *"I will see Yah, Yah in the land of the living."* [Isaiah 38:11], which is in *"the poem of [king] Hezekiah"* [Isaiah 38:9]. Tripled in the Writings: *"Out of the distress I called Yah, and he answered me in the wide Yah."* [Psalms 118:5], and [there are] many [places] similar to them.

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And the name of Binah is the four-letter name [Tetragram] vocalized as Elohim/God, written in the Torah, doubled in the Prophets, tripled in the Writings. Written in the Torah: *"My Lord יהו"ה by what will I know that I will take into possession..."* [Genesis 15:8], and as this one [there are] many [places]. Doubled in the Prophets: *"יהו"ה my Lord is my strength, and He will place my feet etc."* [Habakkuk 3:19], and as this one [there are] many [places]. Tripled in the Writings: *"I will come with the strength of my Lord יהו"ה, I will mention your righteousness alone"* [Psalms 71:16], and as this one [there are] many [places].

And the name of Chesed is the name El/ל"א, and there many [places] of them in the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings. In the Torah: *"And he called him El, the God of Israel."* [Genesis 33:20], and as this one [there are] many [places]. And in the Prophets: *"El God HaShem knows"* [Joshua 22:22], and as this one [there are] many [places]. And in the Writings: *"The El, His way is complete"* [Psalms 18:31], and as this one [there are] many [places].

And the name of Gevurah is Elohim/God, written in the Torah, doubled in the Prophets, tripled in the Writings. Written in the Torah: “*And Elohim/God tested Abraham...*” [Genesis 22:1], and as this one [there are] many [places]. Doubled in the Prophets: “*And there was a fear of Elohim/God...*” [I Samuel 14:15], and as this one [there are] many [places]. Tripled in the Writings: “*Do arise, Elohim/God, and do judge the earth...*” [Psalms 82:8] and as this one [there are] many [places].

And the name of Tif’eret is YHWH, written in the Torah, doubled in the Prophets, tripled in the Writings. Written in the Torah: “*And YHWH said*”, “*And YHWH spoke*” and besides them [there are] many [places]. Doubled in the Prophets: “*Thus spoke YHWH*” and besides them [there are] many [places]. Tripled in the Writings: “*YHWH spoke to me: you are my son.*” [Psalms 2:7], and as this one [there are] many [places].

And the name of Netsach you will not find on its own, only coupled with the name of Hod, by reason that the two of them have one name, and that is Tsebaot/Of Hosts. And this [name] is not found in the Torah at all. But in the Prophets many [times]: “*Thus spoke HaShem Tsebaot*”, and besides them [there are] many [places].

And on the name of Yesod, all later commentators have explained [that] its name [is] special: El Chai/Living God. And it is difficult that El Chai is not among the names that are not to be erased, as the word Chai is not holy, as what is seen in tractate [Babylonian Talmud] Shevuot (35a), that it is not a name [not to be erased], only El [is listed there].

And the name El, which is holy, is borrowed from Chesed [of which it is the name] by way of the special names and their part. And Rabbi Abba included this opinion in the book of the Zohar, parasha Vayikra (page 11a), and this is what it says: ‘The sixth and seventh [name], they called them Tsebaot. The eighth [name] El Chai, as you say: “*Because there HaShem commanded the blessing: Life etc.*” [Psalms 133:3], and this is the Righteous One [Yesod], as all living beings go out from him.’ Until here the citation.

And why did he count Netsach and Hod [as] sixth and seventh although they are [actually] seventh and eighth [in the order of the Sefirot] as is known? [It is] because Rabbi Abba began to count the [divine] names from the name Yah [which is] from Chochmah, as is explained there. And the explanation is that the Righteous One is called El Chai by reason that life is going out of him [= the Righteous One], and he said ‘that all lives go out from him’, because the root of lives, they are above in Chochmah and Binah, as is written (Ecclesiastes 7:12): “*Chochmah/Wisdom will enliven those who possess it*”, and as we will explain in the Gate of the order of the special names [Gate XXI] with help of HaShem. And to this he said that the reason that Yesod is called by the name of El Chai, although the root of the lives are [further] above as it [the Sefira Yesod] is their spring according to their departure outwards [= further downwards, towards Malkut], and because of this he uses the expression “that go out” which is according to [their] departure.

See that Rabbi Abba explained that the name of Yesod is El Chai. And Rabbi Elazar differed from him and said that its name is Shaddai/שׁדַּי, and this is what he says: ‘*The ninth is Shaddai, as it says to the world: Enough!/Dai/דַּי, for Dai is supply, and supply does not come*

to the world except out of the Righteous One, who is the Foundation/Yesod of the world, which said to the world Dai/Enough!’ End of citation.

And since it is difficult for Rabbi Elazar that the name Shaddai (שׁדַּי) [has as] explanation that (שׁ) it says to the world Dai (דַּי)/Enough!, which is that it limited it [= the world] as they [= the elements of the world] were expanding from its narrownesses and going, until it said to it [= the world]: Dai/Enough! [= that suffices!]. And this is not justified for Yesod, as the creation of the world is by means of the Architect which is Malkut, and therefore verily it is this one [= Malkut] who says to the world: Dai/Enough! And to this [difficulty] he [= R. Elazar] said: Shaddai, [with the] explanation: supply and nourishment. And the nourishment, it is from the side of Yesod, and it is supplying nourishment to the world, and this is ‘nourishment does not come to the world except out of the Righteous One, who is the Foundation/Yesod of the world’.

And he intended to say: out of the Righteous One, as he is the Foundation/Yesod *that causes the world to stand*, and this is why he repeated his expression and said ‘the Righteous One, who is the Foundation of the world, who said to the world: Dai/Enough!’.

And even if this is so, we do not deny that the name El Chai is in Yesod, as Rabbi Abba has explained, but [we hold] that it is not a holy name as the rest of the names which are not to be erased, but [it is] a special name as the rest of the special names, and it occurs in Scripture (Psalms 84:3) “*My heart and my flesh will sing to El Chai*”. But the name Shaddai is written in the Torah: “*And El Shaddai will bless you and will make you bear fruit and make you numerous.*” [Genesis 28:3]. Doubled in the Prophets: “*as the voice of Shaddai in their going*” [Ezekiel 1:24], tripled in the Writings: *And Shaddai will be in your need...*” [Job 22:25].

And the name of Malkut [is] Adonai/My Master, written in the Torah, doubled in the Prophets, tripled in the Writings. Written in the Torah: “*Now may the power of Adonai be great*” [Numbers 14:17] and [there are] many [places] similar to them. Doubled in the Prophets: “*The matter which Adonai sent to Jacob*” [Isaiah 9:7] and [there are] many [places] similar to them. Tripled in the Writings: “*Adonai, you will open...*” [Psalms 51:17] and [there are] many [places] similar to them. And it came into the tradition that there are in Scripture 134 occurrences of them, and the reason you will find it in the Torah commentary of Chizkuni [Chizkuni on Genesis 1:1], at the beginning of it he says that this number corresponds to the [numerical value of the] first and last letters of East (מִזְרֵחַ), West (מַעֲרֵב) and South (דָּרוֹם) [the sum of the numerical value of מֵה, מַב and דָּם is 134] to say that these three directions are closed with the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, and therefore 134 (קלד) is an expression of closing, just as “keys” (אֶקְלִידִּי) [Aramaic]. But the North is not in the number as it is open to punish the wicked ones, but in the time to come the Holy One, blessed be He will close it. Similar and more, see there and you will find [further] reasons extending on this explanation.

And these ten names that have been mentioned are palaces for the spirituality of the Sefirot, and this spirituality is a garment for the innermost spirituality that is hinted at by the four-letter name [Tetragram] which is in each and every Sefira. And this subject, and besides it the explanation of these names and the subjects of the Sefirot, will be explained in the Gates that follow with help of HaShem, and each one [of these subjects] at a place that is fitting for it.

And see, this Gate is [now] completed, and thanks to God who helped us, may He help us,
Glory Selah forever Amen.