

**THE TETRAGRAMMATON FORMULA:
THE EVOLUTION OF MATTER AND THE SOUL**
by Shraga Friedman

In Qabalah, the cosmological structure of Creation is defined according to two interdependent numerical structures; the Tetragrammaton, being the expansion of zero into four, and the Tree of Life, defined by the numbers one to ten. The key concept fundamental to an understanding of both is that they are evolutionary in structure and sequence¹. Both the formulae of the Tetragrammaton and the Tree of Life communicate the process by which the Creator manifested general spiritual Substance, and then, through an evolutionary sequence, condensed this substance into specific material Form. These terms, “Substance” and “Form”, are essential, and are applicable to each stage in the sequences of both the Tetragrammaton and the Tree of Life. In these sequences, each stage gives Form to a Substance represented by the stage preceding it.

It must be mentioned at this point that the formulae of the Tetragrammaton and the Tree of Life represent G-d producing Something from Nothing (*Yesh M’Ain*, in Hebrew). In relation to these formulae, G-d Himself is referred to as “**Ain**”, which is Hebrew for “Not”, or “Nothing”. This is because the qualities of material existence cannot be conceived of as applying to G-d in His essential state, which is independent and exalted from all material existence. Thus, by the standards of material existence, G-d is non-existence. The formulae of the Tetragrammaton and the Tree of Life portray the process by which G-d projected material existence out of Divine nonexistence.

The Four letters of the Tetragrammaton represent four basic and definitive stages of this process. First, the **Yod** of the Tetragrammaton represents the emanation of a general, all-encompassing spiritual Substance out of Divine Nothingness. Second, the first **Heh** of the Tetragrammaton represents the definition of particular qualities within this general Substance. **Vav** represents the separation and recombination of these particular qualities to form various basic compounds and ideal Forms which comprise the basic guidelines according to which material existence is ultimately manifested. Manifestation itself is represented by the final **Heh**. This basic outline applies to all applications of the formula of the Tetragrammaton.

G-d, existing in His essential and absolute Unity, is exalted and distinct from material manifestation. As such, He is considered as a “fifth state” existing “behind” manifest Creation. This “fifth

¹They are evolutionary and sequential only for analytical purposes. However, as an expression of the Unique Divine Will, they must be realized as coming into being simultaneously, as Essential Divinity is exalted beyond time and the expression of It’s Will is a single act.

state” is the Source from which the four letters or phases of the Tetragrammaton are projected. This concept implies a direct relationship between the four letters of the Tetragrammaton and the four elements of classical philosophy, which, in turn, correspond directly to the four states of matter in modern physics. These four elements are Fire (energy), Water (liquids), Air (gases), and Earth (solids). These are the four distinguishable manifestations of the “source-substance” which Pythagoras termed **Quintessence**. In Latin writings, “quinta essentia” literally means “fifth substance”.

Fire, which corresponds to **Yod**², the first letter of the Tetragrammaton, also corresponds to the soul of humanity, the element of spirituality which resides within us. This element motivates us to strive for exalted degrees of consciousness and action, and it motivates us to become close to the Divine. Positively, the qualities of Fire manifest as will, inspiration, nobility of deeds, and the motivation and power to achieve honor, prestige, dominion, and leadership. Negatively, these last qualities become pride, egotism, despotism, and tyranny, as opposed to deserved authority. In a literal sense, Fire is the provider of warmth and light, but uncontrolled is the most destructive of the elements.

Water corresponds to **Heh**, the second letter of the Tetragrammaton, and corresponds to the desires of humanity, the passions which shape and direct the will towards specific ends and goals. This concept is most obviously manifest as human emotions. Philosophic Water represents the qualities of passivity, receptivity, flexibility, and dependency, which are the qualities of emotion and desire, because emotion and desire are totally dependent on outside influences. Philosophic Water has no inherent power of its own, except as the conductor and transformer of another. Alone, the element of Water is barren; life did not manifest in seawater without the catalysts of heat and light, which are qualities of the element of Fire.

Obversely, when brought to bear on the element of Fire, Water becomes very powerful and important. Fire, in and of itself, is very chaotic and amorphous. It is the qualities of Water that make it possible to contain and control Fire. Without these “Watery” qualities, Fire would run rampant in a destructive rage and then burn itself out. It is Desire (water) which shapes, sustains, and directs the Will (fire) towards practical ends. Thus, Fire and Water are interdependent for any creative act. This fact is the basis of their relationship to the Tetragrammaton.

Air corresponds to **Vav**, the third letter of the Tetragrammaton, and also to human intellect. The powers of analysis and synthesis, which constitute the intellect, are the abilities to break down a subject into its basic components in order to understand its structure (and, hopefully, its purpose), and then to reconstruct these components into something new, and - possibly - better. Thus, Air represents the qualities of reason and rationality. Positively, these are directed towards constructive applications and new

2 It is here that I depart from traditional attributions, which have Water first, and then Fire. I do this because Fire, as the Energy of modern physics, best represents - in my mind - the nature of the primal, general spiritual substance.

inventions. But, devoid of the creative guidance of the qualities of Fire and Water, intellect, as the power of division, becomes a very destructive force. It has well been seen in our time that, devoid of higher ideals, science, laws, and politics become - at best - sterile of any worth or meaning. Unfortunately, the worst is more often manifest as war, pollution, infringement of basic human rights, and weapons technology that has advanced far beyond our ability to rationally control, much less (G-d forbid) use.

Earth, the final **Heh** of the Tetragrammaton, manifests in humanity as the physical body, as well as that which is needed to sustain the body, such as food and shelter. Earth is also the literal Earth, the soil in which our food grows, as well as the globe which is the home and environment of the human community. Like Water, Philosophic Earth is barren and sterile in and of itself. It's value is completely dependent on how it expresses and is influenced by the "higher" elements. For example, the actions of the human body can only be judged and evaluated according to how well they express or effect the spiritual will (Fire), the passions (Water), and/or the intellect (Air). Thus, money, the most obvious example of material power, is not inherently evil. It is simply a tool of convenience, like a knife or a match, and one can only judge the value of how it is used.

This is a basic summary of the qualities of the philosophic elements of Fire, Water, Air, and Earth. Anthropomorphically, Earth corresponds to the physical body which is the vehicle of human consciousness. The consciousness itself consists of three fundamental parts: the intellect (Air), which is subject to the influences of the passions (Water), which are, in a very real sense, the physical manifestations of the strivings of the spiritual will (Fire). The correspondence of these four elements to the Qabalistic formula of the Tetragrammaton becomes a complex structure of interdependent metaphysical concepts. We will begin with the structure of the human soul.

According to the Qabalistic scheme, the human soul has four distinct facets which are projected out of integral Divinity. The lowest level of the soul is **Nefesh**, or the Animal Soul, which is the spark of life that animates and energizes the body and maintains it's subconscious functions, such as breathing and the beating of the heart. Nefesh corresponds to the element of Earth and the last letter of the Tetragrammaton.

"Above" Nefesh is **Ruach**, literally translated as *wind*, which is the general soul manifesting as consciousness. Ruach animates and energizes the personal consciousness and intellect within the physical vehicle. Ruach corresponds to Air and the Vav of Tetragrammaton. Nefesh and Ruach are the existential aspects of the soul, while the aspects corresponding to Water and Fire are abstract, intangible to physical experience, existing at an almost purely subjective level of manifestation.

The first level of the soul higher than Ruach is called **Neshamah**. This is the Jewish concept of the

“Higher” soul, i.e., the higher level of spiritual consciousness inherent in the individual but often unrecognized. The full potential of the Neshamah is realized through religious and mystical discipline. Within the technical structure of Qabala, the Neshamah is the source of individual identity, the source of the ego, or sense of self. Contrarily, the next level of the soul, termed **Chiah**, is the general living force. It is the part of the soul which is connected with all life, every living, growing thing. This concept embraces all Creation, as all of Creation is in a constant state of growth and development. Chiah corresponds to Fire and the Neshamah to Water. As the highest level of the soul, Chiah is closest to the Divine Source (called **Yechidah** in relation to the soul) and is in constant contact with all life and all of Creation. Neshamah is the first specification of form or identity from this general life-force, and, as such, Neshamah is the source of personal identity or self consciousness. This relationship between Chiah and Neshamah directly corresponds to the aforementioned relationship between Fire and Water. Chiah, equated with Fire, is amorphous and undefined as to function. Neshamah, equated with Water, specifies and directs the force of Chiah into a specific individual, giving them personal consciousness with spiritual motivations. This personal consciousness manifests existentially as Ruach, which is contained in the physical body, which, in turn, is animated and sustained by Nefesh.

Generally, the Ruach is only consciously linked to Nefesh, and it’s perceptions are limited to the physical senses, while Neshamah functions - at best - only at a purely unconscious level. Sometimes Neshamah joins Ruach in dreams, and can bring important insights to an individual. But, generally, this is rare. In psychological terms, we can identify the four aspects of the soul (Nefesh, Ruach, Neshamah, and Chiah) with the concepts of the subconscious, the conscious, the unconscious, and the collective unconscious (respectively).

So far, the attributes of the Tetragrammaton have been explained in anthropomorphic terms, but there are cosmological attributes as well. The most fundamental of these are the Four Worlds of Evolution. The function of the Four Worlds in the evolution of matter is identical to the function of the four levels of the human soul. They are the delineation of the evolution of matter from the pure, amorphous spiritual Substance, or light, that was the first emanation of the Creator, into the solid tangible matter that makes up the form of physically perceivable universe in which we live.

The first and highest of the Four Worlds, corresponding to Fire of the elements, Chiah of the soul, and Yod of the Tetragrammaton, is called **Atzilut**. The term Atzilut is usually translated as *Emanation*, but literally means **Proximity** or “closeness”. This is the World, or primordial Substance, which is the first emanation out of G-d’s unique and pure Essence, and is therefore the World closest to Divinity. This Substance corresponds to Philosophic Fire, which - as opposed to literal fire - is best described as “living

light”. The Substance of “living light” is intangible and has no definite, specific Form, but its dynamic qualities of vitality and illumination are distinguishable. Life and light are the two qualities that must be postulated as being prevalent in any Divinely creative act. Since these qualities can be discerned as having existence distinct from Essential Divinity, the emanation of the primal “living light” (Substance) is the preliminary phase of Divine Creation. This phase is what is called Atzilut. As this is the primal spiritual Substance from which all other matter evolves, it corresponds to that which is called Chiah in the evolution of souls.

The next phase, corresponding to Water of the elements, Neshamah of the soul, and the first Heh of the Tetragrammaton, is called the World of **Briah**, which translates as *Creation*³. Like Neshamah, the function of **Briah** is to define specific Form and function in the amorphous energy of Atzilut. This is the evolutionary stage where matter begins to condense, solidify, and to acquire specific, distinguishable qualities of its own. This is because the Divine Unity is indivisible. Specification, which is division from that Unity, cannot be classified as Divine because the condensation of primal Substance into specific Form begins to occur at this stage. Thus, **Briah** corresponds to Neshamah, the stage where the human soul acquires individual personality and identity.

It must be understood that **Briah** is a purely embryonic stage where specification and differentiation are applied only in an abstract sense, identifying the potential function of specific Forms and forces. The actual separation and division of these different qualities occurs in the next phase of evolution, called **Yetzirah**, which literally translates as *Formation*. The world of **Yetzirah** corresponds to Air of the elements, Ruach of the soul, and Vav of the Tetragrammaton. As previously explained concerning Air as intellect, this is the stage where differentiation of qualities (analysis) is applied to matter, and where these qualities are combined (synthesis) and Formed into archetypal conceptual compositions with a view towards various specific applications. This is the function of the human intellect with which an individual theoretically experiments with various courses of action with the intellect and comes to a decision that the individual thinks will best serve the primal motivation or desire. **Yetzirah** corresponds to Ruach in that this is the stage where a specific compound is identified and given personal existence in the same way that an individual human personality is given identity and necessitates a physical vehicle.

Here we come naturally to the fourth and final stage of development, called **Assiah**, which translates as *Action*. The World of **Assiah** corresponds to Earth of the elements, the human body, and the final Heh of the Tetragrammaton. **Assiah** is the actual physical universe in which all things live and carry out their functions. This is the final proving ground where all the preceding Worlds and Spheres are actualized. The results are judged according to how well they perform their intended purpose, which is

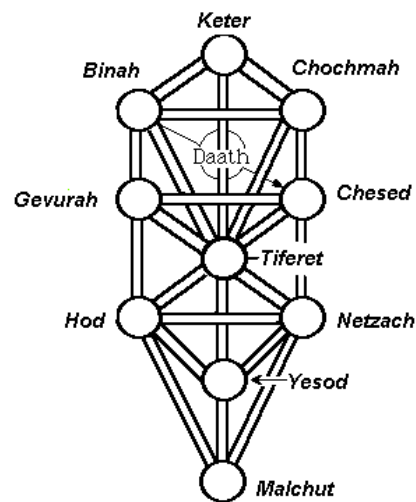
³Although the term “Creation” is specifically applied to this secondary level, the entire process is traditionally referred to as *Maaseh B’reshit*, the Work of Creation.

conceived in Briah and gestates and takes Form in Yetzirah. In correspondence, the human body is the proving ground of the soul, where the soul is evaluated according to how well it fulfills it's intended purpose (traditionally, this purpose is seen as the Torah).

All of these specific delineations of the functions of the Tetragrammaton formula must be constantly interrelated and cross-referenced in order to gain a practical understanding of how the formula functions. There is one last important delineation of the sequence of four in Qabala, known as the Four Partzufim, a word meaning "faces" or "features". However, this sequence is specific to the dynamics of the Ten Spheres of the Tree of Life, and cannot be separated from them. Thus, an understanding of the Partzufim is dependent on an understanding of the formula of the Tree of Life.

The Tree of Life

The most common and fundamental representation of the descent of Divine Light from intangible Unity into perceivable multiplicity is known as the **ETZ CHAIM**, or **Tree of Life**. The Tree of Life is comprised of ten spheres which identify specific aspects of the Divine Light as it condenses from the abstract and amorphous primal substance into solid, tangible matter. It must be mentioned that this sequence, considered as distinct and differentiated concepts of Divinity, is merely an illusion created so that humanity, in it's imperfect existence, can seek to come close to the Divine. A common metaphor used in the Hebrew Qabalistic texts is that of a series of filters and/or lenses which affect our perception of the Light, but not the Essence of the Light itself.



The first thing that should be noticed is that the spheres have been arranged on three vertical lines, or **Pillars**, as they are called in Qabalah. The next thing to observe is that the spheres numbered one through nine have been organized into three triangles, descending sequentially, one from the other, with the tenth sphere as an independent unit emanating from the whole. The three Pillars define certain qualities of the ten spheres as follows: those on the Right (known as the Pillar of Mercy) have qualities of simplicity, expansiveness, bestowal, and providence, while the spheres of the Left Pillar (known as the Pillar of Strictness) have qualities of multiplicity, restriction, reception, and temporality. Between the Right and Left Pillars is the Middle Pillar of Moderation where

the polarized qualities of the Right and Left are brought together and reconciled in harmony and balance. The three descending triangles define the cosmological aspects of the Tree, as will be explained. Although the three triangles and the tenth sphere can be seen as a sequence of four, they should not, at this point, be related to the Tetragrammaton. This, also, will be explained later.

It could be immediately asked that, if the Middle Pillar is the reconciliation of the polarized extremes represented by Right and Left, how and why does the sequence of the ten spheres begin in the Middle Pillar? The answer is that the first sphere, called **Keter** - meaning **Crown** - represents the indivisible Divine Unity. As the Unique Source of all the spheres, it is, by necessity, the highest and purest conceptualization of Harmony and Balance, from which all other phases, defined as extremes or the reconciliation of these extremes, are emanated. Each subsequent sphere which manifests on the Middle Pillar must be seen as a reflection of the Essential Unity of Keter.

Keter is the level of pure Unity: Divine existence which has no dependence on anything other than itself. When the scheme of the Tree of Life is applied to analyze a subject, Keter represents the unique Essence (“**Etzem**”) of the subject in its purest integrity; the subsequent spheres can only define qualities of the subject in relation to, or as perceived by, something other than itself. As such, Keter corresponds to the “source substance” or quintessence as discussed concerning the four elements. By its very nature, this Source exists beyond and above any concept of polarities.

In defining the extension of Light-Substance from Divine Nothingness, Keter is the first point from which manifest light extends. As indivisible Unity, it contains in potential all the successive spheres in their full power. An important point is that the ten spheres of the Tree of Life must be realized as happening simultaneously as one unit. It is only humanity’s limited perception and thought processes which need to divide and separate the Light into what are defined as distinct and individual aspects in order to understand it. Yet, to consider ultimate Divinity as anything other than the purest and simplest Unity is absurd. So the Tree of Life was created by G-d for the benefit of humanity’s understanding, in order to identify qualities of the Divine for the purpose of self improvement and spiritual advancement.

At the same time, humanity’s existence depends on the Tree of Life which separates the physical existence of human multiplicity from Divine Unity. This separation and distance is necessary, because multiple individual consciousnesses could not exist as divided states of being in proximity to the Divine Unity represented by Keter; they would merely be dissolved into it.

The second of the Ten Spheres of the Tree of Life is called **Chochmah**, Hebrew for **Wisdom**. Since this is the first extension from pure Unity, the first concept revealed by this sphere is Quantity. But, as the sphere of Chochmah, this is quantity considered as the sum of all the parts of a subject, before any

analysis or definition of individual components. It is the whole of an object, comprising all the elements, sub-elements, components, parts, potentials, and projections of the object which constitute an organized body of information. This information is inherently attached to the object, whether or not they are perceived by another. Chochmah is broad, general material, prior to any specification or differentiation of detail. It corresponds to the function of the right brain of an individual; the holistic, artistic consciousness which grasps concepts in their integrity before defining particular detail.

The third sphere of the Tree of Life is called **Binah**, which means *Understanding*. This sphere is the first intimation of consciousness apart from the Divine because it represents the perception, reception, and understanding of the Wisdom represented by the second sphere. It is also the specification of particular facts and qualities from this general body of Wisdom, and their preparation for application and manifestation. In fact, in relation to Chochmah as identified by the term “Quantity”, Binah is called “Quality”. This is because, within the structure of the Tree of Life, Chochmah corresponds to the World of Atzilut (the primal spiritual Substance) and Binah corresponds to the World of Briah, where specific, individual qualities and potentials are identified and separated within the primal Substance, as well as their Forms. This is done towards the ultimate end of practical material manifestation. These attributions are the beginning of the correspondence between the Tree of Life and the Tetragrammaton.

The first three spheres of the Tree of Life function purely at the causative level of events, existing only in the abstract realm of idea, whereas the following seven spheres are the basic archetypes of action and result. Keter, Chochmah, and Binah represent G-d as Creator, and together are called the **Supernals**. They are the beginning points of the Three Pillars of Manifestation. Keter is the neutral point initiating the Pillar of Moderation, Chochmah is the beginning of the active, all-encompassing, positive force of the Right Pillar, and Binah is the beginning of the passive, restrictive, negative force of the Left Pillar. These three spheres are the basic substance of the whole Tree of Life. The subsequent triangles are merely garments which enclose this Supernal Triad. Since the Supernals contain and determine all potentials that can occur lower in the Tree, the lower spheres must be understood as mere extensions or variations of the Supernals.

Another way of describing the relationship between the Supernal Triad and the Seven Lower spheres is to consider the latter as a **Vehicle**⁴ for the former. This way of looking at the Tree of Life is the basis of the application of the Tetragrammaton Formula to the Ten Spheres. This will be explained in due course, after a preliminary explanation of the lower spheres.

The fourth sphere of the Tree of Life, which is the first of the seven lower existential spheres, is

⁴ “Vehicle” is the most literal translation of the commonly abused Qabalistic term “Merkavah”, or “Merkabah”.

called **Chesed**, meaning *Kindness*. It represents the Kindness and blessings of G-d which allow for, and maintain, lower existence. Chesed is the general force of expansion, emanation, and extension. As a projection of Chochmah and the Pillar of Mercy, Chesed is the **Will to Give**, i.e., that driving force (*Hanhagah*, in Hebrew) in the tangible world that manifests s generosity, charity, forgiveness, mercy, and broadness of view.

The fifth sphere of the Tree of Life is alternately called **Gevurah** - meaning *Strength* - or **Din** - which means *Judgement* - both having the intimation of strictness and the setting of limits. Gevurah is the power of restriction which contains the expansive energy of Chesed, offsetting any possible imbalances or extremes. An over-abundance of kindness and mercy ultimately degenerates into indulgence and weakness. By setting limits and boundaries to the expansion of Chesed, Gevurah maintains its effectiveness and propriety.

The sixth sphere is called **Tiferet**, which means *Harmony*. It is the equilibrium achieved between Chesed and Gevurah. Tiferet reconciles the lenience of the Right Pillar with the discipline of the Left Pillar in a practical manner so that they can both be effectively expressed in harmony and balance. Gevurah offsets imbalanced Chesed, and Tiferet offsets extremes of Gevurah. As the central point in the scheme of the Tree of Life, Tiferet also moderates between the Supernals and manifest materiality.

This triad comprises the essence of the concept of analysis. Chesed represents the merits of a subject, Gevurah represents its faults, and Tiferet represents the balance between them which determines the best application or use of a subject. Central to the Tree of Life scheme, this triad gives its names to the Three Pillars; Chesed defines the dominant quality of the Right Pillar, Gevurah best defines the Left Pillar, and Tiferet is the harmony and moderation of the Middle Pillar.

The three spheres of the next triad can basically be defined as **Action, Reaction, and Result**. This triad represents the actual functions of a subject in a practical - rather than an abstract or purely intellectual - sense. This triad also represents a subject *in expression*, when it interacts with external details, which are incidental to the essence of the subject itself, but nevertheless have an effect on the course and consequence of its application.

The seventh sphere of the Tree of Life is called **Netzach**, which literally translates as *Victory* or *Perpetuity*, but can be more practically termed “Progress”. Netzach is the application, in strength, of the energy stabilized in Tiferet. As Tiferet is the center of the Tree of Life, any motion from Tiferet will be powerful and should be progressive. Netzach represents the powerful progressive potential of the energy of Tiferet channeled and directed towards a specific application.

The next sphere, **Hod**, represents that which is acted upon by, or reacts to, Netzach. Netzach

cannot be clearly comprehended without relation to Hod, and vice versa. The name “Hod” is Hebrew for *Glory*, which is the natural consequence of the Victory of Netzach. Hod represents the environmental factors and external influences which determine how the function of Netzach is to be achieved. It is both the external forces that must be adapted to in a particular situation and the resources at hand which may be utilized in order to achieve the progressive action of Netzach. Netzach and Hod, being more particular to accidental circumstances rather than being inherent aspects of the cause being realized, have been corresponded with **Time** and **Place**, respectively. These aspects of Netzach and Hod are not inherent at the causative level of an action, but they do, of course, have a major influence on the effect.

The ninth sphere of the Tree of Life is called **Yesod**, which means *Foundation*. Yesod is the fixation of a subject or action within the Time and Place of Netzach and Hod. It represents the actual event, or “position” achieved, within this context. Yesod is seen as the culmination and ultimate expression of all the previous spheres and triads.

The sequences of Chesed-Gevurah-Tiferet and Netzach-Hod-Yesod are the archetypal structure of the process of Formation, i.e., they are, collectively, the World of Yetzirah. These spheres comprise the formative phase of the analysis and synthesis of the components in preparation for its actual manifestation. The final phase of active manifestation, which corresponds to the World of Assiah, is the tenth and concluding sphere of the Tree of Life. This sphere is called **Malchut**, meaning *Kingdom*. Malchut is the end result of the process of Netzach-Hod-Yesod, which, in turn, is the specific application in a particular situation of the force of Chesed-Gevurah-Tiferet. Malchut is the level of ultimate effect as seen in relation to the initial goal defined in the abstract causative level of the Supernal triad. The value of this Effect is dependent on how well the phase of Yetzirah expresses the Cause as determined in the Supernal level that contains the Worlds of Atzilut and Briah (Chochmah and Binah). Malchut also represents the field of action, or vessel, for the expression of all the previous spheres and phases of emanation. Thus, like the element of Earth, Malchut corresponds to the human body and its environment.

The Four Partzufim

As previously mentioned, the correspondence of the Tree of Life to the four phases of the Tetragrammaton Formula is most clearly manifest in what are termed the **Partzufim**, which translates as *faces* or *features*. The Partzufim delineate four basic anthropomorphic “personalities” which characterize the letters of the Tetragrammaton and how they function and interact with each other within the context of

the Ten Spheres of the Tree of Life.⁵ **Yod**, representing the extension of Chochmah from Keter, is called **Partzuf Abba (the Face of the Father)**, and corresponds to Fire, Chiah, and the World of Atzilut. **Heh** is Binah, which draws specific qualities from the general information of Chochmah in preparation for the Formative process of the lower spheres. This first Heh of the Tetragrammaton is called **Partzuf Ima (the Face of the Mother)**, and it corresponds to Water, Neshamah, and the World of Briah. It is extraordinary that the cooperative functions signified by the ancient terms **Father** and **Mother** are best illustrated by the functions of these same terms in modern biology. In the process of reproduction, the seed of the father - which corresponds to the general Substance of Chochmah - comprises millions of spermatozoa, only one of which is specified and received by the ovum of the mother, which is then fertilized. The fertilized ovum then resides in embryo in the womb of the mother, being nurtured in preparation for manifest existence. This biological process directly corresponds to all the cooperative functions of Yod and Heh previously mentioned, and how they take place at a stage preceding birth into manifest existence. It is also interesting to note that, since the level of the sphere of Keter is unattainable by humanity (due to the deficient circumstances of existence and the manifest human condition), the Qabalists found it necessary to postulate a synthetic sphere that is attainable. This sphere is called **Da'at**, Hebrew for **Knowledge**, and it is the balance and reconciliation on the Middle Pillar of Chochmah and Binah (Abba and Ima). The word *Da'at*, meaning *Knowledge*, is derived from the same Hebrew root as the word used in the Bible when Adam had intercourse with Eve, conceiving a son: "and Adam *knew* Eve, his wife, and she conceived" (*Genesis* 4:1). But, in the truly literal sense, Knowledge (Daat) is the natural product of Chochmah (Wisdom), the holistic and poetic function of the Right Brain, functioning in union and harmony with Binah, which represents the analytical and logical function of the Left Brain.

When the offspring of the union of Abba and Ima is born into manifestation, the phase of development represented by the letter **Vav** of the Tetragrammaton begins. This is called (**Partzuf**) **Zeir Anpin**, the "**Small Face**", child of the Partzufim Abba and Ima (Chochmah and Binah). Zeir Anpin, as the letter Vav, corresponds to Ruach in the Soul and the element Air. This stage is correlative to the World of Yetzirah, and comprises the triads of Chesed-Gevurah-Tiferet and Netzach-Hod-Yesod. This first triad is analogous to early childhood where, under the direct guidance of the parents (the Supernal Triad containing Abba and Ima), reward (Chesed) and punishments (Gevurah) are applied in the hope that balance and stability (Tiferet) is achieved at an early stage in the development of the personality. The next triad is analogous to adolescence, where the child, independent of direct guidance, develops for himself - by his own experimentation - personal guidelines for dealing with various situations. These formative stages

⁵There are actually more than just four Partzufim; however, they are all derivative of the Tetragrammaton Formula, which defines the basic structure for all of them. Thus, an understanding of the four general & primary Partzufim is necessary to an understanding of the more particular countenances that are attributed to the Tree of Life, all of which are defined in relation to these Four primaries.

of individual development clearly correspond to Yetzirah, the World of Formation. As this “son” (Zeir Anpin is definitely conceived of as a masculine entity) matures and progresses to adulthood, he grows to become a manifest Vessel for the hidden qualities and attributes of Partzuf Abba. As the letter Vav of the Tetragrammaton, Zeir Anpin eventually takes the final Heh of the Name as his “**Bride**” - ultimately fulfilling, on an existential level, what is achieved by the letters Yod and Heh (the Partzufim Abba and Ima) on an abstract, supernal level. In order to explain all this, the previously discussed terms **Substance** and **Form** must be applied.

The simple phrase, Substance and Form, describes, in the most basic sense, the entire process of the Tree of Life. Applied in the particular sense, it is the key to the Formula of the Tetragrammaton. Both the Tree of Life and the Tetragrammaton are perfect representations of the extension of “Living Light” (Substance) from nonphysical Divine Unity, and its condensation into tangible matter (Form). As discussed before, the terms “Substance” and “Form” are used specifically to describe the first two phases of the Formula of the Tetragrammaton (e.g., the Worlds of Atzilut and Briah), which are represented in the Tree of Life by Chochmah and Binah, respectively.

Substance and Form also describe to relationship between the Supernal Triad (“Above”) of the Tree of Life and the seven lower spheres (“Below”). In the Tetragrammaton, this same relationship establishes itself between the first two letters (Yod and Heh) and the last two letters (Vav and Heh). In the previous discussion of the Tetragrammaton, this corresponds to all that was described as abstract (Substance) as it manifests existentially (Form). On the existential level alone, Substance and Form correspond to Vav and Heh, respectively, of the Tetragrammaton. This correlates to the individual conscious soul in the physical body, and also to the formative ideal in actual application.

In terms of the Partzufim, Abba (Yod) and Zeir Anpin (Vav) correspond to “Substance”. Ima and the “Bride” of Zeir Anpin (the two Hehs) are the feminine principles which apply “Form” to the masculine principles of Abba and Zeir Anpin. Abba and Ima function at the purely abstract supernal level, while Zeir Anpin and his Bride function at the manifest, existential level.

All these theoretical idealizations of the Tetragrammaton can be overwhelming and confusing at first, but through constant cross-referencing and meditation on their correspondences, clarity can be achieved. To further clarify these correspondences, the associations between the reproductive functions of the Partzufim and certain fundamental archetypes of classical mythology can be explored.

As has been stated, the functions of the Partzufim of Abba and Ima correspond to the respective functions of masculine spermatozoa and the feminine ovum in the biological process of reproduction. But these entities function in an unseen, “concealed”, region of existence. So, too, do the abstract, supernal

phases of the Tree of Life and the Tetragrammaton. The visible, “revealed”, vehicles of the sperm and ovum are the male and female reproductive organs. The function of these physical organs can be, with obvious cautions, attributed to the functions of Zeir Anpin and his Bride (in Hebrew, the fourth Partzuf - corresponding with the Final Heh of the Name, the element Earth, the Nefesh, and the sphere of Malchut - is called **Nuqvah**, which translates simply as *Female*)

A valid relationship can be postulated between the symbolism of the Four Partzufim and four of the most fundamental archetypes of polytheism. These archetypes are the Sun, the Moon, the Sky, and the Earth. They appear in various mythologies in endless different representations and applications, but, for the present purposes of this work⁶, they are corresponded to the Partzufim of Abba, Ima, Zeir Anpin, and Nuqvah, respectively. In this context, the Sun and Moon become eloquent symbols of the Supernal energies of Fire and Water (Chochmah and Binah, Atzilut and Briah, Abba and Ima). The Sun provides the general vital energy, light, and warmth associated with Fire, which is necessary for the nurturing of all life. These are also the essential qualities of Chiah. The Moon, with its obvious relationship to the tides and the fertility cycles of women, has a natural correspondence with women. The waxing and waning qualities of the Moon, as it reflects the light of the Sun, can be compared to the function of all the attributes of the first Heh of the Tetragrammaton in its measured application of the light of the Sun (Yod) to the Lower Worlds. The correspondences of Sky (atmosphere) and Earth to the elements of Air and Earth are self evident. The Sky is also the Vehicle that transmits the radiant energies of the Sun and Moon down into the Earth, which in turn imparts these energies to the life it supports. These are general statements which are not supported by every specific myth concerning Sun, Moon, Sky, or Earth. But they are functional for the purpose of defining certain qualities of the Partzufim, especially in their relation to other aspects of the Tetragrammaton Formula. They are also meant as an example for further individual research and meditation on the dynamics of the Four-Lettered Name, in all Its Glory.

⁶ These correspondences will change when the Planetary and Elementary attributions of the individual spheres of the Tree of Life, as well as of the Hebrew letters, are dealt with.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE TETRAGRAMMATON FORMULA:

	<i>Nothing (Ain)</i>	<i>YOD</i>	<i>1st HEH</i>
Philosophic Element:	Quintessence	Fire	Water
State of Matter:		Energy	Liquids
Human Quality:		Spirit/Will	Emotions
Level of Soul:	Yechidah	Chiah	Neshamah
Qabalistic World:	Divine Essence	Atzilut	Briah
Partzuf:	Arich Anpin	Abba	Ima
Sfirot on Tree of Life:	Keter	Chochmah	Binah
Substance & Form:		Substance of Substance	Form of Substance
Reproduction:	Force of Attraction	Spermatozoa	Ovum
Mythology:		Sun	Moon
		<i>VAV</i>	<i>2nd HEH</i>
Philosophic Element:		Air	Earth
State of Matter:		Gases	Solids
Human Quality:		Intellect	Physical Body
Level of Soul:		Ruach	Nefesh
Qabalistic World:		Yetzirah	Assiah
Partzuf:		Zeir Anpin	Nuqvah
Sfirot on Tree of Life:		Chesed to Yesod	Malchut
Substance & Form:		Substance of Form	Form of Form
Reproduction:		Phallus	Vagina/Womb
Mythology:		Sky/Firmament	Earth