



# *Mensionization Complementation*

*The Mathematics of Hermetic Alchemy*

## *The Tetragrammaton Formula: Part I The Evolution of Matter and the Soul*

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### *Alignment of the Four Elements to the Tetragrammaton*

<i>Four Elements</i>			
<i>Fire</i>	<i>Water</i>	<i>Air</i>	<i>Earth</i>
			
<i>Yod</i>	<i>Heh</i>	<i>Vav</i>	<i>Heh</i>
<i>Chiah</i>	<i>Neshmah</i>	<i>Rauch</i>	<i>Nefesh</i>
<i>Atzilut</i>	<i>Briah</i>	<i>Yetzirah</i>	<i>Assiah</i>
<i>Emanation</i>	<i>Creation</i>	<i>Formation</i>	<i>Fabrication</i>
<i>Tetragrammaton</i>			

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 sequence (They 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 Its Will is a single act). 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 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** (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), 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 manifesting 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 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. Its 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 its 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 its 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 (*Chiah*, *Neshamah*, *Ruach*, and *Nefesh*) 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, which 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 "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". 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 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 its intended purpose (traditionally, this purpose is seen as the Torah).

ALL OF THESE specific delineation’s 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.

