

ARTICLE VII.

THE SYSTEM OF THE JEWISH CABBALAH, AS DEVELOPED
IN THE ZOHAR.

By Dr. Theoph. Rubinsohn.

Introduction.

It is an undeniable fact that, at the time of the compilation of the Mishnah, a certain Mystic doctrine was known by the name of "construction of the chariot," מְעֻשֵׁה מְרִיכָבָה. But it is not at all demonstrated, whether the modern Cabbalah is in such a close connection with that doctrine, as the modern Cabbalists would make us believe. We, however, cannot pronounce an apodictic judgment, either in their behalf, or to the contrary, because the evidence is in neither case sufficiently strong.

Another question concerns the time at which the Zohar, the code of the Cabbalah, was written. In what age was it produced? Who was its author? These are the questions which the student naturally asks. The answer to them has engaged many pens, and much has been said on the subject. But most of the writers have copied each other, and have merely clothed old ideas in new words.

Another work of high reputation among the Cabbalists is the "Sepher Yetsirah," סֵפֶר יְצִירָה, i. e. book of the creation. To this book, most of the historians ascribe a high age. This is not the case with the Zohar, to which some ascribe a very recent one.

Concerning the age and writer of the "book of the creation," two opinions are worthy of our notice. The one, that its origin may be traced to the times of the Mishnical doctors, and that Rabbi Akiba was the author. There is, indeed, every probability that it was so. Another opinion is, that it was originated in the times of the Geonim, from 600 to 1000 after the birth of Christ, but this has no foundation whatever.

Those who are in favor of the last opinion, endeavor to sustain it by quoting from it words and phrases which, they say, are of a more recent date than that at which Rabbi Akiba lived.

A still greater uncertainty prevails about the age of the Zohar. Some believe, and this is the current opinion, that it was written in Palestine at the time of Rabbi Simeon Ben Yohai; but others, again,

believe that it was written by Rabbi Moses de Leon, a Spanish Jew, in the thirteenth century.

A third opinion is, that there are fragments in the Zohar of Rabbi Simeon's own doctrine, but that there have been also notes added to them by his disciples, and that it was completed, in the shape in which we have it, about the seventh century. The country of the entire book is Palestine. Rabbi Simeon, it is said, delivered, in the first century of our era, his doctrines with the elements of the Cabbalah to his disciples and friends in occasional chapters; which were handed down orally. These were, of course, enlarged with new comments, and in this shape the work came to Europe in the thirteenth century. It was kept a long time in secret, on account of its numerous attacks upon Asiatic religions.

Neither of these three opinions has much direct support. We can give no positive decision, which of them most deserves our confidence; but for the purpose of a purely scientific investigation of the system itself, the question is of no great importance. Yet two results are actually reliable. The one, that the Zohar cannot be Rabbi Simeon's production in the entire form in which we now have it; and the second, that if the author of the Zohar lived in the thirteenth century, the chief principles of the system are, however, not his own, but of high antiquity; and as to the sources from which he has taken them, it is indifferent whether they were Christian or Jewish, written or traditional.

The System of the Jewish Cabbalah, קַבָּלָה.

The attributes which the Scriptures ascribe to the Creator of the world are: (1) unity (Ex. 20: 3. Deut. 4: 35, 39. & 4); (2) immateriality (Ex. 20: 4. Deut. 4: 15); (3) eternity (Ex. 8: 14. Deut. 32: 40. Is. 41: 4); (4) immutability (Mal. 3: 6); (5) perfection (Deut. 32: 4. Job 37: 16. Ps. 18: 81); (6) goodness (Ex. 34: 6. Ps. 25: 10. 100: 5. 145: 9); (7) freewill (Gen. 1: 1. Ps. 104: 2, 3 ff.); (8) retribution for good and evil (almost on every page of the biblical history); (9) similitude with man (Gen. 1: 27).

These attributes caused the thinking and meditating Israelites to ask the following questions: How can infinite be reconciled with finite? How could matter have been produced from the absolute-unembodied mind, and how multiplicity from unity? How is matter influenced by its author? What relation does the Creator bear to his creation, that we might justly infer his providence and government? What name is appropriate to point out a purely spiritual

being, or what may we suppose to be his form? How is man's similitude with God conceivable? How is imperfection and evil reconcilable with God's perfection and goodness? and lastly, To what purpose has God created the world?

The learned have generally endeavored to solve these problems by two methods, opposed to each other. Some recklessly trusting to the power of human study and research, rejecting positive faith, have attempted to reconcile contradictions by their reasonings and artificial arguments, and have produced the most absurd hypotheses to prepare the way for reconciling the problems, whose solution they have imposed upon themselves. They preferred to invent strange and unmeaning answers, rather than to confess their incapability of solving them, or to concede that man is not able to define God's nature and connection with the world exactly.

Others, again, have rejected reasoning on the subject altogether, saying: as creation is an evident fact, although an inconceivable one, they must, therefore, merely trust the Scriptures, by means of which they are enabled to raise themselves above the common human understanding, that is usually inclined to doubt any fact.

The object of the Cabbalah is to mediate between these two extremes. It teaches, on the one hand, that the creation cannot indeed be conceived of, by the limited human understanding; but, on the other hand, that there exists within man a certain consciousness of things, which the devout mind perceives to be true. The mind, thus constituted, can undertake the solution of the most difficult problems. The Cabbalah does not ask: how this or that was possible? but how it was produced? or, what means have been employed to produce it? what should be the result of our research in reference to the creation of matter, imperfection, evil, and so on?

After these general remarks, we proceed to show what the system of the Cabbalah is, and for the sake of obtaining a better view of its individual parts as well as of the whole system, we propose to exhibit it in distinct paragraphs, and afterwards to give a short summary.

§ 1. "If you wish to know the invisible things, you should endeavor first to have a clear understanding of those that are visible." This is thought to be the motto of the Cabbalah, whose system is chiefly based on analogy.

If we, say the Cabbalists, consider the visible things in this world and the universe as a whole, comparing them with the idea we have of their Maker's perfection, we must necessarily come to the conclusion, that other worlds also exist of a more perfect nature, than that

one in which we live. The degree of perfection of this our world leads us to infer the still greater perfection of its author.

But if we are, on the one hand, fully convinced of the Creator's perfection, when we cast only a single glance upon the universe, and see the constant revolutions of the solar system, the established laws of nature and the marvellous harmony that exists between the individual parts and the entire universe; we must, on the other hand, admit, that in our life in this world, there is change, inconstancy and infirmity. Yet, as an imperfect creation could not have been produced by a God, who is the source only of perfection, our world, consequently, occupies only an inferior degree of perfection among the other ranks of creation. In this world of ours, too, the goodness of God prevails, as it does also in the lowest of his creatures; but another world also exists, that is more perfect.

Between the higher region and that one in which we live, other worlds have their existence, which by their inferior degree of perfection are more similar to ours. All these worlds are closely connected together. There is nothing isolated, not even in the visible world. The difference between the highest region and the lowest one, may be as great as possible; they must, however, have the same form, because they are only links of one chain. To have, therefore, a proper idea of the life in the highest region, we must attentively observe the forms and the laws of the inferior, which forms and laws are also there, only in greater and superior perfection.

§ 2. A greater obstacle presented itself to the Cabbalists in attempting to solve the question about God's government of the universe. It seems, on the one hand, that God is too much above his creation, that he should have special care of individuals, and that it is not possible that the pure God should be so closely connected with impure matter; but, on the other hand, it cannot be denied, that throughout the universe, marvellous order and regularity prevail, which cannot but be ascribed to a premeditated plan and thoughtful design, which the creator has formed for the well-being of his creatures.

The question would still remain unsolved, if the attempt should be made to answer it, by assuming that God, as the first cause of all things, and according to established laws, influences some very high power, by which all other powers are influenced and set in motion and activity, and to which alone we should ascribe the immediate influence. For we might justly consider each specific act to be from God, on account of its being the effect of his general efficiency; since, as we reckon things after the order of their causes and

consequences, we shall always find it necessary to return to the first cause of all things, which is God. For if we should even grant that it is so, the individual powers of nature might not act in accordance with the direct will of God, and so the special providence of God towards individuals would still remain unsolved. We, also, could not assume an immediate, supernatural action of God, without his influence upon intermediate ranks, as the method of God's government of the world; because this might be said to be the mode of his dealings only in unusual, extraordinary events, that is, in such cases where their cause and end are generally known, and every one is conscious of them; but in the common course of nature, our understanding leads us to the conclusion, that his actions are regulated by established laws, and the Scriptures seem to be in favor of it.

We must, therefore, assume, that God has laws established for the course of nature, and that the immediate causes act after these laws, but that their actions are continually dependent upon the Divine will, so that God's coöperation is found even in the smallest changes which take place in the kingdom of nature, and that these happen with his intention and omnipotence. The term which the Cabbalah makes use of, to express this doctrine, is "meeting of God with the spiritual elements of the world," *רדוקות דעלמין*, or "Sephiroth," *ספירות*,¹ which run through all ranks of the universe, by which God is operating upon it, sending his will through these channels of nature's powers, and this will is his marvellous, regular government of the whole world.

A miracle, i. e. a change of this regular established government in nature, takes place only when God makes alterations in these higher organs, either by lessening their number, weakening their power, or effecting the contrary. This Divine coöperation does not contradict man's freewill, because it being merely a regulation of nature, it becomes then nature's law.

The Cabbalah, consequently, teaches that nature can never act without the will of God and his coöperation, by means of the Sephiroth. In accordance with this opinion, the Sephiroth are totally different from God himself, and this is especially taught by the cele-

¹ The Cabbalists are not decided concerning the derivation of the word "Sephiroth." Some derive it from *ספר* "to count;" because, they say, as the numbers from one to ten contain the elements of all numbers which are produced by their combination, so the ten Sephiroth contain all the channels of the intermediate worlds that connect our world with God. Others derive it from the Greek *σφαίρα*, a ball or globe.

brated Cabbalist, Rabbi Raccanadi. But the opinion of Rabbi Isaac Luria and Rabbi Moses Corduero, that God is present in the Sephiroth, can also be reconciled with that of the Zohar, where it is taught, that God makes use of the Sephiroth as of channels, to manifest his will in nature.

We might, accordingly, assume, that God's connection with the world is *immanent*, but in fact we must think it to be *transcendent*. These seemingly contradictory ideas are occasioned by a passage in the Zohar, which, on account of its abstruseness, impedes the clear understanding. It runs thus: God is separated from the world entirely, and yet he is not separated; he has a form, and yet he has no form; he has a form, through which he preserves the world, and he has no form, because of his not being *inherent* in the world.

פֶּרִישׁ וְאַחֲרָיו יְהִיר מַבְּלָא וְלֹא אַחֲרָיו אֲחֻזָּה וְלֹא אֲחֻזָּה אֲחֻזָּה וְלֹא אֲחֻזָּה אֲחֻזָּה
בְּיָדוֹ לְקִרְיָתָא עֲלֵמָא וְלֹא אֲחֻזָּה בְּיָדוֹ וְלֹא אֲחֻזָּה
Zohar 288.
This doctrine, the Zohar considers to be of so great importance, that we are told, that it was communicated to the writer by the prophet Elijah.

"There is no doubt," says another writer of high authority among the Cabbalists, "that the world would not exist a single moment without God's assistance. We might compare the dependency of the world upon God, with that of light upon the sun. We may, therefore, say, that God is constantly creating, because the same will by which the world was called into existence, is still the sole cause of its being preserved. God is also capable (although he seldom exercises this power) of altering the course of nature; at least, it would not be a greater wonder, than the creation of the world from nothing." After several discussions on some scriptural passages, he continues to say: "I myself maintain, that whoever teaches that there are natural powers acting without the Divine coöperation, spreads false opinions among the people. Certain it is, that the manner in which God is connected with these powers is inconceivable; but it is not the less certain, that the freewill of man is not annihilated by it. Just so little do we know how man's freewill is reconcilable with God's prescience. Yet our confession of our ignorance of things which are out of the province of human knowledge, cannot be ascribed to man's depravity.

Maimonides, though a very different writer from our Cabbalist, was also engaged in the task of solving the same difficult problem. "Know," he writes in his book "Guide of the Perplexed," I. 72, "Know, that the whole of the universe, must be considered as one

individual thing. God must be thought of as the soul of the universe, because his connection with the world is as that of perception to the entire man. There is, however, the following difference. The power of perception is a capacity *inherent* in man, but God is not *inherent* in the body of the universe. He is separated from all its parts, although he is connected with it, in a manner inconceivable, through his government and providence. For it is strikingly demonstrated, that God is separated from the world, and that his government and providence may be known from the fact, that the most minute parts of the world are preserved." The idea of the learned Maimonides is, that God's relation to the world is as that of a cause to its effect; but the idea of the Cabbalist is, that God is the cause of the world, and coöperates with it by means of the Sephiroth. The doctrine of the Sephiroth is not contradictory to the common Jewish theory concerning the creation of the world. We may deduce even from the passages quoted, that also the more recent Cabbalists have attempted to advance proofs to identify the opinion of the Cabbalists concerning the Sephiroth with the common opinion of the Jewish divines about the government and preservation of the universe. This doctrine took its rise chiefly, to remove and to give a feasible answer to the perplexing questions about God's governing the world.

§ 3. From what we have already advanced, we perceive that the Sephiroth are not identical with God, and we might have passed it over, without treating the subject more fully, had not the Cabbalists been deeply engaged in the question: whether the Sephiroth are "identical with God or are only instruments?" עֲצָמוּת אֵל קַיָּיִם. The Cabbalist Rabbi Moses Corduero makes mention of two parties; the one headed by Beccanadi, who describes the Sephiroth as mere instruments of God's power, totally different from the eternal God; and the other headed by Rabbi David Abbi Simra, the author of *Migdal David*, who identifies the Sephiroth with the "En Soph," אֵין סוֹפ. He advances a third opinion, which is his own, namely, that God is present in the Sephiroth, but not *inherent*; they can be considered neither as creatures and entirely distinct from God, nor as perfectly identical with God. His argument against his opponents runs thus: "If we," he says, "identify God entirely with the Sephiroth, we are at war with the scriptural dogma of God's immutability, that admits neither of multiplicity in God, nor of his being influenced by anything external; and if we assume an entire distinction of the Sephiroth from God, but concede to them something like divinity, we deify creatures, which is diametrically opposed to the doctrine of

one God." But it seems to us, that Rabbi Moses Corduero himself admits, by believing that God is present in the Sephiroth, a kind of divisibility in God, which is also in contradiction with the Mosaic view of God's nature. He is at all events correct in saying, that those who consider the Sephiroth to be creatures and Divine instruments "deify the creatures," *הַקִּדְּוֹת הַקְּבָרָא לְבוֹרָא*, because they actually ascribe to them Divine power as possessing it of themselves; but he is incorrect with respect to the other party, which, agreeably to our view, teaches that the Sephiroth are not at all identical with God, and that their connection with God has its ground in the mediation they form between man's intellect and God.

§ 4. We have now arrived at a doctrine, which the modern Cabbalah considers to be one of the keystones on which it rests; but if it should be taken literally, it would by no means harmonize with the views we have advanced. It is the Cabbalistic doctrine of God's "concentration," *כִּיּוּד הַקְּבָרָא*. "As God," the Cabbalists say, "is infinite, space, or the place of the world, must have been produced through an absolute concentration of God's own substance. This space, primitive air, was the beginning and the cause of everything created. This primitive air was not really empty space, but a certain creation, yet inferior to that of light." This doctrine has its origin in that of emanation, and is its inevitable consequence. The Cabbalists have this idea in common with other theosophists, who teach the dogma of emanation. Some modern Christian scholars hold, that the Cabbalists thought, by the doctrine of God's concentration, to be able to remove the notion of God's limited powers and his imperfection. (See Buhle, *Lehrbuch der Philosophie*, IV. p. 170 seq.) We are not investigating, whether the Cabbalists succeeded in their praiseworthy undertaking; but it may suffice here to state, that this doctrine is an hypothesis of the modern Cabbalah; the ancient Cabbalists knew nothing of *concentration* and *emanation*. Some of the modern Cabbalists, however, will have it understood in a figurative sense, that is, that by concentration is understood God's *condescension* to have care for the world's well-being, and his providence for every individual; in other words, they understand by it "God's meeting with the Sephiroth or with the elements of the spiritual world."

§ 5. The ten Sephiroth which are styled in the Zohar "the world of the Sephiroth," or "the heavenly man," *עוֹלָם עֵינֵי אֱלֹהִים*, the modern Cabbalists call "the world of emanation," *עוֹלָם הַקְּבָרָא*. We, of course, do not agree with this doctrine. If we examine the word *קְבָרָא* etymologically, we find that its meaning is uncertain. The

Cabbalist Irira proposes to translate it by "construere de non esse in esse," to make from a nonexistence an existence.¹ In the more ancient Cabbalistic writings, the word was never used to convey the idea of emanation. We read, e. g. in the Zohar (I. 22, a): "Everything was done in the way of creation, וַיִּצְרָא. He said "let there be light," and light became immediately a creation, וַיִּצְרָא. The verb וַיִּצְרָא means "to produce," never "to emanate," which can, however, be expressed by the Niphal form וַיִּצְרָא. (Comp. Gen. 27: 36. Num. 11: 17, 25. Koheleth 20: 10.) The noun וַיִּצְרָא has no definite meaning.

It seems that the term was adopted by the ancient Cabbalists, to signify neither more nor less than merely the absolute *act* of creation. In the biblical narrative of creation, three distinct terms are employed to signify the act of producing things, namely: Beriah, בְּרִיאָה, Asiah, אֲשִׁיָּה and Yetsirah, יְצִירָה. The word בְּרִיאָה expresses the act of primitive creation, and also the giving shape and form to existing things; יְצִירָה is used only to give the idea of producing forms; אֲשִׁיָּה conveys also the idea of completion or adornment. Neither of these terms gives the *exclusive* idea of creating from nothing, since even the word בְּרִיאָה sometimes signifies the giving form to things already created. The Cabbalah, therefore, has chosen the word וַיִּצְרָא to convey the idea of a creation from nothing; hence the Cabbalah styles the first step of creation "Olam Haatsiloth;" the second one, "Olam Habberiah;" the third, "Olam Hayetsirah;" and the fourth, "Olam Haasiah." From what we have advanced, it may be seen, that we make use of the term "Atsiloth" to express the absolute creation from nothing, and not "Emanation." Some of the Cabbalists make use of the term, to express the idea of the most excellent world. (Comp. Ex. 24: 11. Is. 41: 9.)

§ 6. The inconceivableness of God's substance is a doctrine which is taught in the Jewish theology in common with the Cabbalah. There cannot be presented to us any intelligible view of the relation of God's essence to our mind, unless we observe the undoubted wisdom, regularity and order in nature, which lead us to the conclusion that there must exist a wise author, upon whose guidance and coöperation it is dependent, and in whose omnipotence it is grounded; in other words, we could know nothing of God's absolute substance, if he had not met the Sephiroth. By this act of God's meeting with the Sephiroth, God, "the unknown of all unknown," assumed a form by which he made himself known unto us. The Cabbalah, therefore,

¹ Maimonides' term for it is יְצִירָה מֵאֵין, existence from nothing.

styles the world of the Sephiroth, *the form of God*. But this form also would have remained unknown to us on account of its brightness and lustre, had not God clothed himself with a *vestment*, namely, the other worlds. The universe, viz. the visible world, is styled the vestment. Moses only was favored with a view of God's form, but all other men see God's vestment only. So we read in the Zohar (I. fol. 2, a): "When the hidden one was about to manifest himself, he created first a point (the first Sefirah), then formed it into a sacred shape, which he covered with a bright vestment; this is the world." It is necessary to bear in mind, that all that we have said, must be understood in its widest sense. The whole world of the Sephiroth forms the vestment of God. In a more restricted sense, the Zohar styles even the first of the Sephiroth a holy form; the other nine of the Sephiroth form, in their totality, a bright vestment, which is surrounded by other garments of inferior splendor.

§ 7. We have seen that the Cabbalah assumes that the relation of the lower worlds to the higher is as that of a copy to its original. It ascribes the forms of the visible world also to those which are invisible. Keeping this principle in view, the mystic appearance will dissolve, and instead of it there remains either a philosophical or a very plain sense. In the visible world, we perceive contrast everywhere, which is reconciled by a certain medium. This is especially perceptible in the distinction of sexes, and the instinct which reconciles them, to which we must ascribe reproduction, development, and preservation, both in the vegetable and animal kingdom. This perception that we obtain by the slightest observation of the laws of nature, the Cabbalists say, may analogically be traced to the highest and ideal worlds. They speak of a masculine or active, and of a feminine or passive principle in the highest worlds. This threefold principle they express by the name of "balance," because the two scales of a balance are two extremes, and the equality of the weight is exhibited by its tongue. They have chosen the balance as a symbol of the development of the Sephiroth, and of the life of the world.

§ 8. The masculine attributes, which are styled "the principle of mercy," חסד, are also called "the right side," סְמִיךָ דְיָמִינָא; the feminine attributes, "the principle of justice or severity," דין, are called "the left side," סְמִיךָ דְשְׂמֵאלָא, and the medium, "the principle of beauty," תְּהוֹמָה, is styled "the interior pillar," עֲמֻדָּא דְאִתְּתִירָא. These three principles, according to the Cabbalistic method of clothing spiritual ideas in such forms as to be perceived with the senses, are also known under the name of colors. Mercy is called

white, the proper color of light; justice or severity, *red*, the burning color; mildness or beauty, *green*, *blue* or *yellow*, the middle colors of the rainbow.

§ 9. The Sephiroth, as representatives of the principles above mentioned, are divided into groups, each consisting of three. Each of the groups consists of one masculine, one feminine, and one mediating Sephirah, which form a division of itself. That the Cabbalah assumes just three of the triunions, is based on analogy in the visible world. The book Yetsirah teaches thus: the centre of the universe is the heavenly dragon; the revolutions of the zodiac are the basis of time; the heart of man is his centre. The first is like a king upon the throne; the second like a king in the midst of his subjects; the third like a king in the battle-field.

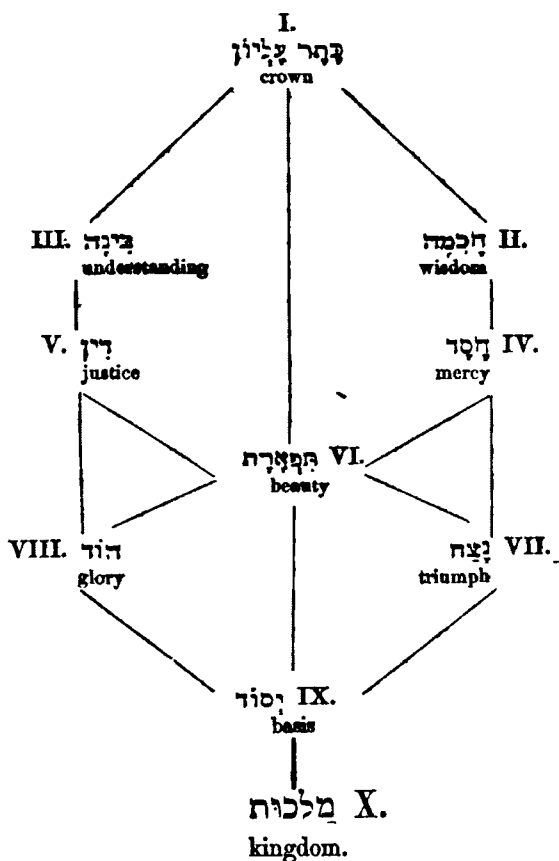
As the world of the Sephiroth is a prototype of all other worlds, it unites in itself also three parts. These divisions are still more connected with man, who being a small world in himself, bears also in him these three divisions. The spirit, *רוח*, will, *רצון*, and animal principle, *שוק*, seem to correspond to the three divisions of the ideal world. For that reason, the Sephiroth are represented by the figure of a man, called the heavenly man. Sometimes they are represented by the figure of a tree, the Cabbalistic tree, because its root, trunk, and top, answer to their three divisions.

§ 10. The Zohar advances various views of the Sephiroth, but the most comprehensive is, that they must be regarded as one connected organization without taking special notice of the individual Sephiroth which are of secondary importance. United they are called, the heavenly man, or the highest region, or the figure of God. Another view is, that the Sephiroth are divided into two parts, the one containing the crown, the other, the remaining nine Sephiroth. The crown represents the first act of God's creation, and, bearing in it the germ of the other Sephiroth, is styled "the long countenance," *אור*; the other Sephiroth, "the small countenance," *אור*. The first of the Sephiroth forms a holy figure, which is covered by the other Sephiroth as if with a bright vestment. Its name is "crown," *קטור*, on account of its high position. A third view is, that the Sephiroth are divided into three parts. We find it explained thus:

An architect is going to build a palace; first he designs his *plan* in his mind; afterwards he thinks of the *manner* in which the workmen should build it; and finally he thinks of the *means* to carry out his design. The first, the plan, is represented by the first division,

consisting in the united Sephiroth of crown, wisdom and understanding; the second, the manner, by the second three, consisting of mercy, justice, and mildness or beauty; the third, the means, by the third division, consisting of power, glory, united in the basis. These, united, make God's government, and have the name of "kingdom." All these views have only a secondary value, and that of the Zohar is the best.

CABBALISTIC TREE.



§ 11. The ten Sephiroth, the Cabbalists say, correspond with the ten names of God which occur in the Scriptures. It must, however, be observed, that these Divine names are also denominations of the

Sephiroth; but that both the Sephiroth and the Divine names are epithets of the "Infinite One," אֵין סוֹף, which epithets answer to the Divine works. The Divine names, as well as the Sephiroth, express nothing more than what men deduce from nature, and regard as God's qualities, only in the highest degree of perfection. The Scriptural names of God do not signify God's real essence, but only his relation to men and to the world at large; which is quite satisfactory, because the Bible speaks to men as to created beings; but the Cabbalah speaks of God as existing before the creation of the world, and of his absolute existence without connection with matter, and therefore invented for that purpose a new name, to denote this abstract idea. This name is "En Soph," אֵין סוֹף.

Neither the Divine names, nor the Sephiroth, convey the same idea of God in every place, in which they occur, but their signification is everywhere such, as the narrative concerning God's manifestations require.

If we desire to express the first action of God at the beginning of the creation, and also God's relation to the world, the Cabbalah presents to us the name of "crown" קְרוֹן. This idea, however, is so darkly expressed, that the Cabbalists found it necessary to invent a new name, and this they did by styling it "En Soph." When we speak of the first created substance, the first Sephirah, which carries in it the germ of the development of the world, and wish to signify it by some word, we employ, or rather God taught us to employ, the name of Ehyeh, אֶהְיֶה, i. e. "I am," or "I shall be;" the capability of development in this substance the Scriptures denote by the name of "Asher Ehyeh," אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה, "who shall be;" the same substance in the actual commencement of development, Scripture styles "Jehovah," יְהוָה, "being, creating, preserving." The connection of God with the world, Scripture styles "Elohim," אֱלֹהִים, and, therefore, in the Scriptural narrative of creation, the term "Elohim" is used. This connection lasts eternally, which is the cause of the world's preservation. After the first account of the final act of creation, the Scriptures join to "Elohim" also "Jehovah;" the second chapter of Genesis speaks of "Jehovah Elohim" who made the earth and the heavens. Jehovah is also Elohim. These names are inseparable. Men generally are ignorant of it, and err in the true faith hence arises gross and refined idolatry. There are many who ascribe everything to nature, accident and fortune; these are their gods; but God's providence is quite out of the range of their thoughts. This is nothing else than a kind of polytheism. But the prophets,

says the Zohar, predicted, that all idolatry shall cease, the gross as well as the refined. The world shall increase in the knowledge of God, and shall know that God, though high above all comprehension, and justly called "En Soph," is however connected with the world. In that day Jehovah and his name shall be one (Zohar, XIV. 9), i. e. the name "Mi," מי or who, in "Elohim," אֱלֹהִים, shall not be any more separated from Jehovah.¹ We find in the Zohar various portions treating on the names of God, which appear quite mysterious; but they are clear and intelligible, if explained in accordance with our method. Another seeming difficulty we find in the following passage: "Come and see; wisdom, חָכְמָה (thought) is the beginning of development; yet this beginning is concealed and mysterious; but by further development, it reaches the point where the spirit rests, and there it is called 'understanding,' בִּינָה, which is here less mysterious than before. This spirit, viz. understanding, develops itself still further, and produces a voice, which is the amalgamation of matter and power. The voice becomes 'word,' that is, the true expression of the spirit, and intelligible speech becomes audible. But if thou consider all these degrees, thou wilt find, that 'thought,' חָכְמָה, understanding, בִּינָה, voice, אָזְנוֹ, and speech, דְּבָרִים, are all one. The same tie binds them together, wisdom being the commencement of all development, and this again is connected with 'En' אֵן, from which it is inseparable." (Zohar, I. 246, b.) The Zohar endeavors to convey the following idea: Creation is an organization of which the primitive substance is "the point," נְקֻדָּה; the Sephiroth are the powers of development; visible nature is the most abundant display of creation, and the principle of existence, the preserving and enlivening power of God, through whose uninterrupted coöperation, the whole development of the world is made possible.

§ 12. We reiterate that the chief method of the Cabbalah is, to ascribe analogically the same qualities and forms to the invisible, spiritual things, which we find among things of the visible world. Keeping this fact in our view, we shall understand the following. In the visible world we observe a certain dependency of the inferior beings upon the superior; the same is also in the vegetable kingdom. Planets receive their light from the sun; the earth receives rain from the clouds; no plant can grow and develop itself without light and heat; we also observe that the impulse comes from below; vapor

¹ Elohim consists of two syllables. The one "Mi," who; the other "Elch," these. Before the creation, God's name was "Mi," who; but after he created "Elch," these things, his name became "Elohim."

rises from the earth and changes in the air into rain; the embryo is produced, before it receives a life and soul from a higher power; this is also, the Cabbalah teaches, the case in the higher and the highest regions. If all the worlds are linked together, as links of a chain, they must be in mutual reciprocity. In the same connection in which each division of the Sephiroth stand to each other, they stand also with the lower worlds. The impulse, however, must be given from below, i. e. from man; and when the higher powers receive it, blessings flow from above in abundance.

§ 13. Our world is of all worlds the most perfect one; its forms, the most proper and convenient; the whole creation, a perfect masterpiece. God created many worlds, he found them to be imperfect, he destroyed them, and created the present world, which is quite perfect. There are, according to the Zohar, four distinct principles of existing forms; first, the so-called "balance;" secondly, the same principles of existence as attributes of God, or the union of mercy with severity or justice; thirdly, "the connection of God with the world;" and fourthly, "humanity" or "the human form." This doctrine is in the Zohar mystically expressed. "Before the balance existed," says our writer, "they — the king and the queen — had not seen each other face to face, and the primitive kings — the old worlds — died for want of nutriment. The balance has no other support but from itself. What is not, what is, and shall be, all things, the balance bears and will bear." (Zohar, II. 176, b.) In another place we read thus: There have been several worlds, but the principle of mildness was not predominant; they could not be preserved, until heavenly Goodness condescended to mitigate severity, and the being of the world was made possible. (Zohar, III. 142, b.) Again we read: Before the Ancient one, the most hidden, prepared the royal figure, the crown of crowns, there was neither beginning, nor end; he spread, therefore, a garment before him, in which he designed the kings — the worlds — and their forms. But they were imperfect, and he destroyed them; until he himself condescended to the garment, and assumed a form. (Zohar, III. 128, a.) Finally, we read: the old worlds could not exist, because man was not created. The human form contains every other form, man being a small world in himself, *μικρόκοσμος*. These worlds had not the proper form, until man was created. (Zohar, III. 135, b.)

We shall now sum up the whole system under the following heads: 1. God's being is incomprehensible; we can neither describe it by a name, nor by attributes, much less can we have any idea of his form.

Yet the Cabbalah invented a name to denote this incomprehensibility, viz. the negative term "En Soph" or "En." 2. God, willing to manifest himself, to spread happiness and bliss, and to make known his greatness, glory and dominion, assumed a form for our sake, i. e. that we might know him. 3. This form is the world of the Sephiroth, or the first degree of creation, whose name is "the heavenly man." 4. All ideas, attributes, and expressions, which the prophets used, and which we have in the Scriptures, must be applied to God's form and vestment only, because his essence itself is inexplicable. They are, however, attributes of God exclusively. They are inferences which the prophets made from the works of the Creator. 6. As the essence of God is not known to man, the ideas which men have of him are different from each other. 7. The prophets even differ in their descriptions of God's being, and these are accommodated to the prophet's power of comprehension and constitution of mind. 8. This strikingly demonstrates, that men will never obtain perfect knowledge of God's essence; but this should not prevent them from endeavoring to obtain that knowledge of God, which they can acquire by the proper use of their faculties. 9. This, too, is quite sufficient to make man happy, and even the highest spirits have only imperfect knowledge of God's essence. (Zohar, II. 100, a.) If we do everything in our power to obtain the knowledge of God, it will contribute to our happiness, both here and hereafter. 10. God created first a purely spiritual substance which is "the primitive point," or the first Sephirah, or the crown. 11. God gave to this substance the greatest power of development to produce the other Sephiroth. The nine following Sephiroth are the development from the first Sephirah or "primitive point." 12. Their evolutions took place in the following manner: When the first substance developed itself, it produced two principles opposed to each other; the one masculine, active, giving; the other feminine, passive, receiving; they are called "father and mother," אָבִי וְאִמָּה, or "wisdom and understanding." 13. These two opposing principles are reconciled by a medium, and become "inseparable friends." This reconciling principle, the son, as the Zohar styles it, is like the father and the mother, and his name is "knowledge," דָּעָה; but this is not a special Sephirah. The union of these opposing principles is in the crown. 14. The first division of the Sephiroth is called "the intelligible world," עוֹלָם הַמַּדְבָּר. 15. The second of the Sephiroth consists also of two opposing principles and a mediating one. The masculine, "mercy;" the feminine, "justice;" the mediating, "beauty." This is called

“the material world,” עוֹלָם הַמַּדְבָּע. 16. The third division consists of a masculine, “power;” feminine, “brightness;” and the mediating “basis.” This is “the natural world,” עוֹלָם הַתְּבִיעַ. The last two divisions have also the name, “Sephiroth of the construction,” סְפִירוֹת הַבְּנִיָּן. 17. The harmony of the Sephiroth, and their united influence upon the lower worlds, has the name of “kingdom,” מְלָכֻת. 18. All the Sephiroth, united, form “the world,” עוֹלָם. The world of the Sephiroth is the highest world, which the modern Cabbalists call “Olam Haatsiloth.” 19. By a gradual development, first appeared “the world of pure spirits,” called “the throne,” כְּסֵא הַסִּפְיָא, or “Olam Habberiah;” then followed “the world of angels,” or “Olam Hayetsirah;” finally, “the world of action,” containing the evil spirits, קְלִיסוֹת, the spheres, מַלְאָכִים, and matter at large, and styled “Olam Haasiah.” 20. Each of these worlds has also its Sephiroth, similar to those of the highest world; they are together in the closest union. 21. There are four worlds, and as many decades of Sephiroth. The world of Atsiloth, the next to God, contains the ten Sephiroth in the highest perfection; they are a perfect manifestation of God; they remain unchanged. The world of Beriah is the next to the Atsiloth world; the substances in it, are still of a spiritual nature, unmixed with matter. The world of Yetsirah is the third. The substances there are not of matter; they can, however, be divided. It is the world of angels, which contains beings endowed with intellect and having no bodies, but covered with a garment of light; when they appear to men, they assume a human form; finally follows the world of Asiah; it consists of all the heavy matter, limited by space, and perceived by the senses. It is constantly changing; appears and disappears. The Cabbalists style it, “the world of show and falsehood.” 22. The lower worlds are copies from the worlds above, but are in mutual reciprocity. 23. God gave to the first point, i. e., the first created substance, the power of development; this should not be understood, as if God left the development under the guidance of any power in nature, which acts without his assistance; but the Cabbalah teaches, that nothing can be done without God’s coöperation, i. e. God condescended to the Sephiroth, and is present in his creation. 24. God has not made use of the Sephiroth as instruments to finish the structure of the universe, but they are his channels, צְנִוּוֹת, through which his creating powers are carried to the extreme ends of the world. All things rest upon God, who is, so to speak, still creating. He is operating through them upon the whole of the universe to give it the necessary forms,

and to have upon it his special providence. 25. Through the Sephiroth, man is able to have a knowledge of God, although only imperfectly. As man knows that all things bear the stamp of God, he need only observe closely the perfect forms in the universe, in order to infer the still greater perfection of its Creator. 26. The ideas we have of God's essence, which are conveyed to us by the Sephiroth, are by no means always the same. They differ according to the distinction of their position. The ideas we obtain through the first Sephirah are obscure and mysterious, and no man can penetrate them. 27. More comprehensive ideas we obtain by the means of the second division of the Sephiroth. It calls our attention to the principles on which God founded the world, namely, mercy, justice and beauty. 28. Clearer still is the view we obtain through the third division. The last of the Sephiroth denotes the harmony of all the Sephiroth, the Divine providence and government, the Shekinah, *שְׁכִינָה*. 29. The Sephiroth are the spiritual elements of nature, from which we know also the Divine attributes, not according to their reality, but according to our capability of understanding them. 30. The Sephiroth are also styled "the chariot," *מְרִקְבָה*, i. e. the throne of the Deity. 31. The creation has not come forth from the hands of God as a perfect work, but as a primitive substance, which was left to perfect itself. But the more it extended and became enlarged, the more it lost of its intensity; the further it removed from its source, the more it became material and deteriorated; because the further nature is removed from its spiritual elements, it becomes imperfect, needy and destitute, so that a beneficial progress can only gain ground by a struggle with want and error. 32. With the appearance of evil, the order of God in nature might have been annihilated, if God had not descended to the lowest degrees of creation, and so preserved it; in other words, had not God's dominion prevailed even in inert matter, in order that his providence should not be impeded, despite of domineering evil. This comes to pass through man, who is conscious of the existence of evil and good. This consciousness is imperfect in the worldly man, and perfect in the heavenly man. It should be man's study to become like the heavenly man, which is obtained through the aid of God himself. (Zohar, III. 144, a.) Hereafter, the Cabbalah pronises in common with the Scripture, that the good will become established, and the evil eradicated from the world. 33. As man unites in himself spirit and matter, he spiritualizes also matter, and by this means he effects unity among all worlds, and approaches God, the source of perfection.

34. With respect to this great task, which man has to accomplish, "similitude" with God is ascribed to him, and he makes himself worthy of being under the special providence of God, *הַשְׁתַּבְּחָה פְּרָטִיָּה*. This important position which man occupies in creation, the Cabbalah styles "End of creation." Ezekiel saw a man sitting on a throne, and the three divisions of the Sefhiroth, correspond to man's spiritual principles, Nephesh, Ruah, and Neshamah; *שֵׁשׁ, רִיחַ, נְשָׁמָה*.

ARTICLE VIII.

PROLEGOMENA TO TISCHENDORF'S NEW EDITION OF THE SEPTUAGINT.¹

Translated from the Latin by Charles Short, M. A., Roxbury, Mass.

§ 1. AMONG the literary remains of sacred antiquity, the Septuagint Version, so called, of the books of the Old Testament, holds a distinguished place. The whole of it, or rather a part,² was believed to have originated in an extraordinary manner before the Christian era,³

¹ *H ILAAIAI ALAGHKH KATA TOTZ EBOMHKONTA. Vetus Testamentum Graece juxta LXX. Interpretes.* Textum Vaticanum Romanum emendatius edidit, argumenta et locos Novi Testamenti parallelos notavit, omnem lectionis varietatem codicum vetustissimorum Alexandrini, Ephraemi Syri, Friderico-Augustani subjunxit, commentationem isagogicam praetexit Constantinus Tischendorf, Theol. et Phil. Doctor, Theol. Professor. Lipsiae: F. A. Brockhaus. 1850. II. Tom. 8vo. pp. lx, 682, 688.

For some account of the labors of Tischendorf, see the Critical Notices at the close of this Number.

² For the expressions *νόμος, νομοθεσία, τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου πάντα*, used by Aristaeus and Aristobulus, and nearly the same by Josephus and Philo, are of uncertain import. A few in modern times, as Valckenaer, Haevernick and Oikonomos, explain them to mean the whole of the Old Testament. See next page, notes 2 and 3.

³ The most ancient authorities for this are: (I.) Aristaeus, of the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, in a letter current under his name to Philocrates; and (II.) Aristobulus, of the reign of Ptolemy Philometor, in Clem. Alex. Strom. I, p. 410, ed. Potter, p. 341 seq. ed. Latet. 1641, and in Eusebius, Praep. Evang. IX, 6; ed. Gaisf. II, p. 356; XIII, 12; ed. Gaisf. III, p. 310; Hist. Eccles. VII, 32; ed. Heinich II, p. 420.