

Chapter 2

Sources of the Mystical Qabalah

INTRODUCTION

The primary texts that are largely the source for the core ideas, meditation practices, and all the various forms of the Tree of Life in the Mystical Qabalah are listed below. Primary texts include those revealed through messiahs, prophets, and great masters. Secondary texts are commentaries upon primary texts. During and since the Middle Ages, European Jewish Kabbalists, especially in Spain, Lithuania, and Poland, wrote a considerable body of secondary qabalistic literature. For the purposes of this book, however, we will limit our attention to earlier primary works, with the notable exception of the *Etz HaChayyim* (**Tree of Life**) of Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria. The Lurianic material has wide regard among contemporary religious students of the Jewish Kabbalah, and yields some unique forms of the Tree of Life not found in the earlier primary texts.

The Work of the Chariot study group focused upon the following primary texts:

- the *Sefer HaTorah* (**Books of the Law**, so-called “Five Books of Master Mosheh”)
- the *Sefer HaShmoth* (**Book of the Names**) of Master Adam
- the *Sefer Yetzirah* (**Book of Formation**), manual on the Hebrew letters written by Master Abraham
- the *Sefer HaZohar* (**Book of Splendor**), five volume exegesis on the *Torah* dictated by Rabbi Shimeon Ben Yochai; and more specifically, the *Zohar*'s innermost core texts, the *Sifra Detzneyutha* (**Book of THAT Which is Concealed**), the *Idra Rabba Qadusha* (**Greater Holy Assembly**), and the *Idra Zuta Qadusha* (**Lesser Holy Assembly**)

- the *Ma'aseh Merkabah* (“Work of the Chariot”) material from the *Nabiyim* (**The Prophets**), the remaining remnants of the **Seferim HaChanokh (Books of Enoch ben Yared)**, and the *Shi'r Qoma* (**Measure of the Divine Body**) from the *Sefer Raziel HaGadol* (**Book of the Secrets of Raziel the Great**)
- the *Qur'an*, the song of *Allah* transmitted through Master Mohammed
- the *Peshitta* (**Gospels**, including the **Gospel of Thomas**) describing the life and teachings of Master Yeshuvah, and the **Revelation of John**
- the *Etz HaChayyim* (**Tree of Life**) dictated by Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria to Chayyim Vital.

SEFERIM HATORAH (BOOKS OF THE LAW)

The five component books of the *Torah* (תּוֹרָה) are conventionally known outside of Judaism as **Genesis**, **Exodus**, **Leviticus**, **Numbers**, and **Deuteronomy**. In this book, the five books of the *Torah* shall be named according to their traditional titles. Hence, the first book is called *Torah B'reshith* (“**In the Beginning**” or “**By the First**”). The second book is called *Torah Shmoth* (**Names**). The third, fourth, and fifth books are respectively titled *Torah Vayiqra* (“**And He Called**”), *Torah B'midbar* (“**In the Wilderness**”), and *Torah Doverim* (“**Words**”).

Most religious Jews regard the present version of the written Hebrew *Torah* to be a faithful copy of an original penned by Master Mosheh. They therefore regard every one of the 304,805 letters and their crownlets, and every word in the order that it appears in the scrolls to be the manifestation in the Lower Worlds of the unmanifest supernal *Torah* (*Torah Qadmah*).¹ By contrast, few biblical scholars and specialists in ancient languages share this assessment. In their view, linguistic analyses and other factors support the argument that the version that we have is a patchwork quilt containing words and phrases from a variety of languages from different periods, with threads dating back into deepest antiquity. Most non-orthodox biblical experts regard the present version of the Hebrew *Torah* to be a compilation of

writings by several Jewish writers working in successive periods starting circa 1000 BCE. Their work appears to have been combined and assembled in a final redaction in the fifth century BCE (though no scrolls from that time have yet to be found).

Whether the present version is the cumulative work of multiple writers or not, tradition ascribes the final redaction to Ezra the Scribe. The compilation required the writer(s) to collect, record, and assemble a large corpus of material from disparate sources. It is impossible to know how much of the text was passed down over the many centuries in written form, but it still would have been susceptible to errors of transcription, omission, etc. It is likely that a substantial amount, if not the majority, of the information was handed down as an oral tradition of teaching stories that skillfully mingled historical facts with miraculous acts. Such a rendition would have been even more vulnerable to corruption, embellishments and outright fictionalization. While it is highly unlikely that the current version of the *Torah* is an accurate version of the Ezra compilation, the living tradition of the Mystical Qabalah provides us with keys by which we can mine for the original treasures still embedded within it. Ultimately, the divinely infused life of Master Mosheh was a vehicle for the renewal and enlivenment of the underlying mystical spirituality regarding the absolute unity of existence and the primacy of unconditional devotion and love for the Divine that had faded in the hearts of Israel.

Despite arguments from religious Jews, there is extensive archeological evidence of a much older Hebrew alphabet, called *Gezer* or *Sinatic* (after Mt. Sinai), as the original and most ancient Hebrew (see “Hebrew-English Transliteration” facing page 11). Sinatic Hebrew is in fact the oldest known alphabet, suddenly appearing about the time of Abraham (circa 1850 BCE). The original Sinatic Hebrew became virtually extinct after the decimation of Lachish circa 701 BCE. The Sinatic alphabet could have evolved as an alphabetic representation of the twenty-six Sumerian cuneiform ciphers, the world’s oldest known non-alphabetic language.²

By the time the current *Torah* was redacted, the original Sinatic Hebrew alphabet had long been extinct. After hundreds

of years of religious and cultural repression under the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Romans, the original biblical Hebrew had faded from the memories of the Jews. As a solution, the final redactor (i.e. Ezra) chose to record the *Torah* in a new alphabet that would be more recognizable to the generations of Jews who had long forgotten the original. It was derived by using the twenty-two letter format of the old Hebrew alphabet, with letter forms synthesized from the familiar alphabets of the Palmyrene and Nabataen dialects of Aramaic extant in Palestine at that time (Figure 2.1 on page 58). Since Ezra is credited with the final redaction of the reconstructed *Torah*, this alphabet shall henceforth be referred to as “Ezra Hebrew.”

The oldest existing scrolls of the Hebrew *Torah* were written many centuries after the time of Ezra, so we can not be certain that the ones we have now are completely faithful to the original ascribed to him. Historically, there are three parallel textual traditions that have contributed substantially to the way the *Torah* is composed and translated. Most Jews now read the Masoretic version of the *Torah*. The Masoretic Hebrew text dates from the fourth century CE and the earliest surviving copy is from the tenth century CE.³ The Greek translation of the *Tanakh*, called the *Septuagint*, was made under Ptolemy in the third century BCE, and the oldest copy is centuries older than the oldest full Masoretic text.⁴ The *Septuagint* became the authoritative text for Christianity as it became estranged from its Jewish roots. The *Samaritan Torah* evolved during the period after the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE, and forcibly resettled many different peoples there. The three source versions vary in a number of details.

The Masoretes created the first system of vowels placed below the Hebrew consonants in the sixth or seventh century CE, thereby moving to standardize the pronunciation of the words and formalizing the structure of the grammar. Until then, even though the pronunciations and meanings had been passed down orally for centuries, the way Hebrew verb roots are parsed left considerable room for ambiguities. As early as the first century BCE, scribes began employing conventions to reduce such ambiguities. The conventions generally involved inserting consonants as vowels to aid reading.⁵ Then, between the sixth

and twelfth centuries CE, the Masoretes and Tiberians edited the definitions of many of the Hebrew words found in the *Torah*.

The letterforms of the Sinatic and Ezra Hebrew alphabets bear little physical resemblance to one another, though they share the same twenty-two-letter format and have the same names for the letters. Hence, the Sinatic Hebrew letter Alef א transliterates with the Ezra Alef א, the Sinatic Beyt ב with the Ezra Beyt ב, and so forth. Sinatic letterforms are basically built from the letters Alef א and Ayin ע. Ezra Hebrew letter forms are built upon variations of the letter Yod י. Both alphabets have letters which overtly or covertly contain other letters, such as the Tav ט contained in the Sinatic Alef א or the Beyt ב contained in the Ezra Alef א (as described in the *Sefer Bahir*).⁶ Unlike the Ezra alphabet, Sinatic does not have final letters, which were developed much later as a means of showing separation between words in crowded scrolls. The final letters became significant in the Ezra alphabet when given extended numerical value in *gematria* or qabalistic numerology.⁷

The sudden appearance of the original Hebrew was paralleled several hundred years later by the sudden appearance of Brahmi Sanskrit in the Indus Valley. Sinatic and Brahmi have many similar letterforms, and both were replaced by later alphabets claimed in present times to be the originals (i.e. Sinatic replaced by Ezra and Brahmi replaced by Deva Negari). Some Qabalists and Tantrikas maintain that there is a parent alphabet, called the “*Gan Aden Alphabet*” (גן עדן, Garden of Eden), from which both Hebrew and Sanskrit are derived. A speculative representation of the *Gan Eden Alphabet* composed of twenty-two families of letters with an aggregate of seventy members is seen in Figure 2.2 on page 59. There is also said to be a *Gan Aden Torah*, an unbroken sequence of letters that may be broken into words and sentences in innumerable ways. Hence, the written *Torah* is one such “translation” of the unbroken letter sequence, minus the letters and *anusvara* that were not included in the Hebrew alphabet.⁸ A book called the *Tiqunim HaZohar* (“Perfections of Splendor”) discusses seventy ways of translating the first six letters of the *Torah*.⁹ The *Torah* contains many power names, mantra, and visual imagery suitable for use in yogic meditation. Examples of these mantra and imagery will

be discussed later in the book, in the detailed section on the meditation practices of the Mystical Qabalah.

FIGURE 2.1 Aramaic, Palmyrene, and Nabataean alphabets

PHONETIC VALUE	EARLY ARAMAIC			PALMYRENE	NABATAEAN
	8th Century B.C.E.	6th Century B.C.E.	4th Century B.C.E.		
'	𐤀	𐤁	𐤂	𐤃	𐤄 𐤅 𐤆
b	𐤇	𐤈	𐤉	𐤊	𐤋 𐤌
g	𐤍	𐤎	𐤏	𐤐	𐤑
d	𐤒	𐤓	𐤔	𐤕	𐤖
h	𐤗	𐤘	𐤙	𐤚	𐤛 𐤜
w	𐤝	𐤞	𐤟	𐤠	𐤡 𐤢
z	𐤣	𐤤	𐤥	𐤦	𐤧
h	𐤨	𐤩	𐤪	𐤫	𐤬 𐤭
t	𐤮	𐤯	𐤰	𐤱	𐤲
y	𐤳	𐤴	𐤵	𐤶	𐤷 𐤸
k	𐤹	𐤺	𐤻	𐤼	𐤽 𐤾
l	𐤿	𐀀	𐀁	𐀂	𐀃 𐀄
m	𐀅	𐀆	𐀇	𐀈	𐀉 𐀊
n	𐀋	𐀌	𐀍	𐀎	𐀏 𐀐
s	𐀑	𐀒	𐀓	𐀔	𐀕
'	𐀖	𐀗	𐀘	𐀙	𐀚
p	𐀛	𐀜	𐀝	𐀞	𐀟 𐀠
s	𐀡	𐀢	𐀣	𐀤	𐀥 𐀦
q	𐀧	𐀨	𐀩	𐀪	𐀫
r	𐀬	𐀭	𐀮	𐀯	𐀰
š(sh)	𐀱	𐀲	𐀳	𐀴	𐀵
t	𐀶	𐀷	𐀸	𐀹	𐀺 𐀻

Reprinted from *The Alphabet "A Key to the History of Mankind,"* (Vol. I, II), by David Diringer, Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1968.

FIGURE 2.2 Gan Eden Alphabet

	T	E	S	D		T	E	S	D
1	A	א	א	अ	T= English Transliteration	M	מ	מ	
2	A'	א'	א'	आ	E= Ezra Hebrew Letter	MH	מח	מח	
					S= Sinatic Hebrew Letter				
					D= Deva Nagari Letter				
3	V	ו	ו	व		12			
4	VH	וה	וה			N	נ	न	
5	V	ו	ו	ब] with		NH	נה	नह] with	
6	BH	בח	בח	भ] with		NN	ננ	नन] with	
						NNH	ננה	ननह] with	
7	J			ज		13			
8	JH			जह] with		'SH	שח	W स	
9	G	ג	ג	ग] with		'SH'	שח'	W' स'	
10	GH	גח	גח	घ] with		S	ס	श] with	
						SH	שח	ष] with	
11	D	ד	ד	द		14			
12	DH	דח	דח	ध] with		F	פ	फ	
13	DD			ड] with		P	פ	फ	
14	DDH			ढ] with					
15	H	ה	ה	ह] with		50	R	ר	र] with
16	HH	חה	חה	हह] with		51	RH	רח	रह] with
17	CH	ח	च] with		52	RR	רר	रर] with	
18	CHH	חח	छ] with		53	RRH	ררח	ररह] with	
						16			
					70 MEMBERS				
					22 FAMILIES	54	a	א	अ] with
					HEBREW minus 14	55	a	א'	आ] with
					SANSKRIT minus 16	56	a	א'	आ] with
19	Z	ז	इ			57	a	א'	आ] with
20	ZH	זח	इह] with			58	a	א'	आ] with
21	TZ	זח	इ] with			17	i	י	इ] with
22	TZH	זחח	इह] with			59	i	י	इ] with
						60	i	י	इ] with
23	T	ת	त			18	u	ו	उ] with
24	TH	תח	थ] with			61	u	ו	उ] with
25	T	ת	ट] with			62	u	ו	उ] with
26	TH	תח	ठ] with						
						19	e	א	ए] with
27	Y	י	य] with			63	e	א	ए] with
						64	e	א	ए] with
28	K	כ	क] with			65	e	א	ए] with
29	KH	כח	कह] with						
30	Q	ק	क] with			20	o	ו	ओ] with
31	QH	קח	कह] with			66	o	ו	ओ] with
						67	au	או	औ] with
32	L	ל	ल] with			21	-	ः	ः] with
33	LH	לח	लह] with			68	-	ः	ः] with
34	LL	לל	लल] with			69	-	ः	ः] with
35	LLH	ללח	ललह] with						
36	LRI	לרי	लरि] with			22	-	ः	ः] with
37	LRI	לרי	लरि] with						

SEFER HASHMOTH (BOOK OF THE NAMES)

It is said, “The *Sefer HaShmoth (Book of the Names)* is as much like a book, as the Sabbath is like the regular days of the week.”¹⁰ On the one hand, the *Sefer HaShmoth* is a book of Divine Names of fundamental importance to qabalistic meditation and magical/occult practices. As such, it is a valuable key that can help open locks guarding the mysteries that lay hidden in Hebrew (and Arabic) qabalistic books, and provides Names of Power by which one can light the entire Tree. Secondly, it is the primary source of “Angelic Tree Language,” comprised of one series of Tree-maps that allude to distinctly different paths of ascension through the planes of consciousness, and a second series that allude to different stations of perfected souls who have completed the ascension.

It is said that Adam gave the book to his son Seth and it was then passed down the generational line to Enoch son of Yared. When Enoch ascended and “walked with *Elohim*,” he took the book with him. The *Sefer HaShmoth* came back into the world again with the Covenant of Abraham.¹¹ Abraham gave the book to Ishmael, Isaac, and his offspring by his concubines.¹² Isaac’s copy was handed down to Master Mosheh and was later sealed in the vault of the first Temple of Jerusalem. Buried in the Temple vault, access to the book was limited to those who had the psychic skill to “see/read” it in Yetzirah (Astral World of Formation), and the strength to survive the impact of its power without shattering their shells.¹³

The powerful *Sefer HaShmoth* resurfaced in the early 1970’s, when it was transmitted through the gentleman responsible for the creation of the Work of the Chariot Trust. For a series of nights, he would awaken in the early hours and record the succession of Sinatic Hebrew Divine Names and Trees of Life he would see as intense light patterns, using the level of psychic mediation described in the *Sefer HaZohar (Book of Splendor)* as “One-Twentieth Cloudy Mirror.” (The various designations regarding the mirror of consciousness in the *Zohar* refer to different degrees of vision. “Clear Mirror” denotes the consciousness of Messiah. “Dull” or “Cloudy Mirror” denotes the vision of Prophets. “One-Twentieth Cloudy Mirror” denotes

the conscious dream state and “One-Sixtieth Cloudy Mirror” the normal dream state.) He assembled the sequence of Names into a book as he was instructed, with one Name on each page. The Names are followed by the series of Angelic Tree Language. The Work of the Chariot Trust subsequently published Sinatic Hebrew, Ezra Hebrew, and English versions of the *Sefer HaShmoth* in 1971-72. Most of the Working and Perfect forms of the Tree of Life that appeared in those books had never been seen before. The complete list of Divine Names contained in the Work of the Chariot edition is provided in Appendix A. All of the various Trees diagrams are included in the seven chapters of this text.

SEFER YETZIRAH (BOOK OF FORMATION)

The *Sefer Yetzirah* (Book of Formation) attracts heated debate about its authorship and date of origination. Many scholars attribute a medieval or Hasmonean date to the book. It is not in the scope of the present work to delineate the varied opinions that attribute a medieval date to the book’s inception. The references to the “Book of Abraham” in the *Qur’an* (see *Surahs* 87:19 and 53:37) may allude to this book or some version of it. If that is the case, since the *Qur’an* predates the medieval period by centuries, it would at least substantiate that the *Sefer Yetzirah* is not of medieval origin.

The Work of the Chariot Trust version was made using all six known textual sources.¹⁴ Some of the versions contain considerable addenda whose language points to the Hasmonean period, circa 130 BCE, and later. The additional material was left out of the redaction the Work of the Chariot used as the basis for its translation. Based upon astronomical information in the book itself, the Work of the Chariot translator attributed authorship of the *Sefer Yetzirah* to Master Abraham in the nineteenth century BCE. An adjunctive note to the translation points out that the Procession of the Equinoxes acts as an unforgeable clock, allowing us to determine that the correspondence of the constellations given in the sixth chapter to the twelve Hebrew months (with no variations in the six texts considered) occurred during the time of Abraham, circa 4000 years ago. Allowing for

an optimal variation of plus or minus 800 years ago, it is still not anywhere within the range of medieval times. A check on the data logs of the old Chaldeans, Egyptians, and Greeks indicated that no one had astronomical knowledge of the Procession (until about 1700 CE).

The *Sefer Yetzirah* is the first mystical manual on, and possibly the source text for, the original Hebrew alphabet. Its chapters explain the significance of the twenty-two letters and ascribe various attributes to them. It is second only to the *Sefer HaShmoth* as the most prolific source of distinct forms of the Tree of Life. The first chapter of the book is the earliest known textual source for the six-pointed symbol known as the “Star of David.” The Six-Pointed Star has come to be seen as a flat, two-dimensional symbol of two interlocking triangles. The *Sefer Yetzirah*, however, presents the Star as a three-dimensional, six-pointed form of the Tree of Life comprised of two interfacing pyramids. The *Sefer Yetzirah* provides one of the two vastly different sets of names commonly found in the Qabalah for the spheres (called *Sefiroth*) on the Tree (the other set comes from the *Sefer HaZohar*). The names for the Sefiroth in the *Sefer Yetzirah* are based on elements (Spirit of Living *Elohim*, Air, Fire, Water), on four “Celestial Heads of Messiah,” and on the six directions. These and the other correspondences that the book gives for the spheres and gates on the Tree will be discussed in detail later in the book.

Like the three innermost core texts of the *Sefer HaZohar*, the *Sefer Yetzirah* stands out within primary qabalistic literature for the depth, terseness, and obscurity of its language, and for its wealth of mystical allusions. For a Mystical Qabalist, the book’s power and value are valid independent of academic considerations regarding its origins. The full range of ideas and allusions presented in the *Sefer Yetzirah* will be discussed in the course of this book.

SEFER HAZOHAR (BOOK OF SPLENDOR)

The *Sefer HaZohar* (Book of Splendor, often referred to simply as “the *Zohar*”) is a five-volume mystical exegesis written in Rashi Aramaic on the five books of the *Torah*. Like

the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the date and original author of the *Zohar* are subjects for academic debate. Many qabalistic scholars, such as Gershom Scholem, believe the *Zohar* to be a new work produced by Moses De Leon, circa 1250 CE in Spain.¹⁵ Others believe that it was dictated by its pivotal figure Rabbi Shimeon Ben Yochai to his son Rabbi Abba in the first century CE, while they and their group of rabbis hid in caves for thirteen years in Piquin, Israel to avoid Roman persecution. Hence, there are also those who would take the intermediary position that De Leon redacted and published a work that had a much earlier time of origin.

The text of the *Zohar* is presented as a series of dialogues among a group of rabbis. These rabbis were the embodiments of the various Sefiroth (spheres) on the Tree of Life. Hence, the “flavor” of the respective Sefirah (sphere) colors each rabbi’s remarks and questions. Like the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the *Zohar* has its own distinct set of names for the Sefiroth, most of which come from the *Sefer HaShmoth*, and are later echoed in the *Torah* and *Ketuvim* (Writings). Those names may be described as various qualities of the Divine, such as Wisdom, Beauty, Glory, and Mercy. The Zoharic names for the Sefiroth are the most commonly known and used among all types of Qabalists.

The body of the five volumes of the *Zohar* emanates from a core of three extraordinary texts. The innermost layer and heart of the *Zohar* is a small text called the *Sifra Detzneyutha* (**Book of THAT Which is Concealed**). This book contains the single greatest exposition on the negatively existent Mysterious Unknown (called *Ayn*, and also “The NOT”) among all written works of the Mystical Qabalah. The next layer of the core of the *Zohar* is a text called *Idra Rabba Qadusha* (**Greater Holy Assembly**), or simply *Idra Rabba*; and the third layer of the core is called *Idra Zuta Qadusha* (**Lesser Holy Assembly**), or simply *Idra Zuta*. The *Idra Rabba* and *Idra Zuta* expand greatly upon the anthropomorphic allusions introduced in the *Sifra Detzneyutha*. The “Greater Holy Assembly” is the entire Tree of ten Sefiroth. The “Lesser Holy Assembly” is the upper seven Sefiroth only. The profound ideas and wonderful mystical allusions presented in the three core texts will be discussed in detail later on.

MA'ASEH MERKABAH (CHARIOT) LITERATURE

Among the principal works of the written Qabalah, significant material is devoted to the description of the Celestial Chariot (מרכבה, *Merkabah*), or “Throne of Glory of *El Shadai*.” The Chariot is generally an allusion to the Tree of Life, and especially to the four Sefiroth in the central matrix of the three-dimensional Tree of Perfection. These four are collectively referred to as the “Inner Court” of the Tree. The Lord יהוה is variously said to be “riding in the Chariot” and “seated upon the Throne” in the similitude of a man (i.e. *Adam Kadmon*, the “Celestial Man”). In the *Ketuvim* (Writings) of the Jewish scripture (called *Tanakh*), this material is concentrated in the books of **Ezekiel** 1-3, 8, 10 and **Isaiah** 6. Specific verses in these books yield a three-dimensional, six-pointed form of the Tree similar to the one delineated by the *Sefer Yetzirah*. Each of these Tree forms contains distinctly different representations of the four Inner Court Sefiroth. The Chariot Tree will be described in more detail when all the forms of the Trees yielded by the respective primary texts are presented in Chapters Four and Five.

The most prolific descriptions of the *Merkabah* appear in the **Books of Enoch**. Enochian literature takes its name from Enoch son of Yared. Enoch was “a righteous man in his generation” and “walked with *Elohim*.”¹⁶ It is believed that in ancient times there may have been as many as 100,000 volumes of Enochian literature, nearly all of whose last remains were lost in the fiery destruction of the Great Library of Alexandria. This literature was virtually unknown from the fourth (when banned by Hilary, Jerome, and Augustus) until the late nineteenth century CE, when three manuscripts deemed as authentic Enochian material were discovered. Two of the manuscripts, **I Enoch** and **III Enoch**, were in Ethiopian translation: these were found in what was once Abyssinia, the domain of King Solomon’s infamous lover, the Queen of Sheba. The third manuscript, called **II Enoch** and the “**Book of the Secrets of Enoch**,” was preserved in two Slavonic versions: these were found in Russia and Serbia. **I Enoch** and **II Enoch** were translated by R.H. Charles. H. Odeburg translated **III Enoch** (“**Hebrew Book of Enoch**”).¹⁷ The **Books of Enoch** that are mentioned here should not be confused with the “Canons of Enoch,” which were discovered

and translated into European languages in the early nineteenth century. These latter books, which influenced Romantic artists and poets such as Thomas Moore, William Blake, and Lord Byron, are from a different tradition.

The authorship and dates of origin of the remaining Enochian books are obscure. The three manuscripts cited, replete with errors of addition, corruption, and omission, may well be the remnants of volumes given to Sheba by King Solomon and subsequently handed down through generations. At the very least, biblical scholars agree that the **Books of Enoch** are the most important Apocrypha and Pseudoepigrapha pre-dating the Christian era. It has been well established that all New Testament authors were more or less influenced by them.¹⁸ The translations of the three **Books of Enoch** had been long out of print by the time the Work of the Chariot Trust republished them in the early 1970's.

The texts address a wide range of topics. There are numerous messianic references, extensive angeologies and demonologies, elaborate descriptions of the various heavens and hells, lists of Divine Names, lists of names of *Metatron*, and allusions to mystical states associated with ascending the Tree. The most prominent Merkabah sections describe the ascension and transformation of Enoch ben Yared into *Metatron*, known as "The Youth" (נָר, *Nar*) to whom the Lord יהוה revealed the deepest secrets, and whom the Lord יהוה made the "operational manager" of this universe.¹⁹ *Metatron*, chief of the angels, is referred to in the *Tanakh* (notably in **Proverbs** 22.6 and **Job** 32.6), as well as the *Zohar* (I.223b). **III Enoch**, the "**Hebrew Book of Enoch**," contains a long discourse on the ascension of the Celestial Chariot by Rabbi Ishmael, the last High Priest before the destruction of the first Temple of Jerusalem. The ascension of Rabbi Ishmael drew vigorous protests from some of the high angels, who objected to the admission of his relatively impure human spirit to the supernal World of Emanation (called *Atziluth*). When high angels get too close to the supernal Sefiroth in the World of *Atziluth*, their wings burn. The ascension by Rabbi Ishmael of the Celestial Chariot is a narrative allegory for the mystical ascent of the Central Column of the Tree.

Another obscure but important treatise included among Merkabah literature is the *Sefer Raziel HaGadol* (**Book of Raziel the Great**),²⁰ which contains a subtext within it called the *Sh'ir Qoma* or “**Measure of the Divine Body**.” The *Sh'ir Qoma* presents copious lists of Divine Names and, uniquely, a series of dimensions ascribed to the “Divine Body” or *Yosher* (יֵשֶׁר, lit. upright) form of the Name יהוה (Figure 2.3). All current Hebrew texts of the *Sh'ir Qoma* come from a single text, the corrupt edition published by Eleazer of Worms in Amsterdam in 1701 CE. The dimensions given in that text do not yield a reasonable image. The Work of the Chariot Trust published the first, and until recently only, English translation of the *Sh'ir Qoma*, and included it in its edition of the **Books of Enoch**. The translator adjusted the dimensions so that a reasonable *Yosher* is produced, and the overall size correlates roughly to the currently accepted size of the sidereal universe.

The “*Sh'ir Qoma*” is the vision of the Creation as a unity in the Name יהוה. It is seen when returning from the negatively existent roots of the Tree, looking down at the Sefirah in the throat center from the Sefirah at the crown of the head. The *Yosher* is a distinctly anthropomorphic form of the Name יהוה. It is encircled by the *Leviathan* (לִיַּיָּתָן) of Vast Face, described as a “snake devouring its tail.”²¹ The *Leviathan* acts as a circular “fence” around the *Yosher* and defines the field of superimposition. It also displays the ubiquitous mystical principle that “the end is contained in the beginning.” An obscure teaching says that the *Yosher* drips out from *Leviathan's* fang. This is paralleled in the Tantric tradition, where *Shiva* is described as swallowing the “poison” of *Maya* and holding it in his throat. In the *Sifra Detzniyutha*, we find the verse:

“The engraving of all engravings appears as a long serpent.

And extends this way and that. The tail is in the head.

The head goes around to the shoulders. Passing and indignant.

Guarding and concealing, revealing itself in a thousand short days.”²²

FIGURE 2.3 Ezra Hebrew *Yosher* in the *Tzimtzum* surrounded by *Leviathan*



THE PESHITTA AND THE REVELATION OF JOHN

Unlike Master Mosheh and the Prophet Mohammed, Master Yeshuvah did not record a revelation to be handed down after his departure from human form. He did not come to start a new religion, but to fulfill and revitalize an old one. Master Yeshuvah was a Jew born to Jewish parents; a messianic messenger and redeemer awaited and yearned for by faithful Jews. His life was his message, and it can only truly be understood in Jewish terms. Upon interrogation, the Head Rabbi could find no fault in him. What was there to dispute? When asked what the first of all commandments was, Master Yeshuvah (like Rabbi Hillel did a century before him) unhesitatingly pronounced it to be the *Shema*, the Affirmation of Unity from *Torah Doverim* upon

which the entire Jewish religion is built. In order of importance after the *Shema*, he cited the root injunction from **Torah** to love and acknowledge the innate divinity of all beings:

“*Shem Ayn Yisroel יהוה Elohenu יהוה EchaD*
Vuh-ahavta et יהוה Elohenu,
Buh-khol levavkha,
Oo-vuh-khol nafshekha,
*Oo-vuh-khol muhodekha.”*²³

“Name *Ayn* Israel YHVH Thy *Elohim* YHVH One.
 And you shall love YHVH Your Elohim
 With all your heart, with all your soul, and with all
 your might.”

Followed by,

“*Vuh-ahavta leh-re'akha kamokha.*”
 “And thou shall love your neighbor as your Self.”²⁴

But when one reads the stories of Master Yeshuvah’s life and teachings as explicated in the four **Gospels** of the conventional **Peshitta**, it is no longer a Jewish story that is found there, but preponderantly an admixture of theology developed almost exclusively by Gentiles. Master Yeshuvah had come to reestablish and enliven the universal mystical spirituality that was always present in Judaism, but had become largely forgotten and covered by the dross of worldliness and contortions of interpretation. But, his simple and clear message of the absolute unity of all existence, and spiritual awakening through unconditional love and surrender to the Divine, was obscured almost immediately after the passing of his close disciples. A virtual divorce of Christianity from its Jewish roots ensued. Fragmented communities of Christians with different and competing views and agendas quickly crystallized, some composed largely of Palestinian or Hellenistic Jewish Christians, and others of Gentiles from a wide variety of backgrounds whose only knowledge of ancient scripture came from the Greek **Septuagint**. Starting about forty years after Master Yeshuvah appeared to pass from his physical body, a variety of narratives attributed to close disciples began to appear. In addition to the four accounts that were canonized by the emerging orthodoxy into the **Peshitta**, the **Gospel of Thomas**, the **Gospel of Peter**,

the **Gospel of Philip**, the **Secret Gospel of Mark**, the **Gospel of Mary Magdalena**, and other works are still extant in whole or part.

Are the four books contained in the current version of the *Peshitta* accurate renditions of the life and teachings of Master Yeshuvah, as recorded by four of his closest disciples? That would be highly unlikely. Until the **Gospel of Mark** appeared several years after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, virtually all information concerning Master Yeshuvah was passed down as an oral tradition, largely in the form of sayings (*L. logia*) attributed to him. Oral traditions are notoriously prone to distortions and embellishments. In the next thirty years, different communities of Christians produced narratives in the name of Matthew, Luke, John, and also Thomas. The **Gospels of Matthew** and **Luke** could well have been intended to be stand-alone replacements for the **Gospel of Mark**. The **Gospel of Matthew** includes 601 verses contained in **Mark**, either word for word or with carefully crafted changes. Some investigators attribute an additional source for the **Gospel of Luke**, dubbed the “Q Source.” Support is growing to include the **Gospel of Thomas** in the *Peshitta* as one of the original canonized Gospels.²⁵

The single most prominent source that all four shared was the Greek translation of the *Tanakh*, called the **Septuagint**, which the Christians had transformed into a book about Master Yeshuvah well before any of the gospel narratives appeared. While the Qumran community and other pre-Christian groups read oracular meanings into the *Tanakh* in a more general sense, the Christians did so in a very specialized way. Long held traditional Jewish meanings for verses in the *Tanakh* were replaced by forced interpretations that supported Master Yeshuvah as the fulfillment of the *Torah*, the writings of the prophets (especially those of Daniel, Isaiah, Micah, and Hosea), and the historical accounts of the kings of Israel. Numerous investigators have pointed out obvious mistranslations and misunderstandings of verses from *Tanakh* that were appropriated and customized for the biblical justification of gospel narratives. Finally, for various reasons, all of the primary religious texts have suffered from corruption, errors in transcription, omissions,

and additions as they were passed down over the centuries. The earliest texts of the canonized **Gospels** only go back to the fourth and fifth centuries CE.

So, does this mean that the essential teachings of Master Yeshuvah are lost to the world? Definitely not! Again, it is important to remember that Master Yeshuvah did not come to deliver a new message but to renew an old one. He did not come to replace the **Torah**, but to demonstrate its essence through his life. Hence, the Hebrew scriptures, even without interpretations skewed to support a developing theology, and the Mystical Qabalah provide us with the necessary keys to identify the many gems placed in the setting of the quasi-fictionalized gospel narratives. The **Gospels of John** and **Thomas**, in particular, make it clear that the teachings of Master Yeshuvah were firmly rooted in the continuum of Shemite mystical spirituality.

Secondly, there are universal characteristics of messianic appearances that cross all religious boundaries. From time to time in the histories of all religions, the One Ineffable Ground of Being has taken human form to reawaken faith, revitalize the universal teachings upon which they are all based, and renew the efficacy of the succession of Gatekeepers who keep those teachings alive within the respective traditions. Every one of these Messiahs is a manifestation with full power, omniscience, and omnipresence of the same Divine Source, and yet every one is utterly unique and extraordinary. While many of the appearances of Messiah are accompanied by a written revelation or set of teachings, in each case it may be said that the message they came to bring was demonstrated most directly and most poignantly by their lives. And while each of those life stories was unique, they all shared a number of things in common that we may apply in considering the divine life of Master Yeshuvah. These commonalities will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three in the section on the nature of messianic appearance within the context of the Mystical Qabalah.

Finally, like every living tradition, the spiritual power of the transmission does not depend primarily upon the written documents, but in the *b'rakha* (spiritual blessing) of Perfect Trees and the grace of the Divine to quicken one's Holy Spirit

(*Ruach Ha Qodesh*). Mystical Christianity has maintained a continuous lineage of known and mostly unknown saints and mystics over the centuries, who have faithfully passed on the essence of Master Yeshuvah's mystical spirituality. Despite later distrust and suppression by Pauline orthodoxy, mysticism flourished in the early church. Master Yeshuvah taught one set of teachings openly to the public, and another set of secret teachings privately to his most advanced disciples. The **Gospels** themselves attest to this, and Clement of Alexandria wrote about such a secret teaching as late as the third century CE.

Of all the Christian mystical literature, the most enigmatic and passionately discussed is the **Revelation of John**. It opens with a description of John's vision of the Ancient of Days with fiery eyes and a two-edged sword coming from His mouth, etc. The text then goes on to delineate a series of seven sets of seven images. These images have long been regarded as allegorically depicting a linear series of events all occurring in the physical plane, leading to the reemergence of Christ, his vanquishing of Satan, and His ascension as the Lamb of God to the Throne on High in the new Jerusalem. However, from the perspective of the Mystical Qabalah, the series of images listed in the **Revelation** provide an allusion for the process of mystical awakening through the four worlds in the ascension of a specialized version of the single-column "Tree of Life of the Treasuries of the House of *Elohim*." The series of images from **Revelation** are presented in the qabalistic Tree format in Chapter Six.

THE QU'RAN

The *Qur'an* is the final revelation of the Lord יהוה (as *Allah*) to the children of Abraham. It was transmitted through the Prophet Mohammed, the "Seal of the Shemite prophets." The only prophet yet to come is the reappearance of Eliyahu (Elijah), who will herald the final messianic advent of *Allah* as "The Last," which the *Qur'an* calls the "Day of Judgment" (*Yom Ah-Din*). The *Qur'an* encompasses 6,666 verses in 114 titled *surahs* (chapters) of varying length. Master Mohammed lived at a time when a substantial number of Jews, Christian, and Sabaeans lived on the Arabian Peninsula among a general population of

idol worshipping Arabs. Master Mohammed is thought to have had significant interaction with religious teachers from all of these groups, as well as, from the Hanifites, and the highly educated Persian Zoroastrians who ruled many parts of the peninsula. A large amount of critical evidence, beyond the scope of this book, concludes that this interaction substantially impacted the content of the *Qur'an*.

The Jews had immigrated to the Arabian Peninsula via the well-traveled trade routes across the Red Sea long before Master Mohammed was born. They were largely centered in Mecca and Medina, and included a substantial number of religious teachers well versed in Talmudic *halacha* (interpretations of verses in *Torah*) and Midrashic commentary (i.e. on the *halacha*). The Sabaeans are thought to have been among the earliest inhabitants of Syria, and only a little is known of their history, culture, and spirituality. The Christian inhabitants consisted largely of the descendants of “heretics” who had been expelled from the Roman Empire. These Arabian “desert fathers” possessed numerous apocalyptic and pseudo-epigraphic texts. But it is suspected that they had limited knowledge of the *Peshitta*, and that the bulk of the material related to the Prophet Isa (Master Yeshuvah) and Miryam (Mary) in the *Qur'an* was derived from Jewish sources. The Hanifites were an Arabian faith community largely concentrated in Mecca, Medina, and a few other cities, who had rejected idolatry previous to the birth of the Prophet. They professed to be in search of the original religion of Abraham. In the *Qur'an*, Master Mohammed repeatedly applies the term “*hanif*” to the disciples of the religion of Abraham. Before and during Master Mohammed’s life, Persian kings ruled many parts of the peninsula. The Persian inhabitants were generally well educated, and their tales and songs became widespread among the Arabian tribes.

The poetic and narrative style of the *Qur'an* is strikingly different from the *Tanakh*. The *Tanakh* is a diverse anthology whose component pieces were written at different times for religious instruction by a number of different consummate storytellers. Their work was selectively preserved and handed down as the best of their kind, culminating in their inclusion in the Ezra redaction of the *Tanakh*. The *Qur'an* was a totally new

work, delivered in a very short period of time in a specific historical climate and cultural milieu. It was an inspired scripture delivering a fresh transmission of the universal mystical spirituality of the religion of Abraham. It was intended to bring the descendants of Ishmael out of their long decline into idol worship, as well as, lead the Jews and the Christians back to the spiritual truth that had become buried under orthodox conventions, fictionalized narratives, forced meanings, and outside cultural distortions. While characters in the *Torah* are highly developed and distinct, those in the *Qur'an* come forth with little development and repeat the same fundamental axioms. While biblical narratives are complete stories rich with dramatic action, the narratives in the *Qur'an* are fragmentary, with incidents and scenes from Jewish and Christian history introduced abruptly, with little dramatic sense, and often lacking important points that would enhance the reader's understanding.

However, the unique and complex circumstances into which the Prophet brought forth his new dispensation didn't require that he repeat the entirety of the biblical narrative. There was a long history of hostilities and distrust among the various Arab tribes. The Jews and the Christians had been estranged for centuries. His fragmentary approach was enough to give the Arabs a sense of ownership of the religion of their ancestors, while providing a vehicle to carry the core mystical concept of the absolute unity of all existence at the roots of all the traditions. The 114 *surahs* of the *Qur'an* are typically divided into those revealed in the early period in Mecca, those revealed in the middle period in Medina, and those that came in the later period in Mecca. As a rule, the shortest and most mystically potent *surahs* are associated with the early period in Mecca. Longer *surahs* from later periods were more loosely structured, allowing the Prophet to make changes as circumstances unfolded, and insert new verses as he deemed appropriate. Thus, the *Qur'an* presented both an opportunity to reestablish the unitive mystical spirituality of the children of Abraham in general, as well as, gave the Prophet the guise of revelation to resolve many tribal disputes.

The core mystical ideas of the *Qur'an* and Sufism are essentially identical to those of the *Torah* and the Mystical Qabalah. As the Mystical Qabalah is predicated upon the

negatively existent “Mysterious Unknown at the Roots of All Things,” called *Ayn* (“Nothing”) and *Lo* (i.e. “The NOT”), the *Qur’an* refers repeatedly to the Divine Essence as *La* (also “The NOT”). Like the Qabalah, the Face of God is a prominent component in Sufi mysticism, and like the *Torah* (as well as, virtually all other mystical traditions), the *Qur’an* has allusions to both Vast and Small Face. For instance, in “The Light” *Surah*, allusions are given for the Tree of Life, for Small Face as “light upon light,” and for Vast Face as “darkness upon thick darkness.”²⁶

“*Allah* is the light of the heavens and the earth.
The similitude of His light is that of a niche,²⁷
within which is a lamp.²⁸
The lamp is within a glass orb.²⁹
The glass, as it were, a shining star,³⁰
Lit with the oil of a blessed olive tree,
NOT of the East, NOT of the West.
Its light luminous even though fire touches it not,
Light upon light.”³¹

and, later in the *surah*,

“Or like darkness upon a vast ocean,³²
Covered with waves upon waves,
Over them clouds,
Darkness upon thick darkness.³³
And whoever *Allah* gives NOT- Light, has
NOT- Light in all.”

In Islam, Judaism and Christianity are regarded as revealed religions, and therefore given protected status. In the *Qur’an*, there are a number of references to the Jews as the “People of the Book (i.e. *Torah*)” whom Muslims are exhorted to honor and respect. In the “Most High *Surah*,” the *Torah* is called the “Book of Mosheh” and the *Sefer Yetzirah* (**Book of Formation**) is referred to as the “Book of Abraham.” The *Qur’an* also has beautiful *surahs* devoted to the Prophet Isa (Master Yeshuvah), to whom is ascribed the exalted stature of *rasool* (prophet of the highest degree), and to Isa’s mother Miryam (Mary). It is interesting to note that in the history of Miryam, Master Mohammed speaks of Miryam, sister of Aaron the High Priest

and Master Mosheh, as the same Miryam who became the mother of Master Isa 1570 years later. Scholars frequently point to this as an erroneous ascription. However, from the perspective of reincarnation, was Master Mohammed inferring that the later Miryam was a reincarnation of the former, much in the same way as John the Baptist is identified as a reincarnation of Prophet Eliyahu in the *Peshitta*?

THE *ETZ HACHAYYIM* (TREE OF LIFE) OF RABBI YITZA'AQ LURIA

Rabbi Yitza'aq Luria (1534-1572 CE) is a highly esteemed Jewish Kabbalist who lived in Safed in Israel. He is widely known as “HaAri” (The Lion). The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 set into motion a tide of momentum that led to Safed becoming a center for the revitalized study of the Jewish Kabbalah, in which Luria was a central figure. Rabbi Luria dictated the *Etz HaChayyim* (Tree of Life) to his student Chayyim Vital. It is composed of ten “Branches” and is deeply rooted in the *Zohar* (Book of Splendor). It is clearly the most intellectually complex of the principal works of written Qabalah, and attracts the lion’s share of interest amongst present-day (non-occult) Qabalists.

The text of the *Etz HaChayyim* describes the emanation of the “smooth and simple” Light of the Endless (אֵין סוּף אִוֵר, *Ayn Sof Or*), from Its unmanifest condition into the pattern of the Sefiroth of the Tree of Life within the “Sphere of Contraction” (צִמְצוּם, *Tzimtzum*).³⁴ In the *Etz HaChayyim*, the Central Column of the Tree is called the *Kav* (כַּב, Line of Light), and the names used for the Sefiroth are exclusively Zoharic. The Lurianic cosmogony elucidates a system of *partzufim*, or “veils,” positioned on the Tree. The *Etz HaChayyim* is a source for several unique forms of the Tree of Life. One form renders the Sefiroth as a pattern of ten concentric circles, like “layers of an onion.” Two other Trees are set upon a version of the vertical arrangement of the letters of the Name יהוה mentioned in the description of the *Sh’ir Qoma* (Measure of the Divine Body). These Trees will be presented in a later chapter.

Luria is particularly noted for his doctrine of the *Shevirat HaKelim*, or the “Shattering of the Vessels.” This doctrine widely influenced many Qabalists who followed, including Sabbatai Zevi and the Baal Shem Tov (the father of Chasidism). The core idea of the *Shevirat HaKelim* is that the universe was shattered at the moment of creation (mirroring the Big Bang Theory). From this inflationary event, “holy sparks” flew off in all directions. Some returned, and others became embodied in all forms of matter. From this arose the idea of *Tikkun Olam*, or the “Perfection of the World,” in which all the holy sparks return to the state of unity that preceded the creation of the universe. A parallel in Chaos Theory is the concept of a “disturbed system” that strives to revert to a former condition of quasi-stationary equilibrium. The Work of the Chariot Trust published the first English translation of all ten Branches of the *Etz HaChayyim* in 1973.

CONCLUSION REGARDING THE PRIMARY TEXTS

The primary texts of the Mystical Qabalah are books of power not intended for superficial consumption. Such books are alive, full of light, with hidden gates and abundant treasures. The life, light, and secrets of any book of power must grow like seeds in the mind. With proper cultivation under suitable conditions, those seeds bear fruit over time. With repeated recitation and perhaps the scribing of a text, one can feel the patterns and identify the key phrases, power names, imagery, and diagrams upon which the book is built. When you properly intone and scribe the key power names and phrases, and visualize the principal imagery and diagrams, you activate deep archetypes in the mind. These archetypes expand in one’s consciousness and trigger associations and flashes of perception.