

## Zohar Appendix III

### The Divine Nomenclature of The Zohar

The reader of the Zohar, whether in the original or a translation, hardly needs to be told that with the mere understanding of the words he can in a great many passages by no means be sure of having penetrated to the sense. The Zohar has a way of using ordinary terms, including well-known proper names, in a sense peculiar to itself, often, too, when the reader, if not on his guard, might not suspect this; it deals largely in allegories of a very far-fetched and intricate character; and therefore a great part of it cannot be understood without some kind of a key. The appendices and glossaries in the first two volumes aimed only at giving such help as would make the main outlines of the Zohar intelligible. Now that the whole work of the translation has been completed, it seems proper to endeavour to provide a more effective clue to its mysteries.

Now, if there is one feature more than another which distinguishes the Zohar, it is the great variety of expressions which it uses to designate God and the divine essence in general. Not merely does it divide the Godhead into grades, but it has a number of names for each grade, besides other names which, strictly speaking, lie outside of the ideology of the grades. For the proper understanding of the Zohar nothing is more essential than the accurate distinguishing of these names; and an Appendix dealing with this matter in a systematic fashion will probably be found the most succinct means of providing a key, if not to the whole, at any rate to a great part of the Zohar, while it will incidentally afford occasion for a critique within limits of the theology of the Zohar, which is the aspect of it most likely to be of interest to the modern reader.

### The Three Approaches To God

An attentive study of the Zohar from this point of view reveals in it a complexity of a peculiar kind. It exhibits three distinct approaches to the God idea springing from distinct psychological needs and ministering to distinct religious requirements, yet all based upon the study of the Hebrew Scriptures and all consonant with Jewish faith and practice. The object of the Zohar in this field may in all cases be said to be the bringing of the individual Jew into communion with God. This, however, may be effected in three ways, according as the appeal is made to his sentiment of prayer and devotion, to his ethical impulse, or to his philosophical spirit. The Zohar recognizes-or postulates-that the individual may be materially assisted in this endeavour by being provided with suitable designations under which to represent to himself the Deity. It further recognizes the need of harmonizing these representations and showing how their diversity is consistent with the essential unity of God; and for this purpose further sets of designations are brought into play. Thus we find in the Zohar on the one hand three designations-or rather, sets of designations, for each has an alternative-which constitute what may be called the standard names of God, according as communion is sought by means of any one of the three approaches mentioned above; and on the other hand, a number of other designations grouped round these and serving to correlate them, and bring them, so to speak, into one frame. We may now proceed to specify these designations and the various aspects of the divine essence to which they are applied.

1. To designate God as the recipient of the Israelite's prayers and the object of his devotions, the Zohar commonly uses a term which the reader would not immediately suspect to have a divine significance, namely 'Community of Israel'. This term corresponds to what present-day writers call the 'national' or 'tribal' or 'particularist' God of Israel. Belief in such a God is based purely on historical grounds, especially on the election of the patriarchs. God as the 'Community of Israel' is the protector and guardian of the people of Israel in this world. In this capacity God is not only personal, but also localized. He is with the children of Israel wherever they are, whether in their own land or in exile. This union was first effected at Mount Sinai; it was consummated by the building of the Temple, and was not broken even by the destruction of the Temple. But since that event God's protection of Israel is naturally much less efficacious. It will however, be restored to its former vigour in time to come, on the advent of the Messiah, which is frequently predicted in the Zohar with great circumstantiality.

If we ask, how does God manifest His presence in Israel, the answer is, through the Divine Light, the Shekinah. This light is the connecting link between the divine and the non-divine. For, according to the Zohar, God, the protector of Israel, is borne along by four Hayyoth or Holy Beasts, constituting His throne, and these are borne on other angelic beings, which again rest on higher firmaments, under which is the lowest heaven, to which belongs the earth and all its creatures. [Tr. note: It will be noticed that this hierarchy corresponds closely to the four 'worlds' of the Cabbalists-of Emanation, Creation, Formation and Completion. In the Zohar itself the worlds of Aziluth and Beriah are mentioned only occasionally, the others hardly at all.] Through this hierarchy an emanation of the Divine Presence is conveyed to earth, just as, on the other hand, the prayer of human beings is conveyed up to heaven. The Shekinah originally rested on the Tabernacle and Temple, but even now it accompanies the wise, especially when three study together.

The 'throne of God', consisting of the Hayyoth, is the instrument of God's providence on earth. For the Hayyoth are pictured as having each a human face, but with the aspect respectively of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle. According, therefore, to the aspect through which he is looked upon from on high will be the

providential care which a man receives here on earth. Here, too, intermediate beings come into play, and round this conception of the Godhead revolves most of the angelology of the Zohar. All this constitutes the more popular portion of the Zohar. Its Biblical basis is to be found in the first chapter of Ezekiel. It is essentially imaginative in character, and its main purpose is to afford consolation and encouragement to Israel in exile by assuring them that God's protection is still with them, as evidenced by the fact that the name 'Community of Israel' has both a human and a divine application.

2. As the promoter of man's moral strivings, God is usually termed in the Zohar 'The Holy One, blessed be He'. In this capacity God is regarded as the source of animate life, as the creator of species, as the vitalizing force in the universe. Man knows of God in this aspect through his own neshamah, the consciousness-based primarily on his neshimah (breathing power)-of his own individuality, the super-soul, the deeper self which transcends his ruah (spirit, intellectual faculties), and nefesh (physical vitality). Through his neshamah man is capable of direct communion with the Holy One, blessed be He, and also of ethical and moral perfection or the reverse. The Israelites possess in the precepts of their Torah the instrument for achieving this perfection, and in proportion as they do so or fail to do so, their neshamah is rewarded or punished after their death. The place of reward is called the Garden of Eden, of punishment, Gehinnom. As the dispenser of reward and punishment after death, God is called the 'Holy King'. Another name given to God from this point of view is the 'Tree of Life', in the branches of which the souls of the righteous are figured as resting. Hence, when an Israelite carries out the Torah, he is said to be cleaving to the Tree of Life. Round this conception of God as the Holy One, blessed be He, revolves the whole Zoharic doctrine of the moral life, of reward and punishment, of heaven and hell and their respective denizens, and of the incarnation and transmigration of souls. This part of the Zohar is predominantly emotional in tone, and the God-idea which it embodies may be said to be based on an effort of introspection, or on what in German philosophical language would be called a *Lebensanschauung*. Its Scriptural basis is the second chapter of Genesis.

3. The Zohar is not content to base the religious life merely on the emotional side of man's nature. It seeks an approach to God, not only introspectively, from the starting-point of a *Lebensanschauung*, but also extraspectively, from the starting-point of a *Weltanschauung*. The designation given to God for this purpose is 'Ancient Holy One'. This name designates God regarded as the First Cause of all existence and all movement. God in this aspect is purely impersonal, a fact somewhat veiled by the designation and of which the writers of the Zohar seem frequently to lose sight. It is, however, clearly brought out in another expression frequently used to describe God in this aspect, viz. 'That Hidden and Undisclosed' (or equivalent terms). It is a postulate of the Zohar that this First Cause is a kind of algebraical  $x$ , which for the sake of intellectual satisfaction must be sought for, but which can never be found. This attitude is summed up in the Zoharic interpretation of the Biblical text, 'See who created these' (Isa. XL, 26). The aspect of 'these'-the perceptible universe-points to the existence of a First Cause, but on inquiring into it we can get no further than the interrogation 'Who?' since the pursuit of an ultimate cause can be carried on to 'en sof', without limit. In order, therefore, to find a beginning we posit an 'Ancient One' who differs from the 'Ancient Holy One' in being not absolutely absolute, so to speak, but containing the possibility of producing or becoming the non-absolute.

As the precepts of the Torah furnish man with the complete guide to the life of righteousness and moral improvement, so the first chapter of Genesis furnishes the complete guide to the quest of the Absolute. When pursued under such guidance, this quest is called *hokhmah*, wisdom, and constitutes the highest form of human activity, the mark of perfection in man. Naturally, in the eyes of the Zohar this quest is fundamentally a theological rather than a metaphysical activity, since the First Cause is *ex hypothesi* regarded as God, and has by some means or other to be identified not only with the personal God who enjoins the moral life, but also with the localized God who dwells among and protects the people of Israel. *Hokhmah* forms a link between man and the First Cause because *hokhmah* also governs the relation of cause and effect throughout the universe. And as the divine *hokhmah* determines the consequences to the soul of human conduct, so the human *hokhmah* embraces of necessity the moral life. Thus there can, in the system of the Zohar, be no conflict between philosophy and the moral law.

### **The Correlation of The Three Approaches**

From what has been said above, it will be seen that it is possible to distinguish three strata in the Zohar regarded as a theological work, which we may designate the devotional, the ethical, and the philosophical, and which address themselves primarily to the imagination, the emotions, and the intellect respectively. Each of these strata is, so to speak, dominated by its own designation for the Deity, representing God under a distinct aspect-in the one case as both personal and local, in the second as personal but not local, in the third as neither personal nor local. But the Zohar is not content to leave these aspects side by side, like the Scottish clergyman who commenced a prayer with the words, 'O Thou who art our eternal hope and ultimate hypothesis'. A great part of it-perhaps the most important-is taken up with an endeavour to correlate them by expressing each in the terms of the others. This involves a wide extension of the designations of God, which we have now to consider.

1. We have seen above that the providential care of Israel in this world is exercised, according to the Zohar, by God qua 'Community of Israel', while the recompensing of souls in the other world is carried out by

God qua 'the Holy King'. Now, these two activities are pictured by the Zohar as being the same relation to each other as the management of the royal household to the management of the affairs of State. If the latter is assigned to the King, naturally the former is assigned to the Queen. Hence the Community of Israel is brought into relation with the Holy King by being designated the Matróna, or Queen, and they are pictured as consorting together in ziwug, or wedlock. The pious are fancifully pictured as, by means of their prayers and studies, preparing the Matróna for the union, and partaking in Her joy. Apparently this is possible even at the present time -a doctrine which it is not altogether easy to reconcile with the statement frequently made in the Zohar, that since the destruction of the Temple there has been 'separation' between the King and the Matróna.

Another way of bringing these two aspects into relationship is to picture the Community of Israel as the moon reflecting the light of the Holy One, blessed be He, who is the sun. Strictly speaking, we should compare them as sun light and moon light, and the moon, the opaque reflecting body, is formed by the souls of the righteous. God's activity in sending souls down to this world and resuscitating them in the next is like the light of the sun. But His providential care of Israel in this world, superadded to His care for their souls, is like the light of the moon, which is the light of the sun conveyed to a place to which it does not properly belong. And just as the moon is not always equally bright, so the Community of Israel is not always equally beneficent. It is the wicked who 'impair' the Moon, causing the Sun's light to be withdrawn from it, while the righteous restore it to fulness. In this way, then, King and Queen, and Sun and Moon are all designations in the Zohar of various aspects of the Godhead.

2. The question now arises, how does the Zohar unify the First Cause with the Holy One, blessed be He, and the Community of Israel? The answer is, through the doctrine of the grades (v. Appendix to Vol. 1). This is in essence the same as what is usually called by the Cabbalists the doctrine of the Sefiroth, but it is enunciated in the Zohar in a manner specially adapted for the purpose it has in view and with its own peculiar theological terminology.

When the Zohar speaks of 'grades', there is no question that ordinarily it means grades of the Godhead, and specifically of the Godhead regarded as First Cause. Seeing that it enumerates ten such grades, it in effect posits ten First Causes. This is apparently a contradiction in terms, and it must be admitted that the Zohar, while positing that the ten grades are in essence one, does habitually speak of them as if they were distinct entities capable of forming all sorts of relations with one another. The favourite method adopted by the Zohar for expressing their unity in diversity, or vice versa, is by picturing them as members of a human body or features of a human head; this method is elaborated in the 'Book of Concealed Wisdom' and in the two Idras. This, however, affords no satisfactory answer to our problem; for while it would be permissible, if we had some rational explanation, to illustrate it by the figure of the human frame, it is surely somewhat 'preposterous' (in the literal sense of the term) to seize on the figure of the human frame first and leave its precise application to be filled in afterwards.

Another explanation which is only adumbrated in the Zohar, but which is found more clearly expressed in other parts of the Cabbalistic literature, and has been adopted by Cordoveiro in his *Pardes Rimmonim*, is as follows. The First Cause is compared to a luminary shining on to a reflecting glass which in turn throws its light on to another from which it is cast on to a third, and so on through nine reflecting glasses (or it may be ten, for there is a difference of opinion as to whether the original light is reckoned among the ten or not). In this way there are ten lights of various grades of intensity which are yet all the same light. This figure explains the fact that there can be a gradation in the extent to which the human mind comprehends the First Cause. But it fails to explain the objective division of the First Cause into ten, which is certainly posited in the Cabbala, because it does not provide us with anything to which we can attach the figure of the reflecting glasses.

It would be possible to find such a basis of comparison in certain 'worlds' of which mention is made in the Zohar. We frequently come across such phrases as, 'there is rejoicing in all worlds', or 'all worlds are knit together'. Now, in later Cabbalistic works there is no doubt that by 'worlds' in such a connection would be meant the four 'worlds' of Aziluth, Beriah, Yezirah and 'Asiah (v. Introduction). But, as we have seen, the Zohar does not seem to be really familiar with this idea, and certainly it hardly seems in place in the contexts where these expressions occur. It makes much better sense if we regard 'worlds' in these contexts as the 'opposite numbers' of the various grades, as the effects of the various manifestations of the First Cause. After all, if the First Cause is tenfold, it stands to reason that the universe must also be tenfold; and we may take this to be the doctrine of the Zohar, though it is nowhere expressly stated. [Tr. note: of course, the three inferior 'worlds', of the Cabbalists would be contained in these worlds, though how exactly they are to be distributed is not easy to determine.]

This supposition, however, only carries the difficulty back a stage, and we have still to ask, how are we to understand the simultaneous existence of various worlds? The key can perhaps be found in the Zoharic conception of the primordial 'Days'. Of the ten grades, six-from the fourth to the ninth-are regarded as functioning each within its own 'day'. Now it is obvious that these 'days' are not successive, since all the grades are evidently functioning concurrently. We must suppose, therefore, that when the Zohar says there are six 'days', what it means is that there are six kinds of time, what we might call six 'tempos' of existence, and in relation to each of these the First Cause assumes a different aspect, exhibits a different manifestation, becomes, in the Zoharic language, a different grade of itself. If we ask, how are we to imagine different kinds of time, it

would be hard to find anything in the Zohar throwing light on this point, but it is not difficult to provide an answer, if we regard time as something not objectively perceived, but as subjectively felt. It might fairly be held that the animate world feels time in a manner different from the inanimate, and the higher branches of the animate world in a manner different from the lower. In this way the conception of various 'worlds' each with its own First Cause, yet all forming one, would become intelligible.

The 'day' as a definite kind of time, presupposes the existence of 'heaven and earth', that is, of an active cause and a material on which it works, originally one but differentiated by the action of the First Cause as a preliminary to the creation of 'worlds'. In this preliminary stage itself the Zohar distinguishes three grades, which it commonly refers to in a group as 'The Patriarchs'. It impresses upon us that these grades are totally beyond the realm of human comprehension, but this does not prevent it from speaking about them quite familiarly. The third of them is frequently called 'the Jubilee', a word which is meant to indicate the passage of timelessness into time, or, it may be, vice versa. The relation of the six Days of Heaven and Earth to the primordial First Cause is expressed by comparing them to six saplings trained in a nursery and subsequently planted out, the mnemonic being the verse of the Psalms, 'The trees of the Lord, the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted' (Ps. CIV, 16).

The names given to the grades are the same as those given in Cabbalist literature to the Sefiroth-Kether, Hokhmah, Binah, then Hesed, etc. For Wisdom and Understanding one can perceive a certain reason; the rest seem more or less fanciful, and no reason for them is given in the Zohar. It should be observed that, strictly speaking, all these are names of God, regarded as first cause. That the Zohar always keeps this fact in mind it would not be safe to assert; it is hardly possible in many places to avoid the impression that we are dealing with a plurality of divinities, or again with mere attributes of the Deity. But either supposition reduces the Cabbalistic system to nonsense.

As there are grades prior to 'heaven and earth' and the six grades functioning in them, so there is a grade posterior to heaven and earth. Whence comes the energy which constitutes this 'day'? This is a question to which it is difficult to find an answer in the Zohar. We might say, however, that it is constituted by a kind of reflex action, and consists in the activity of the First Cause in being conscious of itself and all that it has accomplished. This would explain why the specific function of the Seventh Day is to unite the human soul or consciousness (neshamah) with the body, and why, being outside of 'heaven and earth', it occupies a position apart from the previous six grades.

After what has been said it will not be difficult to understand how the conception of God as First Cause can be made to embrace the conceptions of God as Ruler of the world and Protector of Israel. The sixth grade, Tifereth or Beauty, is the one which functions in the third of the six days of creation, and therefore stands in the relation of First Cause to the earth as the basis of all animate existence and all activity of propagation. There is, therefore, obvious ground for identifying this grade with the Holy One, blessed be He, the dispenser of vital powers and the arbiter of life and death in both worlds. When the Ancient Holy One and the Holy One, blessed be He, are thus correlated, they are distinguished as Arich Anpin (Makroprosopus, lit. long of nostrils, i.e. long-suffering, forbearing), and Ze'er Anpin (Mikroprosopus, lit. small of nostrils, i.e. hasty), the reason being that suffering and pain issue directly from the latter, but not from the former.

If the Holy One, blessed be He, can be identified with the sixth grade, Tifereth, with equal right the Community of Israel can be identified with the tenth grade, Malkuth. The latter is the first cause of union of the human soul with the body; the former is God regarded as immanent in the human soul. A further resemblance lies in the fact that Malkuth, lying outside of the sphere of 'heaven and earth', acts only with a kind of borrowed energy, or, in the language of the Zohar, 'has no light of its own', while the Community of Israel also is regarded as but a moon shining with a borrowed light. Hence the transition from one to the other is easy and natural.

The connection between the various designations of God employed by the Zohar may be illustrated by the following figure. Imagine a long hall divided into three sections, of which one bears the title 'Community of Israel', the second 'Matrona', and the third 'Malkuth'. The first section is open to the heavens; the second section has a somewhat lofty roof; the third a much lower roof. The roof of the second section forms the floor of another hall which extends over the third section also. That part of it which covers the second section of the lower hall, the Matrona, is entitled 'Holy King' and is open to the heavens; that part of it which extends over Malkuth is called Tifereth, and it has three storeys underneath it between itself and Malkuth and five storeys above it, of which the topmost-or it may be the three highest-is open to the heavens. If a man desires to have communion with God, he must enter the lowest hall, but he has his choice between its three sections. If he is content to base his belief in God on the teaching of tradition, he can immediately find communion with God through prayer and devotional exercises. If he seeks to base his belief on the consciousness of his neshamah, or higher self, then devotion is only a first stage and true communion is attained only by ethical practice. If, finally, he bases his belief on philosophical speculation, then even ethical practice is only the fifth of ten stages of intellectual cultivation which he has to pass through in order to attain his goal.

To complete this sketch of the divine nomenclature of the Zohar two things are still necessary. One is to fit into the above scheme the three pairs of categories to which attention was called in the Appendix to Vol. II,

namely, Upper and Lower, Male and Female, and Right and Left. The second is to discuss the place occupied in the Zoharic system by the Holy Name or Tetragrammaton.

### The Designations and The Categories

1. Upper and Lower. According to the Zohar, the grades, as the name implies, constitute a hierarchy, each one being superior to the one which follows. The reason is that the activity of each is conditioned by the activity of the one above it, but not vice versa. This is expressed in Zoharic language by saying that each one sucks from the one above it. Hence the terms 'upper' and 'lower' applied to the grades are relative, save that the lowest grade is 'lower' and the highest grade 'upper' par excellence. It is no doubt in virtue of this conditioning that the Zohar lays down that whatever takes place 'above' also takes place 'below', since it is natural that the same First Cause working in different media should produce parallel results.

2. Male and Female. While each grade is responsible for its own world, in certain cases it is regarded as having received the seed thereof from the grade above, to which it accordingly stands in the relation of female to male. Thus the grades of Wisdom and Understanding are regarded as male and female in regard to the primordial 'heaven and earth' which are, properly speaking, the 'world' of the latter, and hence these two grades are commonly designated 'Father' and 'Mother'. Again, the world of the grade Hesed is commonly known as 'upper waters' and that of the grade Geburah as 'lower waters', the former being a fluid element and the latter fiery. These are regarded as being respectively 'male' and 'female', and out of their union issues the earthly element. The grades themselves, however, Hesed and Geburah, are not distinguished as male and female. Further, the lowest grade, Malkuth, is regarded as female in respect of the six grades of 'heaven and earth', and is often referred to simply as 'The Female'. More specifically, it forms a pair with the grade Yesod (Foundation) immediately above it. The two, when thus conjoined, are usually designated Zaddik (Righteous One), and Zedek (Righteousness), and out of their interaction issues the neshamah as the soul of man.

3. Right and Left. The distinction between 'right' and 'left' in the Zohar is of particular importance because it is the keystone of the Zoharic theory of good and evil. It is also more elusive and difficult to explain than the other categories. This is due to the fact that these terms are found on examination to embody three sets of ideas which in themselves are in reality quite distinct.

(a) In one sense, 'right and left' seem to be used in the Zohar simply as a variation of 'male and female'. Hokhmah, being 'male', is on the right, and Binah, being 'female', is on the left. Similarly, Hesed, being responsible for the 'male waters', is on the right, and Geburah, being responsible for the 'female waters', is on the left. The supreme grade, Kether, being beyond the division of male and female, is pictured as being in the centre. Similarly, Tifereth, which effects the union between male and female waters, is also placed in the centre. Thus it is possible to speak of a 'straight line' from Kether to Tifereth, and to designate Tifereth the 'central pillar'.

(b) A second use of the terms 'right and left' is based on the identification of the grade Tifereth with the Holy King, the Ruler and Judge of the world. The Holy King as judge can exercise either clemency or rigour, and it is a not unnatural figure to say that He exercises clemency with His right hand and rigour with His left. Now, as we have seen, the 'world' of the grade Tifereth, namely the earthly element capable of producing life, is formed by a union of the fluid and fiery elements which constitute the 'worlds' of Hesed and Geburah. It is assumed by the Zohar that the world of bliss which is reserved for the souls of the righteous after death in some way derives from the grade of Hesed and its element, while the world of punishment reserved for the souls of the wicked derives from Geburah and its element. Hence, by a natural transference, Hesed becomes the Right Arm and Geburah the Left Arm. A further elaboration of this idea is to regard Hesed and Geburah as two judges advocating respectively acquittal and condemnation, while Tifereth turns the scale. When thus grouped the three grades are designated Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

(c) The distinction between 'right' and 'left' in the Zohar corresponds, not only to the distinction between reward and punishment in the next world, but also between good and evil, and specifically moral good and evil in this world. Samael, the power of evil, the tempter, the accuser, the evil Serpent, is placed on the left and is identified with the grade Geburah. Now Samael is represented as the opponent not of Hesed but of Tifereth. He is the Great Dragon, who on New Year swallows the Moon, that is, prevents the union of the Matrona with the Holy King, until Israel by their sacrifice on the Day of Atonement induce him to desist. He also, by means of his minions, Lilit and others, seduces men to defile their souls, contrary to the desire of the Holy King [Tr. note: It may be noted here that the Zohar distinguishes the zelem (form) and demuth (likeness) of man (v. Genesis I, 26) as 'left' and 'right', and identifies the demuth with the neshamah. Thus one aspect of the distinction between right and left in the Zohar is a conflict between Samael and the Holy King. This conflict is obviously a very different thing from the conflict of view between Hesed and Geburah, though described in the same terms, and if we ask how it arises, the answer is by no means easy to find in the Zohar. A possible explanation is as follows. It has been mentioned above that each grade is regarded as 'sucking' from the one above it. Now it is not unnatural to suppose that the one which is 'sucked' should offer a certain resistance to the process, so that two opposite tendencies are always at work. This would seem to be implied in the somewhat obscure interpretation given by the Zohar to a text which it frequently quotes as containing a fundamental principle with reference to the grades,

viz. 'To the place whence the rivers came, thither they are ever returning' (Eccl. I, 7). On this principle there should be a conflict between all the adjacent grades; but we may suppose that the reason why the Zohar dwells on the conflict between Samael and the Holy King is because of its importance for the salvation of man's soul and the welfare of the people of Israel.]

### **The Divine Name**

It remains to say a few words on the place occupied by the Holy Name, the Tetragrammaton, in the scheme of the Zohar. In the Cabbalistic doctrine the name formed by the four Hebrew letters yod, he, vau, he, has a special and intimate connection with the grade of Tifereth, of which it is in the strict sense the proper name. We must understand this to mean that if one could grasp with sufficient clearness the nature of the grade Tifereth, especially as the originator of the neshamah, he would automatically perceive that this is the fitting appellation which should be given to it. To this grade of comprehension Moses and the other prophets actually rose, and this was the basis of their inspiration. There is, however, a difference between the inspiration of Moses and that of the other prophets. Moses was able to grasp the connection between the grade and the Name fully and clearly, but the others only through a haze, as it were, since their comprehension only reached fully to the two inferior grades of Nezah and Hod, the two 'pillars' or 'willows of the brook', as they are fancifully called.

Apart from its importance as a vocable, the Tetragrammaton has a deep significance for the Zohar as a written word, through the symbolism of its individual letters and their shapes and qualities. Thus the point of the Yod symbolizes the grade Kether; the Yod itself stands for Hokhmah the Father, and the first He' for Binah, the Mother. The Vau, having the numerical value of six, symbolizes the 'six ends', the grades of the six days, and more particularly Tifereth, the centre of this group. The second He' naturally symbolizes Malkuth. Since the shape of the Vau combines features of the Yod and the He', it is fancifully referred to as the 'son' of these letters, and this designation of 'son' is sometimes transferred to the grade Tifereth which it represents, although we do not find that Tifereth as a grade is particularly associated with Hokhmah and Binah. Thus the Tetragrammaton in its letters sums up the whole doctrine of the grades, while as a name it is the pivot of the entire Holy Writ; and the Zohar therefore does not hesitate to declare that 'the whole of the Torah is the Holy Name'.

MAURICE SIMON