

# The Radiant Body: Embodied Kabbalah Course



Art credit: McKenzie Wren

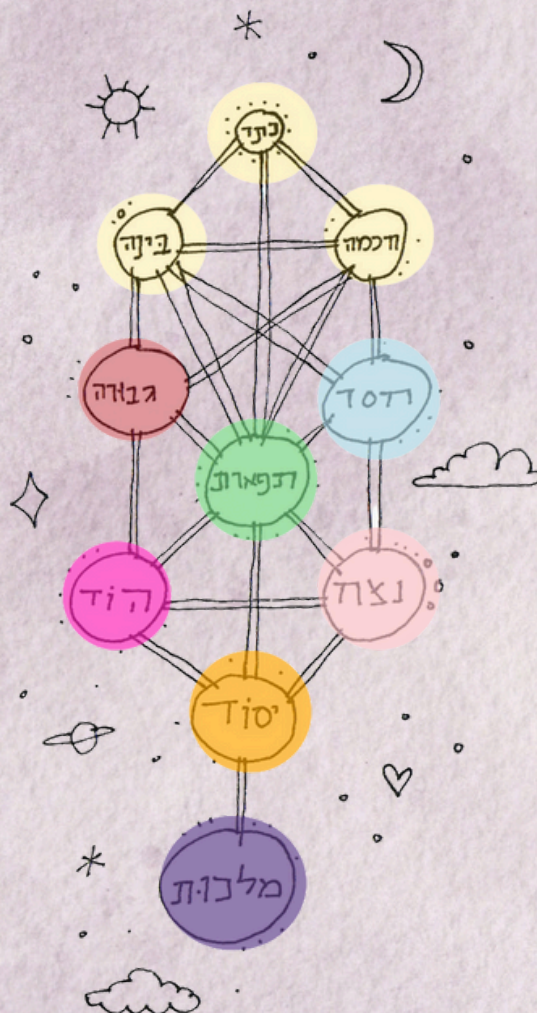


# What is a Sefirah?

In the Cosmic Tree of Life, the Sefirot (singular: Sefirah) are spheres, emanations, radiances, or stages of consciousness.

**The term "Sefirah" is derived from the Hebrew word "Sapir," meaning "to shine."**

These Sefirot are divine attributes that bring forth radiance and aliveness. They form the most detailed map of the Kabbalistic journey towards oneness. Through these qualities, the unknowable, ineffable Divine becomes accessible to humans. Sefirot serve as windows or illuminations through which Divine light shines into the finite world. Interestingly, the Hebrew word **"Sefirah" is also closely related to "Sipur," meaning "story,"** because it is through the Sefirot that the Divine narrates its story to the world.





# Sefirot Structure

Kabbalah organizes the Divine radiances of the Sefirot into three groupings: the intellectual Sefirot (CHABAD), the emotional Sefirot (CHAGAT), and the instinctual Sefirot (NEHY). The intellectual Sefirot correspond to the mind, the emotional Sefirot to the heart, and the instinctual Sefirot to the liver, reflecting a holistic structure of thought, feeling, and action.

**The structure of the *Sephirot* (emanations)**

	<i>Keter</i> “crown”	
3. Intellectual <i>sephirot</i>  <i>CHABAD</i>	<i>Bina</i> “understanding”  <i>Da’at</i> “knowledge”	<i>Chochma</i> “wisdom”
2. Emotional <i>sephirot</i>  <i>CHAGAT</i>	<i>Gevura</i> “strength/restraint”  <i>Tiferet</i> “beauty”	<i>Chesed</i> “loving-kindness”
1. Instinctual <i>sephirot</i>  <i>NEHY</i>	<i>Hod</i> “acknowledgment/thanksgiving”  <i>Yesod</i> “foundation”	<i>Netzach</i> “victory”
	<i>Malchut</i> “kingdom”	



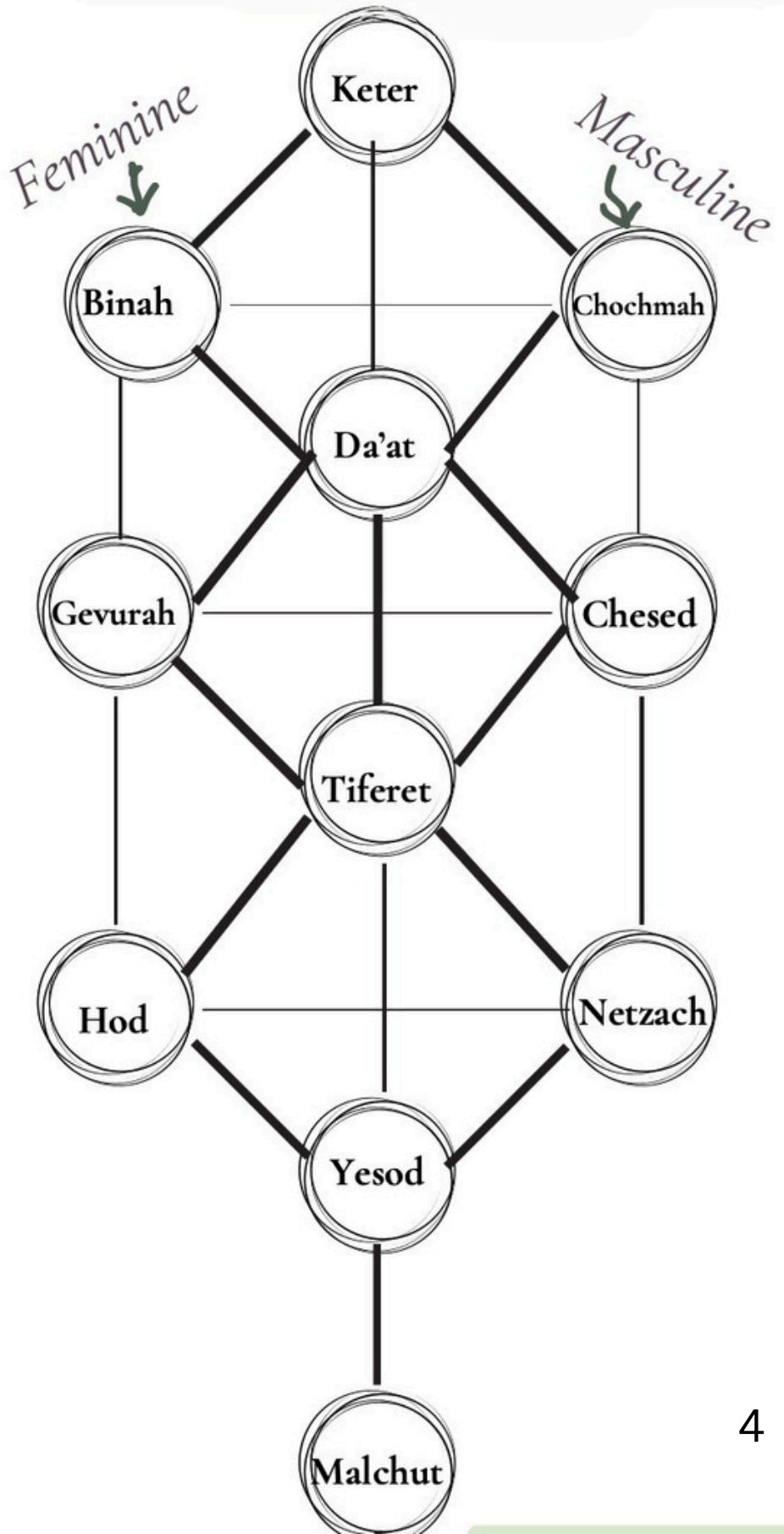
# TREE OF LIFE

**CROWN**

**MIND/  
Intellectual Sefirot  
(CHABAD)**

**HEART/  
Emotional Sefirot  
(CHAGAT)**

**BODY/LIVER  
Instinctual Sefirot  
(NEHY)**

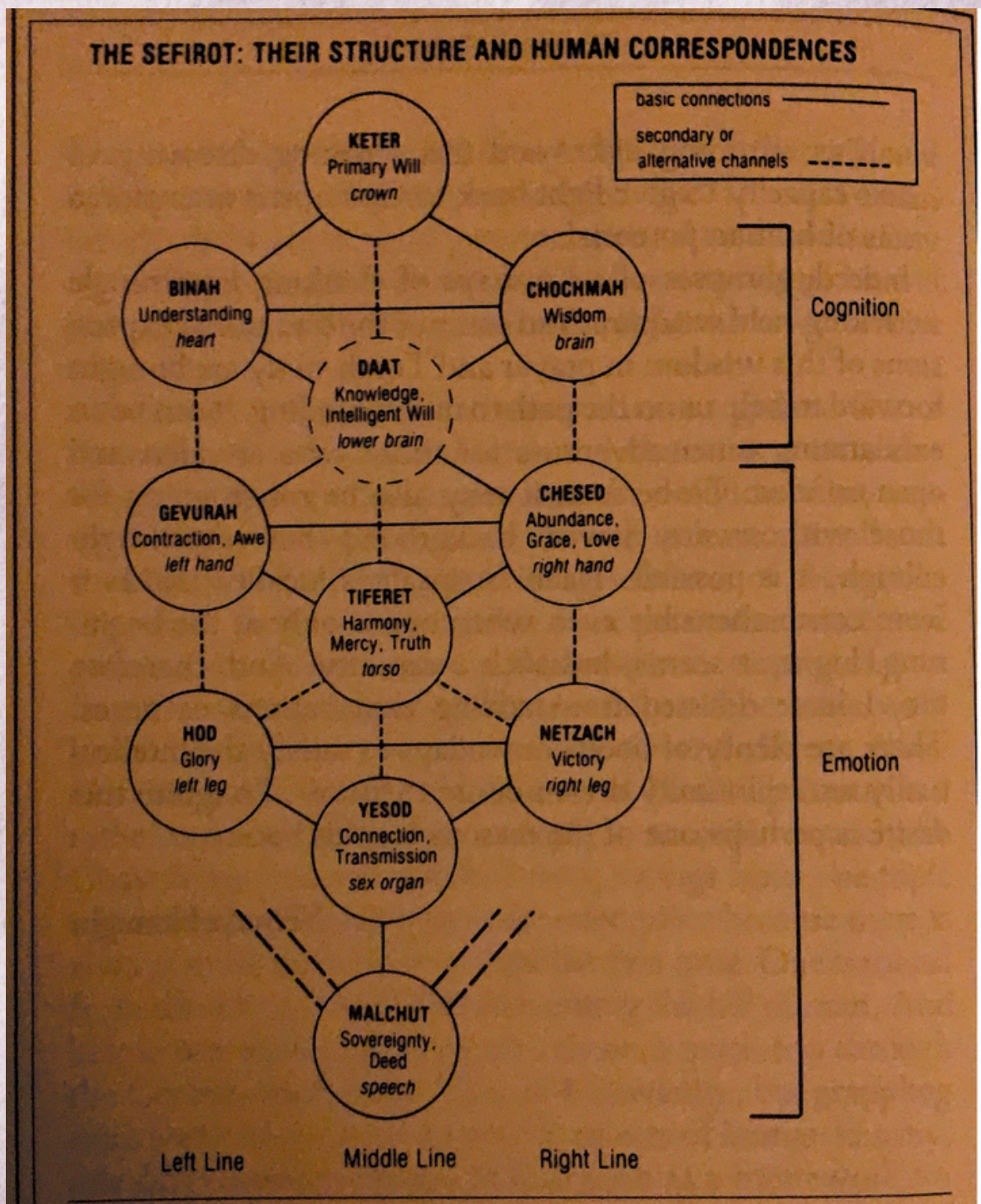




# Sefirot Structure

On a simpler level, the Sefirot are divided into two main categories: the three upper Sefirot, representing intellect, and the seven lower Sefirot, representing emotion. The upper three are known as the "**Three Mothers**" and correspond to the mind and body in the Tree of Life. The right column embodies masculine, expansive energies, while the left column represents feminine, contractive energies. The middle column serves as a balance between the two, creating perfect harmony.

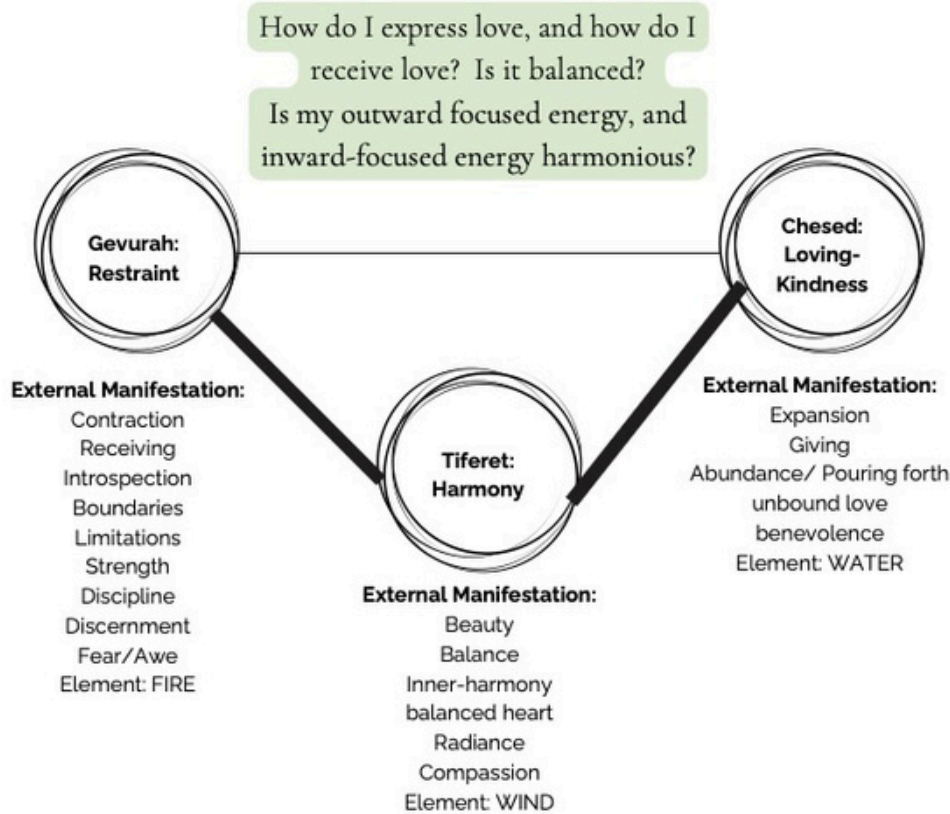
Each of the seven emotional Sefirot carries its own unique quality, energy, and expression. Additionally, each is associated with a day of creation, a shepherd, a prophetess, a body part, a color, a sound, a direction in Divine Space, one of the 7-fruits of Israel, and a system within the body.





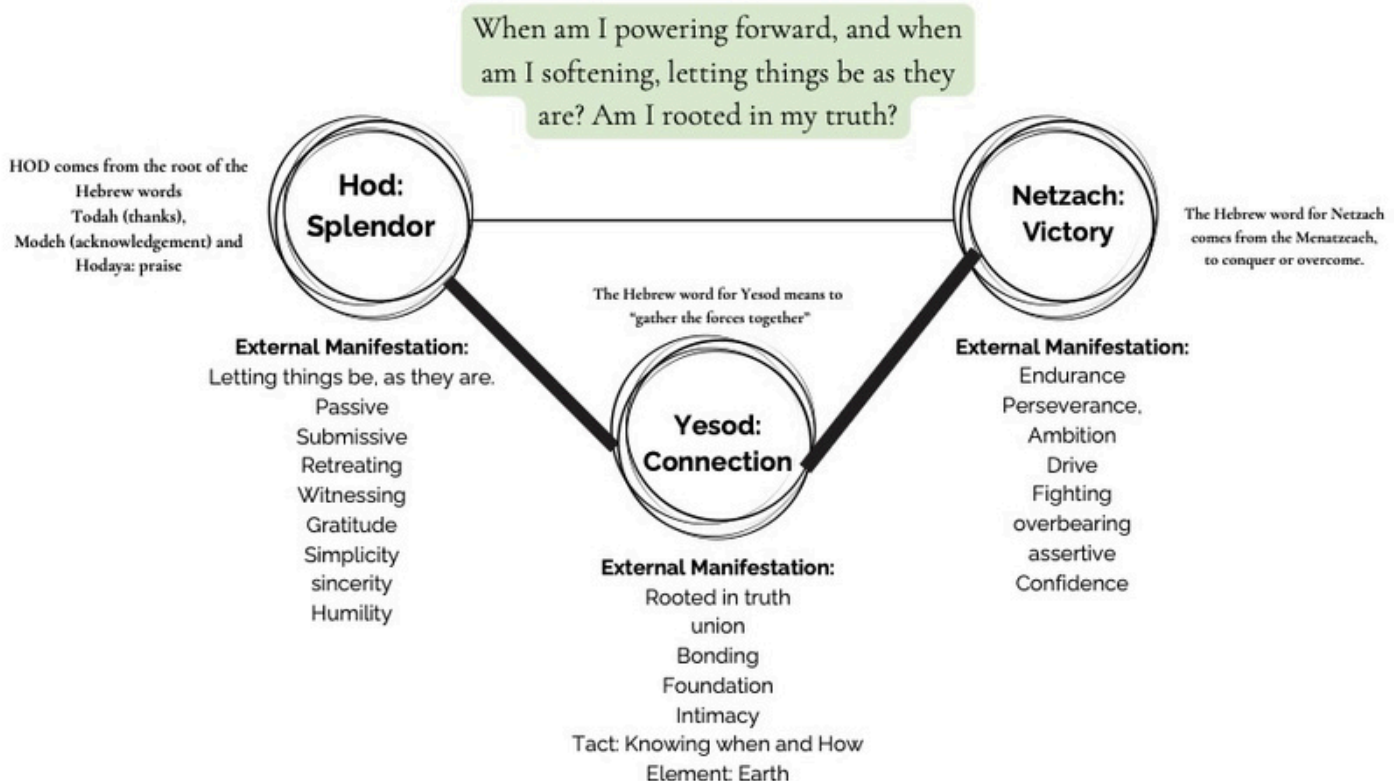
# TRIAD 1:

## Chesed, Gevurah, Tiferet



# TRIAD 2:

## Netzach, Hod, Yesod

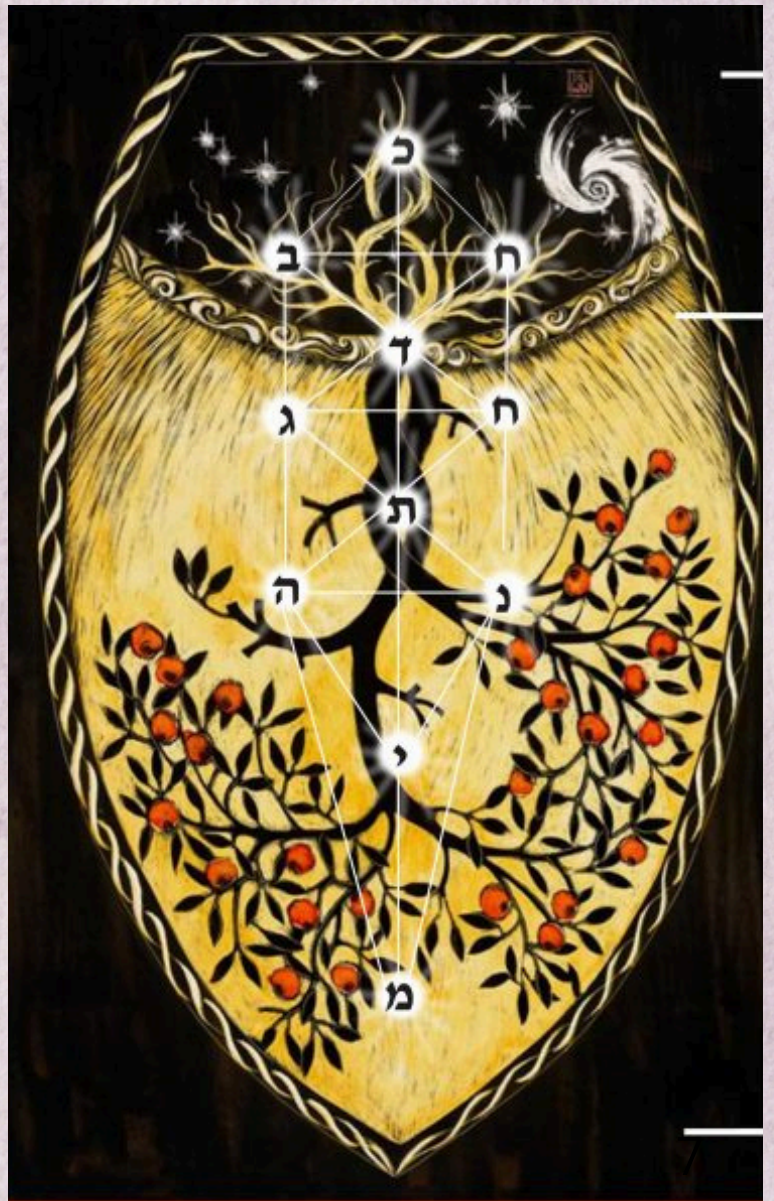




# An Upside Down Tree

The Tree of Life is an upside-down tree. While an earthly tree draws its life-force from roots below, the Tree of Life is rooted Above, channeling divine energy downward.

"Kabbala identifies the Tree of Life with the ten sefirot that together form an upside tree with roots above (keter, chokma, bina, daat) and fruits below (malchut). The Tree of Knowledge portion of that mystical tree extends from the ground to the fruits—encompassing the trunk, branches, leaves and fruit—in other words everything but its roots. In sefirotic terms, the Tree of Knowledge spans from malchut up to and including the lower half of the sefira of daat. This portion of the sefirotic tree is called the middot, the emotional attributes, as opposed to the upper three sefirot which represent the mochin, or brains.



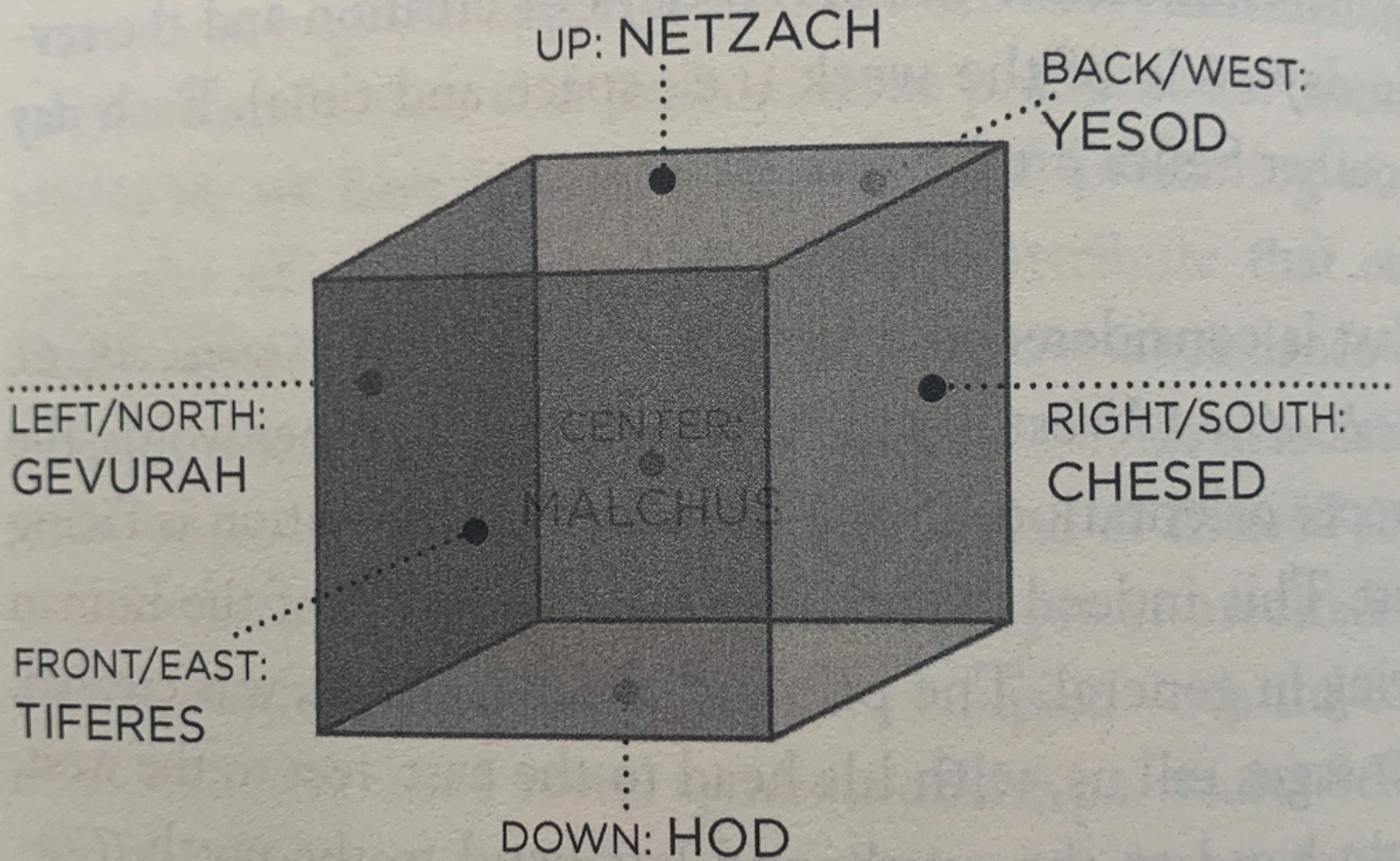
To eat from the Tree of Life is  
to stay present with the  
Presence, to bring the devekut  
of gratitude into every instant  
of enjoyment."

-Sarah Yehudit Shneider

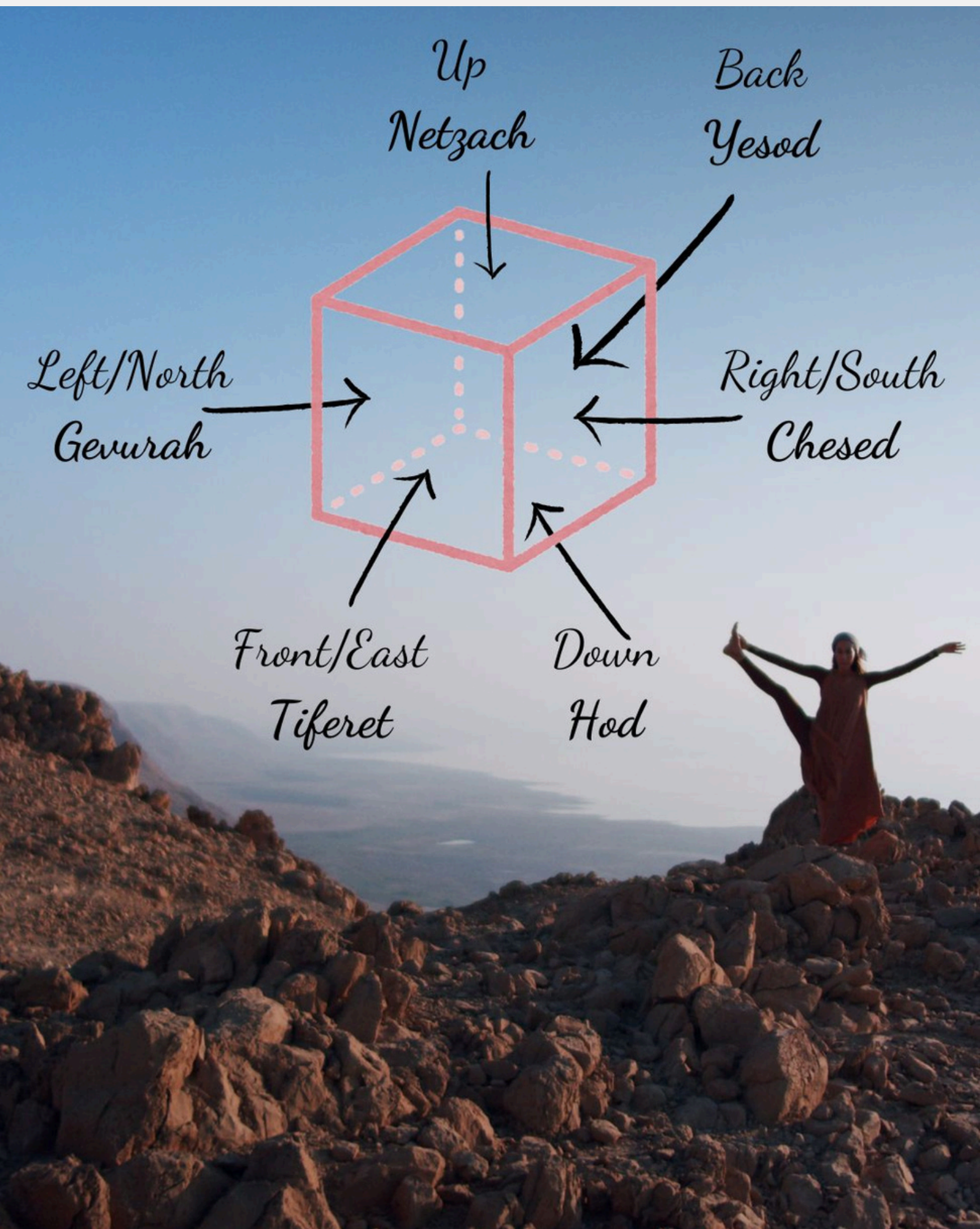


# Cosmic Cube

The Sefirot surround us like a Cosmic Cube, with each Sefirah corresponding to a Sacred direction:









# Sacred Cacoon

The Tetragrammaton, the Divine Name, is expressed through the four directions, embracing us wherever we are:

- Yud → Right
- Upper Heh → Left
- Vav → Front
- Final Heh → Back

By visualizing the Divine Name surrounding us, we create a protective Makif (surrounding light), realizing that we are always standing in the presence of our Creator. Wrapping ourselves in the letters of G-d's Name envelops us on all sides, deepening our awareness of the Divine presence in every moment.



*"When we attempt to visualize the 4 letters of the Name of Hashem, the letters that we can form more easily and the ones that show up brightly tell us which area in our lives is functioning properly. Whereas, the letter we are having trouble forming, or the letters that appear blurry alert us to the areas that need work. this is in addition to taking notice of the colors of the letters..." (Rav Dovber Pinson)*



# Sefirotic Colors



Sefirot are the filters that receive the light of the Ohr Ein Sof (infinite, formless light) and channel it into our finite, physical world. As this pure light passes through the different Sefirot, it becomes robed in an energetic color. This color is not merely physical—it represents the spiritual quality of each Sefirah as a Divine Channel.

The root of the Hebrew word Sefirah is *Sipur* (story), signifying that the Sefirot narrate the journey of Infinite Light as it manifests in our world. Another root of Sefirah is *Sappir* (to illuminate), reflecting how the Sefirot allow G-d's light to shine and permeate creation.

Each Sefirah has a corresponding color, drawn from various Kabbalistic traditions. There is no single definitive color scheme; interpretations may vary. In general, the lighter and more transparent colors are associated with the higher Sefirot on the Tree of Life, closer to the Source of Emanation. As the Sefirot descend, their colors become darker and denser. The harsher, more intense colors align with the left column (Gevurah), while the softer, more fluid colors correspond to the right column (Chesed).

Every color we encounter is connected to a Sefirah. When we notice a particular color, we can reflect:

- Why am I seeing this color at this moment?
- What spiritual quality is being revealed to me, and why?
- How does this color relate to my own development?



# Sefirotic Colors



Chesed	white with a bluish tinge, violet. refined silver
Gevurah	Red like fire or Gold
Tiferet	yellow like a ripening Etrog (citron), purple, maroon, or green
Netzach	Light pink, Red that leans towards white
Hod	Dark Pink, white that leans towards red
Yesod	orange, or a rainbow of hues
Malchut	dark blue with purple tinge, almost black , all the colors mixed together

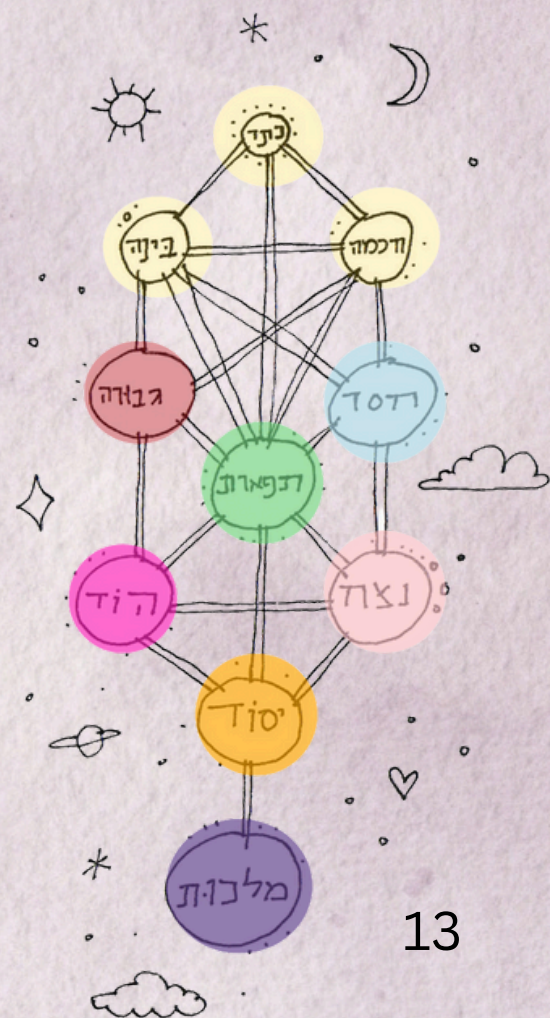


# Light of the Sefirot

## Safer Chareidim, Chap 2

"In general, all the nine Sefiros (from Keser to Yesod) are referred to as lighter lights, whereas Malchus (also called the Shechinah) is a darker (bluer) light which is the seat of the lighter lights. This is similar to the light of a candle where the higher parts of the flame are lighter, more transparent colors, and the lower parts of the flame are darker, bluer lights that serve as a seat for the lighter lights.

And the nation that was chosen was commanded to cleave their thoughts to this (dark) blue light. And they (their bodies) are like a wick upon which rests the blue light, and upon the blue light rests the white light.





# *Shades of Light*

Rabbi Chayim Vital correlates each Sefirah to a different shade of light. The meditation practice first is imagining your body as light, and then using the shades of light powered by each Sefirah. The basic relationship is as follows:

Keter: Infinite Light

Chochmah and Bina: Chayim- Living Light

Chesed: Tov: Good Light

Gevurah: Nogah- Glowing Light

Tiferet is called Kavod: Glorious Light

Netzach is called Bahir: Brilliant Light

Hod is called Zohar: Radiant Light

Yesod is called Chayim: Living Light

Malchut is the Kisei- Throne of Light



# Cosmic Cube: 4 Elements

*Fire, wind, earth, and water  
are the sources and roots of  
all things above and below,  
and on them are all things  
grounded.*

Zohar 11:24a

Jewish wisdom teaches that our character traits are deeply rooted in the four elements. As noted by Rav Chayim Vital in 1578,

*"Just as the four physical elements are the roots from which the 613 organs of the body were formed, so likewise, the soul' of these four elements are the foundations of all the good and bad character traits"* (Shaarei Kedusha 1:2).

Understanding the inner dynamics of the four elements — both their gifts and their difficulties — offers a key to self-awareness and personal growth. As you delve into understanding each element and its influence, you gain useful insight into the supportive and challenging energies at play within yourself. The mystical tradition of Kabbalah builds on this understanding by connecting the four elements with the Four Directions and their corresponding angels: Gavriel, Michael, Uri-el and Rafa-el (Zohar III: 225a).

They are as follows:

East/Front: Wind (Uri-el)

West/Back: Earth (Rafa-el)

South/Right: Water (Michael)

North/Left: Fire (Gavriel)

These elemental associations extend beyond mere symbolism; they offer a holistic framework for personal well-being.

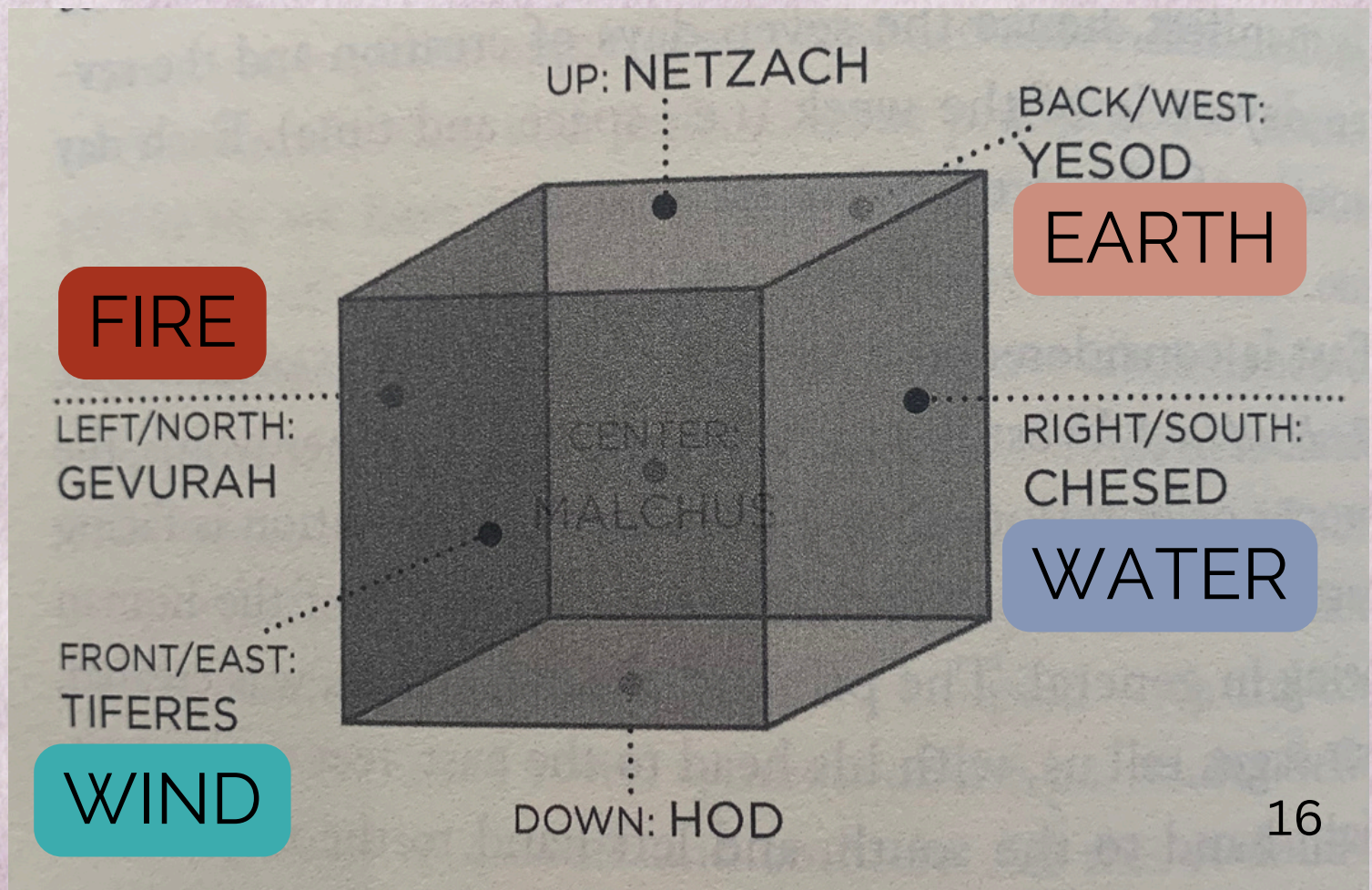




## Cosmic Cube: 4 Elements

The 4 horizontal directions are associated with the 4 elements, the base materials of creation. Everything in the Universe contains a proportion of these 4 elements.

Through the Divine Energy of *Chesed* (to our Right), we invite in the fluid, flowing element of water to allow in love and openness. To the left, *Gevurah* sharpens our inner fire, cultivating discipline and focus. In front we soften towards *Tiferet*: receptive to the winds of the world through our soft porous front-body, like a gentle breeze caressing our skin. Behind us, *Yesod*, is the earth quality of a strong, sturdy back body, as if we are always resting on the support of the Adamah (living earth).





# Angel of Divine Flow

According to Kabbalah, each person is surrounded by angels—energetic forces, spiritual entities, and transmitters of divine energy. These angelic hosts are always present, guiding us along our path and channeling energy to and from us. Four primary angels direct the conduit of Divine Flow (Zohar 3, p. 125a):

- Micha-el
- Gavri-el
- Uri-el
- Rafa-el

The suffix “-el” signifies an expressive, creative, and giving force, reflecting how these angels assist us in fulfilling our divine mission and manifesting Hashem's desire. The Hebrew word for angel is “Malach,” meaning “Messenger.”

Each angel corresponds to a different direction, creating a protective and guiding presence:

- Micha-el (The Right)
- Gavri-el (The Left)
- Uri-el (The Front)
- Rafa-el (The Back)

Before bed, many recite a sacred verse to call upon this angelic protection:

***“To my right is Micha-el, to my left is Gavri-el, in front of me is Uri-el, behind me is Rafa-el, and above me is Shechinah El.”***

— Siddur R. Yaakov Emden



# Garments :

## Tikkunei Zohar 17a:3

You also arranged "garments". It is from these "garments" that the souls of human beings originate.. They are called a "body" relative to the "clothes" that cover over them. These are arranged as follows: chesed (or loving-kindness) is the right arm, gevura (restraint) is the left arm, and tiferet (harmony) is the torso. Netzach (dominance) and hod (empathy) are the two legs, and yesod (foundation or channel) is the body's extremity, the sign of the Holy Covenant. Malchut (kingship) is the mouth. It is therefore called the "Oral Torah".

וְאֵלֶּיךָ עֲשֵׂה שִׁפְרָן אֵינֹן אֲזַלִּין כְּסֻדְרָן, חֵד אֶרֶץ, וְחֵד קֶצֶר, וְחֵד  
בִּינֹנִי, וְאַנְתָּה הוּא דְאֶנְהִיג לֹון, וְלִית מָאן דְאֶנְהִיג לָךְ, לֹא לְעִילָא וְלֹא  
לְתַתָּא וְלֹא מְכָל סִטְרָא, לְבוּשִׁין תְּקִינָת לֹון, דְּמִנִּייהוּ פְּרָחִין נִשְׁמָתִין  
לְבָנֵי נֶשָׂא, וְכִמָּה גּוֹפִין תְּקִינָת לֹון, דְּאֶתְקָרִיאוּ גּוֹפָא לְגַבֵּי לְבוּשִׁין  
דְּמִכְסִּין עֲלֵיהֶון, וְאֶתְקָרִיאוּ בְּתִקּוּנָא דָא, חֶסֶד דְּרוּעָא יְמִינָא,  
גְּבוּרָה דְּרוּעָא שְׁמָאלָא, תְּפָאֶרֶת גּוֹפָא, נֶצַח וְהוּד תִּרְיִן שׁוֹקִין, וְיִסּוּד  
סִימָא דְּגּוֹפָא אוֹת בְּרִית קֹדֶשׁ, מַלְכוּת פֶּה תוֹרָה שְׁבַעַל פֶּה קָרִינָן  
לֵיהּ.







# *Sefirot of the Face*

*Asara Ma amaros,*

*Maamar M'ein Ganim, 1.*

The skull is Keser.

The two ears are Chochmah and Binah,

The forehead is Da'as.

The two eyes are Chesed and Gevurah,

The Nose is Tiferes.

The two lips are Netzach and Hod.

The tongue is Yesod.

And the mouth is Malchus.



# 7 Species of Israel

The Torah praises the seven fruits of Israel, which are deeply connected to the land's climatic and spiritual properties. Eating these fruits helps us attune to the Divine and the holiness of the land. Each of these fruits carries profound lessons for our spiritual lives.

*"For the Divine is bringing you into a good land, a land with streams and springs and fountains issuing from plain and hill;  
**a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs, and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey"***

— Deuteronomy 8:9-10

אֶרֶץ חֹטֶה וְשִׁעוּרָה וְגֶפֶן וְתֵאֵנָה וְרִמּוֹן אֶרֶץ זֵית שֶׁמֶן וְדִבְשׁ:







## 7 Species of Israel

Beautifully, each one of the Sefirot corresponds to one of the seven fruits of Israel, according to the great Kabbalist, the Holy Arizal! Just as different foods offer particular medicinal properties to the body, the inner dimension of each fruit (the corresponding Sefirah) brings spiritual healing and emotional self-improvement:

Sefirot	Translation	7 Species of Israel
Chesed	Loving-Kindness/ Giving	Wheat
Gevurah	Restraint /Power	Barley
Tifferet	Balance/ Beauty	Grapes
Netzach	Ambition/ Victory	Figs
Hod	Humility/ Surrender	Pomegranates
Yesod	Foundation/Truth	Olive Oil
Malchut	Royalty/Queen/Kingship	Date Honey



# *Suggested Extended Readings*

**click for link to book**

- Kabbalah and Jewish Mysticism by Perele Besserman
- The 7 Fruits of the Land by Chana Bracha Siegelbaum
- Sefirat Haomer by Rabbi Trugman
- Living in Divine Space by Rav Gisburgh
- Connecting to God- Ancient Kabbalah and Modern Psychology by Rabbi Abner Weiss, PHD
- Tending the Garden: The Unique Gifts of the Jewish Woman by Chana Weisberg (Sefirah of Malchut specifically)
- Dance of the Omer by Benji Elson
- The Omer Workbook by Amanda Herring and Mo Golden
- Inner Space by Aryeh Kaplan
- Visualization and Imagery by Rabbi Dovber Pinson
- 13 Petalled Rose by Adin Steinsaltz (specifically the Human Image chapter)
- Sefiros -- Spiritual Refinement Through Counting the Omer
- A Spiritual Guide to the Counting of the Omer : Forty-Nine Steps to Personal Refinement According to the Jewish Tradition by Simon Jacobson
- Love Like Fire & Water : A Guide to jewish meditation by R' David Sterne
- Rising Life by Rochie Pinson
- Secrets of the Mikvah by Rav Pinson

