

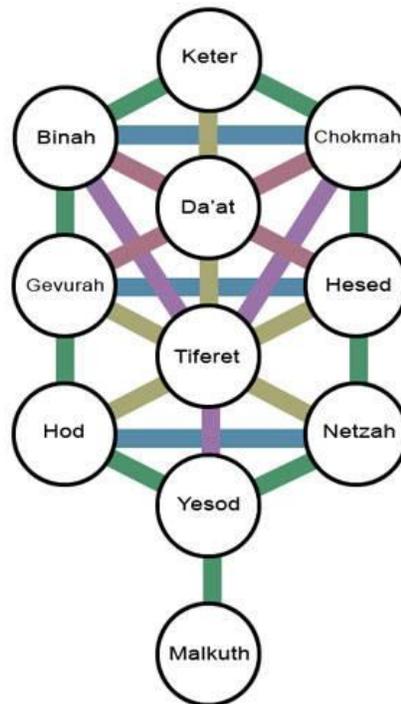
# The Kabbalah and the Tree of Life

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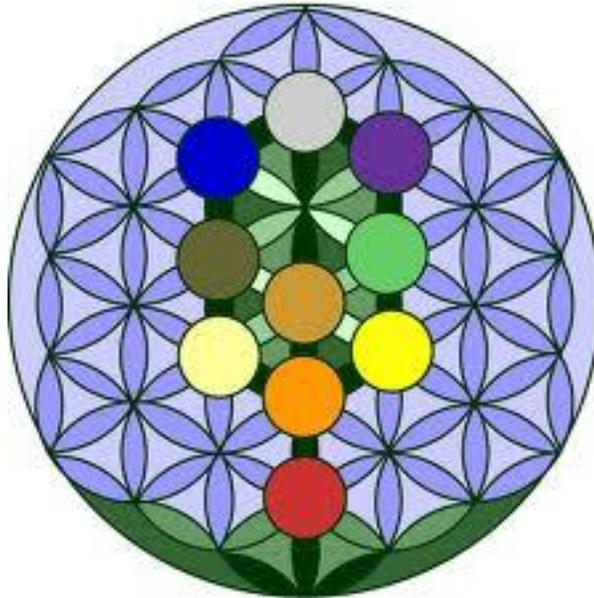
The Kabbalah is an ancient source of wisdom dating as far back as 3000 years ago, long before the birth of modern religions. It was practiced in secret for many years, being passed down orally from teacher to student. As the more modern religions began, the mystics from Christianity and Judaism continued to adhere to the practices of the Kabbalah, finding great wisdom in the ancient practices. There are 3 main streams of Kabbalistic teachings: the first followed by mystic Christians (spelled Cabalah), the second by mystic Jews (Kabbalah) and the third by those practicing ritual magic (Qabalah).

One of the fundamental principals of the Kabbalah states that each being incarnated in the physical realm has access to direct communication from the divine and by studying the various aspects of the Kabbalah, can acquire a much greater understanding of how creation comes into existence and how we can ascend again in our evolutionary growth cycle and return to Source. The Tree of Life is a symbol used to describe this process of descent into creation and ascent into greater awareness.

The Tree of Life, comprising of 10 Sephiroth (or spheres) shows the Divine Source at the top (also known as the sphere of Kether). Creation then follows a specific path, thereby incorporating the aspects of each Sephira into being until it reaches the realm of the physical, known as the sphere Malkuth. The Tree of Life is the foundational building block upon which many well known teachings of the Kabbalah are based. It is also a symbol that is found in the Flower of Life, depicting how all matter is made up of these geometric shapes.



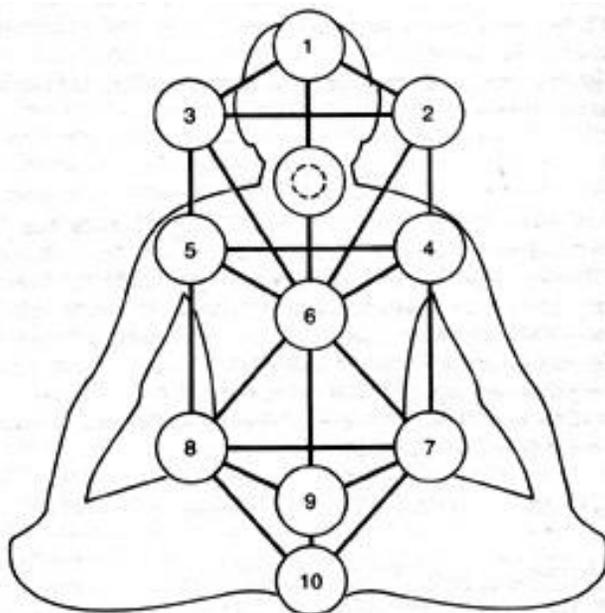
Tree of Life



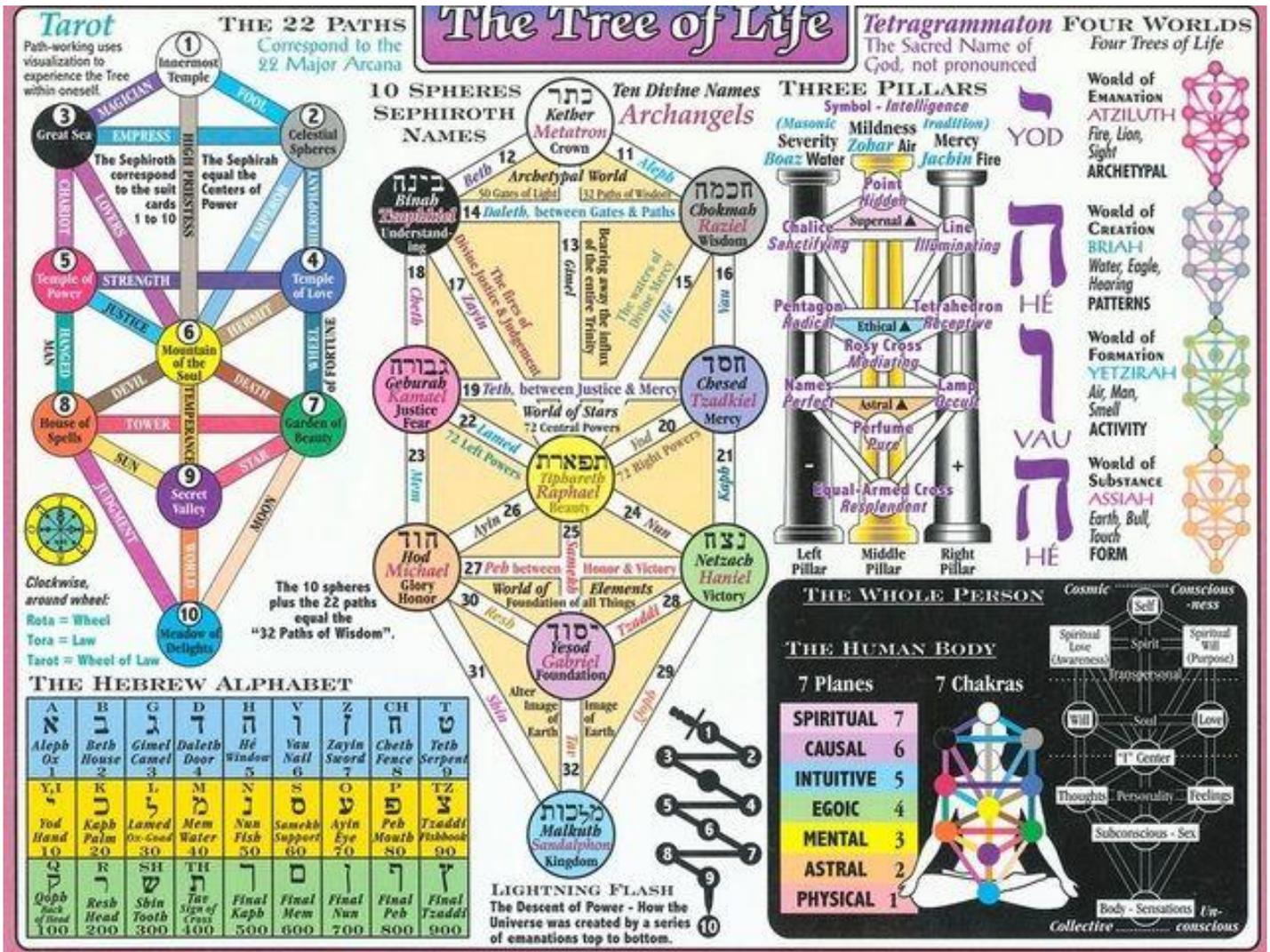
Flower of Life

The symbol of the Tree of Life is a basic representation of the creation of the Universe and also represents a microcosm of our inner Universe – As above, so below – is a principal well known to Kabbalists. The same process that brings spirit down into physical form manifests itself within our own bodies as well. Each sephira represents some aspects of our inner world and how we can overcome the trials we face and grow from our experiences.

And as creation happens by moving from the top (1) to the bottom (10), ascension and evolution happen as we consciously move from the bottom to the top of the tree.



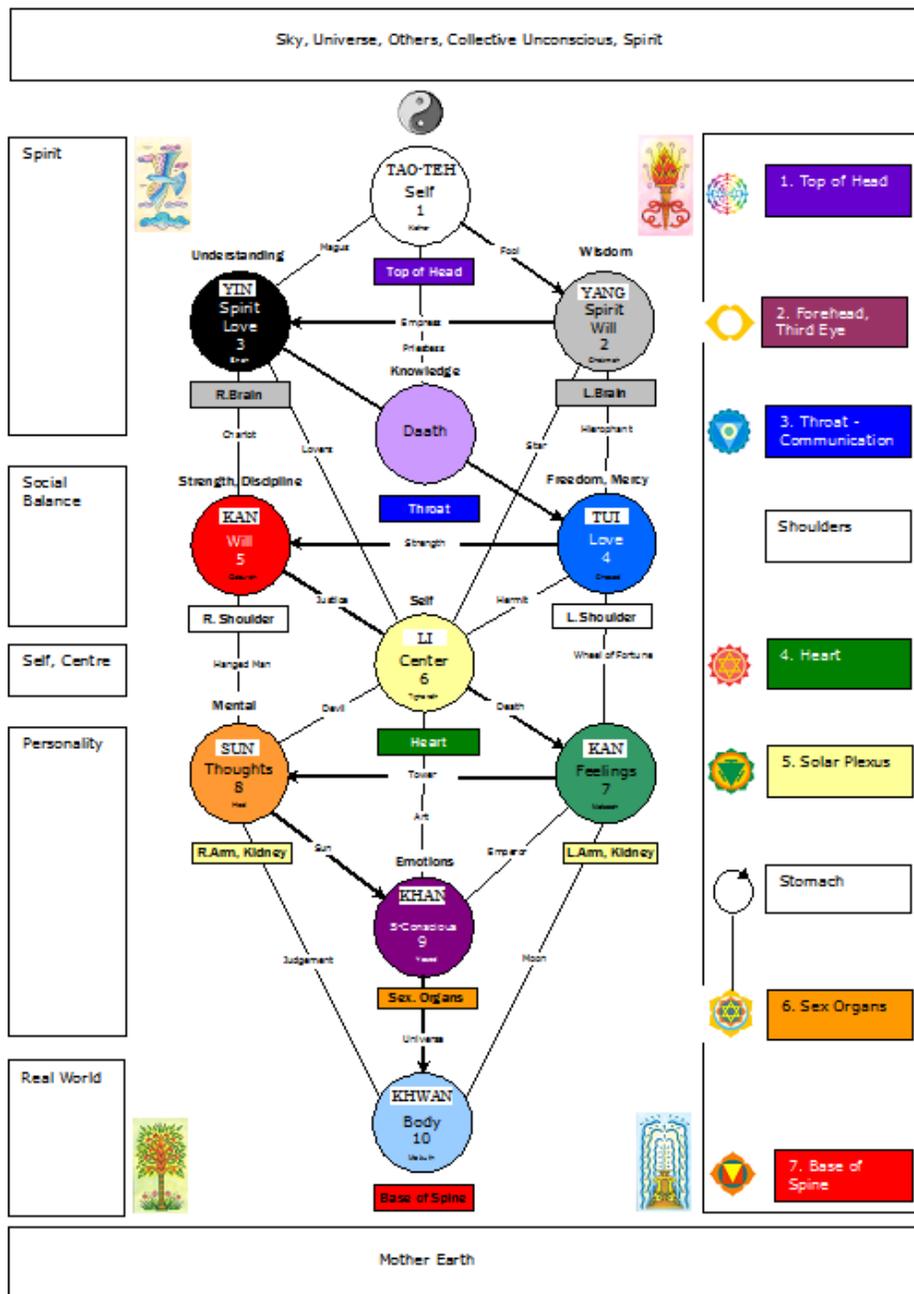
Microcosm of the Tree of Life



There are many overlapping, interconnected systems that are described and linked to the Tree of Life. The Tarot is an intricate part of the tree. The 22 Major Arcana refer directly to the 22 pathways that join the Sephiroth together, each pathway having a specific teaching as you travel from one Sephiroth to the next.

The image above also shows the Tree of Life as having 3 specific PILLARS – the pillar of SEVERITY (left hand pillar), the pillar of MERCY (right hand pillar) and the pillar of EQUANIMITY (center pillar).

- PILLAR OF SEVERITY: The receptive, feminine side of the tree
- PILLAR OF MERCY: The active, male side of the tree
- PILLAR OF EQUANIMITY: Balanced, integrated state of being



This image shows the interconnectivity between the Tree of Life and the Chakra system.

Each Sephira is also related to one of the planets in our solar system.

As a tool for growth and evolution, the Tree of Life can be used in powerful ways. Once a general understanding of the Sephira has taken place, you may want to choose an area of focus, an area that has been challenging or has been a growing edge for you. Meditating on this Sephira can bring great wisdom. Learning more about it, about its qualities, archetypal energies, supporting angels, and symbolic representations opens up the gateway to greater understanding. This is a brief description of each Sephira. Some spend an entire lifetime studying the intricacies of the Tree of Life. With this introduction, my desire is that you find what path resonates with you and follow it.

## **Sphere of MALKUTH (The Kingdom) EARTH**

This is the sphere of the physical realm, comprising of the 5 senses and how we experience our reality through these senses. Malkuth is the product of all 10 Sephiroth, as we traverse downwards, into creation. This is the place of carnal desires, of survival instinct, of root chakra needs and wants. It is the place where our physical senses interact with our outward environment. There is no memory, no intentions, no greater understand that happens here. The Kabbalists refer to the beginning of our journey of awakening as the Point in the Heart Opening. Until this time, all beings are existing solely in Malkuth, led by mundane, carnal desires or by the need for basic survival, without any interest in looking deeper within the self for answers. Humanity begins its upward journey once the Point in the Heart has been awakened and a thirst for something greater has developed.

## **Sphere of YESOD (Foundation) MOON**

Yesod is the sphere of the subconscious mind, the place where dreams take place, memories are formed and beliefs are established. This is the first place where we begin our outward journey, when self awareness is born. This is also where our personality resides. This is the sphere where our stories are created, where are past is held. This is the realm of the psychic and the astral, where imagination lives and dreams take flight. This is the sphere where our shadows reside. It is a mirror of our soul and yet is distorted by the experiences we have had in the physical realm and results in our beliefs about self and about reality being contorted and not a true reflection of what is. This is the realm that must be explored in order to change the stories we carry about ourselves and the beliefs that have kept us in darkness. This is where we go when we look closely at our shadows and unpack the wisdom there.

## **Sphere of HOD (Glory) MERCURY**

Hod is the sphere of the Mental Body. In ShadowWork terms, it is the Magician archetype. It is the area where structure, understanding and analysis take place. It is the realm of form. It is the rational, left-brained thinking mind. This is the place where reason happens, where chaos is given context and meaning. It is also the center of communication. This part of self is necessary if we are to exist in our reality. Hod is the sphere where everything is put into its place and organized into categories.. It helps us evaluate a situation, formulate pros and cons, and make clear decisions for our life. Hod is also the Sephira where we find our need to control. The sphere of Hod is paired with its opposite, the sphere of Netzach, or unbridled, creative life force energy. In order to find balance and greater awareness as we ascend up the Tree of Life, Hod must be balanced with Netzach. In other words, our controlled, analytical mind must be balanced with our free flowing emotional body. We learn to be present with what is moving through our body and from this place, make clear, conscious decisions about the situation. Growth happens when we are still and listen to the movement of life force within us, and then gain clarity about the stories we are carrying in our subconscious mind that are impacting our reactions to life. Hod helps us get clear about the beliefs that are causing us to respond emotionally in any given situation. It also helps us move systematically forward in re-creating these beliefs and thereby rewriting our story.

## **Sphere of Netzach (Victory) VENUS**

Netzach is the sphere of the emotional body. It is the place where pure life force moves and breathes. It can only be understood intuitively. There are no words or descriptions or forms to capture Netzach. It can only be felt in its purest form. All words we attach to our emotions are as a result of the energy of Hod, analyzing and putting it into a structured form. It is chaotic and illogical by nature. It has no reason to be. It simply is. In ShadowWork analogies it is the archetype of the Lover. Netzach is the location where life force is born. It is the wellspring of Chi or Prana. It is the expression of love and life itself. Love moves through us. Hod then brings meaning to that love. Order and chaos are both necessary for life to exist. Netzach is the desire of all

things to grow, to express, to create, to be. Netzach invites us to be in the moment, to surrender to the experience of living.

### **Sphere of TIPHARETH (Beauty) SUN**

Tiphareth is the heart of the Tree, the sacred heart of all life. It is the seat of the soul, the place of equilibrium on the Tree, where all forces are balanced and in harmony. This is the place of the witness, the “I” that has the ability to stand back and see all, know all, and act from a solid space of wisdom and intelligence. This is where the Christ consciousness resides within us. It is the place we strive to achieve on our ascension journey, as in the place, we have access to infinite wisdom and compassion for all. It is our direct link to our divinity.

### **Sphere of GEBURAH (Severity) MARS**

The sphere of Geburah is the sphere of boundaries. It is the place of the warrior. It is where we access the necessary resources to sever and cut ties and links to all that no longer serves us. As we ascend on our upward journey towards divinity, it is with the power of Geburah that we learn to say no. It is in this place where we learn how to discern what areas in our life are life draining and what areas are life giving and then choose to release all that drains our precious life force. We choose consciously from this space. We open to the greater good that is to come from our life and then decide to walk that path, no matter what. It is where we find our ability to wield the powerful sword of the warrior and shave away, carving and creating the life we are choosing to live. Geburah on its own, its destructive energy and has the power to take down all in its path. As we begin to awaken to our greater truth, sometimes we wield our warrior sword without mercy and create harm along the way. The further we evolve and become more comfortable with our fierce NO, the more we learn to temper it with the opposing Sefira of Chesed, or mercy. Geburah in its balanced state, is softened with compassion and understanding. From this place we can learn to create good, solid boundaries in our life and execute these choices with compassion for all. We learn to use our words clearly and lovingly, so that all may know of our intent, our desire, our boundary, and our love. Only when true and clear boundaries are created in our life, can we learn what real sacrifice means. Real service comes from a balanced place, one that knows our limitations, honours our needs, and offers our heart from abundant love.

### **Sphere of CHESED (Mercy) JUPITER**

This is the sphere of loving kindness. It is the merciful ruler, the Sovereign, the one who respects all equally and offers her love in service to the greater good. This is a place of growth and expansion, with the knowledge that all is deeply connected. This is where all are brought together in kindness and honoured for their gifts as a valuable part of the collective. This is the power of acceptance for all that is. In this place, the challenge is to know that you hold ultimate power over all and the wisdom to overcome the temptation to use that power in order to change anything. It is in knowing you CAN change everything and choosing to change nothing, in a flowing state of acceptance. It is the wisdom in Knowing you have power over everything and not Wielding your power over anything.

### **Sphere of BINAH (Understanding) SATURN**

Binah is part of the supernal triad (with Kether and Chokmah) and exists beyond the veil. It is in the realm of the undifferentiated and unknowable. It is beyond what we could ever perceive with our human brains and our current state of evolution. Duality no longer exists beyond the veil. From here, the sense of purpose that comes from Chokmah, is pooled into an endless ocean of Binah, of the Divine Mother, broken down into smaller pieces and launched down into the realm of the dualistic, physical world, passing firstly into Chesed. In Binah, all individualization is lost. All individuals remember themselves and retain connections with other individuals, and at the same time become absorbed into the oneness of all life. Binah is the receiver, the great cauldron from which all life is born. This is where ideas and inspirations take form, find their structure through rules and regulations before coming down into the world of duality.

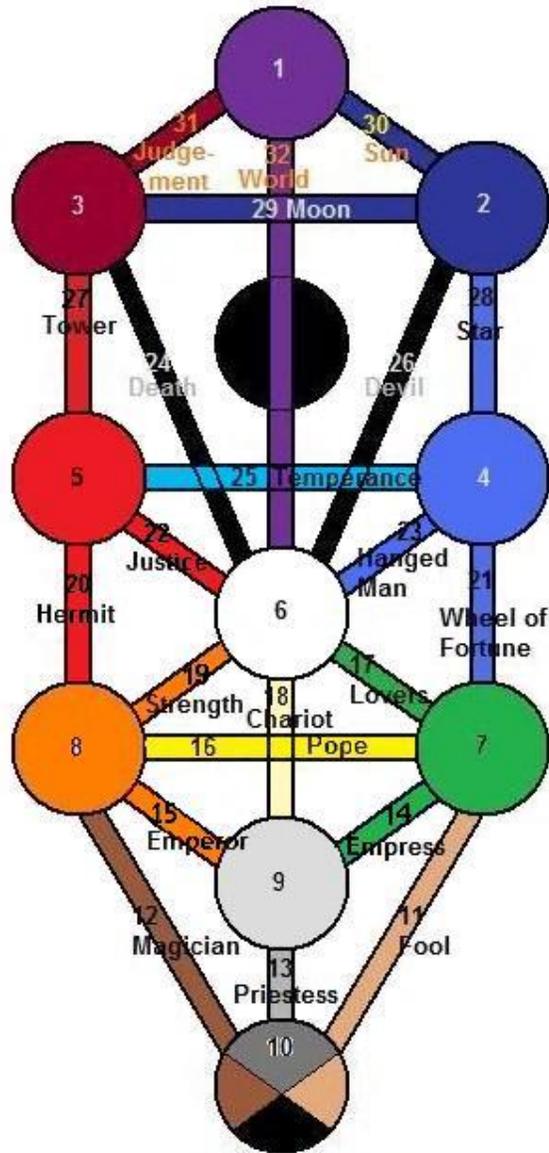
## Sphere of Chokmah (Wisdom) URANUS

The sphere of Chokmah is the sphere of the divine holy father. This is the first spark of existence. It is undirected eternal energy, moving in all directions, with purpose for life. This is the place of the endless stream of inspirations and ideas. The seed for new life in its unabridged, unlimited state.

## Sphere of Kether (Crown) NEPTUNE

This is the source of the divine. Unimaginable, unknowable to human consciousness. It is the great I AM presence.

<https://teachmetarot.com/part-iii-major-arcana/the-kabbalah/the-sephiroth/>



Paths numbered  
going up the Tree  
of Life

# Tree of Life - Microcosm in Tarot Language

