

THE THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN CABALA By ISAAC DIKEOCHA IV Degree

The Renaissance saw the rediscovery of Christian Cabala and the beginning of the development of its theology. Christian Cabala is one of the esoteric streams that lifted the veil of the dark age in Europe and brought spiritual enlightenment, inspired the beginning of studies in humanistic subjects and the transition from medieval age to the modern world of today.

Drawing on the narrative of its doctrine, discussing the relationship between her and other sister streams like Alchemy, Magic, Hermeticism and Pythagorean in the systematic development of its theology, it's link with Hebrew Cabala and its origin in Christian oral tradition and the concept of Prisca Theologia will illuminate our minds and inspire us to more detail research and contributions like our predecessors did.

The Theology of Christian Cabala is the act of digging (searching) in order to discover the knowledge of God through His only begotten son Jesus Christ based on the oral mystical and occult tradition (the disciplina arcana) taught by Jesus to his disciples.

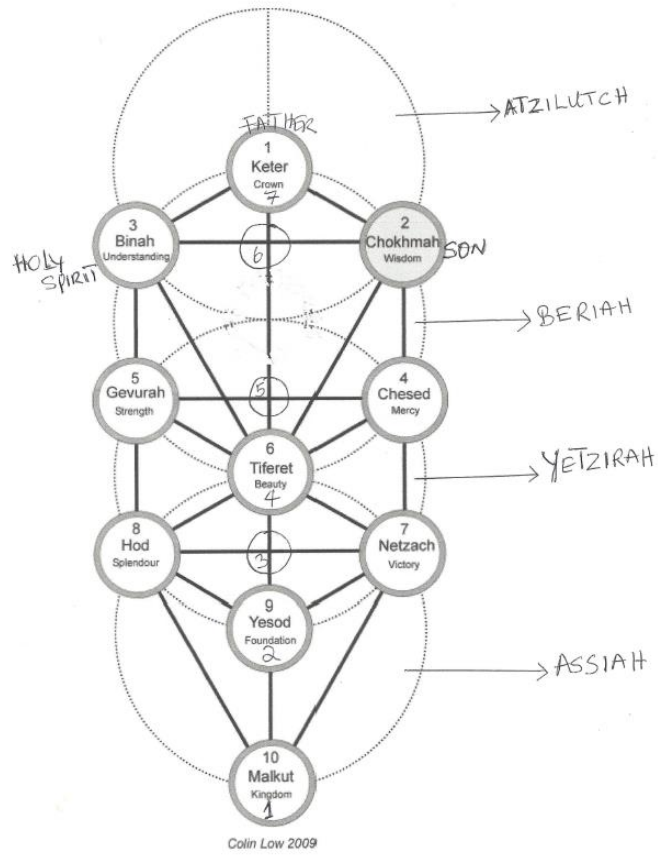
Cabala is a Jewish word which means "receipt" or "to receive". That is to receive, preserve and protect the Oral tradition which existed in the mystery schools of Egypt and particularly among the Essene brotherhood in Palestine (It is believed that the parents Jesus were members).

Records show that these streams of esoteric knowledge had been flowing even before the birth of the Messiah. The birth and the mission of the Messiah has made the way of spiritual redemption simpler and more accessible to all Christians who have been chosen to partake in the mysteries.

St. John was the chief custodian among the disciples of Jesus Christ of the oral cabalistic tradition as evidenced in his book of Apocalypse which is basically a veiled Cabalistic book. The reincarnation of Christian oral tradition (which quietly disappeared after the era of the disciples and apostles of Jesus Christ) was through the Hebrew Cabala when the later was introduced and blended with Christian Mystics like Pico Della Mirandola (1463-94) and his followers in Europe. It is the interpretation of Hebrew Cabala using Christian Theology. It's theology and mission were basically developed out of Christian religious doctrine, from other streams like Alchemy, Magic, Hermeticism and Pythagorean and the Hebrew Cabala. These streams were collectively grouped together and named Prisca Theologia by Marsilio Ficino. This was a term he discovered when he translated Corpus Hermetica into Latin. According to him it is the single, true, theology that exists, which threads through all religions, and which was given by God to man in antiquity. He regarded Prisca Theologia as the seal of the Logos which incarnated through Jesus Christ.

The pre-existence of the Logos confirms what St. John said in John 1:1-5, (In the beginning was the word...) and what Jesus Christ himself said in John 8:58 (Verily verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am) and the Christian doctrine of eternity of Jesus Christ. The syncretism of Christian and Hebrew Cabala is possible because the Christian oral tradition from where Christian theology was developed is related to Hebrew Cabala in Prisca Theologia.

All the esoteric streams converged and flourished in the Egyptian mystery schools and states around it. Moses, Hermes, Pythagoras and Jesus Christ were all linked with Egypt. Pythagoras in his theology of arithmetic laid out the Tetractys as a tool for explaining the cosmogony of the created universe. It is a triangular figure made up of four rows of one, two, three and four. Addition of the four rows gives a total of ten. The four rows signify the four worlds of Hebrew Cabala - Atzilutch, Beriah, Yetzirah and Assiah. Number ten the sum of the added rows



Tree of Life



Tetractys

represents the ten sephirah. The symmetric lines that run through the ten numbers are the twenty two paths of Hebrew Cabala linked with 22 Hebrew alphabets. Through these symmetric lines, harmonics and geometric figures are formed. The harmonics have the properties of sound (music) and light (colors). There is no doubt that the medieval Cabalists developed the tree of life of Cabala from this Pythagorean concept using the scriptures from the Torah to form its doctrine.

Christian oral tradition was not committed to writing. The chain through which it spread was broken because the last recipients did not find the students in line worthy or ready of receiving it. Origen and Dionysius confirmed this in their writings. Pico in his book (Oration on the dignity of man) stated that during the time Zerubabel restored the temple, Ezra who was the head of the church at that time amended the book of Moses and organized the cabalistic wise men of his time to put their Hebrew oral Cabala in writing. Fearing the massacre, exile, the flight and the captivity of the people of Israel, may cause the practice established by the ancients of handing down the doctrines by word of mouth would disappear. Pico said he purchased and read the same books and after reading them from the beginning to the end, he found within the books, the mystery of the holy trinity, the incarnation of the word, the divinity of the messiah, the original sin and its expiation by Christ, about the heavenly Jerusalem, the fall of demons, the order of the Angels, the pains of purgatory and of hell.

Pico Della Mirandola stated he read the same things which we read every day in the pages of Paul and of Dionysius, Jerome and Augustine. In philosophical matters he said it was like listening to Pythagoras and Plato whose doctrine bear affinity to the Christian Faith. It is interesting to learn from the bible that the man who finally led the people of Israel after the failure of Moses to the promise land and walled it to prevent the intrusion of enemies was Joshua the son of Nun.

Joshua in Hebrew is Yeshuah which means Jesus. Nun (his father) is the fourteenth Hebrew letter in Cabala which means fish. We all know how fish has become the symbol of Christianity. The holy Bible is more of a mystical book than a historic book. Pico in his 900 theses said "no science can better convince us of the divinity of Jesus Christ than magic and Cabala". He went on to say that his work was "derived from the fundamental ideas of the Hebrew sages, greatly strengthening the Christian religion". This was the fundamental conclusion that attracted Pico and others who followed him to study of Hebrew cabala and still maintain their strong faith in Christianity.

They believed that the Cabala is only intelligible, productive and alive when the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ is added into it. It is dead when the same is taking away. The Theology of Christian Cabala is a synthesis of Magic, Alchemy, Hermeticism and Pythagorean and Cabala. It evolved over a period of time with subsequent Christian cabalists adding their interpretations and new revelations on the already existing one. Pico, Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522) and Paul Ricci laid the groundwork for the development of the theology of Christian Cabala.

Pico was the first to attribute the first three sephirah to the Holy Trinity. Keter (God the father) Chockmah (God the son) and Binah (God the Holy Spirit). Corresponding to three primary Alchemical elements – Salt, Sulphur and Mercury and the equilateral triangle of Pythagoras. He went on to describe Cabala as the foundation of magic and merged hermetic magic with cabala by building a number system that runs from keter (crown) to Malkuth (kingdom) and from Malkuth back to keter. Pico emphasized largely on higher magic. He called it the magic of numbers which goes beyond the stars. Capable of penetrating the super celestial realm which natural magic developed from letters is not capable of doing. Reuchlin called Pico his inspiration. His contributions and works expanded Pico's ideas. Reuchlin in his book "De Arte Cabalistica" put forward well organized and comprehensive theories and speculations to prove the divinity of Jesus Christ and his indispensability in the study of Cabala. He said that human history is divided

into three periods. First, the period of three-letter name Shaddai linked to Abraham. Second is the period of Torah in the four-lettered name Tetragrammaton (YHVH) which he linked to Moses and the third period of Redemption, in which God revealed himself through five letters. That is the Tetragrammaton with the additional letter of shin thus spelling Yehoshuah or Jesus (YHSVH).

This arrangement corresponded with the Jewish belief in three ages (ages of Chaos, Torah and Messiah) and also the Christian division of the reign of the Father, reign of the Son and the reign of the Holy Spirit. His ideas suggested that the current age of the Messiah Jesus Christ is the age of new covenant - the 'Brit Hadashah' or 'The age of grace'.

To prove Christian doctrine in Cabala, he produced the gematria of the divine name YHVH. YUD (10,6,4), H (5), VV (6,6) H (5) from where came the forty-two letters which he interpreted as Ab Elohim Ben Elohim Ruach Hakadosh Elohim Shelosha Beachad Achad Beshelosha. Which means the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; Three in One and One in Three. Reuchlin further added more light to Pico's numeral magical system by developing the numeric calculations of the seventy-two Angelic names that make up the name Of God and also instructions on how to summon them. There is no doubt that these ideas are divine revelations which constitute theology. But the components of the theology seemed to be scattered until Paul Ricci (Christian Cabalist convert from Judaism) came and unified it into an orderly and comprehensive system.

The fundamentals of Ricci's work rested upon Adam's original innocence in the first three (highest) Sefirah (the sphere of the Holy Trinity) until he lost that innocence and knowledge and his fall from that highest realm down to Malkuth, the redemptive mission of Jesus who was sent by his Father in Keter to redeem Adam and return him back to his original abode in Keter as was said in John 3:16. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life'. By showing Adam the way (the path to Keter), the truth (the hidden gnosis of the path) about repentance, redemption and the eternal life which is in his father in Keter. The work of Ricci suggested that he linked Bereshit (creation) to God the Holy Spirit and Merkavah (ascension) to God the Son and God the Father from where the two emanated.

He emphasized on the plurality and femininity of the name of God "Elohim" in Genesis. It is from this analogy that a structure of how and from where Adam fell and how he will return through Jesus Christ called the tree of life (with ten Sefirah) was interpreted by using the Christian theology. The ten Sefirah came out of the three preliminary states that are regarded to precede manifestation (veils of limitless Existence). These are Ain (nothing) known as the state of nullity. The second is Ain Surf as the concentration of the first. The third is Ain Surph Ur (the limitless light) as the movement of the second Ain Surph. From this third point the holy limitless light out-flowed and poured into Keter, Chokhma and Binah forming the Holy Trinity of God the father (keter), God the Son Jesus Christ (Chokhma) and God the Holy Spirit (Binah). Flowing further down into Chesed, Gevurah, Tipharet, Netzach, Hod, Yesod and Malkuth. The additional seven sefirah symbolize the seven spirits of God according St. John.

The first three Sefirah of Keter, Chokmah and Binah formed the first geometrical figure of triangle on the tree of life. It's is the abode of the creator where He resides with his son and His Holy Spirit. The other seven are his spirits, his image and ideas which materialized into concrete matter in Malkuth (the kingdom). There is an abyss that separates the three first sefirah from the other seven. At the bank of the abyss is the invisible Sephirot Daath.

The thought of Christian cabalists was dominated by two basic impulses: first is the feeling of a sacred and transcendence of God and the second is that God and this earthly world are intimately linked together. They did not see the world as separated from God and they were empirically convinced that God is present in this world in both its smallest and greatest things and they sought to comprehend it. They sought to comprehend the Universe, man's place and mission in it. They sought to comprehend (according to St. John) "that light which shineth in darkness and which darkness comprehend not" - the Ruach Elohim, the Fiat Lux. The electromagnetic energy which bonds opposing polarities of negative and positive together to manifest the third point of the triangle in every atom, molecule, element and compound. They sought the revelation and the source of the mystery of the holy trinity as it is reflected in Keter (God the father), Hockmah (God the son) and Binah (God the Holy Spirit) and how it is responsible for all causes in the world above and all effects in the world below. By the revelation which was received (cabala) from God through His only begotten Son, they developed a true and complete version of theology to interpret the tree of life. Unlike in Hebrew Cabala where they are still expecting the messiah to fulfill the prophecies of Isaiah, the Christian cabalists are convinced that the messiah has come through the person of Jesus Christ and he has fulfilled all prophecies about his coming.

The third point of the Rosicrucian agreement in the Fama Fraternitatis states that "every year, upon the day of Corpus Christi, they should meet together at the house of Sancti Spiritus, or write the cause of absence". There are a lot of interpretations concerning the third point of agreement. In my own opinion this yearly meeting is one of the most important rituals in Christian Cabala. The day of Corpus Christi is the day the cabala of transubstantiation is enacted. The grandest charity ever happened to mankind was the event at Golgotha on the cross of Calvary where our redeemer was crucified. It was when the blood that came out from his right ribs (after it was pierced with a spear) touched the earth that the magnetic current of occult power of redemption of mankind was created.

It is very important to note that Dam (which means blood in Hebrew), Adamah (which means earth) and Adam (the first man) has the same root in Hebrew language. The blood that washes away the earthly sins of man - the original sin of Adam in the garden of Eden. The gematria of these three words if properly understood and connected reveals one of the most profound secrets in Christian Cabala.

Adam redeemed in the blood of Christ becomes Adam Kadmon -the original, sinless, perfect and primordial man whose abode is in Keter. Bereshit (creation) was completed when the word was made flesh in the birth of Christ Jesus and Merkavah (ascension into heaven) too was completed when he died to matter (vanity of materialism) resurrected and ascended into heaven.

The symbolic feast of Corpus Christi in the house of the Holy Spirit is one of the most important in Christian Cabala where Adepts knowledgeable in Cabala, Alchemy and Magic through Transubstantiation, invoke the occult power associated with the incident on the cross of Calvary at Golgotha in middle of the sacrament of Eucharist and transmute the bread into the body of Christ and the wine into his blood for all of them present to eat and drink so that their bodies become the body of Christ and their blood his blood so that together they are born again in Jesus Christ.

To the alchemist it's the alchemical redemption of metal and to the Christian cabalistic it's the redemption of Adam, the four elements of water, fire, air and earth contained in man or Malkuth. It is the freedom of spirit from the bondage of matter. It is the resurrection of spirit through the path of Tau that connect Malkut to Yesod. The Hebrew letter Tau means the sign of cross - the

cross of Calvary upon which Jesus was crucified. The four elements of Malkuth (Fire, Water, Air and Earth) were redeemed, charged and magnetized when they came in contact with the blood of Christ. This is why water whose nature is associated with cleansing can be used for baptism when it is consecrated in the name of Christ may be used to wash away the original sin during baptism.

Liberated from the four elements of Malkuth through the path of Tau, the new initiate gains access into the astral world of spirit of Yesod. One is added on top of four and the initiate becomes number five (quintessence). He has resurrected from the death of Matter. His spirit now has dominion over his body. This is what the alchemist call the victory of the quintessence over the four elements.

Transition from Tetragrammaton of four letter word into Pentagrammaton of a 5 letter word. Johanne Reuchlin revealed the power of adding the additional letter of "Shin" in middle of Tetragrammaton to get the full name of the redeemer and the Savior of Christian initiates - Yeheshuah. The letter shin is a mother letter that represents fire. The sacred fire that renews all nature - the "Igmi Natura Renovator Integra" (INRI), Yod, Nun, Resh, Yod in Hebrew, the acronym placed on top of his cross. At this level of five, the initiate possesses lesser light and needs to take seven steps further to seek the greater light.

The seven steps along the middle pillar of the tree of life. There are four sephirah on the middle pillar (Malkuth, Yesod, Tipharet and Keter) and three intersecting paths that connect three pairs of sephirah on the two pillars of mercy and severity. Peh reconciles the energy of Netzach (victory) and Hod (splendor) on the middle pillar, so does Teth on Chesed (mercy) and Gevurah (justice) and finally Dalet on chokmah (wisdom) and Binah (understanding).

Now we have seven energy centers concentrated on the middle pillar which correspond to seven ancient planets of Alchemist, Seven Metals, seven stages of Alchemical work, seven major psychic centers of the easterners called the chakra, seven lights on Hebrew Menorah, St. John's seven letters to seven churches in Asia and of most important to Christian Cabalists is St. John's vision of the book with seven seals and the lamb.

Yesod is foundation. That is the foundation on which we build our spiritual house. The house which the roof is the Supernal triangle of the holy Trinity comprising of keter chokmah and Binah. Act 4:11 says "the stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone of the foundation". Recovering the rejected stone in Christian Cabala terminology is obtaining the grade of Yesod. Using the recovered stone to form the corner stone of the foundation in building a spiritual house on Yesod (foundation) means gradual ascension into heaven by the sublimation of the energy of the generative organ that results in gradual expansion of consciousness, the opening and vitalization of the psychic centers and graded initiations in the interior world.

Christian Cabala focuses on equilibrium of balanced forces and intelligence on the tree of life. This is why it centers its operations on the middle pillar by balancing the forces of contending pillars of mercy and severity at the center of the middle pillar.

It does not seek to flee from challenges of the world. It seeks to redeem the world by conquering the the devil and saving mankind from its bondage. Christian cabalists actively participate in work of the redeemer and savior and from him they receive the "prop" which is the meaning of the hebrew letter Samekh. The letter that connect Yesod with Tipharet.

The prop is the support to the initiate with the attributes of Tipharet (wisdom, strength and beauty) in the initiate's journey of ascension into heaven of the Supernal. Gimel is the path that

connects Tipharet (beauty) with keter (crown) and the symbol is Carmel which depicts long, gradual and tedious journey toward the spiritual unity with Keter.

There are three paths that cut across Samekh and Gimel. The first is letter Peh. It crosses the path of samekh to connect and reconcile Netzach (victory) and Hod (splendor) at the center of the middle pillar. Hebrew letter Peh Means mouth from where the spoken words flow out. It's from this path we learn the power of the spoken word. As the initiate ascends the planes his psychic centers, perception and power are increasing and any word that flows out of his mouth carries power. The words of the initiate are made flesh or manifest for good when used properly and for ill when reverse is the case. In Mathew 12:36 is the warning of our lord " but I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment".

The next path is Teth which connects and reconciles Chesed (mercy) and Gevurah (justice) on the middle path of Gimel. The Hebrew word Teth means snake - the serpent - the tempter in the garden of Eden, the symbolic animal that was instrumental to the deceit of Adam through Eve. It sticks out its head in all the initiate's thought, speech and action and in his dilemma on when to show mercy and forgiveness or when to seek justice to right a wrong in dealing with his worldly affairs. Thus, St. Paul's encounter with the Viper in Acts 28:5. (And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm).

The next and the last path that connects Chokmah (wisdom) and Binah (understanding) on the middle path of Gimel is Dalet. The Hebrew alphabet Dalet means door - the door of paradise where the Holy Trinity resides. It is from here the initiate will receive the greater light which he seeks. The three luminaries in heaven will reveal to him the grand plan of the universe and his mission in it and the mysteries of the Holy Trinity. In John 10:9 Jesus said to the Pharisees "I am the door (Dalet) : by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and he shall go in and out, and find pasture". Jesus Christ is the great Initiator and Revealer of the Christian Cabalists.

From the Emerald Tablet of Hermes "it ascends from earth to heaven, so as to draw the lights of the height to itself, and descends to earth; thus within it are forces of above and below". This concludes the ascension of the initiate and his spiritual journey to unity. The symbolic return of Adam (through the redemption of Jesus Christ) to his original state before his fall. The path of return is interpreted in light of the Theology of Christian Cabala.

There are other Christian Cabalists who contributed immensely in the development of the Theology of Christian Cabala who for lack of space I could not explain their works in detail. Cornelius Agrippa in his four volumes of 'De Occulta Philosophia' put together an encyclopedia of Christian Cabala. Knorr von Rosenroth in 17th century produced Kaballah Denudata which serves as the Christian version of Zohar and also his outstanding essay on Adam Kadmon his relationship to the primordial man Jesus in Christian Theology.

Christian Cabalistic essays of Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont. The writings of Jacob Boheme, F.C Oetinger and others in England; Francis Bacon, Elias Ashmole, Robert Fluud and Thomas Vaughan and others.

Christian Cabala started as Christian interpretation of Hebrew Cabala and gradually with divine revelations its theology was developed from the esoteric streams that make up the Prisca Theologia.

Today by the Grace of the one in whom we are redeemed and through his revelations of the lost oral tradition, we can say that we have a complete theology that does no longer depend on Hebrew Cabala. The gnosis of oral tradition has reincarnated and is living among us.

Let us continue to research, meditate, contemplate, speculate and seek further revelation so that we will continue to renew and make it perfect. Just like the way our ancient Rosicrucian brethren met every year on the day of Corpus Christi in the house of Holy Spirit to renew their covenant with the Savior and the Redeemer. By His Holy name IMMANUEL his Sanctuary lives within and among us.

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