

Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont's *Cabbalistical Dialogue*

An English translation of
Ad Fundamenta Cabbalae Aeto-Paedo-Melissaeae Dialogus
(TO THE FUNDAMENTALS OF KABBALAH
EAGLE-BOY-BEE DIALOGUE)
namely,
van Helmont's reply to Henry More's
Fundamenta Philosophiae sive Cabbalae Aeto-Paedo-Melissaeae
(FUNDAMENTALS OF PHILOSOPHY OR THE KABBALAH OF THE
EAGLE-BOY-BEE)

TO WHICH IS APPENDED
A Paraphractical Exposition of the First Chapter of Genesis.

Transcribed, edited, & introduced by Don Karr

© Don Karr, 2004-7 Email: dk0618@yahoo.com

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INTRODUCTION

In the years 1677, 1678, and 1684, Christian Knorr von Rosenroth published the multi-volume *Kabbala denudata* (KABBALAH UNVEILED, hereafter KD), which contains a range of kabbalistic texts: sections of the *Zohar*, *Pardes Rimmonim* by Moses Cordovero, *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim* and *Beit Elohim* by Abraham Kohen (or Cohen) de Herrera, *Sefer ha-Gilyulim* (a Lurianic writing attributed to Hayim Vital), and others, with commentaries by von Rosenroth and Henry More, plus some writings on Christian Cabala by Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont—all in Latin translation.

A few items from KD have been translated into English:

- texts from the *Zohar*: “The Book of Concealed Mystery, The Greater Holy Assembly, and the Lesser Holy Assembly” can be found in English as S. L. MacGregor Mathers’ *Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: George Redway, 1887: rpt. New York/ York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1968 and subsequently). Mathers’ versions of these texts also appear at numerous sites on the Internet.
- *Aesch Mesareph*: a kabbalistic-chemical tract found in pieces through the first section of KD.
 - (1) An edition “Translated by a Lover of Philalethes, 1714,” appeared as volume IV of *Collectanea Hermetica*, edited by William Wynn Westcott (1894), which (volume IV alone) was reprinted by Occult Research Press (New York: 1956). *Collectanea Hermetica*, vols. I—VII were reprinted by Kessinger Publishing Company (Kila: n.d.). *Collectanea Hermetica*, vols. I—X, was published by Samuel Weiser (1998); this “special edition” includes Westcott’s version of *Sepher Yetzirah*, which was not part of the original series.

(2) Raphael Patai includes a translation of *Aesch Mezareph* in *The Jewish Alchemists: A History and Source Book* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994): Chapter Twenty-Six. “*Esh M’saref: A Kabbalistic-Alchemical Treatise.*”

- sixteen diagrams from KD are reproduced and translated in Christopher Atton and Stephen Dziklewicz’ *Kabbalistic Diagrams of Rosenroth*, with an introduction by Adam McLean [MAGNUM OPUS HERMETIC SOURCEWORKS, Number 23] (London: The Hermetic Research Trust, 1987).
- van Helmont’s *Cabbalistical Dialogue*, which is a translation of *Ad Fundamenta Cabbalæ Æto-Pado-Melissæ Dialogus* ([RESPONSE] TO THE FUNDAMENTALS OF KABBALAH EAGLE-BOY-BEE DIALOGUE), namely, van Helmont’s reply to Henry More’s *Fundamenta Philosophiæ sive Cabbalæ Æto-Pado-Melissæ* (FUNDAMENTALS OF PHILOSOPHY OR THE KABBALAH OF THE EAGLE-BOY-BEE).

The following works are represented in KD. Neither edition noted here was translated into English from the Latin of KD, but rather from the texts in their original languages.

- Joseph Gikatilla’s *Porta lucis*: see Avi Weinstein’s translation, *Gates of Light: Sha’are Orab* (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994). Excerpts of *Gates of Light* were included in KD, and von Rosenroth drew upon it for the kabbalistic glossary which opens TOME I.
- Abraham Cohen de Herrera’s *Porta cælorum*: see Kenneth Krabbenhoft’s *Abraham Cohen de Herrera: GATE OF HEAVEN (Puerta del cielo)*, translated from the Spanish with Introduction and Notes (Leiden: Brill, 2002). *Puerta del cielo* found its way into KD through its Hebrew version, *Sha’ar ha-Shamayim*, the original having been in Spanish. Von Rosenroth’s rendition is far from a fair representation of the original work—which Krabbenhoft offers—for “Aboab [da Fonseca who executed the Hebrew translation] did not just translate [Herrera’s works] but also radically altered the

texts according to his own interpretation” (Krabbenhoft, *The Mystic in Tradition* [Ph.D. dissertation, New York: New York University, 1982], p. 21). Von Rosenroth further condensed the work in the process of putting it into Latin, emphasizing its philosophical passages.

While fairly well represented in library collections, van Helmont’s *Cabbalistical Dialogue* is far less accessible than the other items on the list above, having not been published since 1682. A short work, (only 17 pages in English—a mere five pages in KD), *A Cabbalistical Dialogue* was printed along with the 13-page *Paraphractical Exposition of the First Chapter of Genesis*. Of course, these pieces are rather slight next to van Helmont’s other “Cabbalistical” works:

- *Two Hundred Queries...Concerning the Doctrine of the Revolution of Humane Souls, and Its Conformity to the Truths of Christianity* (London: printed for Rob. Kettlewell, 1685) [166 pp.]
- Chapter 4 of *The Paradoxal Discourses...Concerning the Macrocosm and Microcosm, or the Greater and Lesser World, And their Union* (London: printed for Robert Kettlewel, 1685) [Chapter 4 = pp. 105-161]
- *Seder olam: or, the Order, Series, or Succession of All the Ages, Periods, and Times of the Whole World...* (London: printed for Sarah Howkins, 1694) [236 pp.]
- *Adumbratio Kabbalæ Christianæ*, which is appended to some editions of *Kabbala denudata*. [70 pp.]

Of the works listed, the first three are in English. The fourth, *Adumbratio Kabbalæ Christianæ*, is in Latin; a summary of its contents is given in Sheila A. Spector’s “*Wonders Divine*”: *The Development of Blake’s Kabbalistic Myth* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2001), pages 44-46.

For a thorough study of van Helmont and his circle—which included not only von Rosenroth but also Leibniz, Henry More, and Anne Conway—see Allison Coudert, *The Impact of Kabbalah in the Seventeenth Century: The Life and Thought of Francis Mercury van Helmont (1614-1698)* (Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 1999).

Refer to my *Study of Christian Cabala in English* at
<http://www.digital-brilliance.com/kab/karr/ccineb.pdf>

- Addendum B: “Seventeenth-Century Printed Works on Christian Cabala in English,” which includes passages from van Helmont’s “Cabbalistical” works
- Addendum C: “The Contents of *Kabbala denudata*, with English Sources.”

Notes on the transcription:

Spelling, punctuation, and italicization have all been preserved, though missing letters have been added. Parentheses () and square brackets [] are given as they appear in the original text.

While the typeface I have used (**Book Antiqua**) is not the same as the printed text, I have attempted to imitate the look of the original *via* spacing, enlarging, italicizing, etc.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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(TITLE PAGE)

[Franciscus Mercurius van Helmont, 1614-1699]

A
Cabbalistical
DIALOGUE

IN
ANSWER

To the Opinion of a Learned
Doctor in *Philosophy* and *Theology*,

THAT THE
WORLD
WAS MADE OF
NOTHING.

As it is Contained in the Second Part of the
Cabbala Denudata & Apparatus in Lib. Sohar, p. 308.&cc.
Printed in Latin at *Sultsbach*, Anno 1677.

To which is subjoined
A Rabbinical and Paraphractical Exposition of *Genesis* I.
written in *High-Dutch* by the Author of the foregoing
Dialogue, first done into Latin, but now made *English*.

LONDON,

Printed for *Benjamin Clark* in *George-Yard* in *Lombard
Street*, Bookseller, M DCL XXXII.

(1)

A *Cabbalistical Dialogue* in Answer to the
Opinion of a Learned Doctor in *Philosophy*
and *Theology*, That the World was made
of Nothing. To which is Subjoined a
Rabbinical and Paraphractical Exposition of
the First Chapter of Genesis.

Compiler

THE *Marts* and *Fairs* drawing near, I
cannot possibly enquire of thee concerning
all those things which I once was
determined to enquire of : Only tell me
briefly for the present ; Are there the
Fundamentals of the *Cabbala*, which are
proposed in the *Aeto-paedo-melissaeon*
Dream ?

Cabbal

No, no ; But what answer shall I give to
one that is in hast ; unless thou dost allow
me to defer until another time those things,
which are more amply to be added to those
three Treatises, called *A further Disquisition*,
the Exposition of the Mercava, and the
Cabbalistical Catachism ?

(2)

Compil.

Be it so. This is all I ask in the first place, Whether dost thou deny all Creation, properly so called ? Or what is Creation, according to thy *Hypothesis* or doctrinal Supposition ?

Cabb.

I will answer Paradoxes with Paradoxes; and because I perceive thou examinest all things so strictly in the Ballance of Reason, which for the most part is stark blind in these more sublime matters; I shall answer problematically, so as ye may be able to judge, whether our Cabbalistical terms do not also admit of another interpretation, according to the dictate of reason, than such a one as may be said to labour under an absurdity. But as for our *Hypothesis* itself, I shall more freely expatiate on that another time. Now therefore to answer thy question, I know one, who is of out number, who defineth *Creation*, properly so call'd, to be the effect of an infinite efficient, whereby a separable Being is constituted, or made. This definition of *Active Creation*, may also be easily applied to *Passive Creation*; or to that which is *Relative*, that is, to that respect which the *Creator* hath to the

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Creature, or on the contrary : As also to *Creation* which is mediate, whether it be so in regard of the Efficient, or in regard of the Effect. And what absurdity is there in all this ?

Compil.

But why, in this definition, dost thou omit that, which we call the formal reason of *Creation*, viz. that it is done out of *Nothing*?

Cabb

Because the Particle [*Ex*] *out of* does only denote or properly belong to *matter* ; nor can it Properly belong to *Spirit* ; which yet is the most proper Subject of *Creation*. Properly so called : and of this [*Spirit*] it can no wise be said, that it is, or is not [*Ex*] *out of* another, but only that it is [*ab*] or *from* another : just as we say, not that an *Idea* or conception is made *out of* the Soul, or *out of* the Mind, but *from* the Soul, or *from* the Mind : or that the beams or rays of a Created Spirit are made *out of* its Centre (unless peradventure with regard to place) but *from* the Centre : or that the Hands, or other formal Members of an Angel, when he appears, are made *out of* the Angel, but are made *from* him.

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Compil.

But thus thou seemest to shut out matter from Creation.

Cabb.

No, but only from such a Creation as is *immediate*. For these are our Positions. 1. That the Creator first brings into being spiritual Nature. 2. And that either arbitrarily [when he pleased ;] or conditionally, as he continually understands, generates, &c. 3. That some of these Spirits, for some certain cause of reason, are slipt down from the state of knowing, of Penetrating, or of moving into a state of impenetration. 4. That these *Monades* or single *Beings* being now become spiritless or dull, did cling or come together after various manners. 5. That this *coalition* or clinging together, so long as it remains such, is called *matter*. 6. That, out of this *matter*, all things material do consist, which yet shall in time return again to a more loosned and free state. No contradiction is involved in all these. Hence the *Creator* may also be said to be the efficient cause of all things *materiated* or made *material*, although not *immediately*.

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Comp.

After this rate , the Creature would be co-eternal, and co-existent with God.

Cabb.

No otherwise, than as the beam or light is said to be co-existent with the Sun ; a Conception, *Idea*, or thought with the mind; a Mode, Manner, or Accident of a Being is co-existent with its Being ; a thing dependent with that on which it dependeth; the effect with its positive actual efficient cause; and many such like. For thus may *Unity* be alwaies better conceived to be in God, because thus he will alwaies have Pluralities as his opposites In like manner will his Goodness be better thus conceived by reason of his incessant communications to his Creatures. Also that he is *supream Act*, because he will alwaies actuate other Beings. Also that he is the *Beginning and the Cause*, because he will alwaies influence his Creatures as their cause. Also that he is *Subject*, because he will alwaies have *Adjuncts* Also that he is the *Measure*, because he will alwaies commensurate others. Also that he is *Priority*, because he will alwaies have all else to be *Posterior* to, or after him. Also that he is *Substance*,

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because he will alwaies bear up all things. Also that he is the *Crown*, because he will encompass or comprehend all others. And so of all the Rest of his *Names* and *Numbers*, and therefore also belongeth to him the Notion of a *Kingdom* , because he will alwaies have Subjects.

Comp.

Why thus it will follow that God did Create be intrinsical necessity.

Cabb.

There will be no absurdity in that, if *Creation* be understood to be *immediate* in regard of its Subject : and therefore to be only of a spiritual nature, which in a certain respect is immanent, or working within its own self, just as motion is from Fire, Cogitation or thinking from the Soul, Volition or Willing proceeding from God : whence also *Creation* is very little different from Conservation, according to the Sentiments of our People. But in that Creation that is Mediate or Transient, or working *ad ext a* without himself, he acteth freely, so that, for Example, he, one day, creates out of *Chaos* or confused mass, the Heavens ; another day, the Earth; another the Stars.

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Compiler.

But how, I pray, after this manner, will the Effect be posterior to, or after its cause ?

Cabbal.

In the order of Nature, though not in the order of Time.

Compil.

But at this rate, Spiritual Natures will differ little from the very Creator himself ; and because it is supported that matter is from their stupefaction or Dispiritedness, it will follow that the Divine Essence is, as it were, a kind of bodily Spirit.

Cabb.

In the first place indeed, some of the Ancients seem to have asserted, *That the Soul is a Particle of the Divine Air, or Breath*, and that men are called the *Off-spring* of God, (Acts 17. 28.) Yet is this warily and wisely to be understood: that the *Air* or *Breath of God* doth at least differ from *God himself*, as the thing principiated or principled differs from its principle : now for things to agree *generically* or in *kind*, doth not infer or allow that they are the same in Essence, or do agree essentially. Whence none do assert the Divine Essence to be *Bodily-spiritual*, but those

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who deny all nature of Spirits ; tho' perhaps it may be more truly said that there is that in God (if I may so say) which may be called κλισιπάθεια , or an affect, or moving (as it were) sufferingly to Create, rather than in Spiits an ὀλοπάθεια , or an affect or moving sufferingly to become Matter However from this *Hypothesis*, or doctrinal supposition, the Nature of God is established to be much more Spiritual, than from the Vulgar *Hypothesis* ; because by this Vulgar one, *Matter*, as such, is not allowed to be so much as a Substance, but to be only a certain *extrinsical* and *accidental Modification* of a *Spiritual Substance*, from which God is most vastly distant; insomuch, as he is the most wise and chief Mover of *all* things.

Comp.

But however the *Material World* will be thus, after a sort, determined to be a Spirit.

Cabb.

Matter as such, is not a *Spirit*; but only that very Substance it self, which appeareth under the form of *Matter*, viz. in its blindness or darkness, *to wit*, in that its *dull* rest, and privation of its former happiness, that was in sometimes past a Spirit, and as

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yet is *fundamentally* and *radically* such, and will sometime hereafter be such again formally, as it is said (*Rom* 8. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. *Eph* 1. 10 I *Cor.* 15, 28.) Examples hereof may be a Man *Living*, and a Man *Dead*; a thin Vapour, and Ice, &c.

Comp.

Dost thou therefore conclude positively, that out of *nothing*, *nothing* can be Created ?

Cabb.

Indeed having positively determined that *Matter* is made by a Coalition or Clinging together of *Spiritual* degenerate *dull Monades* or single Beings, and that this Coalition is called Creation, I should not speak accurately if I should say that *Matter* is made out of Nothing. But I should assert that a Spirit is produced neither *out of* nothing, nor *out of* something; because the very Particle *Ex (out of)* respects a material cause, which is by no means admitted to be in Spirits. But the Inferences with which the first Axiom is loaded, do not touch my *Hypothesis*. But these Absurdities, and Incongruities do flow from the vulgar Opinion, viz. 1. That from a Being supremely perfect, supremely

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intelligent, supremely free, having motion in and felt by itself in the highest degree, supremely penetrating, supremely immutable, supremely positive, supremely living, &c. should be produced a Being most absolutely imperfect, in the highest degree void of all Science, Understanding and Knowledge; under the highest necessity and force imaginable, bound in the highest degree to the Laws of Passive Motion, and by consequence destitute altogether of *all liberty* and *willing*, wanting in it self in the utmost degree *all* motion , and subjected only to the motions and impressions of others, and therefore of and in it self in the highest degree quiet and immovable, wanting in it self *all* penetration as well active as passive; most highly mutable, most highly privative, and despoiled of all happiness, and the possession of *all real good*, and therefore most *highly dull, sluggish* and *dead*, and by consequence enjoying *nothing at all* of those things which are contained in the cause; whence also many have said that *nature* is plainly contrary unto God : whereas an efficient cause as it cannot produce any thing that is altogether like unto it *self* : so neither can it produce any thing altogether

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unlike unto it *self*. 2. And yet this Subject so *vile* and *void*, which is by us deservedly said to occupy the least part of the Universe, is, notwithstanding in this vulgar *Hypothesis*, concluded to be co-extended, yea, co-existing, and co-ordinate with God, and therefore is lifted up into so high an estimation, that *all* the doctrine in the whole *Pagan Philosophy* is exhausted or drawn from this Subject *alone* : which also is established the measure of *all Theorums, Maxims, and Conclusions* concerning *Spirits*, or concerning *God* ; (which they call a Demonstration *a posteriori*, that is, from effects, or *posterior Considerations*) whence it becomes an accursed *Materialism*, and consequently *Atheism*. 3. As. To be, and not to be, done imply a contradiction, so it is a consequent of this contradiction, *out of* Not-being, to be ; if we should speak accurately, and according to the Laws of the Essential Descriptions of Causes. 4. After the same manner, God must be said to have Created *Death, Sin, Shadows* or *Darkness, Monsters, Evils, &c.* which are privations, as Matter is the privation of *spiritual nature*, inasmuch as in whose definition, not one only positive term ought truly and

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rightly to be made an ingredient; because neither is *discerpibility* or *divisibleness*, or *separableness* to be allowed to it in the abstract, and as considered in the *Atome* or *indivisible Being*. 5. The *Creation* of *matter out of nothing*, doth directly and perfectly oppose, or is repugnant to the *Wisdom of God* : inasmuch as in the case thus stated, when he might have done that which was best, as for Example, he might have made every *Creature* a *Spirit*, yet *some* and *so many* he would make to be no *Spirit*, and not the best. 6. It is contrary to *His Goodness*, because he would *Create something* without any *Communication* at all of most of *His good things*. 7. It is contrary to *His Beauty*; because *Matter* is quite opposite directly contrary to and distant from the first *Fair One*. Yea, 8. Hereby would be a *progress* or *passage* from one extream to another immediately Whence, 9. it would be absurd, for the avoiding of certain *absurdities*, which flow not *necessarily* from *Hypothesis*, to admit of many more other *absurdities*, which are highly hurtful to the *nature* of the *Soul* and *Kingdom* of the *Messiah*, and are such as plunge the *Mind* so into material dirty Gulphs, that by reason of utter blotting out of

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its *spiritual nature* in it, it at length plainly becomes a material thing as it were, which God forbid !

Compil.

Dost thou therefore assert that matter cannot be *Created* ?

Cabb.

Not immediately; Nut after that a *Spirit* is immediately *Created*, it doth for certain assignable Causes, and which are elsewhere to be remembered, descend into that state of *Death*, that it admitteth of the *Qualities* and name of matter, being now a natural *Monade* or *single Being*, and a very *Atome* : then *out of* these a further *mediate Creation* may be made and done, even as out of a *Dead Sinner*, a *New Creature* is made by and through the *Messiah*. Therefore as to the Third, Fourth and Fifth *Axiomes*, I answer, that *matter* as such, or as it is considered formally, doth not only not *exist* by and of it self, but in truth doth not so much as *exist positively*, but *privatively* only, just as doth shadow, or rest, &c. And whatever is, is a *Spirit*, whether it be only fundamentally so as a dead man is a man, or whether it be also formally and really so, as is a *Soul*, an *Angel*, *God*.

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Comp.

What therefore dost thou Reply to the rest ?

Cabb

The rest fall of themselves. For every *Spirit* is not the *Divine Essence* (which by the Sixth and Seventh *Axiomes* seems to be insinuated) in a numerical *Identity*, but only in a *specifical*, or a *generical Identity*. Hence is expresly concluded by us, that there is עולם הפרוד* a Systeme of separate *Beings*, which comprehendeth the *Briathick*, the *Jezirathick* and the *Asiathic*, Isa. 43.7. And these in as much as they are products (for they exclude not the concurrent *Divinity*, also) do not *exist* of and by themselves, but from the Author of *Emanations*, who only *existeth* of and by himself, according to the Eighth *Axiome*. But that the *Divine Essence* can be divided (as the Ninth *Axiome* would have it) that we admit not if, but most highly adore the *Unity* which is in it. Just, as for Example, when in some most *Limpid* and clear Fountain, there secretly lurk some earthly and stony Particles, and these at length do cling and grow together, and are separated from the Water, no man asserts and saies that

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the *Fountain* is *divided* into small *Pebles*, but that the *Pebles* are separated from it ; so in truth the *Creator* produced first of all *infinite Myriads* of *Spirits* united to him, and with him in the supream degree of most happy *perfection* (in which the *Messiah* did still abide) so that *God* might be *all in all* : But then, by reason of various degrees of the exercise of their proper *Free-will*, there comes to be a *secretion* or *separation* made amongst these, and that of a many degrees, as there are degrees of *Knowledge*, even unto the very last *extremity*, which is the privation thereof ; and therefore this *death* must again, some time hereafter, be *swallowed up*, Isa.25 8. Now altho' (according to the Tenth *Axiome*) single *Particles* cannot be *infinite*, yet a *Spirit* considered in it self, is, to us, *indefinite*, and its *amplitude*, or *extension* is such and so great, as the degree of its *Knowledge* and *Union* doth admit. The *Divine Essence* it self therefore is not *constringed*, but that which was *Analogous* to it, *viz.* a *Created Spirit* : and these *Particles* out of which the *material World* consisteth, cannot be said to be of the *Divine Essence*, but of that *Nature* which was Effected, Constituted, Produced,

* lit. WORLD OF SEPARATION.

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Made, Created, and brought outwards from the *Divine Essence*. And this constriction may be called a *Sleep*, according to the Thirteenth *Axiome*, or a *Death*, &c. And the awakening, (of which mention is made in the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth *Axiomes*, which is by us termed a *Secretion*, or *Separation of Sparkes*) hath so many degrees of Ascent, as can be assigned of Descent ; the *extremities* of which are, however, no other than the last *contraposition* or *opposition* to *God* in the state of *Death* ; and a *supream Union* (though not an *Unity*) with *God*, and that indeed so, that (not the primary *power* of *Creating*, which is בריאה* to produce *Spirits*, but) the *Secondary*, which is to *form* or *make* (not *out of* a Negative *Nothing*, but *out of* a *pre-existing* rude *Subject*, or a *privative Nothing* , concerning which see 2 *Macc.* 7. 28) as for Example, by יצירה** the *Vehicles* of *Angels*, &c by עשיה*** it can *communicate* thereunto the grosser *Natures*, which we deny not concerning the *Messiah*, from *Isa.* 65. 17, 18. But in the *Commentaries* upon the Twelfth *Axiome*, the *derivation* of the *Soul* from the *material World* is unduly imputed unto us : because

* BRIAH

** YETZIRAH

*** ASIAH

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every *Spirit* is not sunk down to this low degree, but many of them did stop at some of the *intermediate degrees*, amongst which also were *Souls*. Nor do we to these *Particles* ascribe *pains* (as the *Comment* on the Thirteenth *Axiome* insinuates) because we say, that they want even a *sensual Knowledge*: yet some such thing, and what is *Analogous* thereunto , even the *Scriptures* do ascribe unto them, *Rom* 8 12. The rest I pass by, and do appeal to them of your own number, who refute the vulgar *Philosophy*, if they be duly and soundly understood.

Compil.

I am afraid that by making too much hast, thou hast brought forth Blind Whelps.

Cabb.

These *Doctrines* I propose *Accademically*, and for *Experiment* sake; nor do I require assent to them from any whatever. However, I shall in due time explain more fully the *Cabbalistical Hypothesis*, in its own proper *Terms*.

Comp.

At least, let the *Glory* of all our *Writings* be ascribed unto our *God*, and to *His Christ*.

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A
PARAPHRASTICAL
EXPOSITION

Of the First Chapter of
G E N E S I S ,

WRITTEN

In *High-Dutch* by the Author of the fore-
going Dialogue; first done into *Latin*,
but now made *English*.

Verse 1. In or by *the Beginning* of the
Creatures [or
Creation of God,
as in *Rev.* 3. 14.
Col. 1. 15, 16.
John 1. 3. *I Cor*
8. 6. *Eph.* 3. 9.

Heb. 1. 2. *viz.* by the Soul of
the Messiah, which was
already conjoined with the
Divinity : *God* or *Elohim* [or
the dijudicating, or judging
Divinity, with which the Soul

of the Messiah had conjoined
it self, and re-

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mained together therewith in
an inseparable conjunction] *Created* or manifested, or
presented Celestial Beings, or
the Heaven, *viz.* Spirits who
remained in a state of motion,
as *Job* 38. 7. *Col.* 1. 16. to
which sort or kind, Souls also
are referred, or do belong :
Also Terrestrial Beings, or *the Earth*, *viz.* those Spirits who
laid down or putt off the State
of motion, and are vulgarly
called Matter, as *Rom.* 8. 20.
now these two sorts or kinds
of Spirits, even before this
formation and preparation,
did all flow forth from God.

Vers. 2 *And* this
Terrestrial Being, *the Earth*,
viz. Matter, was plainly
unmoved Mass, inasmuch as
it was gross thick Matter, and
partly was capable of motion,
but altogether *without form
and void.* *And darkness*, that is,
Spirits who had departed

from the Union of the Light,
Luke 22. 53 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15.
Eph 6. 12. Col 1. 13. 2 Pet 2. 4.
Jude vers. 6 were extended
 upon and in the parts of the
 Abyss, or *upon the face of the*
Deep, Gen. 1. 2. that is, they
 were present in, and adherent
 to those places which were
 most remote from the
 manifestation of the Original,
Luke 8. 31. Rev. 20.3. But *the*
Spirit of God

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or *Elohim* indeed, or of the
 dijudicating or judging
 Divinity, that is, the good
 Spirit moved it self, and
 distributed its motion, or
moved upon or in *the* parts, or
face of the Waters, which
 encompassed round, or all
 over the Abyss or Deep.

Vers. 3 And Elohim or God,
 or the dijudicating or judging
 Divinity, *said* (that is, suffered
 the Word or Soul of the
 Messiah to operate, or work,
John 1. 1, 2 &c) Let the Light
 appear (or *let there be Light*)

that is, let the Spirit of Nature
 give a most strong motion to
 the most subtil Matter, *and* the
 Light did appear (or *there was*
Light) from this impressed
 motion, *viz.* that which the
 Son of God, by the Soul of the
 Messiah brought into the
 Spirit of Nature, and into this
 most thin, fine Matter.

Vers. 4 And Elohim or God,
 or the dijudicating or judging
 Divinity, *saw* the *Idaea* (or
 measure, or Notion) of *the*
Light, *viz* not only beheld the
 extension it self of the most
 subtil matter, but also that the
 most Noble of the Spirits and
 Souls began to cloath
 themselves with this Light,
which was good, not only
 because it was fit to make
 such Vestments, but for other
 holy uses and services also.
 And

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Elohim or the dijudicating or
 judging Divinity, or *God* made
 a separation, or *divided*
 between *the Light*, together

with the Spirits and Souls invested therewith, and between or *from* the *Darkness*, or Spirits of darkness.

Verse 5. And *Elohim*, or the dijudicating or judging Divinity, or *God*, called the *Light*, together with the Spirits and Souls invested therewith, the *Idaea* or measure of the *Day*, as in *Rom.* 13. 12, 13. *I Thes.* 5. 5, 8. *2 Pet.* 1. 19. and the *Darkness*, viz. of such Spirits who dwelt and liv'd in the darkness, and in the *Abyss* he called the *Idaea* or measure of the *Night*, *I Thes.* 5. 1. And it was the *Evening*, that is, a certain *Essence* mixed with more gross thick *Matter*, and which was next unto darkness whilst, viz. the gloomy dark Spirits do also mix themselves with some sort of such matter; and it was the *Morning*, that is, there were also such *Natures* which only did incline to the *Idaea* or measure of the day, to which also the *Matter* of the second *Element* is to be

referred : and this was the *first Day*, that is, the first *Class*, *Order*, or sort of *Creature*.

Verse 6. And *Elohim*, or the dijudicating Divinity of *God* said (see more about it at v. 3.)

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Let there arise up a thin extended *Essence* or *let there be a Firmament*) of the *Air* and of *Heaven*, in the *midst of*, or between the *Waters*, that the middle Spirits may have wherewith to invest themselves, and let it make a separation, or *divide* between the inferior *Waters*, and between or *from* the superior *Waters*, which are sometimes found in *Clouds* above, and other times under the form of *Vapours*.

Verse 7. And *Elohim* or *God*, or the dijudicating divinity made or spread abroad out of the *Matter* of the third kind or sort (for as the word [Create] [or to be Created] belongs to Spirits, so

the term of [making or of being made] belongs to Matter) a thin and extended Essence of Heaven, and of the Air or *the Firmament*, viz. not only of the grosser Aerial Atoms, which may be compressed and extended like a sheet of Paper (or a Bow; but also of the Aethereal Globules contained in the Cells or Pores of those Atoms as also the most subtil Matter which is found in their Pores, together with Salt-watry Vapours : *And this he made the distinction, or divided between the waters which were beneath the extension, or under the Firmament* (and

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which afterwards were attributed into Seas and Rivers, which were above or on the surface of the Earth, and very much also within the very Bowels thereof) and between, or *from those waters placed above the extension, or which were above the Firmament*, out of which afterwards did arise Clouds,

and other Aereal Meteors, and remained so or *it was so*.

V.8. *And Elohim*, or the dijudicating divinity, or *God called* the extension, or *the Firmament*, or Air, *Heaven*, which name is elsewhere commonly used for the Air, as *Gen. 1. 20, 26, 28. Gen. 2. 19, 20. Gen. 7. 11. Gen. 8. 2.* and by it properly is understood the * Atmosphere, which encompasseth round the Globe of the Earth : *and it was the Evening*; by which is meant a middle Nature betwixt Air and Water, coming near to the likeness of Water : *and it was the Morning*, that is a middle nature of the second Class, Order or sort of Creatures.

* *The Atmosphere is that part of or in the Air, which being alwaies opposite to the Sun, reacheth up as far as the shadow or darkness of the Earth reacheth.*

Verse 9. And Elohim, or the dijudicating and combining divinity, or God said, Let the waters which are under the Heaven (or the Air) be gathered together (for at that time, they as yet quite covered over all the whole Earth) by means of certain deeply hollowed Gulphs, and of highly exalted Mountains, congregate themselves into one place, tho' in divers distinct Regions, or Countries, and let the dry Land

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appear, that from thence a third sort or kind of Spirits may get their vestments, & dwelling places, & it was so.

Ver. 10. And Elohim or the dijudicating divinity, or God called the dry land, Earth, according to its divers Scituations, such also as are Continents, Isthme, Islands, and Peninsules or almost Islands : and the gathering together of the waters, called the Seas, such as also are standing Pools according to all their

divers sorts; as are Oceans, Creeks, Arms of the Sea, and Lakes or standing Waters : and Elohim, or the dijudicating Divinity, or God saw, or judged that it was good, to transplant into it divers living Souls.

Vers 11. And Elohim, or the dijudicating Divinity, or God said, Let the Earth bring forth divers Plants, or grass, which commonly proceed to a further growth, and in which, even as in all Plants, the inferior Souls or Psyches (vulgarly termed vegetable) do obtain their springing forth and their encrease : to which Class, Order or sort also are referred all Mettals in their under-ground places, which, according to the Chaldeans, are nothing else but Portal or Entries of Vegetables; and the Herb yielding seed, and the Fruit tree yielding Fruit after its kind, whose seed is in it self upon the Earth, and it was so.

Vers. 12. And the Earth brought forth various Plants, or grass (and Vegetables) both within and without its Bowels, or Womb, and Herb yielding seed after its kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in its self after its kind; And Elohim, or the dijudicating di-

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vinity, or God saw that it was good, viz. for to be a variety of food for the Creatures which were to come afterwards.

Vers. 13 And the Evening was, that is, there existed divers sorts or kinds of intermediate inanimate bodys Terrestrial, and Mettallick; And the Morning was, that is, various intermediate kinds of Beings, which declined towards Sense, such as are the Zoophytes, or half Herbs, half Animals, viz, the third day, or the third Classis, Order of Creatures.

Vers. 14. And Elohim, or the dijudicating Divinity, or God said, now at last after the production of Vegetables, lest that men prone to Idolatry, should ascribe the Creation of them to the Stars; Let Lights arise out of, or let there be Lights in that thin Essence, or in the firmament of the Heaven, the most subtil Matter being thickned or thrust close together into a constant place, which afterwards may cast forth their beams to a great distance, to make distinction, or to divide between the day, in which shineth one only sort of light, and which is proper only to lucid natures : and between or from the Night, in which the greater Light is absent, and the dark Natures are strengthened; and let them be for Signs concerning divers natural accidents, such as are Drought, Frosts, and various seasons; and for certain times or seasons of the year, of Festival Days, and Months, and for Days and Years.

Vers. 15 *And let them be for burning Torches, (or Lights) in that same thin Essence, or in the firmament*

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of Heaven to give light upon the Earth, and it was so.

Vers. 16. *And Elohim, or the dijudicating divinity, or God made two great Lights, so called and vulgarly esteemed, which, viz to men in this Earth seem greater than the others, and have greater operation in their round motions : and one of them the greater light, with his greater circumvolution to rule the day, and the other lesser light, with his lesser compass, rowling it self about the Earth to rule the night, as well in respect of its light it self, as of it influence upon moist humours, he made the stars also, which afterwards partly disappeared, & were transmuted into Comets & Planets, or wandring Stars.*

Vers. 17. *And Elohim, or the dijudicating divinity, or God set them into that same thin Essence, or Firmament of the Heavens, to give light upon the Earth.*

Vers. 18. *And to rule over the day, and over the night, and to constitute a difference between, or to divide the light from the darkness, which are found no where more than in the shadows of the grosser bodies. And Elohim, if the dijudicating divinity, or God saw that for this end and purpose it was good.*

Vers. 19 *And the evening was, that is, these were middle natures to which belong both fiery Meteors, and Aereal Spheres : and the morning was, that is, these are those middle Natures, to which are referred blazing Stars and lesser Planets; this was the fourth day, or the fourth Class, Order or sort of Creatures.*

Vers. 20. *And Elohim, or the dijudicating Divinity, or God said, let the waters bring forth by Troops, or*

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abundantly divers Animals moving themselves, *the moving Creature*, as are those of the water-kind, those that live both on Land and in the water, those that creep, and those that have wings, in whom there is a Psyche, or living Soul or Spirit : *and the Fowls that may fly* (about) *above the Earth*, in the midst of that thin Essence, or *in the open Firmament of Heaven*.

Vers. 21 *And Elohim* or the dijudicating Divinity, or *God Created*, that is transplac'd Souls into the several Terrestrial Animals following, *viz* divers of the greater Serpents, such as are Dragons, great Whales, Monsters, the larger Snakes, Crocodile, Sea-Buffaloes, *and* all Psyches, or inferior Souls of living Creatures creeping with feet

or every living Creature, that moveth, which the waters brought forth by Troops, or abundantly after their kind, and every winged Fowl after its kind, and God saw that it was good, for divers sorts of food, viz. for Man and Beast.

Vers. 22. *And Elohim, or the dijudicating Divinity, or God blessed them, and gave unto them an influential capacity, that those of them, which were created in pairs, were able to propagate and enlarge their kind, and he said [the Word or Soul of the Messiah co-operating] couple together, be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the Seas, and let Fowl multiply in the Earth.*

Vers. 23. *And it was the Evening*, these were those intermediate Natures, which tend unto the nature of

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Fishes : *and it was the morning*, these were the middle Natures which became flying Creatures, and this was *the fifth day*, or the fifth Class, Order, or sort of Creatures.

Verse 24 *And Elohim*, or the dijudicating divinity, or *God said, let the Earth bring forth* various Psyches or *the living Creature after his kind*, viz *Cattle and Flocks*, and *Worms, or creeping things*, and *wild Beasts, or beast of the Earth after his kind: and it was so*, or so done.

Vers. 25 *And Elohim*, or the dijudicating divinity, or *God made* divers wild Beasts, or *the Beast of the Earth after his kind*, and divers Herds of *Cattel after his kind*, and divers Worms creeping with feet on the Earth, or *everything that creepeth upon the Earth after his kind : and Elohim*, or the dijudicating divinity, or *God saw that it was good*, and that every thing had its use.

Verse 26. *And Elohim*, or *God said* to the Soul of the Messiah, *Let us make Man-kind*, that is, let us transplac'd the superior human Soul into a certain Matter destined for it, *in our Image, after our likeness*, that as there is a communion betwixt us, or our selves, so also betwixt them and this same subtil Matter let somewhat arise, or spring forth, out of which afterwards may follow like effects; *and let them*, viz. these Souls which are called Men, *have dominion over the Fish of the Sea, and over the Fowl of the Air*, or of Heaven, *and over the Cattel*, or Flocks, *and over all the*

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Earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the Earth, or over all wild Beasts, and over all Worms which creep with feet upon the Earth.

Vers. 27. *And so Elohim, or the dijudicating divinity, or God Created, and changed the state of the Soul that from thence might be made mankind in his own Image in the Image of God or Elohim, or the dijudicating divinity created he him or it, Male in the forepart, and Female in the hinderpart, created he them, viz. all and every one of the Souls which do at present exist in the whole Universality of Mankind, he transplac'd into a certain subtil Matter, and co-ordained, or put them into an order under the person of Adam the Protoplast, or the first Parent, as a Regiment of Souldiers, under their Colonel, or General.*

Vers. 28. *And Elohim, or the dijudicating divinity, or God blessed them, and gave unto them the faculty or capacity of turning their faces to one another : and Elohim, or God said unto them, apply your selves that you may be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the*

Earth, or fill the Terrestrial, or the material Being in all the parts thereof; and subdue it to your selves, that your bodys may take thence their nourishment, and have Dominion over the Fish of the Sea, and over the Fowl of Heaven, or of the Air, and over every living thing that moveth, or creepeth with feet upon the Earth.

Vers. 29. *And Elohim or God said, I have given you every Herb, in their Superiour and Inferiour*

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qualities, bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the Earth, and all Trees, or every Tree which beareth Fruit, or in the which is the Fruit of a Tree yielding seed, or his seed, all these shall be for food, or to you it shall be for Meat, to repair the decaies of your bodies.

Verse 30. And to every Beast of the Earth, or wild Beast, and to every Fowl of the Air, or of

Heaven, *and to everything that creepeth*, or that goeth with feet *upon the Earth, wherein there is life*, or a living Psyche or Soul, *I have given every green Herb*, or all Plants and Herbs, *for Meat, and it was so.*

Verse 31. *And God saw all, or every thing that he had made in the matter, and behold it was very and supereminently, (Deut. 6. 5.) good. And the Evening was, that is, the middle Natures descending down to the brute Animals : and the morning was, that is, there were also middle Natures which were exalted above humane condition; and this was the sixth day, or the sixth Class, Order, or sort of Creatures.*

CHAP. II.

Verse 1. **T***Hus the Heavens and the Earth were (together with the Air) brought to perfection, and finished, and all the Hosts (or Troops) of them, viz in the Heavens multitudes of Thrones and of Angels; and in the Earth, multitudes of well ordered sublunary Creatures.*

Verse 2. *And Elohim, or the dijudicating Divinity, or God on the seventh day ended his Work which he had made; and he rested, or ceased from further creating, on the seventh day from all his Work which he had made.*

Verse 3. *And Elohim, or God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it : even as, and for which cause the seventh number is said to be holy and pure, because that amongst the first numbers none is formed out of it, nor is it formed out of any of them, as if it did hint that the happiness of the Creatures did consist only in it, if, not being mixed with any other Creatures, they were quiet in God : Because that in it (in that day) he rested from all his Work, which Elohim, or God had created therein all kinds of Spirits and Souls, so that from thence he had made something in a material representation, manifestation, or appearance, by and through which, other Spirits were presented in this, or the other matter, &c.*

F I N I S.