

Mysticism.

There are those in the Messianic faith who deny the existence of the two houses of Israel today, and as a result are totally blinded to the fact that the events playing out in the major nations of the world have been prophesied in the Scriptures are about the latter day people of the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The events taking place in especially the English speaking nations of the world have been prophesied to happen in the Scriptures by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, as well as the minor prophets, many years before the birth of Messiah. But, without knowing who the two houses of Israel are this vital key necessary to unlock the doors of Scriptural prophecy has been lost to society in general. Similarly are there those who insist that the word '*mysticism*', especially when used together with the word '*Jewish*' to be totally unacceptable and by definition absolutely evil. Even so, the Scriptures are filled with both these subjects from Genesis to Revelation and cannot be denied by those who truly study the Scriptures with the understanding given us by Elohim, through His Set-apart Spirit that indwells us.

The subject that I am talking about today, namely mysticism or more specifically Jewish Mysticism otherwise known as Kabbalah is a very controversial subject. Most Jewish Rabbis tell their congregants not to study Kabbalah, unless they have studied Torah for at least 40 years. The word '*Kabbalah*' is a transliterated Hebrew word meaning '*received*'. The reason why some believe Jewish Mysticism is evil is because it came to be abused during the middle ages by the proponents of witchcraft. As a result many people falsely assume Kabbalah to be witchcraft. However Jewish Kabbalah is the Kabbalah studied by Orthodox Jews and these Jews are by NO MEANS involved in witchcraft.

Claims that Jewish Kabbalah is witchcraft are much like the claims in the middle ages that Jews killed unbaptized babies to use their blood in the Passover Seder -this whilst the consumption of any blood is absolutely forbidden in Torah. The whole idea is rooted in anti-Semitism. In Rabbinic Judaism today Kabbalah has its foundation in three books, namely: '*The Sefer Yetzirah*', '*The Bahir*', and '*The Zohar*'. However Jewish Mysticism existed long before these books were written and in fact Jewish Mysticism is reflected in certain documents of the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as the writings of the first century Jewish historian named Philo.

Even though I have studied some very basic concepts of Kabbalah, I am in no ways an expert in the field and will therefore not attempt to enlighten you regarding the subject. However, my purpose today is to show you that the concepts mentioned in Kabbalah are also mentioned throughout the Scriptures. The very first time where these concepts are beginning to be discussed, is right at the beginning of the Scriptures, where we read from Genesis 1: 26 & 27, ***'Then Elohim said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing, that creeps on the earth."*** (27) ***And Elohim created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim He created him; male and female He created them.'***

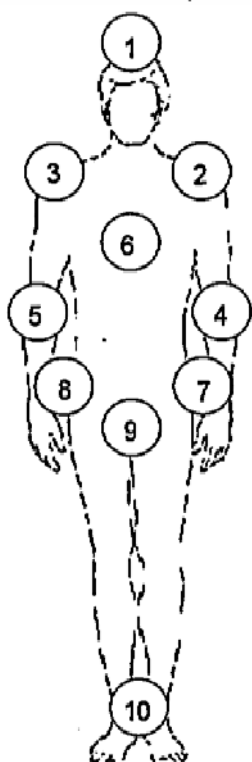
Without going to Kabbalah to determine who or what the image of Elohim is, we need to let the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures. But first let's get a dictionary meaning of the words '*image*' and '*likeness*'. According to the Webster's Dictionary, the word image is defined as an image, likeness, apparition – a representation of any person or thing, sculptured, painted or otherwise made visible; a statue, picture or stamped representation; an effigy, an idol; what forms a counterpart or likeness of something else. We are made in the image and likeness of Elohim. In other words we look like the image of Elohim.

However, the Scriptures tell us that YHVH has no form according to Deuteronomy 4: 12 ***"Then YHVH spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form – only a voice."*** In addition we see that YHVH is infinite according to 1 Kings 8: 27 ***"But will Elohim indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain Thee, how much less this house which I have built!"*** This is also confirmed in the Renewed Covenant in first Timothy 1: 17, as follows: ***'Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only Elohim, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.'*** We read further about

YHVH from first Timothy 6: 16, ***'who alone possesses immortality and dwells in an unapproachable light: whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.'***

The question is, if Elohim is invisible and we look like His image, what or who do we really look like? We turn to the Renewed Covenant for the answer in a number of places; the first being in Colossians 1: 15, where we read: ***"And He (meaning Yahshua) is the image of the invisible Elohim, the first born-born of all creation."*** We also read from John 12: 44 & 45, Yahshua cried out and said: ***"He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me. (45) And he who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me."*** Now, the words first-born in Colossians 1: 15 does not mean that He was born before Adam was created, it means that Yahshua was the first being who was born again as a spirit begotten child of Elohim, as witnessed in Romans 8: 29 & 30, in this way: ***'For whom He (Elohim) foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His son, that He (Yahshua) might be the first-born among many brethren; (30) and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified (at immersion); and who He justified, these He also glorified (one day at His return, when we are born-again as spiritual children of Elohim).'*** A second witness giving us more details of Messiah's rebirth comes from verse 18 of Colossians 1, as follows: ***'He is also the head of the body, the congregation; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.'***

From this it is clear that Yahshua is the visible image of the invisible Elohim. In other words, we were created to look like Yahshua the word of Elohim who became flesh (John 1: 14). In Kabbalah the image of Elohim is referred to as the 'Adam Kadmon'. Gershom Scholem wrote in his book entitled: 'On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead; Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah', *'In His active manifestations, the godhead appears as the dynamic unity of the Sefiroth, portrayed as the "tree of the Sefiroth," or the mystical human form ('Adam Kadmon'), who is none other than the concealed shape of Godhead itself.'* Scholem writes further on page 43 of the same book, *'However, the Sefiroth do not appear only in the shape of the tree. They also appear in the form of Primal Man (Adam Kadmon), which corresponds to that of earthly man.'*



The Sefirot are laid out as Adam Kadmon with Keter (the Crown) as the head, Chokmah (wisdom) and Binah (understanding) represent the right and left lobes of the brain. Gevurah (power or strength) and Chesed (mercy) represent the right and left arms, Tiferet (beauty) the heart. Yesod (foundation) represents the reproductive organs. Hod (majesty) and Netzach (victory) represents the hands and Malkut (kingdom) the feet as shown in the picture.

Adam Kadmon, however, was not just the image of Elohim. He was actually Elohim himself, as Scholem writes in his book, entitled: 'Kabbalah' saying on page 116 *'... God entered into the form of Adam Kadmon...'* The theology of Elohim is easily understood: there is one Elohim and Yahshua is the visible image of the invisible Elohim. We worship the Father in and through Yahshua. When you are immersed in the name of Yahshua Messiah (Acts 2:38) you are immersed in the name of Elohim, since Yahshua is YHVH our righteousness, or the one in which we are righteous before Elohim, as witnessed in Jeremiah 23: 5 & 6, as follows: ***"Behold, the days are coming," declares YHVH, "When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice***

and righteousness in the land. (6) In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called ‘YHVH our righteousness.’

To align all this with the Scriptures we read from Deuteronomy 33: 27, ***“The eternal Elohim is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He drove out the enemy from before you, and said ‘Destroy!’”*** We read further from Isaiah 51: 5, ***“My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth, and My arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands will wait for Me, and for My arm they will wait expectantly.”*** As believers in Yahshua, we are all aware that Yahshua is referred to in various verses in the Scriptures, as the right hand of YHVH, and more specifically in Isaiah 53: 1, as follows: ***‘Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of YHVH been revealed?’*** From the words recorded in John 12: 37 – 40, we know that even though we as believers in Yahshua know the right hand of Elohim, His identity has been hidden from our Jewish Brothers (as well as those who have been deceived to believe in a false Messiah), by YHVH Himself, in this way: ***“But though He had performed so many signs before them (the Jews of His day), yet they were not believing in Him; (38) that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, “YHVH, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF YHVH BEEN REVEALED?” (39) For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, (40) “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART; LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I HEAL THEM.”***

These very facts are explained in detail by Rav Shaul in Romans 11 and more specifically in verses 25 – 28, as follows: ***‘For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery (here we see the word mystery being used in the Renewed Covenant by Rav Shaul), lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel (meaning the Jews) until the fullness of the Gentiles (those Israelites from the lost ten tribes, who lost their identity and now believe that they are Gentiles, as well as some real Gentiles) has come in; (26) and thus all Israel (from both houses) will be saved; just as it is written, “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. (27) AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.” (28) From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of Elohim’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.’*** Rav Shaul also made the purpose for hiding Yahshua’s identity to our Jewish Brothers clear in verse 15 of Romans 11, saying: ***‘For if their rejection (of Yahshua as Messiah) be reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?’*** When Messiah returns on the Feast of Trumpets one day in the near future, He is going to save the tents of Judah first (Zechariah 12: 7), and when they see His hands, He will grant them repentance (Zechariah 12: 10) when they understand who He is and accept Him, mourning for Him as an only son, at which time the dead in Messiah will be resurrected, as per first Thessalonians 5: 16, as follows: ***‘For the Master Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of Elohim; and the dead in Messiah shall rise first.’***

Invalidation to the picture of a man or more correctly the image of Elohim, pictured before, we read from Isaiah 11: 1, ***‘Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of YHVH will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength (or power), The spirit of knowledge and the fear of YHVH.’*** These very facts are also confirmed by Rav Shaul in first Corinthians 1: 24, as follows: ***“But to those who are the called (meaning us), both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of Elohim and the wisdom of Elohim.”*** In fact the prophet Jeremiah tells us in Jeremiah 32: 17, ***‘Ah YHVH Elohim! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee.’*** The concept of (YHVH)’s outstretched arm is first mentioned in Exodus 6: 6, and is continued throughout the Tanach and especially in the Psalms where David wrote in Psalm 98: 1 & 2, in this way: ***‘O sing to YHVH a new song, for He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. (2) YHVH has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.***

It is also for this very reason that Rav Shaul wrote in Romans 1: 18 – 20, ***‘For the wrath of Elohim is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in***

unrighteousness, (19) because that which is known about Elohim is evident within them; for Elohim made it evident to them¹. (20) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes², His eternal power (Yahshua) and divine nature (the Set-apart Spirit), **have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.' Yes, brethren as we are made-up of body, soul and spirit, so is our Elohim composed of body (Yahshua), soul and spirit (the Set-apart Spirit).**

Because YHVH is described as eternal, immortal, invisible, it is difficult for man's mind to understand Him. This is also why YHVH is referred to in Kabbalah as the 'Eyn Sof'. Eyn Sof is the very essence of Elohim, as in Hebrew Eyn means 'there is nothing' and Sof means 'end', 'termination', 'border' or 'definition'. Together, Eyn Sof imply without definition or borders. To tell the truth, Eyn Sof cannot be defined and we cannot even understand the term. Consider for a moment another person, a table, or even your computer. These things are all composed of "matter" that cannot be defined unless they are bordered. They are molecules that cannot be seen or defined, unless they are bound together. When we as believers die, our lives or souls come to an end and our bodies are buried and return to the dust from which it was made. Our human spirit that combined with Elohim's Spirit given us at immersion, returns to the Father as is confirmed in Ecclesiastes 12: 7. Even though the believer's borders have been removed, yet such a believer exists, even if he/she is not conscious of this fact. In support of this, Yahshua said to Martha in John 11: 25 & 26, **"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, (26) and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"** This is talking about the spirits of true believers, that go back to YHVH when we die, and are perfected in heaven according to Hebrews 12: 23, as follows: **'to the general assembly and congregation of the first-born, who are enrolled in heaven, and to Elohim, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect.'** Eyn Sof is boundless; there is nothing outside of it. It transcends and conceals itself, it is the essence of everything hidden and revealed. Eyn Sof cannot be expressed, though it is intimated in everything that exists, as there is nothing outside of it. No letter, no name, no writing, nothing can define or confine it, yet the Scriptures do assign attributes to YHVH our Elohim.

These attributes can clearly be seen in the following passages in the Tanach: Isaiah 11: 2, **"And the Spirit of YHVH (Keter) will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom (Chochmah) and understanding (Binah), the spirit of counsel (Atzah) and strength (Gevurah), the spirit of knowledge (Da'at) and of the fear (Yirah) of YHVH."**; First Chronicles 29:11, **"Thine, O YHVH, is the greatness (Chesed), and the power (Gevurah), and the glory (Tiferet), and the victory (Netzach), and the majesty (Hod), indeed everything that is in the heavens and in the earth; Thine is the dominion (Malkut), O YHVH, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all."**; Isaiah 28: 16, **"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation (Yesod) firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed."**; and Second Chronicles 20: 21, **"Give thanks to YHVH, for His lovingkindness (mercy - Chesed) is everlasting."**

These attributes list out as follows:

1. The Spirit of YHVH (called Crown [Keter]).
2. Wisdom (Chochmah).
3. Understanding (Binah).
4. Mercy, LOVE (Chesed)
5. Severity, power (Gevurah).
6. Harmony/Beauty (Tiferet).
7. Victory (Netzach).
8. Splendor (Hod).
9. Foundation (Yesod).

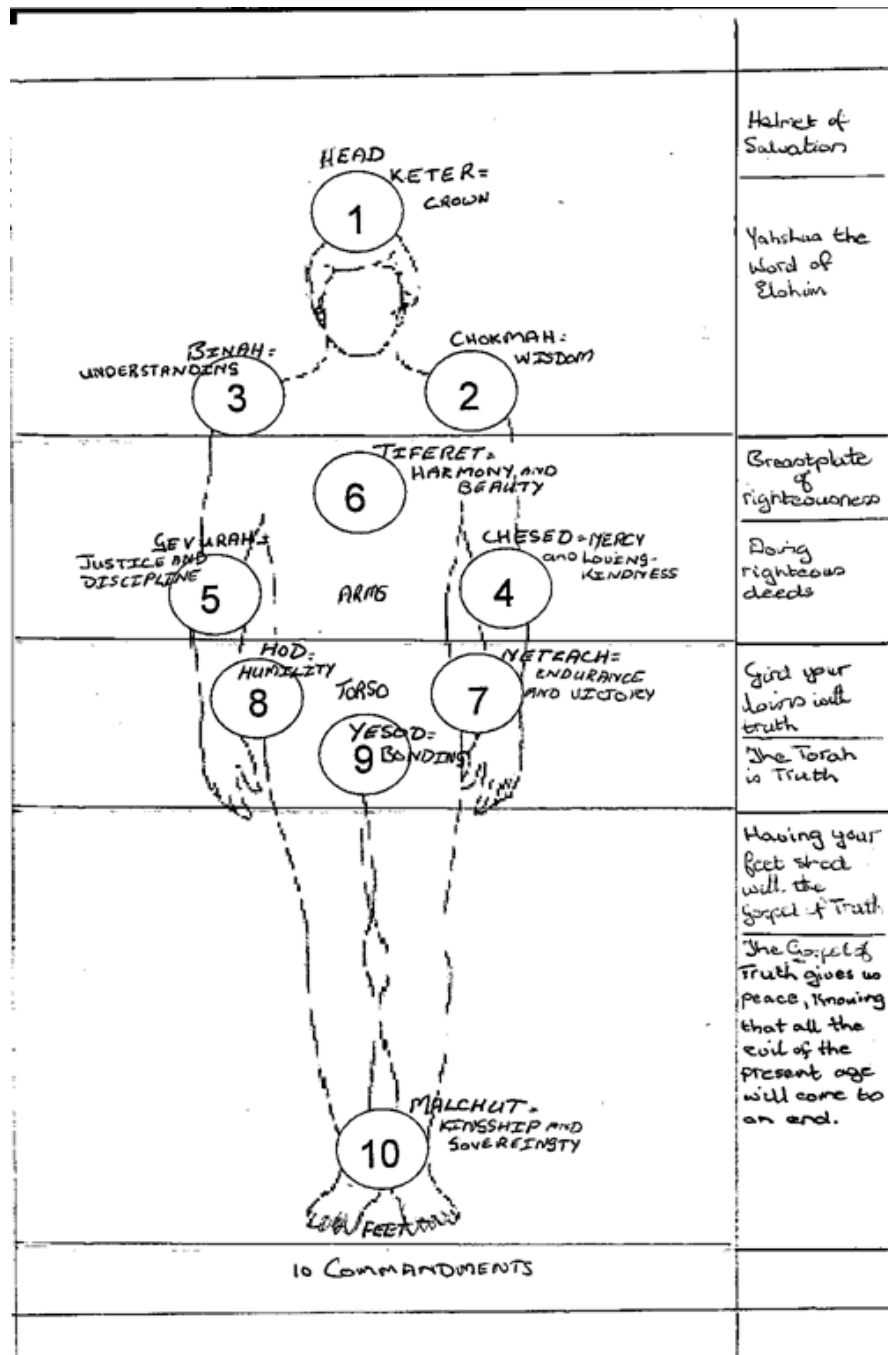
¹ First Thessalonians 5: 23, **'Now may the Elohim of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Master Yahshua Messiah.'**

² First Timothy 1: 17, **'Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only Elohim, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.'**

10. Kingdom/Kingship (Malchut).

These ten attributes are also known in Kabbalah as the emanation of the ten Sefirot which makes up three lights known as tzachtzachot (splendors).

Rav Shaul used Kabbalistic terms in many of his explanations, a prime example being his discussion of the full armor of Elohim in Ephesians 6, in this way:



The first three attributes; namely the Crown, Wisdom and Understanding relate to the Helmet of Salvation. The second three attributes; namely Harmony (or beauty), Mercy and Severity (or power) relate to the heart or Breastplate of Righteousness. The third three attributes; namely Victory, Splendor and Foundation relate to the groin or The Belt of Truth. And the last attribute; namely Kingdom relates to the feet or Shoes of Peace or Nobility (Kingship). We are admonished by Rav Shaul in Ephesians 6: 11 – 19, to put these, also known as the full armor of Elohim on, to protect us from principalities (rulers), powers, the world forces of darkness and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places. This is talking about four classes of demons.

Comparing these four types of demons, we see that they relate to the

body segments of the image of Elohim. This full armor is therefore for our protection from head to toe. The Helmet of Salvation protects us from the evil spirits under heaven, known as principalities. The Breastplate of Righteousness protects us from powers, the Belt of Truth protects us from the rulers of darkness of this world, and the Shoes of Peace protect us from the forces of wickedness in heavenly places. Obviously there are four classes of demons parallel to the four body segments of the image of Elohim. The four pieces of

armor, is put in place to protect us from the four strategies that Satan uses to deceive mankind. Each of the four items of the full armor of Elohim contrasts each of the basic tactics of Satan as expressed in the Tanach:

Helmet of Salvation <> Accusation (Zechariah 3: 1-5)

The Helmet of Salvation protects us from Satan's tactics of accusation. In 1 Thessalonians 5: 8 it is referred to as the Helmet of Hope of Salvation. Accusation is the primary tactic of Satan. He accuses us day and night according to Revelation 12: 10. The Renewed Covenant refers to Yahshua as the head of the body. Therefore Yahshua is the Helmet of our Hope of Salvation. We read from James 1: 12, ***"Blessed is the Man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which YHVH has promised to those who love Him."*** Rav Shaul wrote in 2 Timothy 4: 8, ***"in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which YHVH, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."*** The apostle John wrote in the last part of Revelation 2: 10, ***"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."*** We also read from Revelation 3: 11, ***"I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, that no one take your crown."***

The Helmet of Salvation is not only the crown, but also knowledge and as we read from Hosea 4: 6, ***"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."*** Satan is the accuser of the brethren, but in Zechariah 3: 1 - 5 we see that Satan also accused Yahshua, for wearing filthy garments. But, because Yahshua is the Helmet of Salvation, and due to the fact that He overcame Satan's temptation and accusations, YHVH clothed Him in clean garments and placed a clean Turban on His head. This Turban reminds us of the Helmet of the Hope of our Salvation and this knowledge defends us against the attack of accusation.

Breastplate of Righteousness <> Temptation/pride (1 Chronicles 21: 1)

Putting on the Breastplate of Righteousness protects us from the tactics of pride and temptation. Temptation is a major tactic of Satan as may be read from 1 Thessalonians 3: 5. Satan tempts us through our own pride. King David was made vulnerable to Satan's attack as he took pride in Israel as we read from 1 Chronicles 21: 1, as follows: ***'Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel.'*** We put the Breastplate of Righteousness on by doing righteous deeds.

Belt of Truth <> Lies/Deception (Genesis 3: 1 - 6)

Putting on the belt of truth defends us from the tactic of deception. We read from John 8: 32, ***"and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*** Satan teaches lies (John 8: 44) and deceives the whole world (Revelation 12: 9). We read further from the last part of Psalm 119: 142: ***"And Thy law (Torah) is truth."*** We put the Belt of Truth on by studying (YHVH)'s Torah daily.

Shoes of Peace <> Oppression (Acts 10: 38)

Putting on the Shoes of Peace defends us from Satan's tactic of oppression. Shalom means more than peace, it also means to be united, to be whole or complete and to be at peace. The shoes correspond to the feet which represents Kingdom. During the 1000 year rule of Yahshua we will have complete peace. - The gospel of the coming kingdom of Elohim gives us peace, knowing that all the evil of the present age will come to an end. This sheds light on what it means to put on the full armor of Elohim. If we believe in Yahshua the Helmet of Salvation, practice righteousness, study and obey Torah, and believe in the true gospel we will have put on the full armor of Elohim to protect us from all evil. This will also help us to overcome Satan, the world and ourselves, and ultimately after YHVH has perfected our spirits in Heaven (Hebrews 12: 23) and Yahshua returns to resurrect our bodies and souls we shall be like Him, as witnessed in 1 John 3: 1 & 2, ***"See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of Elohim; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. (2) Beloved, now we are***

children of Elohim, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is."

This brings us to another Kabbalah concept in the Scriptures, namely the Word of YHVH. By looking at the Targums – authoritative Aramaic paraphrases of the books of the Tanach which are read in the synagogues along with the Hebrew of the Torah and Haftarah readings; we get some idea as to how ancient Judaism understood the passages mentioned earlier. Often the Targums come to passages where YHVH is substituted by *'The Word [Memra] of YHVH'* for YHVH. The Word of YHVH was according to Targum Jonathan, the Creator, as follows:

And the Word [Memra] of YHVH created man in his likeness, in the likeness of YHVH, YHVH created, male and female created He them. (Targum Jonathan Gen. 1: 27)

This idea is also used in the Jerusalem Targum, as follows:

And the Word [Memra] of YHVH said to Moses: "I am He who said unto the world 'Be!' and it was: and who in the future shall say to it 'Be!' and it shall be." And He said: "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'I AM' has sent me to you." (Jerusalem Targum Ex. 3: 14)

Both these sections agree with what we read from Psalm 33: 6³ and John 1: 1, in this way: ***'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim.'*** We also read from Genesis 15: 4 – 6, as follows: ***'Then behold, the word of YHVH came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir." (5) And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him(Abram), "So shall your descendants be." (6)Then he believed in YHVH; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.'***

We also read from Targum Jonathan in Isaiah 45: 17 that the Word of YHVH is the Savior, in this way:
But Israel shall be saved by the Word of YHVH with an everlasting salvation...

Speaking of the Memra Gershom Schlolem in *'On the Mystical shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah'* (pages 181 -182)states:

The Memra is not merely a linguistic device for overcoming the problem of biblical anthropomorphisms; it has theological significance in its own right. The Memra is a word-permeating force, a reality in the world of matter or mind, the immanent aspect of Elohim, holding all things under its omnipresent sway.

Even though this is only touching the surface of Kabbalah,I hope it will assist those who are totally against Jewish mysticism to understand that it has nothing to do with witchcraft, but that it simply helps us understand Elohim better, allowing us (different to those Israelites who confess two {YHVH}'s) to believe and say the Shema without any doubt in our minds, as follows: ***"Hear, O Israel! YHVH is our Elohim, YHVH is one!"***

³Psalm 33: 6, ***'By the word of YHVH the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all theirhost.'***