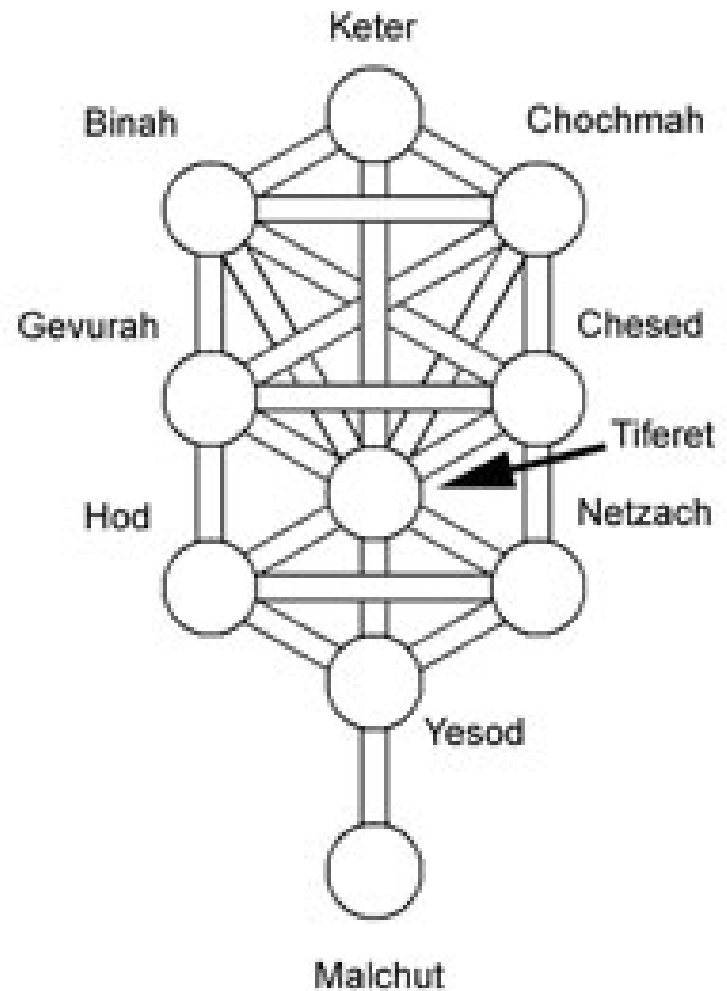


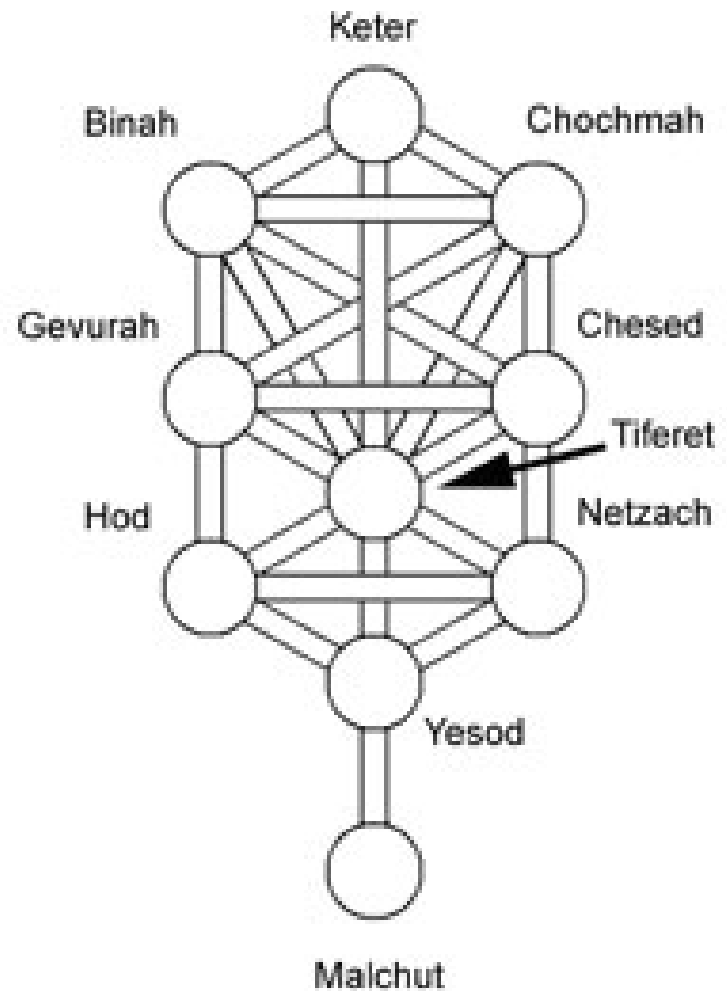
# **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TREE OF LIFE**



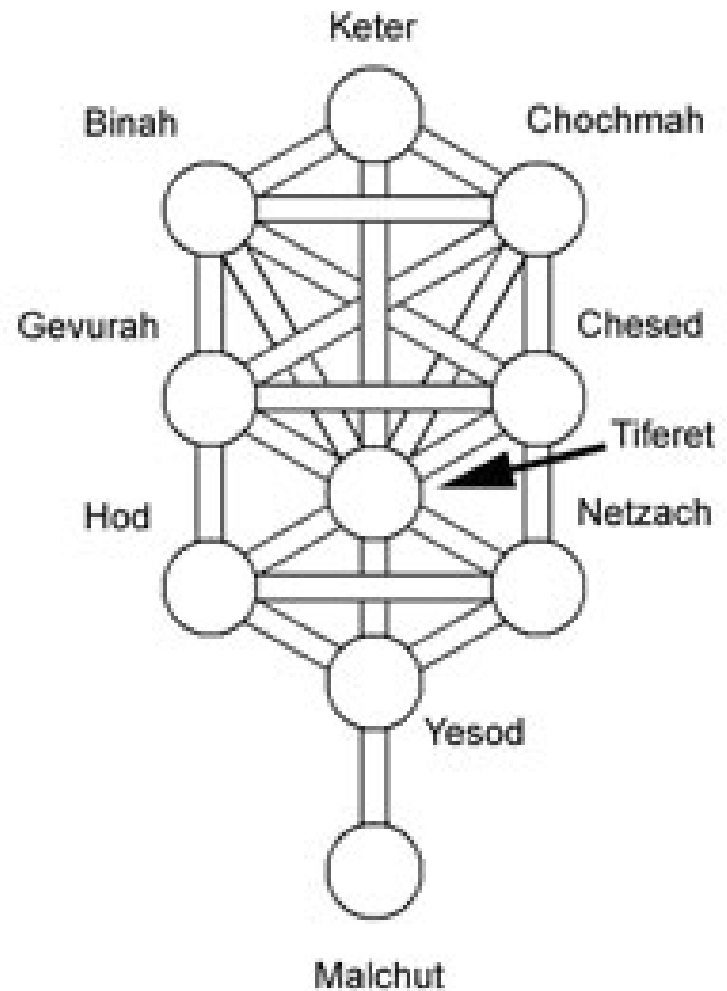
We are going to start in the middle of things with a brief introduction to what is generally referred to as the Kabbalistic or Sefirotic Tree of Life.



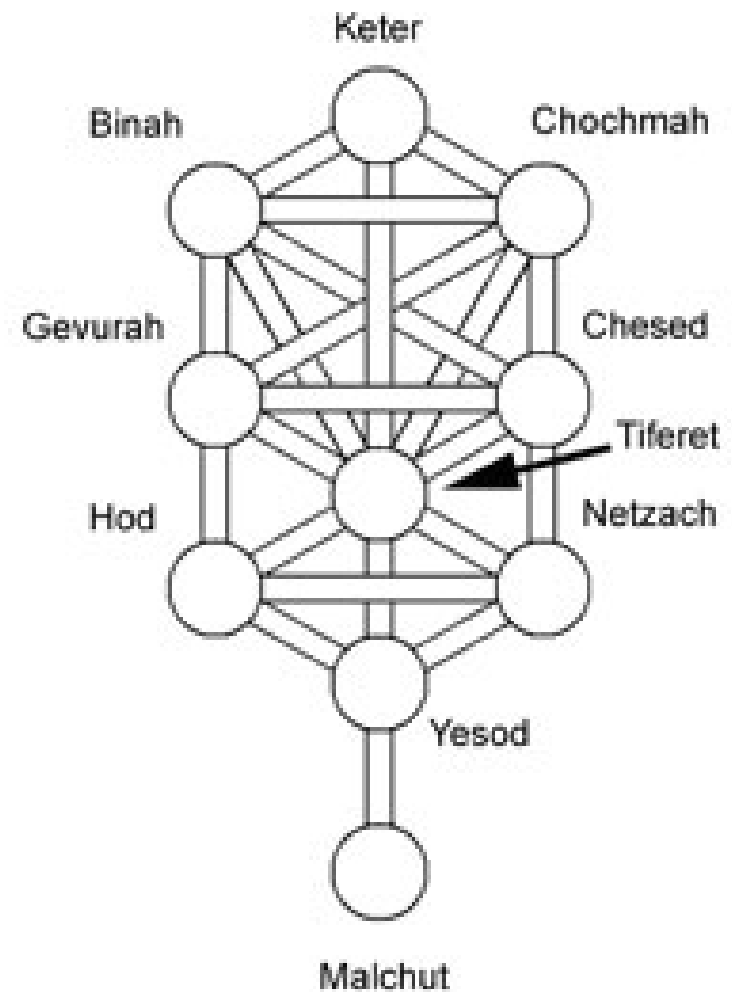
We are beginning this way because many people have heard of this geometric structure, and they are often in a hurry to learn something about it.



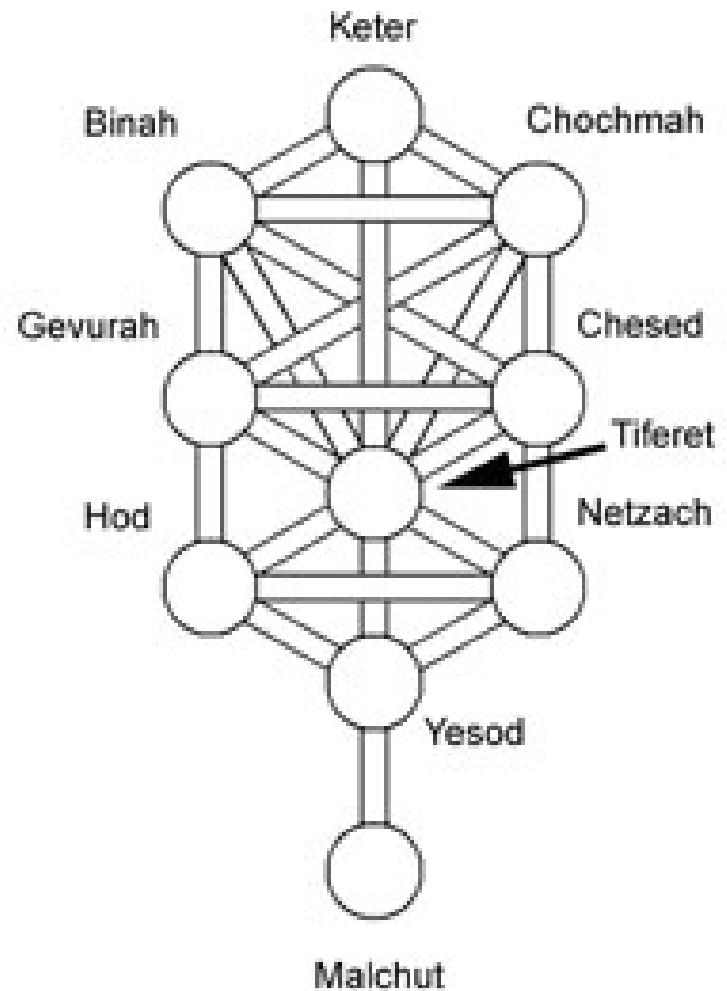
So, we'll begin here with a short introduction, and then we'll go to the proper beginning of everything.



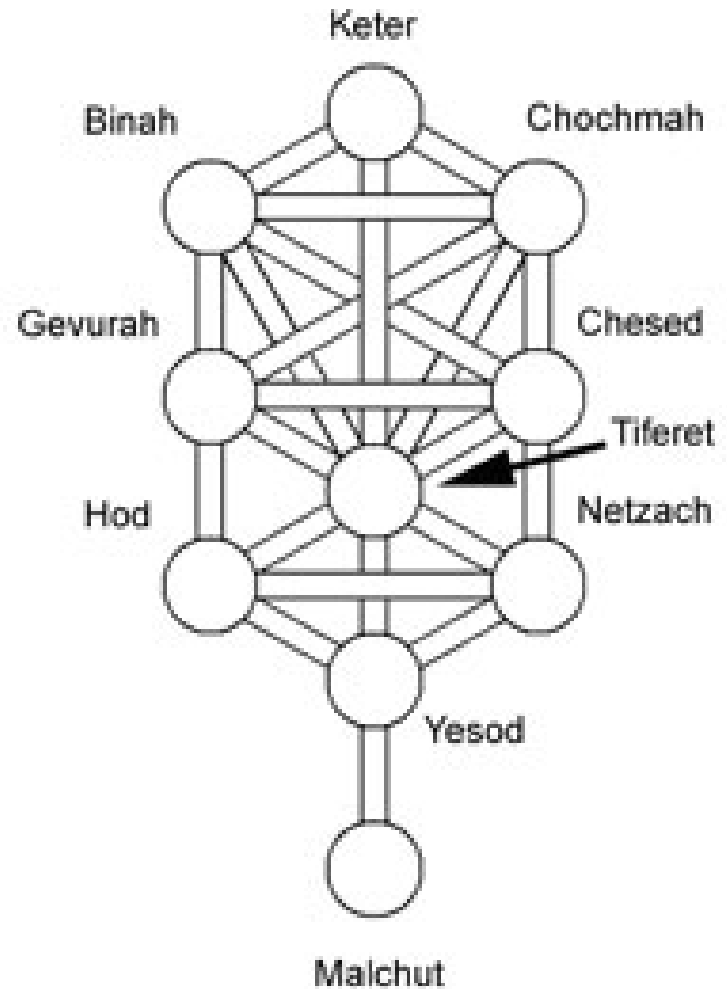
As you can see, the tree is composed of 10 spheres and 22 connecting paths.



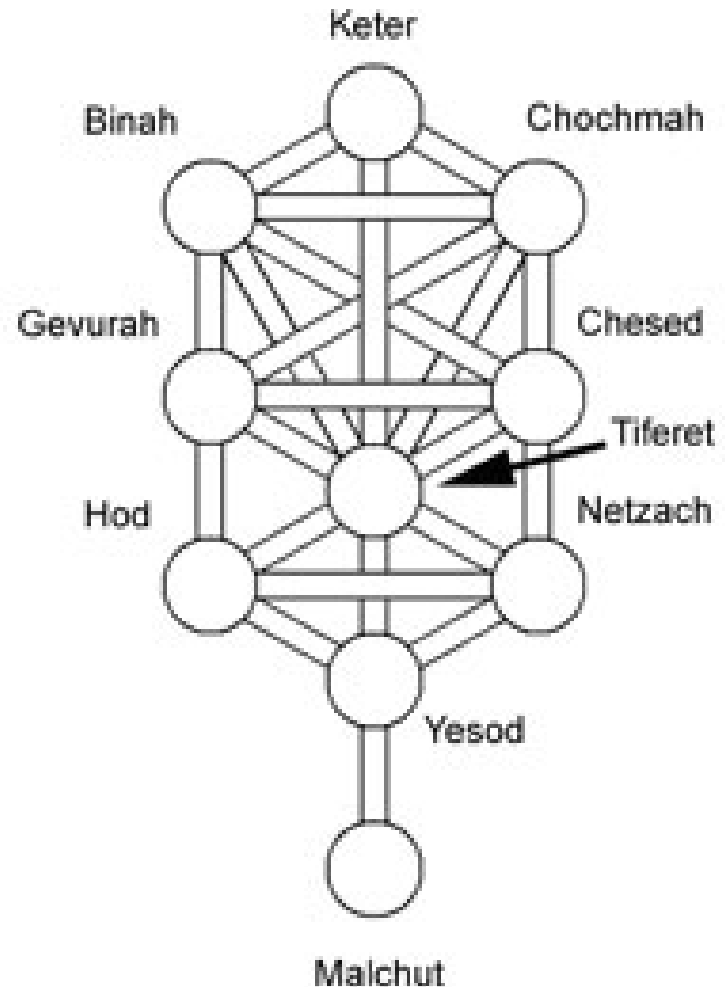
Each sphere is called a “sefirah” (plural: sefirot), and they correspond to the 10 creative utterances found in the first chapter of Genesis.



Actually in Genesis, there are only 9 times that we read, “And God said.” Nonetheless, the very first words of Genesis (In the beginning) are also counted as a created utterance because of what is written in Psalm 33:6.

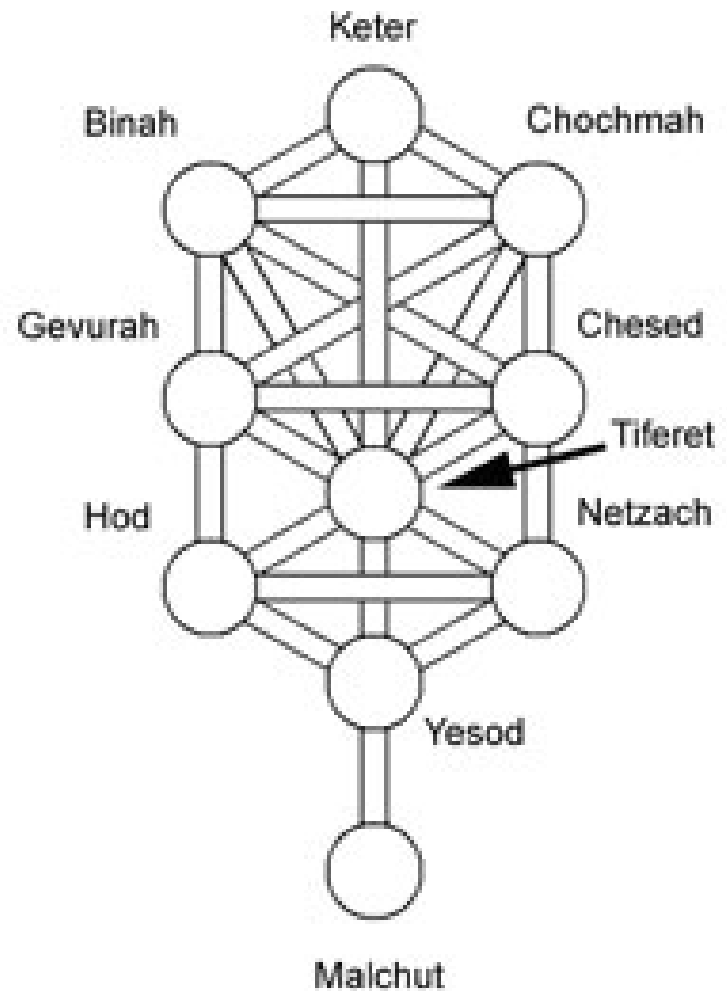


*“Rabbi Johanan said, ‘The ten utterances with which the world was created. What are these? These are the expressions “And God said” in the first chapter of Genesis. But aren’t there only nine? The words “In the beginning” are also a creative utterance, since it is written, “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth (Psalm 33:6).”’”*  
*(B. Megilah 21b)*

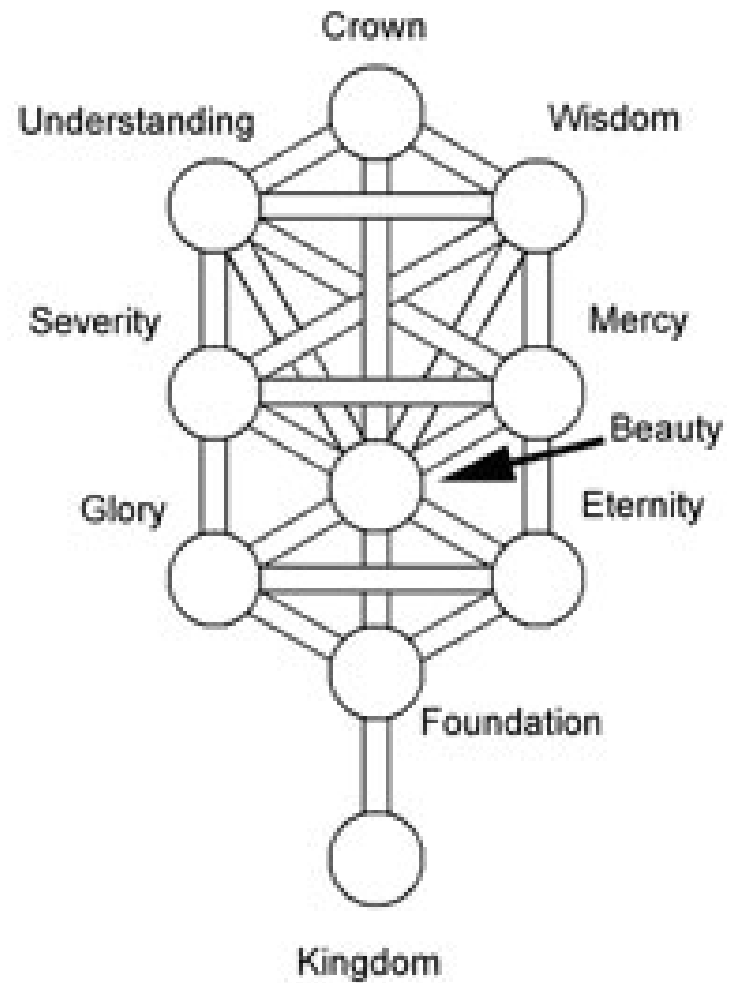




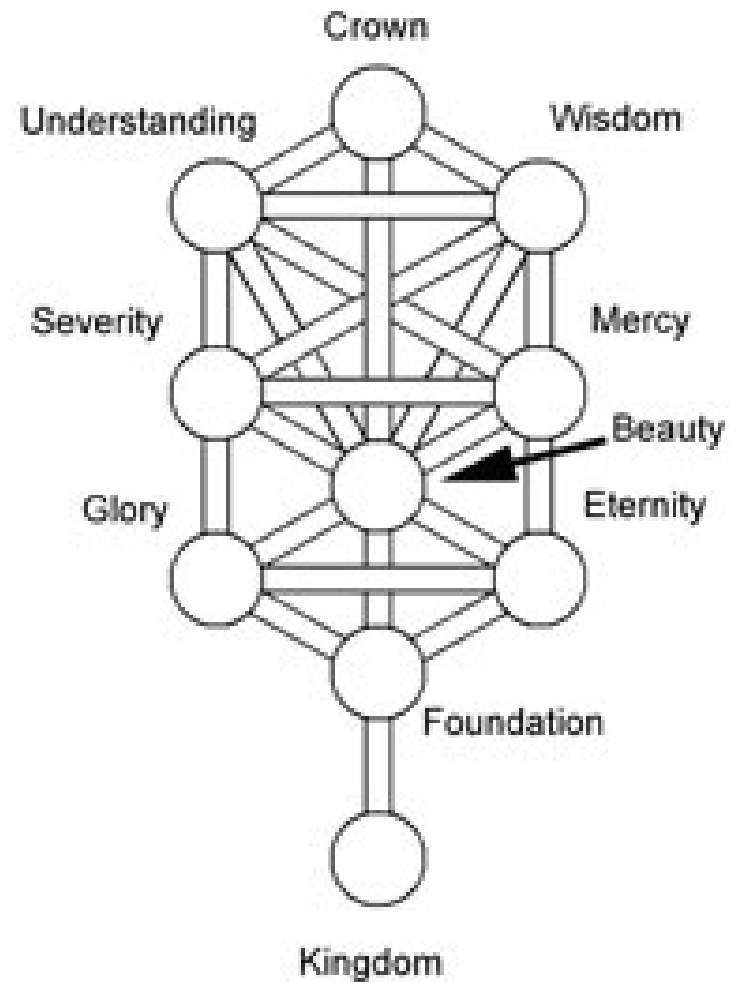
In the diagram to the right you can also see the Hebrew names of the sefirot.



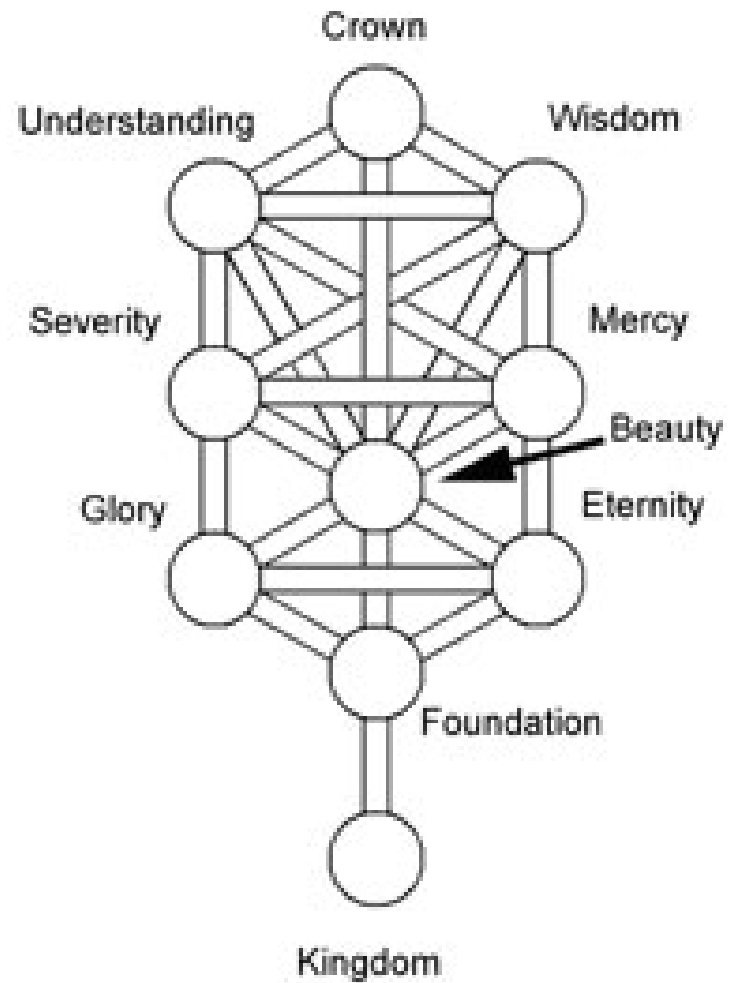
And here are the names of the sefirot as they are sometimes translated in English.



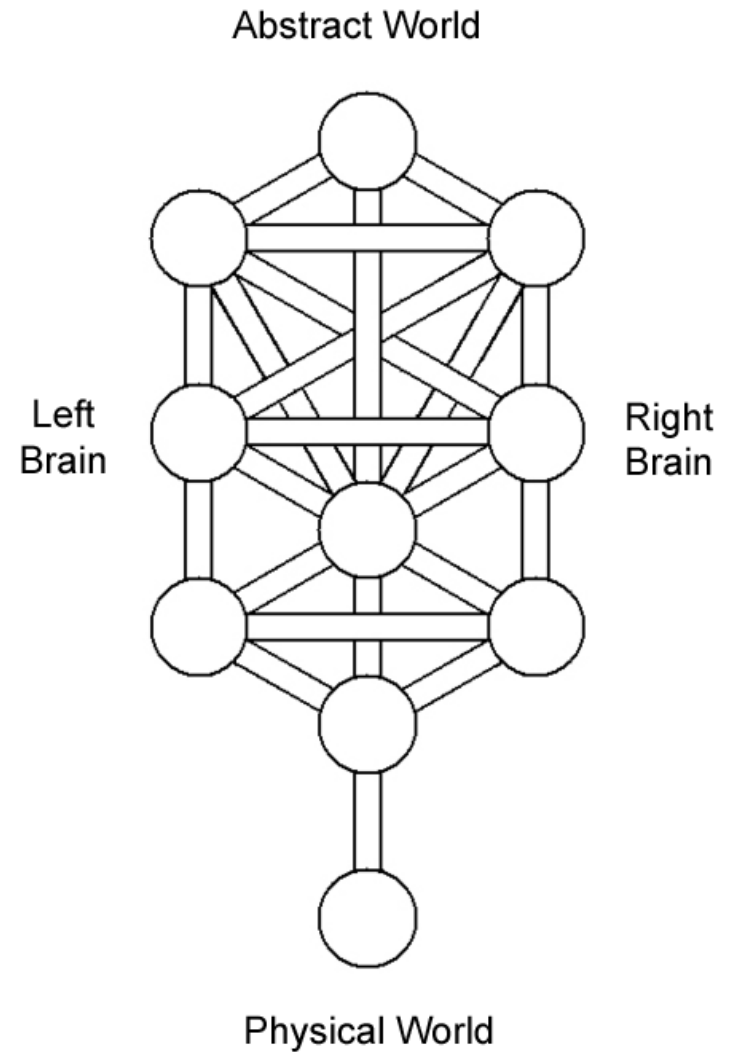
Each path on the tree of life corresponds to one of the 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and we'll talk extensively about both the paths and the sefirot later on.



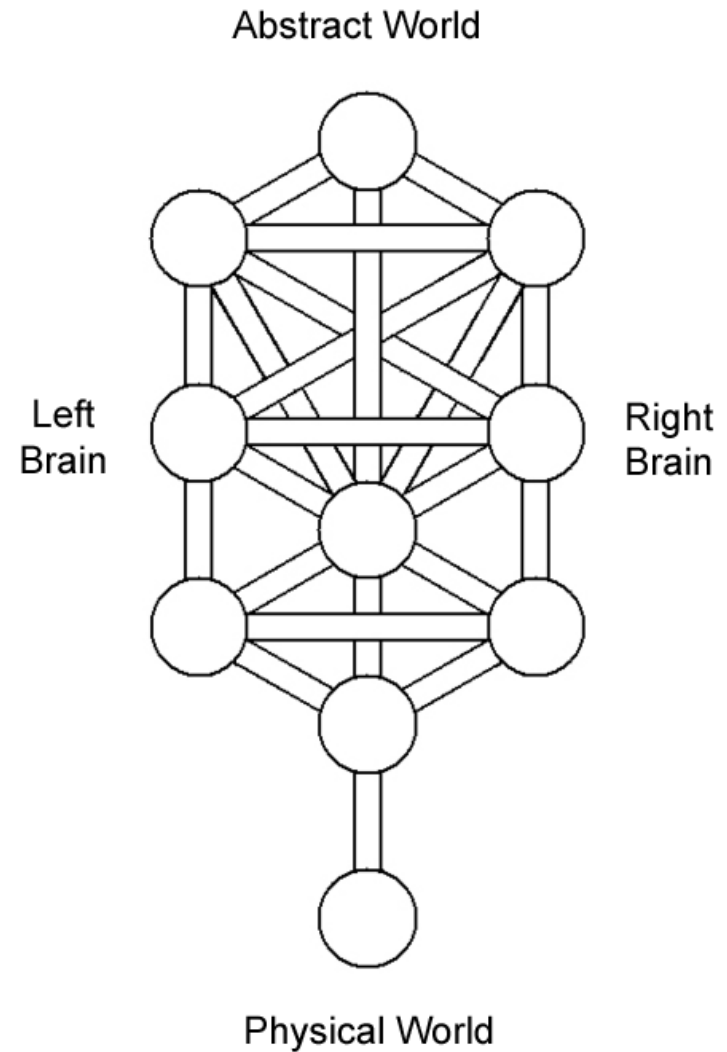
For now, however, here is a very simple lesson from the tree and a very practical way to use it.



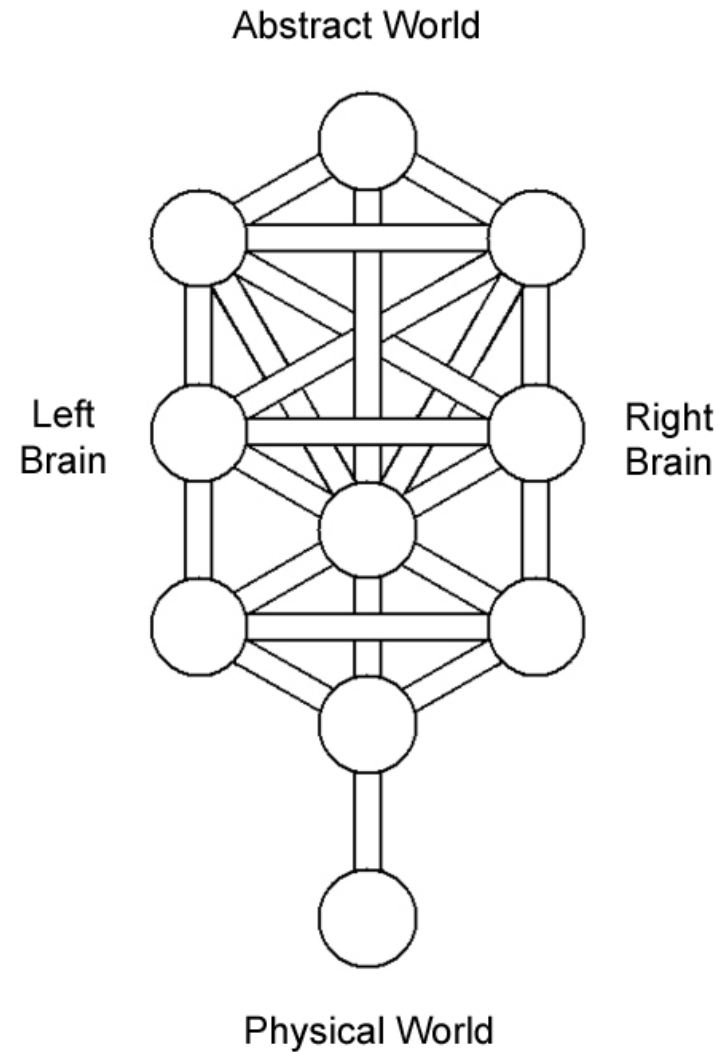
Just keep in mind that the right side of the tree corresponds to the functions of the right hemisphere of the brain, functions such as dreaming, timelessness, and intuition.



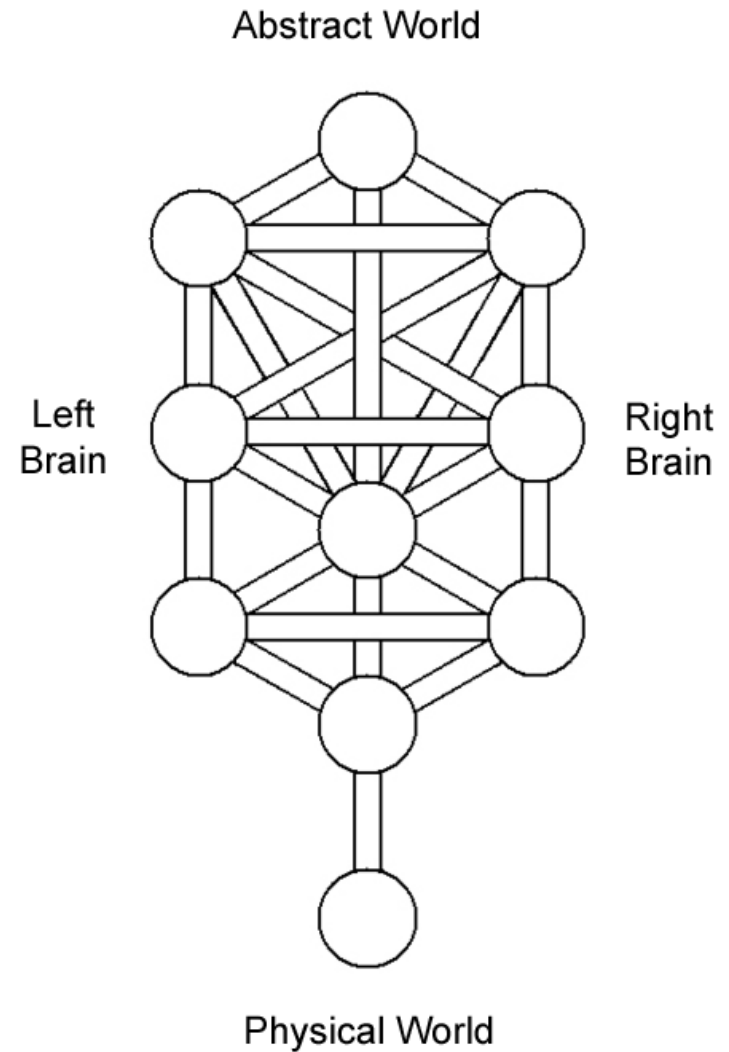
The left side of the tree, however, corresponds to the analytical functions of the left hemisphere of the brain, i.e. mathematics, language, and the structure and meaning that we impose upon our perception of reality.



The bottom of the tree represents our physical world while the top of the tree represents the non-physical world where we encounter abstract thought and what we might call spiritual realities.

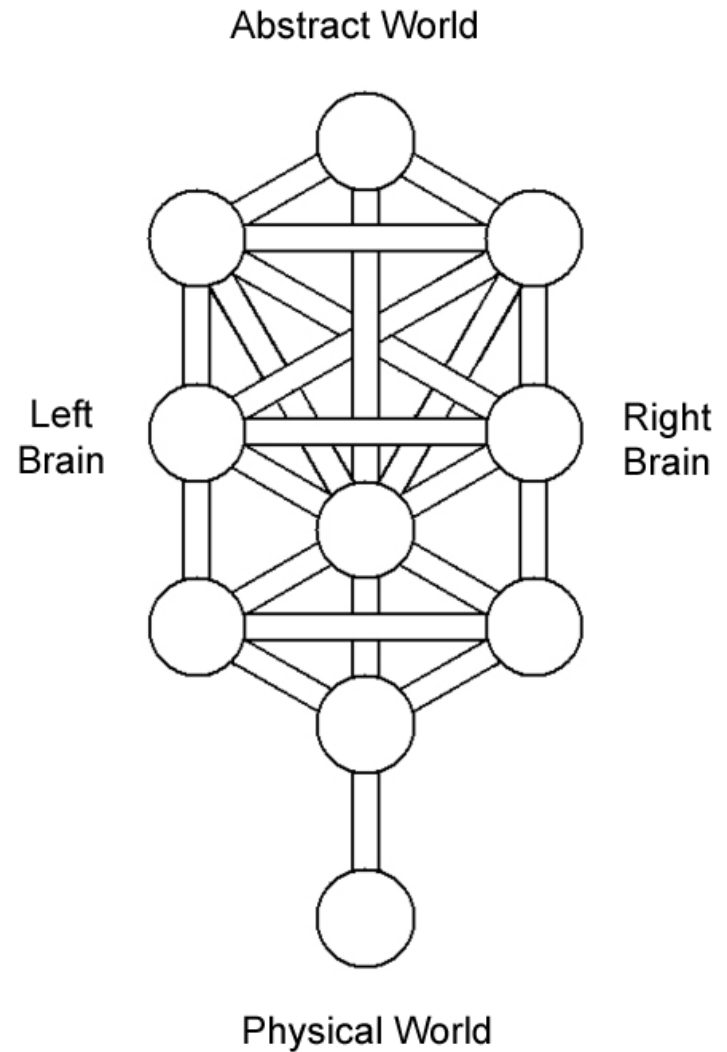


Your exercise for now is to examine your own life and determine where you fit on the tree. Do you live in the abstract world of ideas, or is your focus more on what is concrete?

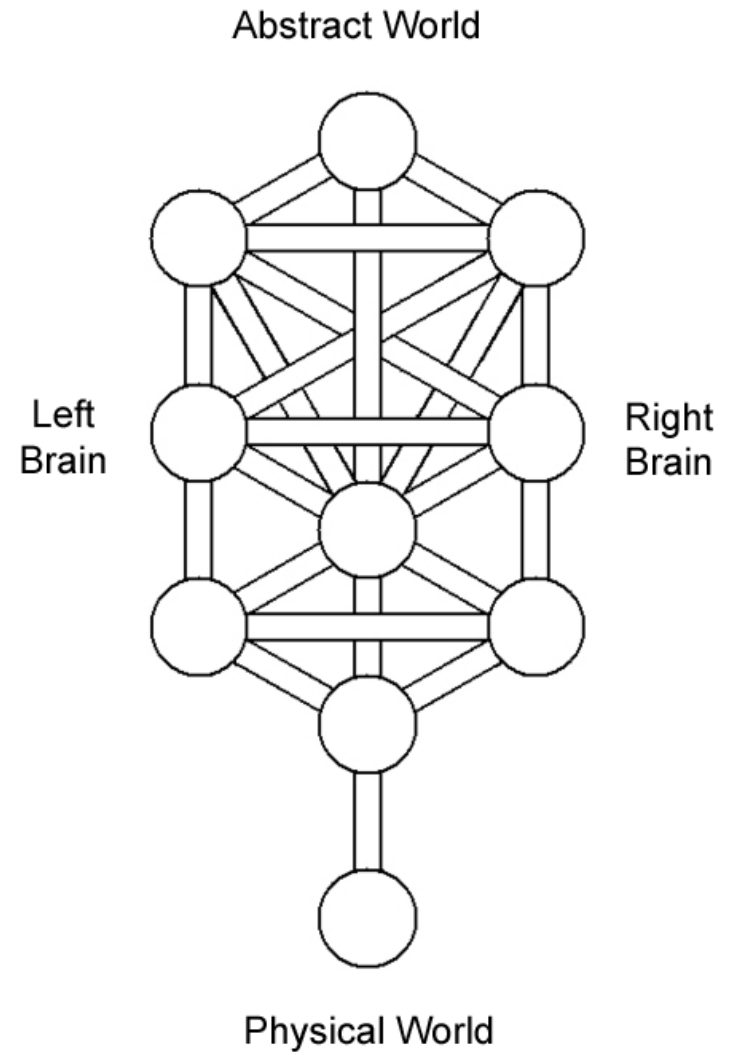




Are you an analytical, left brain person, or are you more of an artistic, intuitive, right brain person?



Assess yourself and  
decide where you fit on the  
tree.



As we progress, you'll come to understand the importance of balance, and by understanding where you are starting from on the tree, you will know your strengths and your weaknesses and what you have to do to achieve a better balance.

