

## HuG Glossary

**Ain Sof** – "The Infinite One" (lit. that which is boundless) A term used in Kabbalah to refer to God's transcendent aspect and/or the pure essence of God, as much as we are able to conceptualize that which is beyond conception. On a deeper level the term is not a proper noun referring to God or even an aspect of God, but rather Ain Sof is a description of the limits of human consciousness, i.e. there is a beginning to our comprehension of the divine process but there is *Ain Sof*, no end to our inability to conclude the conceptualization. Thus, there are infinite layers or modes of *Ain Sof*.

**Ba'al haTanya** – Master (Author) of the Tanya (the opening word of the fundamental work of Habad Hasidut by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi of the 18th century).

**Chazal** – Acrostic for "*Chachameinu Zichronom L'Bracha*" or "Our Sages, their memory is a blessing." It refers to a statement or act of the sages from the period of the Talmud, Midrash and Zohar.

**Din** – (Lit. Judgment, also synonymous with *gevura*). In Kabbalah and in HuG terminology *din* often refers to harsh and unmitigated *gevura*, i.e., judgment and retribution as opposed to mitigated, sweetened and transformed *gevurot*.

**EI Shadai** – God Almighty, a divine name referred to in Genesis 28:3. Associated with *yesod*, channel and conduit, i.e. a vessel of *gevurot*.

**Gevura** – Usually translated as strength or might. Kabbalistically, the *gevurot* (in the plural), refer specifically to a field of contracting divine potencies associated with feminine-like energies (yet not as actual female gender). Due to their apparent contradictory manifestations the essence of the *gevurot* is exceedingly difficult to grasp and requires a spiritually mature and well-trained mindset.

**HaBaD** – The most prolific of all streams of Hasidism. HaBaD is the "brains" of the Hasidic movement, the intellectually oriented branch as evidenced by their name which means "wisdom, understanding, and knowledge" – the right, left, and middle brains of the Godhead. Present day Habad, however, is very different from its original form 200 years ago.

**Halacha** -- (from the root *halach*, "to go") The legal side of Judaism (as distinct from aggadah, the non-legal material found in rabbinical literature) which embraces personal, social, national, and international relationships and all the other practices and observances of Judaism.

**Hassidut** – Revivalist movement initiated by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov in the early 18th century. In affect, Hassidut is a therapeutic and charismatic application of the Kabbalah and of Lurianic Kabbalah in particular.

**Hesed** – Usually translated as loving kindness. Kabbalistically, the *hasadim* (in the plural), refer to a field of expanding divine potencies associated with masculine-like energies (yet not as actual male gender). Although ostensibly easier to grasp than the paradoxical nature of the *gevurot*, the *hasadim* cannot be revealed or even conceptualized without the *gevurot*.

**Hey** - Fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet represented by the letter "H" in the text.

**Leviathan** – Literally, a sea beast mentioned in the books of Job and Isaiah, of which the righteous *tzaddikim* will eat in the future. Kabbalistically, Leviathan is an encompassing, metaphoric code for a constellation of esoteric concepts.

**Midrash** – (From the Hebrew root *drsh*, lit. "to search," "to seek," and "to investigate"). A genre of rabbinic literature compiled between the third and twelfth centuries consisting of homilies, biblical exegesis as well as *aggadot* or *halakhot*, and forming a running commentary on specific books of the Bible.

**Mishnah** – A digest and codex of the Oral Law edited by Rabbi Yehudah The Prince in the beginning of the 3rd century. Two Torahs were given at Mt. Sinai, the Written Torah and the Oral Torah. Until it was codified, the Mishna remained strictly oral as it was forbidden to write it down.

**Mitnagdim** – (literally: Opposers) Refers to the primarily Lithuanian opposition to the Hassidic movement initiated by the Baal Shem Tov.

**Mitzvot** – Commandments. From the Hebrew root "to connect" and "unite."

**O'lam haBah** – The World (or dimension) To Come. Literally, it translates as the World that has [already] come or is [continually] coming.

**O'lam haZeh** – This World, the present state of reality.

**Sefer Yetzirah** – (Book of Formation) One of the earliest works of Kabbalah transmitted by the Patriarch Abraham and redacted into written form by Rabbi Akiva nearly 2000 years ago. Sefer Yetzirah was translated into English by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan and others.

**Rachamim** – Mercy. The middle pillar between *hesed* on the right and *gevura* on the left. Rachamim inclines to the right and is therefore sometimes associated with *hesed*.

**Resh Lakish** – Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish a third century C.E. Palestinian *amora* recorded throughout the Talmud.

**Shaul HaMelech** – King Saul.

**Shmuel HaNavi** – Samuel the Prophet.

**Shulchan Aruch HaRav** – A redaction of the Code of Jewish Law according to the first Rebbe of HaBa”D, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi.

**Siddurim** – (Singular: Siddur) Jewish liturgy/prayer book.

**Talmud** - (Heb. lmd, lit. "study" or "learning"). Comprised of both the Mishna and Gemara (commentary on the Mishna), the Talmud is the collected legal, ethical, and aggadic discussions of the rabbis, edited around the year 500 CE.

**Tzimtzum** - (lit. restriction, contraction and by extension, concealment). In order for the creation of independent realities to coexist with the Omnipresent, a "space" was vacated in the midst of the *Ain Sof*. The power that holds back the absolute Oneness from overwhelming creation is the *tzimtzum*. *Tzimtzum* is powered by primordial *gevurot*.

**Tanya** – See Ba'al haTanya.

**Tosafot** - Additional commentaries written in the Talmud by a school of sages living in France, Germany, and England, in the 12th century.

**Vav** – Sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet that is represented by the letter "V" in the text.

**Yud** – Tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet that is represented by the letter "Y" in the text.