

NOTHING AND THREENESS

Two First Principles and the Formal Architecture of Creation

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Abstract

This paper argues that two propositions, held together and followed to their logical conclusions, generate the complete formal architecture of creation — the ten Sephiroth, the Tree of Life, and the specific structural order of the created dimensional world. The first proposition, ‘Nothing can limit God but itself,’ establishes the kenotic mechanism of creation: the only way genuine otherness can exist is through divine self-limitation. The second proposition, ‘The Trinity is the source of Threeness, not its instance,’ establishes the formal architecture of creation: if nothing external can constrain God, then the forms themselves — including number, structure, and relational pattern — must be defined by the divine essence rather than being prior constraints upon it. Together, the two propositions generate a specific derivation order: the Monad (the Father, the principle of self-limitation), the Dyad (the Logos, the principle of self-expression into genuine otherness), the Triad (the Spirit, the principle of completed relational unity), and the subsequent formal principles that constitute the Decad and the complete Tree of Life. The paper situates this derivation within the Iamblichan arithmological tradition, shows how the two propositions together accomplish what neither can accomplish alone — the first providing the mechanism and the second providing the structure of creation — and concludes by demonstrating that the Tree of Life is not an arbitrary symbolic system but the necessary formal consequence of two truths about God taken with full seriousness.

Keywords: First Principles · Kenosis · Trinity · Threeness · Monad · Dyad · Triad · Decad · Arithmology · Iamblichus · Sephiroth · Tree of Life · KEP · Adam Kadmon · Partzufim

I. The Two Propositions

I.1 — Statement and Independence

This paper begins from two propositions and follows them where they lead. Before stating them, a brief orientation is necessary for readers unfamiliar with the philosophical framework within

which they operate. Kenotic Effluent Panapotheism (KEP) is a philosophical theology developed by the present author across a series of works beginning with a 2016 M.A. thesis at Sacred Heart University and continuing through the Catharturgy Corpus — a systematic body of work integrating Neoplatonic metaphysics, Lurianic Kabbalah, Chalcedonian Christology, and contemporary neuroscience into a unified account of the God-world relationship, the structure of the human soul, and the cathartic path of spiritual purification. The system's name encodes its governing concepts: kenotic (from the Greek *kenosis*, self-emptying — the specific mode of divine creative action); effluent (flowing outward — the directional character of the creative act from source to expression); and panapotheism (from the Greek *pan*, all, and *apotheos*, from God — the claim that all things proceed from God through the kenotic act without being identical to God). The complete system is named Catharturgy — from *katharsis* (purification) and *ergon* (work) — the active work of purification undertaken in embodied life. The present paper proposes to ground the entire system in two first principles from which the rest can be derived.

The first proposition: Nothing can limit God but itself.

The second proposition: The Trinity is the source of Threeness, not its instance.

These two propositions are logically independent. Neither is derivable from the other. The first is a claim about divine sovereignty and the structure of the God-world relationship: it excludes any external constraint on God and generates the kenotic mechanism of creation. The second is a claim about the relationship between the divine essence and the formal order: it establishes the direction of derivation between God and the forms. One could, in principle, hold either proposition without the other. A theologian could affirm that nothing external can limit God while holding that the forms — number, structure, logical relation — are independent Platonic realities that God instantiates rather than defines. A different theologian could affirm that the Trinity is the source of Threeness while holding that God's creative act is not kenotic but emanative, not a self-limitation but a necessary overflowing. The two propositions occupy different philosophical territory, and neither forces the other.

Their power lies in what they generate when held together.

I.2 — What the First Proposition Establishes

The first proposition has been developed at length in 'Nothing Can Limit God But Itself.' Its argument requires restatement here rather than mere summary, because the present paper's deductive structure depends on the reader understanding the logical force of the first proposition as a premise, not merely accepting it as a conclusion. The proposition 'Nothing can limit God but itself' has a deceptively simple grammatical form, but its logical content is dense. It does the work of three separate philosophical claims simultaneously. First, it is a claim about omnipotence: no external force, no prior constraint, no independent reality is capable of imposing a limitation on God. This is not merely the assertion that God is very powerful — it is the categorical exclusion of any external source of limitation whatsoever. If something outside God could limit God, God would not be the unlimited ground of all being but a very large being within a larger ontological

context that constrained it. Second, it is a claim about the only available form of divine constraint. If nothing external can limit God, then any limitation that exists in the divine relationship to the created order must be self-generated. God is not limited by physics, by the laws of logic conceived as independent of God, by the nature of creaturely freedom as an external fact, or by any metaphysical principle external to the divine nature. The only available source of constraint is God itself. This is not a concession of weakness — it is the most maximal statement of divine sovereignty possible. Third, and most consequentially, it is a claim about the structure of creation. For a created order that is genuinely distinct from God to exist at all — for anything to exist that is not simply God — the unlimited must in some sense make room for the other. An unlimited being, taken with full seriousness, is a being with no dimensional determination whatsoever — no specific number of dimensions, no location, no temporal sequence, no finite causal reach. Such a being, by its nature, leaves no ontological room alongside itself. Omnipresence, properly understood, means not merely that God is everywhere but that there is no ‘alongside’ — no space external to God in which a created order could be placed. But since nothing external can do this making-room, God must make room itself. The creative act is kenotic by logical necessity: God freely limits itself to allow genuine otherness to exist. This is why the Lurianic concept of *tzimtzum* — the divine contraction or withdrawal that precedes creation — is not merely a cultural parallel to KEP but its most precise pre-modern articulation. Isaac Luria arrived at essentially the same logical conclusion through the internal logic of Kabbalistic theology: *Ein Sof*, as the absolutely unlimited, must contract to allow anything else to exist. The consequences that follow from this single proposition are substantial. The dimensional incommensurability of the unlimited God with the created order follows directly: if God’s self-limitation produced the dimensional frame of creation, then God cannot act as a finite causal agent within that frame without undermining it — which is to say, without uncreating creation. The dissolution of the Problem of Evil follows: God’s non-intervention in specific suffering is not impotence but the consistent expression of the self-limitation that constitutes creation’s integrity. The structural necessity of the Incarnation follows: if the only way God can be directly present within the dimensional order is through a further self-limitation, then the Incarnation is a second kenotic act following the same logic as the first. And the preservation of divine omnipotence follows: self-limitation is a form of power, not its absence, because a God who could not self-limit would be less free, not more powerful.

What the first proposition does not establish — and this is the gap the second proposition fills — is the specific formal architecture of what the kenotic act produces. But before turning to that gap, a further consequence of the first proposition must be developed, because it is the structural hinge that connects the kenotic mechanism to the formal derivation that follows: the necessity of dimensional perpendicularity. The kenotic act produces genuine otherness. But what is the structural relationship between the unlimited divine ground and the genuine otherness it produces? There are only three logically possible relationships, and the first proposition eliminates two of them. The first possibility is parallelism: the unlimited and the dimensional order exist alongside each other in the same ontological register, like two objects occupying distinct regions of a shared space. But this violates the first proposition directly. If the unlimited and the dimensional exist in the same register, then the dimensional order bounds the unlimited from outside — there is something alongside God, something that occupies ontological territory that God does not. This would be an external limitation on God, which the first proposition

categorically excludes. A God with something alongside it is not the unlimited ground of all being but a very large being within a larger ontological context. The second possibility is identity: the unlimited simply is the dimensional order, viewed from a different angle. This is Spinoza's move — *Deus sive Natura*, God or Nature, the same substance under different attributes. But this eliminates the genuine otherness that the kenotic act was supposed to produce. If the created order is merely God in another mode, then the kenotic act produced nothing genuinely other — creation is a modulation of the divine substance, not a genuine creaturely existence with its own integrity. The dissolution of the Problem of Evil, the structural necessity of the Incarnation, and the entire cathartic framework all require that the created order be genuinely distinct from God — not a divine mode but a genuine creature. Identity eliminates this. The third possibility is perpendicularity: the unlimited and the dimensional order exist in categorically different ontological registers that intersect without being reducible to each other. The dimensional order is genuinely other to the unlimited — it has boundaries, constraints, temporal sequence, spatial determination, causal structure that the unlimited does not possess. But it is not alongside the unlimited in the same register — it exists orthogonally, in a dimensional register that the unlimited's self-limitation opened, intersecting with the unlimited ground at every point of its existence without being identical to it. This is the only structural relationship that satisfies both requirements of the first proposition simultaneously: genuine otherness (the created order is really distinct from God, with its own causal integrity and dimensional character) and no external limitation (the created order does not bound God from outside, because it exists in a different ontological register that the kenotic act itself produced). Perpendicularity is therefore not an additional claim bolted onto the kenotic argument — it is deduced from the first proposition as the only viable structural relationship between the unlimited and the genuine otherness that the kenotic act produces. The created order exists in a dimension perpendicular to the unlimited ground: genuinely other, genuinely distinct, genuinely its own — and yet intersecting with the unlimited at every point, sustained at every moment by the continuous kenotic self-limitation that produced it. This has immediate and far-reaching consequences. If the created order exists in a perpendicular ontological register, then consciousness — the specific mode of creaturely existence that can apprehend the unlimited ground from within the dimensional order — must itself be dimensionally perpendicular: oriented toward the unlimited along an axis that is orthogonal to the dimensional axes of the physical world. This is the biological perpendicularity that the Catharturgy Corpus has documented in detail: the intersection of the cephalization axis (the ontological direction of the soul's orientation toward its source) and the bilateral symmetry axis (the existential structure of the soul's relational engagement with the created world), meeting at the cephalized brain, which is the specific biological site of perpendicular consciousness. The soul's perpendicular orientation is not a metaphor — it is the structural consequence of the kenotic act's perpendicular character. And if the created order exists in a perpendicular register, then the forms that govern it — the structural principles of number, relation, and pattern that constitute its formal architecture — must be forms that can operate across the perpendicular threshold. They must be defined in the unlimited register (by the divine essence) and actualised in the dimensional register (through the kenotic act). The forms are therefore not arbitrary — they are the specific structural principles that perpendicular creation requires. The Monad, as the principle of determinacy, is the formal structure that makes the perpendicular threshold crossable: it is the form of self-limitation itself, the principle by which the unlimited becomes determinable in the dimensional register. The Dyad, as the principle of otherness, is the formal

structure of the perpendicular gap itself: the principle of genuine distinction between registers. The Triad, as the principle of return, is the formal structure that allows the perpendicular gap to be traversed in both directions — from the unlimited into the dimensional (creation) and from the dimensional back toward the unlimited (catharturgy, the soul's return). Perpendicularity is therefore the structural hinge between the two propositions: the first proposition necessitates perpendicularity as the only viable structure of creation, and perpendicularity in turn necessitates specific formal principles that can operate across the perpendicular threshold — which is precisely what the second proposition's derivation provides. With this structural consequence in view, the gap that the second proposition fills can be stated precisely. The first proposition establishes that God must self-limit, that the self-limitation produces a dimensionally perpendicular created order, and that the forms governing that order must operate across the perpendicular threshold. But it does not tell us what those forms specifically are, in what order they are derived, or why the formal architecture has the particular ten-node structure that the Kabbalistic tradition identifies as the Tree of Life. The first proposition constrains the structural character of the forms (they must be perpendicular-threshold-crossing principles) without specifying their content. It gives us the mechanism and the geometry of creation but not the formal architecture. The kenotic act, derived from the first proposition alone, could produce any perpendicular dimensional order whose forms satisfy the threshold-crossing requirement — the proposition constrains the how and the where of creation without constraining the what.

A recent development in the companion paper sharpens what the first proposition does establish about the kenotic act's specific character. A dimension is itself a limitation — not a limitation within a pre-existing space, but the ground condition of all possible limitation. Before dimensions exist, no positions can be specified, no regions bounded, no inside distinguished from outside. Therefore the creation of four-dimensional spacetime is the creation of limitation itself. By the first proposition, this act can only be God's self-limitation. The kenotic creative act and the creation of dimensionality are not two inferential steps but one immediate identification. This tightens the present paper's derivation: where Section IV below describes the kenotic act as the mechanism that 'actualises' the formal architecture, the dimensional identification means the act of creating dimensional structure simply is the kenotic self-limitation. The full argument and its formal proof are developed in 'Nothing Can Limit God But Itself' v3, Sections III.1–III.4.

I.3 — What the Second Proposition Establishes

The second proposition addresses this gap directly, and it does so by entering one of the oldest and most consequential debates in the history of philosophy: the question of whether the forms — the structural principles that govern the organisation of reality (number, shape, relation, pattern) — are prior to God, coextensive with God, or defined by God. The Platonic tradition holds that the forms are eternal and self-subsistent, existing in the realm of Ideas independently of any mind that apprehends them. On this account, the form of Three exists whether or not anything triune exists; the form of Circle exists whether or not any physical circle is drawn. God, if God exists, instantiates these forms but does not create them. The Aristotelian modification internalises the forms into substances but still treats them as explanatory principles that constrain what anything — including God — can be. The classical Christian synthesis, particularly in Augustine and

Aquinas, relocates the forms into the divine intellect: the forms are ideas in the mind of God, eternal but not independent of God. KEP's second proposition radicalises this Augustinian-Thomistic move by drawing out its full implications through the lens of the first proposition. If nothing external can limit God — and this includes the forms — then the forms are not merely located in the divine mind as if God were a container for pre-existing structures. The divine essence actively defines the forms. The direction of derivation runs from God to form, never from form to God. The logical structure of the second proposition is as follows.

If the Trinity is subject to Threeness — if the form of Three is a prior formal category that the Trinity instantiates — then something external to God determines God's nature: the Platonic form of Three, existing independently as a logical or metaphysical necessity, would be constraining what God can be. But the first proposition rules this out absolutely: nothing external can limit God. Therefore the form of Three cannot be ontologically prior to the Trinity. The Trinity does not instantiate a prior category; the Trinity defines the category. Threeness exists because God is triune, not the other way around.

This is not merely a theological preference or a pious assertion of divine sovereignty over abstract objects. It is a logical deduction from the two propositions held together. The first proposition excludes any external constraint on God. The second proposition applies this exclusion to the formal order specifically: the forms — including number itself — cannot be external constraints on God and therefore must be defined by the divine essence rather than being prior to it.

And this application, once made for Threeness, applies universally. If the form of Three is not prior to God, then neither is the form of Two, nor of One, nor of any number, nor of any formal structure whatsoever. All forms are defined by the divine essence. None are ontologically prior to God. None constrain God from outside. The entire formal order — number, structure, relation, pattern — derives from the divine essence rather than the reverse. This is the second proposition's distinctive contribution: it establishes the direction of derivation between God and the forms and thereby opens the question of the specific order in which the divine essence defines them.

The first proposition tells us that God must self-limit to create. The second tells us that the forms of creation are defined by the divine essence rather than being constraints upon it. Together they tell us that creation has a specific formal architecture that is derivable from the nature of God — and the task of the remaining sections is to trace that derivation.

II. The Mathematical Derivation: The Three Hypostases as Monad, Dyad, and Triad

II.1 — The Monad: The Father and the Principle of Limitation

If the forms are defined by the divine essence, then there is a first form — a formal principle that is logically prior to all others, defined by the divine essence before any other formal distinction is

drawn. This first form is the Monad. The derivation that follows draws on the arithmological tradition of the Neopythagorean and Neoplatonic schools, most fully developed in Iamblichus of Chalcis (c. 245–c. 325 CE) and preserved in *The Theology of Arithmetic* attributed to him, in Nicomachus of Gerasa's *Introduction to Arithmetic*, and in Theon of Smyrna's *Mathematics Useful for Understanding Plato*. Arithmology is not numerology in the modern popular sense — it is the systematic philosophical investigation of the formal principles that numbers encode: the qualitative character of number as such, not merely its quantitative application. The Pythagorean tradition, from which Iamblichus draws, held that number is not an abstraction imposed on reality by the counting mind but the structural grammar of reality itself — that the formal principles encoded in the Monad, Dyad, Triad, and their successors are the specific forms that govern the organisation of all that exists. KEP's two propositions provide the theological ground that the Pythagorean tradition intuited but could not formally justify: the forms encoded in number govern reality because they are defined by the divine essence whose kenotic self-limitation produces reality. The arithmological derivation is not a parallel to the theological argument — it is the same argument stated in the formal register.

The Monad is not the number one in the counting sense — not the first item in a sequence of enumerated things. It is the principle of determinacy itself: the formal condition that makes anything identifiable as a specific thing rather than an undifferentiated whole. Without the Monad, there is no 'this' as opposed to 'that,' no boundary, no specificity, no form of any kind. The Monad is the principle by which the unlimited can be determinate — the first self-limitation, the formal structure that makes limitation itself possible.

In Trinitarian terms, the Monad is the mathematical derivation of the Father — the first hypostasis, the principle of divine self-identity, the unity that is the ground of the Godhead's self-knowledge and self-love. The Father is not 'one God among others'; the Father is the hypostasis of unity itself, the Monad considered as a hypostasis. In the Kabbalistic register the Monad corresponds to Kether — the Crown, the dimensionless point, the head of the supernal triad. The Monad/Dyad/Triad is throughout the mathematical derivation of the three hypostases of the Trinity, not an account of one hypostasis producing the next: the three are co-eternal and co-present, three Monads in union, and the arithmology derives their structure rather than generating them in sequence.

In Iamblichus's arithmology, the Monad is explicitly not a number but the source of number — the principle by which the unlimited becomes determinable. This is what the first proposition establishes at the metaphysical level: the only available form of limitation is self-limitation, and the Monad is the formal expression of this self-limiting capacity. The Father defines the Monad; the Monad does not define the Father. The Monad is the mathematical character of the first hypostasis, not a stage from which the others are produced.

II.2 — The Dyad: The Logos and the Principle of Otherness

The Dyad is the mathematical structure of otherness — of distinction, of 'this' as opposed to 'that.' Determinacy and distinction are one act: to determine is to distinguish, so the Monad and the

Dyad are not first and second in time but two inseparable aspects of one structure, unity and the otherness that unity entails. The Dyad is not a second Monad added to the first nor a thing the Monad produces; it is the formal structure of otherness intrinsic to determinacy, the mathematical derivation of the relation of distinction among the three Monads in union.

In Trinitarian terms, the Dyad is the mathematical derivation of the Son — the Logos, the second hypostasis, God's eternal self-knowledge, the Word. The Logos is the hypostasis of genuine otherness within God: the divine self-knowledge that is truly other to the source while wholly consubstantial with it. This is what the Dyad formally encodes — not numerical succession (one, then two) but the structure of genuine otherness within a unity. The Logos is what Twoness is: the capacity of a unity to hold what is genuinely other to itself while remaining itself, co-eternally and without succession.

In the Kabbalistic register, the Dyad corresponds to Chokmah — the second of the supernal triad, genuinely other to Kether while remaining in the same divine register. Chokmah is the Son, the Logos, the hypostasis of self-knowledge; in the form of the primordial Man it is one of the two supernal hemispheres, the focused knowing of the one divine mind. (The older tradition that reads Chokmah as Abba and Binah as Imma is a gendered cosmological gloss; in the present derivation Chokmah and Binah are the Son and the Spirit, the two hemispheres of the Father's one mind.) The relation of Kether and Chokmah is the mathematical relation of Monad to Dyad: unity and the otherness it entails, held in union.

The kenotic significance of the Dyad is immediate. The first proposition establishes that genuine otherness exists only through divine self-limitation. The Dyad is the formal structure of that otherness, the form self-limitation takes when stated as a formal principle; the kenotic creative act — God limiting itself to let something genuinely other exist — is the Dyad actualised as creaturely existence. The Logos, as the hypostasis of genuine otherness, is therefore the hypostatic mode in which the second kenotic act, the Incarnation, is enacted, as established in 'Nothing Can Limit God But Itself.'

II.3 — The Triad: The Spirit and the Principle of Return

The Dyad taken by itself — otherness considered alone — is incomplete: distinction without integration, two without the relation that makes them a whole. The Triad is the mathematical structure of completed relation: the third that constitutes source, otherness, and their union as a genuine whole rather than a bare pair. This is not a third term arriving after two to rescue them from regress; it is the structure of completeness intrinsic to the union, the mathematical derivation of the relation that holds the three Monads as one.

In Trinitarian terms, the Triad is the mathematical derivation of the Holy Spirit — the third hypostasis, the Love between the Knower and the Known, the completed relational unity of the Godhead. The Spirit is not a third thing added to two prior things; it is the hypostasis of completed relation, the structure in which unity, otherness, and their integration are one whole and not an aggregate. This is why the second proposition holds that the Trinity is the source of

Threeness, not its instance: the character of Threeness — the minimum structure of complete relational unity — is derived from the Trinity's own relational character, not imposed from a prior category.

In the Kabbalistic register, the Triad corresponds to Binah — the third of the supernal triad, the Holy Spirit, the hypostasis of completed relation and Love; in the form of the primordial Man it is the other supernal hemisphere, the relational holding of the one divine mind. The supernal triad is thus Kether, Chokmah, and Binah — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Monad, Dyad, and Triad considered as the three hypostases in union, the head and two hemispheres of the primordial Man. It is not three Sephiroth produced one from another but the mathematical derivation of the three hypostases that are co-eternally one.

In Iamblichus's arithmology, the Triad is the first genuine number — the first that has beginning, middle, and end, and therefore the first complete formal structure. The Monad is the source of number but not itself a number; the Dyad is the principle of distinction but not yet a complete structure; the Triad is the first complete formal unity. This is a logical ordering of the principles, not a temporal one, and it corresponds to the Trinitarian claim: the three hypostases are the complete relational structure of the divine essence, the minimum configuration of complete relational unity — three Monads in union.

The Monad is the mathematical character of unity (the Father), the Dyad of otherness (the Son), the Triad of completed relation (the Holy Spirit). These three formal principles are not discovered by the divine essence in a pre-existing order, nor produced one from another in sequence; they are the mathematical derivation of the divine essence's own internal relational structure, the three hypostases stated arithmologically. The Trinity is the three Monads in union, and the Monad, Dyad, and Triad are that union derived as number. These characterisations are sharpened in the dedicated treatment, where the Dyad is specified as the form of construction and the Triad as the form of relation; the two accounts are one, the arithmological derivation giving the formal structure of the three hypostases and the dedicated treatment giving the operations they perform.

III. From the Triad to the Decad: The Formal Architecture of Creation

III.1 — The Tetrad and the Principle of Extension

Once the Monad, Dyad, and Triad are established as the three foundational formal principles, the derivation continues by the same logic. Each subsequent formal principle is generated by the divine essence's internal self-knowledge as it defines the forms that creation will require.

The Tetrad is the first formal principle that has genuine spatial extension. In Pythagorean and Iamblichan arithmology, four is the number of the first solid figure — the tetrahedron, the minimum number of points required to define a three-dimensional volume. The Tetrad is therefore the formal principle of the dimensional order itself: the form that makes spatial extension possible. In the Kabbalistic register, the Tetrad corresponds to Chesed — the first

Sephira below the Abyss, the expansive mercy that opens outward into the created dimensional world. Chesed is the right DLPFC's broad contextual executive function, the faculty that surveys and inhabits the spatial field. The transition from the supernal triad (above the Abyss) to Chesed (below the Abyss) is the formal transition from the divine relational structure to the dimensional order that the kenotic act produces — and the Tetrad is the formal principle that makes this transition possible.

III.2 — The Pentad Through the Ennead

The dimensional limitation argument connects to the Tetrad's cosmological significance. The Projection Hypothesis establishes that four-dimensional spacetime is the peak of exceptional geometric complexity: six regular polytopes exist in four dimensions, compared to only three at every higher dimensionality. If the kenotic creative act is the creation of dimensionality itself, then four dimensions is the fullest expression of the formal principle of extension — the dimensionality at which the limiting act reaches its richest formal realisation before geometric simplification resumes. The Tetrad's correspondence to four-dimensional spacetime is therefore not merely numerical symbolism. It is the formal principle of extension finding its fullest natural expression in the act that created it.

The subsequent formal principles — Pentad through Ennead — continue the derivation. Each defines a formal structure that the created order requires, and each corresponds to a specific Sephira on the Tree. The Pentad (five, the number of life, the pentagon and pentagram, the principle of organic self-regeneration) corresponds to Geburah — the restrictive severity that gives life its specific form through limitation and discipline. The Hexad (six, the first perfect number, equal to the sum of its divisors, the principle of cosmic harmony) corresponds to Tiphareth — the solar centre, the integrating beauty that holds the moral soul in balanced harmony. The Heptad (seven, the number of completion and cyclical return) corresponds to Netzach — the aesthetic endurance, the victory of form through time. The Octad (eight, the first cube, the principle of structural stability) corresponds to Hod — the intellectual splendour that organises knowledge into stable communicable form. The Ennead (nine, the last single digit, the threshold of completion) corresponds to Yesod — the Foundation, the final integrative substrate before the created order achieves its full material instantiation.

Each of these correspondences deserves fuller development than this paper's scope permits. What matters for the present argument is the structural claim: that the derivation order from Monad through Ennead is not arbitrary but follows from the divine essence's own formal self-definition, and that the resulting sequence corresponds to the ten Sephiroth in the specific order that the Kabbalistic tradition has always maintained. The tradition, on this account, is not a human symbolic invention but a genuine apprehension of the formal architecture that the divine essence defines.

III.3 — The Decad and the Tetractys: The Complete Formal Architecture

The Decad — ten — is not merely the tenth number in a counting sequence. It is the Tetractys: the sum of the first four formal principles, one through four summing to ten, the structure in which the Monad, Dyad, Triad, and Tetrad reach their complete expression. The figure is a triangle of ten points in four rows, and it encodes the foundational formal relationships of music, geometry, and cosmology that the Pythagorean tradition revered. The insight KEP grounds theologically is that the Tetractys is not a convenient summary of numerical relationships but the formal grammar of the created order — the structure in which the first four principles articulate the complete architecture of creation. It is the formal ground of the ten Sefirot.

And just as the Monad, Dyad, and Triad are the mathematical derivation of the three hypostases of the Trinity, the Decad is the mathematical derivation of Adam Kadmon. The ten as Tetractys is the primordial Man expressed as number: the full decadic form, all ten Sefirot, the Tree of Life. The supernal triad — Kether, Chokmah, Binah — is the Trinity, the head and two hemispheres; the remaining Sefirot are the body of the same Man, down to Malkuth, the Kingdom, his lowest reach, in which the whole is present in fully determined form. Malkuth is not a fourth term of the Trinity but the completion of Adam Kadmon — the decad come to its ground. The mathematics derives both: the triad derives the three hypostases, the decad derives the primordial Man.

The Tree of Life, on this account, is the Tetractys derived in full — the formal architecture of creation displayed as a relational map of ten nodes and their connecting paths. It is not a symbol imposed on creation from without; it is the formal structure the divine essence defines through its own internal self-knowledge, actualised as creaturely existence through the kenotic act. The ten Sefirot are the ten formal principles the divine essence defines in order for a dimensionally determinate created order to exist — the mathematical derivation of Adam Kadmon, the primordial form from which all creation is modelled at every register.

The Tetractys is the formal summary of the divine self-knowledge expressed as number: one, two, three, four, summing to ten — unity, otherness, completed relation, and extension; Monad, Dyad, Triad, Tetrad. The first three derive the three hypostases of the Trinity; the full decad derives Adam Kadmon. The Tree of Life is the Tetractys fully elaborated, and it is necessary, not arbitrary, because the divine essence defines the forms, and these ten are the forms it defines. The identification of this decadic form with the primordial Man, and of the supernal triad with the three hypostases as the head and hemispheres of that Man, is developed in the companion treatise, ‘The Manifestation of the Great Light.’

IV. The Two Propositions Together: Mechanism and Structure

The complete account of creation now emerges from the two propositions held together.

The first proposition provides the mechanism: the kenotic creative act, the self-limitation by which God makes room for genuine otherness. Without this proposition, we have a formal

architecture (the ten Sephiroth, the Tree of Life) but no account of how it becomes actual — how the forms defined in the divine mind become creaturely existence with genuine integrity of its own. The forms would remain eternal potentialities in the divine essence, never actualised as genuine creation.

The second proposition provides the structure: the forms are defined by the divine essence in a specific derivation order beginning with the Monad and completing in the Decad. Without this proposition, we have a kenotic mechanism but no account of what it produces — the self-limitation would occur, but the specific formal architecture of the resulting creation would be indeterminate. Any created order might result from a kenotic act; the second proposition constrains which created order actually does result.

Together: the divine essence defines the forms (second proposition) — the Monad, Dyad, Triad, Tetrad through Decad, the ten Sephiroth, the complete Tree of Life — and kenotically actualises them as genuine creaturely existence (first proposition). The forms are eternal in the divine mind: the Monad, Dyad, Triad, and the complete Decad are always already present as the formal structure of divine self-knowledge. They are what the Kabbalistic tradition calls Adam Kadmon — the archetypal blueprint of the created order, the pattern of ten Monads existing as pure potentiality in God before creation. The kenotic act does not produce the forms; it actualises them. The first proposition provides the actuality; the second provides the form. Together they constitute a complete account of creation: why it occurs (because the unlimited can limit itself), what it produces (the specific formal architecture defined by the divine essence's relational structure), and how the two are related (the kenotic act actualises the eternally defined forms as genuine creaturely existence).

This is the two-register Trinity principle stated in its most fundamental form. The three co-eternal hypostatic modes — Father (Monad), Son-Logos (Dyad), Holy Spirit (Triad) — are eternal forms in the divine mind, defined by the divine essence's own relational character, prior to and independent of any creative act. The kenotic creative act does not produce these forms but actualises them as creaturely existence, generating the created dimensional order whose formal architecture is the Tree of Life. The distinction between what God eternally is (the three hypostatic modes and the forms they define) and what God freely does (the kenotic act that actualises those forms as genuine creation) is preserved absolutely — and it is preserved by the logical independence of the two propositions, which address the two registers separately and generate the full account only when held together.

Nothing can limit God but itself — this is why creation exists at all. The Trinity is the source of Threeness, not its instance — this is why creation has the specific structure it has. The kenotic act provides the existence; the divine self-knowledge provides the form. Together, from two propositions, the whole of the formal architecture of creation follows.

V. Relationship to the Established KEP Framework

The two-proposition foundation developed in this paper deepens and clarifies several established

features of the KEP framework.

First, it provides the formal ground for the Adam Kadmon claim. KEP has consistently maintained that the ten Sephiroth as the archetypal blueprint of creation are eternal forms in the divine mind prior to the creative act. The two-proposition analysis shows why this must be so: the forms are defined by the divine essence's own relational structure (second proposition) and therefore exist eternally in the divine mind before any actuation. They are not contingent on the creative act — they are necessary features of divine self-knowledge. The kenotic act actualises them as creaturely existence, but it does not invent them.

Second, it provides the formal ground for the neurological Qabalah's structural claim. The neurological Qabalah maps the ten Sephiroth onto specific brain structures and networks. If the Sephiroth were arbitrary symbols, this mapping would be a coincidence or a projection. But if the Sephiroth are the necessary formal architecture of any created dimensional order — defined by the divine essence and actualised through the kenotic act — then their recurrence in the brain's architecture is exactly what the perpendicular ontology principle predicts: the same formal structure appearing at every scale of the created order, from the cosmic to the neural, because it is the specific formal pattern that the divine essence defines.

Third, it clarifies the relationship between the Iamblichan and Kabbalistic traditions that KEP synthesises. Iamblichus's arithmology describes the derivation order of the formal principles from the Monad through the Decad. The Kabbalistic Tree of Life describes the ten Sephiroth and their relational paths. The two-proposition analysis shows why these traditions converge: they are describing the same formal architecture from different directions. The arithmological derivation proceeds from the Monad upward through increasing formal complexity; the Kabbalistic Lightning Flash proceeds from Kether downward through the Tree. Both are tracing the same formal structure — the one defined by the divine essence — and both arrive at the same ten-node architecture because there is only one formal architecture that the divine essence's relational structure can define.

Fourth, it provides the ultimate ground for the perpendicular ontology principle itself. If the forms are defined by the divine essence, and if the divine essence is categorically incommensurable with the dimensional order (first proposition), then the forms inhabit a register that is perpendicular to the dimensional order — they are not within the dimensional world as physical objects, but they are the specific formal structure that the dimensional world instantiates at every point and at every scale. The perpendicular consciousness — the soul's dimensionally perpendicular orientation toward the unlimited ground — is the specific mode of existence in which a created being can apprehend the forms from within the dimensional order. This is why catharturgy is possible: the soul, as perpendicular consciousness, has access to the formal architecture that the divine essence defines, and the cathartic work is the progressive alignment of the soul's actual orientation with that formal architecture.

The dimensional limitation argument makes this perpendicularity structurally precise. The unlimited divine ground is dimensionless — without dimensional determination, not merely very large but constitutively prior to the concept of limitation that dimensionality introduces. The

created order is dimensional, constituted by dimensionality as its defining character, as the direct expression of the kenotic act. The relationship between these two registers is therefore not one of degree along a common axis but the perpendicular relation in its precise sense: substance is not a shared coordinate across it, while the registers remain continuous at their intersection. This must be stated carefully, in step with the system as now developed: the perpendicular relation is not a gap or a severance between the dimensional and the dimensionless, but dimensional distinctness joined by continuity at the intersection, on the paradigm of the body and the soul. The created order is continuous from its dimensionless source — it is the source's own outpoured energy, dimensionally conditioned — and distinct from it as the dimensional register it has become. The soul's perpendicular intersection, the Ruach's inhabitation of the register at the boundary with the four-dimensional observable, is the specific structural consequence of a creation whose dimensionality is the conditioned form of the kenotic outpouring, continuous from the dimensionless ground at the intersection and distinct as the dimensional order.

From two propositions, the architecture of the created order is derived rather than assumed. The forms are eternal in the divine mind; the kenotic act makes them actual; the perpendicular consciousness can apprehend them; and the cathartic path is the work of aligning the soul with what it apprehends. This is the complete structural picture of KEP, and it grows from two seeds.

VI. Conclusion: Two Seeds and the Whole Tree

Philosophy begins in the search for first principles — claims that are not derived from anything more fundamental but from which other claims can be derived. A first principle, to deserve the name, must be irreducible, independently grounded, and generative: it must resist further analysis, stand on its own logical foundation, and produce genuine consequences when followed to its conclusions.

The two propositions developed in this paper meet all three conditions. 'Nothing can limit God but itself' is analytically true given the meaning of 'God' as the unlimited ground of all being — denial requires positing some external reality capable of constraining the unlimited, which undermines the concept. 'The Trinity is the source of Threeness, not its instance' follows from the first proposition applied to the formal order — if nothing external can limit God, then the forms cannot be external constraints. Both propositions are irreducible; each stands on its own ground; and together they generate the complete formal architecture of creation.

The first proposition provides the mechanism: the kenotic self-limitation that makes genuine creaturely existence possible. The second provides the structure: the formal derivation from Monad through Dyad, Triad, and Tetrad to the complete Decad, defining the ten Sephiroth as the necessary formal architecture of the created order. Together they show that the Tree of Life is not a cultural artefact, not a symbolic projection, not an arbitrary esoteric diagram — it is the specific formal architecture that the divine essence must define, actualised as creaturely existence through the kenotic act that the unlimited freely undertakes.

The whole of the Catharturgy Corpus — the perpendicular ontology, the neurological Qabalah, the

Christian English Qabalah, the cathartic path, the Kenotic Christianity at its centre — is the systematic working-out of the implications of these two propositions. Everything the system contains is derivable from them. And what is derivable from them, if the derivation is sound, is not a human construction but a genuine apprehension of the formal architecture of reality.

Two propositions. Ten Sephiroth. The whole Tree.

Nothing can limit God but itself. The Trinity is the source of Threeness, not its instance. From these two seeds the whole Tree grows — because the Tree is what the divine essence defines when it knows itself, and the kenotic act is what makes that self-knowledge actual as the world we inhabit and the soul we are and the path we walk. ADONAI HA-ARETZ. The Kingdom is the floor of the House of God. The formal architecture is the blueprint. The two propositions are the foundation on which the blueprint rests.

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