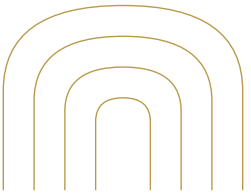
HEKHAL · READER'S EDITION



עץ חיים, שער א, דרוש עגולים ויושר — העיגולים

The Circles

Igulim

Hekhal Targum Project (machine-assisted draft; pending scholarly review)

PROVISIONAL EDITION · MACHINE-ASSISTED · NOT YET REVIEWED BY A CREDENTIALED EDITOR

Edition of 2026-08-13 · hekhal.org

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TRADITION	jewish-mysticism
LANGUAGE	Hebrew
PERIOD	16c (printed 1782)
ATTRIBUTION	Chaim Vital (recording Isaac Luria)
TRANSLATION	Hekhal Targum Project (machine-assisted draft; pending scholarly review)
LICENCE	CC-BY-SA-4.0
ONLINE	https://hekhal.org/texts/etz-chaim-the-circles/

> **Cite this edition:** Hekhal Targum Project, trans. "The Circles." Hekhal reader's edition, 2026-08-13. https://hekhal.org/texts/etz-chaim-the-circles/

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והנה בהיות אור הא"ס נמשך
בבחי' קו ישר תוך החלל הנ"ל לא
נמשך ונתפשט תכף עד למטה.
אמנם היה מתפשט לאט לאט ר"ל
כי בתחלה התחיל קו האור
להתפשט שם ותכף בתחלת
התפשטותו בסוד קו נתפשט
ונמשך ונעשה כעין גלגל א' עגול
מסביב והעגול הזה היה בלתי
דבוק עם אור הא"ס הסובב עליו
מכל צדדיו שאם יתדבק בו יחזור
הדבר לכמות שהיה ויהיה מתבטל
באור א"ס ולא יתראה כחו כלל
ויהיה הכל אור א"ס לבד
כבראשונה לכן העיגול הזה סמוך

Now when the light of the Infinite was drawn in the aspect of a straight line within the aforesaid void, it was not drawn and did not spread all the way down at once; rather, it spread little by little. That is to say, at first the line of light began to spread there, and immediately at the beginning of its spreading, in the secret of the line, it spread and was drawn and became like a single round wheel encompassing all around. And this circle was not joined to the light of the Infinite that surrounds it on all its sides; for were it to join with it, the matter would revert to what it was, and it would be nullified

within the light of the Infinite, and its power would not be seen at all, and all would be the light of the Infinite alone as at first. Therefore this circle is adjacent to the circle of the Infinite and not joined to it. And the whole essence of the binding and cleaving of that emanated circle with the Infinite, the Emanator, is by way of that aforesaid line, through which light descends and is drawn from the Infinite and flows into that circle, while the Infinite surrounds and encompasses it on all its sides, for it too is in the aspect of a circle around it, and distant from it as above, since it is necessary that the illumination of the Infinite into the emanated be by way of that line alone. For if the light were drawn to them also from all their surroundings, the emanated would be in the aspect of the Emanator itself, without limit or measure. And moreover, even that line is very thin, and not of great breadth, so that the light drawn to the emanated be in measure and limit; for which reason the emanated are called 'ten measures' and 'ten sefirot,' to indicate that they have measure and limit and a fixed number, unlike the Infinite, as it is written in the Zohar, Parashat Pinchas: 'the thirteenth commandment, this is the recitation of the Shema ...,' but [of

אל עיגול הא"ס ובלתי מתדבק בו.
וכל עיקר התקשרות ודביקות
העגול הנאצל ההוא עם א"ס
המאציל הוא ע"י הקו ההוא הנ"ל
אשר דרך בו יורד ונמשך אור מן
א"ס ומשפיע בעיגול ההוא והא"ס
סובב ומקיף עליו מכל צדדיו כי
גם הוא בבחי' עגול סביב עליו
ורחוק ממנו כנ"ל כי הוא מוכרח
שהארה א"ס בנאצלים תהיה דרך
קו ההוא לבד. כי אם היה האור
נמשך להם דרך גם מכל
סביבותיהם היו הנאצלים בבחינת
המאציל עצמו בלתי גבול וקצבה
ולא עוד אלא אפי' גם הקו ההוא
דק מאד ולא בהתרחבות גדול כדי
שיהיה האור הנמשך אל הנאצלים
במדה וקצבה אשר לסיבה זו
נקרא הנאצלים י' מדות וי"ס
להורות שיש להם מדה וקצבה
ומספר קצוב משא"כ בא"ס
וכמ"ש בס"ה פ' פנחס פקודא
תליסר דא ק"ש כו' אבל דלא אית
ליה מדה ולא שם ידיע כגוונא
דספירן כו'. דכל ספי' אית לה שם
ידיע ומדה וגבול ותחום ובהיות
הקו דק ימשיך להם שפע כדי
צרכם בלבד בערך היותם נאצלים
ולא יותר מדאי בערך היותם
מאצילים. והנה העגול הזה
הראשון היותר דבוק עם הא"ס
הוא הנקרא כתר דא"ק ואחר כך
נתפשט עוד הקו הזה ונמשך מעט

the Infinite] that it has no measure and no known name, unlike the sefirot ...; for every sefirah has a known name and measure and boundary and limit. And since the line is thin, it draws to them influx sufficient only for their need, in respect of their being emanated, and not too much, in respect of their being emanators. Now this first circle, the one most joined to the Infinite, is what is called the Keter of Adam Kadmon; and afterward this line spread further and was drawn a little, and again circled and became a second circle within the first circle, and this is called the circle of the Chokhmah of Adam Kadmon. It spreads further down still and again circled and became a third circle within the second circle, called the circle of the Binah of Adam Kadmon; and in this manner it went on spreading and circling until the tenth circle, called the circle of the Malkhut of Adam Kadmon. Thus the matter of the ten sefirot that were emanated in the secret of ten circles, one within another, is explained; and all this is the aspect of the ten general sefirot that comprise, in a general way, all the aspects of all the worlds. But it is plain that many kinds of worlds were emanated, created, formed, and made, thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads, and all of

וחזר להתעגל ונעשה עגול ב' תוך עיגול הא' וזה נק' עיגול החכמה דא"ק. עוד מתפשט יותר למטה וחזר להתעגל ונעשה עיגול ג' תוך העיגול הב' ונק' עיגול בינה דא"ק ועד"ז היה הולך ומתפשט ומתעגל עד עגול י' הנק' עיגול מלכות דא"ק הרי נתבאר ענין הי"ס שנאצלו בסוד י' עיגולים זה תוך זה וכ"ז הוא בחי' עשר ספירות הכוללות דרך סתם כל בחי' העולמות כולם. אמנם מבואר ופשוט הוא שכמה מיני עולמות נאצלו ונבראו ונוצרו ונעשו אלף אלפים ורבוא רבואות וכולם כא' הם תוך המקום החלל הנ"ל ואין דבר חוצה לו. והנה כל עולם ועולם יש בו י"ס פרטית וכל ספי' וספי' פרטית שבכל עולם ועולם כלול מי' ספי' פרטי פרטית וכולם הם בצורת עיגולים זה תוך זה וזה לפנים מזה עד אין קץ ומספר וכולם כגלדי בצלים זה תוך זה ע"ד תמונת הגלגלים כנזכר בספרי תוכניים. והנה הבחי' המחברת כל העיגולים יחד הוא ענין קו הדק הזה המתפשט מן הא"ס ועובר ויורד ונמשך מעיגול אל עיגול עד סיום תכלית כולם כנ"ל ודרך הקו הזה נמשך האור והשפע הצריך לכל א' וא' מהם

והרי נתבאר בחי' העיגולים של הי"ס:

them together are within the aforesaid vacated space, and there is nothing outside it. And every single world has within it ten particular sefirot, and every single particular sefirah in each world is comprised of ten particular-of-the-particular sefirot, and they are all in the form of circles one within another, this within that, without end or number, and all of them are like the coats of an onion, one within another, after the manner of the spheres mentioned in the books of the astronomers. And the aspect that joins all the circles together is the matter of this thin line that spreads from the Infinite and passes and descends and is drawn from circle to circle to the very end of them all, as above; and by way of this line the light and the influx required for each and every one of them is drawn. And thus the aspect of the circles of the ten sefirot is explained.

PROVISIONAL DRAFT (PENDING SCHOLARLY REVIEW)

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An orientation

This edition sets the verbatim original-language text beside a fresh English rendering and a critical apparatus: a running commentary on the passage, notes on the controlled vocabulary and the rendering chosen for each term, and cross-references to the lexicon and to related sections. It is a provisional scholarly draft, released openly for correction and not yet reviewed by a credentialed editor.

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the-circle

This is the circle-and-line mode in its circular phase (igulim): the descending line, at the start of its spread, loops into a round wheel and then into ten concentric circles, one within another, named for the ten sefirot of Adam Kadmon, the outermost (Keter), most joined to the surrounding Infinite, down to the innermost (Malkhut), with the gross material world at the very center, furthest from the light. The nesting is figurative of a graded emanation, not a diagram of physical space (the symbolic-imaginal reading; Wolfson): Vital's own comparison is to the onion-coats (gildei betzalim) and to the concentric galgalim of the medieval astronomers, an analogy he draws deliberately while the doctrine remains the order of emanative descent. The image recurs through the whole Lurianic corpus and is the seed of the parallel yosher (linear) configuration that follows. *Elliot R. Wolfson 2005*

measure

The measure-and-limit mode, with a sod-level proof-text (pardes co-applies): the line is thin so that the emanated receive light bi-middah (in measure), not the boundless light of the Emanator, which is why they are called eser middot ('ten measures') and eser sefirot, terms that themselves connote measure, name, and fixed number. Vital anchors this in the Zohar's Ra'aya Mehemna on Parashat Pinchas (the 'thirteenth commandment, the Shema' passage), which contrasts Ein Sof, that has no measure and no known name, with the sefirot, each of which has a known name, measure, boundary, and limit. The same Idra-Pinchas locus is cited in the tzimtzum chunk's circle-argument; here it grounds the bounded character of the emanated.

bittul

The nullification (bittul) clause is the passage's sharpest metaphysical moment and is preserved without adjudication (see the ambiguity record). That the circle, were it to rejoin Ein Sof, would 'revert to what it was' and be nullified, so that 'all would be the light of the Infinite alone as at first,' is read by the literal-tzimtzum pole as proof of a real ontological gap (the emanated is genuinely other) and by the figurative/Habad pole as proof that the emanated has no independent existence at all, bittul ha-yesh raised to cosmology, the selfhood of the worlds a measured concealment sustained only by the thin line. The line is therefore the sole channel of both supply and selfhood: drawn

from all sides, the emanated would be ‘the Emanator itself, without limit.‘

Editorial decisions

- **bittul.** Preserve the bittul/nullification ambiguity (literal real-gap vs Habad acosmism) in both body and apparatus. The single secondary citation (Wolfson 2005) has not yet been verified against the printed source. *(2026-06-11)*

Colophon

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