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THE QUESTION OF PROPHECY

Abraham Abulafia

You, my son, if wise and loving the Name with all your heart, must put your mind to the root you were drawn from, and learn that you were taken from the honored throne, influxed by the enlightened mind, created from the image of God and His likeness, found wrapped in the abundance of the truth of His existence, did not in short come from nothing; and so come back to me for He will save you, Holy Israel by Name, the saint who adores you. Now listen to these words, my son, and wear them at your throat and write them on the tablet of your heart. Trust in the Name and not in a man, for the man who secures himself by way of man is crushed, and this is what you must study day and night in the Torah of God, the Torah of Moses, man of God in the wisdom of God. You must read the books of the prophets with good sense, and sing the written word and its knowledge, and immerse yourself in the sayings of the wise men (may their memory be blessed) in clean and mindful study, and look into the company of the kabbalists with Godly wisdom and you will find the desired things through them, find that all are shouting about wisdom's lack and the want of true actions and the diminution of sense; for there is no wisdom, knowledge, speech, or act in all the Torah, the prophets, the scriptures, and sayings of the wise men (blessed be their memory) that is not within the kabbalists. And as you plunge on, let your heart afterward pay attention to the knowledge of the honored and faithful Name, which shall be blessed, and carve it deep into your heart so that it cannot be erased; for with it our rabbis (may their memory be blessed) have said: The Holy Names will not be erased for they all point to the image of God, and how may the artist erase the ineradicable image? Neither mouth the Names without purpose but respect and bless them, believing they are angels of the blessed Name, sent to raise you, higher and higher, above all the nations of the world; so that all will see the sign of God upon you and will fear you. This is the strong foundation I give into your hands, to know and carve into your heart the Holy Names and the whole Torah and all the scriptures and prophetics filled with Names and fearful things, connecting one with the other, imaging them, trying them, testing them, purifying them and believing they are the writings of the king delivered to you for your own good all the length of your days, as you carry on with them, dealing clearly and lucidly, cleansing yourself of all

sins, crimes, guilts, and mean acts—in preparation for the time when you are raised to the level of love and are beloved above and below, and commence to combine the first Name YOD HAY VAV HAY (YHVH), and observe its infinite connections and combinations uplifting and whirling like a cycling wheel, this way and that, like a scroll; so that you may not rest until you behold that He strengthens through much motion and much confusion in your imagination amid the whirling of your ideas; and even when you stop you will return to Him asking for the wisdom that you cannot forsake because of the beginnings and ends of the alphabet and the *gematria* and *notarikon* and the combinations of the letters and their changes and rhythms and the recognitions of their different shapes and the knowledge of their names and the understanding of their meaning and the fashioning out of the letter ALEPH many words and from the many words, One: they are the truths of the Kabbalah of the prophets which, through their knowledge, raised your cry to God, who will answer; for you will be attached to His company.

And now, my son, the secret of God to the ones who fear Him and his covenant: He who fears God and His total covenant will be told His covenant, and it will be kept from the others, for honor is not befitting fools.

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