

# Notes on the Study of *Merkabah* Mysticism and *Hekhalot* Literature in English *with an appendix on Jewish Magic*

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Reviewers may quote brief passages.

The original version of this article appeared as an appendix to the fourth edition of *A Guide to Kabbalistic Books in English: 1977-1979*, by Don Karr (Ithaca: 1982), pages 37-40; it was reprinted in slightly expanded form in *Collected Articles on the Kabbalah*, volume 1, by D. Karr (Ithaca: KoM #5, 1985), pages 17-20. The 1985 version is reprinted below as APPENDIX 3.

The 2017<sup>[2]</sup> version of this article appears in *Jewish Studies* 52 (Jerusalem: Journal of the World Union of Jewish Studies, 2017), ENGLISH SECTION, pages 35\*-112\*

MERKABAH (= CHARIOT) MYSTICISM developed primarily out of speculation on and expansion of the visions of Ezekiel (CHAPTERS 1, 8, and 10) and, to a lesser extent, Isaiah (CHAPTER 6) and Daniel (CHAPTER 2). This strain of mysticism meanders through the intertestamental pseudepigrapha<sup>1</sup> and even touches corners of gnostic and Qumran texts.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Enoch 14 and The Apocalypse of Abraham (see James H. Charlesworth [ed.], *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Volume 1 [Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1983], pages 20-21 and 689-705); and The Life of Adam and Eve including The Apocalypse of Moses (in Charlesworth, Volume 2 [1985], pages 258-295 [*Life...* and *Apocalypse* are on facing pages]).

1 Enoch 14 is particularly important. Ithamar Gruenwald (in AMM<sub>1</sub>, page 36) says, "...it is the oldest Merkavah vision we know of from outside the canonical Scriptures. ... Indeed, one can consider this particular vision a model-vision of Merkavah Mysticism" (AMM<sub>1</sub> = *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*—see below, **1980** • Gruenwald for the first edition, **2014** • Gruenwald for the second, revised edition, AMM<sub>2</sub>). Gruenwald refines this statement in AMM<sub>2</sub> (page 75): "These are a few samples taken from what might be the oldest Merkavah vision in post scriptural sources. They contain, on the one hand, several motives [motifs?] already found in the "Merkavah" visions in Scripture, and, on the other hand, considerable features in this vision became typical of later Merkavah visions. Indeed, one can consider this particular vision a model-vision of pre-Merkavah mysticism."

<sup>2</sup> For *merkavah* in gnostic texts, see "The Hypostasis of the Archons" and "On the Origin of the World," in James M. Robinson (ed.), *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (Leiden: E. J. Brill / San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1977; revised edition, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), pages 161-189; and Ithamar Gruenwald's article, "Jewish Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism," in *Studies in Jewish Mysticism*, edited by J. Dan and F. Talmage (Cambridge: Association for Jewish Studies, 1982) pages 41-55.

On *merkavah* in Qumran works (= Dead Sea Scrolls): David Halperin, *FACES* (= *The Faces of the Chariot*, see below: **1988** • Halperin); Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin Books, 1987): § 12; Florentino Garcia Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994): pages 419-431; M. Wise, M. Abegg, and E. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996): pages 365-377 (includes the "Masada Fragment").

Refer to the list below: "Regarding the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*," page 16.

*Merkabah* material and references can be found in shreds, often more provocative than telling, in the Talmud and other rabbinic writings.<sup>3</sup> However, the major concentrated expression of *merkabah* mysticism is the cluster of writings which has come to be called the *hekhhalot* (= HEAVENLY HALLS) literature, which is the focus of this paper.

Arguments over the dating of this body of literature continue, but there is general agreement to a range of 200–800 C.E. The bounds and structure of these writings are also matters of dispute, for the notions of titles and fixed contents of a specific canon of *hekhhalot* books appear to be more academic conveniences than reflections of the true nature of the literature.

Since the 'seventies, scholarly work on the *hekhhalot* texts has increased dramatically, as the publication dates of the books and articles discussed below attest. Before this spate of academic activity, there were in English little more than Gershom Scholem's works<sup>4</sup> and Hugo Odeberg's attempt at a critical edition of one of the *hekhhalot* texts<sup>5</sup> to shed light on this oblique collection of writings. Even as this lament is being recalled, no time should be lost in acknowledging Scholem's inescapable influence on this and all other aspects of the study of Jewish mysticism. Some of Scholem's conclusions regarding the *hekhhalot* literature have been challenged, and some of his observations on and characterizations of the *hekhhalot* texts have come to seem convenient, imposing order on that which is, in fact, near chaos. Yet, Scholem's writings on this subject remain some of the clearest and best supported; they have also been among the most accessible, not only in their style but in their actual availability.

As for Odeberg, his lone work is more problematic. As significant as it was, Odeberg's treatment of *Sefer ha-Hekhalot* (BOOK OF THE HEKHALOT, dubbed by Odeberg "3 Enoch") is now considered unreliable and misleading on many points. But, as contemporary scholar David Halperin has pointed out, Odeberg's work has "proved easier to criticize than to emulate."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Mishnah: *Megillah* 4:10, *Hagigah* 2:7, *Tosefta Hagigah* 2:1-7, Palestinian Talmud 77 a-d; Babylonian Talmud 11b-16a.

See the books listed below: **1980** • Halperin, **1982** • Chernus, and **2009** • Schäfer.

<sup>4</sup> A list of Scholem's works is given below, page 4.

Morton Smith's "Observations on Hekhalot Rabbati," in *Biblical and Other Studies*, edited by Alexander Altmann (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963) was another early notice. Also, Smith translated *Hekhalot Rabbati* into English—a project which began in the 'forties and lasted until the 'eighties, when Smith worked on the translation in collaboration with Ithamar Gruenwald. At some point, the typescript was corrected by Gershom Scholem, who mentions Smith's translation in *Jewish Gnosticism...* (1960), page 11, note 4. This translation circulated among a few scholars in the field but was not published until recently: a full transcription of Smith's translation of *Hekhalot Rabbati* is now available online at <http://www.digital-brilliance.com/contributed/Karr/HekRab/index.php>. See below, "TRANSLATIONS & REFERENCES," § A.

<sup>5</sup> *3 Enoch or The Hebrew Book of Enoch* (Cambridge University Press, 1928); reprinted with a prolegomenon by Jonas C. Greenfield (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1973).

<sup>6</sup> *FACES*, page 364. (See below, **1988** • Halperin).

A more recent—and highly-regarded—translation of *Sefer ha-Hekhalot* by Philip S. Alexander appeared in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1983): "3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch: A New Translation and Introduction," pages 223-315.

Today, however, we are in pretty fair shape to study *merkabab* mysticism and *hekhbalot* texts, though some of the leading scholars in this field publish in German<sup>7</sup> and, of course, Hebrew. Nevertheless, from the texts and studies now available in English, the persistent reader can certainly gain firm impressions of

- (i) the contents of the *hekhbalot* texts,
- (ii) the issues captivating contemporary scholarship regarding the *hekhbalot* texts,
- (iii) the place of the *hekhbalot* texts in the history and development of Judaism, early Christianity, and their mysticism.<sup>8</sup>

In the following pages, books, sections of books, and articles on *merkabab* mysticism and *hekhbalot* literature—including translations—are described. I discuss the various texts associated, however loosely, with the *hekhbalot* corpus, with indications of sources for translations and studies.

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<sup>7</sup> For the most part in German, there is the work of Peter Schäfer and his team, which includes Margarete Schlüter and Hans Georg von Mutius. Certainly, the most significant work which Schäfer has overseen is *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1981), which presents in the original Hebrew and Aramaic an array of manuscript readings side by side. *Synopse* was followed by *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur* by the same team (Mohr [Siebeck], 1984). Soon after, several volumes of German translations of *Synopse*, as *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur*, appeared (Mohr [Siebeck], 1987-1995). Schäfer also published a collection of his articles—ten in German, three in English—as *Hekhalot-Studien* (Mohr [Siebeck], 1988).

The contents of *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* are outlined below, page 53.

*Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur* includes 23 texts: “six texts from *Greater Hekhalot* (frag. 1—6); five from *Sbt<sup>c</sup>ur qomah* (frag. 4, 6—11); two from *Lesser Hekhalot* (frag. 7, 18); two concerning Metatron (frag. 9, 19); one from the *Book of the Hekhalot (3 Enoch)* (frag. 12); seven are magical adjurations and incantations (frag. 13—17, 20, 21); one refers to the *Ascension of Moses* (frag. 21), and another to *Pereq shirah* (frag. 23). Finally, *Geniza-Fragmente* offers two include unique merkavah texts (frag. 8, 22), which are “probably the most important texts offered in this collection” (—Rachel Elior, REVIEW: “Schäfer’s *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, in *the Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. 80, no. 1/2 [University of Pennsylvania, 1989, pages 142-145], page 144).

<sup>8</sup> Refer to Ra’anan S. Boustan’s article, “The Study of Heikhalot Literature: Between Mystical Experience and Textual Artifact,” in *Currents in Biblical Research*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2007), pages 130-160.

For a brief overview, see Boustan’s entry, “Hekhalot Literature,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, edited by John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow (Grand Rapids – Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), pages 719-721.

“The nature of the sources of the so-called Heikalot literature and its avatars are topics that still await detailed scholarly analysis”: thus begins Moshe Idel’s article, “Holding an Orb in His Hand: The Angel ‘Anaf’el and a Late Antiquity Helios Mosaic,” in *Arx Judaica: The Bar-Ilan Journal of Jewish Art*, Volume 9 (Ramat Gan: Department of Jewish Art, Bar-Ilan University, 2013), pages 19-44. Idel notes “Three Possible Sources for Heikalot Literature”:

1. “earlier Jewish sources, works related to the Jewish temple traditions and its priests as the preservers, as well as to the Dead Sea literature”
2. “concepts and ideals found in Christianity”
3. “developments in late antiquity Judaism as a confrontation with the Greek-Roman pagan culture”

It is the last of these which Idel addresses in some detail.

## Studies in English

### LISTED CHRONOLOGICALLY – 1960 to 2020

1960

- Scholem, Gershom. *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1960; 2<sup>nd</sup> improved edition, 1965; reprinted in 2015).

The studies of Gershom Scholem form the basis of contemporary scholarship on Jewish mysticism, and, hence, provide the foundation for subsequent work on *merkabah* mysticism and *hekhhalot* texts. Other works by Scholem address this subject at length:

- **1941**: *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* [Hilda Strook Lectures, 1938, delivered at the Jewish Institute of Religion, New York] (Jerusalem: Schocken Publishing House; rpt. London: Thames and Hudson, 1955; reprinted frequently: New York: Schocken Books).
  - LECTURE 2: “Merkabah Mysticism and Jewish Gnosticism”
- **1962**: *Origins of the Kabbalah* (English translation, revised and updated, edited by R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, translated by Allan Arkush, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society/Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987; original German: *Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbala* [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1962]).
  - CHAPTER 1, § 3: “The Esoteric Doctrine of the Creation and the Merkabah in Pre-kabbalistic Judaism: The Literature of the Hekhaloth and Jewish Gnosticism” (page 18-24).
- **1962**: *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead: Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah* (New York: Schocken Books, 1991. The original version of this work was published in German, *Von der mystischen Gestalt der Gottheit: Studien zu Grundbegriffen d. Kabbala* [Zurich: Rhein-Verlag AG, 1962], and subsequently in a revised and emended Hebrew version, 1976).
  - CHAPTER 1. “*Shi'ur Komah*: The Mystical Shape of the Godhead”
- **1974**: *Kabbalah* [articles collected from *ENCYCLOPEDIA JUDAICA*] (Jerusalem and New York: Keter Publishing House and Times Books; rpt. New York: Meridian, 1978; rpt. New York: Dorset Press, 1987).
  - pages 8-21
  - pages 373-6: § MERKABAH MYSTICISM
  - pages 377-81: § METATRON

These works (*Major Trends...*, *Mystical Shape...*, *Origins...*, and *Kabbalah*), are given notice here not only to establish the starting point for “modern” scholarship on *hekhhalot-merkabah* mysticism but to demonstrate Scholem’s development in appraising the subject.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> For more detailed descriptions of Scholem’s works treating *hekhhalot* material, see Rebecca Lesses’ “Hekhalot Bibliography – Part 1” (written in the early 1990s) at <http://mystical-politics.blogspot.com/p/annotated-bibliography-of-hekhalot.html>.

In “Hekhalot Bibliography – Part 2,” at <http://mystical-politics.blogspot.com/p/hekhalot-bibliography-part-2.html>, Lesses discusses “The Traditions about Merkabah Mysticism in the Tannaitic Period” by Ephraim Urbach (from *Studies in Mysticism and Religion presented to Gershom G. Scholem on His Seventieth Birthday by Pupils, Colleagues and Friends*, ed. by Ephraim E. Urbach, R. J. Zvi Werblowsky and Chaim Wirszubski [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967] – in Hebrew); *The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature* by David Halperin (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1980); “The New Testament and Hekhalot Literature: The Journey into Heaven in Paul and Merkavah Mysticism” by Peter Schäfer (in Schäfer’s *Hekhalot Studien* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988], pp. 234-249; and *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism* by Ira Chernus (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1982).

All but the first of these, which is in Hebrew, are described below.

1980

- Gruenwald, Ithamar. *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* [ARBEITEN ZUR GESCHICHTE DES ANTIKEN JUDENTUMS UND DES URCHRISTENTUMS, Band XIV] (Leiden – Köln: E. J. Brill, 1980), hereafter AMM<sub>1</sub>.

Refer below to **2014** • Gruenwald for the second, revised edition of this book (AMM<sub>2</sub>).

The first half of Gruenwald's pioneering book analyzes the major features of the *merkavah* tradition, beginning in Jewish apocalyptic then developing into “the literature that first gives a full-scale presentation of Merkavah mysticism” *i.e.*, the *bekhalot* literature, “composed in Eretz-Yisrael (circa 200-700),” thus ending “as a creative literary stream ... sometime in the Ge'onic period.”

The second half of AMM<sub>1</sub> describes the *bekhalot* texts one by one, including *Re'uyot Yehezkel* and *Sefer ha-Razim*, items now not generally considered part of the *bekhalot* corpus.

Two appendices by Saul Lieberman follow: (1) “Metatron, the Meaning of His Name and His Functions,” and (2) “The Knowledge of *Halakha* by the Author (or Authors) of the *Heikhaloth*.”

Refer to Gruenwald's article:

- “Jewish Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism,” in *Studies in Jewish Mysticism*, edited by Joseph Dan and Frank Talmage (Cambridge: Association for Jewish Studies, 1982), which is reprinted in Gruenwald's *From Apocalypticism to Gnosticism* (see below: **1988**).

- Halperin, David J. *The Merkavah in Rabbinic Literature* [AMERICAN ORIENTAL SERIES, #62] (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1980).

Halperin investigates the references to the merkavah tradition in Mishnah Hagigah 2:1, Tosefta Hagigah 2:1-7, Palestinian Talmud Hagigah 77a-d, and Babylonian Talmud Hagigah 11b-16a. Halperin states,

I believe that I have shown that Scholem's position is not securely supported by the rabbinic sources on the merkavah, which, taken by themselves, provide little reason to believe in the existence of the 'merkavah mysticism' envisioned by Scholem. (–page 184)

Gruenwald's *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* and Halperin's *Merkavah in Rabbinic Literature* are reviewed in Peter Schäfer's “Merkavah Mysticism and Rabbinic Judaism,” in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 104, No. 3 (New Haven: AOS, 1984).

1982

- Chernus, Ira. *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism: Studies in the History of Midrash* [STUDIA JUDAICA, Band XI] (Berlin – New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1982).

This series of essays shows the relationship between *merkavah* mysticism and rabbinic *midrashim* following, generally, two motifs: the revelation on Mount Sinai and the eschatological rewards of the world to come.

Refer also to Chernus' articles:

- “Individual and Community in the Redaction of the Hekhalot Literature,” in *Hebrew Union College Annual* 52 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1981).
- “Visions of God in Merkavah Mysticism,” in *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, vol. 13, nos. 1-2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982).

1983

- Cohen, Martin Samuel. *The Shi'ur Qomah: Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983)—refer below: **1985** • Cohen.

1984

- Dan, Joseph. *Three Types of Ancient Jewish Mysticism* [SEVENTH ANNUAL RABBI LOUIS FEINBERG MEMORIAL LECTURE IN JUDAIC STUDIES] (Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati, 1984).

The “three types” discussed in this brief work are (i) ascent to the divine world, (ii) the mysticism of Hebrew letters, and (iii) *Sar Torah* (PRINCE OF THE TORAH) revelations. *Three Types...* is reprinted in

Dan's *Jewish Mysticism*, Volume I: LATE ANTIQUITY (Northvale – Jerusalem: Jason Aronson Inc., 1998), pages 27-76.

1985

- Cohen, Martin Samuel. *The Shi'ur Qomah: Texts and Recensions* [TEXTE UND STUDIEN ZUM ANTIKEN JUDENTUM, Volume 9] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, [Paul Siebeck], 1985).

Cohen's 1983 and 1985 works comprise an edited version of his PhD dissertation, *THE ŠI'UR QOMAH: A CRITICAL EDITION OF THE TEXT WITH INTRODUCTION, TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary, 1982).

See below, "TRANSLATIONS & REFERENCES," § F. *Shi'ur Qomah*.

1987

- Dan, Joseph. *Gershom Scholem and the Mystical Dimension of Jewish History* (New York – London: New York University Press, 1987).  
CHAPTER 2. "The Early Beginnings of Jewish Mysticism"—pages 38-76.  
CHAPTER 3. "From the Ancient East to the European Middle Ages"—pages 77-91.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (ed.) *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, Volume VI, 1-2: PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE HISTORY OF JEWISH MYSTICISM: *EARLY JEWISH MYSTICISM* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1987).

This volume, in both the Hebrew and English sections, is devoted to *hekhhalot* literature and related topics. Articles in English include

- Chernus, Ira. "The Pilgrimage to the Merkavah: An Interpretation of Early Jewish Mysticism"
- Goldberg, Arnold. "Quotations from Scripture in Hekhalot Literature"
- Grözinger, Karl Erich. "The Names of God and the Celestial Powers: Their Function and Meaning in the Hekhalot Literature"
- Halperin, David J. "A Sexual Image in Hekhalot Rabbati and Its Implications"
- Hayman, A. P. "Sefer Yesira and the Hekhalot Literature"
- Schlüter, Margarete. "The Eulogy *Hakham ba-Razim va-Adon ha-Setarim* in Hekhalot Literature"
- Van Uchelen, N. A. "Tosephta Megillah III, 28: A Tanaïtic Text with a Mystic Connotation?"

1988

- Gruenwald, Ithamar. *From Apocalypticism to Gnosticism: Studies in Apocalypticism, Merkavah Mysticism, and Gnosticism* [BEITRÄGE ZUR ERFORSCHUNG DES ALTEN TESTAMENTS UND DES ANTIKEN JUDENTUMS, Band 14] (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1988).

*From Apocalypticism to Gnosticism* is a collection of twelve articles (along with an introductory essay), most previously published. Four of the articles are new, and one appears in English for the first time.

CONTENTS:

- Introductory Essay: The Cultural Milieu of Apocalypticism
- Chapter 1 Prophecy, Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and the Problem of the Uncanonical Books
- Chapter 2 Two Types of Jewish Esoteric Literature in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud
- Chapter 3 Knowledge and Vision: Towards a Clarification of Two "Gnostic" Concepts in the Light of Their Alleged Origins
- Chapter 4 Priests, Prophets, Apocalyptic Visionaries, and Mystics
- Chapter 5 Angelic Songs, the Qedushah and the Problem of the Origin of Hekhalot Literature
- Chapter 6 Literary and Redactional Issues in the Study of the Hekhalot Literature
- Chapter 7 Jewish Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism
- Chapter 8 Jewish Sources for the Gnostic Texts from Nag Hammadi?
- Chapter 9 Aspects of the Jewish-Gnostic Controversy
- Chapter 10 The Problem of the Anti-Gnostic Polemic in Rabbinic Literature
- Chapter 11 Manichaeism and Judaism in Light of the Cologne Mani Codex
- Chapter 12 Halakhic Material in Codex Gnosticus V, 4: *The Second Apocalypse of James?*

Gruenwald comments,

The traditions and writings which are discussed in this collection of studies crystallized among people whose intellectual horizons were not as clearly and sharply outlined as those of the modern mind. For

those people, the demarcation lines between dreams and dream-like situations, on the one hand, and rational wakefulness, on the other, were rather flexible and likely to be altogether ignored. (—PREFACE, page i)

Refer also to Gruenwald's article:

- "Reflections on the Nature and Origins of Jewish Mysticism," in *Gershom Scholem's MAJOR TRENDS IN JEWISH MYSTICISM 50 Years After*, edited by Joseph Dan and Peter Schäfer (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1993).
- Halperin, David J. *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision*. [TEXTE UND STUDIEN ZUM ANTIKEN JUDENTUM, Volume 16] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), hereafter *FACES*.

*FACES* is a thorough study which challenges many conclusions and assumptions of previous scholars, tracing *merkabab* material from the Bible, through the apocalypses and rabbinic literature, concluding with the *bekhalot* texts. Translations of the text *Re'iyot Yezkiel* (VISIONS OF EZEKIEL) and other important segments of *bekhalot* material are included.

Halperin concludes that the *bekhalot* tradition grew out of interpretations of mythic aspects of third-century Palestinian sermons connected with *Shabwot* which combined the stories of Ezekiel's vision and the reception of the Torah at Mt. Sinai with Psalm 68, which was interpreted to refer to Moses' ascent to heaven.

I suggest that certain people, nurtured on the stories of how Moses climbed to heaven and seized Torah from the angels, used these images to express and to satisfy their own yearning to have Torah made accessible to them. (*FACES*, page 385)

These "certain people," according to Halperin, turn out to be not the rabbis but rather *'am ha'ares*, i.e., "folk without the rabbi's expertise," (*FACES*, page 437) looking for a shortcut to Torah knowledge and wisdom.

*FACES* is valuable in a way that few books of this ilk are in that Halperin invites the reader to engage in his entire scholarly process, which he lays out in great detail in his 450-page text, two-tiered notes (footnotes and endnotes), seven informative appendices (Appendix I: "Orientation to Rabbinic Sources" is especially helpful), and full reference list (which is divided into sixteen sections according to topic).

Refer to Halperin's articles:

- "Heavenly Ascension in Ancient Judaism: The Nature of the Experience," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1987 Seminar Papers*, no. 26, edited by Harold Kent (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987)
- "Ascension or Invasion: Implications of the Heavenly Journey in Ancient Judaism," in *Religion*, vol. 18 (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Oriel Press, 1988).
- Schäfer, Peter. *Hekhalot-Studien* [TEXTE UND STUDIEN ZUM ANTIKEN JUDENTUM, 19] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988).

Of the thirteen articles, ten are in German; the three in English are

- "Tradition and Redaction in Hekhalot Literature," reprinted from *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, vol. 14, no. 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983).
- "New Testament and Hekhalot Literature: The Journey into Heaven in Paul and in Merkavah Mysticism," reprinted from *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 35, no. 1 (The Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Spring 1984).
- "The Aim and Purpose of Early Jewish Mysticism," originally published as a chapbook titled *Gershom Scholem Reconsidered: The Aim and Purpose of Early Jewish Mysticism* [THE TWELFTH SACKS LECTURE DELIVERED ON 29<sup>TH</sup> MAY 1985] (Oxford, Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, 1986).

1989

- Janowitz, Naomi. *The Poetics of Ascent. Theories of Language in a Rabbinic Ascent Text* [SUNY SERIES IN JUDAICA: HERMENEUTICS, MYSTICISM, AND CULTURE] (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

*Poetics of Ascent* offers a translation of *Ma'aseh Merkabah* with a speculative analysis regarding the functions of this text's "ritual language."

Further, see Janowitz' article:

- "God's Body: Theological and Ritual Roles of *Shi'ur Komah*," in *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*, edited by Howard Eilberg-Schwartz [SUNY SERIES: THE BODY IN CULTURE, HISTORY AND RELIGION] (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

1990

- Bockmuehl, Markus N. A. *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* [WISSENSCHAFTLICHE UNTERSUCHUNGEN ZUM NEUEN TESTAMENT 2, Band 36] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1990).

*Revelation and Mystery* outlines the forerunners of *merkavah* mysticism (namely, ancient Judaism, apocalyptic literature, Qumran, wisdom literature, Philo, Josephus, and early rabbinic literature), which brings us to the brink of the *hekhhalot* literature. Bockmuehl instead follows the line of Pauline Christianity *via* Paul's gospel and letters.

1991

- Swartz, Michael D. *Mystical Prayer in Ancient Judaism. An Analysis of MA'ASEH MERKABAH* [TEXTE UND STUDIEN ZUM ANTIKEN JUDENTUM, Volume 28] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1991).

*Mystical Prayer*...gives a full treatment and translation of *Ma'aseh Merkabah* (WORK OF THE CHARIOT).

*Mystical Prayer* is a revised and expanded version of Swartz' Ph.D. dissertation, LITURGICAL ELEMENTS IN EARLY JEWISH MYSTICISM: A LITERARY ANALYSIS OF "MA'ASEH MERKAVAH" (New York: New York University, 1986).

1992

- Dan, Joseph. *The Revelation of the Secret World: The Beginning of Jewish Mysticism* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1992).

After a discussion of the ironic errors of this lecture's title, Dan identifies the "distinctively mystical elements in *Hechalot* literature" as residing in only five texts: *Hekhalot Rabbati*, *Hekhalot Zutarti*, *Sefer Hekhalot* (or 3 Enoch), *Ma'aseh Merkabah*, and *Shi'ur Qomah*.

*Revelation*... has been reprinted in Dan's *Jewish Mysticism*, Volume One: LATE ANTIQUITY (Northvale – Jerusalem: Jason Aronson Inc., 1998), pages 77-108.

- Schäfer, Peter. *The Hidden and Manifest God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism* [SUNY SERIES IN JUDAICA: HERMENEUTICS, MYSTICISM, AND RELIGION] (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), hereafter HMG.

HMG is a detailed look at a selection of *hekhhalot* texts. Instead of summarizing each text in turn, Schäfer organizes his analysis thematically, considering each text's notion of God, angels, and man. He clarifies the roles of two distinct motifs: (i) ascent through the *hekhhalot* to the throne of glory, and (ii) the adjuration—either to God or to one of his angels.

Refer to Schäfer's article:

- "Research on Hekhalot Literature: Where Do We Stand Now?" in *Rashi 1040—1990: Congres europeen des Études juives* [HOMMAGE A EPHRAIM E. URBACH], edited by Gabrielle Sed-Rajna (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1993), pages 229-235.



1993

- Dan, Joseph. *The Ancient Jewish Mysticism* (Tel Aviv: MOD [= Ministry of Defense] Books, 1993).  
Dan reviews all of the major topics, issues, and texts in a manner which does not exclude the non-specialist. *Ancient Jewish Mysticism* expands Dan's earlier chap book, *Three Types of Ancient Jewish Mysticism*—see above 1984 • Dan.  
Further elaborating on the topics covered in *The Ancient Jewish Mysticism* is the collection of articles which comprises Dan's *Jewish Mysticism*, Volume One: LATE ANTIQUITY (Northvale – Jerusalem: Jason Aronson Inc., 1998—hereafter JM1), in which the following articles by Dan have been reprinted.
  - “The Concept of History in Hekhalot and Merkabah Literature,” in *Binah: Studies in Jewish History, Thought, and Culture*, vol. 1: STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY, edited by Joseph Dan (New York – Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1989) = JM1: CHAPTER 7.
  - “The Concept of Knowledge in the *Shi'ur Qomah*,” in *Studies in Jewish Religious and Intellectual History* [PRESENTED TO ALEXANDER ALTMANN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY], edited by Siegfried Stein and Raphael Loewe ([University]: University of Alabama Press/Institute of Jewish Studies, 1979) = JM1: CHAPTER 8.
  - “Rashi and the Merkabah,” in *Rashi 1040—1990: Congres europeen des Études juives* [HOMMAGE A EPHRAIM E. URBACH], edited by Gabrielle Sed-Rajna (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1993) = JM1: CHAPTER 11.

1994

- Wolfson, Elliot R. *Through a Speculum That Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), hereafter SPECULUM.

This book ... is an attempt to treat in a comprehensive manner the problem of visionary experience in some of the main texts of the classical period of medieval Jewish mysticism. I have isolated the problem of vision and visualization since this constitutes one of the essential phenomenological concerns in the various mystical corpora produced by Jewish authors throughout history. I make no claim that mysticism is identical to or collapsible into the phenomenon of vision. I do, however, maintain that the examination of this issue provides an excellent speculum through which to view the religious experience of different Jewish mystics.

While the major focus of this book, from a chronological perspective, is the High Middle Ages... [chapters 5 to 7], in chapter 3 I discuss the nature of the vision of the glory in the ancient Jewish mystical corpus known as the Hekhalot or Merkavah literature. The justification for including this chapter is both historical-textual and phenomenological. (—page 9) [my ellipses—DK]

After providing a summary of scholarship on *bekhalot* literature, CHAPTER 3, “Visionary Ascent and Enthronement in the Hekhalot Literature,” discusses the vision of God as presented therein, citing *Hekhalot Rabbati* most often. Wolfson explores problematic aspects, namely “The Paradox of Seeing the Hidden God,” eroticism, and anthropomorphism, which bear upon the import of the texts: Did actual experiences determine the texts, or did the texts determine the experiences? Are the experiences themselves “real” or “imagined”? Does the *bekhalot* literature represent experience or exegesis? Are such distinctions useful in understanding the intent of the *bekhalot* authors? Through the chapter, Wolfson remains in dialogue with other scholars who have treated the *bekhalot* material, Scholem, Schäfer, and Halperin in particular.

From a phenomenological perspective as well, it is obvious that the Hekhalot corpus is an intrinsic part of such a study [*i.e.*, of visionary experience in medieval Jewish mysticism], insofar as the vision of glory and the chariot served as a paradigm for visionary experience in later Jewish mysticism, influenced in particular...by the philosophical reinterpretations of this religious experience, as will be discussed in chapter 4 [“Theories of Glory and Visionary Experience in Pre-Kabbalistic Sources”]. To be sure, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the various ‘trends’ of Jewish mysticism took shape in such a way that the chariot vision is hermeneutically transformed. It is nevertheless the case that the major mystical ideologies of the period to be discussed in this monograph, the German Pietists [CHAPTER 5: “Haside Ashakenaz: Verdical and Docetic (≈ “real” or “imagined”) Interpretations of the Chariot Vision”] and the Provençal-Spanish kabbalists of the theosophic trend [CHAPTERS 6 and 7, “Visionary Gnosis and the Role of the Imagination in Theosophic Kabbalah” and “The Hermeneutics of Visionary Experience: Revelation and

Interpretation in the Zohar’] orient themselves in terms of the chariot. In that sense we can speak of these schools as hermeneutical transformations of the Hekhalot mysticism. (—pages 9-10) [my brackets and ellipses—DK]

Further, refer to Wolfson’s articles

- “The Image of Jacob Engraved upon the Throne: Further Reflection on the Esoteric Doctrine of the German Pietists” = CHAPTER 1 of *Along the Path: Studies in Kabbalistic Myth, Symbolism, and Hermeneutics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).
- “Jewish Mysticism: A Philosophical Overview,” § MERKAVAH MYSTICISM, in *History of Jewish Philosophy* [ROUTLEDGE HISTORY OF WORLD PHILOSOPHIES – volume 2], edited by Daniel H. Frank & Oliver Leaman (London – New York: Routledge, 1997).
- “Metatron and *Shi’ur Qomah* in the Writings of the Haside Ashkenaz,” in *Mysticism, Magic and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism: International Symposium held in Frankfurt a. M. 1991*, edited by Karl Erich Grözinger and Joseph Dan [STUDIA JUDAICA: Band XIII] (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995).
- “*Yeridah la-Merkabah*: Typology of Ecstasy and Enthronement in Ancient Jewish Mysticism,” in *Mystics of the Book: Themes, Topics, and Typologies*, edited by R. A. Herrera (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1993).

1995

- Deutsch, Nathaniel. *The Gnostic Imagination. Gnosticism, Mandaeism, and Merkabah Mysticism* [BRILL’S SERIES ON JEWISH STUDIES, 13] (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).

Deutsch gives an account of the relationship between Gnosticism and *merkabah* mysticism using Scholem’s written statements on these as a starting point. He surveys a range of scholarly opinion on issues surrounding these topics, drawing on many of the writers mentioned in this bibliography. Deutsch summarizes his view of Scholem on page 36:

Even though his [Scholem’s] comparative analysis of Gnosticism and Merkabah mysticism is problematic from a number of methodological perspectives, its role as an intellectual catalyst cannot be overstated.

- Fossum, Jarl E. *The Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christology* [NOVUM TESTAMENTUM ET ORBIS ANTIQUUS 30] (Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag / Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1995).

Many statements about Jesus in the Gospel according to John can be paralleled by what is said about Metatron in *3 Enoch* and the Son in Valentinian Gnosticism. Perhaps the most striking similarity is that they all are represented as the possessor of the Name of God, the concept of which plays an enormous role in Judaism. As the figure of Metatron appears to be some sort of systemization of and elaboration upon everything that was said about the principal angel in older sources, works outdating even John, it would seem that both Johannine and Gnostic Christology owe to mystical Judaism. (INTRODUCTION, pages 3-4)

- Kuyt, Annalies. *The ‘Descent’ to the Chariot. Towards a Description of the Terminology, Place, Function and Nature of the YERIDAH in Hekhalot Literature* [TEXTE UND STUDIEN ZUM ANTIKEN JUDENTUM, Volume 45] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1995), hereafter DESCENT.

DESCENT offers a discussion of the heavenly journey, *yeridah*, literally “descent,” to the *merkabah* in various passages of the *hekhalot* literature. Kuyt outlines the contents of *Hekhalot Rabbati*, *Hekhalot Zutreti*, *Ma’aseh Merkabah*, *Merkabah Rabbah*, *3 Enoch*, and one of the Genizah fragments. Translated excerpts from all these texts are included.

1996

- DeConick, April D. *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* [Supplement to VIGILÆ CHRISTIANÆ, 33] (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).

This monograph represents a critical juncture in Thomas studies since it dispels the belief that the Gospel of Thomas originates from gnostic traditions. Rather, Jewish mystical and Hermetic origins are proposed and examined. (—ENDFLAP)

- Swartz, Michael D. *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Swartz translates and analyzes the *Sar Torah* (PRINCE OF THE TORAH) texts with an eye toward the cultural environment which produced them.

See below, “Translations & References,” § A.

1997

- Abrams, Daniel. *Sexual Symbolism and Merkavah Speculation in Medieval Germany: A Study of the SOD HA-EGOZ Texts* [TEXTS AND STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN JUDAISM 13] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

Abrams treats and translates the *Sod ha-Egoz* texts, “the earliest known commentaries on Ezekiel’s Chariot (*Ma’aseh Merkavah*),” which are, on the one hand, apparent latter-day developments of *hekhbalot* literature while, on the other hand, “proto-kabbalistic.”

- Green, Arthur. *Keter: The Crown of God in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

In chapters 4 through 7, passages from *Shi’ur Qomah*, 3 Enoch, *Razo shel Sandalphon* (SECRET OF SANDALPHON—a *hekhbalot*-related text), and *Hekhalot Rabbati* are translated and analyzed.

1998

- Kanagaraj, Jey J. *Mysticism in the Gospel of John: An Inquiry into Its Background* [JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, Sup. 158] (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998; rpt. London – New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013 & 2014).

The first half of the book (Parts 1 and 2) provides an excellent survey of *merkavah* material and the apocalyptic, non-apocalyptic—including Qumran material—and Christian literature clustered around it from Hellenistic times through the first century. Part 2 examines *merkavah* mysticism in some detail to set up an analysis of its connections with Johannine mysticism. Kanagaraj concludes

In short, John, in his peculiar way, has intertwined the two aspects of Jewish mysticism, *Ma’aseh Merkavah* and *Ma’aseh Bereshit*, by using the Logos-concept. By so doing, he seeks to confront and persuade the mystics of his time to come to faith in Jesus, the Logos-Son, who is the revelation of God’s glory on earth and who embodies the reality behind God’s creation. (—page 300)

- Kraemer, Ross Shepard. *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and His Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

... *Aseneth* displays significant affinities with traditions about the adjuration of angels and ‘ascent’ to heavens as known to us from the problematic *hekhbalot* and related materials. ... Given the nature of our sources, it seems impossible to know what if any actual connections might exist between *Aseneth* and *hekhbalot* traditions. But if the longer version of *Aseneth* in particular does stand in some self-conscious relationship to the *hekhbalot* traditions, gender may well be a significant factor in the differences. (—page 173)

Refer especially to CHAPTER 4, “*Aseneth* and the Adjuration of Angels,” and CHAPTER 5, “*Aseneth* and Mystical Transformation in the *Hekhalot* Traditions.”

Further, see

- Deutsch, Celia. “Aseneth: Ascetical Practice, Vision, and Transformation,” in *With Letters of Light: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Early Jewish Apocalypticism, Magic, and Mysticism in Honor of Rachel Elior* [EKSTASIS: RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES, vol. 2], edited by Daphna V. Arbel and Andrei A. Orlov (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co., 2011);
- Orlov, Andrei A. “Unveiling the Face: The Heavenly Counterpart Traditions in *Joseph and Aseneth*” (also called “Aseneth’s Voodoo Child”) in *The Embroidered Bible: Studies in Biblical Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Honour of Michael E. Stone*, edited by Lorenzo DiTommaso, Matthias Henze and William Adler (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 771-808.

- Lesses, Rebecca Macy. *Ritual Practices to Gain Power: Angels, Incantations, and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* [HARVARD THEOLOGICAL STUDIES 44] (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), hereafter *Ritual Practices*.

Lesses concentrates on the adjuration sections of the *hekhalot* material. Along with an analysis of these “ritual performances,” Lesses presents a survey of current scholarship, covering many of the authors mentioned in the present paper. Further, she attempts to set the adjurations of the *hekhalot* into the milieu of the Greco-Egyptian ritual literature of late antiquity.

Refer to Lesses’ articles:

- “The Adjuration of the Prince of the Presence: Performative Utterance in a Jewish Ritual,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, edited by Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki [RELIGIONS IN THE GRECO-ROMAN WORLD, 129] (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).
- “‘He Shall Not Look at a Woman’: Gender in the Hekhalot Literature,” in *Mapping Gender in Ancient Religious Discourses*, edited by Todd Penner and Caroline Vander Stichele (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pages 351-388.
- “Amulets and Angels: Visionary Experience in the *Testament of Job* and the Hekhalot Literature,” in *Heavenly Tablets: Interpretation, Identity and Tradition in Ancient Judaism*, edited by Lynn R. LiDonnici and Andrea Lieber (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pages 49-74.

1999

- Deutsch, Nathaniel. *Guardians of the Gate: Angelic Vice Regency in Late Antiquity* [BRILL’S SERIES IN JEWISH STUDIES, 22] (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

Within Merkabah mysticism, God is frequently depicted as an exalted and highly remote figure. Thus, Scholem was partly right when he described the gulf between humans and the God in Merkabah mysticism. Yet, Scholem erred when he emphasized the impossibility of closing this gulf—that is, when he defined the God of Merkabah mysticism as absolutely inaccessible or transcendent. How was the distance between human beings and God breached in Merkabah mysticism? The answer to this question requires an appreciation of the paradoxical nature of the angelic vice regent. (—*Guardians of the Gate*, page 9).

Deutsch discusses Metatron in this role, with comments on Akatriel. He then examines similar figures in Gnosticism (Sabaoth) and Mandaeism (Abathur).

Further, refer to Deutsch’s article:

- “Dangerous Ascents: Rabbi Akiba’s Water Warning and Late Antique Cosmological Traditions,” in *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, vol. 8 (Harwood Academic Publishers GmbH, 1998)
- Hannah, Darrell D. *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology* [WISSENSCHAFTLICHE UNTERSUCHUNGEN ZUM NEUEN TESTAMENT: REIHE 2: 109] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1999).

See in particular CHAPTER 5, “The Archangel Michael in Rabbinic and Hekhalot Literature.” This chapter’s PART 2, § c. develops “The Michael-Metatron Identification” (pages 119-121).

2000

- Kanarfogel, Ephraim. *“Peering through the Lattices”: Mystical, Magical, and Pietistic Dimensions in the Tosafist Period* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000).

Kanarfogel tracks the influence and use of *hekhalot* and other mystical and magical material to 12<sup>th</sup>- and 13<sup>th</sup>-century Germany and France. He argues that esoteric teachings and practices spread beyond the *Hasidei Ashkenaz* to the *tosafists*, rabbinic descendants of Rashi, who are conventionally considered to have been inclined exclusively toward study of the Talmud.

2001

- Davila, James R. *Descenders to the Chariot: The People behind the Hekhalot Literature* [SUPPLEMENT TO THE JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF JUDAISM, Volume 70] (Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 2001).

In the first chapter, Davila provides an excellent summary of the issues and debates in *hekhalot* scholarship. He then makes his case for understanding the *hekhalot* texts not as being mere literary

constructs but as describing the experiences of real practitioners, whom Davila likens to shamans, *i.e.*, “religious functionaries,” “intermediaries” seeking “to gain power over the spiritual world.”

Further, see Davila’s articles

- “Prolegomena to a Critical Edition of the Hekhalot Rabbati,” in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 45, no. 2 (The Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 1994).
- “Shamanic Initiatory Death and Resurrection in the *Hekhalot* Literature,” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, part 4, edited by Paul Allan Mirecki and Marvin W. Meyer (Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 2001), pages 283 *ff.*
- Eskola, Timo. *Messiah and the Throne: Jewish Merkabah Mysticism and Early Christian Exaltation Discourse* [WISSENSCHAFTLICHE UNTERSUCHUNGEN ZUM NEUEN TESTAMENT 2. Reihe 142] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).

Eskola says in the introduction (page 17), “...it will be the main purpose of this work to investigate the relationship between Jewish merkabah mysticism and New Testament exaltation Christology by focusing on the central metaphor of the throne. In this study our interest lies in the occupants of the throne, in enthronements, and in the function of the throne in different contexts.”

2002

- Janowitz, Naomi. *Icons of Power: Ritual Practices in Late Antiquity* [MAGIC IN HISTORY] (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002; reprinted 2012).

Chapter 5, “Using Names, Letters, and Praise: The Language of Ascent,” focuses on *Hekhalot Rabbati*. Chapter 6, “Combining Words and Deeds: Angelic Imprecations in *The Book of Secrets*,” discusses *Sefer ha-Razim*. The *hehkalot* practitioners are considered within the broader setting of the prevailing assumptions—Jewish, Christian, and pagan—of the culture in Late Antiquity concerning religion and ritual.

- Morray-Jones, C. R. A. *A Transparent Illusion. The Dangerous Vision of Water in Hekhalot Mysticism: A Source-Critical and Tradition-Historical Inquiry* [SUPPLEMENTS TO THE JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF JUDAISM, volume 59] (Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 2002).

In the first section of *A Transparent Illusion*, Morray-Jones builds upon (and occasionally corrects) comments regarding the “water test” passages in his own earlier two-part article, “Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12:1-12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul’s Apostolate, Part 1: The Jewish Sources” and “Part 2: Paul’s Heavenly Ascent and Its Significance” (both in *Harvard Theological Review* 86, Cambridge: Harvard Divinity School, 1993, April – pages 177-217 & July – pages 265-292).

Thereafter, Morray-Jones offers an in-depth analysis of the “water vision episode” within the context of the *hehkalot* literature, *i.e.*, *Hekhalot Rabbati* and, especially, *Hekhalot Zutarti*. An extensive appendix discusses “Solomon and the Queen of Sheba,” a story which “appears to derive from the same traditional background and to be related in some manner to the water vision episode itself” (—page 230).

Refer to Morray-Jones’ articles

- “Hekhalot Literature and Talmudic Tradition: Alexander’s Three Test Cases,” in *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, vol. 22, no.1 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991)
- “Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition,” in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 43, no. 1 (The Oxford Centre for the Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 1992), pp. 1-31.

2003

- Arbel, Vita Daphna. *Beholders of Divine Secrets: Mysticism and Myth in the Hekhalot and Merkavah Literature* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).

Arbel’s summary of *hehkalot* and *merkabah* literature and scholarly approaches to it is not as engaging or detailed as, for instance, the introduction in Davila’s *Descenders to the Chariot* (see **2001** above). However, Arbel effectively treats the question, “What is MYSTICAL about *hehkalot-merkabah* mysticism?” *i.e.*, what are its “mystical” characteristics and intentions?

FROM THE SUNY PRESS CATALOGUE (Spring 2003):

While previous scholarship has demonstrated the connection between Hekhalot and Merkavah mysticism and parallel traditions in Rabbinical writings, the Dead Sea Scrolls, apocalyptic, early Christian, and Gnostic sources, this work points out additional mythological traditions that resonate in this literature. Arbel suggests that mythological patterns of expression, as well as themes and models rooted in Near Eastern mythological traditions are employed, in spiritualized fashion, to communicate mystical content.

See also Arbel's articles

- "Understanding of the Heart': Spiritual Transformation and Divine Revelations in the Hekhalot and Merkavah Literature," in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, Volume 6, No. 4 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1999).
- "Pure Marble Stones or Water? On Ecstatic Perception, Group Identity, and Authority in Hekhalot and Merkavah Literature," in *Studies in Spirituality*, Volume 16 (Kampen [Netherlands]: Kok Pharos, 2006).
- Elior, Rachel. *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism*, translated by David Louvish [= MIKDASH U-MERKAVAH, KOHANIM U-MAL'AKHIM, HEKHAL BA-MISTIKAH HA YEHIDIT HA-KEDUMAH, 2002] (Oxford – Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2004).

Elior details the traditions and literature leading up to the *hekhalot* texts. She writes,

Heikhalot literature preserves the living continuation of the sacred service by recovering it from the realm of space and time: the Temple/*beikhal* is lifted up to the heavens, and the priests serving therein become the ministering angels in the supernal Temples; the sacred service in these heavenly sanctuaries is described explicitly in terms of the rituals of the earthly Temple. This metamorphosis is implemented through the terminology of Merkavah mysticism, combining the hallowed memory of ritual with creative imagination and visionary inspiration, creating a bridge between the 'revealed' and the 'hidden.' (—INTRODUCTION, pages 14-15).

Elior attempts to show that *merkabab/hekhalot* mysticism grew out of practices described in the writings of the Qumran sect.

Refer, however, to the comments critical of Elior's *Three Temples* made by presenters Nehemia Polen, Alan F. Segal, Jonah Steinberg, and Lawrence H. Schiffman at the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association for Jewish Studies (Chicago: December 19-21, 2004), § 4.5, HEAVENLY SECRETS AND HUMAN AUTHORITY IN THE THOUGHT OF SECTARIANS, SAGES, AND EARLY JEWISH MYSTICS, Chair: Rebecca Leses (CDs and tapes available from Content Management Corporation, 3043 Foothill Blvd., Suite #2, La Crescenta, CA 91214: 818-857-0874).

Find also the "devastating critique of most of [Elior's] major theses" (—quoting Peter Schäfer, *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism*, page 14, note 51) by Martha Himmelfarb in "Merkavah Mysticism since Scholem: Rachel Elior's *The Three Temples*," in *Wege Mystischer Gotteserfahrung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam / Mystical Approaches to God: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, edited by Peter Schäfer (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006). Ironically, Elior reiterates arguments from *The Three Temples* in a paper which appears immediately before Himmelfarb's in the same volume (see the last entry on the list of Elior's articles immediately below).

In Elior's defense, see Joseph Dan's review, "Varieties of Religious Experience" (2003) at HAARETZ.COM: <http://www.haaretz.com/culture/books/varieties-of-religious-experiences-1.11180>

Also, see Elior's articles

- "The Concept of God in Merkavah Mysticism," in *Binah: Studies in Jewish History, Thought, and Culture*, vol. 2: STUDIES IN JEWISH THOUGHT, edited by Joseph Dan (New York – Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1989) (= a translation from the Hebrew of Elior's article in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, vol. 6, nos. 1-2, edited by Joseph Dan (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1987).
- "Mysticism, Magic, and Angelology: The Perception of Angels in Hekhalot Literature," in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1993).

- “From Earthly Temple to Heavenly Shrines: Prayer and Sacred Song in the Hekhalot Literature and Its Relation to Tradition,” in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, vol. 4, no. 3 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1997).
- “The *Merkavah* Tradition and the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism: From Temple to *Merkavah*, from *Hekhalot* to *Hekhalot*, from Priestly Opposition to Gazing upon the *Merkavah*,” in *Sino-Judaica, Jews and Chinese in Historical Dialogue*, edited by A. Oppenheimer (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press 1999).
- “The Priestly Nature of the Mystical Heritage in *Heykalot Literature*,” in *Experience et Écriture Mystiques dans les Religions du Livre*, edited by Paul Fenton and Roland Goetschel [ETUDES SUR LE JUDAISME MEDIEVAL, TOME XXII] Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- “The Foundations of Early Jewish Mysticism: The Lost Calendar and the Transformed Heavenly Chariot,” in *Wege Mystischer Gotteserfahrung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam / Mystical Approaches to God: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, edited by Peter Schäfer (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006)

2005

- Boustán, Ra‘anan. *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) ≈ Abusch, Ra‘anan S. FROM MARTYR TO MYSTIC: THE STORY OF THE TEN MARTYRS, HEKHALOT RABBATI, AND THE MAKING OF “MERKAVAH MYSTICISM,” Ph.D. dissertation (Princeton: Princeton University, 2004).

My emphasis on the situated nature of “Merkavah mysticism” [as opposed to a “radical alternative or esoteric counterpart of ‘normative’ rabbinic Judaism”] represents, at least in part, a reaction to the scholarly literature that stems from this homogenizing tendency [which is to “routinely conflate later applications or elaborations on Heikhalot texts with the Jewish ‘mystical’ or ‘magical’ literatures of Late Antiquity”]. To this end, this study aims to illuminate the particular historical circumstances and ideological motivations that led the creators of *Hekhalot Rabbati* to formulate their novel conception of heavenly ascent as an esoteric ritual discipline. I thereby pointedly emphasize the role of Heikhalot literature in the transformation of Jewish religious thought from its largely decentralized roots in Late Antiquity to its gradual drive towards systematization in the High Middle Ages. (– PREFACE, pages viii-ix)

- Orlov, Andrei A. *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* [TEXTS AND STUDIES IN ANCIENT JUDAISM 107] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

PART ONE, “Evolution of the Roles and Titles of the Seventh Antediluvian Hero in Mesopotamian, Enochic, and Merkavah Tradition” [Chapter Three deals primarily with *Sefer Hekhalot* (3 ENOCH)]  
 PART TWO, “Polemical (Adamic, Mosaic, and Noachic) Developments and Their Role in the Evolution of Enoch’s Roles and Titles in the Slavonic Apocalypse (= 2 ENOCH)”

Orlov fills a gap in scholarship by reintroducing the Slavonic pseudepigrapha (THE APOCALYPSE OF ABRAHAM, THE LADDER OF JACOB, and, particularly, 2 ENOCH) into the progression from Second Temple apocalypticism to *hekhalot* literature (which progression, borrowing from Hugo Odeberg’s analysis, can be epitomized as 1 ENOCH → 2 ENOCH → 3 ENOCH). Orlov refers to 2 ENOCH as “proto-*hekhalot*,” which indicates, in Orlov’s assessment, the degree to which rabbinic mystical and *hekhalot* literature relied upon it.

Find Orlov’s article,

- “In the Mirror of the Divine Face: The Enochic Features of the *Exagoge* of Ezekiel the Tragedian,” in *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions about Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity*, edited by Georg J. Brooke, Hindy Najman, and Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2008), pages 183-199.

2006

- Alexander, Philip. *The Mystical Texts: Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and Related Manuscripts* [COMPANION TO THE QUMRAN SCROLLS, 7 / LIBRARY OF SECOND TEMPLE STUDIES, 61] (London – New York: T & T Clark International, 2006).

Alexander treats “Heikhalot Mysticism and Qumran” in CHAPTER 5, stating,

...comparison of Qumran mysticism with Heikhalot mysticism draws Qumran into the larger discipline of the study of Jewish mysticism, and puts it in a broader intellectual context. It is probably not unfair to say that the study of the Scrolls has been somewhat marginalized within the study of Judaism, and its significance underestimated by mainline Jewish Studies scholars (see Schiffman 1994 [*Reclaiming the Dead*

*Sea Scrolls*—noted immediately below). . . . It is only recently that attempts have been made to integrate the Qumran evidence into the general history of Jewish mysticism (e.g., Elior 2004 [*The Three Temples*—noted above]). As we shall see, this evidence arguably challenges Scholem’s paradigm of Jewish mysticism [as in *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*—noted above], and forces a revision of it. . . . (—pages 121-2)

Regarding the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* and other “mystical” texts from Qumran:

- Abusch, Ra’anan. “Seven-fold Hymns in the *Sabbath Sacrifice* and the Hekhalot Literature: Formalism, Hierarchy, and the Limits of Human Participation,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Post-Biblical Judaism and Early Christianity*, edited by James R. Davila [STDJ 46] (Leiden: Brill, 2003).
  - Boustan, Ra’anan S. “Angels in the Architecture: Temple Art and the Poetics of Praise in the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*,” in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, edited by Ra’anan S. Boustan and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Cambridge – New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 195-212.
  - Charlesworth, James H., and Cross, Frank Moore (eds). *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Angelic Liturgy: Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations) (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] – Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994).
  - Davila, James R. *Liturgical Works* [EERDMAN’S COMMENTARIES ON THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS, 6] (Grand Rapids – Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000): §§ “4QBerakhot (4Q286-90, 4Q280?)” AND “Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400-407, 11Q17, Mas1K)” —pages 41-167. Throughout Davila’s translations, parallels to *hekkhalot* texts are cited and discussed in brief.
  - \_\_\_\_\_. “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Merkavah Mysticism,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context*, edited by Timothy H. Lim with Larry W. Hurtado, A. Graeme Auld and Alison Jack (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), pages 249-264.
  - Fletcher-Lewis, Crispin H. T. “Heavenly Ascent and Incarnational Presence: A Revisionist Reading of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*,” in *Society of Biblical Literature 1998 Seminar Papers 37* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), and listed at the website JEWISH ROOTS OF EASTERN CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM (<http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/>)
  - Newsom, Carol A. “Merkabah Exegesis in the Qumran *Sabbath Shirot*,” in *Journal of Jewish Studies* 38:1 (Cambridge: 1987), pages 11-30.
  - \_\_\_\_\_. *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* [HARVARD SEMITIC STUDIES 27] (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), which is a revised version of Newsom’s Ph.D. dissertation, 4Q *SEREK SIROT ‘OLAT*: EDITION, TRANSLATION, AND COMMENTARY (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1982); see especially Chapter VII. “4Q Sir and the Tradition of the Hekhalot Hymns.”
  - Schäfer, Peter. “Communion with the Angels: Qumran and the Origins of Jewish Mysticism,” in *Wege Mystischer Gotteserfahrung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam / Mystical Approaches to God: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, edited by Peter Schäfer (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006).
  - Schiffman, Lawrence. “Merkavah Speculation at Qumran: The 4Q *Serekh Shirot ‘Olat ha-Shabbat*,” in *Mystics, Philosophers, and Politicians*, edited by J. Reinhartz and D. Swetschinski (Durham: Duke University Press, 1982).
  - \_\_\_\_\_. *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls: The History of Judaism, the Background of Christianity, the Lost Library of Qumran* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1994): Chapter 22, “Mysticism and Magic.”
  - Swartz, Michael D. “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Later Jewish Magic and Mysticism,” in *Dead Sea Discoveries* 8 (Leiden – New York: E. J. Brill, 2001), pages 182-193.
- Gooder, Paula R. *Only the Third Heaven? 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 and Heavenly Ascent* (London – New York: T & T Clark, 2006).

In an effort to determine the relationship of Paul’s ascent in 2 Cor. 12 to other early ascent accounts, a range of texts is considered, including 4QBerakhot and the Slavonic Enoch. *Hekhalot* literature, in particular *Sefer Hekhalot* (3 ENOCH) and *Hekhalot Rabbati*, is discussed in CHAPTER 8.

Note Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones’ objections to Gooder in *The Mystery of God*, pages 402-404 (listed below: **2009** • Rowland/Morray-Jones).



- *Paradise Now: Essays on Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism*, edited by April D. DeConick (Leiden – Boston: Brill / Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), hereafter *Paradise Now*.

These eighteen articles, gathered from symposia of the Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism unit of the Society of Biblical Literature conducted over a ten-year span commencing in 1995, are described in DeConick’s preface as “a pioneering volume, the first ever to collect international voices that are mapping this field of study” (page xx).

#### CONTENTS:

Abbreviations

PREFACE

#### PART 1: HERMENEUTICS AND EXPERIENCE

- Alan F. Segal, “Religious Experience and the Construction of the Transcendent Self”
- Christopher Rowland, with Patricia Gibbons and Vicente Dobroruka, “Visionary Experience in Ancient Judaism and Christianity”
- Seth L. Sanders, “Performative Exegesis”

#### PART 2: COMMUNAL IDENTITIES

- Rachel Elijor, “The Emergence of the Mystical Traditions of the *Merkabah*”
- James R. Davila, “The Ancient Jewish Apocalypses and the *Hekhalot* Literature”
- Ra’anan S. Boustan, “Rabbi Ishmael’s Priestly Genealogy in *Hekhalot* Literature”

#### PART 3: COSMOLOGY

- Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones, “The Temple Within”
- Andrei A. Orlov, “God’s Face in the Enochic Tradition”
- Cameron C. Afzal, “Wheels of Time in the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ”
- Kevin Sullivan, “Sexuality and Gender of Angels”

#### PART 4: APOCALYPTICISM

- Frances Flannery-Dailey, “Lessons on Early Jewish Apocalypticism and Mysticism from Dream Literature”
- Kelley Coblenz Bautch, “Situating the Afterlife”

#### PART 5: PRACTICES

- Celia Deutsch, “The Therapeutae, Text Work, Ritual, and Mystical Experience”
- Andrea Lieber, “Jewish and Christian Heavenly Meal Traditions”
- Charles A. Gieschen, “Baptismal Praxis and Mystical Experience in the Book of Revelation”
- Daphna Arbel, “Divine Secrets and Divination”

Bibliography

Contributors

Indices

- Smith, Ian K. *Heavenly Perspective: A Study of the Apostle Paul’s Response to a Jewish Mystical Movement at Colossae* [A CONTINUUM IMPRINT] (London – New York: T & T Clark International, 2006).

Smith’s CHAPTER 3, “Jewish Mysticism,” concentrates on the early development of *merkabah* mysticism in the pseudepigrapha, Philo, Qumran literature, and Revelation. From his research on the first-century ascent material, Smith concludes that Paul’s letter to the Colossians is a response to the “super-spirituality” of ascent practitioners, for “such practices showed a faith that was more dependent on human effort than divine grace, and was thereby a denial of Paul’s gospel.” (—page 73)

2007

- Bloom, Maureen. *Jewish Mysticism and Magic: An Anthropological Perspective* [ROUTLEDGE JEWISH STUDIES SERIES] (London – New York: Routledge, 2007).

*Merkabah/hekhalot* and related literature are taken up in CHAPTER 10, “Approximating God, Appropriating Authority: *Hekhalot* and *Merkabah* Literature,” and CHAPTER 11, “Imprecations, Healing, and Protection: The ‘Book of Secrets’, amulets, incantation bowls.”

- Halbertal, Moshe. *Concealment and Revelation: Esotericism in Jewish Thought and Its Philosophical Implications*, translated by Jackie Feldman (Princeton – Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007).

CHAPTER 3 “The Ethics of Gazing: The Attitude of Early Jewish Mysticism toward Seeing the Chariot; and CHAPTER 4 “Concealment and Power: Magic and Esotericism in the Hekhalot Literature.”

Toward the end of CHAPTER 4, Halbertal writes,

The fundamental unit for the transmission of esoteric oral knowledge is the family. According to the testimony of Rabbi Eleazar of Worms, the termination of his family line, as a result of the early death of his son and combined with the diminution of his students, moved him to commit the secrets of the Torah to writing. The fear of the loss of the secret as a result of the diminution of the line of transmission justified the writing down of the secret; thus, the knowledge could be passed on without relying on the continuous chain of oral tradition. (—page 33)

- Orlov, Andrei A. *From Apocalypticism to Merkabah Mysticism: Studies in Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*. [SUPPLEMENTS TO THE JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF JUDAISM, v. 114] (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2007).

PART ONE of Orlov’s study is an exhaustive (near 100-page) “Bibliography of the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha and Related Literature”; PART TWO, “Studies in Slavonic Pseudepigrapha,” “contains several [17] essays previously published in journals inaccessible to many interested readers” (page XI).

In the introduction to the articles in PART TWO, Orlov writes

It should be noted that *2Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, and the *Ladder of Jacob* represent a unique group of texts that share a theophanic and mediatorial language that, in my view, is as different from the mainstream of early apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic writings as it is from later Hekhalot materials. This group of materials gives evidence of the lost *practical* and *literary* development that could very well represent an important transitional stage in early Jewish mystical testimonies, serving as a bridge from the matrix of early Jewish Apocalypticism, as it was manifested in early Enochic literature, to the matrix of early Jewish mysticism as it became manifest in rabbinic Merkabah and Hekhalot materials. The articles gathered in this volume intend to illustrate this transitional character of the Slavonic pseudepigraphic evidence by exploring theophanic and angelological imagery found in *2Enoch*, the *Ladder of Jacob*, the Slavonic version of *3 Baruch* and other pseudepigraphical texts preserved in Slavonic. It appears that the theophanic and angelological developments found in these documents occupy an intermediary stage between Second Temple Apocalypticism and Hekhalot mysticism and thus exhibit its own distinctive, one might say ‘proto-Hekhalot,’ mystical mold. (—page 105)

2009

- Rowland, Christopher; and Morray-Jones, Christopher R. A. *The Mystery of God: Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament* [COMPENDIA RERUM IUDAICARUM AD NOVUM TESTAMENTUM, volume 12] (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2009).

The major divisions of this 685-page volume could form three books:

PART I THINGS INTO WHICH ANGELS LONG TO LOOK: APPROACHING MYSTICISM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE JEWISH APOCALYPSES (*Christopher Rowland*)

- PART II DIVINE NAMES, CELESTIAL SANCTUARIES, AND VISIONARY ASCENTS: APPROACHING THE NEW TESTAMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MERKAVAH TRADITIONS (*Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones*)—includes “A Version of Hekhalot Zutarti” (see notes below, TEXTS & REFERENCES, § B)
- PART III THE BODY OF GLORY: APPROACHING THE NEW TESTAMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SHIUR KOMA TRADITIONS (*Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones*) (see notes below, TEXTS & REFERENCES, § F. *Shi’ur Qomah*)

- Schäfer, Peter. *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

Many scholars have dealt with Merkavah mysticism and its ramifications for classical rabbinic Judaism ... as well as with the origins of the Kabbalah in the Book Bahir, but very few have paid full attention to the evidence of the Hebrew Bible, the apocalyptic literature, Qumran, and Philo. It is this gap between the Hebrew Bible and Merkavah mysticism that the present book wishes to address in a systematic and reflective manner. (ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS—page XI)

In his introduction, Schäfer surveys previous research on the forerunners of Merkavah mysticism, in particular the studies of Gershom Scholem and Rachel Elior (see above, **1965** • *Jewish Gnosticism...* etc., and **2004** • *The Three Temples*). He commences with Ezekiel (CHAPTER 1), then goes to the Enoch literature and related material (CHAPTERS 2 and 3). The section on Qumran (CHAPTER 4) addresses “Communion with Angels” while the section on Philo (CHAPTER 5) concentrates on “The Ascent of the Soul.” CHAPTER 6, “The Rabbis I,” takes up the “Cycle of Seven Stories” from the Tosefta (the four who entered *pardes*, Ben Zoma on the upper and lower waters, etc.); “The Rabbis II” (CHAPTER 7) discusses the Merkavah passages in YERUSHALMI and BAVLI (the same *Hagigah* sections considered by Halperin—see above, **1980** • *Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature*). CHAPTER 8 treats “The Merkavah Mystics,” focusing, in particular, on *Hekhalot Zutarti*. CHAPTER 9 offers Schäfer’s conclusions and observations.

See also, Schäfer’s articles:

- “Communion with the Angels: Qumran and the Origins of Jewish Mysticism,” in *Wege Mystischer Gotteserfahrung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam / Mystical Approaches to God: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, edited by Peter Schäfer (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006).
- “Hekhalot Literature and the Origins of Jewish Mysticism,” in *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, edited by Martin Goodman and Philip Alexander [PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH ACADEMY, 165] (New York – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 265–280.

**2011**

- Koren, Sharon Faye. *Forsaken: The Menstruant in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2011).

Koren’s PART I: EARLY JEWISH MYSTICISM discusses *Beraita d’Niddah* (TEACHINGS ON THE MENSTRUANT) and its connections with *hekhalot* literature. Refer below, TEXTS & REFERENCES, § Q, for a brief passage from *Forsaken* regarding *Beraita d’Niddah*.

**2012**

- Damsma, Alinda. *The Targumic Toseftot to Ezekiel* [STUDIES IN THE ARAMAIC INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE, 13] (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2012).

ABSTRACT from Brill’s website:

This book focuses on the additional liturgical and alternative readings of *Targum Ezekiel*, the so-called *Targumic Toseftot*. The critical text, translation, and commentary are presented with special reference to the long segments of unique mystical lore that are preserved in the *Targumic Toseftot* to Ezekiel 1, the chapter which describes the prophet’s vision of the celestial chariot. This unique manuscript material sheds light on a relatively dark chapter in the reception history of early Jewish mystical lore, being closely related to the Hekhalot literature, and to the *Shi’ur Qomah* tradition in particular. The volume concludes with a systematic treatment of the *Targumic Toseftot* to Ezekiel in relation to their Aramaic dialect, date and provenance, as well as their historical and social setting.

Damsma takes up not only “The Order of the Heavens in Rabbinic Literature” but also “The Order of the Underworlds....”

- Barnard, Jody A. *The Mysticism of Hebrews: Exploring the Role of Jewish Apocalyptic Mysticism in the Epistle to the Hebrews* [WISSENSCHAFTLICHE UNTERSUCHUNGEN ZUM NEUEN TESTAMENT, REIHE 2, Book 331] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012).

“[T]he role of Jewish apocalypticism in [Epistle to the] Hebrews has been vastly underappreciated, and the role of Jewish apocalyptic *mysticism*, even more so. In the field of New Testament studies generally, the aforementioned sporadic engagement with Jewish apocalyptic traditions appears to have passed, at least for the moment, and it is now more common for NT scholars to draw upon these rich and fascinating traditions in an attempt to elucidate the NT documents. Moreover, certain major recent publications suggest that research in this area will no longer be able to so easily marginalize the mystical dimension of apocalyptic traditions. Numerous desiderata remain, however, and among them is the role of Jewish apocalyptic mysticism in the epistle to the Hebrews, the subject of the present study.” (INTRODUCTION, page 2)

The “certain recent publications” that Barnard refers to are *The Mystery of God...* by Christopher Rowland and Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones and *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism* by Peter Schäfer (both listed above: 2009).

Barnard does say, however, “Although I have made occasional reference to the Hekhalot literature, this study is not an attempt to explore the relationship between Hebrews and the Hekhalot traditions” (INTRODUCTION, page 21).

2013

- Davila, James R. *Hekhalot Literature in Translation: Major Texts of Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2013), hereafter *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*.

English translations of *Hekhalot Rabbati*, *Sar Torah* material, *Hekhalot Zutarti*, *Ma’aseh Merkavah*, *Merkavah Rabba*, *The Chapter of R. Nehuniah ben haQanah*, *The Great Seal/Fearsome Crown*, *Sar Panim* material, *The Ascent of Elijah ben Amyah*, *The Youth*, and the *hekhalot* fragments from the Cairo Geniza, “based mainly on the seven manuscripts published in a synoptic edition by Schäfer in the *Synopse*.”

(INTRODUCTION, page 19).

See my comments on Davila’s *Hekhalot Literature in Translation* below on page 25.

- *Envisioning Judaism: Studies in Honor of Peter Schäfer on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, edited by Ra’anan S. Boustán, Klaus Herrmann, Reimund Leicht, Annette Y. Reed, and Giuseppe Veltri, with the collaboration of Alex Ramos, Volume 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

Part IV: Hekhalot and Magical Studies (pages 327-713)

- Swartz, Michael D. “Three-Dimensional Philology: Some Implications of the *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*” (revised version in *The Mechanics of Providence*, CHAPTER 12, see below 2018)
- Kuyt, Annelies. “Visions in Hekhalot Literature: Reflections on Terminology”
- Meerson, Michael. “Physiognomy and Somatomancy: The Ways That Never Crossed”
- Shavit, Yaacov. “‘He was Thoth in Everything’: Why and When King Solomon Became Both *Magister omnium physicorum* and Master of Magic”
- Bohak, Gideon; and Geller, Mark. “Babylonian Astrology in the Cairo Genizah”
- Salzer, Dorothea M. “How to Use the Hebrew Bible to Harm Your Neighbor: The Use of Biblical Quotations in Curse Texts Found in the Cairo Genizah”
- Bohak, Gideon; and Herrmann, Klaus. “*Tefillat Rav Hamnuna Sava*: Genizah Fragments and Medieval Manuscripts”
- Hirschfelder, Ulrike. “*Torat ha-Masbiab* in the Context of Apocalyptic Traditions in Ashkenazi Hekhalot Manuscripts”
- Rebigier, Bill. “Non-European Traditions of Hekhalot Literature: The Yemenite Evidence”

Another article of interest within *Envisioning Judaism*, Volume 1:

- Boustán, Ra’anan S. “The Contested Reception of *The Story of the Ten Martyrs* in Medieval Midrash” (pages 369-393)

- *Handbook of Jewish Literature from Late Antiquity, 135-700 CE*, edited by Eyal Ben-Eliyahu, Yehudah Cohn, and Fergus Millar (Oxford: Oxford University Press/British Academy, 2013).

Chapter 4. “Mystical (Hekhalot) and Magical Literature”

This chapter describes the following texts: *Sefer Hekhalot* (*Third Enoch*—Hebrew *Enoch*), *Hekhalot Rabbati*, *Hekhalot Zutarti*, *Sbiur Qomah*, *Harba de-Moshe*, *Sefer ha-Razim*, and *Sefer Yetsirah*. For each of these texts, the contents, dating, language, printed editions, translations, commentaries, bibliography, electronic resources and manuscripts are provided. (—publisher’s description)

- *Hekhalot Literature in Context*, edited by Ra‘anan Boustan, Martha Himmelfarb, and Peter Schäfer [TEXTS AND STUDIES IN ANCIENT JUDAISM, 153] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

CONTENTS:

- Ra‘anan Boustan, “Introduction”

PART I. THE FORMATION OF HEKHALOT LITERATURE: LINGUISTIC, LITERARY, AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

- Noam Mizrahi, “The Language of Hekhalot Literature: Preliminary Observations”
- Peter Schäfer, “Metatron in Babylonia”
- Michael D. Swartz, “Hekhalot and Piyyut: From Byzantium to Babylonia and Back” (revised version in *The Mechanics of Providence*, CHAPTER 15, see below **2018**)
- Alexei Sivertsev, “The Emperor’s Many Bodies: The Demise of Emperor Lupinus Revisited”
- Klaus Herrmann, “Jewish Mysticism in Byzantium: The Transformation of Merkavah Mysticism in 3 Enoch”
- David M. Grossberg, “Between 3 Enoch and Bavli *Hagigah*: Heresiology and Orthopraxy in the Ascent of Elisha ben Abuyah”
- Moulie Vidas, “Hekhalot Literature, the Babylonian Academies, and the *Tanna'im*”

PART II. THE TRANSMISSION & RECEPTION OF HEKHALOT LITERATURE: TOWARD THE MIDDLE AGES

- Peter Schäfer, “The Hekhalot Genizah”
- Gideon Bohak, “Observations on the Transmission of Hekhalot Literature in the Cairo Genizah”
- Ophir Münz-Manor, “A Prolegomenon to the Study of Hekhalot Traditions in European Piyyut”

PART III. EARLY JEWISH MYSTICISM IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE: THEMES & PATTERNS

- Reimund Leicht, “Major Trends in Rabbinic Cosmology”
- Rebecca Lesses, “Women and Gender in the Hekhalot Literature”
- Andrei A. Orlov, “‘What is Below?’ Mysteries of Leviathan in the Early Jewish Accounts and Mishnah Hagigah 2:1”
- Michael Meerson, “Rites of Passage in Magic and Mysticism”
- Annette Yoshiko Reed, “Rethinking (Jewish-)Christian Evidence for Jewish Mysticism”

- Himmelfarb, Martha. *Between Temple and Torah: Essays on Priests, Scribes, and Visionaries in the Second Temple Period and Beyond* [TEXTS AND STUDIES IN ANCIENT JUDAISM, 151] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

*Between Temple and Torah* reprints twenty of Himmelfarb’s papers originally published between 1984 and 2011. Refer, in particular, to the section entitled “Heavenly Ascent,” which contains

- “Heavenly Ascent and the Relationship of the Apocalypses and the Hekhalot Literature,” from *Hebrew Union College Annual* 59 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1988), pages 73-100.
- “Revelation and Rapture: The Transformation of the Visionary in the Ascent Apocalypses,” from *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies Since the Uppsala Colloquium*, edited by John J. Collins and James H. Charlesworth (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1991), pages 79-90.
- “The Practice of Ascent in the Ancient Mediterranean World,” from *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys*, edited by J. Collins and M. Fishbane (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), pages 121-137.
- “Merkavah Mysticism since Scholem: Rachel Elior’s *The Three Temples*,” from *Wege Mystischer Gotteserfahrung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam / Mystical Approaches to God: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, edited by Peter Schäfer (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2006), pages 19-36.

Himmelfarb observes,

A first attempt at reading through the hekhalot literature can be an unsettling experience, and not only because of the difficulties inherent in the texts. Anyone whose picture of this literature was shaped primarily by Scholem's account comes to it expecting to find the continuation of the tradition of heavenly ascent from the Jewish apocalypses. For while Scholem by no means ignored other aspects of the hekhalot literature, he consistently places ascent at its center. Thus it comes as a surprise to discover how small a place descriptions of heavenly ascent occupy in these texts. (—*Between Temple and Torah*, page 257)

2014

- Gruenwald, Ithamar. *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*. Second, Revised Edition [ARBEITEN ZUR GESCHICHTE DES ANTIKEN JUDENTUMS UND DES URCHRISTENTUMS, Volume 90] (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2014); hereafter AMM<sub>2</sub>

With the surge of books treating the *hekhalot* covered in the previous pages, which all of necessity refer to the first edition of Gruenwald's work, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* itself fell out of print, became difficult to find, and grew prohibitively expensive to obtain. However, for Brill simply to reprint the book would have proven the original edition to be out-of-date on more than a few points in light of all of the important work done on *hekhalot* literature since 1980. Yet, for Gruenwald to compose a wholly new book in response to the research of the intervening years would sacrifice the solid presentation he offered in his original effort. Hence, a revised edition, the two editions being perfect bookends to a field—and a career—devoted to apocalyptic, ancient ritual, and mysticism.

It was my privilege to read and comment on the final draft of the second edition of *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* before publication. My role was primarily to make suggestions regarding form and clarity in English.

While not penned by me, the publisher's description shows traces of my hand:

This is a new and revised edition of the book first published 1980. It contains new introductory and concluding chapters as well as a bibliography and updated index. Furthermore, substantial corrections, updates, and changes have been made in the original text. The changes concern matters of language and style, they nuance the line of argumentation, and they update the discussion of major issues. The new chapters fill several scholarly gaps that have opened since the initial publication of this book in 1980. The new introductory chapter explores new venues and issues in the study and assessment of the *hekhalot* literature and relevant passages in apocalyptic literature, and this in light of epistemological and ontological considerations. The concluding chapter discusses the ritual praxis of the experience of the *hekhalot* mystics and its affinity to magic, and this in terms of new approaches to ritual theory.<sup>10</sup>

2016

- Miller, Michael T. *The Name of God in Jewish Thought: A Philosophical Analysis of Mystical Traditions from Apocalyptic to Kabbalah* (London – New York: Routledge, 2016): CHAPTER 4, “The Seventy Faces of God: Kripke on Names, Identity, and the Angels of the Hekhalot” (pages 83-100).

In the Hekhalot literature, God is both transcendent and present; but this dualism must be understood epistemologically. God is not so transcendent as to be unimaginable, unthinkable, unknowable, but what we can know of God must be tempered by a knowledge of our own minds' tendency to reduce and compress information into a subjective form. That is to say, all human knowledge of God takes the shape of human knowledge, which is linguistic: it is *language-shaped*. This does not invalidate it. This bringing into the subjective realm, or *making-knowable* of the divine is essential in any theology which claims revelation. However, the knowledge must not be mistaken for the thing-itself. (—page 94)

“Kripke” refers to Saul A. Kripke (b. 1940), American philosopher and logician, author of *Naming and Necessity* (Cambridge [MA], Harvard University Press/Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publishers, 1980). Miller deals with the puzzle of *identity* in the many names of God by

drawing on the work of Saul Kripke on the personal name as a ‘rigid designator’ of individuality and identity. (—page 84).

<sup>10</sup> Refer to Gruenwald's *Rituals and Ritual Theory in Ancient Israel* [BRILL REFERENCE LIBRARY OF ANCIENT JUDAISM, Volume 10] (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2003; reprinted Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).

2017

- Harari, Yuval. *Jewish Magic before the Rise of Kabbalah*, translated by Batya Stein [RAPHAEL PATAI SERIES IN JEWISH FOLKLORE AND ANTHROPOLOGY] (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2017).

A substantial portion of Harari's second chapter reviews scholarship on the place of magic in *hekhlot* literature, pages 113-132. Harari surveys the use of magic in *hekhlot* literature, providing examples in translation, pages 316-330.

*Hekhalot* and *Merkavah* works convey a theoretical and practical interest in the power of seals, incantations, and holy names to enforce human will on angels in order to achieve human aims, be they heavenly or earthly. (—page 316)

- Orlov, Andrei A. *The Greatest Mirror: Heavenly Counterparts in the Jewish Pseudepigrapha* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2017).

While he focuses on the image of the heavenly double in works like the *Animal Apocalypse*, *Book of the Watchers*, *2 Enoch*, *Ladder of Jacob*, and *Joseph and Aseneth*, Orlov persistently draws the *hekhlot* material into the discussion, especially *Sefer Hekhalot* (= 3 Enoch).

Reviewer Alexander Kulik states (on the back cover),

[This book] is particularly important for many scholars who do not have control of the Slavonic originals of the *Ladder of Jacob* and 2 Enoch. Orlov also draws on a broad range of unfamiliar sources, including Manichaean and Mandaeen materials, which were often neglected by experts who previously investigated the heavenly counterpart imagery.

- Orlov, Andrei A. *Yahoel and Metatron: Aural Apocalypticism and the Origins of Early Jewish Mysticism* [TEXTS AND STUDIES IN ANCIENT JUDAISM 169] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017).

In this work, Andrei A. Orlov examines Jewish apocalyptic traditions about the angel Yahoel, tracing their conceptual impact on the development of later rabbinic and Hekhalot beliefs concerning the supreme angel Metatron. The author argues that the figure Yahoel, who became associated in Jewish apocalypticism with the distinctive aural ideology of the divine Name, provides an important conceptual key not only for elucidating the evolution of the Metatron tradition, but also for understanding the origins of the distinctive aural ideology prominent in early Jewish mystical accounts. Andrei A. Orlov suggests that the aural mold of Jewish apocalypticism exercised a decisive and formative influence on the development of early Jewish mysticism. (—Mohr book description)

Orlov states in his introduction,

...one of the tasks of this study will be the exploration not only of the ideological proclivities of Hekhalot materials, wherein Metatron's mediatorial profile came arguably to its conceptual fore, but also a thorough investigation of the peculiar apocalyptic mold found in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, from which Yahoel's figure appears in full blown conceptual complexity.

The comparative analysis of the imagery found in an early Jewish apocalyptic text, which was preserved by Eastern Orthodox Christians in its Slavonic translation, and the traditions attested in some Hekhalot macroforms circulating in later Jewish rabbinic and mystical circles, inevitably raise the question of the possible channels of transmission between these different ideological and cultural milieus. This issue, without a doubt, represents a most difficult challenge for students of early Jewish mysticism, as it had already been encountered by Gershom Scholem, who faced the great difficulty of attempting to provide historical links between apocalyptic traditions and later molds of Jewish mystical tradition, including Hekhalot literature. (pages 4-5)

In that Orlov focusses on Metatron, the primary *hekhlot* text he treats is *Sefer ha-Hekhalot*, i.e., 3 Enoch.

2018

- Swartz, Michael D. *The Mechanics of Providence: The Workings of Ancient Jewish Magic and Mysticism* [TEXTS AND STUDIES IN ANCIENT JUDAISM, 172] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018).

The sixteen chapters of *The Mechanics of Providence* are in two sets: Part I, Magic, and Part II, Mysticism. These chapters are based on Swartz' papers which were previously published in a variety of journals and compendia.

Each section of the volume begins with a survey of the main issues and types of evidence ... and programmatic essays on the concepts of magic and mysticism.... The two sections then proceed to studies in the evidence for each category, with an eye to sorting out the problems raised by the textual and material dimensions of the subject..., and especially the complex network of symbols, effects, and internal logic that drives each one.... These studies emphasize close readings of ritual and literary-historical studies as ways of analyzing them. Each section concludes with a translation of a brief text which exemplifies some of the dynamics described in the body of the book. (—INTRODUCTION, page 1)

The texts given are *The Book of the Great Name* (Schäfer, *Synopse*, §§ 489-495—see below, [The “Core Group” of Hekhalot Texts](#), § A) and “The Seal of the Merkavah” (AKA the “Ozhayah fragment”—Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, pp. 97-111).

Swartz' survey chapters at the heads of the two parts are excellent—and the most up-to-date—introductions to ancient Jewish magic and mysticism.

2020

- Busi, Giulio. *Heavenly Palaces in Judaism: A Historical Travel Guide* (Castiglione delle Stiviere: Fondazione Palazzo Bondoni Pastorio, 2020)—a revised edition of *Città di luce: La mistica ebraica dei palazzini celesti* (Turin: Einaudi, 2019).

Busi states early in the book (p. 3),

My aim is to dismantle the symbolic mechanism that makes the narrative move, and that leads the actors of the divine journey to behave a certain way and not otherwise.

Without sacrificing any of the requirements of scholarship, Busi has composed a book that can be enjoyed by the non-academic. His prose reaches out to the reader with statements like the following about “there,” the term set up to represent the goal of the mystic, the “celestial dimension”:

“There” is the place where every time becomes visible to us, where memories and hopes touch and interpenetrate. “There” is a glowing city of light. (p. 11)

Busi starts his narrative sweep with the visions of the biblical Ezekiel and Isaiah then proceeds to place the *hekhalot* texts in a broad context—similar in range to that represented in Schäfer's *Origins of Jewish Mysticism* (see above: 2009). Breaking down various themes and images along the way, Busi approaches the *hekhalot* mystics by asking, “What were they doing?” and “Why were they doing it?”

While offering a humanized, albeit analytical, take on the *hekhalot* literature, Busi casts the net wider by comparing the seven heavens of ancient Jewish mysticism with “The palaces of the Sabians” and “Seven palaces in Malaysia and in the heaven of China.”

Excerpts of significant source texts are provided (in English) throughout.



## Translations & References

### The Hekhalot Corpus

The number of *hekhalot* texts in translation has grown, albeit slowly, over the years, culminating with James R. Davila's *Hekhalot Literature in Translation* (2013—see above, page 20), which includes all of the major works except

- *3 Enoch*, for which Davila defers to Philip S. Alexander's "excellent English translation" (—Davila, page 7) in Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*
- *Masekhet Hekhalot*, in that "it is doubtful that this text should be included in the Hekhalot corpus" (—*ibid.*, page 9)
- much of the *Shi'ur Qomah* corpus, given that "its relationship to the other Hekhalot texts is somewhat tangential" (—*ibid.*). Davila refers the reader to the work on *Shi'ur Qomah* by Martin Cohen (1983 and 1985)

Here we enter directly into the question of what *is* and what *is not* a member of the *hekhalot* family; the canons offered by various scholars differ. For instance, the MSS used in Schäfer's *Synopse* include some items which many commentators find dubious, namely, THE SWORD OF MOSES and *Seder Rabba di Bereshit*.<sup>11</sup> One well-known text, THE VISIONS OF EZEKIEL, while often included on lists of *hekhalot* texts, is clearly of a character different from the so-called "core group." Davila's exclusion of *Masekhet Hekhalot* from the canon is certain to draw some criticism.<sup>12</sup>

Discussions on which texts belong to the *hekhalot* canon have progressed along several lines:

1. Texts which have long been counted among the *hekhalot* are now thought not to belong, for example, THE VISIONS OF EZEKIEL.
2. Magical works, such as THE SWORD OF MOSES and *Sefer ha-Razim*, are being drawn closer to the *hekhalot* writings.
3. Some works are being wholly reconsidered in that they might not be *works* at all but rather of one *genre* or another, as, for instance, the *Shi'ur Qomah* and *Sar Torah* texts.

As mentioned, even the titles of these "books" are late inventions which have become *conventions*, used even by the scholars who refute their validity.

Drawing on the lists of *hekhalot* given by a number of contemporary scholars, below is a reference outline of sources on various *hekhalot* titles, erring generously in favor of inclusion.

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<sup>11</sup> See APPENDIX 2, below, on the contents of *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*.

<sup>12</sup> *Masekhet Hekhalot* is a mixture of *hekhalot* and other materials, which its author/compiler blends and alters rather freely. There is indeed an *after-the-fact* quality to this text.

## The “Core Group” of *Hekhalot* Texts

§ numbers given in braces { ... } are section (*microform*) numbers established in  
*Synopse zur Hekhalot Literatur* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1981)  
 Refer to APPENDIX 2 below on the contents of *Synopse*.

- A. *Hekhalot Rabbati* [THE GREATER PALACES] (HR) {§§ 81-277}  
*Sar Torah* [PRINCE OF THE TORAH] {§§ 278-306}

Translations:

- HR chapters 1-30 {§§ 81-86, 92-113, 117-173, 178-192, 196-260, 269-306}, the most comprehensive translation, which includes *The Story of the Ten Martyrs* {§§ 107-121}; the *First Apocalypse* (called the *David Apocalypse*) {§§ 122-126},<sup>13</sup> *Second Apocalypse* {§§ 130-139}, and *Third Apocalypse* {§§ 140-151}; some *Shi'ur Qomah* material {§ 167}; and the *Sar Torah* appendix {§§ 278-306}, translated by Morton Smith from an unpublished edition (based on MS New York 8128—the primary MS used by Schäfer *et al* in *Synopse*) prepared by Gershom Scholem and Chaim Wirszubski. My annotated transcription of this translation is online at <http://www.digital-brilliance.com/contributed/Karr/HekRab/index.php> and [https://www.academia.edu/41482641/HEKHALOT\\_RABBATI](https://www.academia.edu/41482641/HEKHALOT_RABBATI)
- HR {§§ 81-121, 152-173, 189-277} and *Sar Torah* {§§ 281-306}, in Davila, *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*.
- HR chapters 15-29 {§§ 206-298}, prepared by Lauren Grodner—which includes §§ 281-287 from *Sar Torah*—in David R. Blumenthal's *Understanding Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1978), where it is referred to as “Pirkei Heikalot.”
- HR chapters 1, 2, and 16-26, in Aryeh Kaplan's *Meditation and Kabbalah* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1982).
- HR chapters 15:1-22:2 (with omissions), in Philip S. Alexander's *Textual Sources for the Study of Judaism* (Totowa: Barnes and Noble, 1984; rpt., University of Chicago Press, 1990).
- *Sar Torah* {§§ 278-280 and §§ 281-306 (from HR mss), §§ 307-314 (which fall outside the text usually incorporated into HR), §§ 560-570 (which appear in *Ma'aseh Merkavah*), and §§ 675-697 (from *Merkavah Rabba*)}, along with other *Sar Torah* rituals and related texts, in English translation in Michael Swartz' *Scholastic Magic*, CHAPTERS 4 and 5.
- HR chapters 13-17 {§§ 198-224}, in Joseph Dan, *The Heart and Fountain: An Anthology of Jewish Mystical Experiences* (Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press, 2002): CHAPTER 1.
- HR chapters 5 and 6 {§§ 107-121} (*The Story of the Ten Martyrs* up to the *First Apocalypse*), “annotated translation” = APPENDIX C of Ra'anana Abusch's dissertation, FROM MARTYR TO MYSTIC (listed above: **2005 • Boustan**).

References to HR run throughout the following: Gruenwald's AMM<sub>1,2</sub>, Schäfer's HMG, Kuyt's DESCENT, and Lesses' *Ritual Practices*. See also

- Ahuvia, Mika. ISRAEL AMONG THE ANGELS: ANGELS AND AUTHORITY IN LATE ANTIQUE JEWISH TEXTS. Ph.D. diss. (Princeton: Princeton University, 2014).  
 “Chapter four investigates the early mystical treatise *Hekhalot Rabbati*, which captures the worldview of those Jews most preoccupied with angels. Jewish mystics strove to live in synchronicity with the angels, to achieve angelic status, and even to command the angels.”  
 (from the abstract)

<sup>13</sup> Helen Spurling treats the *David Apocalypse* {§§ 122-126} among the “Hebrew Visions of Hell and Paradise” in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, Volume 1, edited by Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013). She notes (page 701), “This work is found embedded in manuscripts of the mystical Hekhalot literature, usually in a work called the *Hekhalot Rabbati*, but it clearly is a separate composition.”

- Arbel, Daphna. “Pure Marble Stones or Water? On Ecstatic Perception, Group Identity, and Authority in Hekhalot and Merkavah Literature,” in *Studies in Spirituality*, Volume 16 (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 2006), pages 21-38.
- Boustán, Ra‘anan S. *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Rabbi Ishmael’s Miraculous Conception: Jewish Redemption History in Anti-Christian Polemic,” in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, edited by Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), pp. 307-
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Rabbi Ishmael’s Priestly Genealogy in *Hekhalot* Literature,” in *Paradise Now*—see above, **2006**.
- Dan, Joseph. “Origins of Rabbinic Martyrology: Rabbi Akibah, the Song of Songs, and Hekhalot Mysticism,” in *AJS Perspectives: MARTYRDOM THROUGH THE AGES* (New York: Association for Jewish Studies, Spring 2009), pages 14-16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Revelation of the Secret World: The Beginning of Jewish Mysticism* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1992) = JM1: Chapter 3.
- Davila, James R. “Prolegomena to a Critical Edition of the Hekhalot Rabbati,” in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 45, no. 2 (Cambridge: The Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. 1994).
- Halperin, David. “A Sexual Image in Hekhalot Rabbati and Its Implications,” in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, vol. 6, nos. 1-2, edited by Joseph Dan (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1987).
- Hezser, Catherine. “‘He Who Sits Crowned on the Throne of His Glory’: Body Posture in *Hekhalot Rabbati* and in Rabbinic Literature,” in *Les écrits mystiques des Hekhalot et la ‘sacerdotalisation’ dans le Judaïsme ancien*, edited by David Hamidovic, Simon C. Mimouni, and Louis Painchaud (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, forthcoming).  
 Accessed at ACADEMIA (2015):  
[https://www.academia.edu/19801563/ He Who Sits Crowned On the Throne of His Glory Body Posture in Hekhalot Rabbati and in Rabbinic Literature](https://www.academia.edu/19801563/He_Who_Sits_Crowned_On_the_Throne_of_His_Glory_Body_Posture_in_Hekhalot_Rabbati_and_in_Rabbinic_Literature)
- Janowitz, Naomi. “Using Names, Letters, and Praise: The Language of Ascent” = CHAPTER 5 of *Icons of Power: Ritual Practices in Late Antiquity* [MAGIC IN HISTORY] (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).
- Neis, Rachel. “Embracing Icons: The Face of Jacob on the Throne of God,” in *Images: A Journal of Jewish Art and Visual Culture*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 36-54.
- Orlov, Andrei A. “The Heirs of the Enochic Lore: ‘Men of Faith’ in 2 *Enoch* 35:2 and *Sefer Hekhalot* 48D:10,” in *Scrinium: Journal of Patrology and Critical Hagiography*, Volume 3, Issue 1 (Axiōma: Gorgias Press, 2007), pages 451-463.
- Saldarini, Anthony J. “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia* 14 – *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre*, guest editor: John J. Collins (Missoula: Scholars Press/Society of Biblical Literature, 1979); outline of apocalyptic content in HR (citations following Wertheimer), pages 190-192.
- Schäfer, Peter. “Merkavah Mysticism and Magic,” in “Merkavah Mysticism and Magic,” in *Gershom Scholem’s MAJOR TRENDS IN JEWISH MYSTICISM 50 Years After*, edited by J. Dan and P. Schäfer (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1993), pages 59-78.
- Schiffman, Lawrence. “The Recall of Rabbi Nehuniah ha-Qanah from Ecstasy in the Hekhalot Rabbati,” in *AJS Review*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Association for Jewish Studies, 1976).
- Smith, Morton. “Observations on Hekhalot Rabbati,” in *Biblical and Other Studies*, edited by Alexander Altmann (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).
- Wolfson. *SPECULUM*, chapter 3.

Often appended to HR in manuscripts is “The Book of the Great Name” (§§ 489-495).<sup>14</sup> For an introduction and translation, see Michael D. Swartz, “The Book of the Great Name,” in *Judaism in Practice from the Middle Ages through the Early Modern Period* [PRINCETON READINGS IN RELIGION], edited by Lawrence Fine (Princeton – Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001); also in Swartz, *The Mechanics of Providence*, CHAPTER 9. Portions are translated by Ithamar Gruenwald in *From Apocalypticism to Gnosticism*, pages 267-270.

B. *Hekhalot Zutreti*, OR *Zutarti* [THE LESSER PALACES] (HZ) (§§ 335-374, 407-419)

Editions and Translations: Two editions of HZ in the original Hebrew and Aramaic have appeared (i) Schäfer’s *Synopse*, and (ii) a problematic “critical edition” by Rachel Elior (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1982). For a review of these two, see David Halperin’s “A New Edition of the Hekhalot Literature,” in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 104, no. 3 (1984).

HZ in English is in James Davila’s *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*.

Also in English, Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones offers “A Version of Hekhalot Zutarti” in *The Mystery of God: Early Jewish Mysticism and the New Testament* (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2009—detailed above, **2009** • Rowland/Morray-Jones), stating (pages 268-269),

The version of HekhZ that follows includes all of the material included by both Schäfer and Elior (§§ 335-374 and 407-419) plus § 375 (included by Elior but not by Schäfer) and the Akiva ‘postscript’ (422-424). § 347 (MS. Munich 40 only), where the copyist has mistakenly repeated the first words of § 337, is disregarded.

Owing to the redactional complexity of the HekhZ macroform, it cannot be claimed that this version represents an ‘original’ or ‘authoritative’ text of HekhZ. Schäfer’s contention that no such text ever existed is basically correct. It is therefore necessary to take account of the different sources and layers of literary activity found in the manuscripts, including the distinctive literary tradition represented by passages of MS. New York. It can, however, be said that the materials included in this version are the basic ingredients of the early HekhZ literary tradition, that they were amalgamated with each other in something like this form during the early centuries of the common era, and that at least some of the materials preserved in this collection must be very old indeed.

In *Transparent Illusion*, Morray-Jones’ analyzes in detail two sections of HZ: the “ancient midrash ... which includes the water vision episode” (§§ 407-412) in CHAPTER THREE, and the “throne midrash” (§§ 368-375) in CHAPTER EIGHT, section 2.

Many important passages from HZ are translated and discussed in Halperin’s *FACES* and Schäfer’s *Origins of Jewish Mysticism* (§ HEKHALOT ZUTARTI, pages 282-306).

References: AMM<sub>1-2</sub>, *FACES*, HMG, DESCENT, *Ritual Practices*, Scholem’s *Jewish Gnosticism*, and

- Arbel, Daphna. “Pure Marble Stones or Water? On Ecstatic Perception, Group Identity, and Authority in Hekhalot and Merkavah Literature,” in *Studies in Spirituality*, Volume 16 (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 2006), pages 21-38
- Putthoff, Tyson L. “Transformed by His Glory: Self-glorification in *Hekhalot Zutarti*,” = -4 of *Ontological Aspects of Early Jewish Anthropology: The Malleable Self and the Presence of God* (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 176-226.
- Saldarini, Anthony J. “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia* 14—outline of apocalyptic content in HZ, page 195.
- Swartz, Michael D. “Three-Dimensional Philology,” in *Envisioning Judaism*; analysis of an HZ mss. on pages 545-549, and *The Mechanics of Providence*, CHAPTER 12.

<sup>14</sup> Davila, in *Hekhalot Literature...*, page 38, 40, and 189, refers to §§ 489-495 simply as “an Aramaic magical handbook.”

C. *Sefer Hekhalot* [BOOK OF PALACES] = Hebrew Book of Enoch = 3 Enoch (3E) §§ 1-80

Translations (listed chronologically):

- Odeberg, Hugo. *3 Enoch or The Hebrew Book of Enoch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928; rpt. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1973; rpt. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012)  
Chs 1, 4, 10, and 41 of this translation are at the WORK OF THE CHARIOT site:  
<http://www.workofthechariot.com/TextFiles/Translations-Enoch.html>
- Alexander, P. “3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1983).
- Dan, Joseph. *The Heart and the Fountain*, CHAPTER 3: 3E CHAPTERS I-XVI.
- Lumpkin, Joseph B. *The Books of Enoch: The Complete Volume Containing 1 ENOCH (The Ethiopic Book of Enoch), 2 ENOCH (The Slavonic Book of Enoch), and 3 ENOCH (The Hebrew Book of Enoch)* (Blountsville: Fifth Estate, 2010).  
The back cover of Lumpkin’s *Books of Enoch* claims that “[u]ntil now, the Hebrew Book of Enoch has not been available to the general public since 1928,” indicating no knowledge of either the 1973 Ktav reprint of Odeberg or Alexander’s translation within Charlesworth’s *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (1983), which contains all three “Books of Enoch” with full scholarly treatment, pages 5-315. In fact, Lumpkin’s version of 3E appears to be merely a slight reworking of Odeberg’s translation and notes.
- Nyland, Dr. A[nn]. *Third Book of Enoch (3 Enoch, Merkabah Book, Hebrew Book of Enoch)* (Uralla: Smith and Stirling Publishers/CreateSpace, 2010).
- Schnieders, Paul C. *The Three Books of Enoch – Complete Edition* (Las Vegas: International alliance Pro-Publishing, 2012).  
Again, 3 Enoch offered here is simply Odeberg’s translation and format, but without his copious notes.

References: AMM<sub>1-2</sub>, HMG, *Ritual Practices*, and the following articles by P. S. Alexander:

- “Appendix: 3 Enoch,” in Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, A New English Version*, revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Goodman (Edinburgh: T & T Clark Ltd., 1986): volume 3, part 1, pp. 269-277.
- “The Historical Setting of the Hebrew Book of Enoch,” in *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 28, no. 2 (The Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 1977).
- “3 Enoch and the Talmud,” in *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, vol. 17, no. 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986).

See also the following books and articles.

- Boyarin, Daniel. “Beyond Judaisms: Metatron and the Divine Polymorphy of Ancient Judaism,” in *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 41 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 323-365.
- Kaplan, Lawrence. “Adam, Enoch, and Metatron,” in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, Volume Six, edited by Daniel Abrams and Avraham Elqayam (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2001), where Kaplan, among other things, argues that the notion of Enoch’s being transformed into Metatron is original to 3 Enoch.
- Kimbrel, Suzannah MacLean. PENETRATING THE SEVENTH PALACE: READING THE SEXUAL DIMENSIONS OF THE HEBREW BOOK OF ENOCH AND THE HEKHALOT GENRE, (PhD dissertation, Charlotte: University of North Carolina, 2017).
- Paz, Yakir. “Metatron is Not Enoch: Reevaluating the Evolution of and Archangel,” in *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, vol. 50 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 1-49.
- Orlov, Andrei. *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* [TEXTS AND STUDIES IN ANCIENT JUDAISM, vol. 107] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005). See especially Chapter III, “Roles and Titles of Enoch-Metatron in *Sefer Hekhalot* and Other Materials,” pp. 86-147.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Yahoel and Metatron* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017); Chapter III “deal[s] extensively with the Hekhalot materials, and especially with *Sefer Hekhalot*” (—page 141).

- Reed, Annette Y. “Categorization, collection, and the Construction of Continuity: 1 Enoch and 3 Enoch in and beyond ‘Apocalypticism’ and ‘Mysticism,’” in *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Leiden – Boston: Brill, July 2017), pp. 268-311.
- Saldarini, Anthony J. “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia* 14; an outline of apocalyptic content in 3E (citations following Odeberg) appears on pages 192-193.
- Schäfer, Peter. “From the Human Enoch to the Lesser God Metatron” = CHAPTER 11 of *Two Gods in Heaven: Jewish Concepts of God in Antiquity*, translated by Allison Brown (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

See above, **2006** • *Paradise Now*: articles by Rebecca Lesses and Daphna Arbel; and Schäfer’s *Origins of Jewish Mysticism*: § 3 ENOCH (pages 315-327).

#### D. *Merkabah Rabba* [THE GREAT CHARIOT] (MR) {§§ 655-708}

A complete MR in English is offered in Davila’s *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*. Some few paragraphs of MR are translated in

- APPENDIX ONE of Janowitz’ *Poetics of Ascent* {§§ 675-678}, noted above.
- Swartz’ *Scholastic Magic* {§§ 675-676, §§ 680-687}
- Cohen’s *Shi’ur Qomah* {§§ 688-708}; see below: F. *Shi’ur Qomah*.

We must then turn to Schäfer’s HMG, Kuyt’s outline in DESCENT, and Lesses’ references in *Ritual Practices*.

Gruenwald’s chapter on MR in AMM<sub>1,2</sub> begins with a description of material which may represent a sub-genre within *hehbalot* literature, namely, a portion of the *Sar ha-Panim* (ShP, PRINCE OF THE PRESENCE, or COUNTENANCE) {§§ 623-639}. Peter Schäfer treats ShP as an independent text in “Die Beschwörung des *śar ha-panim*: Kritische Edition und Übersetzung” (THE ADJURATION OF THE PRINCE OF THE COUNTENANCE: CRITICAL EDITION AND TRANSLATION), originally published in *Frankfurter Judaische Beiträge*, vol. 6 (1978); reprinted in Schäfer’s *Hekhalot-Studien*. Of course, Schäfer’s translation is in German, but all is not lost. The same text has been put into English a number of times; refer to Section O, below.

Back to Gruenwald: Unlike AMM<sub>1</sub>, AMM<sub>2</sub> goes on to systematically describe the text, quoting it frequently. Indeed, the account of MR in AMM<sub>2</sub> greatly improves on the parallel section of AMM<sub>1</sub> and addresses the issues posed in Schäfer’s *Hidden and Manifest God* and in the article just mentioned from *Hekhalot-Studien*.

Refer also to Anthony J. Saldarini’s “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia* 14, page 192, for an outline of apocalyptic in MR.

#### E. *Ma’aseh Merkabah* [WORK OF THE CHARIOT] (MM) {§§ 544-596}

Translations:

- Dan, *The Heart and the Fountain*, CHAPTER 2:  
   §§ 554-555 (= Janowitz’ Section 6; Swartz’ pages 231-233)  
   §§ 583-586 (= Janowitz’ Sections 24-26; Swartz’ pages 242-243)
- Davila, *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*, translates §§ 544-596
- Janowitz, Naomi. *The Poetics of Ascent*, translates §§ 544-596
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mystical Prayer in Ancient Judaism*, translates §§ 544-596
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Scholastic Magic*, translates §§ 571-578

References: Along with the five books listed under “Translations,” the last three of which offer a full analysis of the text, see AMM<sub>1-2</sub>, HMG, *Ritual Practices*, and the following articles:

- Abrams, Daniel. “*Ma’aseh Merkabah* as a Literary Work: The Reception of the Hekhalot Traditions by German Pietist and Kabbalistic Reinterpretation,” in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, Volume 5, No. 4 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1998)
- Morray-Jones, Christopher R. A. “The Temple Within” (in *Paradise Now*, page 161) translates a passage from MM (Scholem’s *Gnosticism...* APPENDIX C: § 6 / Schäfer’s *Synopse* §§ 544-45)
- Saldarini, Anthony J. “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia*; outline of apocalyptic content in MM on page 196.
- Swartz, Michael D. “*Alay Le-Shabbat*: A Liturgical Prayer in *Ma’aseh Merkabah*,” in *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. LXXVII, Nos. 2-3 (Merion Station: Annenberg Research Institute, October 1986-January 1987), pages 179-190, discusses and translates §§ 544-559 and 579-592.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Three-Dimensional Philology,” in *Envisioning Judaism*; analysis of MM MSS. on pages 542-545.

#### F. *Shi’ur Qomah* [MEASURE OF THE HEIGHT {of the Divine Body}] (SQ)

David Halperin suggests (FACES, page 364) that SQ “probably ought to be considered a generic term for materials describing God’s organs rather than a single text.” Martin S. Cohen (in his book listed immediately below) holds out for SQ’s having been an independent, freestanding work, complete with a lost *urtext* looming in back of the extant versions. SQ has been included here in the “Core Group” because nearly all of the texts discussed so far contain SQ material: HR, HZ, 3E, and MR.

Translations:

- Cohen, Martin Samuel. *The Shi’ur Qomah. Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983).
- Work of the Chariot. #3 *Book of Enoch*. Los Angeles: Work of the Chariot, 1970, which contains 1 and 2 Enoch from R. H. Charles’ *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 3E from Odeberg, along with a translation of SQ. The same SQ translation appears in *The Secret Garden*, edited by David Meltzer (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), pages 23-37.
- Davila. *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*, pages 366-369.
- Horst, Pieter W. van der. “The Measurement of the Body: A Chapter in the History of Ancient Jewish Mysticism,” in *Effigies Dei: Essays on the History of Religions*, edited by Dirk van der Plas (Leiden – New York – København – Köln: E. J. Brill, 1987), pages 56-68.

References: Scholem’s *Jewish Gnosticism...* and *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead*, CHAPTER 1 (New York: Schocken Books, 1991). Further, see

- Abrams, Daniel. “The Dimensions of the Creator—Contradiction or Paradox? Corruptions and Accretions of the Manuscript Witness,” in *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, Volume 5, edited by Daniel Abrams and Avraham Elqayam (Los Angeles [Culver City]: Cherub Press, 2000).
- Bohak, Gideon. “God’s Right Eye and Its Angel in Jewish and Christian Magic,” in *Anges et Démons d’Orient et d’Occident*, edited by Flavia Buzzetta (Paris: Éditions Kimé, 2017), pp. 63-89.
- Dan, Joseph. “The Concept of Knowledge in the *Shi’ur Qomah*,” in *Studies in Jewish Religious and Intellectual History* [Presented to Alexander Altmann on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday], edited by Siegfried Stein and Raphael Loewe (University of Alabama Press/Institute of Jewish Studies: 1979) = JM1: Chapter 8.

- Idel, Moshe. “«In a Whispers»: On Transmission of *Shi’ur Qomah* and Kabbalistic Secrets in Jewish Mysticism,” in *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 47, no. 3 (Firenze: Casa Editrice Leo S. Olschki, 2011), pp. 477-522.
- Jackson, Howard M. “The Origin and Development of Shi’ur Qomah Revelations in Jewish Mysticism,” in *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, Volume 31, Number 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pages 373-415.
- Janowitz, Naomi. “God’s Body: Theological and Ritual Roles of *Shi’ur Komah*,” in *People of the Body: Jews and Judaism from an Embodied Perspective*, edited by Howard Eilberg-Schwartz [SUNY SERIES: THE BODY IN CULTURE, HISTORY AND RELIGION]. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.
- Katz, Steven T. “The ‘Conservative’ Character of Mystical Experience,” in *Mysticism and Religious Experience* (Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).
- Loewe, Raphael. “The Divine Garment and *Shi’ur Qomah*,” in *Harvard Theological Review*, volume 58 (Cambridge: Harvard College, 1965); includes translated excerpts of *Targum Song of Songs*.
- Morray-Jones, Christopher R. A. THE BODY OF GLORY: APPROACHING THE NEW TESTAMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF *SHIUR KOMA* TRADITIONS, which is Part III of *The Mystery of God* (see above, 2009 • Rowland/Morray-Jones)
- Orlov, Andrei A. “The Watchers of Satanail [*or Satanael*]: The Fallen Angels Traditions in 2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch*,” § III. THE TRANSITIONAL TEMPLATE AND ITS AFTERLIFE IN THE *SHI’UR QOMAH* AND HEKHALOT ACCOUNTS, in
  - *Divine Manifestations in the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha* [ORIENTALIA JUDAICA CHRISTIANA, 2] Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009, pages 261-267.
  - *Selected Studies in the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2009, 155-162.
  - *Dark Mirrors: Aza’el and Satanael in Early Jewish Demonology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011), pages 99-105.
- Saldarini, Anthony J. “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia*; outline of apocalyptic content in SQ on page 196.
- Schäfer’s *Origins of Jewish Mysticism*, § *SHI’UR QOMAH*, pages 306-315.
- Segol, Marla. “Israel’s Name at the Site of the Circumcision: Eros and Magic in the *Shiur Qomah*,” in *Societas Magica Newsletter*, Issue 33 (Societas Magica, Spring 2016), pp. 1-6.
- Scholem, Gershom. *Origins of the Kabbalah*, translated from the German by Allan Arkush (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society/Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987): CHAPTER 1, § 3. “The esoteric doctrine of the creation and the Merkabah in pre-kabbalistic Judaism: the literature of the *hekhaloth* and Jewish gnosticism,” pages 18-24.
- Wolfson, Elliot R. “Metatron and *Shi’ur Qomah* in the Writings of the Haside Ashkenaz,” in *Mysticism, Magic and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism: International Symposium held in Frankfurt a. M. 1991*, edited by Karl Erich Grözinger and Joseph Dan [STUDIA JUDAICA: Band XIII] (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995).



## Texts Associated with the *Hekhalot* Corpus

The texts listed in the following set (G-J) are those which are usually included in summaries and lists of *hekhalot* literature.

### G. *Re'uyot Yehezkiel* [VISIONS OF EZEKIEL] (RY)

Translations:

- Halperin, David. *FACES*: Chapter VIII, § A.
- Jacobs, Louis. *Jewish Mystical Testimonies* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976): CHAPTER 3.
- Marmorstein, A. "A Fragment of the Visions of Ezekiel," in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, New Series #8 (Philadelphia: Dropsie College, 1917-18).

References: The best source for information on RY is Halperin's *FACES*. Refer also to Anthony J. Saldarini's outline of the apocalyptic content in RY, following the Cairo Geniza text published by Gruenwald in *Temirin I* (Jerusalem: Kook, 1972), pages 101-139, in "Apocalypses and 'Apocalyptic' in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism," *Semeia*, page 195. Gruenwald provides a full description of RY in AMM<sub>1-2</sub>.

### H. *Masekhet Hekhalot* [TREATISE OF THE PALACES] (MH)

Gruenwald's chapter (AMM<sub>1-2</sub>) on MH begins with these encouraging words: "*Masekhet Hekhalot* is the most frequently published Hekhalot text we have." Alas, this comment reflects the state of the text in Hebrew, though there are two German translations: (i) by August Wunsche in *Aus Israelis Lehrhallen* III (1909); and (ii) by Klaus Herrmann, *Massakhet Hekhalot: Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar* [TEXTE UND STUDIEN ZUM ANTIKEN JUDENTUM, 39] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1994). There is also a French translation by Nicolas Sed within his "Deux documents sur la kabbale: *Le Commentaire sur le Sepher Yesirah* de Moïse ben Nahman et le *Traite des Heykalot*," in *Documents oubliés sur l'alchimie, la kabbale et Guillaume Postel*, offerts, à l'occasion de son 90<sup>e</sup> anniversaire, a François Secret par ses élèves et amis, "Scientific editor": Sylvain Matton (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2001).

Gruenwald's chapter describes the contents of MH in some detail.

MH is listed in Anthony J. Saldarini's "Apocalypses and 'Apocalyptic' in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism," in *Semeia*; an outline of MH's apocalyptic content is on page 196.

James Davila did not include MH in *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*, stating that "it is doubtful that this text should be included in the Hekhalot corpus" (page 9).

### I. *Hekhalot* fragments, or Cairo Geniza(h) fragments (CG)

In 1968-1969, Ithamar Gruenwald published (in Hebrew) "New Passages from Hekhalot Literature," in *Tarbiz*, vol. 38, no. 4; these were the newly-discovered Geniza fragments. These were published subsequently in Peter Schäfer's *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (see note 7 above), and a selection has been put into English by James Davila, in *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*. See also Michael D. Swartz, *The Mechanics of Providence*, CHAPTER 16, for a fragment called "The Seal of the Merkavah." (pp. 279-287).

Further see FACES, DESCENT, *Ritual Practices*, Swartz' *Scholastic Magic*, and

- Jonathan Seidel's article, "Possession and Exorcism in the Magical Texts of the Cairo Geniza," in *Spirit Possession in Judaism: Cases and Contexts from the Middle Ages to the Present*, edited by Matt Goldish (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003).
- Two articles in *Hekhalot Literature in Context* (noted above: **2013**): Peter Schäfer, "The Hekhalot Genizah" and Gideon Bohak, "Observations on the Transmission of Hekhalot Literature in the Cairo Genizah."
- A paper by Gideon Bohak and Klaus Herrmann in *Envisioning Judaism* (pages 637-655) treats "Tefillat Rav Hammuna Sava: Genizah Fragments and Medieval Manuscripts," saying of the *Tefillat*,  
 In spite of its obvious connections with the Hekhalot literature, it happens not to be attested in any of the European manuscripts used by Peter Schäfer in his *Synopse zur Hekhalot Literatur*, and has thus remained outside the scholarly limelight. (page 637)

#### J. Fragments on Physiognomy, Chiromancy, and Metoposcopy

A number of these fragments have been published by Gruenwald (in *Tarbiz*, vol. 40, 1970) and Scholem in *Sefer Assaf* (Jerusalem: 1953) [Hebrew]. One fragment is discussed and translated into German by Schäfer in "Ein neues Fragment zur Metopskopie und Chiromantik" (in *Hekhalot-Studien*). Not only is there next to nothing of these texts in English translation, but Gruenwald (in AMM<sub>1-2</sub>) never really gets around to detailing their contents, though he does address the problems attending these shreds of texts.

Refer to

- Scholem's article, "Chiromancy," in *Kabbalah*.
- Michael Meerson's "Physiognomy and Somatomancy: The Ways That Never Crossed" in *Envisioning Judaism*, pages 563-585.
- the article by Reimund Leicht and Joseph Yahalom, "Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam: An Unknown Esoteric Midrash on Genesis 5:1 from the Geonic Period," in *Ginzei Qedem: Genizah Research Annual*, Volume 4 (Jerusalem: Friedberg Genizah Project, 2008), English section, pages 9-82.

The list of *hekhalot* texts up to this point contains all items listed by Scholem in *Jewish Gnosticism* (pages 5-7), plus the Genizah fragments, which Gruenwald includes in his account in AMM<sub>1-2</sub>. Gruenwald also addresses the following:

#### K. *Sefer ha-Razim* [BOOK OF THE MYSTERIES] (ShR)

Translation:

- Morgan, Michael. *Sefer ha-Razim. The Book of the Mysteries*. [TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS 25; PSEUDEPIGRAPHA SERIES 11] (Chico: Society of Biblical Literature/Scholars Press, 1983).

References:

- AMM<sub>1</sub>, pages 225-234; AMM<sub>2</sub>, pages 255-263.
- Alexander, Philip S. "Incantations and Books of Magic," § 1. *Sefer ha-Razim (The Book of Mysteries – ShR)*, in *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.—A.D. 135)*, by Emil Schürer, A NEW ENGLISH VERSION..., edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Goodman, volume iii, part 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd, 1986), pages 347-350.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Sefer ha-Razim and the Problem of Black Magic in Early Judaism," in *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon*, edited by Todd E. Klutz (London: T & T Clark International, 2003) which offers a full analysis and translated excerpts.

- Bloom, Maureen. “Imprecations, Healing, and Protection: The ‘Book of Secrets’, amulets, incantation bowls” = CHAPTER 11 of *Jewish Mysticism and Magic: An Anthropological Perspective* [ROUTLEDGE JEWISH STUDIES SERIES] (London – New York: Routledge, 2007).
- Bohak, Gideon. *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pages 170-175.
- Bohak, Gideon, and Bellusci, Alessia. “The Greek Prayer to Helios in *Sefer ha-Razim*, in Light of New Textual Evidence,” in *Cultural Plurality in Ancient Magical Texts and Practices: Graeco-Egyptian Handbooks and Related Traditions*, edited by L. M. Bortolani, W. D. Furly, S. Nagel, and J. F. Quack (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), pp. 259-340.
- Harari, Yuval. *Jewish Magic before the Rise of Kabbalah*, translated by Batya Stein (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2017), pages 276-284.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “*Sefer ha-Razim* (the Book of Mysteries) (Jewish magical text),” in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, edited by Roger S. Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige B. Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine R. Huebner (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 6112–6113.
- Janowitz, Naomi. *Icons of Power: Ritual Practices in Late Antiquity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), CHAPTER 6: “Combining Words and Deeds: Angelic Imprecations in *The Book of Secrets*.”
- Keizer, Lewis S. *SEPPER HA-RAZIM AND ITS TRADITION: AN INQUIRY INTO THE INTERRELATION OF JEWISH, GRECO-EGYPTIAN, AND CHRISTIAN MAGICO-MYSTIC PRACTICES IN THE ROMANHELLENISTIC PERIOD* (Santa Cruz: University of California, 1971 [© 1971,1999 Lewis and Willa Keizer]).
- Saldarini, Anthony J. “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia*; outline of apocalyptic content in ShR, page 197.
- Torijano, Pablo A. *Solomon the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition* (Leiden – Boston – Koln: Brill, 2002), CHAPTER 9, § SOLOMON THE MAGICIAN IN *SEPPER HA-RAZIM*, pages 198-208.

The following items are frequently associated with the *bekhalot* cluster:

- L. *Baraita de Ma’aseh Bereshit*, OR *Seder Rabbah di Bereshit* [TEACHING ON THE WORK OF CREATION, or GREAT ORDER OF CREATION] (BMB) {§§ 428-467, §§ 743-820}

Translations:

- In David Meltzer’s *Secret Garden*, pages 3-20. This translation appears to have been done from the French of N. Sed: “Une cosmologie juive du haut moyen age: La Bèraita di Ma’aseh Bèrešit,” in *Revue des Etudes juives*, vol. 123 (1964); also in Sed’s *La mystique cosmologique juive* (Paris: Éditions de l’École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1981). Peter Schäfer points out (in a note to the article “In Heaven as It Is in Hell”—listed immediately below—page 233, note 4) that “Sed did not, however, have all the relevant manuscript evidence at his disposal.”
- Helen Spurling, “Hebrew Visions of Hell and Paradise: A new translation and introduction,” in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, Volume 1, edited by Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013). Spurling offers nine texts, among them BMB (pages 748-750).

References:

- Gottstein, Alon Goshen. “Is *Ma’aseh Bereshit* Part of Ancient Jewish Mysticism?” in *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, VOLUME 4 (Harwood Academic Publishers GmbH, 1995).
- Schäfer, Peter. “In Heaven as It Is in Hell: The Cosmology of *Seder Rabbah di-Bereshit*,” in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, edited by Ra’anana S. Boustán and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Cambridge – New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pages 233-274.

M. *Harba de Moshe* [SWORD OF MOSES] (HdM) {§§ 598-622, §§ 640-650}

## Translations:

- Gaster, Moses. *The Sword of Moses*. (London: D. Nutt, 1896; rpt. New York: Samuel Weiser, 1970—see comments above in § D.) “The Sword of Moses” is reprinted in Gaster’s vast compendium of articles, *Studies and Texts in Folklore, Magic, Mediaeval Romance, Hebrew Apocrypha, and Samaritan Archaeology* (London: Maggs Brothers, 1925-8; rpt. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1971) vol. 1, pages 288-337 [English]; vol. 3, pages 69-103 [Hebrew].

This translation is online at Joseph Peterson’s TWILIT GROTTTO: ARCHIVES OF WESTERN ESOTERICA (<http://www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/sword.htm>), where Peterson has restored the “holy” or “mysterious” names omitted by Gaster.

- Harari, Yuval. “The Sword of Moses (*Harba de-Moshe*): A New Translation and Introduction,” in *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, volume 7, number 1 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), pages 58-98.

## References:

- Alexander, Philip S. “Incantations and Books of Magic,” § 2. *Harba deMosheb (The Sword of Moses – HdM)*, in *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.—A.D. 135)*, by Emil Schürer, A NEW ENGLISH VERSION..., edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Goodman, volume iii, part 1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd, 1986), pages 350-352.
- Bohak, Gideon. *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pages 175-179.
- Harari, Yuval. *Jewish Magic before the Rise of Kabbalah*, translated by Batya Stein (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2017), pages 284-290.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Moses, the Sword, and *The Sword of Moses*: Between Rabbinical and Magical Traditions,” in *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, Volume 12 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), pp. 293-329.
- Roth, Harold. *The Magic of THE SWORD OF MOSES: A Practical Guide to Its Spells, Amulets, and Rituals* (Newburyport: Weiser Books, 2022)—addresses both the scholar and the practitioner.

N. *Ottiyot* [ALPHABET] of Rabbi Akiba (ORA)

## Translations (excerpts):

- Alexander, P. “3 (Hebrew Book of) Enoch” in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (see above, § C). CHAPTER 48C:1-9 contains material taken from the Akiba text.
- Bokser, Ben Zion. *The Jewish Mystical Tradition* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1981): CHAPTER 3 contains excerpts of ORA and HR.

Spanish translation, *Alfabeto de Rabi Akiva*, “realizada por Neil Manel Frau-Cortés” (Barcelona: Ediciones Obelisco, 2018).

Online, see Kaufmann Kohler’s article from the 1906 edition of *Jewish Encyclopedia*, “Akiba ben Joseph, Alphabet of (called also *Otiot de-Rabbi Akiba*, *Midrash* or *Haggadah de-R. Akiba*)” at <http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1034-akiba-ben-joseph-alphabet-of>

O. *Sar ha-Panim* [PRINCE OF THE PRESENCE, or COUNTENANCE] (ShP) {§§ 623-639}

## Translations:

- Moses Gaster puts ShP within *The Sword of Moses* (London: D. Nutt, 1896; rpt. New York: Samuel Weiser, 1970): Appendix I, § III, pages 47-51; also in *Studies and Texts...*: vol. 1, pages 288-337; vol. 3, pages 69-103—see above). Schäfer does not think Gaster’s rendering is terribly accurate, commenting, “The translation is overall fluid and easy to read but often rather fanciful.” (*Hekhalot-Studien*, page 122: “[D]ie Übersetzung ist insgesamt flüssig und gut lesbar, doch häufig recht phantasievoll.” My thanks to Sabine Baumgart for the translation.)

- Michael Swartz in *Scholastic Magic* (described above, page 11) on pages 135-147.
- James Davila in *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*, pages 356-366.

Further, see

- Lesses, Rebecca. *Ritual Practices*, pages 190-203 and numerous other references, *e.g.*, ShP is outlined and its contents analyzed in *Ritual Practices*, pages 415-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Adjunction of the Prince of the Presence: Performative Utterance in a Jewish Ritual,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, edited by Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki [RELIGIONS IN THE GRECO-ROMAN WORLD, 129] (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).

Refer to § D above (MR).

P. *Tosefta* to the *Targum* on Ezekiel (TE)

- Damsma, Alinda. “The Merkabah as a Substitute for Messianism in Targum Ezekiel?” in *Vetus Testamentum* Vol. 62, No. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 515-533.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Targumic Toseftot to Ezekiel* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012).
- Halperin’s *FACES*, pages 278-283.
- Levey, Samson H. “The Targum to Ezekiel,” in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, xlvii [CENTENNIAL ISSUE] (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1975), pages 139-158.
- Saldarini, Anthony J. “Apocalypses and ‘Apocalyptic’ in Rabbinic Literature and Mysticism,” in *Semeia*, outline of apocalyptic content in TE, pages 196-197.

Q. *Beraita d’Niddah* [TEACHING OF THE MENSTRUANT] (BdN)

In *Forsaken: The Menstruant in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press: 2011), Sharon Faye Koren writes (page 36),

Saul Lieberman was the first scholar to associate the strict purity laws of the BdN with the legal philosophy formulated in Hekhalot literature, and Michael Stone [*Scholastic Magic*, pages 182-185] and Rebecca Lesses [*Ritual Practices*, pages 134-144] have noted a connection between the BdN and the ascetic rituals required for *Sar Torah* adjurations. I believe that there is an even stronger connection. The BdN not only informs the ascetic rituals in some Hekhalot texts but also independently reflects a mystical consciousness. The authors of traditions in the BdN, like the authors of Hekhalot literature, were trying to discover a viable spiritual solution to a Judaism without a Temple.

On all this, there is also Jennifer Brown’s “No Menstruating Mystics: The Intensification of Niddah Laws after the Destruction of the Second Temple and Their Application in the Hekhalot Literature,” in *Axis Mundi*, an online journal edited and maintained by Religious Studies graduate students at the University of Alberta

(2005-2006—at <https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/axis-mundi/> > ARCHIVES).

R. *Sefer Zeb Sefer Toledot Adam* [(THIS) BOOK OF THE HISTORY OF ADAM] (SZ)

SZ is a mystical midrash on Genesis from the Geonic period which includes passages on the celestial realm and physiognomy which are very close to passages in *hekhalot* literature, in particular 3 Enoch. Among the German Pietists, SZ was likely viewed as a text in the *hekhalot* corpus.

See the article by Reimund Leicht and Joseph Yahalom, “*Sefer Zeb Sefer Toledot Adam*: An Unknown Esoteric Midrash on Genesis 5:1 from the Geonic Period,” in *Ginzei Qedem: Genizah Research Annual*, Volume 4 (Jerusalem: Friedberg Genizah Project, 2008), English section, pages 9-82.

In *Hekhalot Literature in Translation*, James Davila includes a chapter on shorter *hekhalot* texts (“Some Shorter Macroforms”) which “may be counted as macroforms in their own right” (—Davila, page 350). These include

- *The Chapter of Nebuniah ben HaQanah* {§§ 307-314}, which has also been translated and analyzed by David Halperin in *FACES* (pages 378-380) and Michael Swartz in *Scholastic Magic* (pages 67-74), even previously by Davila in *Descenders to the Chariot* (pages 110-113), and translated by Rebecca Lesses in *Ritual Practices* (pages 412-415)
- *The Great Seal—Fearsome Crown* {§§ 318-321}
- *The Ascent of Elisha ben Auryah* {§ 597}, also covered briefly by Halperin in *FACES* (page 410)
- *Sar Panim* {§§ 623-639, sources for which have been outlined above in Section O
- *The Youth* {§§ 384-400}, also treated elsewhere most significantly by
  - Davila in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context*, edited by T. Lim *et al* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), pages 249-264,
  - Halperin’s *FACES*, pages 402-405, 424-427, and APPENDIX III, “The ‘Youth’ Passages in Ms. New York,” pages 491-494.
  - Morray-Jones, *The Mystery of God*, pages 520-522.
  - Orlov in *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), pages 117-119, 133-136, and 222-226.

## A Selection of Books & Articles

- Abelson, J[oshua]. *Jewish Mysticism: An Introduction to the Kabbalah* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1913; rpt. New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1969 & 1981; and Mineola: Dover Publications, Inc., 2001): Chapter II. “The Merkabah (Chariot) Mysticism”
- Abrams, Daniel. “The Boundaries of Divine Ontology: The Inclusion of Metatron in the Godhead,” in *Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 87, no. 3 (Cambridge: 1994)
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## Appendix 1: Jewish Magic

WITH THE INCLUSION of such items as *Sefer ha-Razim*, the SWORD OF MOSES, and the *Sar ha-Panim* material in cluster of texts associated with *merkabah/hekhalot* material, Jewish magic takes several steps closer to the mystical core of these traditions. Certainly, the convenient notion of a neat separation between ascent texts and magic texts can no longer be sustained. Of late, the tendency among scholars is to dismiss such loaded terms as “magic” (a negative term—*vs* “theurgy” or “religion,” positive terms) and “mysticism” to concentrate on the methods and aims of Jewish, usually along with early Christian and pagan (Greco-Roman), rituals and how these reflect the mindset and beliefs of their eras.

On this trend, see, for example, Rebecca Macy Lesses’ *Ritual Practices to Gain Power* (summary statement on pages 11-13), James R. Davila’s *Descenders to the Chariot* (CHAPTER 2, where Davilla discusses the difficulties of the words “mysticism,” “magic,” and “shamanism”), and Naomi Janowitz’ *Icons of Power* (INTRODUCTION).

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- “Ancient Jewish Magic: A Bibliography,” in *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Jewish Studies*, edited by David Biale (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); online at <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199840731/obo-9780199840731-0022.xml>
- appended to “Prolegomena to the Study of the Jewish Magical Tradition,” in *Currents in Biblical Research* 8 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2009), pp. 107-150.

The “Jewish Magic Bibliography” (141 pp.) by Alex Jassen, Mary Gates, and Jacob Rennaker, under the supervision of Scott Noegel of University of Washington [Seattle] is online at <https://web.archive.org/web/20151004083815/http://faculty.washington.edu/snoegel/JewishMagicBibliography.pdf>. This bibliography is sub-divided into 17 sections by topic and era—up to the modern period.

There is also a bibliography of “Practical Kabbalah” at

<http://kabbalah.fayelevine.com/biblio/biblio-standard.php>

F. Levine, the apparent author of the PRACTICAL KABBALAH site, notes of this bibliography,

I select my sources very carefully, sticking as exclusively as possible with translations of original material and works by noted Judaic scholars (fiction excepted). In order to truly understand this complex tradition, I strongly suggest you stay away from certain 19<sup>th</sup>-century occult and 20<sup>th</sup> century-to-current “New Age” interpretations, as well as titles which mix Kabbalah with other religious, mystical and occult genres. For a quick point of reference, examine how “Kabbalah” is spelled; with only a couple of exceptions in my experience, purely Judaic sources spell the word with a “K”, not a “Q” or a “C.” Also check a book's bibliography: Does it have one? If so, are the sources peer-reviewed journals, original texts, and academic books spanning a significant period of time?

You will not find any information here about the Hermetic Order, the Society of the Golden Dawn, Christian Kabbalah, Freemasonry, etc.

At this site, see Levine’s article, “Why Practical Kabbalah Isn’t Considered ‘Magic.’”

The most extensive (exhaustive) treatment of Jewish magic and *kabbalah ma’asit* resides in Jacobus G. Swart’s SHADOW TREE SERIES (find the list in the bibliography below, page 52). For those most conversant in or limited to English, the books of this scholar/practitioner are highly recommended. While Swart is thorough to a fault—each book runs 450-500 pages—his presentation is clear and accessible, mixing solid scholarship with practical observations. Refer to Swart’s blog:

[Practical Kabbalah and Self Creation \(kabbalahselfcreation.blogspot.com\)](http://kabbalahselfcreation.blogspot.com)

The bibliography below does not include works on the Christian Raziël traditions or Solomonic grimoires. On these see *Sepher Raziël – Liber Salomonis: A Sixteenth-Century English Grimoire*, edited by Don Karr and Stephen Skinner (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2010): Skinner’s excellent foreword on the various *Raziël* traditions (pages 13-23) and my survey of printed works in English on Solomonic magic (page 25-42); the latter is also online at Colin Low’s *Hermetic Kabbalah* and Academia.edu:

<http://www.digital-brilliance.com/contributed/Karr/Solomon/index.php>  
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  - Lesses, Rebecca. "Jewish Magic and Multiculturalism in the Ancient World"
  - Swartz, Michael D. "A Magic All Its Own"
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  - “Book and Tradition in Hekhalot and Magical Literature,” in *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, vol. 3, issue 2, edited by E. Wolfson and P. Mendes-Flohr (Harwood Academic Publishers GmbH, 1993); revised version in *The Mechanics of Providence*, CHAPTER 13.
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## APPENDIX 2

### *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*

In Zusammenarbeit mit Margarete Schlüter und Georg von Mutius

herausgegeben von Peter Schäfer

[Text und Studien zum antiken Judentum herausgegeben von Martin Hengel und Peter Schäfer 2]

(Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1981)

Of the “Textcorpus” in *Synopse*, the first five “undisputedly belong to the Hekhalot literature” (Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God*, page 7):

1. *Hekhalot Rabbati* (including *Sar Torah*)
2. *Hekhalot Zutrati* or *Zutreti*
3. *Ma’aseh Merkavah*
4. *Merkavah Rabba*
5. *3 Henoah* (*3 Enoch*), also called *Sefer Hekhalot*
6. *Sbi’ur Qomah*
7. *Seder Rabba deBere’shit*, also called *Baraita de Ma’aseh Bereshit*
8. *Harba deMoshe*

Not contained in the *Synopse* manuscripts but counted as affiliated with the *Hekhalot* literature are

9. *Re’uyot Yehezqel*
10. *Hekhalot* fragments
11. *Masekhet Hekhalot*
12. *Sefer ha-Razim*
13. Physiognomic fragments
14. *Pereq Shirah*

The distribution of texts in the *Synopse*:

§§ 1-80:	<i>3 Henoah</i>	§§ 598-622	<i>Harba deMoshe</i>
§§ 81-306	<i>Hekhalot Rabbati</i>	§§ 623-639	<i>Sar ha-Panim</i>
§§ 307-314	<i>Pereq Rabbi Nehunyah ben Haqanah</i>	§§ 640-650	<i>Harba deMoshe</i>
§§ 315-317	Metatron	§§ 651-654	Seal/Crown
§§ 318-321	Seal/Crown	§§ 655-708	<i>Merkavah Rabba</i>
§§ 322-334	Great Treasure (lit. <i>special material</i> )	§ 709	Great Treasure
§§ 335-374	<i>Hekhalot Zutrati</i>	§§ 710-712	Yishmael
§§ 375-386	<i>Sbi’ur Qomah</i> /Metatron	§ 713	Adjuration
§§ 387-388	<i>3 Henoah</i>	§§ 714-727	<i>Seder Rabba deBere’shit</i>
§§ 389-402	Metatron	§§ 728-739	Metatron
§§ 403-404	Yishmael	§§ 740-741	Yishmael
§ 405	<i>3 Henoah</i>	§ 742	Adjuration
§ 406	Aqiva	§§ 743-820	<i>Seder Rabba deBere’shit</i>
§§ 407-426	<i>Hekhalot Zutrati</i>	§§ 821-824	<i>Midrash Rabba</i>
§ 427	Great Treasure	§§ 825-831	Adjuration
§§ 428-467	<i>Seder Rabba deBere’shit</i>	§§ 832-853	<i>Seder Rabba deBere’shit</i>
§§ 468-488	<i>Sbi’ur Qomah</i>	§§ 854	Yismael
§§ 489-495	Book/Names	§§ 855-871	<i>3 Henoah</i>
§§ 496-497	<i>Hekhalot Zutrati</i>	§ 872	Great Treasure
§§ 498-517	Adjuration/Names	§§ 873-874	<i>Ma’aseh Merkavah</i>
§§ 518-540	<i>Seder Rabba deBere’shit</i>	§§ 875—881	Great Treasure
§ 541	Great Treasure	§§ 882-938	<i>3 Henoah</i>
§§ 542-543	Adjuration/Great Treasure	§§ 939-973	<i>Sbi’ur Qomah</i> /Metatron
§§ 544-596	<i>Ma’aseh Merkavah</i>	§§ 974-977	<i>Hekhalot Rabbati</i>
§ 597	Akatriel	§§ 978-985	Great Treasure

## Appendix 3

[THE 1982 VERSION OF]

### Notes on the Study of *Merkabah* Mysticism and *Hekhalot* Literature

from *A Guide to Kabbalistic Books in English: 1977-1979*, by Don Karr (Ithaca: 1982),  
pages 37-40

Additions from the slightly expanded version in *Collected Articles on the Kabbalah*, volume 1, by D. Karr (Ithaca: KoM #5, 1985),  
pages 17-20,  
are shown in brackets.

1. Merkabah mysticism is the name of a mystical movement within Judaism's Talmudic and Gaonic Periods (ca. 100-1000 c. e.). This school produced what is called the Hekhalot literature.
2. This mysticism, *ma'aseh merkabah* (work of the chariot), is mentioned in the Mishna itself (in Hagigah 2:1):

The work of creation (*ma'aseh bereshit*) may not be expounded in the presence of two or more. The description of the chariot (*merkabah*) may not be expounded even in the presence of one, unless he is a sage who already understands out of his own insights.

(quoted from Lipman, Eugene. *THE MISHNAH, ORAL TEACHING OF JUDAISM*. [New York:] Schocken, 1974, page 150)

3. Implied in this quote is that merkabah mysticism, though guarded, was not outside of the rabbinic tradition. One gets the impression that it was even thought of as the supreme mystery.
4. Just as the work of creation comprised mystical speculation on the first part of Genesis, work of the chariot comprised mystical speculation on, and amplification of, the first chapter of Ezekiel.
5. The literature of this school describes the mystical journey through various heavens and palaces (*hekhalot*) leading to the ultimate vision of the throne and chariot, and, in some cases, "the figure in the form of a man" (Ezekiel 1:26).
6. It is not the purpose of this short paper to go into detail about the development of the merkabah school or the contents of the Hekhalot texts. To a greater extent than I am capable, this work has already been done. My purpose is to inform the reader of where to look for information on the various facets of study pertaining to merkabah mysticism. I have limited myself to English sources.
7. Historical and scholarly overviews: as it is with any study in the field of Jewish mysticism, the best place to start the investigation

of merkabah mysticism is in the works of Gershom Scholem. Two of his works give excellent synopses of the subject:

MAJOR TRENDS IN JEWISH MYSTICISM (1941, Schocken repr.) Lecture 2. Merkabah Mysticism and Jewish Gnosticism.

KABBALAH (1974, Meridian repr.) pages 8-21, and article: Merkabah Mysticism, pages 373-6.

For a closer look at some of the topics and scholarly concerns in merkabah mysticism, see Scholem's

JEWISH GNOSTICISM, MERKABAH MYSTICISM, AND TALMUDIC TRADITION (1965, Jewish Theological Seminary).

KABBALAH (as above), articles:  
Chiromancy, pages 317-9.  
Meditation, pages 369-72.  
Metatron, pages 377-81.

[Add to these

Gruenwald, Ithamar. APOCALYPTIC AND MERKAVAH MYSTICISM (1980, E. J. Brill).]

8. There are a few articles [and one book] that analyze the connections of merkabah mysticism with the rabbinic (i.e. Talmudic, etc.) tradition:

[Bokser, Ben Zion. THE JEWISH MYSTICAL TRADITION 1981 (Pilgrim Press) Chapter 2. The Talmud. Talmudic "work of the chariot" segments are translated and introduced.]

[Halperin, David J. THE MERKABAH IN RABBINIC LITERATURE. (1980, American Oriental Society)  
This is a close scholarly analysis of the references to merkabah mysticism in the Mishna: Hagigah 2:1, the Tosefta: Hagigah 2:1-7, the Palestinian Talmud 77 a-d, and the Babylonian Talmud 11b-16a.]

Levy, Samson H. The Best Kept Secret of the Rabbinic Tradition, in JUDAISM 21 (4) 1972.  
This takes a look at the strange case of Rabbi Simeon ben Zoma, who entered into PRDS (paradise) but came out of it "stricken."

Neusner, Jacob. The Development of the Merkavah Tradition, in THE STUDY OF JUDAISM in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period, vol 11 (2), 1971, Leiden.  
Four versions of the story of Yohanan ben Zakkai and the merkabah-sermon of his disciple Eleazer ben Arakh are presented and compared to demonstrate that such a story accumulates more and more detail as it passes from earlier to later versions.

9. In JEWISH GNOSTICISM... Scholem lists eight texts belonging to the Hekhalot literature. I shall list them here, adding one (Shiur Qoma), indicating research sources, if any exist:

- a) The Visions of Ezekiel, a mystical midrash on Ezekiel 1:1, see:

Jacobs, Louis. JEWISH MYSTICAL TESTIMONIES (1977, Schocken)  
Chapter Three: The Riders of the Chariot and Those Who Enter  
the Heavenly Halls. Introduction and text of Visions...

Marmorstein, A. A Fragment of the Visions of Ezekiel, in  
JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, New Series #8 (1917-18). Translation  
and discussion.

- b) The Lesser Hekhalot, possibly the oldest. In English, there are  
only spot translations in Scholem's JEWISH GNOSTICISM... and MAJOR  
TRENDS...

- c) The Greater Hekhalot, the best covered of the texts for our  
purposes. Besides spot translations (see Scholem as listed in b)  
there are

Blumenthal, David R. UNDERSTANDING JEWISH MYSTICISM: A Source  
Reader (1978, Ktav) [pages 53-91] Blumenthal introduces and  
presents translations of The Greater Hekhalot, Chapters 15-  
29:5.

[Kaplan, Aryeh. MEDITATION AND KABBALAH. (1982, Weiser) pages  
41-54. Kaplan introduces the Greater Hekhalot and translates  
Chapters 1, 2, and 16-26.]

Schiffman, Lawrence. The Recall of Rabbi Nehuniah ha-Qanah  
from Ecstasy in the Hekhalot Rabbati, in AJS REVIEW vol I,  
1976.

In Hekhalot Rabbati, R. Nehuniah is pulled out of his ecstasy  
by his disciples by making him ever-so-slightly ritually  
impure. This tale is given scholarly treatment in Schiffman's  
article.

Smith, Morton. Observations on Hekhalot Rabbati, in BIBLICAL  
AND OTHER STUDIES, ed. A. Altmann (Harvard U. Press, 1963).  
This [article] summarizes and analyzes the contents [of  
Hekhalot Rabbati], presenting a translated excerpt of The  
Great Magical Papyrus of Paris for the sake of comparison.  
(M. Smith has translated The Greater Hekhalot in its entirety,  
but it has not been published. Indeed, it exists, as far as I  
know, in typescript, with corrections jotted in the margins  
and scribbled over the text by Gershom Scholem.)

- d) Merkabah Rabbah. I know of no English sources for this.

- e) A titleless Hekhalot. Scholem gives a transcription of this text  
in Hebrew in an appendix to JEWISH GNOSTICISM..., but I know of no  
other sources for information on this.

- f) Chapter on physiognomics and chiromancy, published in Hebrew by  
Scholem, but no English translation. See, however, Scholem's  
article: "Chiromancy" in KABBALAH.



- g) Book of the Hekhalot, called also 3 Enoch or the Hebrew Book of Enoch. One of the latest of the texts. Full scholarly treatment and translation of this appear in

Odeberg, Hugo. 3 ENOCH or THE HEBREW BOOK OF ENOCH (1928, Ktav repr. [1973])

- h) The Treatise of the Hekhalot, the latest of the texts. Published, and translated into German, but not into English.
- i) Shiur Qoma, a strange treatise listing the dimensions and secret names of the deity's various members. See

Meltzer, David (ed) THE SECRET GARDEN (1977, Seabury) pages 23-37 for a translation of the text.

For scholarly studies on Shiur Qoma, see

Loewe, Raphael. The Divine Garment and Shi'ur Qomah, in HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW 58 (1965)

Scholem. JEWISH GNOSTICISM... (as above) chapter VI: The Age of Shiur Komah Speculation and a passage in Origen.

A 14th-century commentary on Shiur Qoma by Moses b. Joshua b. Mar David of Narbonne is translated in

Altmann, A. (ed) JEWISH MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES 4 (1967) pages 225-88.

Shiur Qoma's symbolism is based on the details of "the beloved" in Song of Songs 5:11-16. The basis of the dimensions given is derived from Psalm 147:5; since the phrase in that passage adds up to 236, via gematria, this is the root of Shiur Qoma's calculations.