Mysticism, Magic, and Angelology
The Perception of Angels in Hekhalot Literature

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For man stands upon the earth, and his head reaches unto the heavens, and the angels of the Lord ascend and descend within him.

Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye, Ben-Porat Yosef, fol. 42a.

An examination of the synoptic edition of the Hekhalot1 literature and the various texts which relate to the Merkabah2 tradition3 reveals an abundance of different components, comprising the interwoven fabric of the early trends of Jewish mysticism, and is clearly shows the varieties of axles and themes within that tradition.4 A comparative analysis of the various sources will demonstrate that this is not a well formulated corpus of literature produced within a

1 Hekhalot, heavenly palaces, or celestial temples
2 The Merkabah is the Divine Chariot, referring to the vision described at the beginning of the book of Ezekiel, which at an early time was to be designated as the vision of the Merkabah.
distinct from, for various segments of the Hekhalot tradition are differentiated from one another by their literary style, by the quality of their editing and transmission, by the nature of the authorities cited, and by their content, structure, and linguistic patterns. Almost certainly they are also to be distinguished by the date of the composition of the various parts, and by the places where they were composed.3

Some of these traditions possess a decidedly mystical and numinous character, others bear a characteristic magical and theurgical stamp; some have a pronounced cosmological bent, while others are marked by their angelological characters.4 However, despite all the differences in context and style, in genre and in interrelationship, it is possible to identify a fundamental underlying common denominator, which deter-


4 The works which are known as Hekhalot Rabbi, Hekhalot Zabur, Hekhalot Merkabah, Hekhalot Qabbalah, and Zefat Hekhalot: Third Source include traditions of decidedly mystical character. For the outlining of their narratives in the synoptic edition and for an indication of variant editions, see Schäfer, I. Greenwald, p. 287–284. For editions published after the publication of the synoptic edition it is close to the time of its publication, and which were not included in the indications of printings, see note 3 above. Highly interesting mystical traditions which were first published in the synoptic edition are found in paragraphs 384–468 and 967–968 of the synoptic edition and in the Gesenius fragments, paragraphs 8, 11, 22 (cf. I. Greenwald, "New Fragments of the" (Hebrew), Tarbiz 38 (1968–69), pp. 365–372. See now concerning these tendencies and the concept of asqās in these P. Schäfer, The Hekhalot and Merkabah God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism, Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1992.

5 Conant 6, Schäfer, Introduction, p. 41; Martin de Maess, Synoptic, para. 360–367, 488–496, 623–639, 398–432; and codex Genia, fragments para. 13–21. For theological use, see Synoptic, para. 561–590, 572, 204–205, Magic spells, incantation, praise, and songs, lists of names and charms are found throughout Hekhalot literature.

6 Detailed cosmological traditions are found in the Book of Enoch, in the Apocalypse of Hekhalot, and in many paragraphs of the Synoptic. See, for example, paragraphs 51–

55, 346–356, 367–374, 518–525, 246, 354–355, 558–559, 437–437, 786–798. Angelological traditions comprise the major part of the Hekhalot literature and they are presented in hundreds of paragraphs in the Synoptic; so many that it would be impossible to list them in detail. In Genia fragments interesting angelological traditions are also presented; see fragments nos. 8, 19, 31, 22.

8 Myriam. Magic, mines the character of Hekhalot lists of three of its most pronounced on Hekhalot traditions represent a "anchored world earthly existence," yet in the traditional textual context of a common historical past, a future, none do they openly draw upon traditional exegetical framework, or a form which reflects directly a particular religious organization and an alternation to the world of the Tannaim, who Temple, along with an imaginative period when the Temple stood.

8 This "other reality" is a core place, with a visionary and numinous beauty to those who "descend ascended heavenward." In various ways the transcendent exalting of poetic fashion the various dimensions in detail the components of the


10 See Scheler, Trends, pp. 62–71 and he Hekhalot -Merkabah," ibid. 25–41. Makkabi Hahon, The Hekhalot and Merkabah, the difficult to bear after the destruction of the Temple. This change in the view of two.

The corpus which is included in the identification relating to various by G. Schubert, J. Dan, and P. and K. Almqvist, and "Hebraism in the Screw," in the -"Studies in the History of Jewish Thought," 1937.

The Hekhalot literature focuses on cosmic realms which draw upon a mystical vision, upon mythical elements, and upon a ritual tradition, all of which are included within the concept "Merkhah" (divine chariot). This "other reality," is a celestial reality, transcending time and space, with a visionary and enigmatic character, revealed in its splenetic beauty to those who "descend into the Merkha" in order to ascend heavenwards.

In various ways the Hekhalot traditions express the transcendental elusiveness of this celestial reality, describing in poetic fashion the various dimensions of visionary reality and discussing in detail the components of the divine world.


The Hekhalot literature is included in the "Tosafot ha-Nevi'im," in the Hekhalot literature, and they propose, as early that it would be impossible generating angelological 15, 21, 25.

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mites the character of Hekhalot literature, and to note the combination of three of its most pronounced traits, which creates its uniqueness.

Hekhalot traditions represent a "different reality," one which is not anchored within earthly existence, nor in the historical dimension, nor yet in the traditional textual context. They do not express a conception of a common historical past, a defined present, or a yearning for a future, nor do they openly draw upon a distinct social milieu, a conventional exegetical framework, or a structure of beliefs and opinions which reflect directly a particular reality. The Hekhalot tradition contains pseudoequations and an alternative chronology, which both relate to the world of the Taninim, who lived after the destruction of the Temple, along with an imaginative grasp of reality, which relates to the period when the Temple stood. These tendencies express a distinct alienation from tangible reality and a different view of historical perception.


R. Neḥunya ben Hakkaḥaḥ... revealed the secret of the world as it appears to one who is worthy to gaze upon the King and His Throne in His majesty and His beauty, upon the Hayot of holiness, the Cherubim of might, and the Wheels of the Shekhina, upon the frightful lightening and the awesome storm, upon the fiery river which surrounds the Throne upon the bridges and upon the flames which strengthen and rise between the bridges. (Ys. 196)

The complex of cosmological assumptions found underlying this visionary reality is explained extensively in various parts of Hebraic literature. The descriptive point of departure draws upon the vision of Ezekiel and connects ideas and concepts close in spirit and language to the apocalyptic literature and to the pseudepigrapha, to the Hellenistic world, and to the Qumran literature. However, the descriptive structure of the celestial world which takes shape in mystical experience, and the worldview which arises therefore, depart significantly from earlier traditions in extent, in detail, in complexity, and in content. This transformation derives to a large degree from the new combination of diverse spiritual and cultural elements, which constitute a new religious consciousness. These elements are interwoven in changing forms within the diverse traditions of Hebraic literature.

The three primary characteristics, which together create the uniqueness of the Hebraic tradition, are mysticism, angelology, and magic. These three perceptions suggest: (a) a novel grasp of the concept of divinity and a new perception of man's ascent to higher realms, a grasp which is inspired by Ezekiel's chariot, and is affiliated with both "kenhah la-pardes" [the mystical entry into the heavenly grove] and Shi'ur Qomah [the description of the names and dimensions of God's orbs]; (b) a detailed description of the higher powers which comprise the divinity of the world of the Shekhina, as related to the contemporary conception of the "pleroma" and to the mystical thought of the age; (c) the reciprocal relationship between human deeds and knowledge and man's influence upon the various dimensions of the heavenly world, a relationship connected to a ritual and a theurgic perception which pertains to worship in the celestial Temple and to ritual traditions which were affiliated with the terrestrial Temple.

12 Examples of the many the emendations of the Divine such as the following: As it is in heaven, which is hidden to us how we inquire in the midst from all people (Ys. 196 197); the great prince of heaven, said of Israel... that the height of the pascal... (Ys. 350); "I have not seen the form of the spirit... what a splendid vision amply does for... all the visions of the wind... Thus we have no mention of See Hebraic-Quarrel Int. 8. 8.

13 See Scholem, Zadok, Schulman, "Shi'ur Qomah la-Kabbalah ha-Kabad in Seder ha-Tefillah ha-Dinui la-

14 Cf. the mention of the 1. 1. 230, 30. 435, 30. 30, 31. 9, 35. 55, 40. 52, 42. 53, 44. 58, 45. 55, 46. 58, 48. 58, 50. 58, 52. 58, 54. 58, 56. 58, 58. 58, 60. 58, 62. 58, 64. 58, 66. 58, 68. 58, 70. 58, 72. 58, 74. 58, 76. 58, 78. 58, 80. 58, 82. 58, 84. 58, 86. 58, 88. 58, 90. 58, 92. 58, 94. 58, 96. 58, 98. 58, 100. 58, 102. 58, 104. 58, 106. 58, 108. 58, 110. 58, 112. 58, 114. 58, 116. 58, 118. 58, 120. 58, 122. 58, and see below, n. 42, 59. Regarding the connection... in the Creation, see Scholem, Gershom, pp. 28, 128, and see below, n. 44. 99. Regarding the connection with... in the Hellenistic world, see below, n. 44.
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1. The Mystical Elements finds expression in a new conception of the figure of the divinity, which emerges from the Hekhaloth tradition. It is also expressed in the image of those who descend to the Markaboth, that is, those who assumed the possibility of establishing a connection, made by human initiative, between higher and higher realms. The description of the ascension of those who mount the Charriot, the testi-

munity concerning their celestial vision, along with descriptions of the Throne of Glory, the heavenly shrines, the Hekhaloth, etc. firmaments, and the heavenly beings, create a complex view of the upper realms which is portrayed in its mystical vision. The description of numinous reality, which emerges from the heavenly hymns and angelic exult-

ments, has a distinct mystical character. Likewise, the testimonies of those who descended to the Markaboth concerning the meaning of the spiritual conversion which they have undergone all bear an unmistakable mystical quality.

Testimony concerning the upper worlds, the result of visions and mystical exaltation, whether presented as the immediate experience of the visionary or expected in patterns of a liturgical tradition pertaining to worship in the higher realms, is the essential foundation which

13 Examples of the new mystical conception of the deity, which is concerned with the measurement of the divine body and its perception, can be found in descriptions such as the following: "As it is, He is in His body, and He is larger than all, and this is His glory, which is hidden from us" (Synanuth, 355). "Rabbi Haim said, I will tell you how much is the volume of the body of the Hidden One, which is hidden from all people" (Synanuth 499). "R. Akiba said, Meclentov, the beloved servant, great voice of testimony and to me. "I make this rejoicing about YHVH the God of Israel... that the breath of His Body when He sits on the Throne of Glory is present" (Synanuth 1776). "The appearance of the face is like the appearance of the Jews, and the appearance of the Jews and the face of the face is like the image of the spirit and the form of the soul. no creature can know it. His body is the splendor of the moon, the moon is the splendor of the son of the darkness, the moon and the splendor of him. All the princes of the priests and the Shephim are present before him... thus we have no conquest except the names revealed to us" (Synanuth, 499, 401). See Horsholt-Zeramé (ed. Eliezer), pp. 25-29, 64-67.

nurture the spiritual world of the Hekhalot authors. This testimony about the ecstatic experience and the mystical conversion which derived from the mystical ascent traces the horizons of the Merkabah tradition, and its spirit inspires the descriptions of celestial reality. This testimony also represents an innovative dimension in religious thought which does not draw directly upon earlier sources, but rather it creates a new conceptual perception.16

(II) Angelology is concerned with the detailed description of the awesome world of the angels and with celestial ritual, along with the creation of a cosmological foundation for the perception of those who ascend to the Merkabah. The cosmological foundation is a structure of concepts which enumerates and categorizes the phenomena comprising the celestial world as a hierarchical whole, while describing its reality with exact visual detail. The principal cosmological concepts become both focal points of sanctity as well as the dominant elements of the world of those who descend to the Merkabah.17 Against this cosmological background the angels and the diverse celestial beings are described. The angels reflect the exalted beauty of celestial reality and its esoteric splendor. By their very existence, angels express the mysterious exaltedness, the ominous hiddenness, the secrets of the hidden divine high, and the other image through which reality may be reflected.18

R. Ishmael said: the angel Metatron, prince of the divine presence, the glory of highest heaven, said to me: when the Holy One, Blessed be He, took me to serve the throne of glory and the wheels of the chariot ... at once my flesh turned to flames, my sinews to blazing fire, my bones to juniper coal ... all my limbs to rings of burning fire and the substance of my body to blazing fire ... The Holy One, blessed be He, revealed to me from that time onward all the mysteries of wisdom ... all the mysteries of the world and all the orders of nature stand revealed before me as they stand revealed before the Creator. (Synopsis, §19, 14)

The world of the angels is the frame of reference for those who descend to the Merkabah, for the angels set the paradigm for divine


worship, and they serve as intercessors for those who ascend to the heavens. It is the angels who possess the esoteric knowledge of higher worlds and of the image of the deity, and they are the source of knowledge as to the secrets, the secrets, and the seals which those who descend to the Merkabah seek to acquire. Moreover, they constitute an object of imitation for the authors of the Hechalot literature: the worship of the angels in the celestial chariots is a liturgical model which is imitated by those who descend to the Merkabah: the ceremony which the angels celebrate before the Throne of Glory, which includes immersion, the recitation of praises, the singing of hymns, the recital of prayers, the attainment of crowns, and the uttering of the Name, is taken as a basic ritual pattern which those who descend to the Merkabah seek to learn and imitate.17 Against this cosmological and esoteric context, angels express the mysterious forces of the knowledge hidden on high, which reality may be reflected.18

The frame of reference for those who speak on the paradigm for divine communication of God from the mystical standpoint see 480-486, 485-494. For examples of mystical 3, 40, 50, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60.


15. 31:52-60, 364-359, 413-418.

17. See Else, Demise ha-26, pp.23, 49, see below near n.112.

18. See for example: "Rabbi Yehuda said, all of those angels Rabbi Akiba heard them when he descended to the Merkabah and he grasped and learned them from before His Throne of Glory, the ones which His servant sang before Him" (Synopsia, 106). "Rabbi Yehuda said, my friend Sura the Prince of the Constantine spoke to me of the princes of the King and His throne" (ibid., 152). This is the scenario narrated to Rabbi Akiba, when he gazed upon the sight of the Merkabah" (ibid., 337).

19. "Rabbi Akiba said, Heaven, the beloved servant and great prince of testimony and to me: I swear to this testimony about YHVH, the God of Israel... that the height of His station when He sits on the Throne of Glory is 110,000,000 parsecs" (ibid., 376 NYMS 8285). "While you pray, repeat three names that are recalled by the angels of heaven and in red, repeat letters that are recalled by the holy crown while they gaze and see" (ibid., 560).

To demonstrate this scenario, see Hechalot Zutari (ed. Else), 11: 349-389 (Synopsia, papa 413-417), and see below, the discussion of the angelic worship as a background for the worship of the Hechalot mystics, near note 112.
(III) The Magical-Theoretical Arena deals with the various connections between terrestrial and celestial existence and with the ritual links connecting knowledge of celestial secrets and influence upon higher powers. Magic is concerned with clarifying the connection between man's actions and his knowledge and the imposition of his will upon the creatures of the celestial world, both in the upper world and in this one. The magical traditions establish a ritual path and culitic framework for attaining the spiritual goal of acquiring knowledge of the upper worlds. Conversely, the purpose of magical praxis is to help ascend to the Melekhah, and to bring down the upper powers. Its objective is to define patterns of influence and effective ways of addressing celestial powers, thereby helping the adept to erect a bridge between earthly reality and celestial being. The magic instructions, which are based on the assumption of a hidden link and a continuum of reciprocal relations between manifest reality and hidden worlds, discuss the secret formula, the proper time, the holy ritual, and the magic spell which assign an intent to affect and influence the upper powers and to guide their actions according to his wishes.

In many chapters of Hekhalot literature the principal discussion revolves around the magical means which serve mystical elevation. That is, they treat the complex of masonic means and ritual elements which influence the ways to ascend to the Melekhah or to draw the celestial forces down to the earth. In other sections the magic relates to corporeal needs and mundane concerns though in both cases the structural

21 See the definition of theory in relation to magic by E. R. Dodd ["Theory"] of magic applied to a religious purpose and setting in a supposed revelation of a religious character." E. E. Dodd, The Greeks and the Theological (Berkeley 1951), p. 29]. See also the appendix on theory, pp. 287-299.


23 See, for example, Hekhalot Zutiyya, p. 22, 32-33, 36, and of Synopus pars. 360-365; Hekhalot Zutiyya, pp. 32-34, 11. 349-349, 416-429. See also Me'aqer Melekhah, Synopus pars. 306-346. On the relation between magic and mysticism in the Hekhalot, see Schabel, Synopus pars. 35-36; M. Smith, Hekhalot, pars. 149-160; C. B. and J. A. as, Apocryphon, pp. 102-111.


25 See Scholem, Gnosticism and Manicheism, (New York 1969), p. 124, et al. The principal distinction between the "Jewish Mystics," Hekhalot, and the Christian Gnostics is that the use of ritual is associated with some supercilious cartes of such power and influence over man's primary language, personality, and spirit that a conventional liminal is not of primary importance. I would like to thank my friend and colleague and co-editor of this edition, Mr. Joel T. S. Eidelberg, for his kind words, wise counsel, and generous support.
24 deal with the various connections between and with the ritual links conscious and subconscious and influence upon higher self. 

25 The essence of the magical-husnic tradition in the Kabbalistic literature is found within inexpressible holy names, and with meanings of permutation of letters and words. These names and permutations are not based on literal comprehension or on explicit meaning but rather on a predetermined formula and on sacred ritual patterns, all of which are assumed to have the power to influence the upper worlds. Considerable attention is given to these holy names, their classification, their enumeration, their characterisation, their pronunciation and utilisation by means of constant recitation. This literature perceives the divine creative force as being embodied within the Hebrew letters. Thus reality is no more than the extension and manifestation of the divine word. The divine language by which the world was created becomes sacred possessing creative power and letters which bind heaven and earth. The name embodies the divine essence which is susceptible of being attained, the secret creative power hidden in the letters, and the enigmatic effervescence which links between the world of man and the celestial world. 26 The essence of God is identical to His name, and therefore knowledge of the names and the manner of articulating them in tannincoment is a certain comprehension of the divine essence. 27 The name is considered as the embodiment of the creative power and as a means of creation, as a mystical-sacred means of speech and as the secret essence of the celestial world. Therefore knowledge of the divine names which are found throughout all the realms of the celestial Merkabah and the benedictions of

26 See Scholem, "Jewish Mysticism," pp. 65-71. E. Uziorch, Haaz, Zimmah ve-Dor (Jerusalem 1978) (hereafter: "Uziorch, Haaz"). "Kohe ha-Shem," pp. 105-114. D. Z. Hoffman, Ha-Shem ve-Dor (Jerusalem 1978) (hereafter: "Hoffman, Ha-Shem"). E. Grunwald, "The Names of God and the Celestial Powers: Their Function and Meaning in the Hebrew Literature", in "Early Jewish Mysticism", Meirav Bravahayse, Ed. (Hebrew Union College, 1961), pp. 23-70. Interestingly, anthropological research on meaningless names in spells and their source spots them as "the language of demons," see Tambiah (above, n.33). It seems that the use of meaningless names and words without significance to create a communion with supernal supernatural power is based on the assumption that language containing meaningless sounds and letters represents a deep, imperceptible consciousness, one's primary language, prior to the linguistic structures which subordinate speech to sense, to a conventional tradition, or to question logic.

27 See the principal definition of the name as an expression of God's power: "He is in His name, and His name is in Him, and His name is in His name" (Sympol, §58), and of: "For His name is in His might, and His might is in His name." It is in His power, and His power is in His name" (Gh, §37). C. Scholem, "Jewish Mysticism," p. 114, para. 28, and see also para. 31-35.
the upper worlds as pronounced as the core of the yearnings of those who descended to the Merkabah. The name contains the mystery, sanctity, power and symbol, and it includes the secrets and names, the signals and signs, the letters and seals in which the communications of heaven and earth are laid. The name possesses terrestrial dimensions and can be pronounced, written, "observed," "used," "sealed," and adjured. These qualities are characterized both from the angelic point of view and also from the human point of view. The created ritual of relating the tirastragmath and the pronunciation of divine names by the angels is paramount in the cult of the celestial Hekhalot, and, conversely, knowledge of the explicit Name of God, of the angelic, of parts of the Merkabah, and of the entire structure of celestial existence. The names are impacted as part of the historical revelation, as part of the descriptions of the ascent to the Merkabah, and as names known learned from the angels. They also appear as seals, secrets, tallmans, crowns, inscriptions, Spells, "shittimulm," amulets, charms, and magic formulas, and they are mentioned within a ritual context, which relates both directly and indirectly to the angelic role of the celestial Temple. The knowledge of these names is an essential part of mystical experience, and their application upon heavenly powers is the principal concern of magical windows and the theurgic praxis thus is bound up with it.

Mysticism, magic, and angelology are founded upon a shared cosmological view which assumes continuity between the upper realms and the terrestrial world, allowing a reciprocal relationship between them.  

26 See Synopsis, pars. 389, 396, 628, 630-637.
27 See Synopsis, pars. 515-516, 556, 584, 591-594, 676, 725. 972. Regarding various citations relating to prayers of the House of God, to the constitution of the Name, and to its Glorification, see below, n. 11, 104. For the ritual riddance regarding the pronunciation of the English Name by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement, see BT Yoma, ch. 6, p. 63b, and see also below, note n. 105.
That is to say, corresponding to the conceptual structure which details and categorizes the various components of the upper world and constitutes celestial existence — "Sh'iyur Qosmat," "Merakah," the "Throne of Glory," the firmaments, the heavenly spheres, the celestial beings, holy creatures, wheels, angels, names, and the like — a parallel structure is proposed, consisting of mystical concepts allowing man to forge reciprocal relations with the upper world by means of "knowledge of the secret" of "Sh'iyur Qosmat," "gazing upon the Merakah," "one of the Throne of Honor," "ascent to the firmaments," "beholding the Heh-Heh," singing adorations, "riding the wheels," "speaking the names," "swimming the angels," and the like. 26 In the Hehkahot literature, religious consciousness is founded upon the capability bestowed upon man of passing between different levels of existence and of deciphering the secrets of the celestial world through mystical elevation, magical-theurgic use of the names, and the reception of angelic tradition, which includes esoteric knowledge and celestial ritual. This conception regards man as capable of ascent to celestial experiences, of being affected by these, and of influencing them, by means of the three aforementioned areas: Mysticism, magic, and angelology are anchored in the upper world both as a focus of mystical yearnings and also as a realm of celestial vision, both as a source of magical knowledge and as an area in which it can be applied. Further, it is the realized angelic domain and the realm of celestial worship, angelic rites, and mysteries. In the Hehkahot tradition these three areas are acquired by means of mystical experience — their origin is in celestial revelation or in ascent on high, in descent to the Merakah, is, "Entering the Grove," or in ecstatic mystical conversion. The secrets of the Merakah, the angelic hymns, and the descriptions of the Sh'iyur Qosmat are all known through visionary revelation, they are heard in a celestial "divine voice," or from the angels' mouths. The collection of magical stems — the names, the seals, the invocations — are also known by visionary revelation, they are imparted through the testimony of those who descended to the Merakah and return to relate the details of their celestial vision to their listeners, including those components which can be described, for ritual restoration, for study, and for use. 27

26 See Hehkahot Zasek, pp. 22-34 for a demonstration of the connection.
27 See in 20 above, and see also the traditions regarding translation from the upper worlds: "A decree of heaven is upon you, ODependents of the Merakah, if you do not act and say what you have heard, and if you do not act, your place will not be known (Spyreos, §46)." (Paddi Akhar said, When I went and asked this question before the Throne of Glory... and when I parted from the Throne of Glory to descend with
The three elements are combined with each other within the conceptual world of the circle among whom the Heikaloth literature was created, for they are the different ways of establishing a substantial continuum between celestial, numinous reality, with its multiplicity of components, and the world of those who descended to the Merkabah. These ways deviate from the traditional religious conviction, which is based on a historical revelation as consolidated in the Torah and the commandments, and which is primarily related to man's earthly experience, to his historical consciousness, and to his existence in this world. The three areas under discussion here are based on a structure of cosmologies and theological assumptions which is focused on realms hidden from man's normal apprehension and which mainly relates to celestial reality and to man's mystical and magical connection with it.

These new dimensions are founded upon the assumption that the revelation of God and His angels is a phenomenon which did not cease after the final recension of the Scriptures, but that it is a continually recurring phenomenon. That is to say, mysticism, angelology, and magic in the Heikaloth literature depend upon renewed revelation, which is esoteric in character, made known to those who descended to the Merkabah as they ascend upward, and for them it is a source of inspiration and authority. All three factors are based on a worldview for which celestial existence is central and which lays bare unknown dimensions within it. Religious obligation concentrates upon study of the secrets of divine reality, on beholding the Merkabah, on knowledge of the names, and on ascent to the world of the angels. The spiritual desideratum is defined as "seeing the King in His splendor," and as knowledge of "the secrets of the world," and as knowledge of the names of the celestial creatures and the dimensions of Sh'ur Qemah. It is bound up with imitation of the worship of the angel in the celestial Heikaloth and in the mystical re-creation of its foundations.

The three areas establish celestial reality and organize it into liturgical and ritual patterns, of mystical, magical, and angelological character. These new patterns represent a significant turning point in religious consciousness, a turning point which reflects distance from tangible reality, alienation from earthly experience, alongside a withdrawal into a mythical world and concentration on celestial reality, on mystical life, on the world of the angels, and on magical practice.

the children of man. He said to me, Akiba, go down and verify as to the heavenly dimensions to the people." Synopsis, 4:64, and cf. Synopsis, pp. 712, 748, 405, 452. On the celestial sources of the names, see Synopsis, p. 629–636.

Whether the Heikaloth experience, bound up with vision at the time of the numinous-exstatic experience, a literary and literary tradition, in the context of the Heikaloth tradition, in bearing the authority of a profound spiritual experience upon the authority of a holy celestial source.

In various chapters of with each other, strata is in each other and directly or and, correspondingly, the strictly autonomous. That side by side, compositions and magic spells, world existed cosmological don concentrate on expressing it to the Merkabah and on vision which they witness parts of the literature, we structure.

The three areas are dis patterns and in various etching between the outer of a generic variety of the view to mysticism, magic, and separating the areas and or connect the religious creativity as expect and it is direct testimony.

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Whether the Heikalot traditions are based on authentic mystical experience, bound up with the revelation of the secrets of a celestial vision at the time of the descent to the Merkabah, or on an indirect, numinous-existential experience, or whether they are a product of religious imagination, a literary red poesical fiction, or merely a mystical association, in the consciousness of their authors, as reflected in many of the Heikalot traditions, is evident that they regard these matters as bearing the authority of divine revelation, and they acquire the force of a profound spiritual experience. All knowledge in these areas depends upon the authority of vision or of angelic revelation and rests upon the holy celestial source.

In various chapters of the Heikalot literature we find, juxtaposed with each other, strata in which these three areas are bound up with each other and directly connected to the mystical source of knowledge, and, correspondingly, the strata in which each of these areas is distinctly autonomous. That is to say, in the Heikalot traditions we find, side by side, compositions which concern only the use of adjurations and magic spells, works which mainly contain angelic hymns and cosmological descriptions, and chapters of the Heikalot which concentrate on expressing the mystical experience of those who descend to the Merkabah and on descriptions of impressions of the celestial vision which they witnessed. Alongside these distinct sections, in other parts of the literature, we also find these areas combined in a unified structure.

The three areas are discussed in this literature in different stylistic patterns and in various manners of transmission, but one must distinguish between the outer division, which is reflected in the stylistic and generic variety of the various traditions, and the shared inner affiliation to mysticism, magic, and angelology. One must avoid arbitrarily separating the areas and classifying them simplistically. The mystical ascent or descent to the Merkabah is the source for the authority of the religious creativity as expressed in all forms of the Heikalot literature, and it is direct testimony to the new celestial reality which is laid out


33 See no. 7, 25 above.

34 See Heikalot Rishita and Ma'aseh Merkabah for the angelic hymns and Sefer Heikalot for cosmological descriptions, and see no. 6 and 8 above. See also Alexander, Enoch, Introduction, p. 219.
in this creation. 23 Angelology is the conceptual matrix which produces the numerous experience that characterize Merkbah literature. It is also a basic cosmological and ritual pattern that establishes the seferiah reality to which those who descend to the Merkbah refer, and a model for imitation from which they draw inspiration for their worship. Moreover, angelology nourishes the ritual configuration, the magical practices, and mystical elevation. Magic, or the system of bonds and relationships between the revealed and concealed worlds, which makes use of the names which comprise celestial reality and which influence it, is also the transmissible manifestation of the traditions of the names and of the orders of the upper worlds which are learned from the angels when descending to the Merkbah. Magic is also the key to revealed mystical elevation, to "practical use," to spells and adjurations, to theurgical influence on celestial forces and on change in the orders of nature by means of controlling the higher forces. The three aforementioned subjects have been discussed to a varying degree in research into Hekhalot literature. The mystical element has received extensive illumination and comprehensive scholarly discussion with respect to its phenomenal and historical aspects. 24 The magical-theurgical element has been mentioned in comparison to the place of magic in the syncretic culture that was contemporary to 25, and the tradition of the names and its connection with mysticism and magic has also been investigated to some degree. 26 In contrast, the angelological element as a

23 P. Schäfer has recently argued unequivocally against placing the mystical ele-
ments in the center of the Hekhalot tradition and in favor of viewing that literature as a magic corpus, arguing, "Anyone who reads the texts edited in the Synagog zur Hekhalot-Literatur in an unbiased way, and without having the history of research inaugurated by Scholem in mind, will hardly conclude that it is precisely the ascent to the highest, which forms the locus of interest of the authors of this tradition. It seems to me that an entirely different impression will force itself upon the reader. That is, we are concerned here with something magical which deals with formal adjustments." See P. Schäfer, "Griechisch Schreven Reconsidered: The Aim and Purpose of Early Jewish Mysticism," the Twelve Sages Lecture (Oxford 1984), p. 6. See the recent monograph book, P. Schäfer, Hekhalot Studies (Tübingen 1988). ch. 13, pp. 288ff. and ch. 1.6, Of: 1. The Hidden and Manifest God (New York 1992). See also Grosswald's criticism of Schäfer's position in Grosswald, From Apocalypticism to Gnosticism (Frankfort 1983), ch. 6, pp. 175–190.

24 See n. 15 above. See also Grosswald, Apotheose, pp. 98–126. Dan. Three (n. 5 above).

25 See Scholem, trans. 50–51; Scholem, Gnosticism, pp. 75–77; Margalit, Sefer ha-Razin, pp. 1–16. Smith, Hekhalot (n. 4 above), pp. 149–160, and esp. pp. 154–156. In Schäfer's article, referred to in n. 23 above, the history of research in this field is reviewed, including the important developments that have taken place in it recently with the publication of Jewish magical texts from the Gezira.

26 See n. 25 above.

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Mysticism

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27 See G. Cohen, Judentum und 110, '1 Lohn, "Malkuth," in
Bibel: Geschichte der Angelsophie, ed. M. de Jonge, Berlin
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28 See A. Aggur, "Revela-
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general phenomenon has been discussed very little, and the following discussion will be devoted to a clarification of its uniqueness in the Hekhalot literature and to illuminating its mystical, mythical, and ritual dimensions.

The present discussion will concentrate upon the characteristics of the conception of the angels in Merkabah literature, its relation to the conception of the plenum and to the mystical tradition, and on the significance of the prototypical position of the angels and their worship in the celestial Temple, in the ritual of those who descend to the Merkabah.

The conception of the angels in the Hekhalot literature was inspired by developments affecting the importance of angels in post-Biblical Judaism. The angelological concepts in the apocalyptic literature and in the writings of the Judean Essenes reflect a new phase in the development and diffusion of the belief in angels. This juxta has generally been understood as a result of the rise of the transcendentalist conception of God, which distanced God from the world and necessitated the inclusion of intermediary essences, though occasionally this development has been attributed to a foreign influence, especially Persian and Babylonian, upon Israelite faith. The angels fill the space of the celestial world and glorify the greatness of the Creator by serving as an exalted retinue in many of the apocalyptic works. They may also descend to the mundane world and carry out missions in the name of God, holding converse with prophets and mystical visionaries.

The angels play a variety of roles in the upper realm. They are associated with the celestial Temple and are involved with ritual ceremonies and heavenly prayer before the Throne of Glory. Along with their celestial tasks, which are described in relation to the priesthood and the Temple, the description of the retinue of angels is influenced by the sight of the royal courts and regal and military retinues of the late

41 See his detailed bibliographical appendix there on angels in the literature of the Apocalypse.
Persian period. Aside from their heavenly service, the angels also take part in the management of Creation, and they are appointed by the divinity over various dimensions of the universe and of the fulfillment of its historical vocation. They are classified into various orders and ranks in a detailed hierarchical division, and, in some sources, they are described figuratively and given a decided personal character. The details of their existence—their number, their characteristics, their ranks, and their roles—vary from work to work within the apocalyptic literature. Nonetheless, the emphasis on their centrality is reflected prominently in this literature.40

Many of the characteristics mentioned above are also found in the concept of the angels in the Hebrew literature. However, these concepts are not simply quoted or borrowed, but rather they are presented through a new prism: that of mysticism, as narrated from the standpoint of the one descending to the Meskaboth, who ascends to the heavens upon his own initiative and encounters angels. Alternatively, they are also viewed through the prism of magic, that is, from the perspective of one involved in the invocation of angels and the use of names. Furthermore, while in the apocalyptic literature the angels generally appear in an apocalyptic framework and are connected to eschatological eschaton, here in the Hekhalot literature they are not generally associated with a particular objective beyond mystical contemplation or a magical relationship. That is to say, the angels in the apocalyptic literature are not affected by the visionaries or invoked by them, but they are bound up with a predetermined divine mission. While in the Hekhalot they fulfill an active role in the mystical experience and express the exalted reality of the celestial Temple which is imparted to the descendents of the chariot.

These views regarding the angels in post-Biblical literature did not crystallize around a single conceptual system, but it is quite evident that

40 For detailed references to angels in this literature see L. T. Chidlaw, the Old Testament Patristical (New York 1923), vol. 2, pp. 925–977, M. Sitron (ed.), Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period (Philadelphia 1991), p. 78. In 2 Esdras, "Angels." Several works within this literature refer to themselves as compositions dedicated by angels, and some contain dialogues with them. Many of the apocalyptic visions display the angel who speaks and guides the seer to his heavenly ascent, explaining the meaning of the vision (as is revealed to his eyes, and explications of cosmological or eschatological meaning, see, for example, The Ethiopic Zohar, The Testament of Levi, the Vision of Nebadon, and Book of Jubilees) Joseph Flavians mentions two traditions of the name of angels which were preserved by the Eusebians, and in the Apocalypse of Abraham the angel Yedid is described, with whom is the name of God, so the one who receives the celestial hymns. See Scholem, Gnosticism, pp. 23–24 Chidlaw, Patristical, pp. 681–700.
the significance of the angels in religious thought is enhanced during the Second Temple period. Pucher, it is manifest that the development of the conception of the angels and the various teachings about angels were composed in those circles in which the apocalyptic literature and the Judean Desert Scrolls were composed. A special place is set aside for the angels known as "Khasanai Korev," "Nestei Rosh," "priests of the Exalted Heights," and the Sons of Light in the Qumran literature. Here the world of the angels becomes tangible and real, joins with the earthly and celestial cult of the companions of the Yahad, and shares their strict laws of ritual purity. Here the celestial Temple and its priests, the angels, correspond to the world of the priesthood of the members of the Yahad. The angels participate in the plans for the wars of the End of Days between the celestial and earthly Sons of Light and the Sons of darkness, and in determining the fate of the sect in the end of days.61 The various celestial powers, called "princes" or "archons," have a central position in the gnostic literature of the first centuries, in which they are linked to traditions of the creation of the world, with mythical views connected with the pleroma, with the sin of the fallen angels, and with various dualistic views.62 The angels also occupy an important place in the syncretistic magical literature which blossomed throughout the Hellenistic world at the close of antiquity. In works of magic the angels are the object of invocations and represent the mysterious forces active upon man and manifested by him.63

The transformation in the importance of the angels in religious consciousness and the alteration in the meaning of their role in celestial


62 See H. Baraz, The Gnostic Religion (Boston 1963), pp. 42–44, 134–143. K. Parpola, Gods, the Sacred and History of the Ancient Near East (Princeton 1991), pp. 53–87. G. Streeter, Another Seed (Leiden 1956). Regarding the connection between the gnostic views of the apocalyptic and the gnostic of the gurus and the gnostic of the apocalyptic and the gnostic of the gurus and the gnostic of the gurus see, for example, The Oxford Evangel, and Book of the Apocalypse of a gurus which were preserved by the gurus, in which the gurus are described, within which the celestial hymns are possible. See Schubert, Hymn, pp. 681–700.
reality derives from the turning point which took place in understanding of the concept of God and is the meaning of the divine revelation in post-Biblical literature, as well as from the cessation of prophecy and the loss of prophetic authority during the Second Temple period. In contrast to the Biblical view which reflects the awareness that the divinity is close to man, and which views divine revelation as mysterious in the earthly realm, which is conditioned upon the initiative of the deity and upon His desire to reveal Himself in this world, within historical reality, post-Biblical literature reflects a different attitude. Here the revelation of God is intensified, and His omniscience, His glorification, and His immense remembrance from eternity reality are emphasized. In the wake of the transcendent event, which develops a conception of a divinity existing in His distance and in His wondrous ways which are concealed from human understanding, a view emerges which sets the rule of the universe as given over to a structure of celestial forces.

Gradually a view developed regarding the existence of intricate celestial structures which separate man from God – Emanuella, Hekhalot, and Merkavot, and, alongside them, a complex array of celestial beings which bear the sovereignty of God and rule the world in His name. A multitude of angels, princes, and a variety of heavenly constructs was created between man and God. Correspondingly, as his immeasurable distance opens and as more angelic barriers are erected, one sees an intense desire to penetrate the hidden worlds in the celestial firmaments, to contemplate their beauty, to lay bare their secrets and to testify as to what takes place on High.

An additional change, derived from the transcendent event, occurred with respect to the place of divine revelation. In post-Biblical literature the divinity is no longer revealed on earth but, rather, God is revealed only to visionaries who ascend to heaven. All the descriptions of divine revelation relate to the manifestation of God in the upper worlds, and they are transmitted in the name of those who ascended on High and viewed the celestial visions. Revelation is separated from earthly reality, from the realm of the prophets, and from the public domain, and now it is bound up with the ascent on High of a chosen individual, with the revelation of a celestial vision, and with converse with the angels, who guide the ascender and interpret the vision to him.

The emphasis on the exaliation of God and on His remoteness from any contact with the earthly sphere, along with the displacement of the area of revelation from earth to heaven, was bound up with a change in the position of the angels and with a re-mythologization of the celestial world. The angels become the divine entities which form, the barrier between earthly and celestial reality, on the one hand, and, they also become the entities which mediate between divine being and earthly reality, on the other hand. In this literature they are depicted as commanding a wealth of secrets and as possessing foreknowledge of the future, as representing the celestial vision and as interpreting the mysteries of the terrestrial world, and also as effecting the celestial ritual, adoring, existent, and praying on High.

The new tendencies in apocalyptic literature and in the writings of the Judean Desert Sect regarding the status of the angels and their place in religious perception, were developed and augmented in the Hezkiloth literature. The angelological elements mentioned in the apocalypses and in the scrolls were revived in the Hezkiloth traditions and combined with mystical and magical elements and incorporated within mythical and liturgical structures. Three distinct elements are notable in the doctrine of angels of Hezkiloth literature:

1. The mystical element entwined in the affiliation with "another reality," which is derived from the mystical vision of Ezekiel's Chariot, from the body of biblical mystical lore known as "Entry into the Grave" (Haggigah 57) and from the conception of Shabbat Qumah. Some of its components are influenced indirectly by post-Biblical apocalyptic writing.

2. The mystical element, which relates to the profusion of divine forces in the world of the Merkabah and to the creation of new divine figures. This is influenced conditionally by the surrounding culture, though it also expresses an extremely powerful, original seminomad religious experience.

3. The visual-magic element, which is found in the relation to the ritual of the heavenly Temple, and which is influenced both by syncretistic tendencies and also by the Qumah literature.

Alongside these elements are found additional dimensions of the conception of the angels, such as their significance to prayer, their ambivalent attitude towards those who descend to the Merkabah and ascend to heaven, "the bringing down of the Prince of Peace," "Angels of Destruction," and the struggle with hostile angels. These topics will not be discussed here, both, because they have already been widely examined in recent research and also because they deviate from the
shared elements which shape the doctrine of angels in Hebraic literature. The following remarks will be devoted to clarifying the three elements just mentioned, which delineate the conception of angels in the Merkabah tradition.

The Other Reality

1. The Hebraic literature is concentrated on the world of the Merkabah and on the celestial Hebralot, and it transfers the essence of religious worship to the heavens, to the realm of angels beings and various celestial powers. This literature reflects the assumption that no true reality exists on the mundane level, and consequently the center of religious life is defined from the supernatural level to visionary reality, to the mythic reality of the world of the angels, and to the figure of Shuri Qurumah. All concepts are focused on this "other reality," which differs in its mysterious essence from all familiar reality. In this literature a configuration of mystical relations is established, within which man does not act according to the written religious tradition. Nor is his acting essentially defined by man's affinity to his fellow man or by the experience of mundane reality, but rather according to his bond to the renewed perception of the world of the Merkabah and to the revealed celestial beings and anthropological creatures.

The celestial reality related to the descender to the Merkabah includes a detailed cosmological description of the Firmaments and a precise record of the details of the mythic reality of the world of the angels. The masters of the Hebraic list many groups of angels which are given collective names, including "Princes of the Merkabah."


48 On the world of the angels as "numb reality" see 11 above and see Synan, pp. 150-197 for one example among many of that view in Hebraic literature.

"Heavenly Wheels," "Cherubim," the Holy Hayyot, "Omnim of Hayyot," "Hashmal," "Holy Hay of the Hosts," "Guardians of the Name of the King," "High Servants of the House of Pnem," "Servants," "Twelve Ministers." The Princes Guarding the Seven Gate Camps of the Merkabah Hosts," "Holy Angels," and the like. These traditions from the Hebraic list play an important role in the mystical ceremonial liturgy and are a foundation for all the mystorical and anthropological concepts. A significant number of these traditions have been depicted in the Kabbalah, which changes their importance in the mystical tradition later in the 1st millennium B.C.E. It is known that the Hayyot and Hayyot Hosts are in the mystical vision of all the objects of the Temple of Merkabah, and the mystical priests and Levites serving in the Temple are the Hayyot with the face of the wheel that rolls in the mystical vision of the Temple. The Hayyot "eclipses the" facet of the four directions by facing south, and three faces become wheels with eyes, as is stated: "Eyes, eyes, and Eyes."
Mysticism, Magic, and Anceiology

A significant number of these names are composed of concepts and combinations derived from the vision of Ezekiel (chapters 1 and 10). However, their reappearance in the Hebraic literature is neither a direct quotation nor a close combination, but rather a decaloration of the vision of the Markabah and a three-stage recreation including the ritual source of the vision in the earthly Temple; transfer of the ritual objects of the Temple worship to the visionary level in Ezekiel's Markabah; and their reintegation into the celestial ranks personified as priests and Levites serving in the celestial worship.

This reading is founded upon the assumption that a considerable portion of the concepts mentioned in the vision of the consecration of Ezekiel are little more than visionary abstractions of concepts taken originally from the ritual objects of the Temple of Solomon, which are described in detail in 1 Kings 7:23–37, 8:1–9 and in 2 Chronicles 3:7–14, 4:2–5, 14:1–5. The lions, the calf, the cherubim, the spokes of the wheel, the chariot, and the structure of the chariot, which were all connected on the ritual level as parts of the objects of the Temple service, underwent a visionary metamorphosis in the figure of the Holy Harpy with the faces of lions, oxen, and cherubim standing on the wheels in Ezekiel's vision of the Markabah.

The bronze "molten sea" that stood on four horns of oxen, which faced in the four directions "three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east," and the bronze stands with four bronze wheels with "spokes, axles, and hubs," on the frames of which stood "lions, oxen, and cherubim" ... and palm trees in the proportion...

of each,28 and the Cherubim which were plated with gold and spread their wings ("touching each other wingtip to wingtip")29 were all transformed in the vision of the exiled priest Ezekiel into the image of a great glowing cloud with brightness round about it and fire flashing forth, within which was seen "the likeness of the four living creatures") with their wings, sparkling "like burnished bronze," being the four cardinal directions, "and their faces were in the figure of the face of a man and the face of a lion ... and in the face of an eagle to all four of them," and their wings touched one another.30 The four wheels (of manna) of the stands in the Temple which are described in concrete detail: and the four wheels bear the names ... and the making of the wheels was like the making of the wheels of a chariot, their axles, their hubs and their spokes and their spokes everything was motion,31 becomes in the vision of Ezekiel four celestial wheels. "And as I beheld the Hexyeot, behold one wheel upon the earth by the Hexyeot, with his four faces; the appearance of the wheels and their making was like unto the color of a beryl; and their four had one likeness; and their appearance and their making was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel ... and when the Hexyeot went, the wheels went by them: ... for the spirit of the Hexyeot was in the wheels."32 The winged Cherubim from the Temple also became, in the second version of the vision, winged Cherubim with four faces standing on the four wheels, which are identified with the Holy Hayyeot and linked to the Temple that appeared to the prophet in the "vision of the Lord."33

The ritual objects and the burnt bronze altar from Solomon's Temple, which were most likely influenced originally by patterns of mythical thought, evolved into the "figure of the four Hexyeot" with wings that gleam "like burnished bronze," and which, as they move, cast the great roof of the vision of the chariot. In the visionary dimension, movement, sound, and fire were added to the quadruple cubic structure which appeared as a combination of the figures of the Hexyeot and the wheels of the chariot, a structure which was also retained in the visionary image of the heavenly Merkabah. However the essential dimension added to the chariot vision is mystical and mystical, thus externalizing in being the glory and the beauty of the earthly temple which has been destroyed in the exile of Jehoiakim in 597 BC, "all of the treasures in the House in the House of the King and out which Solomnon, king of Israel, had saw "the visions of God" in the fire when the shattered vessels of metal objects became visionary objects it seems that the visionary metaphor is intended as an act of memory, and to maintain within a textual reality. For the Temple, the Merkabah of Ezekiel, transformed the visionary chariot with the earthly Temple into a celestial Temple, while describing a point of personified celestial being in the pattern of the Temple now. The Hexyeot, the Cherubim, in the vision of Ezekiel as moving awesome and splendidly vision, the noise of great waters, the sound thunder - are envisioned in the heavenly priests and Levites who attend the throne of Glory. "From the Heavens" the sound of the in "and from the sound of the chariot "For with six voices singing before the throne, the cherubim and the of"

28 2 Kings 6: 21-27
30 Ezekiel 1: 4-26.
31 1 Kings 7: 32-33.
32 Ezekiel 1: 15-23.
33 Funilio in 10, and see 6, 1.

34 See the survey of scholarship in Ezekiel 1-20, A New Translation with an
35 See the survey of scholarship in Ezekiel 1-20, A New Translation with an
36 The Anchor Bible vol. 22, pp 39-50, excerpted views of the strength of the conviction that the God of the Pentateuch, see 21-27, 2 Chron. 6: 2; 2, and of the text of the Temple woods in "Hexyeot Yehudah" 11, 32-32.
37 Synopsis, pps 100, 165.
The earthly temple, which has been destroyed. Ezekiel, the priest, was exiled in the exile of Jehoiachin in 597 BCE, when Nebuchadnezzar plundered "all of the treasures in the House of the Lord and all of the treasures in the House of the King and on all of the golden utensils which Solomon, king of Israel, had made in the Temple of the Lord," as "the vision of God" in the fifth year of the exile of Jehoiachin, when the shattered utensils of the Temple and the plundered ritual objects became visionary objects in the celestial Temple. It seems that the visionary metamorphosis of objects of the earthly Temple ritual indeed was intended to preserve the lost service within poetic memory, and to maintain an echo of the historical memory within a textual reality. For the authors of the Hekhalot, who concretized the Merkabah of Ezekiel after the destruction of the Second Temple, transformed the visionary beings which were originally associated with the earthly Temple ritual, into bearers of the ritual of the celestial Temple, while describing the elements of the Merkabah in the guise of personified-celestial beings who take part in the heavenly ritual in the pattern of the Temple service. The Hayyot, the Cherubim, and the Ofanim— which are described in the visions of Ezekiel as moving in many directions, as forming an awesome and splendorous vision, as though the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, the storm wind, bursting fire and the glow of torches — are envisioned in the Hekhalot tradition in the figure of heavenly priests and Levites who play, chant, intone, and sing before the Throne of Glory: "From the sound of the playing of lutes of His Hayyot from the sound of the intoning of the drums of His Ofanim and from the sound of the chants of the symphony of His Cherubim ..." "For with six voices singing before Him the beatingke of His glorious Throne, the Cherubim and the Ofanim and the Holy Hayyot." In many parts of the Merkabah a multi-valued personification takes place, for all of its figures become singers, musicians, and players on the

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2 Kings 24:13.
Ezekiel 1:1–2.
4 The Anchor Bible vol. 23, pp. 59–60. See also pp. 75–76 for a discussion of the accepted views of the structure of the Merkabah and the character of the vision in consonant with the context of that period. On the visions of the First Temple which were taken as booty to Babylon, see 2 Kings 24:3, 2 Kings 25:13–17; Jer 52:17–19; 1 Chr. 30:5, 14, and of the traditions connected with the vision of Ezekiel and the Temple visions in "Hayyot Vehayyot," L. Greenwald (ed.), Tempura 1, 1973, p. 119, 11. 31–32.
The earthly Temple which had been constructed was perpetuated in a visionary image; likewise the earthly Temple service was em强化ized by descents of celestial worshipers who called the temple service and the Temple service is linked with earthly prayer, for all of the creatures of the Markah are envisioned as a mighty heavenly chorus which sings, plays, praises, extols, and contemplates with the earthly worshipers who proclaim "Holy, Holy, Holy." Thus the transition from the ritual of the earthly Temple to the prophetic vision of the Markah is completed; the beauty of the Temple is maintained in the celestial vision, a beauty which is revealed anew in the mystical tradition of the author of the Heikal, who depicts the worship of the Haysot and the Merkahah using patterns of the service of the priests and Levites, combining the celestial liturgy with earthly prayers: "From the chant of the litanies of His Haysot, from the song of the drums of His Off Springs and from the sound of the melodies of the symbols of His Hoshanah the sound grows strong and rises up with a great noise in sanctity while Israel says before 'Eem [Holo] [Holo] [Holo]."

According to various traditions, the angels who take part in this celestial ceremony are described as "serving the Throne of Glory," and as bearing upon themselves "generative letters," and as "embellished with the inscription of the Ineffable Name." They are described as members of the heavenly choir, and as "angels of the gates of heaven and with the insignia of the hierarchal hierarchy and defined tasks. In the description that they "pass between," "pray and pray, extol, celebrate celebration, "prepare a seat for the celestial resurrected of the world which is included, and is passed and Levites as we shall see in the celestial world they also represent human beings and the actions of tradition is depicted as such and for the leadership of the angels have conversation with them and their adjustments, rather the secret of celestial mark 'Shetar Gomah, and raise them from the upper worlds, within the mention of the divin world we after the earthly Temple had been God had removed Himself for

II. The Markah

The Markah traditions focus on God to a very, along with relation to the

See Synopsis, p. 12, and also see below, near n. 11.
of the Hezekiah and as possessors of the seals. That is to say, they are depicted with the inspiration of the earthly concepts of the Temple ritual, which include a retinue of servants and helpers whose status is fixed in a hierarchical order. This retinue is decorated with emblems of honor and with the indigible symbols of rank and degree which embody the hierarchal gradation and reflect expressions of authority and defined tasks. In the description of the celestial Temple service it is said that they "pan crowns," "pronounce names," "exposed holiness," "bless and pray, exist, reticulate poverty," "give praise and adoration and celebration," "prepare a seat for the One who sits upon the Cherubim," "stretch crowns," sing, hymn, "murmur in song," play music, "recall and pronounce the memory of His Name," "devote and sanctify themselves," "immerse and "purify themselves in rivers of fire." That is, they embody the celestial hypostasis of the earthly Temple ceremony and the rituals which it included, and, in parallel, they reflect the service of the priests and Levites as we shall see below. Along with their position in the celestial world they also represent God and promise His closeness to human beings and the action of His power by means of them. In several traditions they are depicted as being responsible for the order of nature and for the leadership of the world. In the Hezekiah tradition the angels hold conversation, with those who descend to the Merkabah, respond to their adoration, reveal enigma and answer to them, decipher the secrets of celestial reality, teaching them the mysteries of the Sh'it Qomah, and raise them up to the Throne of Glory. That is to say, the angels become figures who provide the link between the mysteries of heaven and the apprehension of one who descends to the Merkabah. The angels become heavenly custodians who are visible and audible to human beings. They are perceived as the deities of the upper worlds with whom one can converse, or as an accessible dimension of the divine world which is perceived by man in his mind's eye after the earthly Temple had been destroyed, prophecy had ceased, and God had removed Himself from apprehension.  

II. The Merkabah - Multiplicity of Divine Powers

The Hezekiah traditions reflect a tradition from a religious conception focused on God as a worldview centered on the Merkabah. That is, alongside relation to a God existed within the mysteries of the

42 See Synopsis, §125 for a dependent description of the destruction of the Temple, which is attributed to a celestial voice.
Hekhalot, paramount importance is attributed to the celestial powers found beside Him, those which are revealed to the adepts. Along with the imperceptible angels categories, described in connection with the vision of Ezekiel and in the descriptive language of the Bible, which constitute the celestial realm of being and create the Merkabah, individual celestial powers also appear, with names whose sources are unknown, such as Metatron, Anafiel, Zahariasel, Tetrosia, Saria, Sassangiel, Cserubiel, Vofiel, Magphasah, Shakdavtay, Adirion, Ozazbayas, and many others. These figures, the meaning of whose names is not clear, and whose historical development is unknown to us, have a decidedly mythological character. Their most prominent characteristic is their exalted divine eminence, within the heights of the Merkabah, which is portrayed with mythical traits. They have simultaneously sustained a complex association with the deity and fulfill the role as the celestial powers with whom the adept holds conversations during the various stages of his ascent. Central to this visionary reality are the angels, the princes, the guardians of the Hekhalot, the Holy Hayyet, the Cherubim, and the celestial beings who administer the rite of the earthly Temple, which has been destroyed, in its visionary likeness in a celestial ceremony, while they also serve a new exalted mythical reality, gleaming with splendor. All of these are described from the viewpoint of the adepts to the Merkabah, who ascend to the celestial Hekhalot and converse with their deities.

As noted, the arena of the vision passes to the upper realm, and therefore the description of the angels is not bound up with any historical event, with eschatological expectation, with textual interpretation, or with a specific prophetic vision connected with the human world. Rather the description is concerned with the angels' connection with the world of the Merkabah and the celestial ceremonies, on the one hand, and with the celestial reality encountered by the descender of the chariot, on the other. The angels create the exalted reality of the world of the Merkabah with its beauty, elevation, and arcana: they are the attendants at the celestial ceremony and of the ritual of the upper Hekhalot. They are the means by which the divine mysteries are revealed to the descendents to the Merkabah, and they establish the munificent existence against the background of which the figure of God is described.

The concept of the “other reality” is founded upon mystical illumination and a visionary view established in the connection with the Merkabah of Ezekiel and with “Entry into the Grove.” However, it seems that the angelology which is expressed therein is also influenced indirectly by the concept of syzygy polytheistic, mythical, and close to thought is characterized by the conceptions which were based on the adaptation of new divinities, mystical elevation connected with contemplation of heavenly power, magic means connected to these and the characteristics of Hekhalot, geographical area influenced by Hellenism to.

The perception of angels of the continuation of the process of re-creation, Scriptural literature, was considered polytheism, paganism, occult, and as in the surrounding cultures. All of logical conception in which the godology, along with Biblical figures, serve mythology which acknowledges many.

The authors of the Hekhalot view divine unity, which contains within it and divine entities, which join together in the world. This view is not necessarily denied any divine acknowledgment the existence of any without attributing an explicit charge, Hekhalot traditions the mystical and unique God with a resume of angels but rather, upon a complex of celestial
indirectly by the concepts of syncretistic Hellenistic culture, which was polytheistic, mythical, and close to it in spirit. Hellenistic religious thought is characterized by the consolidation of syncretistic mythologies which were based on the adaptation of existing traditions and by the creation of new divine entities. Thus it expressed interest in the mystical elevation connected with gazing upon the divine being and with contemplation of heavenly powers, and it spoke extensively of the magic means connected to these ends.6 These traits are consistent with the characteristics of Hekhalot literature, which was created in the geographical area influenced by Hellenistic culture and with a close affinity to it.

The perception of angels of the Hekhalot literature, reflecting the continuation of the process of esmythologization which began in post-Scriptural literature, was consolidated, as noted, in a period when polytheism, paganism, occult, and magical traditions were preeminent in the surrounding cultures.62 All of these are expressed in the angelological conceptions in which the gods of Greek and Egyptian mythology, along with biblical figures, served together to create a syncretistic mythology which acknowledges many divine entities revealed to man.63 The authors of the Hekhalot viewed the upper worlds as a complex divine unity, which contains within it, along with God, various powers and divine entities, which join together in a divine vision and in governing the worlds. This view is extremely remote from the Biblical view which absolutely denied any divine entity except for God, thought it acknowledged the existence of angels as distinct from the divinity, without attributing an explicit character or autonomy to them.64 In the Hekhalot traditions the mystical attitude does not focus on a single, unique God with a retinue of angels devoid of any individual character, but rather, upon a complex of celestial beings possessing mythic character.

62 See the sources mentioned in n. 44 above, and cf. E. R. Goodenough, By Light, Light, in Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism (New Haven 1932), pp. 11–47, as well as the remarks of Festinger on the system of Hellenistic religions in seeing God and deciphering the celestial mystery, A. J. Festinger, L’homme d’Apollon (Paris 1950), pp. 12–32.
63 See the survey by N. Spiegel, “Plasmos” (Hebrew, in Erezer (Tel-Aviv 1973), pp. 34–72.
64 See Greek Maggelt Papyri (above, n. 44) and Sefer ha-Razim, pp. 1–38; E. R. Dodds, Image and Direction in an Age of Anxiety: Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Mayor’s account to Constantine, (Cambridge, 1965), p. 58.
65 See A. Roffe, ha-Ezrahah be-Malbim, he-Zareh be-Nehalot Zekhari be-Or Messiah Aharon (Jerusalem 1969), and of the survey of the various views regarding the conception of angels in the Bible in M. Mach, Malakhim (n. 39 above), pp. 13–51.
statistics. These celestial entities are not viewed as abstract concepts but rather as exalted figures who inspire awe and which can be seen and heard and can even become interlocutors. The celestial world view is depicted in images of a dreadful encounter with mysterious divine beings which are qualitatively different from any familiar reality. These beings are depicted in a changing hierarchical order, and, against the background of their numinous character, the new figure of the deity is perceived in the world of the Merkábah.

One example among many of the mythical character of the celestial creatures and their awe-inspiring nature is found in the description of the Holy Hayyot standing at the gate of the Seventh Hekhal.

And two-hundred-and-sixty-six faces has each of the Holy Hayyot opposite the entrance of the Seventh Hekhal. Greater than all of them, are the five-hundred-and-twelve eyes of the four holy Hayyot by the entrance of the Seventh Hekhal, which have the facial forms of the sixteen faces of each of the Hayyot ... whatever one requests to descend to the Merkábah, Anael would open the doors of the entrance of the Seventh Hekhal for him, and that man would enter and stand upon the threshold of the entrance to the Seventh Hekhal, and the Holy Hayyot would raise to him five-hundred-and-twelve eyes and each and every eye of the eyes of the Holy Hayyot is split open like a large winnower's affer and bolts of lightning flash from them. Beside them there are the eyes of the mighty Cherubim and the Cherubim of the Shekhinah for they are similar to torches of light whose flames are coals of juniper.

The change in the status of the Biblical allusion, which refers to the Holy Hayyot in the vision of Ezekiel, takes place when the Hayyot are presented from the point of view of the descendants to the Merkábah, gripped by awe in the presence of the Holy. The mythical metamorphosis takes place in response to the details of the dreadful vision which had been experienced in the mystical ascent. This ascent lays bare the awesome mythological character of the exalted angelic configurations which create the celestial Merkábah.

67 Rudolph Otto explained the essence of religious experience as an encounter with a power which is different in quality from all other reality, a force which he called the Numinous force, and the encounter with it was described as an encounter with the mysterium tremendum. According to his view myths exposed the feeling of a person who encounters that other force as a primary expression of the conception of the numinous power. See Otto, The Idea of the Holy (p. 119). 

Another example of a dread, which draws upon upper world in anthropo- vision of Ezekiel, is manifest in the appearing of Zutarmi: 
In its statutes is filled with Gav Hyyot. The end of a robe. And it is a word from one end of the world to the other sparks that are emitted from the holy Hayyot which is known as an angelic God Ramot Patum. 
Beside the divinity, with the tradition of the who are associated with him and are related one to the other, who combine in the main, unknown to us as patterns of their descriptive angels and gods is a poly- the angelological description, and their theological description of Cherubim which is the literary adoration of the of the celestial beings and beings with unprecedent... 
Rabbi Yishmael said: the said to me: Above them is a heave and exalted, whom in his name. A valiant Prince whom is majesty, a holy Prince glorified by the throne...
Another example of a celestial figure of great majesty that inspires dread, which draws upon the mythical tradition that interprets the upper world in anthropomorphic images, in symbols connected to the vision of Ezekiel, in mystical dimensions, and in nameless names, we find in the anonymous description of Sh’ir’ Qomah in Kabbalistic Zutomar. In its octant is filled with a throne of fire, the name of which is Dagguat Chay Vayyag. The ends of it are like its supports, and its name is Dabur Benab Rabeg. And it has arrows named Bintan Galashah. And its eye sets off from one end of the world to the other end and its name is Azzanah. And the sparks that are emitted from it illuminate all beings with their light and with their own eyes it sees behind them while it is going to be and its name is Ayongoth, and its body is like a bow and his bow is like the sight of fire, and it has a house all around. His bow is named Doseh Kashiya ... his sword is named Mahzama Memama. The name of his throne of Glory is Rabfim Pishan.47

Beside the divinity, who is described as the angels in connection with the tradition of Sh’ir’ Qomah, many divine entities are mentioned who are associated with the majesty of the divinity, are derived from it and are related one to another in hierarchical order. These divine beings, who combine in being the divine and the mystical, are in the main, unknown to us from earlier sources or parallel traditions. The patterns of their description, which suggest a certain parallel between angels and gods in a polytheistic pantheon, deviate significantly from the theologico-didactic descriptions in the Bible and in post-biblical literature, and their historical development is obscure.48 The following description of Cherubim, which is taken from Sefer Hebazalot, exemplifies the literary adaptation of the mythical, metaphorical and divine elaboration of the celestial beings and reflects the tendency to create new celestial beings with unprecended traits and in an unspecified degree.

Rabbi Yehudah said: the angel Metzuvot, Prince of the Divine Presence, said to me: Above them is another Prince, noble, mighty and wondrous, brave and excellent, honored with all manner of grace; Cherubiel TSGW Ve his name. A valiant Prince full of boundless power, a majestic prince, with whom is majesty ... a holy Prince, with whom is holiness. A splendid Prince adorned by thousands of harts; a Prince embellished by censers in many legions. At his wrath the earth quakes, at his fury the earth trembles; from...

47 See Zutat, 801, and cf. Kabbalistic Zutomar, 11231-232 and see notes there.
his head the foundations shudder and at his nape Ararat quakes. His stature is full of glowing clouds, the height of his stature is the height of seven firmaments, and the breadth of his stature is of seven firmaments and the thickness of his stature is of seven firmaments. The opening of his mouth blasts like a fiery torch and his tongue is a consuming fire. His eyelids are as the splendor of lightning. His eyes are like sparks of splendor and his face is like flaming fire. A crown of holiness is on his head, for the Sacred Name is engraved on it, from which lightning blazes. The bow of the Shekhinah is across his shoulders; his sword is like a lightning flash on his thigh, his arrows like lightning bolts are on his back; a shield of descent fires on his neck and cloud of jasper accomplishes him. The splendor of the Shekhinah is on his face, rays of glory are on his wheels and the veil of glory covers his head. His whole body is full of eyes and his stature is covered with wings ... clouds blaze from his body, torches shoot from him; and lightning flashes from his face."

This description of Cherubim, which brings to mind the pagan source of angelology, is one of many dozens of descriptions of angels and Princes who are described in the Hechalot traditions, in descriptions that are connected to mythological figures, who create, takes together, the angelic hierarchy of the Merkabah.

Two typical groups of descriptions of angels appear in the Hechalot traditions. One of them is related to distinct figures such as Metatron, Shaddaihuch, Sira, Tetrazia, Cherubim, or Yehefah, who are divine entities appearing individually in the framework of various traditions. They sometimes are described in the first person and sometimes in the third person, as interlocutors of those who descend to the Merkabah.

The second group relates to those exalted Princes who create a set part of the celestial cosmology, who are defined by their function and their high status in the upper world. In the second category there is a group with high rank which is unique to a system of names, the source of the first part of which is unknown, while, in the second part, those names are, in exceptional fashion, associated with the explicit Name of God. In Hechalot Rabah, in the description of the guardians of the gate of the Seventh Hechalot, various forces are named, of whom it is said, "each of them is called by the name of the King of the World." These forces are called by names with complex structures, combining an unknown name with the Explicit Name:

13 Synopsia, para 23-33, and cf. St. Mesropus, Merkabot Shemah (Jerusalem 1938), fol. 27b. See also similar descriptions of other angels, Synopsia, para 23-25, 30-44. There is a certain similarity with the descriptions of Hellen, see Mesropus, Sefer la-Rassen, pp. 15-16, and cf. the description in the Apan of Shemah, Hechalot Zaturit, 11, 231-237.
14 Synopsia, 240, and see Scholem, Teshub, p. 356, n. 3.
Zahaf unrav YHVH an honored Prince ... Atirzai YHVH a mighty prince and desired and dreadful ... Anfali YHVH a Prince whose name is mentioned before the Throne of His Honor (at least) once every day ... why? Because the ring of the seal of heaven and earth is delivered to his hand.\footnote{33 Synoposis \textit{261}.} The group of exalted forces which is callled by the name of YHVH the Lord God of Israel is also mentioned in other traditions: in Hakhalot Zaturi these celestial forces are described as “the seven Princes guardians of the Seven Gates of the Hakhalot,” and they are called by names with a similar structure: Etsah YHVH Lord God of Israel, Azashag YHVH, Lord God of Israel, Shakedshukiy YHVH the Prince, Terotia YHVH the Prince, Natapadrakh YHVH the Prince, and the like.\footnote{34 See for example Hakhalot Zaturi, 11. 369-370: Sh nhạc יְהוָה the prince, showed me a ring which was engraved Shadicke YHVH the God of Israel whose name was called Shadicke YHVH the God of Israel our Father in heaven. YHVH was no distinction between "Shadicke YHVH the God of Israel", mentioned as the seal of Shadicke, the guard of the gate to the seventh palace, and "our Father in heaven Whose name is called Shadicke YHVH the God of Israel."} These Princes are also endowed with rings upon which are engraved the holy names which end in the phrase, “YHVH the God of Israel.”

Sefer Hakhalot, which is also known as \textit{Third Enoch}, mentions “eight great and honored, awesome Princes called YHVH in the name of their King.”\footnote{35 Synoposis, \textit{133}.} and in its various chapters detailed lists are presented specifying celestial forces to whose name is linked that of the divinity. Some of the names in these lists are mentioned in other traditions in Hakhalot literature as the names of God Himself, and sometimes they appear in the lists of the names of other holy powers such as Metatron or Oshia, Terotia or Zahatariel. To the extent that the di-vinity is appropriated in this tradition, while its unique characteristics are attributed to additional divine forces, in this literature many sub-\pl line beings are mentioned, who have been endowed with the unique characteristics of the divine exaltation: the ineffable name, the celestial
glory, the divine mystery, the celestial immanence, the creative power, and the infinite dimensions. A complex array of celestial figures is displayed before the viewer. These figures are seen, described, and heard, and occasionally even worshiped in prayer, summoned in magical invocations, and addressed with petitions. This development, which seems to replace the monothestic tradition with a polytheistic-visionary myth, reflects a religious transmutation in which earthly worship is related to the concept of a single and unique deity is insufficient. The abundance of angels and the appropriation of the uniqueness of the name of God indicate a substantial change in religious concepts. The new conception reflects an expression of the definition of the deity from a single God to a complex of divine forces, modifying the uniqueness of the single divine entity, and including an essential connection with various celestial beings, gradually exchanging the monothestic ritual surrounding the earthly Temple for a celestial ritual relating to an original version of mystical and visionary polytheism in the heavenly temples.

The celestial world revealed to the person who descends to the Markasha is a world in which the divinity is reflected in a variety of forms, illuminated in the spectrum of myth and depicted in an unfamiliar language. On his way "to see the king in his splendor," the descending to the Markasha encounters a dynamic structure of celestial powers which are designated by the Explicit Name and denoted by names which cannot be understood

Immediately Ragazet YHWH takes his hand and throws him to Rahamun YHWH, and Rahamun YHWH to Aserwadi YHWH to Teprous YHWH, and Shabaz YHWH sits in the bosom of Evta YHWH the God of Israel, in the bosom of Azbaqah YHWH, the God of Israel... Shabazet YHWH the God of Israel who is called by his name Shaktiyer YHWH the God of Israel, our Father in Heaven.

This description depic unfamiliar figures who create a new conceptual reality. The powers marked with the Explicit Name, who catch, throw, and raise up the descrent to the Markasha into the bosom of Shaktiyer YHWH the God of Israel, create a divine realm which contains a systematic mythical structure embodying the heavenly Markasha in its plurality of visions, a realm which demarcates the background of mythical experience. Azytivyel, Evta, Azbaqah, Tetwola,

77 See Elor, Creatur he-IL, pp.17-43.

and Shaktiyer are the same. While they are also described as guardians of other traditions. Some sort of the Markasha, and the visions of other divine enigmas. The great number of structures along with these indicate both the transform the authors of the Peshitta concept, relating to the

In the study of the religious world, the concept the religious perception of divinity. Along with it, one recently been coined:

Plenovum = "The doctrine of Angels and other heavenly beings."

Penum = "The World of beings." These definitions largely Those who know the nature of the visible realm, and which is in heavens, and which is in however, the picture's structure of the celestial is archetypal clarity of that picture, a picture drawn upon the image, which is the being of the Markasha. It also contains a decided focus and the codes of its impression, which the mystical experience, grants "other reality."

In the Haikalot, a certain trait of divine being.
and Stratiaker are the names of God himself according to one tradition, while they are also the names of distinct celestial powers which are described as guardians of the gates of the Hekekhalot, according to another tradition. Some are mentioned as names, seals, or names of parts of the Merkahab, and they appear in appellations and various combinations of other divine entities which are mentioned by the one who goes. The great number of unknown names and unfamiliar linguistic structures along with new forms of address to the divine entities, indicate both the transformation which took place within the world of the authors of the Hekekhalot and also the consolidation of a new world of concepts, relating to heavenly existence as to a plenum or pleroma.

In the study of the religions of late antiquity, in the Hellenistic cultural realm, the concept "pleroma" has been proposed to describe the religious perception of a multitude of powers in the world of the divinity. Along with it, one may also use the term "pleroma," which has recently been coined: "Pleroma - "The doctrine of God ... incorporates a 'fullness' (pleroma) of Angels and other heavenly beings." Plenum - "The World is expressed as plenitude of divine forces and beings."

These definitions largely suit the view which emerges from the testimony of those who descends to the Merkahab with respect to the nature of the vision revealed to them when they ascended to the heavens, and which was interpreted by the angels.

However, the picture arising from their remarks concerning the structure of the celestial world is not only an expression of the hierarchical plurality of existent forces but also a multi-valued, mythical picture drawing upon the ritual and liturgical tradition which relates to the beings of the Merkahab, to the Hekekhalot, and to the foundations. It also contains a detailed description of the arrangement of celestial forces and the orders of their worship in the heavenly compartment. This impression, which the mystic internalizes, creates a conceptual continuum between the world of those who descend to the Merkahab and the divine forces, establishing the complex configuration which permits mystical experience, grants it validity within the boundaries of the "other reality."

In the Hekekhalot tradition God and several of His powers share certain traits of divine being, but they are distinguished from one an-

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79 See Rabbi Eliezer, Genesis (n. 43) above, p. 52.
other by the hierarchical relation. God and His Princes share the holy names, the designation "Poten Bereish" (The Creator), the Exalted Name, the ritual form of address, "Our Father in Heaven, the God of Israel," descriptions such as Sh'ur Omah, cosmic size, creative powers, control over the universe and knowledge of the secrets of the world. They also share the celestial beauty and the "seals with which were created heaven and earth," a splendorous retina of angels and attendants, cultic images, the glory of the kingdom and other similar dimensions. However, they are distinguished by hierarchical distinction, some being superior and others subordinate. The multitude of celestial beings who are graced with divine attributes creates a picture of a world with mythical character, sharpening the distinct nature of the various celestial forces, and blurring the distinctions between God and His Princes.

Various divine forces are given the title of "Creator" in this literature, and they are further designated "YHWH the God of Israel." The description of Anael in Hechalot Rabbati exemplifies this tendency to glorify the celestial Princes and liken them to their Creator:

Anael YHVH is an honored, beloved and awesome Prince ... who was called Tzurap YHVH. And why was he called Anael? Because of the branch [Heb. "anul"] of the wreath of crows which was planted upon his head, which would vault and overshadow all the chambers of Hechal- Avotot Rakia like the Creator What is written of the Creator, that "His majesty veils the heavens" [Habakkuk 3:3], too, was Anael, the Princes who is called that after the name of his Master.46

In an adjacent passage God is described by means of motifs which are also associated with crows, branches, and majesty:

King of all Kings, God of God and Lord of Lords, He Who is exalted with the wreath of the crows, Who is accompanied by branches of the region of brilliance, For with the branch of His majesty He veils the heavens, His glory will appear from on high, From His splendorous beauty the abyss will be unsnapped, And from his nature the heavens will be unhinged.

His stature radiates majesty.

46 See Synopsis, para. 243-244, and cf. 216, "and why is His name called Anael, because the branch of His majesty and glory and crows and light and splendor covers all of the chambers of the Heavens Rakia, the highest firmament, like the Creator of the world, so it is written about the Supreme Creator, that the covering of the heavens is His glory ... so too Anael YHVH the prince covers with his majesty and glory all of the chambers of the chambers of upper Heavens," CT para. 242-243, 247-248, and compare J. Duas, Anael (and above).

And His crown blooms with His garment flows with blood, And all eyes will be delighted.

In the Hechalot tradition, are imparted to various co-temporaneous polytheistic myths, a delegation of powers conferring the various forces, but rather between monotheism, which is polytheism, which depicts a set of most typical characteristics of the tension inherent in the kings" and the Prince does not small YHVH, and the pious between God and angel, regarding Metatron. This figure, and with signs of identity. At the beginning of Yishmael about his ascents I have seventy names ... and the king of all kings ... The He Who met and blessed me with one thousand blessings. He raised me in the length and breadth of the seventy-two wings, thirty-six on every single wing is like the hundreds-and-sixty-five-thousand great light, and he did not also his brightness and majesty ... in upon me ... all of these to the Throne of Glory ... He and He set me down upon it ... to me of the mysteries of and all of the mysteries of the world veiled before me as they are in which the Creator of the Wor Majesty in which the array is made me a cloak of honor ...

46 Synopsis, 273. Cf. 239 for of gods, the Lord of lords, the three by clouds of light and light, and his splendor by clouds of lightness and lightest. His splendor He covers the image, the image, the image, the image, the image, the image, the image of His mouth the abysses are illuminated." Cf. Schuren, Go.
And His crown blazes with power.  
His garment flows with richness,  
And all eyes will be delighted with His speech.82

In the Hekhalot tradition, particular signs of the uniqueness of God are imparted to various celestial beings, which were depicted in the visionary polytheistic myth. Indeed, this is not a simple hierarchical delegation of powers creating harmony and a close relationship among the various forces, but rather it is a development which reflects tension between monotheism, which accentuates the unique unity of God, and polytheism, which depicts various celestial beings as possessing the most typical characteristics of the deity.

The tension inherent in the semblance between "the King of all kings" and the Prince described as "Begetter of Creation" or as "a small YHWH," and the problematic nature of the great similarity between God and an angel, are clearly reflected in the various traditions regarding Metatron. This figure is described mythically, on the one hand, and with signs of identity and analogy with the divinity, on the other. At the beginning of Sefer Hekhalot Metatron tells Rabbi Yishmael about his ascendency and about his intimacy with God:

I have seventy names ... and all of them are founded upon the name of the King of all kings ... The Holy One, blessed be He laid His hand upon me and blessed me with one-thousand-and-three-hundred-and-sixty-five-thousand blessings. He raised me up and magnified me to the dimension of the length and breadth of the world. He caused to issue forth from me seventy-two wings, thirty-six on one side and thirty-six on the other, and every single wing is like the entire world. He placed upon me three-hundred-and-sixty-five-thousand-eyes. And each and every eye is like the great light, and he did not leave out any kind of brilliance or splendor, brightness or beauty, in the luminaries of the world, which he did not place upon me ... all of these the Creator of the World did for me, a throne like the Throne of Glory ... He placed it at the entrance to the Seventh Palace and He set me down upon it ... and the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed to me all the mysteries of the Torah ... and all of the mysteries of the world and all of the orders of Creation were revealed before me as they are revealed before the Creator ... out of the love which the Creator of the World loved me ... He made me a raincoat of majesty in which the array of luminaries were set, and He garbed me and made me a cloak of honor ... and He clothed me and made a royal crown.

82 Synopsis, 253. Cf. p.262 for a different version: "the King of kings, the God of gods, the Lord of lords, the elevated one in the crown of monarchy and surrounded by clouds of brightness and surrounded with branches of brightness. With the wing of His splendor He covers the heaven and with his glory He appears on high. From the unmanned of His mouth the abysses are enflamed and from his beauty the fire consume."

for me, the brightness of which extends in the four quarters of the heaven of Areski into the seven heavens and in the four quarters of the world. He set and bound it upon my head and He named me the lesser YHVH in the presence of His entire court on high, as it is written, "My name is in vain." (Ex. 33:21)."

Against the background of this description, in which Metatron becomes a winged, mythological figure, splendid and majestic, on the one hand, and a figure with regal traits similar to God, on the other hand, the question arises as to what might be the criterion for distinguishing between God and some other divine power, which is similar to Him to such a great degree? Metatron — who sits on the throne of glory, who is provided with the names of God, endowed with numerous cosmic dimensions, with the knowledge of mysteries of creation and the wisdom of the universe, with a seat of angels, with the garment and crown of royalty — is invested as "the lesser YHVH" in the presence of the entire court on high and becomes a mystical entity splendid with an excited light.

Metatron completes the transition into an exalted celestial being when the descriptions of the figures of fire from Ezekiel's vision, which, in the original, are associated with the divine chariot, here are used to describe his blazing image:

"immediately my flesh became a flame. My sweat became burning fire. And my bones became coals of jasper. And the light of my eyelids became lightening and the wheels of my eye became a torch of fire, and the hair of my head a blaze and a flame and all of my organs were blinding fire, and the height of my body searing fire."

At the end of the description of Metatron's glorification and elevation to a high and mighty divine power, when his anthropomorphic form goes through a metamorphosis of light and fire, the background of Ezekiel ben Abijah's words is explained. Abijah, who is known as "Abner," almost inevitably saw this second divine power as the figure seated on the Throne of Glory at the entrance to the Seventh Hekhal:

"At first I used to sit on the great Thron at the entrance to the Seventh palace, and I judged all the citizens of the heights with the authority of the Holy One, blessed be He ... and the princes of the kingdom stood next to me at my right and left ... but I, the Metatron and custodian of the secrets, trembled before me, and his name was not recorded in my book."

The description of Metatron permeates the edition of the Sepher God from that which He is in his characteristics, and:

The description of the figure of exalted might which are found in Ezekiel, motifs which describe the seated upon the Metatron, ascribe God as a king sitting on the entire world and governing its characteristics, which, in the Encyclopedia of Jewish Thought, are not combined.

As a Hekhalot fragment from which it is called the "heaven" or a distinction between God and...
to me at my right and left ... But when 'Abner' came to behold the vision of the Merkabah and cast his eyes upon me, he was frightened and trembled before me, and his soul was dismayed in anxiety to leave him, because of my fearlessness and openness and dreadfulness. When he saw me, seated upon a Throne like a King, and the ministering angels standing beside me as servants and all of the Princes of the kingdoms adorning with crowns surrounding me, then he opened his mouth and said, 'There are indeed two powers in heaven'\(^\text{13}\)

The description of Metatron raises, as noted, the question which perplexed the editors of these traditions — what truly divides and separates God from that which is called by His name, who is parallel to Him in his characteristics, and who is endowed with many of His traits? The description of the figure of Metatron is partially based upon revelation motifs which are bound up with the visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, motifs which describe God as surrounded by Seraphim or seated upon the Merkabah, and also upon Biblical motifs which describe God as a king sitting on a high and elevated throne, ruling over the entire world and surrounded by a royal retinue of servants. These characteristics, which, in the tradition, are reserved for depicting God, are now applied to the figure of Metatron, who has become an elevated celestial power, depicted with regal features. This description well typifies the change in the status of the angels — from created angels, serving and adoring the Throne as part of the heavenly retinue subordinate to God, they become superior Princes in the Heikalot traditions, magnificent mighty beings, immesurable sovereign entities — forms of deities, who are endowed with traits peculiar to the divinity. Now these powers are called "Yotzer Bereshit," and "He who holds the seal of heaven and earth in his hand," and the title, "YHVH God of Israel" is added to their name. Moreover, various traditions also show that at times they too are served, adored praised, and worshiped.

\(^{13}\) Synopsis, 20, and see Tl Haggia 15a. On the various interpretations of the words of Abner, see Y. Luba, Hezeq ve-Elisha: Arishah shel Ha-Shnei ha-Pardes ve-Tosafot shel ha-Mekhilah le-Medria ha-Yadidah, publication series 9, Jerusalem 1984. See Numbers 23:20-21, and see U. ben Shlomo, Hez., p.119.

\(^{14}\) For the Hekhalot tradition regarding Metatron, who is called מ"עא, the "youth," see Synopsis, para 4-5 and complete par. 397-398. Regarding that application see 1 Dn, ha-Mekhilah le-Yehuda ha-Kadosh, pp.81-86. Cf. H. Perlman, Chicago, pp.420-427.
becomes even more acute. God speaks in the first person, warning the adept who descends to the Medeba against the error bound up in the similarity or identity between God and His angel. This angel is described by Him as an elevation mythological being assuming the name:

For I am a wise King, a pure King, an honest King, everyone who knows of himself that he is pure... and (as) he who has acquired Torah shall enter and sit before me, and thus three times every day the herald announces, look at the youth (as it were) who comes forth from behind the Throne of Glory to greet you, do not presume yourself before him, even though his crown is like the crown of His King and his shoes are like the shoes of his King, and the cloak upon him is like the cloak of his King, and the cloak of splendor is blowing around his hips. The sun is shining from the bell that is in front of him and the moon from the brains behind him. His eyes glow like torches, and his eyebrows blaze like beacons. His splendor is like the splendor of his King and his glory is like the glory of his creator. Zechariah is his name. He will grasp [I] your hand and set you in his bossom, but only have you come under his authority, but he set them on the place which is prepared before the Throne of His Glory. This is the sign of the Seventh Palace.

The reful and mythological description of the angel that dwells in the Seventh Palace and is compared to his King, also provides an indirect indication of the conception of the figure of the deity in these traditions. However, the main purpose of these passages is to emphasize the similarity between God and the various celestial powers, as well as the prohibition against confusing the two, despite their great similarity. The implicit argument here is that any degree of similarity to God and any amount of divine substance or divine emanation which may be attributed to a celestial power which is not God himself, are insufficient to permit worship of that force, to allow recognition of it as a separate divinity, or to cause inspiration before it. These prohibitions are particularly significant where new divine entities are created in a syncretistic cultural realm and a polytheistic milieu with a mythological heroism that encouraged a variety of cults devoted to various and sundry divine forms.

Perhaps the prohibition against bowing down before the "youth" whose crown is like the crown of his King, which is formulated in language that recalls the verse, "provoke him not ... for your name is in

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88 Beno, the Greek Magical Papyrus, etc. xli-lilii.
89 See the survey by Almagi, the various testimonia of the 65, 75, Compare the magical forms and some of whose conditions see Tosefta (ed. H. S. Zuckerman) of Messiah the prince.
90 Tosefta (ed. H. S. Zuckerman) of Messiah the prince.
91 See the survey by Almagi, p. 139 and explicit citation, "his name utterly destroyed" (Ex. 22:19).
Rachel Elia

text in the first person, warning the adept against the error bound up in the similarity and His angel. This angel is described as being victorious over the angels who, even though His face and His eyes not like the shadow of a

is the name of Michael, the great Prince... this is the feast of offerings to the Lord. Therefore, together with the testimony of Sefir ha-Ra'am, which is close in spirit and in some of its parts to Hekhalot literature, clearly attest to the Suffered practice of angel worship. Introductory remarks in Sefir ha-Ra'am include, "and to say what are the names of all the guardi- ans and every servant and every kingdom, and what proceeds with respect to each thing, and what are the names of their servants, and what obligation shall be made for them." It goes on to mention obligations of wine, the burning of myrrh and frankincense and the sacrifice of a white cock, which are intended for the angels and for the celestial powers. 19

The similarity between the wording of the instructions in the Hekhalot literature and the practical instructions presented in Sefir ha-Ra'am regarding obligations to the angels as part of the magic spell and the connection of these with the detailed directions given in the Greek magical papyri regarding the worship of angels, indicates the presence of angel worship among certain Jewish circles, who were influenced by Hellenistic culture in Late antiquity. The Hekhalot traditions which discuss the meaning of the similarity between God and His minister and the expert bound up with it in the implicit context of 10 angelic rituals as well as the prohibition against procuring assistance before Metatron and the sin of Eliasha which is alike related to Metatron, are testimony to a polemic against circles

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him" (Ex. 22:21), of which one interpretation is "do not exchange... me with him," addressed to the deacon to the Merkabah, is to be explained indirectly against the background of evidence of the worship of angels which was common among various Jewish circles during the first centuries of the era. 20 Testimony in the writings of the Church Fathers attributes the worship of angels to Jews, and teachings in the Toaffa are concerned with the prohibition of prayer and sacrificial offerings for the angels. "He who sacrifices in the name of Michael the angel..." this is the feast of offerings to the Lord. Thus, together with the testimony of Sefir ha-Ra'am, which is close in spirit and in some of its parts to Hekhalot literature, clearly attest to the Suffered practice of angel worship. Introductory remarks in Sefir ha-Ra'am include, "and to say what are the names of all the guardi- ans and every servant and every kingdom, and what proceeds with respect to each thing, and what are the names of their servants, and what obligation shall be made for them." It goes on to mention obligations of wine, the burning of myrrh and frankincense and the sacrifice of a white cock, which are intended for the angels and for the celestial powers. 19

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20 See the survey by Marrow in Sefir ha-Ra'am regarding the various testimonies about the worship of the angels, pp. 22-23, and see pp.32-33, 63, 75. Compare the statement by Masch, Metzaron (iv. 39 above), p.93-398, with some of whose conclusions one might disagree.

21 Tosefo ed. M. S. Zuckermann, Jerusalem, 1963, Index 2, 21, p. 105, "the name of Michael the prince." On alternation between Metatron and Michael see Urbach, Hariz, p. 120.

22 Sefir ha-Ra'am, p. 15 and see also p. 18, 11, 29-30, p. 37, 11, 159-165. Cf. the explicit prohibition, "he that sacrifice in any one to the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed" (Ex. 22:19),
which would bow down to Metatron and worship him whether in mystical vision or in a magical ritual. It is not surprising that this extremely powerful angelological myth, which was conceived as living reality by the circles of the descenders to the Merkabah, was, in certain cases, accompanied by ritual trappings which gave cultic expression to the mystic experience, though the re-
derators of the Merkabah traditions placed matters in a complex context which glorifies the place of the angels, on the one hand, and which has reservations about worship and devotion to them, on the other hand.

Opposition to angels in rabbinic literature, the diminution of their figurers, and the suppression of works dealing with them, were associ-
rated with a consciousness of the pagan origin of angelology, of its connection with polytheistic myth, and of the place which it occupied in popular circles. However, in truth, it does not seem that the sys-
tematic struggle against angelology derived solely from the position which the angels came to occupy in popular faith, but rather that it was related to the central place which angels possessed in mystical literature. The glorification of the angels in the Hebraic traditions, which was based on their indirect affiliation with the ritual traditions and upon their mythic quality, brought about the creation of new divine beings which deviated substantially from the confinements of Biblical tradi-
tion. This change was also bound up with the development of magical and theurgical tendencies, which recognized the worship of angels and maintained a complex liturgical relation with them. All of these de-
velopments brought about a substantial change in the place of angels in religious thought; caused both their glorification within the esoteric

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95 Later testimony to phenomena like these can be found in the words of Ibn Hazm (d.1064), Kitab al-Fal al-Midal wa-tahdithi al-Midal (Cairo, 1902), I, pp. 153-154: "All of the Jews, that is to say, the rabbinical among them, are of one mind as to anger against God, mockery of Him, and contempt for Him, and they say on the eve of their holiday 'Al-habor' [Hamm Kippur], which is on the tenth of Tishri ... that al-Murshar is to blame, and that is the meaning of this expression of theirs, 'Harshan hashrat, that God should rise up over their assessment ... and He punishes His hand and His face. Al-Murshar woe be it to me, that I have destroyed my house ... and you should know that they dedicate ten days on the month of October to worship a different Lord other than God, and in this they come to true sharing, and you should know that 'Harshan hashrat, is to whom those aforementioned days are dedicated and they worship him during them and not God, praised be He - he is Sindiffon with them, the angel who serves the course upon the head of God who is worshipped by them.'" I am grateful to Professor Haresh Laverza-Yaffe for making me aware of the existence of this text and in-workish is for me.


97 See M. Bar-Hama, Stem Tfillah ve-Halakhot (see n. 47, above and n.103 below).
mystical tradition and the intensification of their position in popular worship and magical practice, which simultaneously deepening opposition to them.

III. The Afflatus with Heavenly Temple Worship. At the end of the Second Temple Period there are signs among various circles of a tendency to break out of the earthly frameworks of worship, as well as a related trend to adopt a spiritual and cosmic conception of the Temple and its cult. Various aspects of this tendency are represented in Seferit reference to the celestial Temple, to Jerusalem on High, and in the transfer of the principal adoration of God to the world of angels. Specific reference to angels, priesthood, to ceremonies in the celestial Temple, and to spiritual sacrifices are found in the apocryphal literature, in rabbinic teachings, and in the writings of the Judean Desert sect.68

In the Sefer Deyan Sefera this tendency was given rational expression. In some of the writings by members of the sect we find reemphasization of worship in the Temple in Jerusalem, and two positions arise in response to this. The first develops the concept of the congregation as a Temple ("The Temple of Man"), and the second proposes a complex conception of a priesthood without an earthly Temple, with worship directed towards the celestial Temple and performed in cooperation with the angels who officiate in the upper Heikal.69 The latter aspect is expressed in the "Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifices," which reflects a close affinity between the earthly priesthood within the members of the sect, and the celestial priesthood, which serves in the upper Temple. Depictions of this priesthood are inspired by descriptions of


the Sanctuary and the Temple, on the one hand, and by the description of Ezekiel's Merkaba, on the other. These songs provide a detailed description of the order of the celestial worship by angels called "Kohanim Korah" (priests of the inner sanctuary). In parallel with the order of the duty roster of the Priests in the Temple, and the worship of the Levites and the order of sacrifices. The songs of the Sabbath sacrifice reflect the cultic cooperation of members of the "Yahad" (the name of the sect, literally "togetherness") with the angels in the ritual of the celestial Temple. They place hymns and acclamations in the center of the joint holy worship, and they describe the angelic strings as a substitute for the sacrificial service.10

The relocation of the Temple still from the earth to heaven in post-Biblical literature, the placement of hymns in the context of the sacred service, and the emphasis on the worship of the angelic priesthood in Qumran literature affected the worldview of the authors of the Hekhalot.11 However, although the spiritualization of the Temple in the literature of the apocryphal and Qumran took place while the Temple still existed,12 the reference to the celestial shrines in the Hekhalot literature took place only after its destruction. The Hekhalot literature is not content with the parallel between the worship of the priests and Levites in the earthly Temple and that of the angels in the celestial Temple, which, as noted, is inspired by Ezekiel's vision of the Merkaba and the Temple service, but it also adds an additional parallel between the worship of the angels and that of the messengers to the Merkaba. It formulates the mystical ritual of the liturgy, under the inspiration of the order of the service and the celestlal ceremony of the covenant. That is to say, the Hekhalot literature preserves a three-fold relationship between the ritual of the earthly worship of those who are of the angels in the place of the descendants to the ones described in the Merkaba and the earthly Temple. In the first parallel, the location of the temple is the same but its service is transformed with the angels and their ritual service.

A thousand thousand they crown and consamm the Universe as men see of the Merkaba... And his Creator.13

The ceremonies of the Assembly of the heavenly guests of the celestial ritual, worship in the earthly.14

When the Priests of the Temple of Glory ascend to the assembly of the heavenly guests of the celestial ritual, worship in the earthly... When the Priests of the Temple of Glory ascend to the assembly of the heavenly guests of the celestial ritual, worship in the earthly.15

11 On the central position of the angels as priests in the celestial Temple see p. 30 above.
13 The image of heaven as the Temple and the description of the angels in Psalms show only the spiritualization of earthly worship but also the possibility that the earthly Temple and its priestly duties become a celestial prerogative, as was shown by M. Elkan, See M. Elkan, The Myth of the Eternal Return (Princeton 1976), pp. 5-9, and D. Y. Megg., Psalms by Genesis (Jerusalem 1991), p. 34.
14 See Synopsis, 19, 11 a Priests and then serve on the Temple of the Heavenly God.
15 See Synopsis, 19, a Priests and then serve on the Temple of the Heavenly God.
the rite of the earthly Temple, that of the heavenly Temple, and the worship of those who ascend to the Merkabah. It adapts the worship of the angels in the celestial Temple at the prototype of the worship of the descendants to the Merkabah, while the worship of the angels as described in the Merkabah tradition is portrayed as the prototype of the earthly Temple service or of poetical traditions concerning it. The first parallel, between the earthly Temple service and the worship of the angels in the celestial Merkabah, commencing a visitation image of the service in the earthly Temple, which was destroyed, is described in several aspects. The priestly worship in the earthly Temple, the holy service, and the High Priest; entry into the Holy of Holies all correspond to the songs and adoration of the angels in the celestial sanctuary, and their ritual attendance before the Throne of Glory:

A thousand thousand stand and serve before the Throne of Glory and they crown and commemorate Your name ... Because the Creator of the Universe took me in service to attend the Throne of Glory and the wheels of the Merkabah ... and He serves after the Merkabah and ties crowns to his Creator. 50

The ceremonies of raising up the crown, the coronation of God, or the tying of wreaths of crowns by the angels are described as the focus of the celestial rite, in place of sacrifice offering us the center of worship in the earthly Temple.

When the priests of Consecration enter in and arrange to raise the Throne of Glory and to prepare the seat of the "Knight of Beacos," he binds a thousand thousand crowns to the Omnim of Splendor upon each one's head. A thousand thousand times he kneels and falls down and prays himself before each of them. Two thousand crowns he binds to the Cherubim of glory. ... Three thousand crowns he binds to the Holy Harpies, upon each one's head, and three thousand times he kneels and falls down and postures himself before each of them ... "I pray you, bearers of the Throne of Glory ... a treat in jubilation and joy and song and melody before the Throne of the Glory of Tzitzitzz ... the Lord of Israel. 51


51 See Synopsis, p. 17 and of. §§ 114, 127, "and some of them are High Priests and they served on the altar." Regarding angels portrayed as Priests in the Temple in Sefarim Shenot Olam (Jastrow), see Newman, Shenot Olam (1945), p. 87. The angels are called "Kochet Shekhirim" (kneels of the inner sanctuary) and they bring songs of the angels as a sacred joy at the Levites used to sing songs during the Temple service. They are also called "kneel servants in the Sanctuary of His Presence," terrains of the coronation of the King in the Holy of Holies," etc. On the worship of the Priests in relation to that of the angels, see also Tj Brahamtah 11, p. 46, and Sefi, Redeemer, 12, p. 341 (ed. Frankfurt).
Parallely to the tradition of the priests’ recitation of the holy names and their knowledge of the secret of the Explicit Names, the tradition of reciting the names by the angels and of the knowledge of the Explicit Names, which is granted only to them.

The Omenim and the Holy Hayyot and the Omenim of splendor and the Seraphim of the flame and the wheels of the Merkabah with a great and huge voice and in a voice more the rememberance of the Name Terumim, YHWH, one-hundredth- and-twelve names.

The tradition of pronouncing the Explicit Name by the High Priest when he entered the Holy of Holies is parallel to the pronunciation of the Explicit Names by Metatron, at the peak of the celestial ceremony. And that youth whose name is Metatron brings silent fire and puts it in the ears of the Hayyot so that they shall not hear the speaking voice of the Holy One Blessed be He and the Explicit Name that the lad whose name is Metatron pronounces at that time with seven voices in the name of the Living and Pure and Venerated and Awesome.

Corresponding to the song of the Levites, which was part of the Temple cult meant to glorify and praise the Lord, the song of the angels’ hymns before the Terum of Golory is described as part of the celestial ceremony, the intent of the world.


See also the Liturgical Psalms, pp. 251–260.

On the song of the angels in the Apocrypha, see 103, 137, 163, 256. See also the Apocrypha, p. 103.

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Celestial ceremonies; the intent of which is to praise, glorify, and purify the deity. Corresponding to the Levites who play various musical instruments and the priests who hold censers, the angels are described in the Kabbalistic literature as holding horns, censers, flutes, lutes, drums, and cymbals. The circling of purification and ritual immersion which the priests were commanded to carry out during the Temple worship service are parallel to the immolation of the angels and their purification in the river of fire before their sanctified service. The conception of the priests as possessing a secret, esoteric knowledge, and as guardians of the Torah, is parallel to the view of the angels as possessing secrets and esoterica, as a source of hidden celestial knowledge and as the guardians of the Torah, on high. The holy awe and danger upon the entry into the Holy of Holies, as well as the mysterious apprehension, correspond to the feeling of tremendous fear and profound dread before the mystery bound up with mystical elevation, and with both the fourteen strings associated with entry into the joyous Hekhalot and the seven punishments connected with them. The prayers and ceremonies performed jointly by the priests and those who...
have come to the Temple are parallel to the liturgical union with the angels during the recitation of the “Holy, holy, holy ... on earth.”

Generally speaking, the ritual concept, cultic ceremonies, liturgical expressions, maniacal demeanors, and maimhetic-mystical experiences which were brought up with the Temple service were transferred to the celestial Hezekiah. The angels who are described in the Hezekiah literature as performing the ritual, as reciting the prayer, and as experiencing the saluted majesty of the celestial Temple, are portrayed with the inspiration of the worship of the priests and Levites in the earthly Temple. Almost certainly the religious significance, the sanctity, exaltation, and glory which were attached to the earthly Temple and its priesthood, which were transferred to the Temple on high as early as the visions of Ezekiel and the Qumran sect, were greatly intensified after the destruction of the Second Temple which survived in the realm of celestial vision alone.

The second prototypical parallel, which attributes earthly signification to the visionary perception of the ritual, is made between the worship of the angels in the celestial ritual and the worship of those who descend to the Merkabah in a mystical ritual. Those who descend to the Merkabah, which seeks to ascend to celestial realms and to gain upon the worship taking place before the Throne of Glory, imitate the worship of the angels, identify with them, and aspire to emulate them. The descendents to the Merkabah join the angelic hymns, which they learn during their ascent to the heavens, and which they tend to the messengers of their circle, while empowering their angelic source. All of the prayers of the authors of the Hezekiah, which are recited during mystical ecstasy, are acquired, according to their testimony, from the prayers of the angels before the Throne of Glory.

Knowledge of the names of the components of the Merkabah and of the celestial beings, which occupy a central place in the worship of

111 See Synagog., para. 165, 178–179; and cf. the liturgical partnership in Qumran, Megilla ha-Hadadim ed. Y. Leicht, Jacobyana 1955, 6, 11, 22–24, p. 44. For an analysis of the unity of liturgy with Merkabah mysticism and a view of its in connection with the Temple ritual, see M. D. Szwarc, “Patterns of Mystical Prayer in Ancient Judaism” (c. 47, above).

112 According to the story, when Rabbi Akiba was tried before Cestius, he prayed in order to descend to the Merkabah and was tried because he believed in the real existence of the Merkabah, which was not believed in by the Sadducees. See Synagog., para. 190, “He has no need of descending to the Merkabah, because he should be the King of Glory and come to utter the song which the Throne of Glory utteres, a song for every single day” (E220). The conversation between the singing of the angels and that of the descendents to the Merkabah, see Hamburger (c. 44 above), pp. 92–94.

The authors of the Hekhalot, derive from an angelic source. The ceremony of articulating the Exalted Name which takes place in heaven before the Throne of Glory and the ceremonies of receiving the names in a specific order by the angels are the model for the recitation of these names in the ceremonies of those who descended to the Merkabah during their elevation on high. Adoration and praise form the relationship between the higher creatures and their Creator, and the oration which extols God is uttered by the angels. The recitation of praise by the angels, who emphasize the subordination, of all the upper worlds to God and His coronation in song and prayer, is the central object of imitators in the worship of those who descend to the Merkabah, and it is also the principal means of participating with the angels in their worship. Purificatory ceremonies and the imitations of the angels in the river of fire, prior to their service before the Throne of Glory, are parallel to the ceremonies of purification and ritual immersion of the descenders to the Merkabah before their ascent to heaven.

The authors of the Hekhalot describe the entirety of the mystical experience bound up with descent to the Merkabah to an angelic source. In a Gnostic fragment from the Hekhalot literature the words of an angel are quoted, who says to the descender to the Merkabah: Now, found, return to the study of the descents to the Merkabah which I have been introducing you, how one descends and how one ascends: the features of the first passage, and how to secure angels into one's service and how one attracts them. And I stopped you; and you wrote down the seal of the descent to the Merkabah, and you confided it to those who live in the world and for your own benefit and for the benefit of whoever wishes to descend and to gaze at the King and His splendour. If one takes this path, one will descend and see, and no harm will come to him, but on the scroll I set forth for you, and I will show to you, with instructions you descended to the Merkabah, and others centered in the worship of the King who is the root of the liturgical piety in the Qumran, Qumran 5, 5, 11-27, p. 64. For an analy-

sis mysticism and a view of it in connection with the theme of Mystical Prayer in Haggadot, and on other sources, see Rabbi Avivaahu when he de-

scribed his ascent from before the Throne of Glory to the place of Glory (Seymon, 1950). "You have the

beauty he speaks before the Throne of Glory in a Throne of Glory, a song for every day between the days of the angels and that of the Sabbath (p. 64 above), pp 93-94, 97-98.
and saw you attentively it was no harm came to you. The reason is that I have made for you the path of the Merkabah as the light and the source of

According to the view of the masters of the Hekhalot, the knowledge which is bound up with descent to the Merkabah is of angelic origin, and this is what constitutes mystical ascent, just as the worship of the angels in the celestial Temple is the matrix of their ritual worship. The authors of the Hekhalot invoke the angels in order "to reveal the secrets of on high and below," and they strive to discover their mysteries. They invoke the angels' songs, pray their prayers, and worship as their counterparts, recite their names and impress them upon their bodies, and describe their worship in the celestial ceremony. They repeat the names of God, which the angels mention, and they sing his praises inspired by the angelic rituals. They purify themselves like the angels before they ascend to the Throne of Glory, and they learn the mysteries of Sh'irat Qemash from them. It seems that there is no aspect of the world of the Merkabah mystics which is not vested to the world of the angels, and there is no change in the tradition which is not bound up with an angelic source. That is to say, the world of the angels comprises a celestial prototype for mystical worship, and a primary source of authority for the spiritual transformation which is reflected in this literature. The mystical ritual of the adepts ascending to the Hekhalot is inspired by angelic rite and the worship of the descendents to the Merkabah is modeled upon the worship of the angels. As we have noted, angelic worship is found in direct relation with the Temple ritual and the worship of the Priests, although the elements which the Merkabah mystics imitate are directly related to the worship of the angels and not to the terrestrial Temple service. The masters of the Hekhalot point expressly to the worship of the angels as the source of inspiration and they emphasize the angelic origin of the mystical ritual.\(^{109}\)


\(^{108}\) Noyes, pp. 253.

\(^{107}\) A different view, which stresses the worship of the descendents to the Merkabah as a direct connection with the Temple ritual was proposed by I. Cherubim and I. Cherubim, I. Cherubim, Mekubash and the Angelic Adoration, pp. 90f. I. Cherubim, "The Pilgrimage to the Merkabah: an Interpretation of Early Jewish Mysticism," Early Jewish Mysticism, J. Schlemper, Introduction by S. Miller, VI, I–III (1983) pp. 1–17 (English section). Grosswein connects the merkabah traditions with the profound characteristics of the world of the Merkabah.
There can be no doubt of the affinity between the background of the Merkabah mystics and aspects bound up with the Temple ritual, although examination of the Hekhalot literature shows that this connection is not direct but rather indirect. The angels are depicted under the inspiration of the worship of the Hysects and the Temple ritual, while the descendants to the Merkabah are described in relation to the angels and to the celestial cult. The masters of the Hekhalot do not place themselves in a direct relationship with worship in the earthly Temple, which remained after the destruction only within the realm of the tradition, vision, or orphic memory, but rather they position themselves solely in relation to the worship of the angels in the celestial Hekhalot. As noted, mystical elevation thus draws its inspiration from the conception of the angels and the celestial rite, though the meaning of the angels' worship derives from a complex affinity with the Temple cult and to the visionary transformation which took place within it at the end of the Second Temple period.

Summary

The conception of the angels in Hekhalot literature reflects a combination of mystical and vernacular elements concerned with the vision of the Merkabah, with mythical and magical elements associated with the abundance of divine beings and celestial figures, and with ritual and visionary elements which were related to the transformation of the ritual traditions of the earthly Temple into angelic worship in the celestial sanctuary. All of these are reflected from the point of view of the descendants to the Merkabah, who described in direct fashion the details of the celestial vision and their association with the mythic, mystical, magical, and ritual aspects of the world of the angels.

Angiography in the Hekhalot literature, which comes upon the vision of Ezekiel's chariot and from the renewed revelation at the time of the Exile in its relation to the Temple ritual and the parallel characteristics of the world of the messiah of the Hekhalot, and the Temple conveys a pilgrimage to the Temple with the mystic's ascent to the Merkabah, as is widely known.

The following statement: “The ritual parallels from the Temple appear and an active role in creating Merkabah mysticism, or at least in certain techniques which were widespread in it” (ibid., p. 87).
mystical aspect, determines the bounds of minuscule being and the components of celestial reality, and it binds the ritual source of the vision of the coterie with the visionary level of the celestial ritual, which is associated with the worship in the earthly Temple. The angels are the subject of the mystical vision, the source of celestial knowledge, and the medium through which the divine mystery is revealed to the ascenders in the Merkabah. The world of the angels comprises the cosmological framework and the mythological foundation of the mystical conception bound up with ascent to the Hekhalot.

Along with the suminmum perspective and the celestial point of view of the world of the angels, a magical-theurgical view is also, represented in Hekhalot literature. This view preconditions mystical ascent with proficiency in magic and enfolds man with the ability to invoke various divine forces and to subordinate forces to his will by means of spells and theurgy. Ceremonies, which create a significant connection between heaven and earth.

Alongside the mystic and magical element the doctrine of angels also reflect a highly interesting mythological aspect. The abundance of divine powers which constitute the world of the Merkabah and the extensive creativity of new divine figures in the celestial worlds, who share with the deity the characteristics of the divine experience, all testify to the re-mythologizing of the perception of God. This change is reflected in the new linguistic creativity which is expressed in the Hekhalot traditions and in the wealth of concepts, the source of which is unknown, used by the masters of the Hekhalot in order to describe the celestial world. The problematic character of the theology implied by this transformation is reflected in the traditions which discuss the meaning of the similarity between God and His angels and in the prohibition against substituting one for the other, despite their close resemblance. The possibility of there being a close connection between the aforementioned anthropologizing and other concepts is the foundation of the worship of the angels in Jewish circles at the end of the Hellenistic period has also been suggested, for indeed the very powerful and creative myth, which was grasped as living reality among the ascenders to the Merkabah, could have brought about the development of a ritual framework related to worship of angels, just as it influenced the crystallization of a rich body of liturgy dispersed throughout the Hekhalot literature. The fourth aspect, which is expressed in the various mythological traditions, is the ritual aspect, which relates to the angels as practicing worship in the celestial Temple. The worship of the angels in the heavenly Hekhalot is the basic ritual pattern of the ascenders to
The Merkabah, and the angelic ritual before the Throne of Glory is the prototype to which they refer in their worship. Our study has shown that the celestial rite was formed with the inspiration of the Temple ritual, and the worship of the angels, which relates to the service of the Priests in the Temple, becomes the source of inspiration and the model for imitation of the worship of the descendants to the Merkabah.

The various angelological traditions which extend through Hebraic literature reflect the yearning for a divine dimension which can be attained descriptively, which can be seen and heard, and with which conversation can be held. They also indicate longings for a ritual bond which preserves ceremonial continuity and a ritual tradition as the realm of visionary reality — in a historical reality where the earthly symbols of the connection with the divine realm were suspended and obliterated after the destruction of the Temple, and the rituals which expressed the bond between the mundane and the divine had ceased to exist. It would seem that the mythical narrative, which describes the divine realm with-realized visions and luminous beauty, with figures of awesome might, with visionary images and ritual splendor, also reflects the desire to maintain an echo of the glory and splendor which had been bound up with the rite in the earthly Temple. For the mystical vision, which takes on a mythical guise in the figure of the angels, expresses the metamorphosis of traditions regarding the splendor of the earthly Temple; in a literature which reflects alienation from tangible reality, igniting concrete history, real experience, and expresses a definite preference for the world of vision.

The many facets of the conception of the angels in Hebraic literature, the theological transformation which it entailed from the mythical and mythological point of view, the new linguistic creativity which accompanied it, with its poetical force, the imaginative power and conceptual strangeness, all testify to its centrality in shaping a religious transformation in the consciousness of the descendents to the Merkabah, a transformation which was part of the effort to preserve an ideosyncratic religious identity despite antagonistic historical circumstances.