

Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam: An Unknown Esoteric Midrash on Genesis 5:1 from the Geonic Period

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1. Introduction

The reconstruction of lost works of Jewish literature from the fragments of the Cairo Genizah is, even after more than a century of research, a process full of surprises and unexpected discoveries. One of these is the gradual restitution of a hitherto unknown esoteric midrash on Genesis 5:1. The beginnings of this discovery go back to the early 1970s, when Ithamar Gruenwald published an article in which he edited two leaves of a fragmentary text from the Cairo Genizah (Cambridge University Library, T-S K 21.88), written on paper and in an Oriental script of the eleventh century. Gruenwald considered the text preserved on this fragment to be a piece of “further Jewish physiognomic and chiromantic fragments”,¹ and in continuation of Gershom Scholem’s much earlier articles on Jewish physiognomy and chiromancy,² he believed it to originate in all likelihood in the post-Talmudic period, even though he was convinced that at least some of the material its contains goes back to the milieu of the Qumran sect.

- 1 Ithamar Gruenwald, “Further Jewish Physiognomic and Chiromantic Fragments” (Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 40 (1971), pp. 301–319.
- 2 Cf. Gershom Scholem, “*Hakkarat Panim we-Sidre Sirtuṭim*” (Hebrew), in idem, *Devils, Demons and Souls: Essays on Demonology by Gershom Scholem*, ed. E. Liebes, Jerusalem 2004, pp. 246–301 [first published in *Sefer Asaf*, Jerusalem 1943, pp. 459–495]. Scholem published a partly revised German version under the title “Ein Fragment zu Physiognomik und Chiromantik aus der Tradition der Spätantiken Jüdischen Esoterik”, in *Liber Amicorum. Studies in Honour of Professor Dr. C.J. Bleeker*, Leiden 1969, pp. 175–193 [= *Numen*, Supplements XVII].

The second step in the discovery of our esoteric midrash occurred more than a decade later, when Peter Schäfer published a fragment of one page (CUL T-S L 21.95L), which he labeled “a new fragment on metoposcopy and chiromancy”.³ The editor’s attention was drawn to this fragment because of its close parallels with Hekhalot literature. As Schäfer pointed out, it combines four paragraphs from the book of 3 Enoch (§§1, 2, 61 and 62) with chiromantic and metoposcopic predictions. The fragment was consequently also discussed in the context of the recent study and German translation of 3 Enoch.⁴

As subsequent research on these fragments has revealed, the manuscript pages published independently by Gruenwald and Schäfer in fact form a coherent text, and they originally stem from one and the same manuscript.⁵ However, the key to a better understanding of these fragments is to be found in nine pages of a hitherto unpublished manuscript, which were preserved among the treasures of the Cairo Genizah and made their way to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York (fol. 0r-v: ENA 962.20; fol. 1r–8v: ENA 508).⁶ The manuscript is a palimpsest. The lower script obviously represents Greek mathematical calculations written within grids on both sides of the pages,

3 P. Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, Tübingen 1984, pp. 135–139; idem, “Ein neues Fragment zur Metoposkopie und Chiromantik” in *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge* 13 (1985), pp. 61–82, re printed in idem, *Hekhalot-Studien*, Tübingen 1988, pp. 84–95.

4 A discussion and German translation of parts of the fragment can be found in P. Schäfer and K. Herrmann (eds.), *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur*, vol. 1, Tübingen 1995, pp. XIX, XXII–XXII, XLIV–XLIX, 4–6 and 132–138.

5 The text will be re-published in P. Schäfer, Sh. Shaked and R. Leicht, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza*, vol. 4, Tübingen [in press]; cf. also R. Leicht, *Astrologumena Judaica. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der astrologischen Literatur der Juden*, Tübingen 2006, pp. 102–103.

6 For the sake of clarity, references to the fragments published by Gruenwald and Schäfer are given with a Roman numeral I, whereas the new fragments from the JTS Library are called MS II. We have also divided the text into paragraphs. §§1–5 are preserved in MS I (Cambridge University Library, T-S K 21.95L and T-S K 21.88), whereas §§30–45 (with the exception of §§42–43) can be found in MS II (New York, JTS, ENA 962.20 and ENA 508). §§6–29, §§42–43 and §§46–end are lost.

which are easily visible to the naked eye. They allow a reconstruction of the original format of the parchment pages: The distribution on the pages indicates that four pages of the present manuscript once formed a single page in the original manuscript.⁷ Consequently, the parchment pages originally measured approximately 20.5 x 24 centimeters before they were cut into four pieces each. The size of a single page of the present manuscript ranges between 10–10.5 cm. x 12–12.5 cm.

The Hebrew text of the newly discovered manuscript is written in a clearly legible oriental hand of the tenth or eleventh century, with 16–18 lines per page. Small holes on the top, middle and bottom of the inner side of each page show that for its second use the manuscript was probably not written on bifolia but consisted of single pages, which were sewn together with a simple thread and thus formed a little booklet.

From a paleographical point of view the fragments published by Gruenwald and Schäfer and the new manuscript from New York were both produced in the Orient roughly at the turn of the millennium, but the place and exact date of composition of the text they contain are unknown. Internal evidence indicates, however, that it was probably written in the late ninth or early tenth century, since at MS II, fol. 8r, lines 1–3 the author provides us with a date for the arrival of the Messiah, which refers to the year 938 CE — the absolute *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the text.

This dating and a geographical location in Geonic Babylonia are also supported by linguistic arguments. First of all, there is a strong Aramaic influence discernible on the Hebrew used in the text of both fragments, which finds its expression in the wide-spread employment of geminated verbal stems,⁸

7 One of the original pages can be reconstructed from fol. 1r-v, 2r-v, 4r-v, the other from fol. 5r-v 3r-v, 6r-v, 7r-v and 8r-v. No other fragments of the page to which fol. 0r-v once belonged have been discovered to date.

8 Cf., e.g., מפרחות in MS I fol. 1r l. 18; מסותרים in MS I fol.3v l. 13; מנוקב in MS II fol. 3r l. 6; משולם ibid. fol. 3v l. 9; מכובל ibid. fol. 4r l. 17. Some of these forms are attested in the Babylonian Talmud; cf., e.g., BT Keritot 5b and Shabbat 59a.

the use of *lamed* to indicate the accusative,⁹ and the dissimilated form of *min* even before non-gutturals.¹⁰ The specifically Eastern traits become evident on the lexicographical level, where we can find borrowings from Eastern Aramaic or Syriac such as *מלושיהן* (“signs of the zodiac”)¹¹ and *בר תליא* (“lunar node”);¹² in Hebrew forms like *nigdo*¹³ or *ribboni* in contrast to *rabbun*, which are considered Babylonian;¹⁴ and in the weakening of the guttural ‘*ayin* especially in the numerals.¹⁵ This shows that the present text was written in a linguistic milieu in which Arabic had long become the dominant language but Aramaic still exercised considerable influence, as was the case in Iraq — a fact which finds expression in the famous statement of Hai Gaon that “in all the villages the Aramaic and Chaldean language is spoken among Jews and non-Jews”.¹⁶

In the fragments discovered so far the text is untitled, since the heading *סימן טוב* (“a good sign”) written at the top of fol. 1r of MS 1 is probably a scribal convention rather than a title. In view of its content, however, the present midrash can conveniently be called *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam*. It also seems quite possible that the words *בסיפר וגו; זה ספר תולדות אדם* (“in the book *Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam*” etc.) found on fol. 1v l. 3 of MS I were also conceived of as a kind of title for the whole work, although it remains unknown how medieval authors would have referred to this text. It is worth noticing, however, that a reference to a *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam* can be

9 Cf. MS II, fol. 3r l.10: וראינתי ללפידיים; *ibid.* l. 12: ומשבחין למלך.

10 Cf., e.g., *א* מן הוא in MS I, fol. 2v ll.8,19; 3r ll. 23,25; 3v ll. 9,23; מן ספינקא in MS I fol. 3v l. 26; מן סולם in MS I fol. 2v l. 24.

11 MS I fol. 1b l. 14.

12 *Ibid.* fol. 2v l. 10.

13 *Ibid.* fol. 2r l. 16.

14 Cf. Y. Kutscher, “Leshon HZ”L” (Hebrew), in *Henoah Yalon Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (eds. Sh. Abramson et al.), Jerusalem 1963, pp. 246–280, on pp. 268–271.

15 Cf. ותשים in MS II fol. 7r l. 15; בן שבין in MS I fol. 2r l. 22; שבת יום in MS I fol.2v l. 10.

16 Abraham Harkavy, “Aus einer orientalischen Genizah in der Kaiserl. Öffentlichen Bibliothek zu St. Petersburg II. N. 10” (Hebrew), in *Hakedem* 2 (1908), pp. 82–90, on p. 82: כי כיון שבבל מאז מקום לשון ארמי ולשון כשדי ועד אן בכל העיירות בלשון ארמי וכשדי מספרין הכל בין ישראל ובין הגויים.

found in a famous responsum of Sherira and Hai Gaon.¹⁷ Even though it is impossible to prove that this refers precisely to the present text, it is striking that the information given regarding its content largely corroborates such an assumption: Both texts are midrashim on Genesis 5:1, and physiognomy plays a significant role in each of them.

Little can be said about the actual diffusion of the midrash during the Geonic period and the early Middle Ages. The text does not seem to have enjoyed sufficient popularity to find entry into any midrash collections or the “classical” corpus of Hekhalot,¹⁸ and it was not among the sources used by outstanding medieval mystics like Ele‘azar of Worms. To the best of our knowledge it also passed unnoticed by the authors of many other works of medieval Ashkenazi culture such as Moses Taku’s *Ketav Tamim*¹⁹ or Abraham ben Azriel’s *Sefer ‘Arugat ha-Bosem*.²⁰

17 Cf. B.M. Lewin (ed.), *Otzar ha-Geonim. Thesaurus of the Gaonic Responsa and Commentaries, following the order of the Talmudic Tractates* (Hebrew), vol. 4, Jerusalem 1931, p. 12: ולמה מסרו חכמים אחד לחברו הכרת פנים וסדרי שרטוטים שמקצתן אמורין בספר זה: תולדות אדם ומקצתן בסדר פסוק של אחריי זכר ונקבה בראם אלא על זאת לפי שאין מוסרין סתרים (ורזין) הללו אלא למי שרואין בו סימנים ראויים לכך — “And the Sages transmitted to each other physiognomy and chiromancy, which are partly expounded in the *Sefer Zeh [Sefer] Toledot Adam* and partly in the order of the following verse *Zakhar u-Neqevah Bera’am* only because they transmit the secrets and mysteries only to those in whom they discern (physical) signs that he is worthy”. (In the translation we have added the word *Sefer*, which was obviously omitted because of a scribal error.)

18 The majority the texts belonging to the different strata of the corpus of Hekhalot literature were transmitted in larger collections (“Sammelhandschriften”), which served as the basis for the publication by P. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, Tübingen 1981 (subsequently quoted as *Synopse*). The choice of the manuscripts and its consequences for subsequent scholarship have been discussed with varying degrees of justification by a number of reviewers; cf. e.g., R. Elijor, “Schäfer’s *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*”, in *JQR* 77 (1986–1987), pp. 213–217; J. Dan, “The Ancient Heikhalot Mystical Texts in the Middle Ages: Tradition, Source, Inspiration”, in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 75 (1993), pp. 83–96; Daniel Abrams, “Critical and Post-Critical Textual Scholarship of Jewish Mystical Literature: Notes on the History and Development of Modern Editing Techniques”, in *Kabbalah* 1 (1996), pp. 17–71, esp. on pp. 32–45.

19 Published in facsimile (ed. J. Dan), Jerusalem 1984.

20 Edited by Ephraim E. Urbach, vol. 1–4, Jerusalem 1939–1963.

Yet additional evidence shows that the text did have its medieval readers. Some echoes of this can be heard in liturgical manuscripts from Ashkenaz.²¹ The first testimony which clearly reflects an acquaintance with the present midrash goes back to Rabbi Asher of Osnabrück, who was active during the 13th century.²² In his commentary on the daily prayers he discusses a prayer to be said after the *Tefillah*, and refers in passing to §40 of our text (MS II fol. 6r l. 16–6v l.12):

I have heard that it is found in a *Book of the Hekhalot* that the angel said to Rabbi Yishma'el, the high priest, that when you reach the end of your prayer until “May the words of my mouth be accepted” you must say “Our king, our God, unify your name in your world, redeem your people, build your city, reconstruct your temple. Do it for the sake of your name. Do it for the sake of your right hand. Do it for the sake if your covenant. Do it for the sake of your Torah. Do it for the sake of your temple. Do it for the sake of your righteous Messiah. Do it for your own sake, if not for our sake. May the words of my mouth be accepted,” etc. And then one finishes his prayer.²³

- 21 For the following discussion of references to the esoteric midrash in medieval Ashkenazi liturgical manuscripts see U. Ehrlich and A. Shmidman, “The Passage ‘Our King, Our Lord’ at the End of the ‘Amida and in the Grace After Meals: Its Origin, Text and Status’” (Hebrew), in *Ginzei Qedem* 3 (2007), pp. 17–19.
- 22 For the identification of Rabbi Asher of Osnabrück as author of the commentary in question see I. M. Ta-Shema, “On a Few Issues Related to the Mahzor Vitry” (Hebrew), in *‘Aleī Sefer* 12 (1986), p. 81, and S. Immanuel, “On the Issue of the Mahzor Vitry” (Hebrew), in *‘Aleī Sefer* 13 (1987), p. 130; cf. also *Germania Judaica*, vol. II/2 (eds. I. Elbogen, A. Freimann and H. Tykocinski), Tübingen 1963, p. 635.
- 23 Translated according to the version found in MS Budapest, Academy of Sciences, Kaufman A 399, pp. 86–87 [Intitute for Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts (henceforth IMHM): Fiche 84]: שמעתי שיש בספר היכלות שאמ' המלאך לר' ישמעאל כהן גדול לכשתבא לסיים תפלתך עד יהיו לרצון אמרי פי יש לך לומר מלכינו אלהינו יחיד שמך בעולמך פדה עמך בנה עירך שכלל היכלך עשה למען שמך עשה למען ימינך עשה למען בריתך עש' למען תורתך עשה למען היכלך עשה למען משיח צדקך למענך אם לא למענינו יהיו לרצון אמרי פי וכו' ומסיים תפילתו. The Hebrew text was published by Ehrlich and Shmidman (n. 21 above), p. 18. Another version with slight differences, insignificant for our purpose, was published from MS Oxford, Opp. 649 (Neubauer 1102),

manuscript is in itself so similar to the one found in the Oxford manuscript that all four glosses may well ultimately go back to a single *Vorlage*. But even if we assume this is the case, if compared to the first testimony by Rabbi Asher of Osnabrück, the designation of our mystical midrash as *Ma'aseh Merkavah* rather than *Sefer Hekhalot* and the reference to “the world to come” clearly distinguish this group of glosses from the information provided by Rabbi Asher. Consequently, we either have to reckon with a much fuller common source for all of them, or with the acquaintance of at least some medieval Ashkenazi scholars with the mystical midrash of Rabbi Yishma'el itself.

Irrespective of the question whether or not the present midrash was directly known in medieval Ashkenaz, the testimonies quoted here bear some relevance for the question of the titles given to this work in the course of history. As pointed out above, the midrash has no clear title in the Genizah fragments. Rabbi Asher of Osnabrück calls it a “Book of Hekhalot” (ספר היכלות) and attributes it to Rabbi Yishma'el, whose name is indeed found at the beginning of our text. It is not clear, however, whether this medieval Ashkenazi rabbi uses “Book of Hekhalot” as a book title or as a more general designation of its content. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the second group of commentaries calls the text *Ma'aseh Merkavah*. This indicates that there was no unanimity as to the exact title of the book, and it is quite likely that the *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam* reached medieval Europe as an untitled and anonymous tract, but was assigned by its Ashkenazi readers to the genre of Hekhalot literature.²⁷

2. Literary Structure

It is a difficult undertaking to reconstruct the literary structure of a work which has been preserved only fragmentarily. There are, however, two dominant structural features, which not only unify the two manuscripts and demonstrate

27 On the “title” *Ma'aseh Merkavah* in medieval Jewish literature see D. Abrams, “*Ma'aseh Merkavah* as a Literary Work: The Reception of Hekhalot Traditions by the German Pietists and Kabbalistic Reinterpretation”, in *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 5 (1998), pp. 329–345.

their origin in the same literary work, but also set this midrash apart from any other esoteric work known so far: The text published here is a combination of a detailed description of Rabbi Yishma‘el’s ascent to heaven and a midrash on Genesis 5:1: **זה ספר תולדות אדם ביום ברא אלהים אדם בדמות אלהים עשה אותו** (“This is the book of the generations of man. On the day when God created man, He made him in the image of God”).

To begin with the midrashic structure of the work, the exegetical technique employed by the author is, at first sight, not easily discernible, partly because the exegetical formula characteristic of the midrash appears in a rather corrupted form in Manuscript I. Here, we find on fol. 1v, l.14 the words **זה האמור כן אינו ב**, which does not allow a satisfactory reading.²⁸ If compared, however, to the parallel formulations in the second manuscript, its meaning and function become clear: Throughout the second manuscript, the midrash is divided into relatively small literary units or paragraphs, which are always preceded by the stereotyped formula: **אין ... הכתוב/אמור כן אינו אלא ... אל תקרי ... אלא ... שנאמר** — “(The letter) X written/said here (means) nothing but (the word or syllable) Y. Do not read X but Y, as it is said...” Now, in this formula, X stands for one letter of the verse Genesis 5:1, and Y for a syllable or word, which is somehow based upon X. The word or syllable Y, however, is also found in the Biblical verse which is quoted immediately thereafter.²⁹ If assembled in the order of their interpretation, the letters adduced first in this formula (as X) form an acrostic based on the verse in Genesis.

As an example of this technique we may take §33 (MS II, fol. 1r l. 17–1v l.1), which contains a midrash on the letter *mem* of the word **אדם**, the twenty-second letter in the verse. This letter is first identified with the syllable **מה (מם) אין מם** — “[The letter] *mem* written here is nothing but *meh*”). In a second step this identification is further developed by a formula, which

28 Cf. the tentative translation by Schäfer, “Ein neues Fragment” (n. 3 above), p. 93: “Das, was hier gesagt wird, (bezieht sich) nur auf mich.”

29 MS II fol. 0r ll. 5–7; 0v l. 15–1r l. 1; 1r l. 17–1v l. 1; 2r ll. 3–4; 2v ll. 5–7; 3r l. 16–3v l. 2; 4r ll. 4–6; 5r ll. 10–12; 6r ll. 1–3, 15–16; 7v ll. 9–13; 8r ll. 7–9; 8v ll. 13–15.

connects this syllable with another verse, in this case Song of Songs 8:14: אל' תי[קרי מם אילא ודמה שני' ו]דמה לך וג' ("do not read *mem* but *u-demeh*, as it is said *and make yourself like*").

This exegetical technique, which is so far unattested in other midrashim, provides us with a key to understanding the literary structure of the whole work. But more than that, it allows us to locate the place of the two manuscripts within the body of the entire work: MS I contains an introduction and the interpretation of the letter *zayin* (*zeh*), which undoubtedly refers to the first letter of the verse Genesis 5:1. The sections containing the midrash of the 24 following letters are currently lost. MS II covers 13 sections, which contain the interpretation of 13 letters in the second part of the verse. Two sections within this fragment and four letters at the end of this fragment are missing, which indicates that one page in the middle and two or three pages at the end of the manuscript have been lost. Of the whole midrash, we thus possess today the sections on the following letters:

[ז]ה ספר תולדות אדם ביום ברא אלהים [אדם בדמות אלהים] [עשה אותן]

It should be noted that if this reconstruction is correct, the distribution of the fragments indicates that this midrash on Genesis 5:1 must originally have been a work of considerable length, less than half of which has been recovered to date.³⁰

אל תקרי ... אלא ... are taken from all parts of the Hebrew Bible, i.e. the Torah (Genesis 28:17;³¹ Deuteronomy 4:36;³² *ibid.* 10:4³³), the Prophets (Isaiah 66:1;³⁴ Ezekiel

30 The responsum of Hai and Sherira Gaon quoted above refers to a midrash on both Genesis 5:1 and the following verse. It should be noted that a striking feature of the present midrash is that it quite often refers explicitly to women (cf., e.g., MS II fol. Or l. 8–0v l. 14; 2r ll. 9–13; 2v l. 4, 3v ll. 5, 10–14). This may be a sign that the author of the midrash indeed conceived of Genesis 5:1 and 5:2 (זכר ונקבה בראם) as a unity and interpreted both verses. If this was the case, the original composition must have been even more extensive.

31 MS I fol. 1v l. 14; see the translation below.

32 MS II fol. 3v l. 2.

33 *Ibid.* fol. 7v ll. 12–13.

34 MS I fol. 1v l. 14; see the translation below.

23:21;³⁵ Zechariah 1:4³⁶) and the Hagiographia (Psalms 117:2;³⁷ *ibid.* 145:4;³⁸ Proverbs 11:3;³⁹ Song of Songs 8:14;⁴⁰ Lamentations 1:4;⁴¹ *ibid.* 5:17;⁴² Ruth 4:4;⁴³ I Chronicles 29:11⁴⁴), although quotations from the Hagiographa clearly predominate. The choice of the specific verse does not reflect exegetical considerations connected with Genesis 5:1, but rather foreshadows the subject matter discussed in the following paragraph. In §32 (MS II fol. 0v l. 15–1r l. 1), e.g., we find an interpretation of the letter *dal* (*dalet*), which is identified with the word *dor* found in the verse Psalms 145:4 (...*דור ישבח מעשיך*...) — “one generation shall praise your works to another”). The reason for this identification is that the following paragraph tells us about the birds of the heavens, which “all give praise” to God. In the following section (§33), discussed above, the letter *mem* is associated with the word *u-demeh* of Song of Songs 8:14 (*ודמה לך לצבי או לעפר האילים על הרי בשמים*), because in this section the midrash admonishes men to follow the example of the animals, which refrain from incestuous relations. In §36 (MS II fol. 3r l. 16–3v l. 2), the letter *mem* is interpreted as referring to the word *min* in Deuteronomy 4:36 (*מן השמים השמייעך את־קלו ליסרך ועל־הארץ הראך את־אשו הגדולה ודבריו שמעת מתוך האש*), although the true meaning of this midrash becomes clear only in light of the following verse 37 (*ותחת כי אהב את אבתך ויבחר בזרעו אחריו ויצאך בפניו בכחו*) (הגדל ממצרים), which speaks about the exodus from Egypt and thus provides a wider theological and eschatological context for the physiognomic descriptions of “slaves” (*עבדים*) and “freemen” (*בני חורין*). Consequently, the letter midrash

35 MS II fol. 2r l. 4.

36 *Ibid.* fol. 8v l. 15.

37 *Ibid.* fol. 6r l. 3.

38 *Ibid.* fol. 0v l. 17–1r l. 1.

39 *Ibid.* fol. 5r l. 11.

40 *Ibid.* fol. 1v l. 1.

41 *Ibid.* fol. 2v l. 7.

42 *Ibid.* fol. 8r l. 9.

43 *Ibid.* fol. 4r l. 6.

44 *Ibid.* fol. 6r l. 16.

functions not only as an introduction to the following paragraph, but also as a hermeneutic key for its interpretation.

This letter midrash based upon Genesis 5:1 reveals one peculiarity for which we have not found a satisfactory explanation: The designation of the letters is not always in conformity with their commonly used names. *Bet*, for example, appears in our text as *bo* or *baw*,⁴⁵ *dalet* is called *dal*,⁴⁶ and *waw* is simply *wa*.⁴⁷ Furthermore, lamed is once called *labeled*,⁴⁸ and *‘ayin* was probably pronounced *‘en*.⁴⁹ Although one might hope that the names given to the letters of the alphabet could provide us with a clue as to the geographical origin of the text, no convincing parallel has been identified.

The letter midrash, however, is only one of the structural literary features displayed in this composition. The second one is that of the celestial journey, which the author adopted from Hekhalot literature. As mentioned above, MS I contains a general literary framework based upon texts which today form §§1–2, 61–62 of 3 Enoch.⁵⁰ There are a number of minor textual variants, which need not to be discussed in detail, but the author of the midrash also made some quite significant changes in his *Vorlage*, which allowed him to adjust it to his needs. §§1–2 (MS I fol. 1r ll.1–15) of our midrash describe Rabbi Yishma‘el as a *yored merkavah* who proceeds to the seventh heavenly palace and then introduce Metatron as his *angelus interpres* in a form almost identical to that found in §§1–2 of 3 Enoch. Next, however, the author moves on to a totally different topic and speaks about “the souls which have not yet been created in a body” (הנשמות שעדין לא נבראו לגוף). This section (§3, MS I fol. 1r l. 16–2v l. 2) is taken literally from §61 of 3 Enoch, but before quoting §62 of 3 Enoch

45 Ibid. fol. 2r l. 3.

46 Ibid. fol. 0v l. 15; 2v l. 5.

47 Ibid. fol. 4r l. 4.

48 Ibid. fol. 6r l. 15.

49 Ibid. fol. 8r l. 7.

50 For a synoptic comparison of the present text with the respective paragraphs in 3 Enoch see Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente* (n. 3 above), pp. 138–139 and the commentaries on pp. XXII–XXIII and XLIV–XLIX.

(§3, MS I, fol. 1r ll. 4–12), he adds half a sentence after the words אילו נשמות (‘‘these are the souls of the righteous, [who] still are not created for a body’’), which connect the whole passage with Genesis 5:1: א' ב' אל' ב' א' ל' א"ב"ב" א"ל' א' ב' אל' ב' א' (‘‘and they [i.e. the souls] are explained in the book *This is the Book of the Generation of Man. On the day when God created man, He made him in the image of God*).⁵¹ Through this modification, the author radically transformed the meaning of his source and produced a new sequence, which now functions as a heading for the whole subsequent text.

After this insertion, the author continues to quote literally from §62 of 3 Enoch, a passage which deals with the souls of the ‘‘intermediate’’ (בינוניים) and the wicked (רשעים), but at the end of his literal borrowings from 3 Enoch (MS I fol. 1v l. 12), he again adds some words of his own. First, he mentions, that Metatron revealed to Rabbi Yishma‘el the signs of the zodiac (ibid. ll.13–14: והראני שנים עשר מזלות וגם מלושיהם), which are totally unknown in his literary source, and then he adds the above-mentioned midrashic formula (ibid. l. 14: זה האמור כן אין אילא בי). This leads the reader directly into the subject matter of the first section with the midrash on the letter *zain* (*zeh*), which consists of a long astrological excursus⁵² followed by a few moralistic exhortations.⁵³

There can be little doubt that the author’s quotations from 3 Enoch are intended to provide the whole midrash with a clear literary setting: It presents itself not only as an explanation and interpretation of Genesis 5:1, but also as a description of a cosmic journey undertaken by Rabbi Yishma‘el and his *angelus interpres* Metatron.⁵⁴ Unfortunately, nothing can be said about the fate of the two protagonists on their celestial and terrestrial journey as described in the 24 paragraphs (§§6–29) which are currently lost. In §§31–35, however,

51 MS I fol. 1v ll. 2–3.

52 Ibid. fol. 1v l. 14–3v l. 16.

53 Ibid. fol. 3v ll. 17–25.

54 It is striking that Metatron is mentioned by name only in literal quotations from 3 Enoch and not in original passages written by the author of our midrash; cf. MS I fol. 1r l. 10; 1v l. 4.

Rabbi Yishma'el and his angel seem to travel on earth. From §36 onwards (with the exception of §37), they visit the celestial realm, and in §41 they make their way back from the firmaments to the lower parts of the cosmos. It is striking that in §45 the mystic and his angel can be found standing behind the “curtain” (*pargod*) once again. Therefore, at present Rabbi Yishma'el's and Metatron's route does not appear to follow a clear inner logic, and it is difficult to say whether the inconsistencies in the travel narrative are due to the fragmentary state of the text or are the result of the literary activity of its author. Nonetheless, whether or not the description of the ascent to heaven once formed a coherent narrative, there can be no doubt that the motif of the acquisition of esoteric knowledge by means of a cosmic voyage is one of the structural cornerstones of the present midrash.

3. Cosmology, Angelology and Theology

In view of the closeness of the *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam* to Hekhalot literature, it is not surprising that five of the fifteen surviving paragraphs deal with descriptions of the celestial realm (§§ 36, 38–41; MS II, fol. 2v l. 8–3v l. 2 and fol. 4r l. 7–7v l. 13).⁵⁵ Admittedly, the content of the lost paragraphs is presently unknown, so that it is difficult to determine whether the dominance of cosmological issues is characteristic of the author's religious interests and tastes, but his close familiarity with various oral and/or literary sources related to *merkavah* mysticism is beyond doubt.

The cosmological descriptions in §36 consist of two sections, the first of which describes the firmaments with their respective thrones of glory, their ministering angels and assemblies of 23 princes (“Small Sanhedrins”), who praise God (MS II fol. 2v l. 8–3r l. 6). It culminates in a short explanation of the ineffable divine name. The second section (*ibid.* fol. 3r l. 7–3v l. 2) repeats

55 From the surviving first lines of §12 (MS II fol. 7v ll. 13–18) it is difficult to decide whether this paragraph was a direct continuation of the cosmological discourse of the preceding paragraphs or whether it provided a transition to a new subject.

similar concepts and speaks about the innumerable torches of fire and angels who are engaged in praising God all day long. In spite of various points of contact with Hekhalot traditions, it is difficult to pinpoint a specific literary source for this paragraph.

On the other hand, the cosmological system expounded in §38 (MS II fol. 4r l. 7–5r l. 12) bears a clear resemblance to that found in the Babylonian Talmud, Ḥagigah 12b. In spite of various differences in detail, it seems quite likely that this was the author’s direct source, rather than any of the later elaborations of similar traditions such as the different versions of *Seder Rabba di-Bereshit*.⁵⁶

The lowest firmament is called *Shamayim*. It stretches right above the heavenly curtain (*Wilon*), which separates the earth from the heavenly realms. *Shamayim* contains not only water and fire, but also the luminaries and the angels. The author seems to identify *Shamayim* — at least implicitly — with *Raqia’*, which is not counted as a firmament in its own right in our tract.⁵⁷ The second firmament bears the name *Sheḥaqim*, and the reference to the “millstones grinding manna for the righteous for the future to come” gives the impression of being a literal borrowing from TB Ḥagigah.

The third firmament is called *Zevul*. In accordance with TB Ḥagigah, the heavenly Jerusalem and the temple are located there. Consequently, it is quite likely that the enigmatic figure of the “prince tied up with a very large rope”⁵⁸ has to be identified with the angel Michael, who is often said to function as a priest in the heavenly temple, although our text does not make this explicit.

56 For comparative studies of the various cosmological systems current in Judaism in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages see N. Séd, *La Mystique Cosmologie Juive*, Paris 1981 and P. Schäfer, “In Heaven as It Is in Hell: The Cosmology of *Seder Rabbah di-Bereshit*”, in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions* (eds. R. S. Bousthan and A. Y. Reed), Cambridge 2004, pp. 233–274. On the recensions of *Seder Rabba di-Bereshit* see also K. Herrmann, *Masseket Hekhalot*, Tübingen 1994, pp. 229–233.

57 For this idea see e.g. *Seder Rabba di-Bereshit* (Synopsis, § 770 = SRdB B), and the Genizah fragment published by L. Ginzberg, *Genizah Studies in Memory of Doctor Solomon Schechter* (Hebrew), vol. 1, New York 1928, pp. 182–187, on p. 186 (= SRdB A).

58 For this motif see the commentary below.

It is worth noting that the lamentation about the destruction of the Temple is pronounced before God by an unnamed prince.⁵⁹

The fourth firmament, *Ma'on*, is filled with classes of ministering angels (כיתות כיתות של מלאכי השרת), and the fifth firmament, *Makhon*, is full of “hoards of snow and hoards of hail” (אוצרות שלג ואוצרות ברד ועליות טללים). This is again in perfect accordance with TB Ḥagigah, and it is noteworthy that even the Biblical quotations adduced in the Babylonian Talmud recur in our midrash.⁶⁰

It is perhaps characteristic of the religious outlook of the present tract that its author seems to lose interest in strictly cosmological aspects from the sixth firmament onwards. His cosmological explanations suddenly give way to more religious and theological speculations about the presence of the *Shekhinah* in the sixth firmament. This heavenly realm, which would have been called *'Aravot* according to the Babylonian Talmud, remains nameless in the present midrash. What interests the author much more is the theological idea that God dwells in the sixth firmament only in times of benevolence, whereas He withdraws his *Shekhinah* to the “heights of heights” when He is angry. This statement notwithstanding, the author stresses that God remains true to His people and acts graciously even from the loftiest heights.

Considerable similarities between the cosmological systems expounded in the Babylonian Talmud and the present midrash notwithstanding, there are also some quite substantial differences. A case in point is that the Babylonian Talmud describes *Wilson* as being the first firmament, whereas the present tract obviously does not consider it as a firmament of its own. This bears some consequences for the numbering of the following firmaments: According to the model adopted by the midrash, the last firmament described in detail (*'Aravot* in the Talmud) turns out to be the *sixth* firmament, whereas it should be the *seventh* according to the Talmud. Consequently, the heavenly court described in the following paragraph (§38; MS II fol. 5r l. 10–6r l. 3) is probably also located in the sixth firmament according to our midrash, although it is located

59 Cf. BT Berachot 3a.

60 Cf. the quotations of I Kings 8:13, Psalms 42:9 and Deuteronomy 28:12.

in the seventh firmament 'Aravot according to other Hekhalot traditions like 3 Enoch (*Synopse*, §§43, 45).⁶¹

It remains uncertain whether the cosmological system adopted by the present midrash included a well-defined seventh firmament. The author does however mention the existence of a hundred additional firmaments filled with praising and singing angels (§39; MS II fol. 6r ll. 4–16). This contradicts the model of TB Ḥagigah 13a for two reasons: Firstly, because Rav Aḥa admits the existence of only one additional firmament above 'Aravot, and secondly because the Talmud explicitly prohibits any further inquiry into the higher worlds (עד כאן יש לך רשות לדבר מכאן ואילך אין לך רשות לדבר) (מרום),⁶² represent the “transcendental” pinnacle of the cosmological system. To this almost impenetrable place God withdraws His *Shekhinah* in times of anger,⁶³ and it demands total silence on the part of the mystic (MS II fol. 6r l. 12: הביט וראה ודום).

After a short section dealing with a specifically liturgical issue (§40; MS II fol. 6r l. 16–6v l. 12), which will be discussed in greater detail below, the tract recounts the mystic's return from the “height of heights” to the lower realms (§40; *ibid.* 6v l. 12–7v l.13). In order to describe this journey, the author uses formulations which again bear clear resemblances to a passage in 3 Enoch (*Synopse*, §60) on the one hand, and to cosmological speculations found in a paragraph inserted into *Hekhalot Rabbati* (*Synopse*, §146) on the other hand:

61 Cf. also the location of justice and righteousness in 'Aravot in BT Ḥagigah 12b and *Seder Rabba di-Bereshit* (*Synopse*, §775).

62 MS II fol. 5r l. 7; 6v ll. 15, 16; 7r l. 3; 7v l. 13.

63 Cf. the discussion of MS II fol. 5r l. 7 above.

<i>Synopse</i> , §60 (3 Enoch)	<i>Synopse</i> , §146 (<i>Hekhalot Rabbati</i>)	<i>Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam</i> , §11 (fol. 6v l. 12–7v l. 10)
<p>אמר ר' ישמעאל אמר לי מטטרון בא אראך איפה מים תלויין ברום רמים ואיפה אש דולקת בתוך אבני ברד ואיפה ברקים מבריקים בתוך הרי שלג ואיפה רעמים מרעישים במרומי עליון ואיפה להבה תלהב בתוך אש יוקדת ואיפה קולות משמיעים ברעם וברעש</p>	<p>א'ר ישמעאל אמ' לי דר ממרום בא ואראך אופייו. תלויים בין רקיע לרקיע מים. בין מים למים אש. בין אש לאש מים. בין מים למים אש וברד ומים. אש מתלקחת</p>	<p>ואמר לי בוא ואראך אפוא מים תלויין [מר]ום מרומים ואפוא אש [דול]קת במרום מרומים ואפוא [...] [ג]דור במרום מרומים</p>
<p>והלכתי אצלו תפסני ואחזני והושבני על כתיפו והחזירני את כולם וראיתי מים תלויים ברום ערבות רקיע בשם יה אהיה אשר אהיה ופירוותיהן יורדין גשמים ומרוים פני תבל שנאמר מפרי מעשיך תשבע הארץ. וראיתי אש ושלג. ואבני ברד שהם מתלקחות אלו בתוך אלו ואינם ניזוקות בשם אש אוכלה שנאמר כי יוי אלהיך אש אוכלה וגו'. וראיתי ברקים. שהם מבריקים בתוך הרי שלג ואינם ניזוקין בשם יה יוי צור עולמים שנאמר כי</p>		<p>מיד תפסני ואחזני והושבני על כתיפו והחזירני על כל רקיע ורקיע שבמרום מרומים וראיתי כל סידרי מרומים וראיתי בין רקיע לרקיע מים ובין מים למים אש אכלה ובין אש לאש מים ובין מים אש ומים ובין אש ומים ברד ואש גליד ושלג גליד ושלג לחט ולפיד ובין לפיד אש ושלהבת [ו]ברק</p>

Synopsis, §60 (3 Enoch)	Synopsis, §146 (<i>Hekhalot Rabbati</i>)	<i>Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam</i> , §11 (fol. 6v l. 12–7v l. 10)
<p>ביה יוי צור עולמים. וראיתי רעמים וקולות שהם מרעישין בתוך להבי אש ואינן ניזוקין בשם אל שדי רבה שנאמר אני אל שדי. וראיתי להט ולהבה שהן לוהטין ולוהבין בתוך אש יוקדת ואינן ניזוקין בשם יה על כס יה שנא' ויאמר כי יד על כס יה. וראיתי נהרי אש בתוך נהרי מים ונהרי מים בתוך נהרי אש ואינן ניזוקין בשם עושה שלום שנאמ' עושה במרומיו שלום שהוא עושה שלום בין אש למים ובין ברד לאש ובין רוח לענן בין זועים לזיקים.</p>		
	<p>וחומת אש מכאן ומכאן לכסא.</p>	<p>וחמות אש מוקפות לכסא כבוד ובכל רקיע ורקיע כסא כבוד ושכינה שרויה עליו ושרפים וחיות מוקפ[ין] לכסא ועם כל כסא וכסא אר[בע] מאות אלפים ותשים ושש[ה] [...] מלאכי השרת מוקפין [...] כמראה ברקים [וש]רפים [...] למעלה מכסא</p>

<i>Synopse</i> , §60 (3 Enoch)	<i>Synopse</i> , §146 (<i>Hekhalot Rabbati</i>)	<i>Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam</i> , §11 (fol. 6v l. 12–7v l. 10)
	וכ... שרפים ארבעה כנגד ארבע רוחות העולם וכל אחד ואחד [יש לו ארבע פנים וארבע כנפים וכל כנף כמלא עולם	
	ושרפים עומדים לפניו ואומ' ק'ק'ק' יהוה צבאות וחיות משבחות ברוך כבוד יהוה ממקומו. ורקיע אומר ימלוך יהוה לעולם וגו'. והארץ אומ' יהוה מלך גיאות לבש וגו' ימים ונהרות משבחין ואומ' לגוזר ים סוף ל? לגזרים וגו'.	ושרפים אומרין[ן] עם מלאכי השרת ק' ק' יי' צ' וג' וחיות עונות אחריהן ברוך וג' ואחר כך הודיע הודיעיני כמספר כלם והיה מספרן אלף מאה וארבעים ושש רקיעים ועליהן הכתוב אומר הן ליי' אלהיך השמים וג'

At the present stage of research it is difficult to determine the exact relationship between these three sources. It is striking that the introductory part of §60 in 3 Enoch is very similar to the present midrash, although 3 Enoch next presents a cosmological description in the form of a detailed exposition of the power of the divine names, which has left no trace in the present midrash. It would therefore be difficult to interpret §40 of the *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam* as a simple abbreviation of the text found in 3 Enoch, even if from a literary point of view it is certainly possible that its author intended to produce an “epitomized cosmology”, which would serve as a framework for his description of the mystic’s return to the lower world.⁶⁴

64 Compare the formulation תפסני ואחזני והושבני על כתיפו והחזירני in the present midrash with תפסני ואחזני והושבני על כתיפו והחזירני in 3 Enoch.

On the other hand, the relationship between the midrash and the ancient “Sondergut”, which found its way into *Hekhalot Rabbati* in MS New York 8128, is also not easy to determine.⁶⁵ There are a number of striking points of contact: The *angelus interpres* in §146, for example, is not called *Metatron* (as usually in 3 Enoch), but *דר ממרום*, which is a corrupt form of the title *הדר מרום* (“Splendor of the Height”) regularly employed in our midrash.⁶⁶ In addition, this section ends in both versions with a description of the heavenly *Qedsuhah*, which again unites them in contradistinction to the version found in 3 Enoch. On the other hand, the cosmological descriptions in the middle part of 3 Enoch and our midrash are largely absent from §146 of the “Sondergut”. This could be interpreted as an indication that this is an abbreviation of a more complete source, but the midrashic elements at the end of this paragraph are not found in our midrash either. Consequently, it does not appear that the text of our midrash is the direct source of the “Sondergut” found in MS New York or vice versa. The whole passage can thus be seen as an important illustration of the complex literary processes which led to the crystallisation of the works which we call “Hekhalot literature”.

65 The “Sondergut” found in MS New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, Mic. 8128, has given rise to a number of studies. These studies have demonstrated that in many cases the origin of this material predates by centuries the Ashkenazi redaction, which was responsible for its insertion at different places in the other “macroforms” of Hekhalot literature. Cf. K. Herrmann and C. Rohrbacher-Sticker, “Magische Traditionen der New Yorker Hekhalot-Handschrift JTS 8128 im Kontext ihre Gesamtedaktion”, in *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge* 17 (1989), pp. 101–149; iid., “Magische Traditionen der Oxforder Hekhalot-Handschrift Michael 9 in ihrem Verhältnis zu MS New York 8128”, in *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge* 19 (1991/92), pp. 169–182; K. Herrmann, “‘Feuer aus Wasser’: Zum Fortleben eines unbekanntes *Sefer Yesira*-Kommentars in der *Hekhalot*-Literatur”, in *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge* 20 (1993), pp. 49–95; idem, “Re-Written Mystical Texts: The Transmission of the Heikhalot Literature in the Middle Ages”, in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 75 (1993), pp. 97–116; and idem, “An unknown commentary on the ‘Book of Creation’ (‘*Sefer Yezirah*’) from the Cairo Genizah and its re-creation among the Haside Ashkenaz”, in *Creation and Recreation in Jewish Thought: Festschrift in Honor of Joseph Dan on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (eds. R. Elior and P. Schäfer), Tübingen 2005, pp. 103–112.

66 See below, p. 000.

Despite these uncertainties and a few inconsistencies,⁶⁷ a close reading of the text reveals that the author had relatively well-defined cosmological concepts, which include a few interesting peculiarities. Specifically, the idea that each firmament contains its own throne of glory⁶⁸ and the concept that water, fire and other elements coexist in the heavenly realms⁶⁹ pervade the whole tract.

The angelology of the present midrash is not very developed. The only angelic figure mentioned by name is the *angelus interpres* of the mystic, who accompanies him on his terrestrial and celestial journey. In the paragraphs adopted from 3 Enoch he is called Metatron,⁷⁰ but this name does not recur in the later parts of the work. There, the angel's full name is "Galitzur, the Holy Name, SWYRYH, Prince of the Face, Splendour of the Height of the Universe",⁷¹ but occasionally his title is also given as "Splendour of the Universe",⁷² the "Prince of the Presence, Splendour of the Height of the Universe"⁷³ or "Prince of Princes".⁷⁴ Once he is called "[YHWH, the] Prince, the beloved [youth], who is called after the name of his Maker",⁷⁵ while one of his more secret names seems to be "HSTS WHQWS [...] WHYQRYN, Great Splendour, H[...]". All these titles, however, are closely related to the figure of Enoch-Metatron in other texts of the Hekhalot corpus, especially 3 Enoch, where Metatron assumes the function of Rabbi Yishma'el's *angelus interpres*.⁷⁶ "SWYRYH, the Prince of

67 For example: MS II fol. 6r l. 4 mentions a hundred firmaments above the six firmaments described in detail previously, whereas *ibid.* fol. 7v l. 8 gives their total number as 1146. A few lines later (7v l. 16) the text seems to speak about four hundred firmaments, whereas fol. 2v ll. 11–12 gives no specific number.

68 Cf. MS II fol. 2v l. 12 and 7r ll. 11–13.

69 *Ibid.* fol. 4r ll. 8–13 and 7r ll. 5–11; cf. also *Synopse*, §60 (3 Enoch).

70 MS fol. 1r ll. 10–11: מיטטרון שניקרא שמו איטמון אסטס הסטס הסקוס.

71 MS II fol. 1v ll. 3–4; 5r ll. 14–16.; and probably also 8v ll. 16–17.

72 *Ibid.* fol. 2v l. 9.

73 *Ibid.* fol. 6r l. 11.

74 *Ibid.* fol. 5r l. 12.

75 *Ibid.* fol. 3r ll. 7–8.

76 Cf. *הדר מרום* in 3 Enoch, *Synopse* §§16, 19, 21, 23, 37. The title *הדר מרום* is associated with Yofi'el in some manuscripts of *Hekhalot Rabbati* (*Synopse*, §302). *הדר מרום* is strongly reminiscent of the name of the Prince of the

the Presence” is also Rabbi Yishma‘el’s partner in the Babylonian Talmud,⁷⁷ in *Hekhalot Rabbati*⁷⁸ and in a short introduction to a treatise on physiognomy, which we will have occasion to discuss in greater detail below.

Most of the other angelic beings mentioned in the midrash differ little from standard descriptions of the heavenly household found in many other literary sources of *Hekhalot* literature. The only possible exception is the enigmatic figure of a prince who is “tied up with a very [large] rope”, mentioned in the description of the third firmament (*Zevul*).⁷⁹ Judging by the context, this angel is most likely to be identified with Michael, but the motif remains quite exceptional.

In most places God is given the title of “Creator of the Universe” (יצור כל),⁸⁰ a title which is strikingly absent from the rest of *Hekhalot* literature,⁸¹ but He also appears under names like “The Holy One, praised be He [...] Eternal Rock”,⁸² “King [...] HYQRWN, Eternal Rock”⁸³ or simply “High King”.⁸⁴ His “explicit, unique and pronounced” name is “YH" W H" W Y" H H W" H Y" H",⁸⁵ but “Y'MTsYH PTsMTsYH SRNYNWS SRNYNQUS 'TBYH YH BYH the Lord, the God of Israel”⁸⁶ also seems to be one of His more important titles. Once he is referred to as the *Place* — *Maqom* (מקום).⁸⁷ Generally speaking, however, God himself does not play a dominant role in the present midrash,

Presence in *Merkavah Rabbah* (*Synopsis*, §691). In 3 Enoch (*Synopsis*, § 5), Metatron is called “by the name of (his) Maker” (בשם קונך) and “youth” (נוער); cf. for the latter name MS II fol. 5r l. 13.

77 Cf. BT Berachot 61a: *Suri'el*.

78 *Synopsis*, §§117–120; cf. also §219 (*Hekhalot Rabbati*), §§425–426 (*Hekhalot Zutarti*), §517 and §560 (*Ma'aseh Merkavah*).

79 MS II fol.4r l. 17.

80 *Ibid.* fol. 2r ll. 6–7, 14; 2v ll. 10, 15–16.

81 This expression is found, but not as a title, in *Ma'aseh Merkavah* (*Synopsis*, §558).

82 MS II fol. 1r ll. 9–10.

83 *Ibid.* fol. 3r ll. 12–13.

84 *Ibid.* fol. 5r l. 7; 5v l. 1.

85 *Ibid.* fol. 3r l. 6.

86 *Ibid.* fol. 4v ll. 5–7.

87 *Ibid.* fol. 0v l.13.

although the issue of the Divine Presence (*Shekhinah*) in the sixth heaven and its retreat from there in times of anger seems to have been quite important to its author.⁸⁸

In sum, the cosmology, angelology and concept of God rely heavily on Talmudic traditions about *merkavah* mysticism (BT Ḥagigah) and various literary strata of the Hekhalot literature. There is perhaps a certain preponderance of traditions related to 3 Enoch (especially *Synopse*, §§59–70) with Metatron as Rabbi Yishma‘el’s *angelus interpretis*, but the evidence is insufficient to argue for a direct usage of this book in the form we know today.

However, in spite of numerous points of contact it is clear that the author’s major interests were quite different from those of his mystical sources. Hekhalot motifs undoubtedly served him by supplying the general literary framework of the terrestrial and celestial journey, but we may also observe that he readily abandoned them in favour of new ideas and religious concepts, whenever he deemed it necessary. Typical elements of Hekhalot literature such as the techniques of the ascent to heaven, magic and theurgy, detailed angelic hierarchies, divine and angelic names, and *Shi‘ur Qoma* speculations have little or no place in the present midrash, and it will be seen that ethical, and even more so eschatological, questions form the conceptual backbone of the composition.

4. Liturgy

One of the points where the difference in religious outlook between the “classical” works of Hekhalot literature and the present midrash becomes most obvious is in the role of liturgy. There can be no doubt that motifs related to the heavenly liturgy were common currency for the author of the *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam*, but it is equally evident that this element remains rather unproductive in his hands. An case in point is his description of the recitation of the *Qedushah* in §40.⁸⁹ He probably adopted this description from a literary

88 See pp. 000–000 above.

89 MS II fol. 7v ll. 1–6.

source,⁹⁰ and it bears no signs of independent elaboration. Nothing hints at the possibility that mystical participation in the heavenly liturgy, for which Peter Schäfer has coined the term *unio liturgica*,⁹¹ was regarded by the author as a major aim of the mystic's efforts.

On the other hand, the author has singled out another aspect of the daily liturgy and transformed it into an issue of great significance: Immediately after the comparatively dull description of the heavenly liturgy in §39, we are told that the *angelus interpretis* informed the mystic about various matters related to practical behavior (§40; MS II fol. 6v ll. 1–3). The true climax of the whole passage, however, is the question: How can man gain rewards in the world to come?⁹² The angel's answer to this question is as simple as it is surprising: Only those who include the liturgical formula “Let your name be unique in your world, one (is) your kingdom in your world. Build your temple, do it for the sake of your name, and reconstruct your tabernacle. Do (it) for the sake of your right hand” in their daily prayer and in the Grace after Meals are assured of a place in the world to come.⁹³ This is a surprisingly far-reaching statement if one bears in mind that we are speaking of a rather minute detail of liturgical practice. The background of his statement, however, becomes much clearer if we cast an eye on the history of the liturgical formula under discussion.

In a recent study devoted to the history of the prayer *Our King, our God, let your name be unique in your world*, Uri Ehrlich and Avi Shmidman have systematically collected and discussed the evidence for the development of this prayer from the Geonic period onwards up to the codification of the *Shulḥan Arukh*.⁹⁴ The exact origin of the formula — presumably in Geonic Babylonia — remains uncertain, but Ehrlich and Shmidman convincingly argue that in a period which predates the earliest attestation of the formula in fragments from the Cairo

90 Cf. the discussion of the usage of the passage in *Synopse*, §146, above.

91 P. Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism*, Albany 1992, p. 165.

92 MS II fol. 6v ll. 4–5.

93 *Ibid.* fol. 6v ll. 7–11.

94 See n. 21 above.

Genizah, the *Our King, our God* prayer was part of the Grace after Meals. Due to its importance and popularity, it was later transferred from this context and added at the end of the Eighteen Benedictions prayer. Genizah fragments and the prayerbooks of 'Amram and Sa'adyah Gaon provide evidence, however, that towards the end of the first millennium its liturgical status and prestige weakened, and it became optional in the daily prayer; later still it was omitted altogether in the *Shulḥan Arukh*.

This historical reconstruction largely converges with the evidence that can be drawn from the present midrash. Here, too, the inclusion of this prayer is not obligatory. This is essential for the argument of the present text, because it provides our author with the opportunity to highlight this prayer as a touchstone for righteous religious behaviour: Only the usage of this specific prayer guarantees a share in the world to come. Accordingly, the midrash must have been written in a period when the inclusion of this prayer was *not, not yet* or *no longer* an undisputed and well-established liturgical practice. Since additional evidence points to the fact that the present tract was probably written at the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century,⁹⁵ this would fit perfectly with the evidence for the non-obligatory status of the *Our King, our God* prayer offered by the *Siddurim* of 'Amram and Sa'adyah Gaon.

The historical coincidence, however, does not yet sufficiently explain why the author of the present midrash has chosen this specific formula as a touchstone for distinguishing those who will and those who will not partake in the life of the world to come. The midrash leaves little doubt that he does not intend to institute a totally new, unheard-of practice; rather, its author tries to promote the systematic usage of a formula which was regarded in his time as merely optional.⁹⁶ It is therefore likely that his statement refers to a contemporary dispute on a specific liturgical issue. But we can probably go one

95 Cf. pp. 000–000 above.

96 Ehrlich and Shmidman (n. 21 above), pp. 18–19, seem to assume that the midrash claims an angelic *origin* for this formula. This, however, seems to be unwarranted after a closer reading of the text.

step further and argue that it was the eschatological perspective embodied in this prayer which attracted the author's attention. If we read the prayer in all the versions known to us today, the *Our King, our God* always presents itself as a kind of eschatological confession, an expression of firm belief in an imminent redemption, which could guarantee participation in the world to come. It was this aspect, which was so attractive for the author of the present midrash, which led him to transform a seemingly minute liturgical detail into a means for the propagation of eschatological beliefs.

5. Astrology and Physiognomy

The eschatological perspective adopted by the midrash finds its expression also in the passages dealing with astrology (§5, MS I fol. 1v l. 14–3v l. 25) and physiognomy (§36, MS II fol. 3v l. 2–4r l. 6). A first hint of this worldview is to be found in §5, which is based upon a collection of horoscopes with strong physiognomic elements. It is concluded by a passage in which the author of the midrash explicitly points out the need to keep this knowledge secret, if one does not want to be punished in the “two worlds”.⁹⁷

This eschatological perspective becomes more evident in §36, which interrupts the cosmological descriptions of §§35 and 37–40 (MS II fol. 2v l. 8–3v l. 2 and fol. 4r l. 7–7v l. 11). At first sight, this passage looks like a quotation from a physiognomic handbook on different categories of male and female slaves, namely those who will become “freemen in future” and those “who revolt against their lords”, and it is certainly possible that the descriptions of slaves provided by this text were adopted from a hitherto unidentified treatise on physiognomy. On the other hand, it is rather unlikely that its author would be interested in the fate of slaves as such, and it is thus not surprising to see that the text in fact develops a quite distinctive perspective on this issue.

The physiognomic text presents three well-defined categories of slaves, each

97 MS I fol. 3v ll. 17–19.

of which is characterized by two different kind of qualities, one moral and one physiognomic: Slaves who will finally be “freemen” are those who have “understanding” on the one hand, and have lines on their hands — “one out of five in the right (hand), and a [threefold] line from the beginning” (MS II fol. 3v ll. 8–9) — on the other. Female slaves who will be “freemen” are those who are “virtuous in their behaviour and deeds” and have “lines that go upwards in the hands and in the forehead” (ibid. ll. 11–13). Finally, slaves who are disobedient *and* display a specific physiognomy will flee from their lords and will not be found (MS II fol. 3v l. 15–4r l. 4). The perspective presented in this text is not that of a person who wants to determine the hidden moral qualities of a slave according to his outer appearance; rather, it regards both moral and physical qualities as signs of the “slave’s” future destiny. Consequently, the focus of the text cannot be the concrete evaluation of slaves, but the definition of those who will be “freemen” in future. Therefore, it seems quite likely that the terms “slaves” (עבדים) and “freemen” (בני חורין) in this text have assumed an eschatological dimension which goes far beyond their literal meaning.

This interpretation finds additional confirmation in connection with the verse quoted at the beginning of the paragraph. As noted above, the letter *mem* is associated here with the verses Deuteronomy 4:36–37, which speak about the exodus from Egypt. Therefore, it is very likely that the author alludes here to the past and future liberation of the people of Israel.

The insertion of a passage on physiognomy into a midrash so closely related to Hekhalot traditions is even more noteworthy if we bear in mind that similar combinations can be found not only in other Hekhalot texts such as §§61–62 of 3 Enoch quoted at length at the beginning of our midrash, but also in a short treatise on physiognomy known as *Hakkarat Panim le-Rabbi Yishma‘el* (*Physiognomy of Rabbi Yishma‘el*) which was published by Gershom Scholem almost half a century ago.⁹⁸ This treatise is attested in a fragment from the Cairo Genizah and in many European manuscripts. It reveals numerous points

98 See n. 2 above.

of contact with the present midrash, not only with respect to the incipit or title of the book (“*This is the Book of the generations of man* in order to discern the righteous and the wicked”, זה ספר תולדות אדם לדעת בין צדיק לרשע), but also with regard to technical terminology⁹⁹ and the attribution of the revelation to the angel SWYRYH. Scholem argued in his article that the *Hakkarat Panim le-Rabbi Yishma‘el* is a remnant of a largely lost collection of Hekhalot texts from the Talmudic period.¹⁰⁰ This is not the place to discuss whether or not he adduced sufficient evidence to substantiate this claim. What can be stated with confidence is that the present midrash confirms that during the Geonic period there was a well-established connection between Genesis 5:1, divinatory practices like astrology and physiognomy and Hekhalot traditions.¹⁰¹

6. Divine Promise, Election and Redemption

While eschatological concepts and messianic ideas are the main focus of religious speculation in the earlier strata of Hekhalot literature, divine promises, election and redemption play a crucial role in the *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam*. The retribution reserved for women in this world and in the world to come is a major topic dealt with in §31 (MS II fol. 0r l. 7–1r l. 1), although due to the fragmentary state of the text the context remains largely obscure. The following §32 (fol. 1r l. 2–1v l. 1) stresses God’s unshakable faithfulness to His people, an idea which is repeated in other terms in the *Shekhinah* theology of §37 (ibid. fol. 5v ll. 5–12). The eschatological dimensions of the passages on physiognomy (§36; ibid. fol. 3v l. 2–4r l. 5) and liturgy (§40; ibid. fol. 6r l. 16–6v l. 12) have already been discussed above.

One must exercise caution in interpreting a fragmentary text like the present one, but it seems that the eschatological elements become even stronger towards

99 See for example, the usage of the term פדחת instead of מצח for the forehead, mentioned by Scholem, *ibid.*, p. 268.

100 Scholem, *ibid.*, p. 268; cf. also p. 265.

101 Cf. also the famous responsum of Sherira and Hai Gaon, n. 17 above.

the end of the midrash. In the fragmentarily preserved text of §43 (MS II fol. 8r ll. 1–9) the author even goes so far as to provide an exact date for the arrival of the “redeemer”: He will come “after 870 years”, at which time the mystic is promised that he will awake to eternal life (ibid. ll. 1–3). Since the preceding pages are lost, the exact context of this messianic prediction is difficult to restore, but the author most likely expected the redemption to occur 870 years after the destruction of the Second Temple, i.e., according to Jewish tradition, in 938 CE.

It is striking, however, that the author of the midrash was by no means an apocalyptic enthusiast. Quite to the contrary, he was well aware of the dangerous implications of his messianic predictions and warned the mystic to be careful in speaking about the coming of the messiah, because otherwise — and here he alludes to the punishments of Ben Azzai and Ben Zoma described in BT Ḥagigah 14b — he could be severely punished for acquiring and disseminating esoteric knowledge.¹⁰²

At the same time, it is characteristic of the religious worldview of the midrash that it combines eschatological concepts with ethical views, which in turn are closely related to rabbinic culture and values. The importance of moral behavior and ethical knowledge is stressed in various places,¹⁰³ which places the midrash in line with other works of the Geonic period and testifies to an ethical re-interpretation of older mystical traditions towards the end of the first millennium CE.¹⁰⁴ In a certain sense, it even foreshadows the worldview later developed by the Hasidei Ashkenaz.

102 The midrash employs the word *היצתה* (“you peered”), which is strongly reminiscent of Ben Azzai and Ben Zoma in BT Ḥagigah 14b, who were also “peering” and then died (*מת*) and became demented (*נבטל*) respectively.

103 Cf. MS II, §32, fol. 1r ll. 10–16; §33, fol. 1v l. 5–2r l. 1; §34, fol. 2r l. 7–2v l. 5; §36, fol. 3v l. 3–4r l. 4; §40, fol. 6v ll. 1–2.

104 On this issue see Herrmann (n. 56 above), pp. 218, 234–??; S. Dönitz, “Das Alphabet des Rabbi Aqiva und sein literarisches Umfeld”, in *Jewish Studies Between the Disciplines* (eds. K. Herrmann, M. Schlüter and G. Veltri), Leiden 2003, pp. 159, 167, 173–177; and J. Elbaum, “The Midrash Tana devei Eliyahu and Ancient Esoteric Literature” (Hebrew), in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 6 (1987), pp. 139–150.

Perhaps nowhere does the author's general outlook, so deeply rooted in the ethics of rabbinic culture, find a more apt expression than in §44 (MS II fol. 8r l. 9–8v l. 15), where the mystic is granted a revelation from “behind the curtain” (*pargod*). The *pargod* is traditionally the place where the destinies and deeds of all future generations are recorded,¹⁰⁵ but in our text this revelation from the innermost precincts of the divine realm is immediately seen to be heavily moralistic: The midrash first mentions the enormous value attributed to rabbinic learning,¹⁰⁶ but only in order to stress afterwards the crucial importance of repentance and, even more so, of encouraging others to repent.¹⁰⁷ This whole passage is dependent on the Babylonian Talmud, Ḥagigah 16a, where we read about a conversation between Rabbi Me'ir and Aḥer, in which the former tries to encourage the latter to repent after his break with Jewish orthodoxy. Aḥer, however, brusquely rebukes Rabbi Me'ir, arguing that he himself had heard “from behind the curtain” that he would not be granted the opportunity to repent (כבר שמעתי מאחורי הפרגוד: שובו בנים שובבים – חוץ מאחר). The high value assigned in our midrash to encouraging others to repent thus reflects Rabbi Me'ir's attempt to bring Aḥer back to orthodox Judaism. Once again, the present midrash shows itself to be a sophisticated elaboration and interpretation of material found in earlier rabbinic and mystical sources.

7. Conclusions

The main value of the anonymous tract published here for the first time is that it represents a unique source for the study of Jewish religious thought in the poorly documented and insufficiently studied Geonic period. It is deeply rooted in rabbinic culture, but at the same time it documents the reception and creative development of material originating in the various traditions of *merkavah* mysticism and of Hekhalot literature.

105 Cf. *Synopse*, §§64 and 65 (3 Enoch).

106 MS II fol. 8r l. 12–8v l. 2.

107 *Ibid.* fol. 8v ll. 4–9.

The dependence of this 9th- or 10th-century mystical midrash upon earlier traditions gives rise to questions about its literary, and possibly also oral, sources. These questions are by no means easy to answer, even with respect to the Hekhalot literature, where the parallels are perhaps most obvious. In the preceding analysis we have pointed out various passages which present word-for-word parallels with 3 Enoch. Therefore, it is not unlikely that the author of the present midrash had direct access to some form of 3 Enoch, whether or not it was identical with the work known to us today. Furthermore, parallels to additional Hekhalot materials not included in any of the “classical” works of Hekhalot-literature (e.g., *Synopse*, §146) indicate that the present midrash was written at a time when more such texts were circulating than have been preserved in the collections known to us today.

Another major source of inspiration of the present midrash was undoubtedly the Babylonian Talmud on Mishnah Ḥagigah 2:1. In view of the relatively late date of the midrash and its origin in circles influenced by rabbinic culture and values, this familiarity with a prominent Talmudic text is not very surprising. It is worth noticing, however, that this literary *Vorlage* may have been more than a mere quarry for literary motifs exploited by the author for his own midrash, and that it may also preserve a key to a better understanding of the religious character of the midrash as a whole. Our midrash is mainly concerned with the divine realm, cosmology and ethics, while within the field of ethics one may observe the dominant role played by the prohibition of incest (§33, MS II fol. 1v l. 2–2r l. 4). These, however, are exactly the subjects enumerated in Mishnah Ḥagigah 2:1, the locus classicus for the rabbinic definition of esotericism: אין דורשין בעריות בשלשה, ולא במעשה בראשית בשנים, ולא במרכבה ביחיד, אלא אם כן היה חכם ומבין מדעתו — “One does not expound incest among three (persons), cosmology among two (persons), nor the divine throne among one (person), unless he is wise and understands on his own”. Consequently, the present midrash can also be read as an “unpacking” of the esoteric disciplines mentioned in the Mishnah. According to this view, it could be appropriately described as an “esoteric encyclopedia” covering a wide range of secret knowledge.

This interpretation is, of course, qualified by the strong caveat that the text has been preserved only fragmentarily, and that it is very possible that other parts of the work, now lost, dealt with numerous other topics. If, however, this interpretation of the dependence of the midrash on the definition of esoteric topics in Ḥagigah 2:1 is correct, we must ask to how its author would have described the character of his work, in view of the explicit prohibition to disseminate knowledge concerning these three subjects. Did he consider this prohibition as being of little practical relevance, as some Talmudic traditions seem to suggest, or is ours a conscious counter-midrash which tells us — perhaps even teasingly — that one *does* expound these subjects (כן דורשין) ... (בעריות...)? Could it even be an implicit hint to the reader that the book which he holds in his hands is one which expounds the most secret and esoteric of all parts of Jewish religious tradition? In other words, is the present work an example of a midrashic popularization and vulgarization of *merkavah* mysticism and Hekhalot literature in the Geonic period, or is it a unique remnant of the activities of esoteric circles?

At present, it is difficult to decide upon this question. At any rate, the author of the *Sefer Zeh Sefer Toledot Adam* has created a highly sophisticated literary composition, which describes man's place in the cosmos, from the pre-existence of the soul (§3–4) and his astrologically determined birth (§5) to the ultimate fate of future generations written down on the *pargod* (§45) and the arrival of the messiah (end of §43). It is simultaneously a description of a terrestrial and celestial journey reminiscent of Hekhalot literature, a letter-midrash on Genesis 5:1, a literary elaboration of elements borrowed from BT Ḥagigah, a discussion of liturgy, and a collection of discussions on such topics as astrology and physiognomy, adapted from other sources. Reading the text from this perspective, the reader at times may fear that the author of the midrash is about to lose control of all these different elements and that his composition might dissolve into a chaotic assortment of disparate elements arbitrarily borrowed from different sources. But so far as we can tell from the surviving material, the anonymous author executed his undertaking

with considerable virtuosity, and he has provided us with a unique panorama of the spiritual world of Judaism in the Geonic period, with its mystical traditions, ethical convictions and eschatological hopes.

Texts and Translations¹⁰⁸

MS I: Cambridge University Library, T-S K 21.95L and T-S K 21.88¹⁰⁹

א1

סימן טוב

- אמר רבי ישמעאל כשעליתי למרום [ל]ה[סתנ]ל במרכבה הייתי
נכנס בששה היכלות חדר {בהוך} בתוך חדר וכיון שהגעתי
לפתח היכל שביעי עמדתי בתפלה לפני הקדש ב"ה" ונשאתי את
עיני כלפי למעלה ואמרתי ריבוני בבקשה מלפניך שתגרום 5
לי זכות אהרון אוהב שלום ורודף שלום וקיבל כתר כהונה
מסיני שלא יחבלוני מלאכי חבלה ולא ישרפוני עיני גיאים <גיא>
מיד אמ"הק" לשרפים ולאופנים ו<ל>כרובים ולחיות שרפיי אופניי
כרוביי חיותיי כסו פניכם מפני ישמעאל בני חביב ונחמד
מיד כיסו פניהם ובא מיטטרון שניקרא שמו איטמון 10
פיסקון רוח פרסק[... ..] נית סנגרון סיגרון מיקון מיטון
אסטס הסטס הסקוס והשלם לי בשלומי והציגני על רגלי
ועדין לא היה בי כו[ח] לומר שירא<ה> לכסא כבודו שלמלך
הכבוד אדיר כל המלכים זוהר כל הרוזנים עד שכלתה
לי שעה ואחר שעה פתח לי ה"ק"ב"ה" שערי חכמה שע" בינה 15

108 The present edition aims at an easily readable presentation of the text. Lacunae and illegible passages in the texts are designated by square brackets [...]. Text within these brackets represents the present editors' attempts at restoration of the text. Suggested corrections are given in the footnotes to the translation. Curved brackets {...} designate erasures by the scribe, angle brackets <...> his later additions.

109 The text and translation of MS I (CUL T-S K 21.95L and T-S K 21.88) are based on the edition prepared for the fourth volume of the *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza*, Tübingen (forthcoming). We are grateful to the editors Peter Schäfer and Shaul Shaked for permitting us to use this material prior to its publication.

והאיר את עיני והכניסני אצל מקום שכינה וגילה לי
והראני את אותן הנשמות שעדין לא נבראו לגוף שהן
מפורחות למעלה מכסא הכבוד לפני הקבה ואחר כך
פרחתי פי ודרשתי את הפסוק הזה כי רוח מלפני יעטף
ונש"א" עשיתי כי רוח מ"יע" איל אותן הנשמות שנבראו

20

ב1

בגוף הבריות ש[ל צדי]קים וחזר לפני ה"ק"ב"ה" ונ"א" ע" אילו
נשמות של צדיקים שעדין לא נבראו לגוף שהן פירושי
בספר: זה ספר תולדות אדם ב"ב" א"ל" א" ב" אל" ב" א":¹¹⁰
אמר רבי ישמעאל שוב אמר למיטטרון שר הפנים
בוא ואראך נשם" שלבינונים ונש" שלרשעים היכן הן /עו
עומדות והיאך מור<>דין אותן לשאול על ידי שני המלאכים
זעפיאל וסמכיאל סמכיאל שהוא ממונה על נש" שלבינונים
כדי ל<ס>מכן ולטהרן מחט כרוב רחמין שלמקום ועפיאל
ממונה על נש" שלרשעים כדי להורידן מלפני השכינה
מבית דין שלמעלה לשאול ולנדונם באש של גיהנם
במקלות שלגחלים והלכתי אצלו ותפסני ב[י]דו והעליני
בכנפיו והראני את כולם באצבעו[ת] י[ד]יו כאב שהוא מורא
לבינו אותיות שלתורה והראני שנים עשר מזלות וגם
מלושיה{ם}<ן> זה האמור כן אינו אילא בי[ת] אמר הנולד
במזל <ב>מאזנים ביום ראשון בצדק או בלבנה כיון שהוא
נולד הולד בב" שעות הללו אינו נולד אילא כשהוא
זוטוקטין וצהוב ואות יהיה לו באצבעות ידיו ואצבעות
רגליו או אצבע יתירה ביד<ו> או ברגליו ואתו האיש מהיר
יהיה וג" שירטוטין בכתרים במצחו והאמצעי קיטע
לג" ושירטוטיו רחבות והוא אחד מן הטובים ובין
שבעה חדשים ועשרה ימים חולה ו<י>היה במים חמי[ם]
יעלו עליו וכל הרואה אתו אומר לא נתמלט מאותו

5

10

15

20

א2

[הצ]ער מן היסור[ים] [ומ]כות [...] [...] ושנים
 ש[... ..] ג חדשים ולסוף יבוא עליו איש
 חכם ממקום אחר בעל קומה וי[כתוב] לו קמ[יע] וראש
 שמיה ועל [...] [...] ורומשקה לו סם וירפא: ובן"ה"
 שנים ברזל [...] [...] עליו ויהתוך קמיעא מבשרו וכמה 5
 ימים יצטעיר עד שירפא: בן ז"ש שנים יפול מן הגג
 וישתבר ראשו ולא ימות: ובן ח"ש שנים יכנס לבית רבו
 וילמד תורה ונביאים וכתובים: ובן ז"י"ש שנים יצא מבית
 מקרא ויכנס לת<ג>אים ושונה משנה והלכות יתיר מחבירו
 וכשהוא שונה בסדר נשים יקנה כסף וזהב: ובן כ"וט"
 שנים ילך וישא אשה שראש שמה ח"מבנות גדול[י]
 הדור שיש לה ממון הרבה וילדו לו שני בנים תיומין
 ובן ס"ו"ש שנים חולאים הרבה עד שמגיע מתוך חוליו
 לשערי מות ובנים ג"בונות בוכין ומספדין עליו:
 סליק פירקא 15 כל שאתה רואה ששירטוט נגדיו
 לנגד עפעפיו כניגדו חייו במנין עשר נ"חוטמו כשפופרת
 וטול יעלה ו[...] [...] עליו כי אין לו התנחל בעולם והנ[ו]לד בא"
 בשבא בצדק או בלבנה יהיה ראש וחכם ושתי נשים
 יקח ומאשה אחרנה יבנה על השלישי וג"בנות יהיו
 לו מן אשה הכשר ואחת מהן כשיא כלה כלתה ובן 20
 נ"ז"ש שנים יהיה פקיד בגנזי המלך או פקיד בבית המלך
 לישק על פיו כל בני המדינה וימות בן שבין. הנולד
 בשני בשבה במזל ארי או בטלה בלבנה [כ]יין שהוא
 נולד יהרג את הלבנה וכשהגיע בן ה"ש שנים [י]פול הכמה
 ובן ז"ש שנים תבלול נפל בעינו ובן {ה"ש שנים} וצער
 גדול יהיה לו עד שיבא אדם אחד שראש שמו י"

ב2

[... ..] ישיח [ו]ינפח בחו[ט]מו וירפא וצ[ער]
 גדול י[ה]יה לו מ[צ]עיר[ו]תו ועד זקנ[ו] ובמאכל [ומ]שתה

- ובכ[ס]ות [...] כל ממונו של [א]ביו או גנבין באין
עליו ומן השמים ירחמו עליו ויצ[ילוהו מן הצ]ע[ר] וירוח
וחייו ע" חסיר י" ימים וכשהוא מת [יום] שבה בכוכב 5
הנוגה ס"ל פי" וכל שאתה רואה פניו כאיספקלרי[א]
ורסי עיניו צהובין וגבותיו צהובין הוא ושירטוטו
פדחתו מקוטעין ובתוך פדחתו כתוב ג" הוא א" מן /ע
שינויהר ס והנולד בג" במזל עקרב או בארי כיון
שהוא נולד עד שבת יום בר תליא ללבנה וכשהגיע 10
[ל]חמש יום טובה היה בטוב ונושה אשה בן י"ט שנה
וראש שמה הו" והוא והיא ממשפח[ה] טובה בן ן שנה
יעלו לו את הזזית על בשרו וירפא על יד[ין] אשה ע
ערבית והיא זנות וכל שנה ושנה חודש אחד עד שהגיע
לפ"ר" שנה ועד שימלא לו ח" ש" [הוא] לא ילמד את התורה 15
ואחר כך כל שחביריו ילמדו בשני ימים הוא ילמד ביום
אחד ובינשיאת אשה יהיה מריבה ד[ין] ודברים ובכ" וג"
שנים ילד לו בן והוא יגדיל וכל שירטוט פסת ידיו
מרובין סימניו דרך פשוט תחת הנהר הגדול הוא א" מן
דכיברות וכל שירטוט שבאמץ פסת יד אם דומה לשין 20
שין וריש למעלה וקרדום למטה הוא אחד מן ל"ד"
סל" פי" והנולד ברביעי במזל ארי או במזל נוגה הוא
בן מאירת פנים ושיפתותיו כשושנים ועיניו גבוהות
וחכם למ[א]ד ועד לא יפתח לבו ובן ז" נופל מן סולם
או בטיט ביום הב" וג שבור מפרקתו והיה קשקיש 25
עד ל" שנים ובן ל" ישא אשה שראש שמה ז" וילך בן
- א3
- [...] רך לקנות לו נכ[ס]ים כיון ש[הוא מגיע ל]מ[דינה]
[א]חת נפילה מפלת על[יו] ולא יזיק אילא כל ימיו ילך ויבא
[ל]מטה שברו והוא גביר בזקנו ומלאכת מלכים הוא ממונה
וימי חייו [...] שנים [ה]יא אחד מן בינוניות וימות בד"
[ש]עות של יום [...] כל שאתה רואה קומה בטממוהון 5

וראשו כ[אג]מו[ן] ושני שירטוטיו בסתר שפו<פ>רתו ואחד בסתר
 שפופרת שלי[מ]ין שלך בידוע שהוא אוחז אחרונים ומאביד
 את הראשונים והציפור בפסת ימינו יהרג בחרב וימות
 וכשאתה רוצה להביט בו כמה שנים הוא יחיה ר[אה] ב[ג]ב
 של עין שכל שרטוט ושירטוט {ס} כנגד ס" והם חיי
 10 וכל הנולד בה וישבו מזל סרטן או בתולה יחיה ושומ[א]
 באצבעו הקמוצי וסופר מהיר {...} י[היה] וראיית פניו
 נחמדים בעיני הכל וקולו נמוך ובקו א[...]. יחיה הנוגה נא[...]
 וחכם ופקח וסופר בילדותו {דוח} רוח רעה נכנסת בו
 ויצטער ג" שנים צער גדול מן רוח רעה ומן החולי ומן
 15 היסורים וסוף [יב]א עלך אדם רופא מארץ כושים שראש
 שמו י" ויחלש עליו וישקהו סם ג" ימים ויתרפא מרוח רעה
 ומן היסורים שעליו ובן ד ש" ו"ד" חדשים מן עין רע אש
 יחריך מקצת [...]. א[בריו וכשהוא מת בחדש טבת
 20 [...]. בט" ו" בחדש בחצ[י] [ה]ל[ילה] ויש לו גדול טוב: וכל
 שאתה רואה שיפתותיו דובקין כאחד ולא נראה
 ב[...]. <ס>טורו שלו ועינו אחד זגלגל ודמעה יזל ממנו הוא
 א מן מעתיה וגונב [...]. ד ורבת ונדמה בתוכו כברו
 והוא אינו אילא תוכו כ[א]רס ולבבו כפחתא ושער גבינו
 25 וריסיו הן זוקפין חוזיר ויעשה ד וטבח ויהיה אחד מן
 נמשיאם ס וכל הנולד בו" בקשת ובמזל טלה יהיה

ב3

[...] אשה [...]. סר ונתערב [ע]ם המזומנים ואוכ[ל]
 מ" שלו ונה[נה] מי[ג]יעו וישא אשה [ובש]נותה מ[יתה] וחזר [...]
 ונשא אשה א[ח]רת [שר]אש שמה ה" [...]. ו[כ]שהוא נושא
 [אותה] ונתערבה בזכר ונק" זכר [יח]יה [ונק" ת]מות ומלמד
 5 ברבים יהיה והוריק נפשות יהיה ברשעת[ו] יעשה תשובה
 יושב ודומים וסוביל חולאים [ב]סתר [ו]בגלוי ומת בשם הטו[ב]
 וגורלו גור<ל> טוב וכל שאתה רואה צהובין גבותיו [...]
 רבה ו[כש]הוא כועיס יפחו צרעותיו ויפחו נז[...]. ניו

ויתקצ}ר}פו עיניו הוא א" מן רשעים וחיל[קו] וגורלו במא[כל]
 10 ובמשתה וכשהוא יגדיל יגזול ושירטוט [...]תור [ו]מ[ע]יד
 אלא שהן מועטין ומקוטעין ונחלה אין לו [...]עבור וה[ו]א
 [מנ]היג בסררותיו ס וכל הנולד בשב[ה] בתאומים במזל
 ארי מפעלותיו [מ]סותרים נאים חפין ומתחנין [...] ...
 ויענה וקללתו [כמג]דיף וברכותיו כב[...].ל חתוך עני יהיה
 15 ומז[ו]נותיו קטעין ואוהב שמים יהיה וימות בארץ טהור
 ביום השבת ושם ראש שמה שלא[שתו] ל או ר[יש] ס
 בני פקח עיניך וראה בעיניך ושמע באזניך אם אתה
 מגלה מעשה הכרת גופותיו האש ונ[דון] ובשיני¹¹¹ עולמים
 וגופו ניתן לאכזרי ואם שמרה [ו]ל[א] נ[תנה] לכל עין י
 20 אילא לראוי לו ולא ישנה ב[ה] [...]פרי [...] ולא יהא מהרהיר
 בלבו בטבילה במקום צניע[ות] שאין הבריות מכירות בו
 וינהוג עצמו בשפלות רוח ואינו מדבר שוא אשריו
 בחייו ואשריו במותו כי הוא "א" מ[ן] הקדושים ונוחיל
 שם טוב לו ולזרעו עד עול[ם] [א]ם אתה רוצה
 25 להתחכם בהן ובמעשה איש אשה ובהמה וחיה ועוף
 ורימסי אדמה עמוד וט[ו]ב[ו]ל טבילה חמורה מן ספי[ק]

1r

A good sign.

[§1] Rabbi Yishma'el said: When I went up to the height to look at the *merkavah*, I entered six palaces, chamber within chamber. And when I reached

the entrance of the seventh palace, I stood (there), praying in front of the Holy One, blessed be He, and I raised

5 my eyes upwards and I said: "My master, I beg you that the merit of Aaron, who loved peace and pursued peace, and he received the crown of priesthood

111 Vocalized in the MS with *ḥiriq* and *tzere*.

from Sinai, cause the angels of destruction not to destroy me and the eyes of the haughty ones not to burn me.”

[§2] The Holy One immediately said to the Seraphim, Ophannim, Cherubim and the *Hayyot*: “My Seraphim, my Ophannim, my Cherubim, my *Hayyot*, cover your faces before Yishma‘el, my beloved and desired son!”

- 10 Immediately, they covered their faces, and Metatron, who is called ‘YTMWN
 PYSQWN Spirit PRSQ[... ..]NYT SNGRWN SYGRWN MYQWN
 MYTWN
 ‘STS HSTS, came, and he restored my well-being and raised me on my feet.

And still, I did not have the [power] to utter a song¹¹² for the throne of the glory of the King

- of Glory, the mightiest of all kings, the splendor of all rulers, until
 15 an hour elapsed for me. And after an hour, the Holy One, blessed be He, opened for me the gates of wisdom and the gates of understanding, and he enlightened my eyes. [§3] And he led me to the place of the *Shekhinah*. And he revealed to me and showed me those souls, which have not yet been created in a body, which hover above the throne of glory in front of the Holy One, blessed be He. And thereafter,
 I opened¹¹³ my mouth and I expounded the verse (Isaiah 57:16) “for the spirit becomes wearied before me,
 20 and I have made the souls”. “For the spirit becomes wearied before me” — these¹¹⁴ are

112 The scribe probably corrected שירא into שירה without erasing the *aleph*.

113 Emending to פתחתי.

114 Emending to אלה.

those souls, which have been created in the body of the [righteous] creatures,

Fol. 1v

and they have come back to the Holy One, blessed be He.¹¹⁵ “And I have made the souls” — these are the souls of the righteous, which have not yet been created in a body, which are expounded in the book (Genesis 5:1): *This is the Book of the Generations of Man. On the day when God created man, He made¹¹⁶ him in the image of God.*

[§4] Rabbi Yishma'el said again: Metatron, the Prince of countenance, told me:¹¹⁷

- 5 “Come and I will show you the souls of the intermediate and of the wicked, where they are standing, and how they bring them down to hell with the help of two angels,
Z'PY'L and SMKY'L — SMKY'L, who is in charge of the souls of the intermediate to strengthen them and to purify them from sin according to the great grace of God. And Z'PY'L is in charge of the souls of the wicked, in order to bring them down from before the *Shekhinah*,
10 from the heavenly court-house, to Hell, and to judge them with the fire of Gehenna, with rods of coals.” And I went to him, and he took me by his [hand] and raised me

115 Emending to חזרו.

116 Emending the text to read ע[שה] instead of ב[רא] according to Genesis 5:1.

117 Emending to read לי מטטרון.

upon his shoulders, and he showed me all of them with the [fingers] of his [hand] like a father who teaches¹¹⁸ his son the letters of the Torah. And he showed me the twelve signs of the zodiac and also their horoscopes.¹¹⁹ [§5] (The letter) *zeh* said here is nothing but [*zeh* as it is said (Genesis 28:17): *This is none other than the House of God.*]¹²⁰ He said: The one who is born

15 under the sign of Libra on Sunday, in the (hour) of Jupiter or the Moon — when he is born in these two hours, he is only born as a small (child), and yellow, and he will have a sign on the fingers of his hand and the toes of his feet, or (he will have) an additional digit on his hands or feet. And this man will be swift. And he will have three lines in the crowns of his forehead, and the one in the middle will split

20 into three. And (if) his lines will be broad, he will be one of the good ones. And at the age of seven months and ten days he will be sick, and one will put [warm] water upon him, and everyone who sees him will say that he will not escape from this

Fol. 2r

pain, afflictions and [injuries] [... ...] and two

118 Emending to מורה.

119 מלושא is the Syriac word for the signs of the zodiac.

120 The midrashic formula is corrupt here (cf. the introduction above): זה האמור כן אינו אילא [זה שגא' אין זה כי אם] ב[ית אלהים] כה אמר יהוה השמים כסאי והארץ הדם רגלי איזה בית אשר תבגורלי: Isaiah 66:1. ואיזה מקום מנוחתי.

- ??? [... ...] three months. And in the end a wise man will come to him from another place, a tall one, and he will [write] an [amulet] for him, and the beginning of his name is (...). And upon [... ...], and he will give him a drug to drink, and he will recover. And at the age of five
- 5 years, iron [... ...] upon him and cut¹²¹ a bit of his flesh, and for a few days he will have pain, until he will recover. At the age of seven years he will fall from the roof and break his head, but he will not die. At the age of eight years he will enter the (school)house of his master and he will learn Torah, Prophets and Scriptures. At the age of seventeen years, he will leave the Bible school and go to the *tannaim*, and he will study the Mishnah and Halakhot more than his fellows.¹²²
- 10 And when he studies the Order of *Nashim*, he will acquire silver and gold. At the age of twenty-nine years he will go and marry a woman, the beginning of whose name is *Het*, of the daughters of the [dignitaries] of the generation, who possesses great wealth. And twin sons will be born to him, and at the age of sixty-six he will have many illnesses, so that due to his sickness he will reach the gates of death. And three sons and daughters will mourn and bewail him.
- 15 End of the chapter. Everyone, whom you see that he has lines in front of his eyelids, his life will be the number of ten ???. Whose nose is like a tube and ??? will rise and [...] upon him, because he has no one to inherit him in the world. The one who is [born] on

121 Emending to יחתוך.

122 Following the emendation חבריו.

- Monday in the (hour) of Jupiter or the Moon will be a leader or a sage,
and he will take
two wives, and with another one he will get children for a third time.
And he will have three daughters
20 from the appropriate¹²³ wife. And one of them will perish while being a
bride. And at the age of
fifty-seven years, he will be in charge of the treasures of the king or in
charge of the king's palace,
and all the men of the country will obey (the words of) his mouth. At
the age of seventy he will die. The one who is born
on Monday under the sign of Leo or Aries in the (hour) of the Moon,
[when] he is
born, he will kill (?) the moon. At the age of five years, he [will] fall ill
in bed,¹²⁴
25 and at the age of seven years, cataracts will befall his eyes, and at the
age of (...) and great pain,
until a man will come, the beginning of whose name is *Yud*

Fol. 2v

- [...] ??? and he [will] blow into his [nose], and he will recover. And he
will have great pain
from his [youth] to [his] old age. And food, drinking
and clothing [... ...] all the money of his father, or thieves will come
upon him. And heaven will have mercy upon him and will [rescue him
from the pain], and he will have relief.
5 And his life will be ten days less than seventy (years), and when he dies
he (will die on)
[the day of the] Sabbath in the (hour) of the star of

123 Emend: הנשורה?

124 Emend: במיטה?

Venus. End of the chapter. And everyone whom you see that his face is like a speculum, and his eyelashes are yellow, and he (...), and the lines¹²⁵ of his forehead are broken, and on his forehead a *Gimel* is written, he is one of the ????. End (of the chapter). The one who is born on Tuesday in the sign of Scorpio or Leo, when

10 he was born before the seventh day, a day of the node of the moon (...), but when he reaches the fifth day in a good state, he will be good. And he will marry a wife at the age of nineteen years, and the beginning of her name will be *Heh*. And he and she will come from a good [family]. At the age of fifty years, he will get tumescences on his flesh, and he will be cured by an Arab woman, and she will be a whore.¹²⁶ And (he will get this illness) one month every year, until he will reach

15 eighty-six years. And until eight years will become full, [he] will not learn the Torah, but afterwards, whatever his fellows will learn in two days, he will learn in one day. And there will be struggles, disputes and words at his wedding. And at the age of twenty-three years, a son will be born to him and he will grow. And all the lines of the palm of his hands are many, (and) his signs are a simple way under the great river, he is one of

125 Emending to read: שירורי.

126 Emending to read: זונה.

- 20 ???, and every line, which is in the middle¹²⁷ of the palm of the hand —
 if it resembles a *Shin*¹²⁸
 and a *Resh* from above, and a hatchet from below, he is one of the
 thirty-three.
 End of the chapter. And the one who is born on Wednesday in the sign
 of Leo or in the sign of Venus, he
 has a radiant face, and his lips are like roses, and his eyes are high,
 and he will be [very] wise, but his heart will not yet be opened. And at
 the age of seven, he will fall down a ladder
 25 or into the mud, on Monday or Tuesday. He will break¹²⁹ his ankle, and
 he will be confused
 until the age of thirty years. And at the age of thirty years he will marry
 a wife, the
 beginning of whose name is *Zayin*, and he will go at the age of

Fol. 3r

- [...] ??? to buy [goods]. When [he reaches one country],
 a collapse will fall upon [him], but it will do no harm. But during his
 whole life he will come and go
 [for] provisions. He will become a lord in his old age, and he will be
 appointed to the work of kings.
 And the days of his life will be [...] years. And she will be one of the
 intermediate.¹³⁰
 And he will die in the fourth
 5 hour of ???-day. Everyone, whom you see that his stature is ???
 and his head like a reed, and two of his lines are hidden under his tube
 and one hidden under

127 Emend: באמצע?

128 The second *shin* is a dittography.

129 Emending to read: ישבור.

130 The sentence is incomplete. It probably refers to the wife he is going to marry.

the right tube, you should know that he keeps the later and loses the first ones. And the bird on the palm of his right hand will be killed with the sword, and he will die.

- If you wish to see how many years he will live, look at the brows¹³¹ of the eye, because every line is ??? against ???, and they are his life. And everyone who is born on Thursday and has the sign of Cancer or Virgo will live. And he will have a birthmark on his ring finger and he will be a swift scribe. And the appearance of his face will be pleasant in the opinion of everyone, and his voice will be low and he will be ??? [...] will live. Venus ??? [...] wise and smart, and a scribe. In his youth, an evil spirit will enter him, and he will have great pain for three years from the evil spirit and from illness and from sorrow. And at the end, a man, a doctor, [will come] to him¹³² from the land of the Ethiopians, the beginning of whose name is *Yud*. And he will whisper¹³³ over him and give him a drug to drink for three days and he will recover from the evil spirit and from the sorrow which had befallen him. And at the age of four years and four months, an evil eye, fire, will burn a bit of [...] of his [limbs]. And when he dies, it will happen in the month of Tevet [...] on the fifteenth day, at midnight, and he will have a good fate.¹³⁴ And everyone whom you see that his lips stick together and cannot be seen in his [...], and one of his eyes is oval and a drop of tears is running out of it — he

131 Emending to read: בגבות.

132 Emending to: עליו.

133 Emending to: ילחוש.

134 Emending to: גורל.

is one of the ???, and a thief [...] ??? ???. And his innermost is similar to his outer appearance, and his inside is like [poison], and his heart like a pit. And (if) the hairs of his eyebrows
 25 and his eyelashes are standing upright — he will return and do repentance,¹³⁵ ??? and slaughter (?),¹³⁶ and he will be one of the ????. End (of the chapter). And everyone who is born on Friday, in Sagittarius and in the sign of Aries, will be

Fol. 3v

[...] wife [...] ??? will intermingle with the invited guests. And he will [eat] from his own and enjoy (the fruits) of his labor. And he will marry a wife, and within [her first year,¹³⁷ she will die], and again, he will marry [another] wife, the beginning of whose name is *Heh* [...]. And when he marries [her], she will get pregnant¹³⁸ with a boy and a girl. And the boy [will live and the girl will] die. And he will teach
 5 in public, and he will be a killer of souls. And in [his] wickedness, he [will] do repentance. He will sit in silence and will suffer illnesses secretly and overtly. And he will die with a [good] name, and his fate will be a good fate. And everyone whom you see that his eyebrows are yellow [...] many, and when he is angry, his temples¹³⁹ are swelling, and his [...] are swelling,

135 Adding: תשובה [וייעשה].

136 Perhaps emending to: טובה — “good”.

137 Emending to: ובשנתה.

138 Emending to: ונתעברה.

139 Emending to: צדעותיו.

and his eyes become angry — he is one of the wicked and his [part],
 and his fate consists of [eating]
 10 and drinking. And when he grows up, he will steal. And the line [...] and give testimony,
 unless they are few and interrupted. He will not have a share [...] ???.
 And he
 will be a leader in his office. End (of the chapter). And everyone who is
 born on the [Sabbath] in Gemini in the sign
 of Leo — his deeds are [hidden], pleasant, innocent and full of grace
 [...]
 and he will answer. And his curse is [like a blasphemer] and his
 benedictions like [...] ??? cut. He will be poor
 15 and his food will consist of little pieces, and he will love heaven, and
 he will die in a pure¹⁴⁰ country
 on the Sabbath. And the name, the beginning of his [wife's] name, is
Lamed or [*Resh*]. End (of the chapter).
 My son, open your eyes and see with your eyes and hear with your ears,
 that anyone
 who reveals the work of the physiognomy of their body (...) fire, and he
 will be sentenced, and in the two worlds,
 and his body will be handed over to the cruel one. But if he keeps it
 [and does not give it] to every eye,
 20 but only to the one who is worthy of it, and if he does not change in it
 [...] ??? [...] and does not think
 in his heart of vanity¹⁴¹ (and sits)¹⁴² in a secluded place, where men
 cannot discern him,
 and lives in humility and does not speak idle things — blessed be he

140 Emending to: טהורה.

141 Emending to: בטלה.

142 Adding: ויושב.

in his life and in his death, because he is [one of] the saints, and he inherits
 a good name for himself and for his descendents forever. If you want
 25 to become wise in them (i.e., in these things) and in the works of men
 and women,
 beasts, animal, birds and reptiles of the earth, stand up and make a strict
 immersion
 because of the [doubt of]

MS II: New York, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, ENA 962.20 and
 ENA 508

א0

[... ..] יל[... ..]
 [... ..] תמ[ור] ור[... ..]
 אמונ[ה] ה[... ..]
 [ארבע]ת [ה[... ..]
 5 [... ..] שאננו[ת] אין אלף הכתוב כן אילא[... ..]
 [... ..] אל תיקרי [אלף אילא ...]
 [... ..] וגמ' דבר [... ..]
 [ו]דרך נקבה ה[... ..]
 [... ..] אן עושין [... ..]
 10 [... ..] ל[נ]קבה הג[... ..]
 [... ..] ותורת[י] בינו [... ..]
 [דרו]שה ותבועה [... ..]
 [בזי]ווג יול[ד]ות שגגנו על[... ..]
 [חמ]שה וארבעת יל[דיהן] ...
 15 [... ..] לים מפני ש[חשבו] ...
 [נודע] ל[... ..] וחוש[בות] ...
 [אח]ריתן בהן ו[מה]ן [... ..]

[אחר]יהן שנוש[אות]

ב0

- [... ... נפ]גשות ור[...]
- [... ... ל]ת ומיהן
- [... ... רבו]ן ומספר
- [... ... שבח]ן מ[...]
- [... ... וי]פחות יד 5
- [... ... מנכ]סיהן ומיהן
- [... ... מז]ה נפרעות לע[ולם]
- [הבא ומזה נפרעות] בעולם הז[ה]
- [... ... ואילו] הוא
- [... לדור ד]ור[ים]ם משכלת 10
- [... על ידי] חולאים ואיל[ו]
- [... ... נפרעות] בעולם הזה
- [... בשבח] מקום ומנקבת
- [...]על זו וזו מוכריזין [...]
- [... הדבר] אין דל הכתוב 15
- [כן אילא] דור אל תיקרי דל
- [אילא] דור לדור ישבח

א1

- [... ...]מ' וג[מ]'
- [... ...]ת' יי[ת]
- [... ...]ע[ן] ...
- [... ...]בני אדם[...]
- [... ...]מ' ... 5
- [עופות אמר לי הבינט ו]ראה [עופות]
- [השמים שהן נותנין] שבח [ל...]
- [שלעולם ואמר לי אף על פי] שה[ן]
- [נותנין שבח אמר הב]ה[...]

- 10 צור עולמים א[ין] לי חיפ[ן] אלא ביונה]
 שהיא תמה ואינה משנה את [בן זוגה]
 לפיכך נימשלה כנ[סת] ישראל ב[יונה]
 תמה ואין הקב"ה משניה באומה אח[רת]
 ועליה נאמר נשבע יי' בימינו וגמ' [...]
- 15 [ו]הן מחרפין ומגדפין בטמאתם ובגלול[יהם]
 ואף על פי כן אינו עושה כלה שנ[א']
 ואף גם זאת וגמ' אין מס ה[כתוב]
 כן אינו אילא מה אל תי[קרי] מס]
- ב1
- [אילא ודמה שנ'] ו[דמה לך] וג'
 [...] מ[תבוניני]ם]
 [...] ומ... גלי[צור] שם קדוש
 [סוריה שר הפנים] ה[ד]ר מרום כל
 [הביט ו]ראה [בה]מות השדה שיש 5
 [...] שא[ין] נוגעין בשאר בשרן
 [אף על פי] שאינ[ן] מצוין עליהן אבל
 [בני אדם] רצ[ין] אחר שאיריהן
 [ועוברים ע]ל מה שכתוב בתורה
 [איש] אי[ש] אל כל שאיר בשרו וג' 10
 [...] זה הוא מ[ן] בהמות השדה
 [ש]אין נוגיע בקרבו ושאין נוגיע
 [באמו] הרי סוס ובו נאמר לסוס[תי]
 [...] וג' אבל בני אדם
 [...] וביתהן כגין אמגן 15
- א2
- ואמן ועליהם [א]מר [הכתוב א]רור א[שר]
 לא יקים א[ת] ד[ברי התור]ה הזא[ת] וגמ'
 אין בו הכתוב [כן אינו אילא בעשות]

אל תיקרי בו א[ילא] בעשות[ת] רש[עים]	
5 כן יהיו אפור דרכי חיתו יער ל[עשות]	
והביט והבין וראה במעשי [יוצר]	
כל התבונן בבני אדם שיש ב[יניהם]	
שדומין שהן מיתקבצין [...]	
אחת אצל נקבה ואין אר[ך] להם ומאור]	
10 פנים אבל קינאה ותחרות[ת] ומצות]	
ואין אחוה ביניהם ונקיבות[ת] אין]	
עמהן אחוה אילא אצל כל אחד [מהם]	
לפי שעה הביט [ור]אה דעתו של [...]	
של יוצר כל כמה רחבה שבני א[דם]	
15 מכעיסין במעשיהם הרעים [ואין]	
להם אר[ך] ואין בהם אחד [...]	
אתו במעשים טובים [... ...]	
	ב2
[דבר ויש ...] יש בהן שיבוא עליה	
[על] שמו [... מא]ותן שהיו	
[מ]ר ה[נא]... בה נ[אמר] שנים	
[..יה פו]ג עין בנקבה שלהן אבל	
5 [אח]ד ני[ז]קק לה אין דל הכתוב כן	
[...] אילא [ד]רכו אל תיקרי דל	
[אילא] דרכי שנ' דרכי ציון אבלות	
[...] מר]ום היבנתי כל זאת ולימדתי	
[.. תי] ולימדני הדר כל מעשה	
10 יו[צ]ר כל ואחר כל אלה הבטתי	
ממרומ[ים] וכל רקיע ורקיע	
מכוונין כסא כבוד ומלאכי השרת	
ושרפים ואו[פנ]ים וכרובים והן	
רצין כבזק ובכל רקיע ורקיע	
15 [כ]בודו וגו' <ד>לו ותפארתו של יוצר	

[כל וב] כל אחת ואחת מכווננים
[עשרים וש]לשה שרים ה>ג>דולים

א3

כנגד סנדרי קטנ[ה וכל] אחד ואח[ד]
משלים סיפרו מעשה כל מציון
עליו וכולם מפארין ומשבחין ל[שם]
הגדול שהוא שם מפורש ואי ז[ה]
הוא שם המפורש זה הוא שם 5
יחיד ומנוקב יה"ו ה"ו י"ה ה"ה י"ה
ואחר כך אמר לי יהו[ה] ה[ש]ר [נער]
אהוב שנקרא על שום קוניו היי[ה]
צופה ואל תירא בכל רקיע ורקיע
מה יש בה והיבטתי ורא[י]תי ללפידים 10
ולפידי אש ומלאכי מרום ומלאכי
רעש והן מפארים ומשבחין למלך [...]
היקרון צור עולמים והמפארין
והמשבחין אין להן חיקר ואין לה[ן]
מספר ועליהם הכתוב אומר [ברכו]
את יי' מלאכיו וגמ' אין [מים הכתוב]

ב3

כן אינו אין[לא מן אל] תיקרי מם אילא
[מן] שנ' מן השמים השמיעך וג' ויבא
[א]לי ואמר לי פקח עיניך וראה שיש
עבדים שהן עתידין להיות בני
חורין וגם השפחות להיות בני 5
חורין ומיהן שהן מורדין באדוניהם
ואילו הן אילו עבדים שיש בהן
[תבו]נה ויש להן אחת מחמש בימין
ושירטוט משולם מתחילה ידוע

- 10 לך שנעשה בני חורין וכל שהיא
צנועה בדרכיה ומעשיה נאין
ויש לה שרטוטין שעולין בידיה
[וב]פדחתה ויש בהן גדולות
[נע]שות בן חורין ואילו הן אילו
- 15 [ש]מורדין באדוניהם כל שקרא
[לו אד]וניו ושנים ושלשה פעמים
[... רגל]יו וגוניב מבית אדניו
- א4 ואילו ס[י]מנין יש [בהן פד]חתו גבוהה
ודעתו ג[ס]ה ושרטוטי פדחתו מוש[ן]יק
עליונים ויש מיהן שמושיך האימ[צעעים]
ובוריה ואינו נמצא וא הכתוב כן אי[נו]
- 5 אילא אני אל תיקרי וא אילא ואני ש[נ']
ואני אמרתי אגלה אזנך לאמר וגמ'
תכין לבך להבין כל מה שיש בחדרי
מעלה כי האש והמים ברקיע [וילון]
מעלה מיוילון ובין מים לרקיע תלויין
- 10 גלגל חמה ולבנה ובתוכה משרתין
משרתי קדוש והחשמל והבזק
ביניהם וביניהם אש ומים ובין מ[ים]
למים אש ובין אש למעלה שחק[ים]
ובשחקים רחים עומדות וטוחנ[ות]
- 15 מן לצדיקים לעתיד לבוא ומעל[ה]
משחקים הבטתי וראיתי [זבול]
וראיתי שר מכובל ב[כבל גדול]
ועצום מאד והיתבו[ננתי]
- ב4 והכרתי ת[בנית] עיר הקודש ומזבח

- [מ]כוננים כהלכתן והיכל מיוסד ועליו
 [ה]כתוב אומר בנה בניתי בית זבול וג'
 ושר עומד על פתח ושלשה פעמים
 ביום צועיק לפני יעמציה פצמציה 5
 סרנינוס סרנינוקוס אטביה יה
 ביה יהוה אלהי ישראל ואמר אוי
 לי על שברי וגמ' ואומר עד אנה
 יהוה תשכחינו נצח וגמ' שג
 עומד והתבוננתי וראיתי 10
 והכרתי ברביעי מעון ראיתי
 כיתות כיתות של מלאכי השרת
 שהן אומרין שירה בלילה וביו<ם>
 [ו]ביום עושין רצון קוניהם
 [ועליה]ם הכתוב אומר יומם 15
 [יצוה יי'] חסדו וגמ' ובחמשית
- א5
- ראיתי במכון אוצרות שלג ואוצר[ות]
 ברד ועליות טללים ועליו הכתוב
 אומר ויפתח יי' לך אוצרו וגמ'
 ובששית ראיתי כסא וחיות ושרפ<י>ם
 ואופנים וכרובים ושכינה רוכבת 5
 עליו בעת ריצוי וכשהוא כועיס
 מלך רם עולה למרום מרומים וגם
 בהיותו במרומים עשה חסד ועליו
 הכתוב אומר עושה חסד לאלפים
 וגמ' אין תו הכתוב אינו אילא תמת 10
 אל תיקרי תו אלא תמת שנ' תמת
 ישרים וגמ' אמרתי לשר השרים
 שהו נער וידוי קושרות תפילי[ן]
 למלכו שלעולם ושמו גליצור [שם קדוש]

15	סוּרִיָּה שֶׁר הַפְּנִים הַדֶּר מְרוֹם] [רום] כֹּל וְשֵׁמוֹ הַסֵּטֶס וְהַקּוֹס [ה... ..] וְהַיִּקְרִין זִיוֹא רַבֵּא הַר... ..]
35	
5	[וּמַח] כּוֹת בַּפְּתַח בְּיָת דִּינוֹ שְׁלַמְלַךְ רֵם [ה]רֵאנִי וְהִנֵּה שְׂרִים וְקְדוּשִׁים יוֹשְׁבֵין עַל פֶּתַח בֵּית דִּינוֹ שֶׁל מְקוֹם שְׁבַעִים [ו]שָׁנִים כְּנֶגֶד שְׁבַעִים וּשְׁנַיִם לְשָׁנוֹת מִפְּנֵי שֶׁסִּלְפּוֹטְרִין שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי מַלְכֵי <א>ם מַלְכִים בְּרוּךְ הוּא יֵשׁ לוֹ שְׁמַנִּים אֲלֵפִים וְשֶׁבַע מֵאוֹת וְשִׁשִּׁים וְשִׁשִּׁים פִּתְחִים וְעַל כָּל פֶּתַח וּפְתַח עוֹמֵדִין עֲלָיו שְׁמַנַּת אֲלֵפִים וְשִׁשִּׁים וְשִׁשִּׁים רִיבּוֹ [מל]אֲכִים קְדוּשִׁים נִכְבְּדִים וְשְׂרִים 10 [ו]שְׂרִים בַּפְּתַח בֵּית דִּינוֹ שֶׁל מְקוֹם [ו]שְׁבַעִים וְאַחַד מֵאֲכִים נִכְבְּדִים [ו]שְׂרִים גְּדוּלִים מִמוֹנִים עַל כָּל [פֶּתַח ו]פֶּתַח כְּסַנְדְרֵי גְדוּלָה לְגַלוּת [... ..] שְׁלַמְלַךְ מַלְכֵי מַלְכִים 15 [... ..] אִיתוֹ מֵאֲכֵי הַשְּׂרֵת]
א6	
5	שְׁעַל הַפְּתַחִים אֵין אֵלֶף הַכְּתוּב כֵּן אֵינוֹ אֵילֵא אִמַּת אֵל תִּיקְרֵי אֵלֶף אֵלֵא אִמַּת שְׁנֵי אִמַּת יֵיי לְעוֹלָם וְגו' לְמַעַלָּה מִמֶּנּוּ הֵיוּ לְפָנֵי מֵאָה רִקִּיעִים לְעֹלוֹת וּבַעוֹמְדֵי בְּמִקוֹמֵי רֵאִיתִי 5 הַרְבֵּי [ש]הֵן מִפֶּאֲרִין וּמִשְׁבַּחִין וְנוֹתְנִין קִילוֹס הוּד וְהַדֶּר שִׁיר וְשֶׁבַח[ח] לְפָנֵי אֲבִיגַי[ת]ם שֶׁהוּא קִרְעַ שְׁטוֹן

סטר צתג הקב ופלגיו ומספרים
 שבחו וגודלו ותפארתו בכל עת 10
 וסר הפנים הדר מרום כל עמד
 אצלו ואמר לי הביט וראה וד[ום]
 ואל תתחר בלבבך אחר מעשה
 יוצר כל שכך כתוב דום ליי' [...] 15
 אין לבד הכתוב כן אינו איל[א]
 לך יי' הגדולה וגמ' [והוא לימדני]

ב6

אורחות חיים (ותורות) ותוכחות
 מוסר ואמרתי לו אלופי עזרי ומפלטי
 דרך ישרים הודיעני ואמר לי שאל
 ואתן לך ואמרת לי לו במה יזכי אדם
 את עצמו ויהא בן העולם הבא 5
 ואמר לי כל האומר בתפילתו
 ובברכת המזון יחיד שמך
 בעולמך יחיד מלכותך בעולמך
 בנה ביתך עשה למען שמך
 ושכליל היכלך עשה למען 10
 למען ימינך מובטח לו שבין
 העולם הבא הוא ואמר לי
 בוא ואראך אפוא מים תלויין
 [במר] ום מרומים ואפוא אש
 [דול]קת במרום מרומים ואפוא 15
 [...] ג]דור במרום מרומים

א7

מיד תפסני ואחזני והושבני על
 כתיפו והחזירני על כל רקיע
 ורקיע שבמרום מרומים וראיתי

כל סידרי מרומים וראיתי בין	
רקיע לרקיע מים ובין מים למים	5
אש אכלה ובין אש לאש מים ובין	
מים אש ומים ובין אש ומים ברד	
ואש ובין ברד ואש גליד ושליג	
ובין גליד ושליג להט ולפיד ובין	
לפיד אש ושלהבת [ו]ברק וחמות	10
אש מוקפות לכסא כבוד ובכל	
רקיע ורקיע כסא כבוד ושכינה	
שרויה עליו ושרפים וחיות מוקפ[ין]	
לכסא ועם כל כסא וכסא אר[בע]	
מאות אלפים ותשים ושש[ה] ...	15
מלאכי השרת מוקפין [...]	
כמראה ברקים [וש]רפים [...]	
למעלה מכסא וכ[...]	
	17
שרפים ארבעה כנגד ארבע רוחות	
העולם וכל אחד ואחד [י]ש לו ארבע	
פנים וארבע כנפים וכל כנף כמלא	
עולם ושרפים אומרי[ן] עם מלאכי	
השרת ק' ק' ק' יי' צ' וג' וחיות עונות	5
אחריהן ברוך וג' ואחר כך הודיע	
הודיעני כמספר כלם והיה מספרן	
אלף מאה וארבעים ושש רקי	
רקיעים ועליהן הכתוב אומר	
הן ליי' אלהיך השמים וג' אין	10
[הי] הכתוב כן אינו אלא הן אל	
תיקרי הי אילא הן שנ' הן ליי'	
אלהיך וג' ידעתי מה במרום מרומים	
[... ..] והעמידני על עמודי	

- 15 [... ..שק]ין לפני מעלות למלאות
 [... .. ארב]ע מאות רקיעים
 [א..] לא עליתי אמר לי אם
 [... ..] להביט וא[ן] אתה
- א8
- כל טוב אבל לאחר שמונה מאות ושב
 ושבעים שנה לאחר [...] לתכלית ק[ץ]
 יבא מושיע ותקיץ לחיי עולם והוי
 זהיר בדבריך שלא יבא בשרך לידי
 סירוק שבשביל שהיצצתה ניגזרה 5
 עליך כך ועל זאת נימס[ר] על [ב..]
 פניך לאכזר אין ען הכתוב [כ]ן אינו
 אילא על אל תיקרי ע[ן] אילא על שנ'
 על זה היה דוה לב[נו וגו'] שמע[תי]
 דבריו וקיבלתי מוסר ואחזני רעד 10
 ומיד החזרתי פני [נ] ע[מ]ד[תי א]חור[י]
 פרגוד וכך שמעתי אשרי מי [שבא]
 לכן ותלמודו בידו אוי לו למי ש[בא]
 לכן ומבקשין ממנו ואין [בידו יאבד]
 זרעו בחיים במעשים ה[רעים ...] 15
 רודף אחריהן להח[זירן ...]
 עד שתצא נשמתו [...] ...]
- ב8
- [..ה]..[רם [ך.] ויבייש את עצמו
 בפני מי שגדול ממנו זכות גדול
 מסיעתו ומחזיר דעתו בתשובה
 שכל מי שמחזיר פושיע אחד לתש
 לתשובה מעלה עליו כאילו בנה את 5
 [כ]ל ה[עו]לם כולו [ו]כל מי שיש בידו

	לימחות ואינו ממחה מעלה עליו	
	כאילו ש[כח] את כל התורה כולה	
	ולא שייר ממנה אפילו אות אחת	
10	ועליו הכתוב אומר מושל מקשיב	
	על דבר שקר וג' וכל מי שעוזב	
	[ב..] ואין [ב] ידו אחר ועליו הכתוב	
	[אומר] ולרשע אמר אלהים אין	
	[שין הכתוב כ]ן אינו אילא שובו שנ' שובו	
15	[מדר] כיכם הרעים וג' חזר	
	[סוי] ריה שר הפנים הדר	
	[מרום כל] אמר לי בבקשה	

Fol. Or

- [§30] [...] ??? [...]
 [...] ??? [...]
 [belief] [...]
 [the four] [...]
- 5 [...] ease. [§31] [(The letter) *Alef* written here is nothing but]
 [...]. Do not read [*Alef* but...]
 [...] etc. Speak [...]
 [...] [and] the female way ??? [...]
 [...] do not do [...]
- 10 [...] to [female] ??? [...]
 [...] and [my] Torah. Understand [...]
 [requested] and demanded [...]
 [in conjugation] they [give birth]. We erred about [...]
 [five] and four [of their] children [...]
- 15 [...] ???, because they [thought] [...]
 [was known] to [...] and [they think] [...]
 their [end comes immediately] them
 [after] them, who be[ar]

Fol. 0v

- [...] [are meeting] and ??? [...]
 [...] ??? And among them (there are)
 [...] [multiplied] and the number
 [...] their praise ??? [...]
- 5 [...] [and he will] lower the hand
 [...] [from their property]. And among them (there are)
 [...] [from that] will be rewarded in the [world]
 [to come, and from that they will be rewarded in this] world.
 [...] whereas he [...]
- 10 [...] [for generation after generation] will be wise
 [...] [through] diseases. Whereas
 [...] [will be rewarded] in this world
 [...] in the praise of *Maqom*. And from the female
 [...] ??? and about this one and that one and that one they declare
- 15 [...] [the word]. [§32] (The letter) *dal* written
 [here is nothing but] *dor*. Do not read *dal*
 but (Psalms 145:4): “One generation shall praise

Fol. 1r

- your works to another”, etc. [...]
 these in her ??? [...]
 of the order of ??? [...]
 of men [...]
- 5 for eight hundred [firmaments] [...]
 birds. He said to me: Look and see [the birds]
 of the heavens which all give praise to [...]
 of the World. And he said to me: Although [they]
 give praise, said the Holy One, blessed be He, [...]
- 10 Eternal Rock: I desire [the dove alone],
 which is innocent and does not change its [mate].

Therefore the Congregation of Israel is compared to an innocent [dove], and the Holy One, blessed be he, does not change her for another nation, and about her it is said (Isaiah 62:8): “The Lord has sworn by His right arm”, etc. [...].

- 15 And they revile and defy (him) with their impurity and [their] idols, but nevertheless, He does not annihilate (them), for it is [said] (Leviticus 26:44):
 “Yet even then”, etc. [§33] (The letter) *mem* written here (is) nothing but *meh*. Do not [read *mem*]

Fol. 1v

[but *u-demeh* as it is said (Song of Songs 8:14): “And] make yourself like”, etc.

[...] [they] observe [...]

[...] ??? [...] [Galitzur], the Holy Name,

[SWYRYH, Prince of the Face], Splendour of the Height of the Universe:

- 5 [Look and] see the [beasts] of the field, who have
 [...] [who do not] touch their consanguine relatives,
 [although they] are not forbidden to them, but
 [men] run after their relatives
 [and transgress] what is written in the Torah (Leviticus 18:6):
 10 “None (of you shall come near) to his consanguine relative”, etc.
 [...] this [from] the beast of the field,
 [who] does not touch his kinsfolk and does not touch
 [his mother]. Behold, a horse, about which it is said (Song of Songs 1:9): “To my mare [I have likened you”,] etc. But men
 15 [...] and their houses like ???

Fol. 2r

- and ???, and about them [Scripture says] (Deuteronomy 27:26): [“Cursed
be he who]
does not uphold [the words of this] Torah”, [etc.]
[§34] (The letter) *bo* written [here is nothing but *ba-‘asot*].
Do not read *bo* but (Ezekiel 23:21): “When they handled” ???
5 thus will be dark the ways of the beasts of the wilderness ???
and look and understand and see the deeds of the [Creator]
of the Universe, and observe men, [among whom] there are those,
who seem, when they come together [once upon a time]
with a woman, as if [they do not have patience and radiance]
10 of the face, but (they have) envy and competition and [strife].
And there is no brotherhood among them, and the [women, there is no]
brotherhood with them, but each [of them]
according to her evil doing.¹⁴³ Look and [see] the mind of [...]
of the Creator of the Universe, how generous it is, because [men]
15 provoke his anger with their evil deeds [and they have no]
patience, and there is not one among them [...]
with him with good deeds [...]

Fol. 2v

- [thing. And there are]. There are among them (those) who have
intercourse with her
[for] his sake [...] [of those] who were
[...] ??? [...] about her it is said: Two
[...] [gives] a glance at their female, but
5 [one intermingles with] her. [§35] (The letter) *dal* written here
[...] nothing but [*darko*].¹⁴⁴ Do not read *dal*
But *darkhe*, as it is said (Lamentations 1:4): “The ways of Zion are
mourning”

143 Emending to: לפשעה.

144 Cf. the expression (Proverbs 30:19) דרך גבר בעלמה.

[...] [height] I understood all this and I learned
 [...], and the Splendour of the Universe taught me the work of
 10 the Creator of the Universe. And after all that I looked
 from the [heights], and (in) all the firmaments,
 (there were) erected¹⁴⁵ thrones of glory and the ministering angels
 and the Seraphim and the [Ophannim] and the Cherubim. And they
 were running like lightning. And in all the firmaments
 15 there is the [glory] and greatness and majesty of the Creator
 of [the Universe, and in] each of them there are established
 [twenty-three] princes, the great ones,

Fol. 3r

corresponding to the [Small] Sanhedrin, and [each of them]
 completes his tale, the works of all are inscribed¹⁴⁶
 on it. And all of them praise and laud the
 great [name], which is the explicit name. And which [one]
 5 is the explicit name? It is the name
 Which is unique and is pronounced YH"W H"W HW"H Y"H.¹⁴⁷
 And thereafter [YHWH, the] Prince, the beloved [youth],
 who is called after the name of his Maker,¹⁴⁸ said to me:
 Watch, and be not afraid, at each of the firmaments,
 10 what is in it. And I looked and [I saw] torches
 and torches of fire and angels of the height and angels of
 noise. And they praised and lauded the King [...]
 HYQRWN, Eternal Rock, and they praised and
 lauded, and they are unfathomable and [they] have no

145 Emending to: מכוונים.

146 Emending to: מצוין.

147 Cf. *Synopse*, §357 (*Hekhalot Zutarti*): ופירוש וניקבוהו וחקרוהו ופירושו: שהוא שם המפורש ופירושוהו וניקבוהו וחקרוהו ופירושו: — “which is the explicit name. And they made it explicit and pronounced it and investigated it. And the explication of his names is Greek.”

148 Emending to: קונו.

15 number, and Scripture says about them (Psalms 103:20): “Praise the Lord, His angels”, etc. [§36] [(The letter) *mem* written]

Fol. 3v

here is nothing but *min*. Do not read *mem* but
 [min], as it is said (Deuteronomy 4:36): “From Heaven He made you
 hear”, etc. And he came
 [to] me and said to me: Open your eyes and see that there are
 slaves who will be freemen in future,
 5 and there are also maids who will be freemen,
 and there are those who revolt against their lords.
 And which ones are those? Slaves who have
 [understanding], and they have one out of five in the right (hand),
 and a perfect line from the beginning — it is known to you
 10 that [they] will be freemen. And every (woman), who is
 virtuous in her behaviour and her deeds are pleasant
 and she has lines that go upwards in her hands
 [and on] her forehead, and there are great ones among them,
 will become freemen. And which ones are those
 15 who revolt against their lords? Everyone
 whom his [lord] called twice or thrice
 [...] his [feet], and (he) steals from the house of his lord.

Fol. 4r

And these are the [signs]. They have a high [forehead]
 and their mind is coarse and the lines of his forehead are [stretched]
 upwards, and there are those which are stretched to the [middle] -
 and he will flee and will not be found. [§37] And (the letter) *wa* written
 here is

- 5 [nothing] but *wa-ani*.¹⁴⁹ Do not read *wa* but *wa-ani*, as it is [said] (Ruth 4:4):
 “And I said: I will uncover your ear and say”, etc.
 Prepare your heart to understand all that is there in the rooms above. For there is the fire (*esh*) and the water (*mayim*) in the firmament of [*Shamayim*]¹⁵⁰
 above *Wilon*, and between the water and the firmament hang
 10 the wheel of the sun and the moon, and within it the servants of the Holy One are serving, and the *HHshmal* and the lightning are between them. And between them there are fire and water, and between the [water]
 and the water there is fire. And between the fire (...). Above (*Shamayim*) there is [*Sheḥaqim*],
 and in *Sheḥaqim* there are millstones standing and [grinding]
 15 manna for the righteous for the future to come. And [above] *Sheḥaqim* I looked and I saw [*Zevul*].
 And I saw a prince bound with a very [large] rope. And I [watched]

Fol. 4v

- and I discerned the [image] of the Holy City and an altar correctly [erected], and a palace founded, and about this [the] scripture says (I Kings 8:13): “I have verily built a house of *Zevul*”, etc.
 And a prince stands at the entrance and three times
 5 a day he shouts in front of Y’MTsYH PTsMTsYH
 SRNYNWS SRNYNQUS ’TBYH YH
 BYH the Lord, the God of Israel. And he said (Jeremiah 10:19): “Woe

149 Emending to: וָאֲנִי.

150 Emending to: שָׁמַיִם.

unto me because of my disaster”, etc. And he says (Psalms 13:2): “Until
 when,
 Lord, will you forget us forever”, etc. And ???
 10 standing, and I watched and I saw
 and I discerned in the fourth (firmament) Ma’on. I saw
 classes and classes of ministering angels,
 who pronounce a song night and [day]
 [and] during the day they carry out the will of their Creator
 15 [and about] them scripture says (Psalms 42:9): “During the day
 [the Lord gives order], His grace”, etc. And in the fifth

Fol. 5r

I saw, in *Makhon*, hoards of snow and [hoards]
 of hail and rising of dew. And about this Scripture
 says (Deuteronomy 18:12): “And the Lord opened his treasure-house
 for you”, etc.
 And in the sixth I saw a throne and animals and Seraphim
 5 and Ophannim and Cherubim and the *Shekhinah* riding
 upon it in times of benevolence. And when He is angry,
 the lofty King ascends to the heights of heights. But even
 when He is in the heights He is gracious, and about Him
 Scripture says (Exodus 20:5, Deuteronomy 5:10): “Is gracious to
 thousands”,
 10 etc. [§38] (The letter) *taw* written here is nothing but *tumat*.
 Do not read *taw* but *tumat* as it is said (Proverbs 11:3): “The innocence
 of the
 Righteous”, etc. I said to the Prince of Princes,
 who is the youth and his hands bind the [phylacteries]
 for the King of the world, and his name is GLYTsUR, [Holy Name]
 15 SWYRYH, Prince of the Face, who lives in the [height]
 of the Universe, and his name is HSTS and HQWS H[...]

and HYQRYN, Great Radiance, ??? [...]

Fol. 5v

And waiting at the entrance of the courthouse of the high king,
 He [showed] me, and behold, princes and saints were sitting
 at the entrance of the courthouse of *Maqom*, seventy-
 two corresponding to seventy-two languages,
 5 because the palace¹⁵¹ of the King of Kings of [Kings]
 of Kings, be He praised, has eight thousand
 seven hundred and sixty-six entrances
 and at every entrance stand
 eight thousand and sixty-six myriads
 10 of holy and honourable [angels] and princes.
 [and] there are princes at the entrance of the courthouse of *Maqom*
 and seventy-one honourable angels
 [and] great [princes] in charge of each of
 [the entrances] like the Great Sanhedrin to reveal
 15 [...] of the King of Kings of Kings
 [...] with him the [ministering] angels

Fol. 6r

who are over the entrances. [§39] (The letter) *aleph* written here
 is nothing but *emet*. Do not read *aleph*
 but *emet*, as it is said (Psalms 117:2): “The truth of the Lord is forever”,
 etc.
 Above it, there were in front of me a hundred firmaments
 5 to ascend. And when I stood at my place, I saw
 many, [who] praised and lauded
 and gave honour, majesty and glory, song and [praise]

151 Emend: פלטרין?

- in front of 'BGYTM, who is QR' ShTN
 STR TsTG HQB, and his divisions. And they recount
- 10 His praise and greatness and glory at all times.
 And the Prince of Countenance, Glory of the height of the Universe,
 stood
 near Him and he said to me: Watch and see and be [silent],
 and do not wonder in your heart about the work
 of the Creator of the Universe, because thus it is written (Psalms 37:7):
 "Be silent for the Lord" [...]
- 15 [§40] (The letter) *labeled* written here is nothing [but] (I Chronicles
 29:11):
 "Yours, Lord, is the greatness", etc. [And he taught me]

Fol. 6v

- the ways of life and the teachings and admonitions
 of ethics. And I said to him: My master, my help and my refuge!
 Let me know the path of the righteous. And he said to me: Ask
 and I will grant (it) to you. And I said to him: How can man gain rewards
- 5 for himself and belong to the world to come?
 And he said to me: Whoever says in his prayer
 and in the Grace after Meals "Let your name
 be unique in your world, let your kingdom be unique in your world.
 Build your temple. Do it for the sake of your name,
- 10 and reconstruct your tabernacle. Do (it) for the sake
 of your right hand", to him it is assured that he will belong to
 the world to come. And he said to me:
 Come, I will show you where the water is suspended
 [in the height] of heights, and where the fire
- 15 [is burning] in the height of heights, and where
 [...] ??? in the height of heights.

Fol. 7r

He immediately seized me and took me and bore me on his shoulder and brought me around to every firmament which is in the height of heights. And I saw the orders of the heights. And I saw in between

5 firmament and firmament water, and between water and water consuming fire, and between fire and fire water, and between water fire and water, and between fire and water hail and fire, and between hail and fire ice and snow, and between ice and snow shining and torch, and between

10 torch fire and flame and lightning, and walls of fire are placed around a throne of glory. And in every firmament there is a throne of glory and the *Shekhinah* is placed on it, and the Seraphim [are] placed around the throne. And with every throne there are [four]

15 hundred thousand and six [...] Ministering angels are placed around [...] in the likeness of lightning, [and Seraphim] [...] above the throne and [Cherubim] [...]

Fol. 7v

Seraphim, four corresponding to the four winds of the world. And each of them [has] four faces and four wings and every wing is like the fullness of the world.¹⁵² And the Seraphim say with the ministering

5 angels (Isaiah 3:6): “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts”, etc., and the *Hayyot* answer after them “Blessed”, etc. And thereafter he informed me about the number of all of them, and their number was

152 Emend to מלא עיניים — “full of eyes”?

one thousand one hundred and forty-six

firmaments, and about them Scripture says (Deuteronomy 10:4):

10 “Behold the Lord your God’s are the heavens”, etc.

[§41] [(The letter) *heh*] of the Scripture here is nothing but *hen*. Do not

Read *heh* but *hen*, as it is said (ibid.): “Behold, the Lord

your God’s”, etc. (So) I knew what is in the height of heights

[...] and he set me up upon my place

15 [...] ??? in front of the steps to fulfil

[...] [four] hundred firmaments

[...] did to ascend. He said to me: If

[...] to watch, and you are [not]

[One folio containing the end of §41, all of §42 and the beginning of §43 is missing.]

Fol. 8r

any good. But after eight hundred

and seventy years after ??? to the final end

the saviour will come, and you will awake to eternal life.

Be careful with your words lest your flesh will be

5 combed. For because you have been peeping it has been decreed

against you like this. And about this it has been handed down about [...]

your face to the cruel one. [§44] (The letter) *‘en* written [here] is nothing
but *‘al*. Do not read [*‘en*] but *‘al* as it is said (Lamentations 5:17):

“About this [our heart] was mourning”, [etc.] I heard

10 his words and received instruction. And trembling took hold of me,

and immediately it turned my face back and I [stood behind]

the curtain, and I heard thus: Blessed be the one [who comes]

here with his learning in his hand. Woe to the one who [comes]

here and one asks him and he has nothing [in his hand. His seed]

15 will be destroyed while he is alive because of the [evil] deeds. [...]

pursues them in order to bring [them back] [...]

until his soul departs [...]

Fol. 8v

[...] ??? [...] and will bring shame upon himself before one who is greater than he. The reward is greater than his ???, and he brings his mind back in repentance, because anyone who brings a wicked person back

5 to repentance will be credited for this as if he had built the [entire world. And] anyone who is in a position to protest and does not protest will be blamed for this as if he had [forgotten] the entire Torah, and left not even a single letter of it.

10 And about him Scripture says (Proverbs 29:12): “The ruler listens to the lying word”, etc. And anyone who leaves [...] and has [no] other one [in] his hand, about him Scripture [says] (Psalms 50:16): “And to the wicked God said”.

[\$45] [(The letter) *shin* written here] is nothing but *shuvu*, as it is said (Zechariah 1:4): “Return

15 [from] your evil [ways”], etc. He came back [...] [SWYRYH] the Prince of the Countenance, the glory of the height of the Universe. He said to me: Please [...]

