THE SHI'UR QOMAH

Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism

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This book is dedicated to the memory of

my beloved mother, Mildred Cohen.

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PREFACE

This book was first conceived as a dissertation when I was a doctoral candidate at the Jewish Theological Seminary several years ago. I am grateful to my colleagues and teachers at the Seminary, and foremost among them, to its Chancellor, Dr. Gerson D. Cohen, for their support and interest during the years of research and analysis I was privileged to conduct in their midst. In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to specifically thank those who offered me even more direct help: my doctoral advisors, Professors Shaye J.D. Cohen, David Halivni and Yochanan Muffs, all three of the Jewish Theological Seminary; Dr. Menahem Schmelzer of the Seminary's Library and Mr. Benjamin Richler of the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, both of whom assisted me in tracking down elusive manuscripts and texts; Professor Moshe Idel of the Hebrew University and Professor Barbara Sproul of Hunter College of the City University of New York, who kindly consented to read my research and then to offer me the benefits of their insight and criticism; Dr. Ismar Schorsch and Dr. Mayer Rabinowitz, both of whom, in their capacities as deans of the Seminary's Graduate School, were instrumental in helping me acquire the financial assistance that was necessary to enable me to have the leisure to pursue my research; the Charles H. Revson Foundation, for its generous support in the 1979-80 and 1980-81 academic years; the various European, Israeli and American libraries from which I was able to acquire microfilms of the various manuscripts on which my research was based, and specifically the Bodleian Library at Oxford, which was kind enough to grant me permission to publish my translation of one of their manuscripts; and finally, my wife, Joan Freeman Cohen, without whom I could not have even begun, much less finished, this work. I have dedicated this book to the memory of my mother, Mildred Cohen, who passed away after long years of illness while I was conducting the research reflected in these pages. My mother typified to me, and to all who knew her, a rare blend of intelligence, aesthetic sensitivity and culture, qualities I have tried, however inadequately, to capture in my own scholarship. For this reason, as well as for others too numerous to list here, it is my reverent duty to dedicate these chapters to her memory.

M.S.C.
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INTRODUCTION

The entire Hebrew Bible was written in an age of priests and prophets. Whether one sought out one's God in the sacred precincts of His Temple in Jerusalem, or whether one chose the less direct path of seeking communion with God in the contemplation of His word as conveyed by the prophet to the world of men, the Jew in the Biblical period was more than able to find God in the world, and thus to know, love and commune with Him as best he was able.

The post-Biblical period presented a challenge to monotheistic man, who, in an age that was post-prophetic as well, could no longer count on the fact that sooner or later, a prophet would rise up to proclaim God's word to man. He was forced to develop new methods of finding God in the world, for finding God was the obvious prerequisite to knowing and loving Him, both of which, in addition to being commandments ordained by Scripture, had become religious and even moral imperatives for religious man as well. In time, different theories were developed from within Jewish tradition itself.

One such technique was the mythologization and idealization of the Torah beyond its former status as the law and word of God to the point at which the Torah became the agent through which men might actually commune with God. The Torah came to be described as the blueprint from which God created the universe, the personification, one might almost say, of God Himself in the world of men. Long lists of rabbinic adages extolling the study of Torah and the virtues of the sage transcend mere pietisms; they are directing men to the source of knowledge of the divine in their world, and to the means by which any man might commune with his God.

It was in the early rabbinic period that we find the roots of Jewish mysticism, a phenomenon that even in its pre-kabbalistic stage of development can be shown to have existed for more than a millenium. The famous definition of mysticism as the formal and intentional cultivation of experiential, rather than merely intellectual, knowledge of God can help set this phenomenon in its proper historical context, for that definition allows us to trace the history of the development of

Jewish mysticism in the post-Biblical period from the phenomenon of prophetism in the Biblical period into the medieval period.[1]

It should be obvious to any reader of the Biblical text that the Pentateuchal narratives fluctuate between an anthropomorphic and an amorphic conception of the Deity. It is, therefore, not surprising to see the prophets of Israel split along similar lines, depending of whether a particular prophet's experiences included instances of the prophet visually gazing on the godhead or whether they were strictly aural. Regardless of whether the difference of prophetic experience is a development of the specific prophet's understanding of the Pentateuchal text, as traditional chronology would demand, or whether the reverse is true, and the differences between the various strands of thought incorporated into the Pentateuch are the result of the variations in the prophetic experience, it is not at all surprising to find this double strand of prophetic experience reflected in earliest Jewish mysticism.

Like their prophetic antecedents, the so-called merkavah mystics of the early rabbinic period cultivated communion with God.[2] It has been observed that these mystic endeavors fall roughly into two classes: the exegetical mysticism connected in our texts with Palestinian Judaism, and the practical mysticism of both Palestinian and Babylonian Jewry.[3] The former is clearly a derivative of sorts of the standard Torah mysticism of the rabbis, except that, instead of engaging in Pentateuchal exegesis for the purpose of learning the will of God, these mystics chose the ancient prophetic texts which described the prophet's communion with an anthropomorphically conceived Deity as the basis for their mystical exegetical activity.

Two texts may be cited to demonstrate the way in which this exegetical mysticism functioned. The first, the parable of the barber, is taken from the Palestinian text, the Visions of Ezekiel, and sets forth the author's understanding of the relationship between the ancient prophet and the mystic of the author's own day.

We cite our own translation of the parable:

> While Ezekiel was still staring
> [at the River Kebar,] the Holy
> One opened up [all] the seven
> heavens and Ezekiel saw the godhead.

> A parable was been spoken [concerning this]: To what is this similar? To a man who visits a barber [Hebrew: sappar.] The latter cuts his hair and hands him a mirror [to see his haircut] and he [i.e. the client] looks in it. As he is looking in it, the king passes by. He saw [in the mirror] that the king and his soldiers were passing the door. The barber says to him, "Turn and see the king!" He replies, "I have already seen his reflection."[4]

The barber in the parable is the ancient prophet. He gazes on the king directly, and is the master of the latter-day mystic, symbolized in the parable by the barber's client. The latter cannot see his God except through the former's mirror, although he clearly considers the reflection to be sufficiently exact so as to obviate the need for him to turn his head and gaze on the king. The mirror is, of course, the Biblical text, the prophet's "mirror" through which the mystic may behold the king. The text, or here, the mirror, is the link between barber and client and between prophet and mystic. For the exegetically oriented mystic in the rabbinic period, communion with God was available via the ancient text; the client does not turn his head in the story because the mystic could not.

A second text can illustrate the efficacy of the technique. Although presented in the Babylonian Talmud, the text concerns two late first century C.E. Palestinian rabbis, a master and his disciple, who engaged in this exegesis of the Biblical text:

> Our rabbis taught: It happened once that R. Yochanan b. Zakkai was travelling down a road riding on a donkey, and R. Eleazar b. Arakh [his student] was following behind. The latter said to the former, "Rabbi, teach me a lesson of exegesis on the [chapters of Ezekiel relating to the] chariot-throne [Hebrew: ma'ase merkavah.] He replied, "Have I not taught you that this may not be explicated in the presence of one alone unless he be a great scholar and mentally sound?" [R. Eleazar] said to him, "Allow me, then, rabbi, to recite a single thing that you

> yourself taught me." He replied, "Yes, [you may recite."] R. Yochanan got down immediately from his donkey, wrapped himself up [i.e. in his ṭallit (prayer-shawl)] and sat down on a single stone beneath an olive tree. [R. Eleazar] asked, "Rabbi, why did you get down from the donkey?" He replied, "Is it reasonable to expect that I should sit on a donkey while you engage in exegesis of the [texts relating to the] chariot-throne, [thus bringing] the Shekhinah [i.e. the Divine Presence] into our midst and causing the attending angels to accompany us?" R. Eleazar b. Arakh immediately opened his discourse and engaged in the mystic exegesis, whereupon fire descended from heaven and surrounded all the trees that were in the field. At once the trees began to sing hymns...whereupon an angel spoke up from within the fire and said, "This is certainly the essence of chariot-throne exegesis..."[5]

Exegetical mysticism was not the only linear descendant of the visual prophetic experience of communion with an anthropomorphic Deity. At the same time, or perhaps a bit later, an alternate school of mystic procedure developed, one we might best label "practical" mysticism, because, as opposed to the exegetical school which was rooted in the exegesis of the text, this school developed its own mystic praxis. It has been suggested that this practical mysticism was essentially a Babylonian phenomenon, and was a reaction to, or perhaps, a development from the exegetical techniques that characterized Palestinian mystic endeavor. This theory is plausible, but far from a certainty in my mind;[6] it is to a great extent based on the fact that the Talmudic references to mystic activity seem to suggest (but only vaguely) such a distinction. The other great body of early mystic literature, the literary corpus of merkavah mysticism, does not lend itself at all to such a distinction. While it is true that the Visions of Ezekiel text, which is exegetical mysticism par excellance, seems to be a Palestinian text,[7] and that the Urtext of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, the practical mystic text that is the subject of this study, seems to have a Babylonian provenance, as we hope to demonstrate below, it is nonetheless also so

that the vast majority of other texts do not seem to be clearly able to be assigned to either center of Jewish life, and so the question must remain moot.

At any rate, regardless of whether it was an exclusively Babylonian practice, it is, on the other hand, the case that this form of mystic communion did flourish among Babylonian Jewry. It is from a Babylonian source, in fact, from a responsum of R. Hai Gaon (939-1038), that we have our most detailed account of the technique, although it certainly must have developed (some would say, degenerated) by the time R. Hai described it in the tenth century C.E.

The Talmud presents a famous story of four who entered the mystic garden, of whom one, R. Aqiba, was the only one to survive without suffering apostasy, insanity or death.[8] This prompted some now forgotten student of the text to write to R. Hai, inquiring as to the meaning of the story. "What,' the questioner asks, 'is this garden [Hebrew: pardes], and why does it bring some men to apostasy, and make others insane, while leaving still others unscathed...?" To this request, R. Hai wrote a long response, from which the following is excerpted:

> You are aware, perhaps, that it was the opinion of many sages that there are [several] methods available to one who was possessed of enough specifically mentioned qualities and who desired to gaze upon the [divine] chariot-throne and to see the palaces on high [in which the Deity resides, i.e. to engage in mystic communion with God. These are] that he sit and fast on certain specific days and put his head between his knees and whisper hymns and songs of praise into the ground, [hymns] he may choose from the many available texts. Thus may he gaze [at first] within himself, as one who sees the seven supernal palaces [Hebrew: hekhalot] with his own eyes, and look out, as if he were progressing from palace to palace and observing what might be found in each one...[9]

Here we have the essence of the practical mystic experience set forth for the modern reader. Despite

the many obscurities of this text, we nonetheless can clearly see that this procedure is quite different from the one described by the parable of the barber and his client. The "mirror", that is, the prophetic text, is totally absent. The mystic looks within, after having induced an hallucinogenic state through fasting, through the placing of his head in a low body position, and through the recitation of certain hymns in a presumably repetitive and hypnotic way. Many of these hymns have survived, and we know them to be characterized by a variety of mesmerizing features: strong cadence, an extensive and, for Hebrew poetry quite uncharacteristic, use of internal rhyme and alliteration, and, most of all, polylogy, a technique in which the poet strings together long lists of near synonyms to express some aspect of the divine splendor. Even today, if one recites these hymns, the effect is quite hypnotic and, to a certain extent, unnerving.[10]

Although the details given by R. Hai have the ring of truth, as well as the support of the gaon's unimpeachable authority, we know from the many texts that make up the extant corpus of ancient Jewish mystic literature that such hymns were not derived from some accepted literary or liturgical source, and were not always even hymns, but could also be prose passages. Here we find a bizarre phenomenon-- the meditative technique is often described in the text as the result, rather than as the technique of the mystic's communion with God. Presumably, this reflects its own reality, and shows how the mystic tradition developed; the revelations and divine data derived by mystics in their communion with God seem to have become the meditative stuff of future mystic endeavor. This is to say that the mystic experience was progressive; ideally, each generation began at the level of intimacy at which the former left off. Thus we find the texts recommending outright the stuff of their authors' mystic experiences to the reader as the stuff of the reader's own mystic meditation.

The result and meditative stimulus of the mystic experience in these circles was thus constituted by a single body of information. When we proceed to attempt to identify exactly what shape that information took, we are somewhat stymied-- the extant texts seem to be rooted in a number of different systems. To put it another way, the various texts found in the Talmudic sources (of which the story of R. Yochanan b. Zakkai and R. Eleazar b. Arakh was only one) that describe exegetical technique are similar in that they are based on a single set of texts; the meditative handbooks, on

the other hand, that form our principal sources of knowledge outside the corpus of Talmudic literature, are rooted in a variety of different texts from which are developed a variety of different systems. It should not be surprising that I mention texts in this context; the practical mystic techniques were rooted no less obviously in the Biblical text than were the exegetical techniques. The difference was merely that they chose different texts, and that they did not perform exegesis per se on them.

The descriptive references to God found in the pages of the Hebrew Bible may be divided easily into metaphoric domains. Authors, that is to say, unrelated to each other chronologically or even in terms of literary genre, often chose the same system of metaphoric expression in which to describe the God they basically accepted as being, in essence, beyond the descriptive limits of human language. Certainly none of the linguistic conventions used to describe the godhead may be said to contradict-- they merely express what the author saw at a given moment depending on a large number of variables, of which his mood, temperament and psychological make-up are only a few.

One school of mystic technique known to us from several ancient sources seems to have centered on the idea of divine beauty. The notion that the God of Israel is beautiful is, of course, found throughout the Bible. Isaiah, for instance, declared, "Your eyes shall behold the King in His beauty."[11] and after the Babylonian exile, Zachariah was to exult, "How good He is! How beautiful He is!"[12] The Song of Songs, whether originally composed a secular love poetry or as religious metaphor, was certainly taken in a very early period to be describing the God of Israel: "Behold, You are beautiful, my Beloved, and comely..."[13]

It is, therefore, no surprise to learn that a certain school of post-Biblical Jewish mystics, among whom the greatest of all these merkavah texts, the Hekhalot Rabbati was composed, chose the concept of divine beauty upon which to focus as a meditative technique. A passage beautifully translated by Scholem will well illustrate the point:

> King of Kings, God of Gods and Lord of Lords
> He who is surrounded with chains of crowns
> Who is encompassed by the clusters of the rulers of radiance,

Who covers the heavens with the wings
of His magnificence;
And in His majesty, appeared from the
Heights,
From His beauty, the deeps were
enkindled,
And from His stature, the heavens are
sparkling
His stature sends out the lofty,
And His crown blazes out the
mighty,
And His garment flows with the
precious.
And all trees shall rejoice in His
word,
And herbs shall exult in His
rejoicing,
And His words shall drop as perfume
Flowing forth in flames of fire,
Giving joy to those who search them,
And quiet to those who fulfill
them.[14]

Those who search and those who fulfill are the mystics engaged in their quest for communion with the Divine. It is no wonder that in another section of the text, the author requires those using his text as a guide to their own mystic communion with God to recite the entire description of the lover found in the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs.[15] This is not exegetical mysticism because the mystic is not involved in the study of the text; it is totally unlike the barber's mirror in the text of the Visions of Ezekiel. Rather, the mystics here have chosen a metaphoric domain in which, enjoying the sanction of Biblical precedant, it is legitimate to seek out one's God.

This seems to have been the general technique: meditation on a particular aspect of the Deity (no doubt accompanied by the recitation of hymns and perhaps by fasting and physical contortions of the kind described by R. Hai) in order to induce communion with the godhead. The reasons for which a particular mystic in search of his God might channel his meditative quest into a specific metaphoric line of thinking do not lend themselves to explication over the long and silent centuries that separate us from the authors of these texts. Needless to say, there is not any evidence that these different mystic techniques reflect the reality of separate and discrete conventicles of mystical praxis. Undoubtedly, these techniques were the common heritage of all practical mystics, and

different men (or perhaps, different groups) merely emphasized one set of metaphoric meditative ideas over others. The reasons for which one would choose one over another were rooted in the mystic's psychological make-up, as well as in his prior beliefs and religious orientation.

Another school (if that is the proper term) of practical mysticism developed around the set of Biblical descriptions of the godhead rooted in the notion of divine gedullah. The adjective gadol, usually translated as "great" or "magnificent" was taken at its most literal, and understood to mean simply "big." The text produced in this circle, the Shi^ur Qomah, displays the same traits as the texts described above. It describes the bigness of the godhead, carefully giving the dimensions between the various limbs (in the section of the text attributed to R. Aqiba) or the dimensions of the divine limbs and their secret names (in the section of the text attributed to R. Ishmael.) There can be no question that the text presents its information both as the result of mystic communion with the godhead, as well as as a meditative technique for the aspiring mystic. This slightly paradoxical feature connects the text to the others in this genre more closely than would any parallel of detail or content.

The text is clearly the result of the mystic author's own communion with the godhead. He paraphrases Michaiah through the persona of R. Ishmael, "I saw the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, as He was sitting on an exalted throne, and His soldiers were standing before Him to the right and to the left...What is the measure of the body of the Holy One, blessed be He, who lives...for all eternity, may His name be blessed and exalted?"[16] The text continues with a starkly anthropomorphic description of the godhead, beginning with the feet, and proceeding to discuss the divine ankles, calves, thighs, loins, neck, skull, beard, cheeks, nose, tongue, forehead, eyes, shoulders, arms, fingers and toes, giving specific dimensions and names for each, as well as occasional extra details. In a subsequent section of the text, one which has many parallels in other mystic texts, we learn that these parasangs, with which the author measures the divine limbs, are divine parasangs, and not the human measurement after all, and are equal to many universe lengths each. Thus, the final measure for the divine body given in the text, which is 100,000,000,000 parasangs, may be converted into human terms to yield a final tally of twelve quadrillion (i.e.

12×10^{15}) universe-lengths. It is quite clear that this was not meant as an empirically correct figure (it doesn't, incidentally, match the sum of all the other dimensions), but rather as an essentially inconceivable notion upon which the mystic might focus for the sake of his meitative technique. The five recensions of the text that survive are all reworkings of this material into more standard literary formats that add long prose and hymn sections designed to mold this data into literary texts, but they neither can nor do hide the original nature of the text, even from modern eyes.

At the same time, the text is very much a manual of meditative technique. It opens with a prayer, for instance, in which the mystic prays that the words of Torah pour out of his throat "like a vigorously flowing stream."[17] There are long Biblical passages included for recitation, among which are Psalm 93, Psalm 91, Psalm 29 and, in an even more prominent position, Song of Songs 5:9-16. Even more to the point is the joint declaration of R. Ishmael and R. Aqiba:

> R. Ishmael said, "I and R. Aqiba are guarantors of this, that in this world, [the mystic is secure] in a good life, and in the world to come, [he may be secure] in a good name, but only if he recites this [text] as mishnah every day.[18]

We thus have our standard technique of one mystic recommending the results of his own mystic communion with God to another as the stuff of the latter's meditative endeavor towards the same goal.

What would inspire a man to choose such a simple, almost naive, aspect of the Biblical text as a jumping-off point for his own meditative union with God is not hard to imagine. Firstly, we have the unimpeachable sanction of the Biblical text. Certainly, the Psalmist who wrote "Our Lord is big and mighty (Ps 147:4)" may be taken as literally and as seriously as Isaiah's remark about it being within man's grasp to gaze on the godhead in all its beauty. Secondly, as anyone familiar with Buddhist meditative technique will know, the simplicity of a meditative idea is a positive rather than a detrimental feature. Finally, the idea that the godhead transcends our regularly comprehendible notions about space is an appealing one for the mystic, combining, as it does, simplicity and unfathomability. The regular use of Ps 147:19, which is apparently to be

translated, "He [God] reveals His dimensions to Jacob," throughout the text suggested, no doubt, that the God of Israel intended all along for His physical dimensions to be known to the elect of Israel.

This, then, is the Shi^{C}ur Qomah. We shall proceed with our introduction to the various aspects of the text, our translation and finally our commentary to one of the surviving recensions of the text, but first we must investigate the state of research into the text as others have understood it beginning in the last century, and concluding in this very decade.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. This is roughly the definition of Thomas Aquinas as cited by Scholem in his Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, 3rd ed. (New York, 1941), p. 4, cf. p. 353, n. 5.

2. Merkavah is the Hebrew term for the chariot-throne, and, by metonymy, the godhead seated upon it, as described in the opening chapters of Ezekiel. The basic texts in the literary corpus of merkavah mysticism are discussed below in chapter six. Cf. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition, 2nd ed. (New York, 1965), pp. 6-7.

3. See D. Halperin, The Merkavah in Rabbinic Literature (New Haven, 1980) for an exhaustive analysis of this distinction.

4. Visions of Ezekiel, ed. Gruenwald (in Temirin, ed. I. Weinstock, vol. 1 [Jerusalem, 1972],) pp. 113-114.

5. BT Ḥagigah 14b.

6. See above, n. 3.

7. Gruenwald, op. cit., p. 102.

8. BT Ḥagigah 14b.

9. This is a paraphrase based on the text printed by B.M. Levin in his 'Oṣar Haggе'onim, vol. 4 (Jerusalem, 1932), pp. 13-14.

10. A large selection of these hymns was published by A. Altmann in his "Shire Qedushah Besifrut Hehekhalot Haqqedumah," Melilah 2(1946), pp. 1-24.

11. Is 33:17.

12. Zach 9:17.

13. Song 1:16.

14. Hekhalot Rabbati, ch. 24, ed. Jellinek, p. 101; ibid., 25:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 105; trans. Scholem, in Jewish Gnosticism, p. 62. See below, p. 174.

15. Song 5:9-16; Hekhalot Rabbati 12:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 87.

16. See below, Sefer Haqqomah, lines 47 and 52.

17. Ibid., lines 8-9.

18. Ibid., lines 125-127. Cf. Gruenwald, Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism (Leiden and Cologne, 1980), p. 216.

II A SURVEY OF RECENT SCHOLARSHIP

The history of scholarly inquiry into the Shi^cur Qomah and its sister texts of merkavah mysticism is not old. Aside from the diatribes of Eisenmenger at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the first serious effort at evaluating the age of the text, and its worth for the study of Jewish ideas and their history was by Heinrich Graetz, who, as we shall see, was a bit overcome by his disgust at the type of speculation regarding the Deity that characterizes the Shi^cur Qomah. A contemporary, but far more deliberate approach was that of Elijah Benamozegh, an Italian scholar whose work is not too well recalled in our day, but who was, actually, the originator of some of the most widely held theories about the history of the text. Benamozegh remains little read; the scholarly world remembers Graetz' younger contemporary, Moses Gaster, as having been his opponent in matters relating to the Shi^cur Qomah. Both Graetz and Gaster made important and enduring contributions, but while their conclusions continue to have validity and value, the evidence adduced by both authors to defend their points of view was inadequate. Despite the efforts of both men, the consensus of modern scholarship is that the Shi^cur Qomah is a product of inner-Jewish theological development, and need be traced back neither to Valentinian gnosis, nor to Islamic sectarian anthropomorphism. In our century, it is the work of Gershom Scholem and Saul Lieberman that clearly dominates the scene. Scholem's views on the work are often summarized so as to suggest a monolithic approach; actually, by chronological analysis of his writings, his ideas can be shown to have undergone a clear development. Lieberman's work needs to be considered in light of Scholem's, which inspired it. Nevertheless, we shall find a certain reticence in Lieberman's work which makes it both less absolute, but also probably more enduring than some of the more firmly stated theories of others.

Although many medieval Jewish scholars spoke about the Shi^cur Qomah, critical research began only in the eighteenth century. In fact, it was only in the nineteenth century that research intensified and began to draw firm conclusions.[1]

Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891) developed his theories regarding the history of the Shi^cur Qomah as part of his overall view of kabbalah and mysticism as "malignant growths in the body of Judaism."[2] It is in a Jewish

desire to imitate Moslem sectarians of the kind that we find described in Shahrastani's handbook of Islamic sects that Graetz finds the prime motivation that he felt inspired the composition of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. He was critical of Zunz of devoting a complete chapter to Jewish mystic texts that "says as little as is possible," and which totally ignores the Shi^{c}ur Qomah.[3]

Graetz was also of the opinion that both the Shi^{c}ur Qomah and also the short piece published by Jellinek under the title of Sefer Ḥanokh were originally part of the longer midrashic work, the 'Otiot Derabbi ^{c}Aqiva.[4] All of these pieces are post-Talmudic, a conclusion reached through an analysis of the Sefer Milḥamot 'Adonai of Salmon b. Yeruḥam, and confirmed by a responsum of Saadia Gaon, in which the latter admits that many sages of his day denied the Talmudic origin of the text. Graetz concludes that the Hekhalot Rabbati, the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and the 'Otiot were all widely known and already ascribed to the tannaitic period by the beginning of the tenth century.[5] Going backwards from there, Graetz finds the earliest references to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in the first half of the ninth century,[6] and this he determines to be the date of composition. He bases this on two points, the first being that the Pesiqta, which Graetz took to have been composed in the year 845 C.E., already knows of certain mystic traditions,[7] which it quotes as baraitot, i.e. as tannaitic statements. The second is the testimony of Agobard of Lyons, who knew of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in the ninth century in France, either directly or indirectly.[8] Together, these suggest to Graetz a ninth century date for the composition of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. It could be wondered why Graetz did not simply take these as the latest possible dates for the composition of the text, especially in light of the use of the formulary tannu rabbanan in the Pesiqta, which normally introduces tannaitic remarks.[9]

Graetz speaks directly to this point:

> One might be of the opinion that one should conclude from the aggadic-mystic quotes in Agobard that the mystical literature must to have existed long before 829, to have found its way [by then] to France. By doing so, however, one limits the historical significance of this conclusion. Since the embassy of Charlemagne to Harrun Arrashid, in which the Jew Isaac took part, there was regular intercourse between the Babylonian Jews and the Jewish-French communities. Zakuto maintains

> a tradition that Charlemagne himself asked the Khalif for a Jewish sage for his realm, and that this latter sent to him a [certain] R. Makhir, who settled in Narbonne, and founded schools in the south of France, as did R. Kalonymus of Lucca in Mainz.[10] Literary testimonia could therefore find their way from the East to France in a short time.[11]

Perhaps sensing that he has shown only how the text could have travelled across the Jewish world, but not that it did so, Graetz turns to an even less conclusive argument, this time an argument from silence based on the fact that the Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^{c}ezer, which Graetz takes to have been composed between 809 and 813, has no references at all to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, or to any other hekhalot topics, although the fourth chapter of that work would seem to call for their inclusion, had they been known to the author.[12] This is, of course, as are all arguments from silence, a shaky foundation on which to build any theories, and Graetz seems to realize this, although he hides his uncertainty behind bold assertions. By the next centuries, the testimonia of Saadia, Sherirah and Hai Gaons testify to the existence of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and so the ninth century becomes the century in which Graetz sees the composition of the text, bounded by the composition of the Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^{c}ezer on one side, and the Pesiqta on the other. The validity of this theory, then, rests on the assumption that if the Pesiqta quotes the Ascension of Moses, then the Shi^{c}ur Qomah must also have existed and the assumption that if the Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^{c}ezer does not quote the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, then the latter must not have been composed yet. Neither of these assertions need be taken into serious account. The Ascension of Moses and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah are unrelated works, and certainly have entirely different literary histories. The redactor of the Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^{c}ezer could have omitted hekhalot traditions for a variety of reasons from his book, including the possibilities that he did not know of them, he did not approve of them, or he felt that they were sufficiently esoteric so as to make it inappropriate to include them in a work intended for public distribution.

Nonetheless, having claimed a ninth century date for the text, Graetz continues to discuss a reason for which a work like the Shi^{c}ur Qomah might have been introduced into the literary corpus of gaonic Judaism, despite what Graetz calls its "through and through un-Jewish and anti-Jewish nature."[13] "From what quarter,'

he wonders, 'was this monstrosity smuggled in?"[14] This is where Graetz introduces the various schools of Islamic anthropomorphism described by Shahrastani, concluding that, for further study, "we may take, as a certain point of departure, our [newly] discovered theory, that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is a copy of the crass teachings of the Hishamites that God is a Body and has dimensions, albeit in His own terms."[15] It was to these inauthentic and slavish imitators of the Islamic sectarians that the Karaites reacted so vehemently.[16] While Shahrastani himself suggests that the source of all this Islamic anthropomorphism might be Jewish theosophical thought, as it perhaps was, Graetz bristles at the thought, and declares that Shahrastani's theory is either "his [own] invention, or a misunderstanding."[17]

It is clear that Graetz is trying his best to save Judaism from the Shi^{c}ur Qomah by assigning its origin to Islamic sectarians, or, more exactly, to Jews heavily influenced by them. This cannot be justified historically, and Graetz fails to prove that the text could not be earlier than the ninth century. At most, he shows that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah could have been composed in the ninth century, in time to be known to Agobard and Saadia. If there was any contact at all between Jewish and Islamic mystics in gaonic Babylonia, then the direction of the borrowing, at least as regards the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, could just as easily have been as Shahrastani described it, as it could have been as Graetz would have us think.

Nevertheless, the theory of Graetz became, in relatively short time, the standard approach to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, especially in popular works. J. Hamburger, for example, gives it as uncontested fact in his Real-Encyclopaedie für Bibel und Talmud, without even mentioning Graetz' name, noting only that it is not absolutely certain whether Moslem borrowed from Jew, or Jew from Moslem, and to opt, therefore, for a situation in which both sides influenced the other.[18]

Elijah Benamozegh (1822-1900) was an Italian scholar who wrote a number of works on the kabbalah, of which one, the Ta^{c}am Leshed 'The Taste of Manna' was a refutation of the Vikkuah ^{c}al Haqqabbalah of S.D. Luzzatto, a work in which the antiquity of the Zohar is questioned.[19] In this work, Benamozegh addresses the question of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and, although he is rarely mentioned by modern authors, he was, in fact, the originator of some of our more familiar theories regarding the text.[20] The pages devoted to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah are written in a highly stylized rabbinic Hebrew which often masks

the importance of Benamozegh's opinions.

He begins his discussion by asserting that the Shi^cur Qomah is the forerunner of kabbalistic thought, basing himself on the affinity he finds to exist between this work and later kabbalistic ideas, and also on the assertion by Ibn Ezra that the "true" meaning of the Shi^cur Qomah is its assertion of the doctrine of the divine Creator, an idea which was developed and made even more elaborate by later kabbalistic authors.[21] Furthermore, it is clear that the anthropomorphism of the Zoharic Idras, also taken as a work of high antiquity by the author, is also characterized by a sense of gigantism, and this helps establish a reasonable period in which to date the Shi^cur Qomah.[22]

Benamozegh presumes the antiquity of Midrash Mishle, the rabbinic midrash on Proverbs, and so finds final proof of the antiquity of the Shi^cur Qomah in the famous series of questions found in the tenth chapter of that work.[23] He further allows that "we find that from the day on which the Kabbalah began to be the subject of written texts and subsequently, the Shi^cur Qomah has been a [source of] glory and splendor for the Kabbalist, and from thence on, those who fear God have discussed and glorified in the knowledge of the measurements of the Creator."[24] He further makes reference to the esteem in which the Shi^cur Qomah was held by quoting manuscript and printed texts of Azriel of Gerona and Nahmanides, both among the greatest masters of the immediately pre-Zoharic Spanish school of kabbalah, texts which suggest that both men were acquainted with the Shi^cur Qomah.[25]

The section concludes with an elaborate defense of the testimonies of Ibn Ezra and Judah Halevi regarding the Shi^cur Qomah, testimonies which should not be discarded merely because they themselves were repelled by the Kabbalah and sought to eliminate the essential ideas of the Kabbalah from the works whose authenticity they accepted by trying to interpret them philosophically.[26]

The historical importance of Benamozegh is his discovery of the link between Christian gnostics of the first centuries of the Christian era and their Jewish counterparts. Benamozegh prefers to call the earliest mystic authors "early kabbalists", and it was only later that others first used the phrase Jewish Gnostics to describe the hekhalot mystics. Nonetheless, the distinction of first laying the groundwork for such an assumption may be assigned to Benamozegh.[27]

Philipp Bloch (1841-1923) was a German historian and rabbi with a marked interest in kabbalah. His book, Geschichte der Entwicklung der Kabbalah und der jüdischen Religionsphilosophie, was published in 1894 and has in it a brief chapter on the Shi^cur Qomah in which the author sets forth his unique views.[28] Bloch was of the opinion that the Shi^cur Qomah was originally a longer work, of which the texts that appear in the Sefer Razi'el (see below) and the 'Otiot Derabbi ^Aqiva are only extant fragments; he seems unaware of the Sefer Haqqomah traditions, almost all of which, as we shall see presently, appear in manuscript as complete works unto themselves. He quotes at length from the responsum of R. Sherirah and R. Hai Gaon, and refers to the responsa of Saadia and Maimonides. He then offers his own opinion:

> One would like to be of the opinion that this little text, with its hyperbole and naked sobriety [seine kohle Nuchternheit] was intended for small school children. Many teachers would be easily inclined to [use the text] to bring the [concept of] God's greatness near to such [pupils] who are not yet able to think abstractly, in terms appropriate to [the state of their] intellectual growth. Perhaps they also had other didactic purposes; perhaps they also wanted to teach, at the same time, and in a [most] impressive way, the parts of the human body, their relationships [to each other], their names, incomprehensible though they may be for us, and all sorts of mathematical computations.[29]

The notion of taking the Shi^cur Qomah to be an ancient Jewish "Alouette", catechism, and mathematics lesson, all rolled into one, is a theory hardly worth refuting. Scholem's observation that "the curious tendency of some nineteenth century Jewish scholars to treat profoundly mythical and mystical references to God and the world as pedagogical obiter dicta for the benefit of small children is certainly one of the most remarkable examples of misplaced criticism and insensitivity to the character of religious phenomena which the period has produced," is well taken.[30]

Adolph Jellinek (1820-1893) was one of the few nineteenth century scholars to take an interest in the study of kabbalah. He did not publish a text of the Shi^cur Qomah in his famous collection of ninety-nine short midrashic texts, the Bet Hammidrash, published in Leipzig from 1853 to 1878, and he did not write a

specific article or study on the subject of the Shi^cur Qomah. Nevertheless, in a few paragraphs, written in the Bet Hammidrash in 1878, he managed to lay the groundwork for most subsequent analyses of our text.[31]

Firstly, he realized that the Shi^cur Qomah is much older than the 'Otiot Derabbi ^cAqiva, which was a departure from the theories of earlier scholars. Secondly, he asserted that Graetz was wrong in trying to find an Islamic origin for the type of thinking reflected in the lines of the text; he stressed that the work was of Jewish origin. Finally, he declared the Shi^cur Qomah to be an elaboration of the description of the bridegroom found in the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs.

Jellinek explains the development from midrash to the text of the Shi^cur Qomah:

> This anthropomorphic understanding of God must have been inspired in a strictly monotheistic frame of reference, [i.e. the description of God as the bridegroom in the Song], and to paralyze it, in an unphilosophic age, they gave the divine body in the Song of Songs such a size so as to withdraw its consideration from human faculties of conception...[32]

There are a number of difficulties with this last assertion, not the least of which is that the godhead described in the text of the Shi^cur Qomah has almost nothing to do with the description of the bridegroom in the Song. They share certain common body parts, to be sure, but they share them with all men as well as with each other. In fact, there are a number of important body parts that are unique to each text. Furthermore, although the relevant passage from the Song is quoted in the text of the Shi^cur Qomah, it is clearly intended there to form part of the liturgical frame in which the editor of the Urtext encased the original fund of mystic data with which he was working. The actual description of the divine body has no real affinity at all to the description of the bridegroom. The verses of the Song are never used as proof-texts for the various assertions of the Shi^cur Qomah, even when they would be relevant or helpful. Instead, the author of the mystic text prefers to rely on Isaiah, and particularly on the Psalms, for his proof-texts, and on II Kings, Isaiah and Ezekiel mainly for his vocabulary. He shows no interest at all in drawing information from the text of the Song. The flaw in Jellinek's final point is that his assertion that the Shi^cur Qomah is the description of the bridegroom writ

large is not borne out by the text itself. Nonetheless, the basic idea, that the Shi^cur Qomah is the result of the development of inner-Jewish processes is correct, and Jellinek was the first to declare Graetz wrong to seek the roots of the text outside of the sphere of Jewish intellectual history.

It will be suggested below that the verses from the Song that are quoted in the body of the text have a liturgical (and possibly theurgic) function, and do not function as midrashic proof-texts at all.

Moses Gaster (1856-1939) wrote a long article on the Shi^cur Qomah in 1893.[33] He rejected Graetz' theories outright and accepted Jellinek's views on an inner-Jewish origin for the text.[34] However, he rightly observed that with the single exception of the closing lines of the section of the text attributed to R. Nathan, there is no connection at all between that text and the Song of Songs,[35] and that this denies to Jellinek's hypothesis a sound foundation on which to build.

Gaster preferred to work on a basis of comparison with other similar texts. He wrote, "The Shi^cur Qomah, if it is to be correctly understood, must be considered together with other works of the mystic circle to which [its author] must have belonged..."[36] To this group, Gaster admits the authors of the Ascension of Moses, 2 Enoch, the Testament of Levi and the Ascension of Isaiah, as well, of course, as the authors of the other hekhalot texts. Gaster finds it impossible to imagine that a literature such as this should have lacked a description of the godhead towards which all the characters described in it are busily working, and, as there is no such description visible, it thus follows that the Shi^cur Qomah must originally have been composed to fill that gap. "There can be no doubt that such a description [of the godhead] cannot originally have been lacking...and in fact, it was not lacking. It only later disappeared from the hekhalot [literature], either to lead its own existence as a self-contained literary unit, as is often the case with the various limbs of this complex literary corpus, or else because it was [purposefully] repressed, for obvious reasons."[37] Gaster's theory that the Shi^cur Qomah was originally part of a larger hekhalot text that either broke off from its parent or was intentionally repressed is echoed later by Scholem's theory that the Shi^cur Qomah was originally formulated as a section of the Merkavah Rabbah.[38] In the final analysis, Gaster's approach can be seen as a reasonable modification of

Jellinek's theory, and one that presents a viable option of its own.

Gaster goes on to posit that the original impetus to create a work like the Shi^cur Qomah is to be found in the parallel type of speculation described by Irenaeus as having been developed by the Valentinian gnostic, Marcus. We shall examine Marcus' theory of alphabet mysticism and emanation below.[39] Gaster was also the first to point out the relevance of Montefiore ms. 279, which is a unique recension of the text, and one that is quite a bit closer to the alphabet system of Marcus than any other. This shows that the Shi^cur Qomah is a very old work and one that reflects Jewish speculation of a similar kind to that which was in vogue among non-Jewish gnostic theosophists. Gaster stops short of suggesting that the Shi^cur Qomah stems from Jewish gnostic circles which had the same agenda as non-Jewish gnostic circles, but, without calling the author of the Shi^cur Qomah a gnostic, he merely implies that he was responding to the current theories of theosophical speculation in specifically Jewish terms. The Shi^cur Qomah is therefore a Jewish work, and one of "high antiquity."[40] If there are parallels between Moslem and Jewish thought in the gaonic age, it is the Shi^cur Qomah with influenced the Moslems, as Shahrastani stated, and not vice versa as Graetz would have had it.

Gaster concludes:

> Its origins go back to a Weltanschauung that found expression on the one hand in the system of the Valentinian Marcus and on the other in the mystic apocalypses and pseudepigraphs of the last centuries B.C.E. and the first centuries C.E. A work like the Shi^cur Qomah can hardly have a later date.[41]

Gershom Scholem (1897-1982) was the greatest scholar of Jewish mysticism in the modern period. His work on the Shi^cur Qomah was multi-faceted, ranging from the descriptive essay "Schi^cur Koma: die mystische Gestalt der Gottheit," itself an expansion of the treatment of the text in earlier works, to the important chapter, "The Age of Shiur Komah Speculation and a Passage in Origen," in which Scholem addresses himself to the questions of the antiquity and provenance of the text.[42]

Scholem completely rejects Graetz' view, calling it "entirely fallacious."[43] We have quoted Scholem's

denunciation of Bloch's hypothesis that the Shi^cur Qomah was written for the edification of school children.[44] Scholem repeats Jellinek's assertion that the text of the Shi^cur Qomah described "the 'body' of the Creator, in close analogy to the description of the body of the beloved one in the fifth chapter of the Song of Song..."[45] We have seen already that this assertion needs to be proven rather than merely stated; actually the godhead described in the Shi^cur Qomah has neither golden head nor ivory loins nor marble calves, and is like the lover in the Song only in that the two share some of the same body parts. Furthermore, the description of the lover is from the head down to the feet, while the Shi^cur Qomah described the godhead from the feet up, both in the Aqiban and Ishmaelian texts. The problems inherent in this hypothesis apparently led Scholem to modify his views. In his last word on the subject, Scholem retracted slightly. Here, the Shi^cur Qomah is described as a literary testimonium to the fact that "when the mystic attained the vision of the supernal world and found himself standing before the Throne, he was vouchsafed a vision of the Shi^cur Qomah as the 'figure in the form of a man' which Ezekiel had seen."[46] This image was "reinforced by the interpretation of the Song of Songs as relating to God and Israel."[47] This is a reasonable modification, and, as the view that the Song is actually an allegory is connected in tannaitic literature specifically with R. Aqiba, it is likely that the text of the Song did reinforce the text of the Shi^cur Qomah, granting to it the legitimacy of ancient and authoritative precedent. The very fact that the Mishnah is obliged to consider the question of the sanctity of the Song itself suggests that perhaps there were those to whom that ancient precedent was unappealing and who, therefore, questioned the authenticity (in Mishnaic terms, the sanctity) of the Song itself.[48]

As early as 1960, however, Scholem had already begun to modify his views. In his work on Jewish gnosticism, Scholem describes the Shi^cur Qomah as having "grown up around the vision" of the man in the first chapters of Ezekiel."[49] The link to the description of the bridegroom, still unattributed to Jellenik, is described as just that, i.e. a link rather than a generative force: "The whole doctrine is linked...to the description of the figure of the lover in the Song of Songs..."[50] He refers, in order to establish the link, to two texts, one, the apparent insertion of some verses from the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs into the text of the Shi^cur Qomah, and the other, a reference in the Hekhalot Rabbati, chapter ten. Neither

of these is able to support such a hypothesis. The verses in the text of the Shi^cur Qomah, as we have observed above, are wholly without context.[51] They clearly can be seen to function in the text as part of the liturgical framework used to transform the original mystic data into a text of literary theurgy, as we shall see below. The reference in Hekhalot Rabbati is equally unhelpful; in it, the splendor of the godhead is said to be even more splendid than the splendor of bridegrooms and brides in their nuptial chambers.[52] This is quite weak for two reasons. First of all, the beloved is never described as a bridegroom per se in the Song. Secondly, the expression involved is far more related to Ps 19:6 or perhaps to a benediction coined for use at the wedding service than it is to the Song.[53]

Scholem attributes not only high antiquity to the Shi^cur Qomah, but also finds it to have been the source of the teachings of the Valentinian gnostic, Marcus. This requires establishing a second century C.E. date for the text to match Marcus', whose own second century date is guaranteed by his inclusion in Irenaeus' book on heretical systems. Marcus probably flourished around 170-190 C.E., apparently in Asia Minor.[54]

The system of Marcus is quite confusing, but leads to the notion of a "body of truth" (soma tes aletheias) which is "the expression of all that is unspeakable, the mouth of the silent Sige ['Silence', i.e. the female counterpart of Propator, the most exalted and first divinity in the Pleroma.]"[55] Marcus explains that he received the direct revelation of Sige, about whom he had learned from his teacher, Calorbasus. This Sige is called by Marcus "the Tetrad", and he explains how "the infinitely exalted Tetrad descended upon [me] from the invisible and indescribable places in the form of a woman [for the world could not have borne its coming in its male form] and expounded to [me] alone its own nature, and the origin of all things..."[56] The revelation was as follows:

> When first the unoriginated, inconceivable Father, who is without material substance, and is neither male nor female, willed to bring forth that which is ineffable to Him, and to endow with form that which is invisible, He opened His mouth and sent forth the word similar to Himself, who, standing near, showed Him what He Himself was, inasmuch as He had been manifested in the form of that which was invisible.[57]

The idea here seems to be that the godhead, being without

substance or form, gazed on the Word he had uttered in order to see what he himself looked like.

The text goes on to explain how Propator generated the aeons by speaking the various names of the letters and how this process was continued by the aeons themselves until the Pleroma was complete.[58] The Tetrad now turns to a new revelation, declaring, "I wish to show thee Aletheia [Truth] herself, for I have brought her down from the dwellings above, that thou mayest see her speaking and admire her wisdom."[59] The Tetrad does not fully explain who this Aletheia is. In the system of Valentinus, the teacher of Marcus, Aletheia and her brother Monogenes (or Nous) are the offspring of Sige and Propator, here conceived of as the female and male preexistent, perfect aeons. In Marcus' system, which is derived from the Valentinian, the relationship is presumably the same, with the term Tetrad, officially applying to the four of them (i.e. Propator, Sige, Nous and Aletheia), here being identified with Sige, the Mother.

The particular interest in Marcus stems from the subsequent description of Aletheia:

> Behold, then, her head on high, Alpha and Omega; her neck, Beta and Psi; her shoulders with her hands, Gamma and Chi; her breast, Delta and Phi; her diaphragm, Epsilon and Upsilon; her back, Zeta and Tau; her belly, Eta and Sigma; her thighs, Theta and Rho; her knees, Iota and Pi; her legs, Kappa and Omicron; her ankles, Lambda and Xi; her feet, Mu and Nu. Such is the body of Aletheia [or, "the body of Truth"] according to Marcus...[60]

Irenaeus goes on to tell us that Marcus called this "element" (Aletheia), Anthropos, "and says that [it] is the fountain of all speech, and the beginning of all sound, and the expression of all that is unspeakable and the mouth of the silent Sige."[61] This description of Aletheia in an anthropomorphic shape is reminiscent, in some ways, of the godhead of the Shi^cur Qomah, especially if the mystic names are taken to be Jewish adaptations or imitations of the mystic letters which name the limbs of Aletheia. Scholem writes that the source from which Marcus may have derived this idea is possibly the Shi^cur Qomah itself.[62]

This seems to be doubtful. First of all, Aletheia is neither the supreme godhead, nor is she the Demiurge. Secondly, the description of her body shows no aspect

of gigantism. Even the fact that her limbs are named is not that conclusive; the names are letters, not regularly known names, and, furthermore, the letters are to be taken, judging from the context, to represent the generative forces that produce the specific limb bearing those two letters. This idea is, of course, wholly absent from the Shi^cur Qomah; moreover, the use of the letters in chiastic combinations beginning with the first and last letters is a technique known in Jewish sources as 'atbash, but one totally absent from the Shi^cur Qomah itself. Finally, Scholem's reference to the corpus described by Marcus as the "Body of Truth" is misleading, and suggests that when Marcus refers to the "Body of Truth", it is as if he were referring to "The Body of the True God." Aletheia is a regular Valentinian aeon, an hypostasis of truth, perhaps, but a distinct being nevertheless. She is never confounded with Propator, or with the Demiurge, and to suggest that Marcus transferred Jewish ideas regarding those figures (i.e. in Marcus' conception; in Judaism, they are, of course, the same Deity) to Aletheia, while not absolutely impossible, needs to be explained further to establish the link Marcus saw between the two, and why, if he did see a reason to describe Aletheia in Jewish terms, he altered those terms in the ways in which he did. The system of alphabet mysticism, furthermore, is so much an integral part of the system of Marcus, that it is really unnecessary to assume the names of the limbs of Aletheia to derive from any outside source. If we exclude, therefore, the name element, the only remaining similarity between the godhead described in the Shi^cur Qomah and Aletheia is their common anthropomorphic shape. If, in the final analysis, that single feature is all that links the two texts, it hardly seems necessary to connect the two texts historically on that account. Finally, later in the text of Irenaeus, we learn that the letters are not really names at all (except, perhaps by extension); there it is stated that the body of Aletheia is said to be "composed of twelve members, each of which consists of two letters."[63] Thus the limbs are not really anthropomorphic at all--they are not named by the letters but composed of them. They exact meaning of this notion of limbs constituted by letters is quite obscure, but, whatever it meant to Marcus, it makes any comparison with the Shi^cur Qomah even less likely to produce any firm theory of intimate historical relationship between the two texts.[64]

Scholem's final proof for the date of the Shi^cur Qomah is a passage from Origen, who, in the prologue to his commentary on the Song of Songs, refers to the

existence of a set of esoteric traditions surrounding the Song of Songs, which prompted the Jews of his time to defer the mastery of that book to the final years of a student's education. We now can see why Scholem is so anxious to find a link between the Song and the text of the Shi^cur Qomah. It is Origen's reference that establishes the second century date for the mystic text itself, but only if that text can be identified with the esoteric traditions surrounding the Song of Songs to which Origen refers. Scholem concludes:

> The Song of Songs, then, in order to have been included in Origen's list, must have been known in Palestine in his time, and even for some time before, as a text linked to esoteric teachings about the appearence of the Divinity...if it is thus true that Origen's statement and our fragments of Shiur Komah explain each other, there can no longer be any valid reason to assign a late date to the sources from which these fragments [of the Shi^cur Qomah] derive.[65]

This assertion leads to other conclusions. Whereas Lieberman, as we shall see, upon noting that a baraita preserved in the Babylonian Talmud is identical to a passage in the Shi^cur Qomah, suggested that they might have had a common source, possibly an outside one, Scholem is prepared to assert that the Talmud is quoting the Shi^cur Qomah, the tannaitic provenance of which it correctly indicates by introducing the passage with the tanna formula usually reserved for tannaitic statements.[66]

By the time of the Encyclopaedia Judaica article on the subject, Scholem had retreated significantly from these assertions. In his article, he does not refer to Origen at all, and in the article on "Kabbalah: Historical Development," he refers to the fact that the testimony of Origen points to the prohibition of esoteric traditions "like the Shi^cur Qomah which were tied to the Song of Songs."[67] This is clearly a modification of previously held views.

It remains, of course, possible that Origen was, in fact, referring to the Shi^cur Qomah, even if he was recording a commonly held theory regarding the "true" nature of that text rather than empirically correct information.[68] Still, as we have pointed out in our analysis of the position of Jellinek, the link between the Song and the Shi^cur Qomah is an extremely weak foundation on which to build any but the most ephemeral structures.

Scholem is also of the opinion that the Shi^cur Qomah was originally composed as part of the larger Merkavah Rabbah, the manuscripts of which do, as we shall explain presently, contain a recension of the text.[69] Scholem neither proves this assertion nor does he advance any support for his hypothesis. Although it cannot be argued that the Merkavah Rabbah recension of the text is not very old, it seems premature to state that "the oldest text of the Shi^cur Qomah...was originally part of the Merkavah Rabbah."[70]

Saul Lieberman (b. 1898) has devoted one brief but far-reaching essay to the elucidation of the questions surrounding the origin and provenance of the Shi^cur Qomah, his "Mishnat Shir Hashirim" essay, published as an appendix to Scholem's book on Jewish gnosticism,[71] as well as several important remarks scattered throughout his other books and essays. Lieberman first demonstrates, in his essay, that there were strong and accepted tannaitic traditions that asserted that the Song of Songs was revealed by God to Israel at the Red Sea or at Mount Sinai, and that, by extension, the figure of the beloved in the Song of Songs was taken, at least allegorically, to refer to the appearance of the godhead as a youthful warrior during those historical events. The Shi^cur Qomah thereupon becomes the midrashically conceived amplification of that theory. Lieberman writes:

> I can now accept Scholem's theory that the mishnah of the Shi^cur Qomah is an early midrash to the Song 5:10-16, which was once part of an ancient midrash to the Song. Shi^cur Qomah is [a text of] praise and glorification to the Holy One, blessed be He, in a style that is too elevated [to be comprehensible] to us.[72]

He continues to show that the inner connection between the Song and the Shi^cur Qomah was known to some of the ancients and led to a general acceptance of the Shi^cur Qomah. He writes that the text "was sanctified in the national consciousness,"[73] and was known to the early liturgical poet, Kalir. The relationship between Kalir and the Shi^cur Qomah will be discussed in detail below. Even more significantly, according to other tannaitic texts, passages of the Song were taken to be included among the texts to which the famous mishnaic prohibition of the private study of ma^case merkavah applied.[74] This identifies the ma^case merkavah with the Shi^cur Qomah and leads Lieberman to declare "Midrash Shir Hashirim, ma^case merkavah and Shi^cur Qomah are all

the same work."[75] Thus Lieberman offers his own theory as to the original framework in which the Shi^cur Qomah was included, similar to the views of Jellinek and Scholem. What Lieberman does have in common with these others is the assumption that the Shi^cur Qomah is to be linked to the Song of Songs. Whereas his predecessors merely assumed that to be the case, Lieberman has tried to show that the radical extension of the simple theory that the Song presents an allegory of the relationship between God and Israel to the point at which the text of the Song is actually taken to be a description of the godhead was known in antiquity and that this allows the theory that the Shi^cur Qomah was linked to the Song in the tannaitic period. This supports Scholem, and leaves plausible the latter's theories regarding Jewish origins for Marcus' alphabet mysticism, and also makes reasonable Scholem's theory regarding the meaning of Origen's reference to the esoteric doctrines connected to the Song of Songs. At any rate, the plausibility of the existence of extreme anthropomorphic speculation in the tannaitic period is certainly not enough to establish a tannaitic date for the composition of the Shi^cur Qomah.

Having accepted Scholem's date for the text, Lieberman also shows that a baraita found in BT Bekhorot 44a is identical to a passage of the Shi^cur Qomah. This suggests a common source for both to Lieberman; Scholem takes the mystic text to have been the source of the citation in the Talmud.[76] In listing the various inacceptable physical blemishes in a priest's physical appearance, the Mishnah (M Bekhorot) declares that a nose that is out of proportion to the other limbs is sufficient cause to disqualify a priest. To this, the Talmud offers an elucidatory baraita: tanna ke'esba^c qeṭanah 'it is taught [i.e. in a baraita]: [This nose is optimally as long] as the little finger.' This phrase is identical to a sentence in the Shi^cur Qomah. At line 110, we find a slightly confused text, the result, apparently, of a phrase inadvertantly omitted by the scribe. The text appears in its fuller version in other manuscripts. In JTS ms. 1892, for example, we read "The width of the forehead [Hebrew: mesah] is as [i.e. equals] the length of the neck; and the lip [similarly] is as the length of the nose. The length of the nose is as the length of the little finger. The height of the cheek [Hebrew: leset] is one half the circumference of the head, and such are the [ideal] proportions of all men." The source of such information itself need not be sought in the text of the Shi^cur Qomah. Lieberman himself, in his essay on the natural science of the rabbis, has observed that "at least part

of their information was based on personal observation; there were Rabbis who themselves examined the anatomy of the human body."[77] Assuming such information to have been derived from anatomical examination in antiquity, Lieberman, in another work, remarks that "there seems to have been a common [separate] source of the baraita in Bekhorot and of the Shi^cur Qomah."[78] This discovery does not help to determine when the texts involved borrowed this information, or the nature of the link between them.

In his recent book on Apocalytic and Merkavah Mysticism, I. Gruenwald devotes a few pages to the Shi^cur Qomah.[79] His work is almost entirely descriptive and provides no new insights into the text. There are, however, a number of unfounded hypotheses put forth which cannot be supported. Gruenwald assumes that the names assigned to the limbs were actually "mystic metonyms" meant to allow the mystics to discuss the divine form without transgressing the specifically stated prohibition of Exodus 33:20 ("...for no man may see My face and live.") First of all, Ex 33:20 is more of an observation within a particular narrative than a commandment for the generations.[80] Secondly, there is no evidence whatsoever that the mystic names were ever discussed without reference to the parts of the body to which they correspond. This curious theory leads Gruenwald to write that "the mystical language...aimed at circumventing the anthropomorphic problem."[81] It seems unnecessary to point out that the addition of mystical names hardly took the sting out of the obvious and stark anthropomorphism of the text.

Because of the problems in this approach, Gruenwald offers another explanation. The statement that "we do not possess any measure, only the names are revealed" which appears in the text at line 81 (or, more exactly, in some manuscripts at the point corresponding to line 81 of our text) is taken by Gruenwald to suggest that the names are meant to replace the measures. "Thus,' he writes, 'the mystical name may refer to a particular limb and also indicate its measurement."[82] It is quite unclear what this means, and Gruenwald does not offer any explanation of how the measure may be derived somehow from the name. It is refuted by the fact that all the recensions of the text which give the names also give the corresponding measurements of the limbs. Some manuscripts give the measurements but not the names. It seems relatively certain that both names and measurements are equally original features of the text and that neither is meant to replace or supercede the other.

Gruenwald is the first author who points out that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was originally meant to be recited. The references to the fact that "one who does not conclude with this verse" is declared to be in error, an assertion that occurs twice in the text, is correctly taken by Gruenwald to refer to a public recitation in which the reader is enjoined from concluding with any other than the specific verse indicated.[83] It is surprising that Gruenwald does not build on this important observation, as it is precisely the fact that the text was composed to be recited that reveals its original context and nature, as we shall see below.

Finally, Gruenwald writes that the absence of the "fire of deafness" tradition in 3 Enoch implies that the author of this latter work did not know the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, in which it is reported that Metatron, the vizier of the celestial court, uses such mysterious fire to stop up the ears of the heavenly creatures lest they be damaged by his recitation of the holy names.[84] 3 Enoch is composed of its own set of traditions, and is not solely a collection of earlier texts. It is futile to draw any firm conclusions about the related literary history of the two texts based on the inclusion or exclusion of one tradition or another in or from one of the two works.

An English translation of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah prepared by a group of latter-day mystics, The Work of the Chariot, appeared in 1976. Their work is literal, but incomplete, and is based solely on the Sefer Razi'el recension of the text.[85] The other translation of the text into a Western language, also made from the text that appears in the Sefer Razi'el, was by Johann Andreas Eisenmenger, the early eighteenth century anti-Semitic author of the Entdecktes Judenthum, a collection of Jewish texts intended to "reveal" to the Gentile reader the folly and blasphemous nature of Judaism. It is an honor of some sort, perhaps, that Eisenmenger chose the Shi^{c}ur Qomah as the work with which to begin his vast work; he could, apparently, think of no more damning place to begin.[86]

The central problem in research on the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is the lateness of the manuscript sources. Scholars who argue for an early date for the text must realize that they are conducting their research over the long and silent centuries that divide the supposed date of composition from our earliest manuscript. Of course, the same is the case for all, or almost all, Jewish literature that has survived from antiquity, so it is

hardly the case that lack of early manuscript support rules out an early date for a text. Ultimately, the fate and state of preservation of the manuscripts is a wholly unrelated issue to the question of the date and provenance of the text itself in any given case.

All the theories we have examined above have their failings. The Jellinek-Scholem theory is built on the weak link between the Shi^cur Qomah and the description of the lover in the Song of Songs. In light of that weakness, Lieberman's essay merely demonstrates the plausibility of extreme anthropomorphic speculation in the tannaitic period, but hardly proves the second century provenance of the text, and does not prove that the text is the result of those speculative tendencies. Gaster's theory cannot be sustained in light of our inability to find a clear relationship between the kind of theosophy that characterizes Valentinian gnosticism and the kind of thought revealed in the lines of our text. Graetz' gaonic date for the text has the serious benefit of the firm literary testimonia that support it, but is weakened by his failure to show why a Jewish author in the gaonic period, presumably in gaonic Mesopotamia, would have gone to such extremes to mimic the theosophic musings of Moslem sectarians. Below, we shall present our own theory of the date and nature of the text, based on firmly datable literary testimony and on inner-Jewish theosophical development. First, however, we shall turn to the manuscripts themselves, and introduce the reader to the various recensions of the text that have survived into the modern period.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. Saadia Gaon (882-942) wrote a responsum dealing specifically with the Shi^cur Qomah and the question of the validity of anthropomorphic theosophic speculation which has come down to us in a number of forms; see the Commentar zum Sepher Jezira von R. Jehudah b. Barsilai, ed. S.J. Halberstam (Berlin, 1885), pp. 20-21; Gabriel Pollak, Halikhot Qedem (Amsterdam, 1847), pp. 69-71; B.M. Levin, 'Oṣar Hagge'onim, vol. 1 (Haifa, 1928), pp. 15-18 and Y. Kafih, "Sarid Mihibbur Temani 'Atiq Be^cinyane

S[efer] Shi^{c}ur Qomah," in The Jews of Yemen: Studies and Researches [sic], ed. Y. Yeshayahu and Y. Tobi (Jerusalem, 1975), pp. 407-410. Sherirah Gaon (906-1006) and his son Hai Gaon (939-1038) issued a responsum regarding the Shi^{c}ur Qomah published by M.M. Meyuhas in his Teshuvot Hagge'onim Sha^{c}are Teshuvah (Leipzig, 1858; rpt. Jerusalem, n.d., and, with the commentary of Z.W. Leiter, Pittsburgh, 1946), resp. no. 122, p. 12. The responsum was later published in Teshuvot Hagge'onim, ed. J. Mussafiah (Lik, 1864; rpt. Jerusalem, 1967), resp. no. 29, pp. 12a-b; and by B.M. Levin in his 'Oṣar Hagge'onim vol. 4 (Jerusalem, 1931), pt. 2, pp. 10-12. From the same period are several Kariatic remarks concerning the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. Salmon b. Yeruḥam devoted the last three chapters of his fiercely polemical Sefer Milḥamot 'Adonai to a blistering attack on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah; see the edition of Israel Davidson, The Book of the Wars of the Lord (New York, 1934). Salmon also commented on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in his commentary on the Psalms, published by Jacob Mann in his "Karaite Settlements in Jerusalem" in his Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature (New York, 1972), vol. 2, pp. 83-86. On the eleventh century Karaite, Abu'l Faraj, see Mann, "Karaite Settlements," pp. 38-39; Lieberman, Sheqi^{c}in (Jerusalem, 1970), p. 11 and Lieberman in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 124. Al-Qirqisani also refers to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah; see A. Harkavy in Zaniski Vostochnavo Otdyeleniya Imperatorskavo Russkavo Arkheologicheskavo Obshchestva 8(1894), pp. 247ff.; L. Nemoy, "Al-Qirqisani's Account of the Jewish Sects and Christianity," HUCA 7(1930), pp. 317ff.; and Lieberman, Sheqi^{c}in, p. 11. A. Sharf has tried, not entirely successfully, to demonstrate that there are parts of the oeuvre of Shabbetai Donnolo (913-c.982) composed as reactions to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah; see his The Universe of Shabbetai Donnolo (New York, 1976), pp. 73-93. Scholem, with more success, has shown that Rashi (1040-1105) had some knowledge of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah text; see his Jewish Gnosticism, 2nd ed. (New York, 1965), p. 129, note to p. 40, line 2. The earliest explicit reference to the text in the works of the medievals is in the writings of Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164); see his Yesod Mora', chs. 1 and 12 (Frankfurt, 1840), pp. 10-11 and p. 50; and also his long commentary to Exodus 33:21, ed. A. Weizer (Jerusalem, 1976), vol. 2, p. 214. Ibn Ezra's approach to the text, and the various approaches of other medieval scholars are discussed by A. Altmann in his article, "Moses Narboni's Epistle on Shi^{c}ur Qoma," in Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies, ed. A. Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 225-254. A responsum of Maimonides (1135-1204) on the subject of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was published by Blau (Jerusalem, 1957),

vol. 1, pp. 100-102, cf. ed. Freimann (Jerusalem- Tel Aviv, 1934), p. 343. The responsum is no. 117 in Blau, no. 373 in Freimann. The text of the responsum may be compared with the version quoted in the Commentary to the Mishnah, ed. Gottlieb (Hannover, 1906), p. 97, regarding which, see Lieberman in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 124. The responsum reflects the mature years of Maimonides' thinking; the opinions of his youth may be found in another text of the Commentary to the Mishnah, see his introduction to the tenth chapter of M Sanhedrin in Mavo' Lefereq Heleq, ed. Holzer (Berlin, 1901), p. 24 and ed. Kafiḥ (Jerusalem, 1965), vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 142. Maimonides' comment on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah text that was in his own hands is allegedly preserved according to an old Yemenite manuscript published by Y. Kafiḥ in his article in The Jews of Yemen..., eds. Yeshayahu and Tobi, pp. 407-410. That manuscript gives a long section from the text itself as well. Of course, the larger issues of divine incorporeity and anthropomorphism are the subjects of long passages in the Guide for the Perplexed and other works of Maimonides, among which the famous passage in the Mishneh Torah, laws of repentance 3:7 (with the scricture of Rabad) deserves special attention, as does the passage in the Ma'amar Teḥiyyat Hammetim published in 'Iggrot Harambam (Leipzig, 1859; rpt. Jerusalem, 1967), p. 8a, in which Maimonides describes anyone who would conceive of the godhead in a corporeal manner as being a heretic, an Epicurean, in a category with animals and as having brains filled with the lunacies of old women. Eleazar of Worms, to whom one of the manuscripts of the Sefer Haqqomah is specifically attributed, refers to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah that was before him in his Sefer Haroqeaḥ Haggadol, laws of repentance (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 20-21. A contemporary work, the Pesaq Hiyyir'ah Veha'emunah, often incorrectly attributed to Eleazar, as proven by Joseph Dan in his "Hug Hakkeruv Hammeyuḥad Betenu^{c}at Haside 'Ashkenaz," Tarbiz 35(1966), pp. 356-357, mentions the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. The text is published as part of Eleazar's Sha^{c}are Hassod Veha'emunah, ed. Jellinek, in the journal Kokhave Yiṣḥaq 27(1862), pp. 7-15, and, more recently, as an appendix to the 1956 Jerusalem edition of the Commentary to the Torah of Joseph Bekhor Shor, vol. 1, pp. 124-131. That latter edition contains Jellinek's notes, word for word, but gives no indication of their author or the source from which the publisher has apparently copied them. Eleazar also refers to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in his Sode Razaya, ed. Kamelhar (Bilgoraj, 1936), pp. 31-36. Judah Halevi makes reference to the text in his Kuzari, trans.

H. Hirschfeld (London, 1905; rpt. New York, 1964), p. 212. Menaḥem b. Solomon Meiri (1249-1316) refers to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in his introduction to M 'Avot, ed. B. Prag (Jerusalem, 1964), p. 48. Moses Taku discusses the text in his Ketav Tamim, ed. Kirchheim (in 'Osar Nehmad 3 (1860), pp. 61-62. Abraham b. Azriel, author of the ^{c}Aruqat Habbosem, discusses the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in that work, ed. Urbach (Jerusalem, 1965), vol. 1, p. 202, to which may be compared the author's citations from the 'Otiot Derabbi ^{c}Aqiva, ed. cit., vol. 1, pp. 127-28. The Epistle on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah by Moses ben Joshua Narboni has almost nothing to do with the ancient text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, which serves the author more as a pretext than as a real basis for philosophical inquiry. The text was published by S. Pinsker in the journal Kokhave Yiṣḥaq 30(1864), pp. 25-33, and, in a scientific edition, by Altmann in Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies, ed. A. Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 225-88. Simon b. Tzemaḥ Duran (1361-1444) refers to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in his Magen 'Avot, ed. Livorno, 1785; rpt. Jerusalem, n.d., p. 21b, regarding which, see Scholem, Von der mystischen Gestalt der Gottheit (Zurich, 1965), p. 30. Finally, references to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah may be found in Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov, Sefer Ha'emunot 3:5, ed. Ferrara, 1556, p. 23a; Abraham Bibago, Derekh 'Emunot, ed. Constantinople, 1522, pp. 12d-13a; and David Darshan, Sefer Shir Hamma^{c}alot Ledavid, ed. Cracow, 1567, p. 12a. According to Graetz, "Die mystische Literatur der gaonischen Epoche," MGWJ 8(1859), pp. 110-111, there is a very early reference to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in the works of Agobard of Lyons (779-840). The reference is in Agobard's treatise, De Judaicus Superstitionibus, ed. Baluzi, quoted by Graetz, "Mystische Literatur," p. 111. Graetz' view is opposed by Gaster in MGWJ 37(1893), pp. 226-28, in an essay now reprinted in his Studies and Texts..., vol. 2, pp. 1349-1351. Graetz' and Gaster's views are discussed below.

2. S. Ettinger, "Heinrich Graetz", EJ, 1972.

3. H. Graetz, "Mystische Literatur," p. 67. The chapter to which he is referring is Zunz, Die gottesdienstliche Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt (Berlin, 1832), pp. 165-170. Cf. Graetz' note in his Geschichte der Juden, 4th edition (Leipzig, 1908), vol. 7, note 3, pp. 385-402. Shahrastani's book appears only in German translation, see Abu-'l Fath^{c} Muhammad asch-Schahrastani's Religionsparthein und Philosophenschulen, ed. and trans. Theodor Haarbrücker (Halle, 1850). Shahrastani lived from 1086 to 1153.

4. Jellinek, BH, vol. 2, pp. 114-17.

5. Graetz, "Mystische Literatur," p. 110. This is, of course, a correct conclusion.

6. More logically, it is only really the latest possible date for the composition of the work.

7. Graetz, "Mystische Literatur," p. 110.

8. See above, note 1.

9. The passage from the Pesiqta Rabbati is in ch. 20, ed. Freimann (Vienna, 1880), p. 96b.

10. The source of this is in Abraham Zakuto, Sefer Yuhasin Hashalem, ed. Filopowski (London and Edinburgh, 1857), p. 84.

11. Graetz, "Mystische Literatur," p. 112.

12. The reasons for dating the Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^{c}ezer between 809 and 813 are set forth by Graetz in "Mystische Literatur," p. 112, n. 5, and have to do with a brief reference in the thirty-sixth chapter to the splitting up of the Kalifate between two brothers, apparently a unique historical event.

13. Graetz, "Mystische Literatur," p. 115.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., p. 142.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 117.

18. J. Hamburger, Real-Encyclopaedie für Bibel und Talmud (Strelitz, 1883), vol. 2, pp. 577-78.

19. The title is based on an obscure phrase in Nu 11:8, but is actually a pun. Leshed is an anagram for the initials of Samuel David Luzzato. The Ta^{c}am Leshed was published in Livorno in 1865. The Vikkuaḥ ^{c}al Haqqabbalah was published in Gorizia in 1852. The latter work takes the form of a dialogue between the author (who is merely the foil) and his guest, who expresses Luzzato's views. The author figure argues for the antiquity of the Kabbalah, referring in one place to the fact that Ibn Ezra refers to the Shi^{c}ur

Qomah in his commentary to the Pentateuch (p. 15.) To this, the guest responds, "I admit that all those books [including the Shi'ur Qomah] came from the hands of our rabbis [and are therefore not late forgeries], but I have not seen them, and can therefore not know if they agree or disagree with the opinions of the Kabbalists or not. All I have seen is that R. Judah Halevi and R. Abraham Ibn Ezra, who saw them and supported their [claim of] antiquity, did not maintain any of the kabbalistic theories at all. Furthermore, I imagine that if those books were supportive of the faith of the Kabbalists, they would have been quite anxious to publish them, which they did not do..." (pp. 15-16). This presumably was Luzzato's own situation. He had not read the Shi'ur Qomah and was willing to accept it as ancient based on the testimony of Ibn Ezra.

20. An exception to the rule is Israel Weinstock, who correctly puts Benamozegh as the originator of the theory of tannaitic authorship pursued by Gaster, Scholem and Lieberman. Cf. his Bema'agale Hannigleh Vehannistar (Jerusalem, 1969), p. 107, n. 2.

21. Benamozegh, p. 110.

22. Benamozegh, p. 111.

23. These are discussed below.

24. Benamozegh, p. 115.

25. See below, chapter six.

26. Benamozegh, p. 117.

27. The earliest source for a theory of a pre-Christian Jewish gnosis offered by Scholem is Moritz Friedlander's Der vorchristliche jüdische Gnostizismus (Gottingen, 1898), in Jewish Gnosticism, p. 3, n. 2. Scholem does not refer to Benamozegh in this context.

28. Philipp Bloch, Geschichte der Entwicklung der Kabbala und der jüdischen Religionsphilosophie (Trier, 1894), pp. 14-17.

29. Bloch, p. 17.

30. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, 3rd ed. (New York, 1941), p. 67.

31. Jellinek, BH, vol. 6, p. xxxxii-xxxxiii.

32. Ibid., p. xxxxii.

33. Moses Gaster, "Das Schiur Komah," MGWJ 37(1893), pp. 179-185 and 213-230; Studies and Texts... (London, 1925-1928), vol. 2, pp. 1330-1353. Page numbers here follow the original article.

34. Gaster, p. 182.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., p. 183.

37. Ibid., p. 215.

38. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 6-7.

39. See below in this chapter.

40. Gaster, p. 229.

41. Ibid., p. 230.

42. Scholem, "Schi^{c}ur Koma: die mystische Gestalt der Gottheit," in Von der mystischen Gestalt der Gottheit: Studien zu Grundbegriffe der Kabbala (Zurich, 1962), pp. 7-48; Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 63-7; Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 36-42. Cf. also Scholem, Kabbalah (New York, 1974), pp. 16-17 and "Shiur Komah," EJ, 1972. As far as we can determine, the EJ article represents the latest statement Scholem made on the subject of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. Cf. also Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbala (Berlin, 1962), pp. 17-18 and David Biale, Gershom Scholem: Kabbala and Counter-History (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1979), pp. 129-134.

43. Scholem, Major Trends, p. 66.

44. Ibid., p. 67.

45. Ibid., p. 63. Scholem does not credit Jellinek with having made this observation first.

46. Scholem, "Shiur Komah," EJ, 1972.

47. Ibid.

48. M Yadaim 3:5.

49. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 36.

50. Ibid., p. 37.

51. See below, lines 115-117.

52. Hekhalot Rabbati, ch. 10, ed. Wertheimer, p. 84.

53. Scholem usually refers to the Hekhalot Rabbati according to the divisions of his privately prepared and unpublished text. We presume his reference here is to the tenth chapter in Wertheimer's text. The tenth chapter in Jellinek's text in BH, vol. 3, p. 91, also has a fragmentary reference to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, but there, there is no reference to grooms or lovers whatsoever, and no affinity to the Song at all.

54. A. Siouville, ed. and trans. Hippolyte de Rome, Philosophumena ou Réfutation de Toutes les Hérésies (Paris, 1928), p. 67, n. 1. Hippolytus derived his information from Irenaeus, but his book has its own value in that it preserves the Greek terminology of Irenaeus' original text which is no longer extant.

55. Irenaeus 1.14.3, trans. and ed. A.C. Coxe in ANF, vol. 1, p. 337.

56. Irenaeus 1.14.1, ed. cit., p. 336.

57. Ibid.

58. There is a certain similarity between the system of Marcus' letter mysticism and the doctrine of creation set forth in the Sefer Yeşirah.

59. Irenaeus 1.14.3, ed. cit., p. 337.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 37. Cf. M. Gaster, "Das Schiur Komah," p. 221 (and in his Texts and Studies, vol. 2, p. 1344.

63. Irenaeus 1.14.9, ed. cit., p. 338.

64. Although Scholem's parallel between the Shi^{c}ur Qomah and Marcus may not be that exact, there are other gnostic authors of a relatively early period that might, in fact, provide parallels to the description of God in

the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and specifically to the aspect of gigantism. Hippolytus, Origen and Epiphanius all refer to a certain Elchasai, who wrote a book that was adopted in Christian heretical circles, particularly by the Elchasites, his own followers. See A.F.J. Klijn and G.J. Reinink, Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects (Leiden, 1973) [=Supplements to Novum Testamentum 36(1973)], pp. 54-69; and E. Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson, Best, Hill, Ogg and Stead (Philadelphia, 1965), vol. 2, pp. 745-750. Hippolytus states that a certain Alcibiades went to Rome and brought with him a book by a certain Elchasai, who claimed "...that it [i.e. the book] had been revealed by an angel whose height was twenty-four schoenoi, which makes ninety-six miles, and whose breath [sic] was four schoenoi, and from shoulder to shoulder six schoenoi and the tracks of his feet extend to the length of three and one half schoenoi, which make fourteen miles, while the breadth is one and a half schoenoi with the height of half a schoenos[Hippolytus, Refutatio omn. haer. IX.13.2, in Klijn and Reinink, p. 115 and Hennecke-Schneemelcher, pp. 747-748.]" The text goes on to declare that this angel was actually the Son of God, and that he was accompanied by a female of similar dimensions, who was the Holy Spirit. Epiphanius (c. 315-403 C.E.) writes similarly that "he [Elchasai] describes Christ as a power of whom he also gives the dimensions: his length is twenty-four schoinoi, that means ninety-six miles, his breadth is six schoinoi, which is twenty-four miles...[Klijn and Reinink, p. 159.]" The dual testimony here is significant: Hippolytus' own dates (c. 170-236 C.E.) show Elchasai to have probably been a second century teacher and author; Epiphanius shows that his work was still known in the fourth century. If Scholem's second century date for the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is correct, then it is not implausible that it was composed in response to this sort of gigantistic speculation regarding Jesus. Certainly, this seems more likely than taking the Jewish text as a reaction (or even as a development) of Marcus' alphabet mysticism. The Gospel of Peter (a gnostic work), for what it is worth, observes that when the resurrected Jesus first left his earthly tomb, led by two angels, "the heads of the two [angels] reached to heaven, but that of him who was led by them overpassed the heavens [Hennecke-Schneemelcher, vol. 1, p. 186.]"

65. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 40. The passage in Origen is Prologus in Canticum, in Patrologia Latina, ed. Migne (Paris, 1844-1880), vol. 13, col. 63.

Although Scholem does not mention it, a better passage in Origen is in his Gen. hom. 1.13 (in GCS VI.15,17) in which he mentions that some (Jews?) consider Is 66:1 to imply that God is so large that he can sit in heaven and use the earth as a footstool. If any passage in Origen can be made to suggest that Origen knew of the Shi^cur Qomah, this one can. See N. de Lange, Origen and the Jews (Cambridge, 1976), p. 44 and p. 171, n. 47.

66. Lieberman, Sheqi^cin, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem, 1970), p. 12.

67. Scholem, "Shiur Komah," EJ, 1972; Scholem, Kabbalah, p. 17. The emphasis is added here. (These references are to two versions of the same article.)

68. Origen also appears to have been wrong about the existence of a "fourth" type of Jewish esoteric tradition based on the last chapters of Ezekiel. If he was correct, then no trace of it seems to have survived. Probably, Origen meant just what he said, that is, that these four sections were deferred until the latter part of a student's education. Origen is not necessarily making reference to secret traditions.

69. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 6-7. The sentence in the text is misplaced, and should apparently be read at the end of the paragraph preceding the paragraph it concludes in the current edition.

70. Ibid. The only other way to read Scholem is to presume that he meant that the oldest surviving manuscript of any recension of our text is a manuscript of the Merkavah Rabbah, but that does not seem to be the case. Scholem's book on Jewish Gnosticism was reviewed by D. Flusser in JJS 11(1960), pp. 59-68, several of whose remarks can be helpful in evaluating Scholem's work on our text.

71. S. Lieberman, "Mishnat Shir Hashirim," in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 111-126.

72. Lieberman, in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 123. Lieberman does not mention that this was originally the theory of Jellinek.

73. Lieberman, in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 124.

74. Lieberman, in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 126, referring to a tannaitic tradition preserved in an old

Yemenite commentary to the Song of Songs published in the Steinschneider Festschrift, p. 58.

75. Lieberman, in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 126. The Hebrew formulation of the phrase is hu'...hu'... hu'...

76. Lieberman, Sheqi^{c}in, p. 12.

77. Lieberman, "The Natural Science of the Rabbis." in Hellenism in Jewish Palestine 2nd ed. (New York, 1962), pp. 182-183.

78. Lieberman, Sheqi^{c}in, p. 12.

79. Ithamar Gruenwald, Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism (Leiden and Cologne, 1980), pp. 213-217.

80. Even if it were a commandment, it is obviously concerned with gazing on the godhead, not with discussing its form.

81. Gruenwald, Apocalyptic, p. 214.

82. Ibid., p. 215.

83. Ibid., p. 216.

84. Ibid., p. 217.

85. The Secret Garden, ed. David Meltzer (New York, 1976), pp. 23-27.

86. Eisenmenger, Entdecktes Judenthum (Königsberg, 1711), p. 2.

III THE RECENSIONS OF THE TEXT

Before approaching the Shi^{c}ur Qomah itself, we must first consider the state in which the text has survived into our own day. It is the underlying assumption of our research that the varied and quite distinctive texts that we have found in approximately thirty-four manuscripts of various dates and provenances all, or almost all, ultimately hark back to a single non-extant Urtext that was composed by a single author at a particular historical moment. In the next chapter, we shall try to analyze the information we have attempted to recover regarding that author, the time and place in which he lived, and nature of his original work, the sources from which he drew his information and the reasons for which he might have been moved to compose such a text. Before, however, we plunge into the realm of theory and hypothesis, it is first our obligation to describe and to examine the extant manuscripts and to analyze the groups into which they may be divided.

The manuscripts may first be divided into those which present their version of the text as an independent work, and those which present it as part of a larger work. Of the latter, there are three groups; naming the recension after the larger text in which it appears, we have the Sefer Razi'el recension, the Merkavah Rabbah recension and the Siddur Rabbah recension of the text. These are all analyzed below. Of the former group, we have the Sefer Haqqomah and the Sefer Hashi^{c}ur recensions, of which the former seems to be the most well attested in the manuscript sources, and which we have chosen to translate and explicate below in chapter seven. In addition to these five groups, there is a sixth group of six manuscript texts which, by virtue either of the uniqueness of their texts or of their fragmentary or abridged natures, cannot be definitively or neatly set into one of the larger manuscript families. Of course, within each group, there are distinct subgroups; we shall comment below on this phenomenon as well.

The largest group is the Sefer Haqqomah group, although, as we shall see below in chapter 5 i, not all the manuscripts offer the same name for the text. Furthermore, the Sefer Haqqomah comes in a short and a long version. The long version, which is quite closely related to the Sefer Razi'el recension, seems to be, basically, an expansion of the shorter one, accomplished through the addition of four or five specific passages of poetry or prose at specific points in the text. The interpolations (if they are correctly so called) are

very old-- our oldest manuscripts, Oxford Hebr. C. 65 and Sassoon ms. 522, both Genizah texts, cite, as it happens, passages that appear only in the longer version.[1] Because it seems to be the best attested text, we have chosen to describe the other texts in terms of the Sefer Haqqomah. We have divided the short version into fourteen sections, and to each, we have assigned a letter of the English alphabet. When we discuss another recension in terms of the Sefer Haqqomah, the intention is not to suggest anything regarding the inner relationship of the texts, but merely to provide a framework in which the recensions may be discussed and compared without being obliged to make constant reference to the manuscripts themselves.

The four manuscripts that present the short version of the Sefer Haqqomah recension are Oxford mss. 1791 (ff. 58a-70b) and 1606 (ff. 91a-93b), Guenzburg ms. 90 (Lenin State Library, Moscow; ff. 150a-152b) and Cambridge Add. ms. 405.4 (ff. 338a-341a.) The fourteen sections of the text are as follows:

A: a prayer apparently composed to be recited by the mystic practitioner before the recitation of the text, which, it is noted in section H, must be recited daily.

B: a short text attributed to R. Aqiba describing the distances in parasangs between the various limbs of the godhead, and a total figure for the height of the godhead derived from Ps 147:5.

C: a list of rewards for the initiate into the secrets of the text, and a long litany built around the word melekh 'King'.

D: the counterpart to section B; a long text attributed to R. Ishmael giving the dimensions and names of the following limbs and organs of the godhead: the soles of the feet, the ankles, the calves, the knees, the thighs, the loins, the heart, the neck, the skull, the beard, the tongue, the forehead, the iris, the white of the eye, the shoulder, the arms, the palms of the hand, the fingers and the toes.

E: a textual unit with strong parallels in other rabbinic texts, setting down a method of converting the figures

given in the preceding sections from divine into human terms.

F: the third descriptive text, attributed to R. Nathan, giving names and dimensions of various physiognomical features and a final reckoning of the total divine height and width.

G: a statement by R. Ishmael recounting the rewards for one who would recite the text which he learned from R. Aqiba when he recited the text before him.

H: an injunction to recite the text "as a mishnah" daily and some random information about the body of the godhead and the divine eyes.

I: a description of the divine throne, sword, seat and their names.

J: a description of the celestial creatures (hayyot) and officers (sarim) and their place in the celestial throne room.

K: a brief midrashic amplification of Ex 23:20-21 warning the mystic against confusing the celestial valet, Metatron, with the godhead itself.

L: a description of the celestial worship service with Metatron featured as the leader of the service.

M: a clearly liturgical section, beginning with an apparently original hymn and continuing with selections from the Psalms, Chronicles and Kings.

N: a long prose exposition of the splendor and majesty of God, the celestial worship service and the uniqueness of the godhead.

The longer version of the Sefer Haqqomah is represented by ten manuscripts: Oxford mss. Hebr. C. 65 (f. 6), 1102 (f. 102), 1816 (f. 100b-101a), 1915 (ff. 2a-13a), 1960 (ff. 23b-27b), and 2257 (ff. 16a-20a); JTS mss. 1892 (ff. 1a-8a) and 1990 (ff. 41a-44a); Guenzburg ms. 131 (Lenin State Library, Moscow; ff. 2a-12b); and Munich ms. 40 (ff. 132b-138b.) These texts are characterized by the presence of apparently interpolated material following sections C, J, L, and N, which we propose to designate C_x, J_x, L_x and N_x. The C_x section is a liturgical text presenting prayers on behalf of the supplicant, and including a version of the famous 'En Kelohenu hymn. J_x is an elaborate description

of the meteriorological and astronomical phenomena that are to be found in heaven and a detailed description of Metatron's role in the celestial worship service. Section L_x is a hymn entitled, 'El Bema'amarkhah. Finally, section N_x is a long section made up of magic names, descriptions of the godhead, long melismatic prose passages describing the splendor of God, and a number of hymns and hymn fragments. Some of the manuscripts are incomplete, and at least two (Oxford mss. 1102 and 1816) are abridgements of the text. JTS ms. 1990 presents the C_x section following section M. Oxford ms. 2257 presents a quite different and long version preceding section B (section A is actually absent from the text,) and, as a further deviation from the norm, this manuscript offers section B embedded within section D.

Closely related to the long version of the Sefer Haqqomah is the text found within the Sefer Razi'el. This text may be found in the following manuscripts: Florence Plut. ms. 44.13 (ff. 121a-127a); JTS mss. 1879 (ff. 60b-73a), 2130 (ff. 36b-51a), and 8115 (ff. 37a-46a); JNUL ms. 476 (ff. 84b-89b) and Sassoon ms. 290 (pp. 227-228.) The Florence manuscript, JTS manuscripts 1879 and 8115 and the Jerusalem manuscript all present texts with identical structures, with the exception that JTS mss. 1879 and 8115 present the C_x sections before section B and do not present section A at all, while the Florence and Jerusalem manuscripts present both A and C_x, the latter between sections A and B. JTS 2130 is a ninteenth century Yemenite text, and presents the C_x text in the position in which it appears in the Sefer Haqqomah tradition, i.e. between sections C and D. Sassoon ms. 290 is a large compendium of kabbalistic texts. On pp. 228 and 228, the fifteenth century scribe, Joseph, presents sections B and D, taken from the Sefer Razi'el. His text of section D is almost entirely different from the other manuscripts. The Sefer Razi'el was printed by Moses b. Abraham Mendes Coutinho in Amsterdam in 1701, and subsequently in about twenty-five separate editions.

Three manuscripts represent the Sefer Hashi^{c}ur tradition: JTS mss. 1886 (ff. 37b-39a) and 1904 (ff. 1b-3b) and Mossayef ms. 145 (ff. 57a-58b.) The latter was published by Mossayef in his Merkavah Shelemah (1921; rpt. Jerusalem: Maqor, 1971), pp. 30a-33b (top) in relatively careless transcription. The format of the texts is the same in all these manuscripts: the texts begin with a long amplification of the E section of the Sefer Haqqomah texts and continue with a very distinctive version of sections B, D and F.

Section B is quite short, and is inserted into section D at about the midpoint. It is not clear that the name Sefer Hashi^{c}ur is the real name of the recension, but since two of the manuscript begin "This is the size of the [divine] body found in Sefer Hashi^{c}ur," we have adopted that name as a convenient way to designate this recension.

The fourth recension appears in its two manuscripts as part of a larger work, the Siddur Rabbah Debereshit Demerkavah Derabbi Yishma^{c}el Kohen Gadol. The manuscripts, JTS 1746 (ff. 140a-143b) and JNUL 381 (ff. 53a-59a), present identical formats, including material parallel to sections B, D, E, F, G, I, J_x, K and L of the long Sefer Haqqomah texts. The order of sections in this recension is B, J_x, K, F, I, L, D, E and G. After section G, there is a long section that could be taken as an elaborate amplification of section H, counting off a long list of boons and rewards stored up for the practitioner, as well as a large number of more standard hekhalot traditions, of which some are known from other sources, and others, not. It is of interest to note that the sixteenth century scribe of the Jerusalem manuscript specifically remarks on f. 60a that he has abridged the sources from which he culled his texts, if that comment is not the work of the original editor of the Siddur. Also of interest is the scribe's (or editor's) list of his sources found on the same folio.

The final homogeneous group of manuscripts is made up of the three manuscripts of the Merkavah Rabbah, itself generally regarded as a merkavah text.[2] As a critical edition of the text is being prepared at the present time, we will only remark here that the Merkavah Rabbah does contain a recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and one that differs quite seriously from the other recensions.[3] The three manuscripts, Oxford 1531 (ff. 70b-73a), JTS 8128 (ff. 41a-43b) and Munich ms. 40 (ff. 111a-113a), all present the same format in three sections, which are roughly parallel to sections D, E, and H of the Sefer Haqqomah, but, as stated above, with wide-ranging textual differences. The textual variances are such that one might even wonder if the version of the text presented here derives from the same Urtext as the other recensions, or if it represents a parallel literary formulation of the same fund of mystic information on which the Urtext itself was based. A version of the Merkavah Rabbah was printed by Mossayef in his Merkavah Shelemah, pp. 1a-6a, but the text of the recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is mostly omitted, except for the section parallel to section H of the Sefer Haqqomah.

Finally, there are a number of manuscripts that defy classification in one of the recensions of the text we have described, either because of the poor state in which they have been preserved, or because of genuine textual uniqueness. JTS ms. 8128 (ff. 18a-22a) presents sections apparently taken from the Sefer Haqqomah, but reworked by the fifteenth century scribe and presented in the following order: sections H, I, J, B, C, C_x, J_x, L, L_x, K, F, I (!), L (!) and with his own set of unusual readings. Sassoon ms. 522 (p. 2) is a single leaf written in probably the tenth or eleventh century that presents texts parallel to sections H, I, J_x and L of the Sefer Haqqomah. This, along with Oxford ms. Hebr. C. 65, are our oldest texts. British Museum ms. 10384 (f. 183a) is a single leaf presenting material parallel to sections A, B and C of the Sefer Haqqomah under the unique title, "The Shi'ur Qomah Which R. Ishmael ibn [sic] Elisha, the High Priest...Saw When He Ascended on High." British Museum ms. 10675 (ff. 1a-6a) is a text apparently intended for liturgical use containing material parallel to sections D, E, F, G, and H of the Sefer Haqqomah. Parma ms. 2784 (f. 15) presents an expanded version of section H of the Sefer Haqqomah as a useful prayer-text for one stricken with sudden muteness and attributed to Rabbenu Tam.[4] Finally, Munich ms. 22 (ff. 168a-171a) presents a long reworking of sections D, E, F, G, H_x, I, J_x, K, L, and L_x in an extremely novel order, and with a large number of variant readings. The scribe seems to have felt free to draw from all sections of the text at once, presenting, for example, sections of section J_x at three different points in his text.

In addition to all these, there are three manuscripts that we have been unable to study because the libraries in which they rest are unable (in the case of Oxford) or unwilling (in the case of Moscow) to provide microfilms of them. These are Oxford ms. 2456 (ff. 52-56) and Guenzburg mss. 302 and 738. The Guenzburg manuscripts are housed at the Lenin State Library in Moscow.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. Oxford ms. Hebr. C. 65, f. 6a, lines 16-32 and 43-51; Sassoon ms. 522, p. 2, lines 6-18.

2. See Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, 2nd ed. (New York, 1965), p. 4 and ibid, n. 15.

3. See Peter Schaefer, "Prolegomena zu einer kritischen Edition und Analyse der Merkava Rabba," Franfurter Judaistische Beiträge 5(1977), pp. 65-101.

4. The text has been published, with an error or two of transcription, by Scholem in his "Hakkarat Panim Vesidre Shirṭutin" in Sefer 'Assaf, eds. Cassuto, Lausner and Gutman (Jerusalem, 1953), p. 469.

IV THE PROVENANCE AND NATURE OF THE TEXT

As we have seen, the Shi^cur Qomah texts have come down to us in a variety of recensions, all of which, while clearly distinct in terms of format and layout, are really quite similar in terms of content and style. We have presumed in our analysis of the manuscript recensions that each of these versions of the text is a reworking of an original fund of speculative information which served, in its literary form, as the Urtext behind all the recensions. None of the texts we have examined recommends itself clearly as that original literary doctument, and so we may conclude tentatively that the Urtext is probably no longer extant, having been superseded by the surviving recensions. We may therefore ask a number of distinct questions. Firstly, how old is this original literary formulation? It could conceivably have been composed as early as the late second century C.E., as held by Scholem. On the other hand, with the exception of the liturgical poet, Kallir, whose relation to the text is discussed below, the earliest unequivocal literary attestation to the (or, to a) Shi^cur Qomah text is either in the works of Saadia Gaon (882-942) or in the book of his Karaite contemporary, Salmon b. Yeruham. There is no particular reason not to think that Saadia and Salmon had one of our recensions of the text, most probably the Sefer Haqqomah, before them. We must presume that the Urtext had in it at least all of sections B, D, and F (that is, the actual facts, figures and names presented in the larger text), and it is just to this kind of information that both Saadia and Salmon make reference. We must therefore leave our conclusions about the Urtext unfortunately vague.

This raises a further question regarding the age of the text. The Scholem-Lieberman hypothesis of a second century date for the text is best applied, if at all, to the genre of speculation that resulted in an extreme anthropomorphic conception of the Deity, of the kind, perhaps reflected in the Shi^cur Qomah, but not necessarily to the text itself. If the Urtext is conceivably as late as the ninth or tenth centuries, then how was the fund of facts transmitted? It seems implausible that the kind of data found in the Shi^cur Qomah would have been, or even, could have been, transmitted orally, and so we are left with two quite dissimilar possibilities: either the Urtext was composed centuries before it was mentioned in any surviving work, or else, the Urtext itself should be dated in the time of Kallir or Saadia and Salmon, and it should be assumed that the speculation itself is only that old. This is, of course, as per Graetz' theory,

but not for his reasons. We find it more likely that the Shi^cur Qomah was composed as a response to inner Jewish developments, rather than as a slavish attempt to Judaize Islamic sectarian anthropomorphism. There are certain appealing aspects to this theory of a date for the Shi^cur Qomah, not the least of which is that it would explain how the redactors of the Babylonian Talmud were able to use a quote that later appeared in the Shi^cur Qomah, to describe a priestly blemish.[1] On the other hand, both Saadia and Salmon seem to take the antiquity (if not the legitimacy) of the text for granted. Even Salmon, whose vituperative language left no possible avenue of depreciation unexplored, did not cast any aspersions on the ascription to tannaitic authorities he found in his text. We may therefore posit, at least tentatively, that the Shi^cur Qomah was composed after the close of the Talmudic period of redaction (i.e. after the fifth century C.E.), early enough to have been cited by Kallir, and long enough before Saadia and Salmon to have allowed them both to take the antiquity of the text as a given.

There are other arguments that strongly suggest a post-Talmudic but pre-ninth century date for the text. S.W. Baron has pointed out that our text contains a paraphrase of the conclusion of the Talmud.[2] It is hard to imagine that it is the Talmud, in this instance, that is paraphrasing the Shi^cur Qomah. We have mentioned above the inherent likelihood that the Talmud would hardly have used a statement presented in the Shi^cur Qomah with reference to the divine nose to describe a priestly blemish. Finally, the complete absence of any citations from the Shi^cur Qomah in the collection of mystic data in the second chapter of Tractate Ḥagigah in both the Palestinian and the Babylonian Talmuds suggests, at least ex silentio, that those traditions were unknown to the redactor of those sections of the Talmuds.

Text often are adduced as "proof" of an early composition of the Shi^cur Qomah; these are, generally, only restatements and developments of Biblical anthropomorphism. Thus, for example, the Alexandrian playwright Ezekiel writes, regarding Moses' encounter with God:

> There appeared to me [to Moses] at the summit
> of Mount Sinai,
> Reaching to the firmament of heaven
> On which was sitting someone who was as of
> light
> Wearing a crown and holding a rather large
> scepter

In his left hand. With his right hand
He beckoned me, and I stood before the Throne.
He gave me the crown, and upon the great Throne
He told me to sit. The royal crown he gave me
And himself moved away from the Throne.
Whereas I looked all around me at the whole
world
At what was below on earth and in the heavens
above,
And to me, the totality of stars, to their
knees
Fell, and I numbered them all,
And there passed by me, an encampment of men,
Whereupon I awoke, terrified, from my sleep.[3]

The author is developing the description of the anthropomorphic Deity found in Daniel 7 and 9, but it is unnecessary to relate his text to the Shi^cur Qomah; he did not know of the Shi^cur Qomah, nor did the author of the latter text read Ezekiel's play. The same must be stated regarding the descriptions of the godhead in 1 Enoch 14:8-25, the Apocalypse of Abraham, and 2 Enoch 13.[4]

We shall examine the texts that make up the corpus of merkavah mysticism below. Those texts may be divided into three groups: those texts which display no evidence that their authors knew the Shi^cur Qomah, those texts the authors of which seem to have known of speculation like that found in the Shi^cur Qomah, but whose authors cannot be shown to have definitely used the text of the Shi^cur Qomah in the preparation of their works, and the two works that have material common with our text: the Merkavah Rabbah, which contains a recension of the text, and Hekhalot Rabbati, which presents certain common traditions. Neither text is of any real help in dating our text because of the obscurity of their own dates of composition. The Hekhalot Rabbati has several traditions contained in the Shi^cur Qomah, but does not seem to have used any of our recensions of the text. Scholem has shown the beginnings of speculation akin to what we find in the Shi^cur Qomah as early as the second century C.E. Below, we shall posit an early gaonic date for the composition of the Urtext. This would place the text of Hekhalot Rabbati somewhere between the two, possibly in the fourth or fifth centuries, which is the date suggested by Scholem (at least for the prose passages of the Hekhalot Rabbati), and by Morton Smith.[5] Perhaps the author of the Hekhalot Rabbati knew the original Urtext of the Shi^cur Qomah; at any rate, the common hymn material suggests a common milieu rather than real literary borrowing, and the single passage of Shi^cur

Qomah-style gigantism seems inconsistant with the rest of the Hekhalot Rabbati, and thus may be presumed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, to have been borrowed from some other source. Merkavah Rabbah obviously postdates the recension of the Shi^cur Qomah it includes. Even if that is the earliest recension, as was suggested by Scholem, and all the more so if it is not, the date of the Merkavah Rabbah, were it known, could only fix a latest possible date for the Shi^cur Qomah.[6] If Peter Schaefer's current work on the Merkavah Rabbah allows him to fix a precise date, then we shall know by when at least one recension of the Shi^cur Qomah was composed. Generally speaking, it would not be incorrect to say that the literature of merkavah mysticism provides the background and framework for reading the various recensions of the Shi^cur Qomah, rather than offering hard facts and dates regarding the latter's composition or the history of its recensions.

A largely neglected body of relevant material is constituted by the ma^caseh merkavah traditions preserved within rabbinic literature. David J. Halperin, in a recent book, has effectively and cogently shown that the tannaitic and Palestinian amoraic traditions regarding the merkavah refer not to a developed school of ecstatic mystic praxis, but rather to the midrashic exegesis of the first chapter of Ezekiel.[7] In Babylonia alone can traces of a mystic praxis be found, and even those traces are suspect and can hardly sustain much weight.[8] Unless we presume the surviving hekhalot texts to emanate from entirely different circles that those which produced the standard texts of rabbinic Judaism, we are forced to conclude that the theurgic aspect of merkavah mysticism is either amoraic or post-amoraic.[9] Halperin does not mention the Shi^cur Qomah in his book, presumably because it falls beyond the scope of his investigation. Still, his book provides strong supporting evidence that theurgy of the type found in the Shi^cur Qomah is hardly to be assigned to tannaitic Palestine in the absence of unequivocal proof.

What is far more important are examples of literary borrowing from the Shi^cur Qomah in the post-Talmudic midrashic literature, and in liturgical poetry. The problem, unfortunately, is that most of the works involved defy precise (and often, even imprecise) dating themselves.

The probably late midrashic text known as the 'Otiot Derabbi ^cAqiva or the 'Alfa Beta Derabbi ^cAqiva has within it texts that suggest that the author of that

midrash knew the Shi^cur Qomah. The text has come down to us in two recensions, known either by the location in which they were first published, Constantinople and Venice, or, simply, in the terminology of S. Wertheimer, whose edition we shall use, texts A and B. There are few or no relevant passages in the B text; the texts that we shall cite below are taken from text A.[10]

> In a passage in the het section, we read:
> God is close to the broken hearted [Ps 34:19]: [This is so because] all the broken hearted are dear to the Holy One, blessed be He, more than the ministering angels, for these ministering angels are [not near to Him at all, but rather are] at a distance from the Shekhinah of 360,000,000 parasangs, as it is written, "angels [serafim] stand above Him [Is 6:2]," and the numerical value of [the word] "Him" [lo] is thirty-six. This teaches [us] that the body of the Shekhinah is 2,360,000,000 parasangs, 118 [that is, 118,000,000] from the loins up and 118 [that is, 118,000,000] from the loins down, and these measurements are given in supernal [literally: His] parasangs, for each of His parasangs is 1,000,000 cubits, each of His cubits is four spans and a handsbreadth [zeret and tefah], and each span stretches from one end of the universe to the other, as it is written, "Who measured the water with the hollow of his hand, and measured the heavens with the span [of His hand]? [Is 40:12]."[11]

This material is clearly not original in this setting; the seam is quite apparent at the word melammed 'this teaches,' which is preceded by a passage that teaches nothing of the sort. The compiler of the 'Otiot clearly had before him a collection of Shi^cur Qomah texts of some sort, corresponding at least in part to sections B and E of the base manuscript. Whether he himself paraphrased them, or whether he had before him a text setting the information in a literary context which has not survived is impossible to know.

There is, later in the text of the 'Otiot, a brief description, not of the divine body, but of the divine weaponry, which seems to be an elaboration, or, if we might say so, a midrash, on lines 132-135 of the Sefer Haqqomah. In the qof section, we read:

His power and might fill the universe;
His voice ignites flames of fire;
His voice breaks up mountains;
His throne is the heavens;
His footstool is the earth;
His bow [Hebrew: qeshet] is fire;
His arrows are flames;
His spear is a torch;
His shield is the clouds;
His sword is lightning and not iron...[12]

Some of this imagery is Biblical; for instance, the first line seems to be based on I Ch 29:12 or II Ch 20:6, the second line is from Ps 29:7, the third lines is based loosely on I K 19:11. From the fourth lines on, we are on different ground. From line six on, we are dealing with ideas which, although they may be based in part on certain Biblical verses, are no longer mere Biblical paraphrases, but are now statements that are more reminiscent of section I of the Sefer Haqqomah. If the divine weaponry was an original subject of speculation in the circles that produced the Shi^cur Qomah, then the author of the 'Otiot would seem rather clearly to have had access to it, and to have drawn from it material that none of the editors of the recensions of the Shi^cur Qomah itself used in their work. It should be noted that even in the opening lines of the selection, the author has preserved the aspect of gigantism in describing the Deity, which is lacking in his Biblical sources. He seems clearly to have learned about the godhead from the Shi^cur Qomah, and is partially relying on it, and partially expounding on it, to produce his text.

An even more striking example of the use of the Shi^cur Qomah in the 'Otiot appears in the section of that work devoted to midrash on the letters heh and vav. There, we read regarding Moses that

...[God] revealed to him all the explicit names, including those names engraved on the royal crown [that He wears] on His head, the names that are engraved on the Throne of Glory, the names that are engraved on the ring on His finger [literally, on His hand], the names that stand like pillars of fire around His chariots, and the names that hover around the Shekhinah like the eagles of the chariot-throne...[13]

Given the fact that other texts prove that the author of the 'Otiot knew the Shi^cur Qomah, this paean to the sacred names that surround the Deity can only be taken

to be based on the type of names found in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. Moses, who is portrayed in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah itself as the first to whom the sacred names were revealed is shown here to have received not only the names of the limbs, but also all the other secret and magic names stored up in heaven. If there ever were lists of those names, in analagous settings to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, they seem to have vanished.

The text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah seems to have been known to the editor of Midrash Mishle, a late midrashic compendium based on the Biblical book of Proverbs. In the tenth chapter of that work, a statement is preserved that is attributed to R. Ishmael That attribution can be taken to reflect the attribution of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah to R. Ishmael as well. In this passage, the author discusses the relative merits and importance of the various branches of rabbinic scholarship, but we can get the idea from the following abridgement:

> R. Ishmael said: Come and see how difficult shall be the Day of Judgement, for the Holy One, blessed be He, will [then] judge the entire world at the Valley of Jehosefat. When scholars come before Him, he shall ask them, "Did you study any Torah?" If he says, "Yes", the Holy One, blessed be He, will say to him, "Since you admit it, tell me what Scripture you have learned, and what Mishnah and what Talmud you have learned in the academies." If one should come before Him who has learned two or three orders [of Mishnah], then the Holy One, blessed be He, says to him, "My son, why did you not study all the laws?"...If one comes before Him who did study all the laws, the Holy One, blessed be He, says to him, "My son, why did you not study Torat Kohanim?"...If one comes before Him who did study Torat Kohanim, the Holy One, blessed be He, says to him, "My son, why did you not learn the five books [i.e. the four other books of the Pentateuch, in addition to Leviticus, to which the author refers as Torat Kohanim]...[the progression continues through Haggadah and Talmud, and then continues with merkavah subjects]...If one comes before Him who studied Talmud, the Holy One, blessed be He, says to Him, "My son, since you have studied Talmud, have you gazed on the merkavah for...I get no pleasure in My world except when scholars sit and study Torah, and peer and look and study...how my Throne stands, and

> what is the function of the first leg...of the second leg...of the third leg...of the fourth leg, of the hashmal...but greater than all of these is the study [Hebrew: ʿiyyun] of the Throne of Glory...and greater than all these [branches of study connected with the Throne, is the knowledge of] how I appear [literally: stand] from My [toe]nails until My skull; what is the measure of the palm of My hand, what is the measure of My toes...[14]

The author of this text can definitely be said to have had in mind the Shiʿur Qomah, which he considered the summit of rabbinic theosophical speculation. Whether the ascription to R. Ishmael can or cannot be taken to be based on the similar ascription of part of the Shiʿur Qomah, the fact cannot be discounted that the author knew of the latter text, and had read or heard enough of the text to know that it began with the feet and moved up to the skull. If the attribution to R. Ishmael does reflect the text of the Shiʿur Qomah, then there is no reason to assume that the author did not know the entire text. It is precisely the Ishmaelian text, after all, that goes from the feet to the head; the Aqiban text starts at the waist, and the text given in the name of R. Nathan, at the nose.

My colleague, Burton L. Visotzky, has informed me that, as a result of his recent research into the text of Midrash Mishle, he is able to fix the date of the composition of that text between 860 and 910 C.E.[15] It is certainly worth noting that the author of Midrash Mishle probably never met a "real" practical mystic who used the Shiʿur Qomah as the meditative stuff of his communion with the divine; he knew the text merely as another (if an odd) rabbinic text. He describes it as being in the same category as the Mishnah, or, for that matter, the Bible, i.e. a text to be studied and mastered. If Midrash Mishle was, in fact, written during the last decades of the ninth century, then we may assume that already by that time, the Shiʿur Qomah was already old enough for its original, theurgic nature to have been forgotten, and for those characteristics which separate the Shiʿur Qomah from other texts of rabbinic midrash to have become unclear, even to as astute a rabbinic scholar as the author of Midrash Mishle. In other words, the author of Midrash Mishle knew the Shiʿur Qomah through the recensions and not through the Urtext. He thus overlooked the special nature of the text, and described it as though it were a work of hekhalot mysticism, not unlike Hekhalot

Rabbati or any of its sister works.

Midrash Konen can also be shown to depend on the Shi^cur Qomah in a direct literary relationship, and to have shared several traditions with the Shi^cur Qomah.[16] The difficulties involved in deciding which text is drawn from which, or whether both stem from a third should might be demonstrated by comparing a text from Midrash Konen and a similar passage taken from the Sefer Haqqomah:

MK

He prepares the heavens in wisdom [Pr 3:19]: [this refers to] the supernal beings [ha^celyonim] whom God created as a reminder [lezikkaron] to declare the glory [shevah] of His name. How is this done?...One of the creatures stands in the middle of the heaven [raqia^c], Israel is his name, and says "Bless ye the blessed God, for all eternity"...until all the supernal creatures join in with that creature whose name is Israel, and one whose forehead is engraved "Israel, Hear, O Israel...[Dt 6:4]. That is what is referred to by the verse "He prepares the heavens in wisdom [Pr 3:19]."[17]

SQ

Rabbi Nathan, student of R. Ishmael said...although he gave me the measure of the forehead, he also gave me the measure...of the width of the forehead... The crown that is on His head is 500,000 by 500,000 [parasangs], Israel is its name, and the gem that is between its horns has engraved on it "Israel is My people, Israel is My very own people [yisra'el ^cami yisra'el ^cami li]...R. Ishmael said, When I said these things [literally: this thing] before R. Aqiba, he said to me, "He who knows this measurement of his Creator and the glory [shevah] of the Holy One, blessed be He, can be secure in this world and in the next.[18]

These texts can obviously not be said to be derived from each other, yet the curious parallel concatenation of ideas deserves some analysis. Both texts refer, within the same few lines, to the divine shevah (i.e. physically conceived splendor), to the celestial usage of the name Israel, to the forehead (in Midrash Konen, of a celestial creature; in the Shi^cur Qomah, of the godhead), and to the engraving of the name Israel, albeit in a different phrase in each context. It seems hard to assert that both authors independently linked the same series of rather esoteric ideas in their respective works. They do not seem to be copying each other; what is more confusing, they do not seem to be

copying any third source either. They present totally different pictures, and are making totally different midrash. Yet, it seems undeniable that there is some link between the two texts. Perhaps both authors were familiar with a certain literary genre of heavenly travelogue, not unlike some sections of certain hekhalot texts, in which all these elements were mentioned at one point in the text. To speculate even further, perhaps the verb leshabbeah 'to give shevah, glory' meant, originally, simply 'to ascribe glory' and was so used by the author of Midrash Konen. That would have been the meaning in the original source; the author of the Shi^cur Qomah would then have seized on the term, as a key word in the Shi^cur Qomah vocabulary, meaning, in his mind, 'to recite the details of the divine shevah', that is, 'to recite the Shi^cur Qomah.' Both authors would have thus heard different things in the original, and both would have thus seized on the text as "right" for their own compositions. Neither apparently felt constrained to use the literary format in which he found the material; as it were, each merely lifted the material out of its text and reworked it to suit his own end. The fact that the passage is quite tightly composed in the Midrash Konen, but spread out over fourteen lines in the text of the Shi^cur Qomah, leads us to suspect that it is in the latter text that the original text has had its greatest reworking, but that is only a hypothesis, and an unprovable one, at that. It is also, of course, possible that one author found the material in the work of the other, which would, for chronological reasons, point to an instance of the author of the Midrash Konen having borrowed from the Shi^cur Qomah, and merely having lifted out the facts, symbols and ideas. In that case, the author of the Midrash Konen would simply have been using the Shi^cur Qomah, much as he uses the texts of the Pesiqta Derav Kahana or Numbers Rabbah.[19] The standard date for the composition of the Midrash Konen is in the eleventh century.[20] Of course, that does not establish the date of any particular tradition or set of traditions that is preserved in that text, but it does, of course, set the latest possible date for any of them.

There has been a certain amount of speculation regarding literary reactions against the Shi^cur Qomah. Most prominent is the theory of R. Lowe, who found such reactionary material in the Targum to the Song of Songs.[21] This could be quite important for dating the Shi^cur Qomah, if the date of the Targum could be established, and if Lowe were right. The passage he presents is the Targum to Song 5:10a, quoted from a Yemenite manuscript:[22]

> [My beloved is radiant and ruddy...]: Thereupon did the Congregation of Israel begin the recitation of the praise of the Master of the World, and thus did she declare, "It is that same God whom to serve 'tis my will and pleasure, who is wrapped [or, who wraps on] by day in a stole white as snow, and is engaged upon the twenty-four [canonical books], the words of the Torah and the words of the Prophets and the words of the Writings, and who by night is engaged upon the six orders of Mishnah: the effulgence of the glory of whose face is brilliant as fire because of the multitude of wisdom and deductive insight...[23]

Lowe makes the point that the introduction of the stole (Aramaic: 'uṣṭela = Greek stole), although at first apparently a gratuitous addition, is actually a development of the term ṣaḥ 'radiant' in the Biblical verse, and was intended by the Targumist to correspond to the mystic tradition and to satisfy his readers' desire to find mysticism in the Song. If this were true, and if it could be asserted that such a tease would sate rather than whet such esoteric appetites, then Lowe might be considered correct. The problem with his theory is that he is assuming that the doctrine of the cloak would lead his readers away from the Shi'ur Qomah. Scholem has written that he found it logical to assume that the garment was originally part of the Shi'ur Qomah traditions, and that "the visionary was taught to expect such a garment of light covering the glory."[24] Lowe quotes Scholem, but fails to show why the cloak tradition is a rejoinder to the Shi'ur Qomah. The most one can say about the Targum is that its author, if he knew of the Shi'ur Qomah, ignored it. To assert that the cloak is a feature of Torah mysticism (so to speak) of the Targumist, rather than a Shi'ur Qomah tradition, seems groundless.

The presence in the works of the paytanim of clear or oblique references to the Shi'ur Qomah would be of paramount importance in dating the text, were the dates of these early poets themselves not as obscure as they are. The poet we shall consider, for example, Eleazar Kallir, is dated by various scholars between the second and tenth or eleventh centuries, and in almost any conceivable country of origin, including Palestine, Sardinia, France, Germany, Italy, Syria and the Byzantine Empire.[25] The most commonly held view places him in sixth century Palestine,[26] and it is on this hypothesis that we shall build. We are, therefore, dealing with

a source of considerable importance and antiquity. The presence of quotes from or allusions to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in the oeuvre of Kallir would establish an amoraic, or a post-amoraic boundary, before which at least the Urtext must have already been in existence.

There are two points in the extant oeuvre of Kallir that are relevant to our study. The first was brought to light by P.F. Frankl, in an article published in the Zunz Festschrift in 1884.[27] In it, the poet describes the relationship between God and Adam in an elaborate alphabetical acrostic, of which the third and fourth phrases of the eleventh verse are as follows:

kidemut bor'o heyot demuto,
keqomat tamar qomato...[28]

This may be translated simply "His [Adam's] image was as the image of his Creator; his qomah, like that of a palm tree." Qomah, in this context, is apparently to be taken to mean "height," and the sense is presumably that Adam was tall of stature.[29] A note given by Frankl reveals that the manuscript text has the words keshi^{c}ur qo in the text before the word keqomat, and that those extra words have supralinear points, a standard scribal device to signal a phrase or word copied by error and to be deleted from the text.[30] The second word, qo, is clearly an abbreviation for qomah, as Frankl observes in his note.[31] The text can then be read, with the pointed words:

...keshi^{c}ur qo[mah] keqomat tamar qomato.

This text does not make sense, and the scribe has fixed the problem by signaling us to delete the problematic opening phrase. The problem, however, cannot be so neatly dismissed. Saul Lieberman, in his essay, "Mishnat Shir Hashirim," points out that a Cambridge manuscript of the poem reads keshi^{c}ur qomah qomato, thus solving the problem by deleting the reference to the palm tree, and retaining the reference to the shi^{c}ur qomah.[32] From these one and a half texts, so to speak, Lieberman concludes, "It follows from this [i.e. the confirmation of the deleted reading by the Cambridge manuscript] that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was already the fixed name for the 'dimensions of our Creator,' so to speak, in the time of the poet."[33] Frankl himself had previously observed, "It seems unthinkable to us that the error and correction of two words that played such an important and significant role in the Rabbanite-Karaite controversy could [not have some importance.]"[34] We may thus conclude that the original text once read:

kidemut bor'o heyot demuto
keshi^{c}ur qomah qomato,

and was to be translated, "His [Adam's] image was as the

image of his Creator; his body was [as are the dimensions set forth in the] Shi^{c}ur Qomah," or "as the [divine] body," or "as the [divine] height."[35] Probably, qomah here means both "body" and "height." The idea that Adam's body was of immense proportions is a famous rabbinic concept, and does not suggest that Kallir was himself a member of the mystic school that produced the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, if such a group actually existed.[36] On the contrary, the fact that he chose to express a standard rabbinic notion with the phrase shi^{c}ur qomah speaks strongly for the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah having been known and acepted in Kallir's day, to the extent that a passing reference to it in a poem would be understood.

A second a more important locus of Shi^{c}ur Qomah terminology is Kallir's oeuvre is found in his silluq for the special Sabbath of Sheqalim. The first to call attention to this feature of the poem was Jellinek, in his brief introduction to the text of Hekhalot Rabbati.[37] The plausibility of this link between Kallir and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah has been confirmed several times: by Zunz, in 1865,[38] and, more recently, by Scholem.[39] The full text of the silluq is published in S. Baer's Seder ^{c}Avodat Yisra'el.[40] The link to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is established through two types of reference: parallels of language and parallels of idea.

Of the first group, there are two most important lines in the poem. The first, and, in fact, the one originally pointed to by Jellinek and Zunz, is found towards the end of the poem, and concerns the one whom the poet calls bat melekh 'the daughter of the king.'[41] Baer identifies the princess with the Torah, which, he observes, is sometimes called the daughter of the divine king.[42] The poet describes the Torah's various functions, emphasizing its role in the Creation. Among these remarks we find the following:

vehi' shi'arah qomat 'alfe shin'anim,

which translates as "and she [the princess] estimated [or, more likely, 'measured'] the qomah of the thousands of angels [shin'anim, based on Ps 68:18.]" Jellinek says cautiously, "Probably Kallir...is alluding, in the silluq...to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah." This is a bit far-fetched; were it not for the other references, more undeniably linked to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, we could easily dismiss this suggestion. Earlier in the poem, we have a quotation that is less easily dismissed. We read the following regarding man's ability to praise God:

ulefi sikhlo ken yehi hillulo;
qadol 'adonenu verav koah;

ᶜal ken 'ohil lo;
ki middato veshiqlo lefi godlo...[43]

This can be translated, "According to a man's intelligence, so will be his [ability] to praise Him; Our Lord is big, and mighty; therefore I shall supplicate Him. For His size and weight are in proportion to His bigness..." The phrase "our Lord is big" is lifted from Ps 147:5, but more important is the fact that that verse alone appears in the Aqiban text of the Shiᶜur Qomah as proof, so to speak, of the figure given in that text for the height of the godhead. Furthermore, as we shall see below, judging from the frequency with which it is quoted in later sources, this passage seems to have become the most well known passage of the Shiᶜur Qomah. The use of that verse in such close proximity to a reference to the divine size (middato) and weight make the link quite obvious. Although we have no speculation at all in any of the sources regarding the weight of the godhead, this does not necessarily constitute a problem. The poet is probably using size and weight as a sort of general way of referring to the physical totality of the godhead. Finally, the first line of the quatrain is quite reminiscent of the keshemo ken gedullato hymn which is featured in most of the recensions of the Shiᶜur Qomah text. The fact that both phrases hark back to Ps 48:11 does not make the similarily much less striking.

There are many other phrases and ideas in the silluq that are reminiscent of the Shiᶜur Qomah, although in some cases, they only become obvious when the initial link has been elsewhere established. For instance, mixed in with the bat melekh expressions, to which we have already made allusion, are some expressions which seem clearly to be lifted out of some other context, as, for example, when the poet declares middat ᶜolam kemizzeret veᶜad 'aguddal 'the size of the earth [or, 'the universe'] is as [the distance] from the pinky-finger to the thumb.'[44] This is a sort of reverse Shiᶜur Qomah formulation; here, the divine limb is being used to measure some other vast size, rather than vice versa. The poet seems to be playing on a double meaning of bat melekh, the term being used to signify the Torah (as Baer explains) and also the Shekhinah, the divine presence on earth.[45] If the princess may be taken as the Shekhinah, then the entire passage in which the bat melekh terminology is introduced needs to be re-examined.

The pertinent verses are as follows:

middat bat melekh bakkol me^{c}ullah,
be'orekh berohav be^{c}omeq begovah mit^{c}alah;
ki yesh kes lekol tikhlah,
ve'imrah rehavah la^{c}ad lo khalah.[46]

Assuming the identification of the king's daughter with the Shekhinah, we may translate:

The measurements of the princess are superior
in all ways,
In length, in width, in depth and in height,
they are all excellent;
For all finite things have ends,
But her word-- it is of infinite width.

To take this as referring to the size of the hypostasized Torah is unnecessarily obscure. It is certainly much clearer and easier to understand if these lines are meant to be in praise of the godhead, whose dimensions are revealed to be colossal in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, a text to which the poet had alluded just above.[47]

In the final analysis, there are very few, if any, of these bat melekh passages that cannot be taken to refer to the Shekhinah. Even the passage quoted above, regarding the measuring of the bodies of the angels makes more sense if we presume the assignment of bodies to the angels to be the work of the Shekhinah, rather than the Torah, which rarely, if ever, is personified to such an extent. The rest of the bat melekh passages are of a similar nature. What can be asserted is that Kallir did know of Shi^{c}ur Qomah mysticism, that he probably knew some version of the text, probably of the Urtext, and that he already knew the name Shi^{c}ur Qomah.

We may, therefore, say that while the earliest unequivocal citations of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah are to be found in texts written in the tenth century C.E., we find in Kallir an author familiar with some version of the text, or at least with traditions that have survived only as parts of the various recensions of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah.

Thus are we led back to an early gaonic date for the composition of the Urtext of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, a date late enough to post-date the redaction of the Babylonian Talmud, and yet early enough to explain why, by the ninth century, the antiquity of the work could be uncontested, and to allow the work to have been known to Kallir. If the sixth century date for Kallir can be maintained, then it is probably the most desirable for the Shi^{c}ur Qomah as well, being both early and late enough to satisfy our various requirements.

This would also explain why no manuscripts of the Urtext survive; by the earliest period of extant manuscripts, the Urtext had already been reworked into one or some of the various recensions of the text.

Halperin's work would suggest that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah might have a Babylonian provenance. Our earliest firm attestations to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah text, are, after all, in the works of Salmon and Saadia, both Babylonians. On the other hand, earlier attestation, in the poem of Kallir, is Palestinian, although the Babylonian influence on Kallir has been noted. We might theorize that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was first given a literary framework in Babylonia, while the traditions that were being developed were Palestinian. This would explain the fact that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah seems to echo some passages in the Babylonian Talmud, and that some of the Aramaic description of Metatron found in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah seems to be similar to the type of language found on the Babylonian magic bowls. Ultimately, we know so little about post-amoraic Palestine that it is hard to fix a locale for the composition of the text with any certainty. Certainly, in Babylonia, the use of the divine names for mystic purposes eventually degenerated (or, developed) into magic and superstition,[48] but it is not possible to know, owing to the absence of literary remains, if there was a similar development in Palestine. Overall, the evidence suggests a Babylonian provenance, but does not by any means prove that the text is not Palestinian.

If the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah were of Babylonian provenance, more than a few questions might be answered. The ascription of one of the three attributed passages in the text to R. Nathan, who was the son of the Babylonian exilarch, certainly would begin to be more understandable. R. Nathan does not seem, based on the way in which he is portrayed in other rabbinic texts, to have had any particular connection to the mystic sphere of activity. If the text is Babylonian, then it is clear why R. Nathan was brought into the picture; we are presumably to find in him the vehicle by means of which the Shi^{c}ur Qomah traditions attributed to R. Aqiba and to R. Ishmael found their way from Palestine to Babylonia. The fact that R. Nathan lived in Palestine during the lifetimes of R. Aqiba and R. Ishmael, and then returned to Babylonia, enabled the author of the text to legitimize his own mystic pursuits somewhat, merely by asserting the the use of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in Babylonia was only slightly younger than such activity in Palestine.

A Babylonian provenance would also explain the literary allusion to the ʿAlenu Leshabbeaḥ prayer found in our text, since that prayer seems to have been written in Babylonia for inclusion in the High Holiday liturgy. More importantly, Babylonian provenance would help explain why the only surviving fragments of the Raza Rabba, the work which plays such an important role in Scholem's research on Sefer Habbahir and the origins of European kabbalah, and which is itself a Babylonian work, are fragments of a commentary on the Shiʿur Qomah. Finally, it should also be recalled that recent research has asserted that of all the references in rabbinic literature to merkavah exegesis and mystic speculation, it is only in the Babylonian Talmud that any traces of references to actual mystic praxis can be detected. The references in Palestinian works seem to point to simple exegetical and homiletical activity based on the first chapter of Ezekiel. Together, all of these facts make a relatively strong case for a Babylonian place of composition. In addition, assigning the Shiʿur Qomah would go a long way towards explaining how the work came to be accepted, and, for that matter, venerated, among the Ashkenazic ḥasidim.

The recensions in which the text is preserved are the inevitable results of historical and literary development and cannot be easily traced, even by analyzing the locales and times of the later authorities who quote one recension or the other, owing the the similarity of each to each other. The most famous sections of the text are common to all the recensions, and it is these sections that are generally quoted. Still, with profound reservations, we may take the Sefer Haqqomah to be the earliest recension. It also seems to have been the basis of Salmon's parody. The Sefer Razi'el recension is quite similar to the Sefer Haqqomah; if the Sefer Razi'el itself is a product of Ashkenazic ḥasidism, then perhaps it is in that milieu that the the recension of the text preserved in that larger work was first edited. The Sefer Hashiʿur text, judging from the provenance of the manuscripts in which it is preserved, seems to be of North African or Oriental origin.

The Merkavah Rabbah texts are all German, but that work seems to be much older than the German provenance of these manuscripts would suggest, and is listed by Scholem as a hekhalot text in its own right, not a late compendium of earlier traditions.[49] A critical edition of the Merkavah Rabbah is being prepared at the present time, and any conclusions regarding the age and

nature of that work would best be deferred until the publication of that edition. If the Merkavah Rabbah can, in fact, be shown to be an early work, then the recension of the Shi^cur Qomah found in it may be tentatively considered to be the earliest extant reworking of the Urtext. On the other hand, the Merkavah Rabbah is probably a collection of previously edited texts which, if the period of redaction was long, makes it quite difficult to determine the relative ages of any of the various constituent parts.

If we ask what may have motivated the author to produce such a text, we are somewhat stymied by the obscurity of the era to which we would assign the text. Baron refers to the obscure but religiously creative centuries in which Jewish mystic literature was born.[50] Given the obscurity of the era, we may only suggest plausibilities regarding the kinds of motivation that might have stimulated the author to write. On the one hand, he seems to be defending an anthropomorphic conception of God in a Jewish world that had long since opted for an amorphic conception. The dispute is very old, and can be detected in the pages of the Hebrew Bible itself.[51] The Shi^cur Qomah can be read as a "scientific" proof of the validity of anthropomorphism; the author confirms the humanoid form of the godhead by stating that he himself, speaking through the mouths of his spokesmen, Rabbis Aqiba, Ishmael and Nathan, visited the highest heaven and gazed on the godhead. On the other hand, there seems to be a strong element of theurgy in the Shi^cur Qomah. Perhaps Baron goes too far in describing the theurgists of the gaonic period as "medicine men interested in the practical results of their incantations rather than in theoretical implications or logical consistency."[52] Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the same Metatron who reveals the figures and secret names in the Shi^cur Qomah figures in several of the Aramaic incantation bowls in a clearly theurgic context. Furthermore, it seems likely that, when the author enjoins the reader to recite the text of the Shi^cur Qomah daily "as a mishnah" in order to acquire a long life and a portion of the world to come, his intent is basically theurgic.[53] This explains the presence of whole psalms and Biblical passages into the text, and of the solemn reminder that one who fails to conclude (hotem) with the proper verse, usually Ps 147:19, is in error.[54] This also suggests why hymns and even the opening prayer were added in, in the various recensions: either the theurgic nature of the text led later scribes to take it for liturgy, or the prayer and verse were part of the original magic ceremony.

It seems, from all this, that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was composed as a mystic meditation (incantation would be, perhaps, too strong a term) on the Deity, the recitation of which was meant to yield practical physical and metaphysical results. In a sense, the author of our text was a precursor both of the speculative and the practical kabbalists of the medieval period. In later generations, the two styles of kabbalah separated, but the Shi^{c}ur Qomah recalls a simpler time, when the act of meditation on the godhead according to a set of esoteric principles was considered enough to produce real results. If we may venture even further into the realm of theory and hypothesis, we might propose that the original fund of names and figures upon which the Urtext was based was originally formulated as the result of an actual experience of mystic communion with God. The Urtext itself took the stuff of that communion and made of it a text of theurgy, albeit of a distinctly liturgical nature. The final stage of development, represented by the various recensions, shows the text being worked, by means of the addition of various prose and poetry passages, into a text more akin to than distinct from the other texts in the literary corpus of hekhalot mysticism.

The Shi^{c}ur Qomah is thus at once liturgy and theurgy, and this was not forgotten entirely, even by the scribes in the medieval period who copied the recensions in which the text was preserved. Thus, the scribe of JTS ms. 1746 concludes his text with a solemn warning: "All those names mentioned in this book have no replacements [temurah] and regarding him who knows them, but [nonetheless] refrains from using them [i.e. for magical purposes], I swear by all the names he [or, He] possesses, that I shall never deny him life everlasting."[55] The scribe of JNUL ms. 381 also correctly understood the theurgic nature of the text; after the series of names parallel to lines 164-166 of the text, he noted that the recitation of these lines would aid one who would want to stand on the sea (ha^{c}omed ^{c}al hayyam), and although he did not copy them all out, he directs his readers to several sources in which they may be found.

This use of the mystic names need not be presumed to be a late reutilization of the text, but may, at least tentatively, be presumed to explained the original intent of the author of the Urtext. As the centuries passed, and as theurgy fell into both disrepute and perhaps even into disuse, different editors tried to set the text into a literary framework that would present

it as another, if distinctive, hekhalot text. These reworkings are the recensions that survive in the extant manuscripts.

The use of a text describing intimate physical details or names of the godhead in a theurgic context is ancient and well documented. In an old Mesopotamian hymn dating the the first millenium B.C.E., the pious supplicant carefully names the limbs of Ninurta, using familiar divine names, to gain favor from the god:

> O Lord, your face is the sun god; your hair, Aya; your eyes, O Lord, are Enlil and Ninlil.
> The pupils of your eyes are Gula and Belit-ili; the irises of your eyes are the twins, Sin and Shamash;
> The lashes of your eyes are the rays of the sun that...
> The appearance of your mouth, O Lord, is Ishtar of the stars;
> Anu and Antum are your lips, your command...
> Your tongue [?] is Pabilsag of the above...
> The roof of your mouth, O Lord, is the vault of heaven and earth, your divine above;
> Your teeth are the seven gods who lay low the evil ones.[56]

In Egypt, one gained admission, after death to the halls of righteousness, by reciting the names of the forty-two gods, and of the doorkeepers, at least one of whom is identified with a limb of Osiris:

> The doorkeeper of this door saith, "I will not open to thee, and I will not let thee enter by me, unless thou tellest my name." [And I reply,] "Elbow of the god, Shu, who placeth himself to protect Osiris-- [this is thy name.]"[57]

In addition to the mystic names of the limbs, the Shi^{c}ur Qomah presents, at specific points in the text, a different set of names based on various permutations of the Tetragrammaton, or its Biblical variant, 'eheyeh. That these permutations possessed the most intense theurgic potency will be apparent to any reader of the Greek magical papyri, which abound in them, despite their non-Jewish provenance.[58] The idea was not exclusively the property of theurgists, either. Some sages considered that Moses himself was the first to use the divine name for magical purposes.[59]

That theurgy demands liturgy goes without saying. In a titleless merkavah text published by Scholem, we read:

> R. Ishmael said, "R. Aqiba said to me, 'I said a prayer and I beheld the Shekhinah and I [also] saw all that is done before the Throne of Glory.'"[60]

The text proceeds with a prayer quite different from any found in the Shi^cur Qomah. That prayer has no magical formulae, and, as such, is appropriate for a text that is essentially a literary document. The Shi^cur Qomah, in its recensions, is also a literary work, but behind those recensions, is a fund of magic names and facts that is the stuff of theurgy. Eventually, probably by the mid-gaonic period, Jewish theurgists became the medicine-men described by Baron,[61] but in an earlier time, in the sixth or seventh centuries, if our dating is correct, the author of the Shi^cur Qomah was able to present a theurgic manual that combined the stuff of theurgy with the highest mystic aspirations. The user of the Shi^cur Qomah was able to pronounce his magic formulae and acquire the rewards stored up for him precisely because he worked his magic in the context of the longing all religious men feel towards their gods, a longing that is legitimate, noble and ancient.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. See above, chapter 2, n. 76.

2. Our text: lines 135-137; BT: Niddah 73a; Baron: A Social and Religious History of the Jews, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1958), vol. 8, p. 20.

3. J. Wieneke, Ezechielis Judaei poetae Alexandrini fabulae quae inscribitur EXAGOGE fragmenta (Aschendorf, 1931), pp. 8-9.

4. I Enoch 14:8-25, trans. Charles (1917; rpt. London, 1974), pp. 41-42; Apocalypse of Abraham, ch. 11, ed. Box (London and New York, 1912), p. 49; 2 Enoch 13:1-9. ed. Cahana (Jerusalem, 1970), vol. 1, p. 123, and cf. Vaillant, Le Livre des Secrets D'Hénoch (Paris, 1952),

p. 23; Morfill and Charles, The Book of the Secrets of Enoch (Oxford, 1896), pp. 51-52, and Scholem, Jewish Mysticism, p. 130, note to p. 41, line 12.

5. Smith, "Observations on Hekhalot Rabbati," in Biblical and Other Studies, ed. A. Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 148-149.

6. Scholem, Kabbalah (New York, 1974), p. 375.

7. David J. Halperin, The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature (New Haven, 1980), passim.

8. Ibid.

9. The theurgic nautre of the merkavah texts is asserted by Morton Smith in his "Observations," pp. 154-156. Smith is discussing Hekhalot Rabbati but his remarks may be applied to other hekhalot texts as well.

10. Both texts were published by Jellinek, in Bet Hammidrash, vol. 3, pp. 12-64.

11. 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 369-370. This passage is quoted and translated derisively by Eisenmenger in Entdecktes Judenthum (Königsberg, 1711), p. 4.

12. 'Otiot, ed. cit., p. 390.

13. Ibid., p. 366.

14. Midrash Mishle, ch. 10, ed. S. Buber (Vilna, 1893), pp. 66-67. The text returns to the throne, suggesting that the knowledge of the throne is superior even to knowledge of the dimensions of the godhead, but since the throne has already been mentioned, the text is possibly to be taken as corrupt. In Bet Hammidrash, vol. 6, pp. 152-153, Jellinek published a version of this same text, apparently taken from the Leipziger Rathsbibliothek ms. 12, which is preserved without the larger text. Jellinek is of the opinion that this text is derived from the text of Midrash Mishle, not incorporated into it, see Bet Hammidrash, vol. 6, p. xxxvi. The text there is quite like the Buber text; cf. Scholem's "corrected" translation in Major Trends, p. 71.

15. See, however, L. Zunz, Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt, ed. and trans. (Hebrew), H. Albeck (Jerusalem, 1974), p. 133;

J. Elbaum, "Midrash Proverbs," EJ, 1972.

16. The text of Midrash Konen is given in Jellinek, Bet Hammidrash, vol. 2, pp. 23-39.

17. Midrash Konen, end, ed. Jellinek, p. 39.

18. Lines 108-122, passim.

19. Jellinek, Bet Hammidrash, vol. 2, p. xiv.

20. M.D. Herr, "Smaller Midrashim," EJ, 1972, vol. 16, col. 1517.

21. R. Lowe, "The Divine Garment and Shi^{c}ur Qomah," HTR 58(1965), pp. 153-160.

22. The manuscript is British Museum ms. Or. 1302, and it was published by Melamed in JQR 9 (1918-1919), pp. 377ff., and also as a separate book (Philadelphia, 1921.)

23. The translation is Lowe's.

24. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 60.

25. "Eleazar Kallir," EJ, 1972.

26. Ibid.

27. P.F. Frankl, "Fragment einer kallir'schen Karoba," in Jubelschrift zum neunzigsten Geburtstag des Dr. L. Zunz (Berlin, 1884), pp. 160-171 (German) and pp. 201-217 (Hebrew.)

28. Frankl, p. 212.

29. The word qomah is discussed below in chapter V i.

30. Frankl, p. 212, note 13.

31. Ibid.

32. S. Lieberman, in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 124, note 30. Lieberman notes that he owes the reading to Sholom Spiegel. The Cambridge manuscript is TSH 3:10. Lieberman's citation of the complete manuscript text (i.e. with the words the scribe has indicated are to be deleted) does not match Frankl's own quotation, p. 171, and should be corrected as we have given it here.

33. Lieberman, in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 124, note 30.

34. Frankl, p. 171.

35. See above, note 29.

36. The notion of Adam's body being of immense size is found most prominently in Bereshit Rabbah 8:1, ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 55. Other sources are listed in Ginzberg, Legends of the Jews (Philadelphia, 1925), vol. 5, p. 79, note 22.

37. Jellinek, Bet Hammidrash, vol. 3, p. xxiii.

38. Zunz, Literaturgeschichte der synagogalen Poesie (Berlin, 1865), p. 6-7, note 7.

39. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 129, note to p. 41, line 8. Scholem does not refer to the fact that Jellinek had noted the link between the silluq of Kallir and the Shi^cur Qomah.

40. S. Baer, Seder ^cAvodat Yisra'el (Rödelheim, 1868; rpt. Jerusalem, 1937), pp. 653-656.

41. Baer, p. 655, line 10.

42. Baer, p. 655, comment, ad locum.

43. Baer, p. 655, lines 3-5.

44. Baer, p. 655, line 13.

45. References to the Shekhinah as the "daughter of God" in later Jewish mystic texts are collected in R. Patai's The Hebrew Goddess (New York, 1967), pp. 177-180.

46. Baer, p. 655, lines 11-12.

47. Scholem takes bat melekh to be the Torah in Jewish Gnosticism, p. 129, note to p. 41, line 8, but he does not discuss his reasons for accepting Baer's explanation.

48. Scholem, Major Trends, p. 78; Idem, Kabbalah, pp. 30-35.

49. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 6.

50. Baron, A Social and Religious History, vol. 8,

p. 11. Cf. Scholem, Kabbalah, pp. 30-35 and Ginzberg, on the Kabbalah in the gaonic period in his article "Cabala," in the old Jewish Encyclopaedia.

51. Compare, e.g. I K 22:19, Is 6:1-3 and Ez 1:27-28 to Is 40:18 and 22 or Job 11:7.

52. Baron, A Social and Religious History, vol. 8, p. 8.

53. Line 126, reading kemishnah for bammishnah. Cf. BT Niddah 73a, of which the statement in our text is a paraphrase, or, perhaps, a parody.

54. Line 114ff. and 178ff.

55. JTS ms. 1746, f. 142, top.

56. Thorkild Jacobsen, The Treasures of Darkness (New Haven and London, 1975), p. 234.

57. E.W. Budge, The Book of the Dead (London, 1900; rpt. New York, 1970), p. 57a.

58. Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri, ed. K. Preisendanz, passim, and see Scholem's remarks on the gnostic gems in Jewish Gnosticism, p. 130, note to p. 41, line 17. These gems, which feature a clearly magical representation of a man, presumed by some to be the God of Israel, surrounded by his mystic names are more fully discussed by Campbell Bonner in his "A Miscellany of Engraved Stones," in Hesperia 23(1954), pp. 151-152, and by Spon and Wheler in their Voyage D'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce et du Levant fait aux années 1675 et 1676 (Amsterdam, 1679), vol. 1, pp. 424-427. A copy of this rare book is in the library of Columbia University. Scholem takes the name on a snake held in the man's left hand, Sesengenbarpharanges, to be the same as the name of the right thigh of the godhead in Oxford ms. C. 65: shshnvst (or, ssnvst) vprngsyy, which is not a particularly striking parallel. In the final analysis, there does not seem to be any link between the gem and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, except insofar as the gem shows how the magic names of the limbs of a body (whoever the man on the gem is) may be used in a theurgic context. Finally, cf. the so-called Mithras Liturgy, ed. and trans. Meyer, p. 11.

59. Exodus Rabbah 1:29, s.v. vayyakh 'et hammiṣri, to which may be compared Leviticus Rabbah 32:4, which refers more obliquely to the same tradition.

60. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 115, § 32.

61. Baron, A Social and Religious History, vol. 8, p. 8.

V i THE NAME OF THE TEXT

The name Shi^{c}ur Qomah seems to be the name from which the names of the various recensions were derived, and was, presumably, the name of the Urtext.

Both words, shi^{c}ur and qomah, have long histories. Shi^{c}ur is not attested in Biblical Hebrew, but seems to be related to the Biblical sha^{c}ar 'measure', as, for example, at Gen 26:12, where the phrase me'ah she^{c}arim is used to mean "one-hundred fold." This word is not necessarily limited to physical reckoning; at Pr 23:7, we find the expression sha^{c}ar benafsho 'to estimate mentally, to calculate.'[1] In later Hebrew, the root shin-^{c}ayin-resh develops from this meaning in Proverbs to mean, as a verb "to estimate" or "to measure" and the verb, conjugated, unlike the Biblical antecedent, in the pi^{c}el declension, yields the noun shi^{c}ur.[2] Shi^{c}ur has the regular meaning, in post-Biblical Hebrew, of "size, measure, limit," as, for example, in the famous opening mishnah of M Pe'ah: "these are the things for which there is no specific shi^{c}ur (assigned by the Law)..."[3] The term is also, more pertinently, specifically used to mean 'measure' as, for instance, at BT Niddah 26a: hamishah shi^{c}uran ṭefaḥ 'there are five things, the [legal minimal] size of which is one handsbreadth.'[4] The meaning of shi^{c}ur, therefore, in the phrase shi^{c}ur qomah may be taken to mean "size or "measure."

The use of qomah to mean "body" is more complex. The Biblical qomah, derived from the verb qum 'to rise' means "height", either of persons, as at Ez 13:18; or trees, as at 2 K 19:23 (=Is 37:24); or, most commonly, of buildings or physical things, as, for example, of the ark at Gen 6:15 or the tabernacle, at Ex 25:10. There is one exception, and, given its location in the Song of Songs, it is one of great importance.[5]

Song 7:8 reads zot qomatekh damtah letamar veshadayikh le'eshkolot, which seems to be best translated "this is your [f.] body, it is like a palm tree, and your breasts are like clusters [of grapes.]" To take qomah here as height is unlikely, because it would not be too much of a compliment, implying, as it then would, that the Shulamith is as tall as a tree, whereas the context clearly requires a complimentary meaning. Qomah 'body' might imply erect posture and stature. Furthermore, the context calls for a body part (or a reference to the entire body), but not to a bodily characteristic or feature like height. Rashi seems to take qomah here to mean body.[6] The versions are not

particularly helpful; the Septuagint, for example, seems to have read 'aqum betamar 'I shall climb on a palm tree.'[7] The Peshita offers a precise translation into Syriac, using a Syriac cognate of qomah, which can mean, unfortunately, "height" as well as "body" in Syriac.[8] If qomah can mean "body" in Biblical Hebrew, then it is at least plausible to assume that the use of the word qomah in the phrase shi^{c}ur qomah is derived from Song 7:8.[9] At any rate, Scholem's assertion that the term qomah in the mystic title is a borrowed expression from the Aramaic cognate which simply means "body," as in some of the Aramaic incantation texts, is unnecessary. Scholem does not explain, first of all, why an Aramaic word should be borrowed to be used in place of the regular Hebrew terms for body.[10] Secondly, it seems highly unlikely that, even assuming the presence of the word qomah in the vocabulary of speakers of Hebrew in the period in which the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was composed, such an unusual term could have been chosen with no midrashic impetus at all. For these reasons, we prefer to assume that if qomah does have the special meaning of "body" rather than "height," that the term is meant to recall the passage in the Song.[11] The fact that the verse refers to the bride, although more famous passages use different terms to refer to the body of the male lover, is not necessarily a problem. The use of the word qomah, if it is meant to suggest the Song, is probably not intended to provide any specific information regarding the divine qomah. The choice of the relatively hidden qomah of Song 7:8 instead, for instance, of the term geviyyah 'body' specifically applied to the divine body in Dan 10:6, coupled with the fact that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah itself accepts that the man in Daniel's vision was the godhead incarnate, strongly suggests a midrashic prior consideration on the part of the author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. It should finally be observed that the use of qomah in post-Biblical Hebrew is not that widespread with the meaning of "body." As in Biblical Hebrew, the more regular meaning is "height." On the other hand, the Shi^{c}ur Qomah does offer more than the simple measure of height; it names the limbs and gives some brief description of most of them. As such, the term must, ultimately, be taken as ambiguous; qomah means "body" and "height" and both are described in the text. In fact, it may well have been just that ambiguity (which is, as it happens, lacking in any synonym) that prompted the author to choose just that term.

The phrase shi^{c}ur qomah occurs outside of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah itself in quite unrelated contexts. The following baraita is preserved in the Palestinian Talmud:

> Rabbi Hananiah b. Samuel taught [tanna]: Regarding all the vessels that were in the Temple, [the Torah] gives their length, their width and shi^cur qomatan 'their height'; except for the kapporet 'ark cover' for which the length and width are given, but not the height [shi^cur qomato.][12]

It is clear from the language of this text that the phrase shi^cur qomah is being taken as a synonym for height, the dimension that is, in fact, missing in Ex 25:17. It cannot be doubted that it is to this lack in the Biblical stipulations for the building of the tabernacle and its appurtenances that the baraita is making reference. There do not seem to be any theological overtones here; the phrase is used to simple mean "height." There is no reason to presume that this was a particularly famous or often quoted text, and it is hard to imagine that the author of the Shi^cur Qomah looked specifically to this baraita for the title of his work.[13] Nonetheless, the fact that the whole expression can simply mean "the height" coupled with the fact that qomah apparently means "body" in Biblical Hebrew, as well as in later texts, must have provided the author with the opportunity to select a title that expresses with a double entendre both the divine subject matter of his text, as well as the specific aspect of the divine body he was prepared to describe.

Another text has been mentioned in the literature surrounding the Shi^cur Qomah as possibly offering another example of the use of the phrase shi^cur qomah outside the framework of our text, this time to refer specifically to the body of the godhead. In the Slavonic Book of Enoch (2 Enoch), we read the following in the thirteenth chapter:

> Listen, O my sons, for it is not on my own authority that I speak to you today, but rather [on the authority] of God who has sent me to you.
> For you hear my words from my mouth, I, a man created as are you, but I have heard them from the fiery mouth of the Lord, for the mouth of the Lord is a fiery furnace, and his words [are] flames which go forth...
> For you see, my sons, a right hand that helps you...but I have seen the right hand of the Lord helping me, and it fills up the heavens.
> For you see the measure of my body...but I

> have seen the measure of the body of the Lord, with no measure, similar to nothing and without boundary.[14]

In his Hebrew version of the Slavonic, Cahana translates the phrase 'measure of my body' as shi^{c}ur qomati. This may be compared to Vaillant's French translation, l'étendue de mon corps.[15] Scholem calls this a "suggestive statement."[16] Gruenwald goes further and suggests that this may be the first reference to the shi^{c}ur qomah of God.[17] Of course, it is far from certain that the Old Slavonic phrase is a direct translation of the Hebrew phrase shi^{c}ur qomah. Even if it were, the link between our text and 2 Enoch remains to be firmly established. It certainly seems farfetched to assume that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah derived its name from the text of 2 Enoch, a book never elsewhere referred to in any rabbinic text. It seems strained to imagine the author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah having recourse to terminology he would have found in 2 Enoch, even if he had access to the Hebrew original. For all these reasons, plus the added point that otherwise there seems to be no clear influence of hekhalot mysticism on the text of 2 Enoch, it seems safe to say that Cahana's translation is at least mildly misleading. Consequently, we may cast serious doubts on Gruenwald's suggestion. Even Scholem's statement should perhaps be applied, if at all, to the earliest collection of facts upon which the Urtext was based, rather than to any extant or non-extant version of the text.

Different recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah present different titles: Sefer Haqqomah means simply "Book of the Qomah," that is, "Book of the [Divine] Body"; Sefer Hashi^{c}ur means "Book of the Measurement"; Sefer Shi^{c}ur Haqqomah means "Book of the Measure of the [Divine] Body";[18] Sod Shi^{c}ur Qomah (Sassoon ms. 290) and Sha^{c}ar Haqqomah (Oxford ms. 2257) are both variations of the same name. Of all the manuscripts that present their recensions of the text as independent works, in fact, only two have titles that refer neither to the word shi^{c}ur nor to the word qomah.[19] These are the Ma'amar Rabbi Yishma^{c}el 'The Discourse of R. Ishmael' (Oxford ms. 2456) and Yedi^{c}at Habbor'e 'The Knowledge of the Creator' (Guenzburg ms. 738). Both of these titles are appropriately descriptive of the contents of the text.

The term shi^{c}ur qomah also appears in a number of other books' titles. In order to avoid confusion, all of the works known to us are listed here:

1. Shi^{c}ur Qomah by Joseph Qorqos, Livorno, 1804.

2. Shi^{c}ur Qomah by Moses Cordevero, Warsaw, 1883.

3. Guide to the Perplexed, part I, chapter 72. This chapter is known as the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, cf. the commentary of R. Shem Tov, ad locum: "This rare and precious chapter is called Shi^{c}ur Qomah."[20]

4. Shi^{c}ur Qomah: Tefillot Veliqqutim Mizzohar Vetiqqunim, Guenzburg 161 (=Lenin State Library, Moscow, no. 1105.)

5. An untitled work found in Mossayef ms. 134, ff. 15a-22b (Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem), beginning with the words "this is a copy from an old book speaking of shi^{c}ur qomah."

6. An untitled work found in Oxford ms. 1960, ff. 1a-2b beginning "This is the order of the universe according to the information given in Sefer Haqqomah." This work consists solely of various astronomical and geological data about the heavens, earth and the layers of hell, and does not seem to be related to our text, which appears in the same manuscript, beginning a few folios later.

7. Sefer Qomah, Oxford ms. 1786, ff. 40b-42a, quite similar to #6, and presumably the work to which the author of #6 was making reference in his superscription.

In later literature, a number of generic names were used for the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. Judah Hayyat refers loosely to the text as Ma^{c}aseh Merkavah.[21] Cordevero apparently refers to the text as Sefer Merkavah and Sefer Hekhalot.[22]

V ii THE ATTRIBUTION OF THE TEXT

The literary history of the Shi^cur Qomah is obscure and ultimately unknowable. Three periods may be distinguished, but their precise relationship one to the other and their chronology are uncertain. They are: the period of the named authorities to whom various parts of the work are ascribed; the period of the anonymous creators of the Urtext; and, the period of the final redaction. The redactors were responsible for the recensions which exist today; their work was to expand, compress and arrange the material they found before them, thereby creating the different recensions discussed above. Assuming that all of these redactors had a common Urtext before them, we may now turn our attention to the narrator(s) or editor(s) who created that original literary text. These narrators (whether they were one or many) were the people responsible for the composition of the sections of the text themselves, by bringing together various units of information, and by inserting editorial remarks ("R. Aqiba said," or "R. Ishmael said".) Their activity and its relationship to the sayings ascribed to the named figures are the subjects of this section. That these three stages reflect different chronological periods seems plausible, although it seems unlikely that they could have been too far apart. On the other hand, we cannot rule out the possibility that the narrator and redactor may have lived at the same time, or even have been the same person. Whatever other questions might be asked, one single question comes to the fore and subsumes the others: how did the narrator know these texts to be the work of R. Aqiba, R. Ishmael and R. Nathan? And whatever the answer to that question is, did he consider these documents to report their words verbatim, or was he merely paraphrasing their ideas in his own words? Finally, are the attributions correct, or are they the honest (but mistaken) opinion of the narrator, or are they pseudepigraphic, either never intended to be taken seriously, or else consciously calculated to trick the reader?

Let us first consider the issue of pseudepigraphy. Pseudepigraphy is defined as the attribution of a work to someone other than to its true author. This should not be confused with plagiarism, which is the act of claiming someone's else's work for one's own. Pseudepigraphy is the opposite of plagiarism; although both result in incorrect attribution, the difference of attitude is crucial. The plagiarist is concerned with his own self-aggrandizement; the pseudepigrapher is

concerned not with himself, but with his work, which he seeks to connect to the name of someone else more famous or more authoritative than himself.[23]

B.M. Metzger, in a recent essay, isolates eight motives that might have prompted an ancient author to produce his work under the cover of false attribution. These are 1) the desire for financial gain, 2) the desire to disparage or hurt the figure to whom the work is attributed, 3) the desire to honor the figure to whom the work is attributed, as a sort of extreme form of dedication, 4) feelings of inferiority or modesty on the part of the real author (whether real or feigned), 5) the impetus of rhetoric, which might lead an author to refer to a work as being "by" another, when the more correct term would be "in the style" of the one to whom the work is attributed, 6) the urge to provide a venerated figure with a suitable correspondance, 7) errors of attribution, in which a later copier or redactor incorrectly, but innocently, attributes a work to other than its real author, and 8) the desire to gain readers for a work by attributing it to a more prestigious author than was its own.

The best illustration of Metzger's third and fourth categories is to be found in the very beginning of Cicero's De Amicitia, where the author explains why he had attributed the De Senectute to Cato, and why he was attributing the De Amicitia to Laelius:

> ...I represented Cato, when an old man, as the principal speaker, because I thought of no man more suitable to talk of that period of life than he who had been old a very long time and had been a favorite of fortune in old age beyond other men; so, since we had learned from our forefathers that the intimacy of Gaius Laelius and Publius Scipio was most noteworthy, I concluded that Laelius was a fit person to expound the very views of friendship which Scaevola remembered that he had maintained. Besides, discourses of this kind seem, in some way, to acquire greater dignity when founded on the influence of ancient times, especially such as are renowned; and hence, in reading my own work on old age, I am at times so affected that I imagine Cato is the speaker and not myself...[24]

Of Metzger's eight possibilities, only numbers three, four and eight enter into consideration here. If the attribution to the famous tannaim whose names

appear in the text is not meant to be taken seriously, then it is either an attempt to gain acceptance for a text by connecting it to an older set of authorities, or it is a kind of honorific attribution meant to suggest that R. Aqiba, R. Ishmael and R. Nathan, the stars of hekhalot literature, could not have had the mystic experiences they are credited with having had, without actually having seen the godhead in all its glory as well. Actually, R. Nathan is not known from any other mystic text, and above we have offered our explanation of his presence in the text of the Shi^cur Qomah. R. Ishmael and R. Aqiba were the prototypical heroes of hekhalot literature, and it is possible and perhaps likely that it is from that corpus of literature that the author of the Shi^cur Qomah took his cue in attributing his text to those figures. We have already noted that the main things the formulators of the various recensions added to the Urtext were large sections of "normative," so to speak, hekhalot traditions. If the attributions were not part of the Urtext, then they could conceivably be interpreted as part and parcel of the hekhalot motifs and traditions added to the Urtext by its redactors. On the other hand, the attributions are quite the same in all the texts, and we must at least consider the possibility that they were an integral part of the Urtext.

Yet, if we do not rule out as a motive in the attribution of the texts what C.C. McCown calls "the glamour of antiquity,"[25] then we must ask what compelled the author to select precisely the figures he did choose for his attribution, assuming the real author could have chosen any other figures as well. Other, later, mystic works are attributed to other authorities; if the author of the Shi^cur Qomah chose the stars of hekhalot literature as his spokesmen, then this must. presumably, reflect a certain attitude and understanding on his part of the meaning of the work, and its place in the corpus of ancient Jewish literature. Although some moderns try to justify the practice of pseudepigraphy on a purely psychological basis, using the notions of an exaggerated sense of corporate personality among the ancients, the sense of "contemporaneity" which allowed authors to present their own experiences in the names of others with no ethical qualms, and the notion of name-immortality,[26] there is probably a more reasonable approach, more rooted in history than in psychology.

Were the figures of R. Aqiba, R. Ishmael and R. Nathan appropriate figures for an anonymous narrator to have chosen to present as the tradents of the text?

Rabbi Aqiba certainly is in that category. If we set aside the question of the relationship of the attribution of the Shi^cur Qomah to the attributions of the other hekhalot texts (given the unclear chronological relationship between all those works), and concentrate on sources that may certainly be assumed to have been known to the author of the Shi^cur Qomah, then we can find a variety of sources that can explain why an author in the gaonic period would have chosen the tannaitic teachers he did choose as likely figures in whose mouths to put the traditions presented in our text. R. Aqiba is, for example, recalled in tannaitic literature as having been adept in mystical as well as theurgic matters.

The mystic aspect is evidenced by the famous baraita of the four who entered the mystic orchard.[27] Of the four, R. Aqiba alone entered and exited in peace. The precise meaning of entering the orchard is not clear, and has been the subject of much speculation; most probably "entering the orchard" is an expression for engaging in ma^caseh merkavah speculation.[28] At any rate, R. Aqiba is the only both sane and pious survivor. His interest in theurgy is related in a baraita in BT Sanhedrin 68a. There, R. Eliezer (b. Hyrqenos), the teacher of R. Aqiba, in a death bed speech recounts some of his own intellectual achievements: "I have studied three hundred (others say, three thousand) laws about the (magic) planting of cucumbers, and yet no man ever asked me about them except for Aqiba b. Joseph. Once I and he were walking in the way, and he said to me, 'My teacher, teach me regarding the planting of cucumbers.' I said one word and the field was filled up with cucumbers. He said, 'My teacher, you have taught me regarding their planting, now teach me how to uproot them,' I spoke one word, and they were all gathered in one place." R. Aqiba was therefore credited with having mastered the theurgic talents of his teacher. His expertise in such matters was recognized; his legal distinction between a real magician and a charlatan who merely creates illusions, which he cites in the name of R. Joshua, was accepted as authoritative in the Mishnah. It is, in fact, in discussing that mishnah that the Talmud quotes the baraita. R. Aqiba thus is described in tannaitic literature as having been adept both in the mystic arts and also in theurgy. The gaonic period also saw the composition of magic works attributed to R. Aqiba, as, for example, the Havdalah Derabbi ^cAqiva, which survives in numerous manuscripts.[29]

As for R. Ishmael, he is mentioned in all the other

hekhalot texts, and so it is at least plausible that the author of the Shi^cur Qomah chose to attribute a large section of the text to R. Ishmael for purely literary reasons.[30] However, if we disregard the testimony of hekhalot literature, as we did above, owing to the chronological uncertainties, then we are still not at a loss to explain the author's choice of R. Ishmael. Possibly, the major reason for the attribution of the texts to R. Ishmael is the close link throughout tannaitic literature between him and R. Aqiba. There is one baraita that may shed some light on the choice of R. Ishmael himself. In BT Berakhot 7a, we read: "R. Ishmael b. Elisha said, 'Once I entered the Holy of Holies to offer up the incense and I saw Akatriel Yah, the Lord of Hosts, who was sitting on a high and exalted throne, and he said to me, 'Ishmael, my son, bless me!' I said to him, 'May it be Your will that Your mercy outweigh Your anger, and that Your mercy overrule Your other attributes, and that You behave with Your children mercifully, and that You do not apply the letter of the law [in judging them'."] The text presumes that R. Ishmael was the high priest, which is not an historical role which he played. Yet, the importance of the text stems from the fact that R. Ishmael is shown to have gazed on the godhead himself, or at least on a manifestation of the godhead. The use of the language from the vision of Micaiah, and the expression "Lord of Hosts," in which the English word Lord corresponds to the Tetragrammaton, strongly suggests that the godhead itself is involved, and not some angel, which is, of course, entirely appropriate for the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, which is the obvious setting for the story.[31] We can, therefore, see that R. Ishmael too, even more than R. Aqiba, is presented in at least one tannaitic source as having had an experience in which he visually saw a manifestation of God. It may be that the tannaitic traditions about both men separately and their constant appearance together led, ultimately, to the attribution. Of course, it is also entirely possible that it was because of the attribution of the Shi^cur Qomah that these other traditions grew up, but that would oblige us to abandon our theory of a gaonic date of composition.

R. Nathan is presented in the text, at line 108, as the pupil of R. Ishmael, as role which is historical.[32] His name seems not to be linked to any particular mystic experience in tannaitic sources, and he is presumably an appropriate figure for textual attribution merely because of his relationship to R. Ishmael. Of course, R. Ishmael had many students, of whom R. Nathan was

neither the oldest nor the most famous, and so the ultimate reason for which a section of the text was attributed to him must remain uncertain. We have suggested that the Shi^cur Qomah, or, more precisely, the Urtext, may well have a Babylonian provenance. If this is so, then the reasons for which R. Nathan appears in the text become more obvious: it was no doubt he whom the reader was to assume brought the mystic names and numbers from Palestine, home of R. Aqiba and R. Ishmael, to Babylonia, home of the text itself.

We may therefore posit the following tentative answers to the questions posed above. Probably, the author of the Shi^cur Qomah sought to ascribe his work to those tannaitic authorities he knew to have been sympathetic to issues relating to theurgy and theosophy. If it was the author of the Urtext, himself, who experienced the mystic union of which the divine names and dimensions are the revelatory result, then perhaps it was also he who attributed the texts which presented them to R. Aqiba, R. Ishmael and R. Nathan. If he derived these mystic doctrines from some anterior source, then the issue must remain obscure, and we cannot say with certainty whether the attributions are part of the original fund of information, or whether they were added by the composer of the Urtext. Ultimately, the question rests on the obscure issue of the way in which the attributor understood his own creative process. If he was a bona fide mystic, who experienced visions and revelations of Metatron, who told him these teachings in the names of the tannaitic authorities to whom they are attributed, then the question of pseudepigraphy is solved-- the ascriptions are part of the revelation, not its frame. If the author attained his visions of the Deity through the performance of mystic techniques he believed (correctly or incorrectly) to have been developed by these tannaitic authorities, then the attributions may be seen, perhaps, as literary testimony to that fact. Finally, he may have felt obligated to attribute his work to others for any of the three reasons on Metzger's list that could apply to this situation. The question cannot be answered with absolute certainty, but we favor our first suggestion, that the attributions are part of the revelation. As such, they need not be justified any further; the attributions may have been as mysterious to the author as they are to his readers, and have come from the same inner source as the rest of his mystic information. In any event, all three attributions certainly contain, whether consciously or unconsciously on the part of the author, a strong degree of self-justification.

Alexander Altmann, in an article on the use of hymns in hekhalot literature, has written that "there can be no vision of the chariot-throne without hymnody."[33] This assertion is abundantly verified on every page, practically, of early mystic literature, and at least one hymn from that literary corpus, the Ha'adderet Veha'emunah, eventually became a regular part of the liturgy, although its original context is in the Hekhalot Rabbati.[34]

The Shi^{C}ur Qomah itself contains a number of hymns and what appear to be a number of hymn fragments. Because these may constitute one of the strongest links between the Shi^{C}ur Qomah and the other branches of hekhalot mysticism on the one hand, and non-mystic Jewish literature, specifically the corpus of liturgical poetry known as piyyuṭ on the other, it might be useful to consider the hymns separately. The hymns do not present any material that sets them specifically apart from their sister hymns in other ancient mystic texts. At least one hymn occurs outside the mystic context in a purely liturgical framework: section C of our text is presented in Oxford ms. 1102, which is a sixteenth century German prayerbook.

The full length hymns present in some or most recensions of the text are as follows: the melekh litany which is found in section C, and which comes in a variety of versions; 'el bema'amarkhah, a hymn which is found in the supplementary section, L_X; and barukh shemo bemoshav hadaro, kishemo ken gedullato, vetiftaḥ li... shaC^{C}are tefillah, 'asher malakhekhah useva'ekhah lekhah yitnu hadar, melekh 'ahuv venehmad, tithaddar bekol shir and lekhah yitnu ge'ut, all of which are found in the various versions of the supplemental N_X section. Not all of these latter hymns appear in all the recensions, as we shall see. Many times, it is hard to distinguish the hymns from the exceedingly flowery prose contexts in which they are presented. When dealing with fragments, often of one or two sentences, it is often quite difficult to decide whether a passage is legitimately to be taken as part of a hymn or as a prose passage which is written in highly poetic language. We shall also consider two hymns which are presented as parts of other prayers; the reader may consider the texts to determine if these are integral parts of their contexts, or independent texts interpolated into the texts in which they appear. These texts are the 'en kelohenu passage found in C_X and the lekhah haggedulah lekhah

haggevurah passage found in the same location.

Ultimately, were we to have a concordance of paytanic language, or even a complete anthology of all known paytanic literature, it is certain that we could fit these hymns into the development of the piyyut, and use that information as an aid in dating the text and in fixing its locale. In the absence of such basic tools, we can only proceed to analyze the hymns of the Shi^cur Qomah unto themselves in the contexts in which they are presented in the text and without the context of the greater history of the development of Jewish liturgical poetry.

The first hymn is the melekh litany of section C. It apparently begins, somewhat oddly, with the word lefikhakh 'therefore' on line 28. The opening is thus, "Therefore, we are obligated to praise, beautify [i.e. to declare beautiful], glorify, exalt, bless and magnify..." which is followed by a long list of phrases referring to the Deity, each one of which begins with the word melekh 'king.' The text in Oxford ms. 1791 is not an acrostic; the texts in nine other manuscripts are acrostics.[35] Guenzburg ms. 90 and Cambridge ms. Add. 405.4 agree with the text of Oxford ms. 1791, with some variations. Since, of the acrostic manuscripts, six are Sefer Haqqomah manuscripts and two are Sefer Razi'el texts, while the Guenzburg and Cambridge manuscripts are from the Sefer Haqqomah tradition, it is clear that we cannot simply ascribe one of these versions to one recension and the other to another. In terms of textual preference, we would tend to favor the non-acrostic version as probably the original and certainly the less efficient, having neither alphabet nor cogent progression of ideas as an organizing agent. Furthermore, despite some alliterative lines ('adir...'abir...'amis...'emet), the phrases in the non-acrostic texts seem to be grouped topically in synonym couplets, but only to a limited degree, and this is a strong suggestion against taking this version to be a development of the other. Since all the Sefer Razi'el manuscripts have the acrostic version, as do some of the Sefer Haqqomah texts, we may assume some contamination. This would explain the divergence of texts: the original source of the Sefer Haqqomah would have had a very brief passage, or perhaps none at all, skipping from line 28 to line 42, thus reading, "...exalt, bless and magnify//the King, whose name is the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He..." At a later date, some scribe inserted an acrostic, long version of the hymn, probably derived from some other hekhalot context, and some other

chose a shorter version. It is unfortunate that no manuscript makes such a hypothetical jump.

Most of the divine epithets, which, coupled with the repeated word melekh, form the entire body of the hymn are Biblical in origin. The specific Biblical references of more than passing interest are mentioned below in the commentary. Here, we may note, by way of example, that melekh gadol is found in Ps 47:3; most of the other references are found in Biblical texts to refer to God, but almost never actually in the expression containing the word melekh that appears here. This suggests that the initial expression, melekh haggadol, is the text of which the rest of the hymn is a midrashic elaboration, if the word "midrashic" does not denote a more complicated procedure than the one at work here. This too suggests that the non-acrostic version cannot be dismissed as a corruption of the longer acrostic version. Both are related developments of the same idea. A version of this hymn, in fact, does appear in Hekhalot Rabbati.[36] We may presume that in its original setting the word gadol in the generating expression was meant to suggest divine grandeur or greatness. Given the special and literal meaning of the divine epithet in a text like the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, it is easy to imagine why the redactor or scribe who introduced the hymn into the original text found it particularly significant. No doubt he took gadol to mean simply "big", and the hymn to be, therefore, an appropriate hymn in a text such as the one he was creating.

The 'el bema'amarkhah hymn is found in fourteen of our manuscripts.[37] Of these, eight are examples of the Sefer Haqqomah tradition, and five are texts of the Sefer Razi'el. The lack of any significant divergence between the texts of this hymn in these two manuscript families implies a common source, and helps to confirm our initial supposition that the interpolated sections are, generally speaking, later additions, rather than being integral parts of a common Urtext which have been dropped out of certain shorter recensions of the text. The text is composed of two elements, an introductory prose passage and a hymn. The prose passage begins with a sentence of exceedingly difficult syntax, which is discussed below in the commentary. The hymn itself is simply constructed on the model 'atah...veshimkhah... 'You are...and Your name is...' in which both blanks are filled in with the same phrase. This is a Biblical model, presumably derived from Zach 14:9. The text itself implies a different scriptural basis: Ps 8:2. The verse itself is quoted, and the reference in it to

the Name is used to generate the rest of the hymn, which is an acrostic. The acrostic is imperfect, with each letter of the alphabet represented by one, two or three terms. The closing passage is the benediction ha'el haqqadosh, which also closes section L. This again helps suggest that the hymn is added as a later element, here, apparently meant to replace rather than supplement section K, or, more precisely, to replace the last few lines of it. Presumably, the hymn should be read in following the quote from Psalm 8 that appears on line 168 and which introduces this hymn. It should be noted that none of the texts which give the hymn continues in section K past line 168, so no one text actually gives the benediction twice. Some of the texts give the doxology barukh shem kavod malkhuto le^{c}olam va^{c}ed at line 168, which also suggests the later inclusion of the 'el bema'amarkhah hymn.[38]

We now turn to the long N_x section, which contains both hymns and prose passages. Again, the great divergence of texts suggests the theory that these hymns are later injections into the text. As stated above, some of the hymns could actually have been written as flowery prose, but we have isolated tentatively the following hymns, which appear in the manuscripts according to the following table:

	Oxford ms. 1915	Oxford ms. 1960	Florence Plut. 44.13	JTS ms. 1879	JTS mss. 1896 & 2130	JTS ms. 8115	JNUL ms. 476	Guenzburg ms. 131	Munich ms. 40
barukh shemo bemoshav hadaro	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
kishemo ken gedullato	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
vetiftaḥ li sha^{c}are tefillah	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
'asher malakhekhah	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
melekh 'ahuv veneḥmad	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
tithaddar bekol shir	x	x			x			x	x
lekhah yitnu ge'ut	x				x			x	

It is interesting to note the divergences between the manuscript families. Oxford mss. 1915 and 1960, JTS ms. 1892, Guenzburg ms. 131 and Munich ms. 40 are all examples of the Sefer Haqqomah text, but they do not all present all of the hymns or hymn fragments: based on that criterion, they fall into two groups, within which the manuscripts do have identical contents. Oxford ms. 1915, JTS ms. 1892 and Guenzburg ms. 131 form one group, and Oxford ms. 1960 and the Munich manuscript form the other. This difference is further reflected in the formula used within each group to mark the termination of the N_X text. In the former group, the closing formula is "Here ends the seder of the King of the Universe," while the latter group uses the formula, "You have concluded the prayer of Elijah." Manuscripts Florence 44.13, JTS 1879, 2130 and 8115 and the Jerusalem manuscript are from the Sefer Razi'el tradition. These manuscripts also do not have a common text. Here, however, the question is less one of literary development than of contamination. Four of these manuscripts have a common format. JTS ms. 2130 does not, but the use of the "seder of the King" termination formula, combined with the fact that we are dealing with a nineteenth century Yemenite manuscript, leaves little question that we are dealing with a case of cross-manuscript-family borrowing. We would therefore prefer to guess that the manuscript family derived from the Sefer Razi'el originally had a single format for section N_X.

To turn to the hymns themselves, the first, barukh shemo bemoshav hadaro 'Blessed is His name in the seat of His splendor,' is a paean to the ubiquity of the divine splendor. The poet refers to deserts, oceans and a host of other meteorological and geographical phenomena in which may be viewed manifestations of the splendor the divine. The text usually closes with the familiar 'amen 'amen selah halleluya doxology. Some of the geographical and meteorological terms are not mundane terms and apparently refer to the world of the hekhalot. These references include the nahare shalhevot 'the rivers or flames' and the ʿorpele ziv 'the clouds of brilliance.'

The second hymn we shall consider in this category is the kishemo ken gedullato hymn which follows soon after the barukh shemo text. It is based on Ps 48:11. There, the psalmist declares keshimekhah 'elohim ken tehilatekhah 'as is Your name, so is Your praise.' The poet here has taken two steps to produce his first line. First of all, he has shifted the psalmist's

declaration into the third person, and secondly, he has inserted the word gedullah 'greatness' into the phrase, so that his opening line reads, "As is His name, so is His greatness; and as is His greatness, so is His praise." This is an important idea because it provides, depending on our a priori assumptions, either evidence that the hymn was composed for the specific purpose of being included in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah and not merely accepted into the text at a later date, or the reason why, if it was accepted into the text, this particular hymn was considered suitable. The key, apparently, is the word gedullah itself, which here seems to be meant as a double entendre, suggesting the greatness or grandeur of the divine, according to its usual meaning, but also the meaning of bigness, as though the word were merely the nominal form of the Hebrew adjective gadol 'big.' The bigness of the godhead is, of course, the key idea in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and the use of Ps 147:5, gadol 'adonenu verav koah 'our Lord is big and mighty' is characteristic of many manuscripts, to the extent that the numerical value of verav koah is taken to be the height in millions of parasangs of the godhead in at least one tradition.[39] Note that it was the phrase melekh gadol that provided the impetus that generated the hymn in section C which we have already discussed. Here too, the poet continues to build on the original idea, extending it, in each line, to a new divine attribute. The first few lines will give the general idea:

> As His name, so is His gedullah;
> And as His gedullah, so is His praise.
> As His praise, so is His kingship;
> And as His kingship, so is His holiness.
> As His holiness, so is His glory;
> And as His glory, so is His ability to punish.[40]

The third hymn of this section appears in all the manuscripts, and borders on being prose, being distinguished from the prose context only by the repetition of the word sha^{c}are 'gates of.' We label this a hymn, albeit not a terribly developed one, because it is in the same bland style as the melekh litany of section C, which is also distinguished from its prose context only by the rhythm generated by the constantly recurring word melekh. The poet imagines the gates that lead to the various highly prized goals of human endeavor: prayer, repentance, wisdom, knowledge, understanding, awe, mercy and income. Probably, the idea was generated by the famous "gates of righteousness" of Ps 118:19, although that term is not listed here, although a close derivitive is mentioned. The Sefer Razi'el texts

give a text that is even closer to prose than the Sefer Haqqomah texts. There, the author merely lists the gates, without repeating the word sha^{c}are, thus depriving the text of any rhythm and making it hard to call poetry. The impression one gets, although it cannot be proven, is that originally, there must have been a reference to gates of some sort, which was expanded in two different ways: the redactor of one tradition chose prose as his medium, and the redactor of the other chose poetry. The similarily of terms is due to a limited number of reasonable terms that could be used in this context in the first place. On the chart above, we have indicated the presence of this hymn in all the Sefer Razi'el manuscripts; one could reasonably delete those references since the material that corresponds to this hymn as it is found in the Sefer Haqqomah is not really a hymn at all, but a prose passage.

The next hymn, 'asher mal'akhekhah, begins in the manuscripts of the Sefer Haqqomah group, 'asher mal'akhe seva'akhah '[they] who are the angels of Your hosts' and in the Sefer Razi'el tradition, 'asher mal'akhekhah uṣeva'ekhah '[they] who are Your angels and Your hosts.'[41] The hymn continues describing the various attributes the heavenly hosts attribute (presumably as part of their worship service) to the Deity. This usage of the imperfect in Hebrew, whereby, for example, yaqdishu means 'to ascribe holiness' rather than 'to sanctify' is a regular feature of liturgical Hebrew. We designate this passage poetry and not prose, again, because of the rhythm generated by the use of the word lekhah 'to You' after every other term. The opening phrase, 'asher, is somewhat superfluous, and seems to suggest that the hymn was originally lifted from some longer context.

The hymn, melekh 'ahuv veneḥmad, is the final hymn in the Sefer Razi'el tradition. Here too we have the problems of contamination with which to deal in explaining the literary relationships between the various manuscript sources. The situation is that some of the texts have two sections, one beginning with the words melekh 'ahuv nehmad venaqi 'King, beloved, lovely and innocent', and the other beginning with the words melekh 'emet veyahid 'King, true and only.'[42] The first part, and in the Sefer Razi'el texts, the only part of the hymn, extols the various divine attributes which are compared, in part, to men who have some fraction of that same quality. This is built into a type of chain, which develops as the hymn progresses. This can best be illustrated by a section of the text itself:

O Beloved, Innocent and Charming King,
Who lifts Himself over all the kings;
The tall One, who vaunts Himself over [all]
them who are proud.
Proud, and very beautiful, over all those who
are themselves the essence of beauty.
He, Who raises Himself over the mighty, and
Who lifts Himself over the awesome,
Splendor to all the kings; Praise to the
chosen ones;
Mirth to the holy ones; and the same to all
them who wish [well] for His name...[43]

The final two hymns are present only in the Sefer Haqqomah texts. The first, tithaddar bekhol shir, is built on a grammatical base, every third word being a second person singular imperfect hitpa^{c}el form, distinguished by the characteristic tit- prefix.[44] Again, the hitpa^{c}el form here denotes ascription: tithaddar means "You declare Yourself splendid" rather than a simple reflexive meaning. The different manuscripts give much the same text. The final hymn, lekhah yitnu ge'ut, is lacking in some of the Sefer Haqqomah texts. The poem is built on the repetitive use of the word lekhah 'to You', just as was the 'asher mal'akhekhah hymn, and lists the various types of praise offered up by the celestial worshipers during their supernal prayer service.

The last four of these hymns can definitely be said to have been part of the general stock of merkavah liturgy; they appear as well in Hekhalot Rabbati.[45] It does not seem likely that they were composed for one of these two contexts, and borrowed for the other. More likely is the idea that these hymns were part of the common liturgical heritage of merkavah mysticism. Probably, they were really sung by members of those circles as part of their own worship service; imitation of the celestial worship service in human prayer was, after all, a feature of all Jewish worship. At any rate, they seem to be part of the literary frame provided by the editors of the various recensions in their apparent effort to transform the Urtext of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah into a more regular merkavah text.

The final two hymns we shall consider are found following section A in the Sefer Razi'el tradition, and, at least usually, following section C in the Sefer Haqqomah. The first is the famous 'en kelohenu hymn, currently a part of the Sabbath and festival liturgy in the Ashkenazic ritual and part of the daily liturgy

as well in the Sephardic rite.[46] The hymn that appears in our texts is quite dissimilar from manuscript to manuscript, and quite different from the text familiar from the liturgy. The hymn is based on the fourfold divine epithets: God, Lord, King and Savior. Each of the verses of the hymn is formed by attaching either a cohortative verb (let us praise, let us bless), a question (who is like...), or an assertion (there is none like...) to each of the four titles. The largest group of similar texts is made up of Oxford mss. 1915 and 1960, JTS mss. 1892 and 2130, Guenzburg ms. 131 and Munich ms. 40. Their texts read simply:

mi kelohenu, mi kadonenu, mi kemalkenu, mi kemoshi^{c}enu;
'en kelohenu, 'en kadonenu, 'en kemalkenu, 'en kemoshi^{c}enu;
nodeh lelohenu, nodeh ladonenu, nodeh lemalkenu, nodeh lemoshi^{c}enu.[47]

This largest group is made up entirely of Sefer Haqqomah manuscripts, with the single exception of JTS ms. 2130, which consistently shows signs of contamination. The second largest group, also with slight variation from text to text, is the Sefer Razi'el group, represented by four manuscripts. The texts there are identical in the first three lines to the text cited above, but the fourth line here reads:

nevarekh ladonenu; neromem lelohenu;
neshabbeah lemalkenu; nefa'er lemoshi^{c}enu.

Let us bless our Lord; Let us exalt our God;
Let us praise our King; Let us glorify our Savior.[48]

The hymn itself is quite ancient. The earliest texts are found in a fragment of the Palestinian rite published by Jacob Mann from a Genizah text, and the text in Seder Rav ^{c}Amram. The text published by Mann is as follows:

barukh 'elohenu, barukh 'adonenu, barukh malkenu, barukh moshi^{c}enu;
mi kelohenu, mi kadonenu, mi kemalkenu, mi kemoshi^{c}enu;
'en kelohenu, 'en kadonenu, 'en kemalkenu, 'en kemoshi^{c}enu;
nodeh lelohenu, nodeh ladonenu, nodeh lemalkenu, nodeh lemoshi^{c}enu;
nevarekh lelohenu, nevarekh ladonenu, nevarekh lemalkenu, nevarekh lemoshi^{c}enu.[49]

Note that this seems to be a development of the Sefer Haqqomah text, but a different expansion than the one we have already seen in the Sefer Razi'el texts.

The tradition in Seder Rav ʿAmram is quite similar to the Genizah fragment quoted above, with the exception tha the barukh line comes between the 'en and the nodeh lines, and the nevarekh line is replaced with an 'attah hu' 'You are' line.[50] A concluding line is given here regarding the Temple incense, in order to introduce a liturgical reading of a Talmudic passage on that topic. We may hypothesize that the text in Seder Rav ʿAmram is developed from the Genizah text, or vice versa; at any rate, they seem together to represent a different type of development of the Sefer Haqqomah text than the one we read in the Sefer Razi'el tradition.

The question is made even more interesting by the fact that a version of the prayer appears elsewhere in hekhalot literature, namely in the Hekhalot Rabbati. Unfortunately, this important text has not been published in a scientific edition, and so we must rely on the two standard printed editions, those of Jellinek and Wertheimer.[51]

There are two passages in the text of Hekhalot Rabbati that are related to this hymn. The first reads:

mi kemalkenu bekol qe'eh tofse [malkhut];
mi keyoṣrenu, mi kemalkenu;
mi kelohenu, umi kamohu [beqoshre qishre ketarim.][52]

Who is like our King among those who proudly hold the [reins of] government?
Who is like our Creator; Who is like our King;
Who is like our God, and who is like Him [among those who knot the knots of the divine crowns?][53]

Another brief passage is found later in the text:[54]

mi kelohenu, mi kadonenu, mi keyosrenu.

Who is like our God; who is like our Lord; who is like our Creator?

These cannot be considered versions of the hymn, but they do seem to be literary formulae which the author of the Sefer Haqqomah has developed into a hymn by expanding and organizing the material. Alternately, it could be the author of the Hekhalot Rabbati who was doing the borrowing, and who merely chose to express in prose a set of ideas known to him from a familiar hymn. Finally, it should be noted that R. Eleazar of Worms, whose own handwritten copy of the Sefer Haqqomah seems to have been copied by the scribe of Oxford ms. 1791, thought highly of this hymn, and wrote about it in his great halakhic compendium.[55]

The final hymn, lekhah haggedullah lekhah haggevurah, is also presented in the manuscript sources in two versions. Four of the Sefer Razi'el manuscripts present the hymn, which is probably only a fragment of a longer poem, in two lines:

lekhah haggedullah, lekhah haggevurah;
lekhah na'eh gedullah umalkhut.
lekhah ᶜoz;
lekhah na'eh kavod vaᶜoz.[56]

Yours is bigness, Yours is might;
To You, bigness and majesty are becoming.
Yours is strength;
To You, glory and strength are becoming.[57]

Five of our manuscripts are Sefer Haqqomah texts, and their version of the hymn is in three stanzas. The text there is basically the same as the Sefer Razi'el text given above, except for the extra verse and the fact that, for the lekhah ᶜoz on line three, these texts read lekhah malkhut lekhah ᶜoz lekhah ᶜizzuz 'Yours is majesty, Yours is strength; Yours is great strength.'[58] The extra verse is as follows:

lekhah hod lekhah hadar;
lekhah na'eh hadarah.[59]

Yours is majesty, Yours is beauty;
To You, beauty is becoming.[60]

V iv THE NAMES AND DIMENSIONS OF THE DIVINE LIMBS

The single most characteristic feature of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is the description of the divine body and the revelation of the names and dimensions of the limbs and some of the internal organs of the Deity. Whether or not this notion implies a rejection of the principle of divine incorporeity in the mind of the author, or in the minds of his earliest readers, is not a question that can be decided with certainty. It does seem, however, that if we ask in absolute terms, whether this must have been the case, the answer would have to be that it is not so, as evidenced by those gaonic and medieval scholars who praised the text and who accepted it as a valid text of Jewish mystic expression, and who, yet, are known to have held the doctrine of divine incorporeity as a cardinal element in their religious systems.

As we turn to an anlysis of these two features, it is necessary to remember that it is precisely that type of information that differs the most from manuscript to manuscript. The readings are often clearly confused or corrupted, especially the names, which are often beyond the state at which reconstruction would be a real possibility. Nevertheless, it is equally clear that the various manuscript families maintained similar traditions, and are distinguished from other manuscript groups quite obviously by the names, which are apparently the most susceptible elements in the text to contamination. Thus, for example,at line 95, we learn that the name of the divine left arm is y^{c}ns. 61
If we investigate all of the alternative readings, we see that some Sefer Haqqomah manuscripts have names that are apparently variants of this name, as, for example, y^{c}nsy in Guenzburg ms. 90 or ^{c}ksy in Oxford ms. 2257, while others seem to be variants of a different name altogether, for example, mtnhsnvnv in Oxford ms. 1915, mṭghynynyhv in JTS ms. 1892, or mṭghṣnyhv in Guenzburg ms. 131. On the other hand, it must be noted that all of the Sefer Razi'el manuscript have names that are clearly related to variations of this latter name. Furthermore, all the Sefer Hashi^{c}ur manuscripts give variations of the former name, while the Merkavah Rabbah texts give the length, but no name at all for the left arm of the godhead. Thus, the uniformity of the other manuscript traditions suggests that the Sefer Haqqomah tradition may too have once had a single original reading, which was eventually altered via contamination. This must have occurred at a very early date, since Oxford ms. Hebr. C. 65, a Genizah text, has

the reading that has come down to us as part of the Sefer Razi'el tradition.

The names are generally stated in a fixed formula: the type of the limb is stated, followed by its length in millions of parasangs, followed by the name of the limb and the word shemo '[is] its name.' The formula itself is a reflex of Biblical style, in which we find the form x + name + shemo, where x is a piece of information regarding the man being named. This formula can be used for either men, as, for example, at Job 1:1, or for God, as at Exodus 15:3. The use of the formula for man is quite rare; almost all the other attestations in the Bible concern God.[62] Much more common is the version with the word ushemo 'and his name [is],' which has twenty-three attestations in Biblical Hebrew, all of which name men.[63] It seems that the Biblical authors consciously used the shemo formula for God and the ushemo formula for man, and so it is entirely appropriate for the author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah to adopt the shemo formula, given the divine frame of reference.

The ultimate explanation for the names stems from lines 151 and 152 of the text, where the text declares that all the Shi^{c}ur Qomah secrets were revealed to Moses originally. Although these lines have a different meaning when section J_x is added in, the meaning is quite clear in the shorter versions of the Sefer Haqqomah. The paradox of a text specifically attributed to a tannaitic rabbi being said to constitute a divine revelation to Moses is no more of a problem for the author here than it is for the authors of any other rabbinic text. The difference is that, here, the attribution to Moses is more of an impetus than an afterthought, as it so often seems to be in other texts. The source of the whole issue is Exodus 3:13-15:

> Moses said to God, "When I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you' and they ask me, 'What is His name?', what shall I say to them?" And God said to Moses, "Thus shall you say to the Israelites, 'Ehyeh sent me to you.'" And God said further to Moses, "Thus shall you speak to the Israelites: 'The Lord, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob has sent me to you. This shall be My name forever, my appelation for all eternity.'"[64]

These verses raise certain questions, especially to the mystic. The name Ehyeh, whether in its long or

short form, does not seem to be the name requested by Moses, a suspicion confirmed by its absence from the rest of the Pentateuchal text. Apparently, the author of this section of the Shi^cur Qomah, or, more precisely, the original mystic of whose mystic revelation the secret names are the result and stuff, noting that Ehyeh is not, despite the simplest meaning of the verse, the name of God, supposed it to stand for another set of names, which, as a result of his own mystic and inner processes, he was able to elaborate as the set of secret names we now find in our text. The use of Exodus 3:15 at lines 166 and 167 seems to confirm this supposition, and the name Ehyeh is one of the most popular in the text; elsewhere, the full name, Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh, is said to be engraved both on the divine heart (line 67) and on the divine forehead (lines 87-88). In both collections of names, those on the heart as well as those on the forehead, the Tetragrammaton is strangely absent among the other mystic names, while the Ehyeh name appears quite prominently. The names are therefore to be taken as a kind of elaboration of the Biblical suggestion that more names than are listed in the text of the Bible were revealed to Moses at the burning bush. Certainly, the use of the Tetragrammaton earlier in the Pentateuchal text, and specifically, the famous remark in Genesis 4:26 that the Tetragrammaton was known and used even by the antediluvians, were enough to impress on the minds of the mystcs the belief that it was not the Tetragrammaton that was the real subject of the revelation at the burning bush. Their mystic speculation was aimed at providing the "true" contents of that revelation.

That the essence of a revelation should consist of the names of the Deity should not surprise us. In second century C.E. inscriptions in Africa and Europe, Isis is called myrionymos 'the one of countless names,' and in other places, polynomos 'the one of many names.'[65] That Lucius, in his Metamorphosis uses this aspect of Isis as the central item in her revelation to the author and uses it to imply a type of syncretism that approaches monotheism does not mean that the epithet originally bore such a deep connotation. Probably, the title, at first, merely pointed to a plethora of names which implied a greater aura of grandeur and dignity. Several centuries later, the anonymous author of the treatise On the Divine Names, attributed to the figure of Dionysius the Areopagite mentioned in Acts 17:34,[66] wrote: We must sing Him of endless names..."[67] The motivating factor in the development of these traditions is probably the assumption that the magnificence of the

divine calls for a surfeit of names. Of course, in a monotheistic context, one can hardly pile up divine names by declaring the many gods to be one, and their names properly applied to that single Deity. Two solutions appear in Jewish mystic literature: the literary eulogy of the hekhalot texts, in which long lists of synonyms are used, paradoxically, in texts describing the Deity to point to the essential inability of man to describe the divine within the confines of human language; and, the special technique of the Shi^cur Qomah. By devising the technique of assigning a specific name to each divine limb, the author is able to describe his God with a multiplicity of names without compromising on His essential unity and uniqueness. It was apparently in the context of these ideas and issues that the original mystic whose experiences formed the basis for the Urtext of the Shi^cur Qomah seems to have chosen to express his experiences, and to describe the intimacy of intensity of his experience of divine communion in terms of the mystic names of his God.

The names themselves are sometimes theophoric and sometimes non-theophoric; in the former category, however, the theophoric element is often the only recognizable element in the word. Sometimes, the name is build on a known term, but the addition of an element of uncertain, or entirely unknown, meaning obscures the name. Thus, the name of the divine beard, hdrqmsyh (line 78) seems to be a theophoric name, made up of the short theophoric element (yah) preceded by the word hadar 'beauty' and another element, apparently constituted by the letters qof, mem and semakh. There does not seem to be a Hebrew root based on those letters. The familiar qomes in rabbinic Hebrew, a loan word from the Latin comes, originally meaning "comrade, associate or partner," has the nuance in Hebrew of a member of the court or an attendant of magistrates.[68] Likewise, Suetonius, a nearly exact contemporary of both R. Aqiba and R. Ishmael, used comes to refer to a member of the imperial court.[69] Possibly, the name hdrqmsyh should be taken to mean "[he who bears] the splendor of the divine court." Furthermore, qomes is used to describe Metatron's relationship to the Deity in the Visions of Ezekiel.[70] The word was, therefore, in regular use in early mystic circles. Ultimately, it is not unlikely that the name cannot be assigned a meaning, and is meant only to serve as a symbol of the utter transcendence of the God of Israel, as well as of the utter obscurity that surrounds Him. This single example should make it clear how difficult it is, and how risky, to assing meanings to the divine names in the Shi^cur

Qomah. One can never be sure that the name was constructed in the first place for any but its phonological value. It should be noted, as a further arguement against trying to ascribe any meaning to the names, that the name hdrqmsyh alone has at least seven manuscript variations, of which not one has both the elements hdr and yah.

It should further be noted that the asssignment of names to the divine limbs is characteristic only of section D, the text ascribed to R. Ishmael, and section F, the text attributed to R. Nathan. The Aqiban text has no names for the limbs.[71] Finally, as far as we are aware, these names are unique to the Shi^cur Qomah. The names of Metatron on lines 49-51 are in a different category. As we describe below in the commentary to those lines, some of those names are used in the midrashic 'Otiot Derabbi ^cAqiva, and also in the Talmud, at BT Sanhedrin 44b. These names are also part of the Zoharic tradition,[72] and even generate their own midrash, the Seventy Names of Metatron, which exists in print and in manuscript.[73]

A point should be made which argues in favor of the artificial nature of the names and that is the higher than average frequency with which certain letters of the Hebrew alphabet appear in the added element of the name, that is, the element of the name which is neither a theophoric element nor a recognizable Hebrew word. These letters are gimel, nun, samekh, sadi and qof. These letters are not the most frequently used letters of the Hebrew alphabet, but that is all that sets them off from the other seventeen letters. The recognition of this artificial source of syllables helps us a great deal in constructing the sense of the names. The artificial element added to the theophoric element is apparently supposed to produce a sense of the relatively austere majesty of the godhead, seated on His throne surrounded by what the text itself calls the "fog of brilliance and the hidden places of darkness."[74] Based on this principle, the name of the white part of the left eye, bzqstqy' (line 91) may be assumed to be composed of the element bazaq 'lightning,' the artificial syllable stq, and ya (y'), a version of the theorphoric element. The name of the right shoulder is given on lines 92 of the text as ttmhynyny'l. The name may be explained as formed by the Hebrew tamah 'amazement, wonder' plus artificial syllables of obfuscation, and the theophoric suffix 'el 'God.' These examples should suffice to introduce the reader to the types of thought processes involved in the generation of the names found

in the text. It is the names that give the Shi^{c}ur Qomah its exotic flavor; despite the literal meaning of the title, it should not necessarily be assumed that the dimensions are the real stuff of the ancient mystic revelation, and that the names were added in at a later date. Both aspects of the text are real and equally ancient. The presentation of both language and number in a text as the stuff of revelation when it is actually intended by the author to provide the meditative framework for the mystic experiences of others is known from other contexts as well, and is the key to the Sefer Yeşirah.

The dimensions of the various limbs of the Deity are certainly at the center of the text. All indications point to the notion that the dimensions revealed in the text were considered to have a special importance, and they were thus called upon to suggest a name for the entire text. There are three major indications of this. Firstly, we have the fact that the dimensions are the only type of statement we find sprinkled throughout the text in the sections attributed to R. Ishmael, R. Aqiba and R. Nathan. All have in common the idea of the length of the limbs forming the crux of the mystic's knowledge of his God. The dimensions given in these three sections do not actually contradict each other, except in their final tallies (which, prompted, as they are, by midrashic considerations, cannot really be called sincere attempts to calculate the sum of the previously given dimensions); they give the measures of different things, the shorter Aqiban text dealing almost exclusively with the distances from one limb to another, the Ishmaelian text dealing mostly with the lengths of the various limbs themselves, and the Nathanian text dealing mostly with the lengths of the various physiognomical features. Furthermore, one of the most important parts of the text, section E, is the information needed to effect the proper conversions of the measurements from supernal to mundane measurements.

Secondly, we have the pervasive use of the word gadol 'big' and its derivatives throughout the text. We have seen how the phrase melekh gadol, which is found in Ps 47:3, stimulates the long melekh litany of section C. Equally important are Ps 147:5, gadol 'adonenu verav koah 'Big [usually translated as 'great'] is our Lord, and full of might' which serves as an important proof-text in the Aqiban text; and Dt 10:17, ha'el haggadol haggibbor vehannora' 'the big, the heroic and awesome God' which functions as a closing doxological prooftext both in the Aqiban and Ishmaelian texts. Furthermore,

the constant use of Ps 147:19-20, which is somewhat of a puzzle because of the absence of any obvious connection between the words of the verses and the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, is to be explained merely on the basis of these verses concluding the psalm which contains the gadol 'adonenu phrase. Although gadol and its nominal form, gedullah, are usually taken to express the loftier conceptions of greatness and grandeur, here they apparently are to be simply taken to mean "big" and "bigness." This may seem to reflect a certain naive literalism, but it is, of course, just such discrepancies between form and meaning that are the meat of midrashic exegesis, and which here provided the mystic with a legitimate framework within which to express verbally the essential ineffability of the mystic union with God.

Thirdly, and in some ways, most importantly, we have the overwhelmingly visual framework of the early Jewish mystic experience. Although soemtimes specific instructions may be heard during the mystic theophany, it is nonetheless true that the revelations described in the great mystic passages of the Bible are almost entirely visual. The two great Biblical personalities, Isaiah and Ezekiel, both describe first and foremost what they saw.[75] When Ezekiel recalled his initial experience at the Kebar River, he referred to it as "the splendor [he] had seen."[76] Finally, the less well-known vision of Michaiah, whose words appear in the mouth of R. Ishmael in the opening lines of the Ishmaelian text (lines 47-48), specifically begins his account with the stark, pointed ra'iti 'I saw.' The Shi^{c}ur Qomah, to the extent that its author was prepared to build on Biblical antecedents, presented almost exclusively visual information. The author in sensitive to the fact that one can hardly see something billions of parasangs tall, and it is probably for that reason that he explains, despite the contradiction a few lines later, that it was actually Metatron who revealed all of these figures to R. Ishmael. The author has it both ways: R. Ishmael had a legitimate visual experience, but the grandeur and immensity of what he saw made it necessary for an angelic guide to describe to him just what he has experienced. It is also possible that the word devarav is Ps 147:19, a verse to which we have made reference above, is to be taken to refer to the measurements. The word davar means "thing" or "word" in Hebrew, but some later texts use the term to mean, more generally "manner", "style" or "aspect," and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah itself uses the word in this way in section N$_{X}$.[77] Possibly, the earlier reference in the Psalm to the

divine bigness suggested to our author a special meaning for the word devarav, which he took to refer specifically to the divine dimensions.

Before we turn to the measurements themselves, it is interesting to note that they are generally phrased so as to suggest only vertical direction. In section D, for example, we begin with the height of the soles of the feet, and then learn, rather than specific sizes, the distances between the various portions of the legs. It is only once we go above the neck that we begin to get the actual dimensions of the various body-parts, the crown of the head, the forehead, the eyes and so forth. This holds true also for the arms-- we learn the distance from shoulder to shoulder and from arm to arm, but the only precise dimensions are given for the fingers.[78] This fits in nicely with both the Aqiban text, which also gives only distances, except for the skull (line 20) and the crown (line 21), both of which, of course, are also above the neck; and also with the text attributed to R. Nathan, which gives details only for the physiognomical features. The reason for this is apparently that there are two, rather than one, midrashic impulses generating the figures. The first we have seen above: it is the general preoccupation with the divine bigness. The godhead is gadol, and the distance figures express in almost incalculable sums the extent to which that bigness goes. That the figures were, we are to presume, derived in the context of one mystic's experience of communion with his anthropomorphically conceived God does not mean that that earliest author was not guided by midrashic imperatives in expressing verbally and intellectually interpreting his experience. The physiognomical dimensions are, big though they certainly are, not specifically related to this bigness speculation. This can be maintained both because the style is substantially different from the style in which the text describes the dimensions that relate more precisely to the divine gedullah, and also, and even more significantly, because the facial feature sums cannot be said to add significantly to the bigness at all; in the final analysis, height is not calculated on the basis of the largeness of facial features.[79]

If we turn to the numbers themselves, even without converting them into mundane terms according to the table on lines 104-108, we are presented with an enormous puzzle. If we consider the figures given in the Aqiban text, we find no particular significance in them, except to say that they are very big numbers. What is more interesting is to note that they suggest more or

less normal human body proportions, and specifically a sort of symmetry or equilibrium which is, possibly, meant to suggest the perfection of the even-tempered Deity. Some of the numbers are midrashically motivated: the height of the godhead is 2,360,000,000 parasangs, a number presumably derived from the numerical value of verav koah (reading the verse in Ps 147 as if it meant "Our Lord is big, [his size is] verav koah.")[80] The figure of 600,000 for the crown (lines 21-22) is said in the text itself to derive from the number of Israelites who fled Egypt.[81] If the other figures ever had more precise significances, they can no longer be restored, and for want of the discovery of some inner midrashic impetuses suggesting some figures and not others, we must assume that a Being 2,360,000,000 parasangs tall would have a distance of about 300,000,000 parasangs between his eyeballs, and about 770,000,000 parasangs across his shoulder blades. We can thus see, at least in the Aqiban text, a combination of midrash and anatomical proportion working together to produce the figures we read. To those familiar with the techniques of non-Jewish meditation, the simplicity of the notion that one mystic's expression of his own communion with the divine in terms of the overwhelming bigness of the godhead might be presented in a literary text as the meditative stuff of another's mystic technique, is quite normal and not at all detrimental to the mystic process.

The Ishmaelian text seems to have figures that are purely proportional. We have not been able to discover any underlying midrashic imperitives in these figures, and neither have we found any in the Nathanian text. It seems that the overriding consideration is the bigness; the final tally in the text attributed to R. Nathan of a height of 100,000,000,000 parasangs and a width of 10,000,000,000 parasangs seems to merely be designed to express in unfathomable terms just how big the Deity is. The rest of the dimensions seem to be calculated on a basis of porportion, both to each other and to normal human size. The emphasis on normal human proportions is made even more explicit by the specific mention that the proportions are the same as for all men. Thus at line 110, we read in JTS ms. 2130, "the length of the nose is as the length of the little finger; the height of the cheeks equals about half the crown of the head, and this is the [correct] proportion for all men." The correctness of these proportions seems to have been standard rabbinic anatomical doctrine. The only time, in fact, that the Babylonian Talmud and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah present a common tradition is in the seventh chapter of Bekhorot, when, in response to a statement that too

large or too small a nose in proportion to the other limbs of the body is sufficient bodily blemish to disqualify a priest from exercising his sacerdotal duties, the Gemara tersely parallels this very line of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah text, observing: tanna ke'esba^{c} qeṭanah 'it was taught: [the nose is correctly as long] as the little finger.'[82] The attempt by the Talmud to establish the correct means of determining the "perfect" length of the nose indicates that the remark "and this is the [correct] proportion for all men" is not the laconic remark of an observant editor, and probably indicates that the proportions between the limbs is originally derived from anatomical observation.

In lines 104-108, between sections D and F, we have a table for the conversion of the supernal dimensions and distances into mundane figures. This process is quite straightforward and has several parallels elsewhere in the literary corpus of ancient Judaism. It is possible that the editor intended it to be taken as part of the Ishmaelian text, but the literary format of the text seems to call for a closing Biblical proof-text, and as such, we prefer to see section D concluding at line 104. Furthermore, the table of conversion does appear, as we have already noted, in other midrashic works, as, for example, in the 'Otiot Derabbi ^{c}Aqiva. It seems clear that this conversion table is a fixed literary pericope inserted here by the editor to take some of the sting out of the text of section D by multiplying the dimensions from the merely immense to the incalculably vast. The reader will find that the results of the application of this table of conversion produce numbers that are, probably, far beyond the mathematical abilities of ancient man. If there were some in antiquity who could fathom a neck 15.6 trillion universe lengths tall, they certainly did not include the average man, or even the average member of a mystic conventicle. By their very nature, the numbers recommend themselves as the stuff rather than as the result of meditative communion with God.

A few words should perhaps be devoted to one final aspect of the description of the godhead, and that is the direction in which it progresses, i.e. from foot to head. The obvious explanation is that the mystic stands at the foot of the throne as he gazes up at the godhead, and so sees the divine feet before him, and then, as he looks up, the divine ankles, calves, knees, thighs, and so forth, each at a greater distance from him. This explanation presupposes that the element of gigantism is at the base of the description rather than an aspect

of its literary formulation. If, for the sake of argument, the element of gigantism is deleted, then another reason may be sought for the description moving in the direction in which it does. Shaye J.D. Cohen, in a recent study, has shown that the technique of anatomical description going from the ground up was a known technique in the Graeco-Roman literary corpus.[83] Homer described Thersites, for example, in the second book of the Iliad from the legs up to the point of the skull.[84] The first century B.C.E. Syrian poet Philodemus of Gadara described his beloved Flora from her feet up to her eyes in one of his most famous epigrams.[85] Other authors, of course, chose to travel from the head down in their descriptive language, as did, for example, Ovid and Horace.[86]

The Song of Songs, it might be noted, offers a series of such descriptive texts. The section in Song 5:10-16 which is cited in the text of the Shi^cur Qomah, and which was somewhat hastily identified by some scholars as constituting the basis for the author's description of the godhead, describes the beloved from the head to the feet. The Shulamite herself is described from the feet to the head, as in Song 7:2-8, and in the opposite order in Song 4:1-7. There does not, therefore, seem to be any particular meaning to the fact that the godhead is described from foot to crown, except that such a descriptive technique could reasonably be expected from one who experienced his God while standing at the base of the throne and looking up.

V v THE USE OF BIBLICAL VERSES IN THE SHI^{C}UR QOMAH TEXT

A distinction may be made between the use of Biblical verses as sources of language and ideas and the actualy quotation of verses by the author. In the Shi^{C}ur Qomah, as in all rabbinic texts, there is evidence of the Biblical text being utilized in both ways. It is actually quite difficult to know where to draw the line between these two styles of usage. For example, the statement on line 47, "I saw the King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, sitting on an exalted throne, and his soldiers standing before Him, to the right and to the left" is clearly based on I Kings 22:19, "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne and all the heavenly army [ṣeva' marom, instead of hayyalotav] standing before Him [^{C}alav, instead of lefanav], to the right and to the left." There can be no question that the sentence in the Shi^{C}ur Qomah is derived from the verse in I Kings, yet the author gives no indication that he is citing, practically verbatim, a Biblical text. In fact, if one were not familiar with the verse in I Kings, one would have no reason to suspect that these lines are a close paraphrase of a Biblical text.

Other times, the same text can be presented in different sections of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah in different ways, as allusion, paraphrase or quotation. Thus, for example, at lines 1 and 2, God is called the "great, mighty and awesome God," a familiar liturgical usage. The author is basing himself, probably, on Dt 19:17, where that phrase appears, as does the phrase "God of gods and Lord of lords," which is used in the same part of the mystic text, on line 3. Further on, we find at line 22, the statement, "therefore, He is called [niqra'] the great, mighty and awesome God." This statement is not exactly a quotation of Scripture, but by referring to the passage on which the phrase is based in the Biblical text (miqra'), the author can now be said to be paraphrasing, rather than merely alluding to the Biblical verse. Finally, at lines 102-103, we find a quotation: "therefore, He is called the great, mighty and awesome God, as it is written, 'For the Lord God is the God of gods...'"[87] Thus, the same phrase can be used in different ways. In the commentary to the text, we shall attempt to offer a complete list of the various verses on which the language and ideas of the text are based. Here, however, we shall limit ourselves to the study of those verses that the text uses consciously. The Shi^{C}ur Qomah never refers to itself, nor is it generally referred to in other works, as midrash. In

other words, the author of the text does not seem to have considered himself to be using the Biblical texts themselves as the generative force behind his text. Given that provision, we may proceed with our analysis of one of the more provocative passages of the text, the use of some verses from the Song of Songs at lines 115-116, a passage that apparently suggested to some that midrash on the Song of Songs, and especially on the description of the lover in the fifth chapter (which is the chapter from which our verses are taken), is exactly what the Shi^cur Qomah is.

It must be noted that, although some manuscripts only give Song 5:10, 11a and 12, most of the other texts give much fuller versions, usually giving all or part of the following four verses as well. It should further be noted that these verses are not generally given any formal or conventional introduction. They are not apparently intended to prove, in the manner of Biblical prooftexts in standard midrashic works, the statements immediately preceding them regarding the crown and the gem between its points (or between the horns of the Deity!) Coming as they do at the end of the third and final attributed text, the Nathanian, and coming immediately before the final tally of parasangs, these verses can be taken to be a sort of summary of the essence of the text, a sort of Biblical confirmation of the validity of anthropomorphic mysticism.

We have evaluated the Jellinek-Scholem-Lieberman thesis regarding the relationship between the Song of Songs and the Shi^cur Qomah above.[88] Here, we may therefore summarize. In his commentary on the Song of Songs, Origen remarked that there were four Biblical passages that the rabbis of his day did not teach to children, but which they preferred to relegate to the later years of a student's education. These include the first chapter of Genesis, the first chapter of Ezekiel, the last nine chapters of Ezekiel and the Song of Songs. The first two categories are known to have engendered specific esoteric traditions; the strictures regarding their study were already codified briefly in the Mishnah, in the tractate Hagigah.[89] The chapters at the end of Ezekiel were problematic, in the opinion of Scholem, because they contradicted statements in the Torah.[90] The fact remains that neither traces of these esoteric traditions, nor even any clear reference to them have survived to our own day. Be that as it may, the real question is raised by the reference to the Song.

Scholem suggests that the Song of Songs was removed

from the curriculum because of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, which was the embodiment of just those esoteric traditions that the rabbis were anxious to deny to all but the most advanced and mature students, and that, in fact, the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was a midrash to the description of the bridegroom in Song 5:10-16. Scholem is aware that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is not normal midrash:

> ...and the Song of Songs-- because it contained a detailed description of the limbs of the lover, who was identified with God-- became the basic scriptural text upon which the doctrine of Shiur Komah leaned. But it is clear that the authors of our fragments of Shiur Komah, instead of interpreting the Song of Songs as an allegory within the framework of the generally accepted midrashic interpretations, saw it as a strictly esoteric text containing sublime and tremendous mysteries regarding God in His appearance upon the throne of the Merkabah.[91]

Lieberman accepted this theory, writing, "I can now accept the hypothesis of Scholem that the mishnah of Shi^{c}ur Qomah is an early midrash to Song 5:10-16, which was once part of an ancient midrash to the Song of Songs."[92] Lieberman, in fact, explains the absence of any rabbinic references to the prohibition of the study of the Song of Songs, by assuming there was no rabbinic prohibition. "Apparently,' he writes, 'we have here a stringency adopted by the people themselves, without the prodding of the rabbis."[93] Origen, it should be noted, does not claim to be discussing rabbinic law, nor does he claim to have his information firsthand. His opening phrase, "it is said that it is [a custom] observed by the Jews...", does not necessarily mean more than it says, which is just that the teaching of the Song (because of esoteric traditions connected to it, or for some other reason) was generally deferred to the more mature years of a student's education, or was perhaps left for adults to study, if Origen's "until they should reach a perfect and mature age" is to be taken literally.[94]

We have shown above that this theory cannot be substantiated, and is not borne out by the texts themselves. These verses from the Song must be presumed to have a function other than merely providing a hook upon which the Shi^{c}ur Qomah might hang. They form part of the liturgical frame in which the theurgy of the text is cast, as we have already had the opportunity to explain above.

The rest of the verses are used in a more typical midrashic style, although they are characterized to a certain extent by a noticable arbitrariness which links some of them to the facts they are provided to "prove" in only the most vague way.

The verses used in the text of the Sefer Haqqomah are as follows:

line	source	introductory formula
46	Ps 147:19	shenne'emar
53	Is 66:1	shenne'emar
83	Ps 147:19	shenne'emar
103	Dt 10:17	shenne'emar
103-104	Dt 7:9	vekhatuv
107-108	Is 40:12	shenne'emar
149	Ps 147:19	shenne'emar
152	Ex 23:20	shenne'emar
153	Ex 23:21	shenne'emar
174-177	Ps 93:1-5 (passim)	-
177	Ps 91:16	-
178	Ps 24:1	-
178-179	Ps 29:1	-
179-181	I Ch 29:12b-13	-
201-202	Is 6:3	-

This list excludes verses which, even though they may be cited in the text, are presented as prose elements in a larger context. Thus we have omitted Job 41:17a from the list, although it appears on line 199, because it seems to function merely as a literary expression, albeit one derived from the Bible. Similarly, we have omitted Ps 103:2, although it is quoted in full at line 44, because it is used there as a literary turn of phrase, again certainly derived from the Psalms, but not functioning as a prooftext. Ps 8:2 is quoted almost in full at lines 167-168, but with no formula of introduction, and so it is to be doubted that the author intended to use that verse specifically as a prooftext. These, and more obscure references, are given in the commentary to the lines on which they influence may be detected. In short, we have limited our analysis here to two groups of verses: those which seem to function as prooftexts, and which might, therefore, provide a link between the Shi^{c}ur Qomah and the midrashic traditions preserved in other contexts regarding these verses, and verses that seem to provide a liturgical frame for the text, and which may, therefore, provide us with a jumping off point in our attempt to discover the impression the author may have had of his own literary work.

If we examine our list, we find that the two groups are quite identifiable. The first is formed of nine references, scattered throughout the first 153 lines of the text; the second, of the final six references on our list, all distinguished by the absence of any formulae of introduction, and all grouped together at one location, with the exception of the final verse.

Beginning with the former group, the first verse, Ps 147:19, is the only verse to appear three times on the list. The verse "He tells His words [devarav] to Jacob, His laws and statutes to Israel" is used at line 46 to conclude section C, as a prooftext at line 83, and at line 149 to conclude section J. The usage is fairly constant in all the manuscripts, although it is also the case that most of the manuscripts that have a section J_x keep this verse at the end of section J, thereby denying to it, in effect, its place of prominence. The question that faces us is thus: what is the link between this verse and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah? The three terms devarav 'His words,' huqav 'his laws' and mishpaṭav 'his statutes' must apply somehow to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. Davar, we have already observed, can mean, loosely, "style" or "manner" as, for example, at Esther 1:13.[95] Huqav may be more to the point; it is attested in at least one place in rabbinic Hebrew with the meaning of "bodily mark," or "characteristic." In BT Shabbat 137b, we find that one of the benedictions for the ceremony of circumcision uses the word ḥoq with the apparent meaning of "body mark" or "sign." This might have suggested the verse in question to the author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, who could have then taken the verse to mean that the God of Israel revealed His bodily characteristics to Jacob. The possibility is, however, that the dictionaries are wrong to list this meaning of ḥoq, and that it is derived ad locum by virtue of the parallelism between the words ḥoq and berit 'covenant' (but also, loosely, circumcision) in Jer 33:25, a verse quoted in this midrashic pericope as well.[96] Mishpaṭ has a basic legal sense, but has an extended semantic range similar to davar, and may simply refer to some descriptive aspect of the person or object described. Thus, Ps 147:19 seems to suggest that, along with the known revelation, there was revealed to Israel also a body of secret knowledge regarding the intimate practice and habits of the Deity, a body of knowledge, apparently taken by the author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah to include the particulars of the divine appearance. Of course, all of this is made a great deal more obvious by the fact that Ps 147 also contains the famous "Big is our Lord and mighty" passage which seems to definitely have played

an important role in the midrashic thinking of the author, and which seems to have provided the author with a Biblical substantiation of his own brand of mystic experience, although in the text we have chosen to translate below, that verse does not appear as a proof-text. If "Big is our Lord" means that the God of Israel may be experienced by man in terms of his immense size, then "He tells His devarav to Jacob..." can only refer to the measurements of His limbs.[97] This special meaning of the word mishpaṭ seems to have inspired other, later midrash; the author of Exodus Rabbah to Ex 21:1 seems to have relied on the way in which that term is used in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in order to make his own midrash.[98] Interestingly enough, that author used the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah to argue for the notion of divine enormity, as opposed to divine omnipresence, a logically reasonable conclusion that may be drawn from the text, but probably not the one intended by the original author.[99]

The second verse, Is 66:1, is used in a clearer way. The verse, "The heavens are My seat, the earth, My footstool [hadom raglai]," is used to "prove" the assertion that the soles of the divine feet fill up the universe. This deduction seems relatively straightforward: the Biblical assertion that the earth is the footstool implies that the foot must be even larger.[100] There may be a pun involved, based not so much on etymology, as on assonance with the Aramaic haddama 'limb' or 'member', a word attested in rabbinic literature and in Syriac,[101] as well as in Biblical Aramaic.[102] The verse would then be taken to mean "the earth is the limb of my foot." The author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah writes, "The divine soles fill up the universe, as it is written "...the limbs of my feet [i.e. the soles] fill [literally: are] the earth [or, the universe]." Of course, the fact that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah text proceeds to contradict this assertion by showing the feet of the godhead to be many universe-lengths tall, suggests, perhaps, that both sources derived their midrash from some other earlier sources. If that is the case, the author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah does not seem to have felt it necessary to explain the contradiction in details. At any rate, the assonance between Hebrew haddam 'blood' and our haddama seems to lie at the base of at least this brief midrashic exegesis of Dt 12:23: "...not to eat the blood [haddam]: this refers to [the prohibition of eating] a limb [torn] from a living animal."[103] The Aramaic haddama was used to explain both Hebrew words, hadom and haddam.[104]

The verse has a literary history of use in texts

that seem to be related in some ways to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, or at least to stem from hekhalot circles. For example, at BT Berakhot 59a, R. Aḥa b. Jacob explains the phenomenon of earthquakes as occurring when God pushes His feet (doḥeq 'et raglav) beneath the throne of glory, and uses Is 66:1 as his prooftext. A similar usage appears in a Talmudic presentation of a debate between R. Abba and R. Joseph regarding the intent of the mishnaic curse on one who does not properly care for the honor of his Maker.[105] We shall have reason to cite R. Abba's explanation below in the commentary to the text. Here, R. Joseph's is the more germane text. His answer is that the mishnaic curse is directed at one who sins in private (thereby, apparently, sinning doubly in that he demonstrates at once both his disobedience and his lack of faith in the doctrine of divine omniscience.) "For,' R. Joseph explains, 'R. Isaac has said that it is as if one who sins in private pushes the feet of the Shekhinah [doḥeq raqle shekhinah], as it is written..." The passage concludes with our verse, Is 66:1.[106] Thus it is clear that this verse came to be understood as more than mere metaphor, and developed its own midrashic tradition based on whatever conclusions could be drawn about the anthropomorphically conceived feet of the godhead based on the size of the divine footstool. The author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, anxious, no doubt, to find traditions to support his anthropomorphic gigantism, was willing to incorporate a passage based on this set of midrashic traditions without worrying about any mild inconsistencies that might result.

We may now consider the third and fourth verse on our list together, both because they appear contiguously in our text, and also because the second verse is lacking in all but three of our manuscripts. The verse or verses come at the conclusion of section D, the section of the text attributed to R. Ishmael, and apparently serve different functions in those manuscripts in which both appear. The first verse, Dt 10:17, is a normal prooftext; the text refers, on line 102, to "the big, mighty and awesome God," and immediately goes on to state the source of this expression, which is the verse under consideration. The second verse is more of a puzzle, since it does not seem to be directly related to the texts that precede it, nor, particularly, to the material that follows it in the text. Furthermore, there are no particularly germane midrashic traditions that might link Dt 7:9 to any type of mystic speculation. We are left to conclude that those texts that quote Dt 7:9 do so for no other reason than the similarity of the first few words in that verse to the opening phrase

of Dt 10:17. This likelihood is endorsed by the fact that the scribes of two of the manuscripts which cite Dt 7:9, Oxford mss. 1606 and 1791, misquote Dt 10:17, giving 'elohim for 'elohekhem, thus increasing somewhat the similarity to Dt 7:9. The scribe of the other manuscript that cites Dt 7:9 gives the correct scriptural reading, perhaps correcting on his own authority the error in the text he found before him.

The fifth verse, from Is 40:12, appears at lines 107-108 as a prooftext brought to support the assertion that the divine zeret measures one entire universe-length. The correct meaning of the term zeret is discussed below. The verse functions as a normal prooftext in that its phrase "He gauged the heavens with His zeret" seems to confirm, if not the precise detail, than at least the general assertion of the bigness of the divine zeret. Some of the manuscripts give the misreading tiqqen 'He fixed' for tikken 'He gauged' which makes the intent of the midrash even clearer.

The verse in question is at the crux of a number of midrashic texts, but, of them, one stands out and suggests by its content that its author knew of the use of the verse in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. In the printed edition of the Tanḥuma, we find the following description of the differences between God and a mortal king. The context clearly suggests that this parable was not originally tied to this midrash. The text is as follows:

> When a mortal king draws an image ['aikonin] of himself on a slate [ṭavla], [of course,] the slate is bigger than the image. The Holy One, blessed be He [is different, in that He] is bigger than the entire universe. Regarding the heavens, Scripture states, "Behold, even the highest heavens cannot contain You [I K 8:27]," and regarding the earth, Scripture states, "The whole earth is filled with His glory [Is 6:2]," and the heavens, at their furthest limit are [only the size] of the divine zeret, as it is written, "He gauged the heavens with His zeret [Is 40:12]," and the earth is only a third of the divine zeret, as it is written, "He held [measured] in a shalish [apparently a measure of some sort, but here taken as a third of a zeret by assonance with shelish 'third' and by proximity to zeret in the verse] the dust of the earth.[107]

The apparent willingness of the author here to dis-

cuss the greatness of the Lord (gadol) and the bigness of His image (gedolah) in separate terms, and to use the verse from Isaiah 40 to demonstrate, apparently, that the heavens are smaller than the divine image because the entire heavens are only the size of the divine zeret, suggests his familiarity with the use of the verse in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, or perhaps among members of the groups that used that text as a springboard for their own meditative union with the godhead, to prove the same thing: that the enormity of God may be derived from the verse regarding the size of the divine pinky-finger, if that is the correct meaning of zeret here. There may also be a slightly apologetic side to the statement, in that this may be the earliest attempt to rationalize and thereby legitimize the Shi^{c}ur Qomah by dividing the godhead from its image, thus suggesting that the body described in the text is not the Deity, essence and being all together, but rather His image, either emanated or drawn by the real God, whose recondite nature does preclude, after all, His being seen or described. Virtually all the various later attempts to rationalize the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, notably the attempts of Saadia Gaon and the Ashkenazic pietists, are directly or indirectly derived from this approach taken here by the author of the Tanhuma. The logic behind the midrash-- that the image of the godhead is actually bigger than the heavens-- is precisely the line of thought taken in the text itself, after all, except that there is no indication in the text that the author considered his mystic experience to have been with an image of the godhead and not with the real and essential God of Israel.

The seventh and eighth quotations on our list may also be discussed together, both because they are contiguous in our text, and also in their scriptural source. The two verses, Ex 23:20 and 21 are used as prooftexts at lines 152-3 to show, respectively, that the substance of a certain revelation, depending on whether the manuscript gives a J_x section between sections J and K, was given to Moses alone, to the exclusion of the ante- and post-diluvian patriarchs, and that God warned even Moses lest he make some error regarding the use of the material which had been revealed to him. The whole section in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is not much more than these two verses, and apparently, both are intended to suggest only one point. At any rate, it is quite necessary to read one in light of the other. Analyzing them as separate sources produces precisely the opposite effect than the author intended. The first problem is in deciding what the text is about. The opening of section K refers to God giving Moses

permission to use something, presumably that which has just been discussed in the text. In those texts which give a section between sections J and K, this would seem to refer to the name of the Deity, or the name of Metatron. The end of section J_x reads, in one manuscript, "...[the name of Metatron] is written in one letter, with which were created heaven and earth...and sealed with the ring of Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh...and written in seven voices [golot] in [letters] six [cubits long and] six [cubits] high, and put in the innermost chambers, and the most recondite secret place, and in the most wonderful place, for Moses." The obscure terms in this passage will be discussed below in the commentary. The text then goes on with section K, and we learn that God only gave permission to Moses alone to "use it," that is, to effect magic with it. The quotation from Ex 23 then "proves" the truth of this assertion: "Behold, I am sending an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared [Ex 23:20.]" The author of our text evidently considered the fact that the word lefanekhah 'before you' is in the singular to suggest that it applied specifically to Moses. Therefore, we know that a special angel was sent to lead Moses, who himself led the Israelites. This angel was identified with Metatron as early as the Talmudic period. In the Talmud, R. Idit is quoted as saying that the name of Metatron is like the name of his teacher, God, and using the phrase "for My name is in him [Ex 23:21]" as his prooftext.[108] Scholem has pointed to a Palestinian parallel to this tradition in the hekhalot text, The Visions of Ezekiel.[109] Thus the angel Metatron is sent to Moses, and this, being the event referred to in Ex 23:20, is proven by the use of that verse. The Biblical text proceeds with the warning addressed by God to Moses, "Respect him and obey him; do not rebel against him, for My name is in him." For the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, this opens up a midrashic possibility. The assonance of tammer 'to rebel' and tamer 'to exchange, change, confound' allows the midrash with which the text proceeds to finish the idea that God, at the same time, warned Moses not to confound the Deity and His angel.

The situation is somewhat more provocative if one leaves out the J_x section, as do five of our Sefer Haqqomah manuscripts. In these texts, the antecedent of the initial statement that God gave permission to Moses to use something seems to be referring to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah itself, since no specific term recommends itself in the passage that immediately precedes the opening line of section K. This assumption makes the first verse, verse 20, more difficult; we know what it

means to use a name, for example, in a magic spell or in a curse formula, but what would it mean "to use" the Shi^{c}ur Qomah? There is a famous dictum of Hillel warning against "using" the crown of the Torah, but that remark too is unclear.[110] Assuming that using the mystic text means utilizing parts of it, presumably the magic names, for magic purposes, we then find the rest of the passage even simpler: Moses is warned not to abuse the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, which is defined as confounding the godhead's angel with the Divinity Himself. This is even more likely if we read lehishtammer bo rather than the difficult lehishtamshehu at line 153.

It should be clear that this constitutes a third type of use of Scripture. For the first time in the list we have been examining, we get the impression that the midrash is flowing from the verse, rather than the verse merely being tacked on afterwards. The verses as they appear in the text suggest what must have been a real fear in the circles that "used" the Shi^{c}ur Qomah as part of their mystic praxis, that the inept would assume that the text describes an angel of some sort, Metatron perhaps, but not the real God of Israel. To thwart that possibility, the texts include these verses from Exodus and their midrashic value: that such a warning was included with the revelation itself when it was made to Moses himself in the first place.

It is also possible that these verses and their midrash were originally included in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah out of specific concern regarding the mystic names of the limbs rather than with respect to the dimensions. This is suggested by two things: firstly, the text seems to suggest that this information was revealed to Moses after he descended from the mountain.[111] This would suggest an informational rather than a visual revelation. Secondly, the names are precisely the stuff of theurgic magic in Judaism, as is evident from any text of practical kabbalah or Jewish magic. Even if it could be argued that the dimensions constitute, essentially as informational a revelation as do the names, the fact remains that it is the body of secret names that most readily lend themselves to abuse. This would then suggest a literary history for the section. The section built around Ex 23:10 and 21 would have originally been composed with reference to the names, and inserted following the text of section J. Later, when the dimensions were added (as in section D), or, if the editor had before him a text like our section B, which exclusively gives dimensions and no names at all, it must have no longer seemed clear what God was permitting Moses to

"use." The interpolated passage, J_x, was therefore introduced because it solved the problem in a particularly appealing way: it concludes with a reference to a reasonable theurgic element, the name of Metatron, and concerns the very angel who was identified by tradition as the angel who is being discussed in the passage of Exodus. If R. Idit provides the earliest datable link of Ex 23:20 to Metatron, then we might assume that the short version of Sefer Haqqomah might reflect an earlier state of the text, in which the text presented an early version of the Ishmaelian text with just the names, and later in the text, section K referring to just those names.[112] Later, when the dimensions were added, section K became obscure and hard to understand. After R. Idit's time, the connection between Metatron and Ex 23 having been made, section J_x was added to explain the meaning of section K: it referred to the name of Metatron, which itself later became the object of mystic speculation. This new literary unit, comprising at least sections B, D, and K, would then have become the Urtext from which the various recensions developed.

The fact, as we have seen, that none of the recensions seems clearly to be the Urtext from which the others have developed suggests that there must have once been just such a text. We have also seen that although the earliest attestations of any one of the surviving recensions of the text were written in the ninth century, a number of early texts seem to indicate familiarity with either specific traditions now known to us as part of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, or with the type of theurgic mysticism which centered on the experience of communion with a gigantic Deity, who could be fathomed chiefly by knowning the names and dimensions of His limbs. Probably, these authors knew of the Urtext, which is no longer extant.

The next five items on the list are clearly in a different category from the items which precede them. On lines 172-174, section M opens with a cohortative exclamation to praise God, who is referred to by a number of honorific titles. What follows after this sentence is a selection of verses or entire chapters from the Psalms and I Chronicles. The entire chapters are not given; for Ps 93, for example, the first lines and the last are given with the word ^{c}ad 'until' betwee them. The abbreviation vaqo. 'et cetera' indicates that Ps 24 is to be continued; other scribes use the note kol hammizmor 'the whole psalm' to indicate that the reader is to mentally supply the rest of the text. These psalms apparently form the text of a liturgy which

the mystic is to recite as part of the theurgic ceremony. Jewish liturgy often has the feature of a "silent liturgist," one who writes no words of his own, but merely juxtaposes Biblical texts to each other. This is the style of the most famous Jewish prayers: the shema', the hallel, and the pesuqe dezimra, to name a few. Here, too, the liturgist is, so to speak, silent, and contents himself merely with the arrangement of the texts he has chosen. Why these texts and not others are chosen is a difficult question to answer with certainty, but certain possibilities suggest themselves. Perhaps Ps 93 was considered appropriate for recital in this context because of the references to the divine majesty (ge'ut), the wearing (of clothes), the girding (of loins) and the divine throne, all of which are items mentioned and elaborated in various hekhalot texts. The line from Ps 91 is clearly included in the texts which present it (and many do not) because of the phrase 'arehu bishu'ati 'I shall reveal Him at [the time of] my salvation,' which was probably emended, at least informally, to 'erehu bishu'ati 'I shall see Him at [the time of] my salvation,' which requires a simple change of vocalization. Psalm 24 was probably chosen because of its favorable reference to the mevaqqshe panekhah 'the seekers of Your face,' which was undoubtedly taken in the circles that utilized the Shi'ur Qomah in their mystic ceremonies to refer to the mystics themselves. Also, the final verse in Psalm 24, asking the famous question, "Who is that, the King of Glory?" and answering "The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory, selah" was one in which the mystic could not have failed to find support and legitimacy for his particular brand of mysticism, in which the search for experiential communion with God could easily be construed as a very practical attempt to answer the Psalmist's question. Psalm 29 was probably chosen because it refers to the celestial palace in which "all say Glory (Ps 29:29b.)" This may have been taken as a reference to the mystic journey to the divine throne room and a sort of Biblical visa to make the journey. The final selection from I Ch 29:12b-13 does not make specific reference to the msytic or to the mystic experience, but is merely a closing doxology. The text continues with a personal supplicatory prayer. Whether or not this liturgy was ever intended to be used in private worship cannot be known. We have, of course, no evidence that private prayer conventicles ever existed, the admittance to which was restricted to mystics and their followers. On the contrary, the texts are transmitted, as we have discussed above, in the names of the most famous rabbis of the tannaitic period, who are known from many other

sources to have played active community roles. Even if the attributions are pseudepigraphic, the fact remains that the real author sought to connect his work to public figures known to his readers from countless other sources. Still, the text does exist, and is composed of precisely those Biblical passages that could be taken as justifications of the style of mysticism we presume to have characterized the circles in which the Shi^cur Qomah was used and created. At any rate, the Biblical texts involved are really rather tame, even by Biblical standards, and are actually all used in more standard liturgical contexts. Whether this was intended to be a "real" liturgy, or just to provide a liturgical backdrop to the text, of course, can no longer be known.

Finally, the use of Is 6:3 at lines 201-202 is in a prose passage. This is not exactly midrash; it is rather the mere use of Biblical terminology to express an idea. We have generally omitted this type of passage, but since this is an entire verse, standing as a single sentence in the larger text, we thought that it would be misleading to omit it. The point of midrash is the use of Biblical verses to support and buttress other ideas. Here, the verse is used to convey its own literal meaning.

We can therefore isolate three ways in which the Biblical text is used in the Shi^cur Qomah, aside from acting as the inspiration behind countless turns of phrase: as prooftexts, as liturgy, and as the source of information. None of these is unique to the Shi^cur Qomah, but the presence of them all here suggests strongly that the text was composed for a variety of reasons, and to serve a variety of different functions: to set forth an approach to theosophical speculation; to serve as a work around which mystics of a certain temperament could group themselves in pursuit of their God; in the traditional rabbinic style, to provide insight into the Biblical texts itself; and to "use" the Biblical texts theurgically. We have already suggested that some of these were central to the original nature of the text and some tangential, but, nonetheless, the use of Biblical verses in the text points to its composition by an author familiar with, and anxious to pay homage to, the traditional midrashic literature, as well as the traditional liturgical style.

Despite all that is uncommon about the Shi^cur Qomah, there are certain traditions presented in those texts that are, in fact, found in other texts and contexts. Despite the difficulties in dating the texts, the Shi^cur Qomah seems to be the earliest text to present some of these traditions. Even if the dating of the texts cannot clearly suggest which text has borrowed from which, or whether both have derived their traditions from some third source, these traditions are still quite important precisely for the links they forge both between the Shi^cur Qomah and contemporary non-mystic literature, and also between our text and later mystic texts. Here, we shall concern ourselves solely with the traditions that deal specifically with Metatron.[113] These traditions link the Shi^cur Qomah quite closely to other mystic and non-mystic texts, and therefore require careful and close analysis.

Metatron is mentioned throughout the text in all the recensions that have survived. He is specifically mentioned at the beginning of both the Aqiban and the Ishmaelian texts, at lines 12 and 49 respectively, as the source of the traditions that are subsequently presented in the text. The two phrases, "R. Aqiba said, 'I testify...that Metatron, the great angel [sara rabba] of testimony, said to me...'" and "The angel, the angel of the [divine] Presence [literally, Face], whose name is Metatron...said to me..." seem to express more or less the same idea, that the information contained in the Shi^cur Qomah was not acquired directly by the mystic in any of the ways we might have guessed, but was rather the result of an aural revelation (the Aqiban text calls this 'ashaduta 'testimony') about the godhead, from His chief vizier, Metatron.[114] What exactly this reflects about the original mystic experience that lies behind the information presented in the Urtext is difficult to determine. It also seems possible that the figure of Metatron was added in after the composition of the Urtext, as part of the general effort of the editors of the various recensions to present the text as a more or less standard literary merkavah text.

The most elaborate Metatron section is section L, which is almost entirely given over to a description of the role Metatron plays in the celestial worship service. In those manuscripts which present the J_x section, this section rivals section L as a center of Metatron traditions. We have discussed above the possibility that section K should be taken to refer not to the right

given to Moses to "use", presumably in magic incantation, the names or figures of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, but rather to the mystic names of Metatron. Some of these are given in our text at lines 49-51; others appear in other texts.

We may isolate the following Metatron traditions that appear regularly in the different recensions of the text:[115]

1. Metatron is the revealer of the information contained in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah (lines 12, 49);

2. His title is sara rabba de'ashaduta 'great angel of testimony,' (lines 12-13);

3. His mystic names, in addition to Metatron, are ruaḥ pisqonit, 'iṭmon, hiqron, sigron, meṭon, mitan, veneṭiṭ and veneṭif, (lines 49-51);

4. The hand of the Holy One rests on the head of Metatron, (J_x);

5. Metatron is called na^{c}ar 'lad,' (J_x; lines 157, 160, 162);

6. Metatron leads the celestial hosts in their worship service, (J_x; lines 161-162);

7. Metatron's body fills the universe (qomato male' ^{c}olam, J_x);

8. Metatron is the angel above all the angels (sar ^{c}al kol hassarim ve^{c}al kol mal'akhe hasharet, J_x);

9. Metatron is "inscribed" (nikhtav) with the letter ('ot) with which were created heaven and earth, and is "sealed" (hatmah) with the signet ring of Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh, (J_x);

10. His name may be written in six, seven, or twenty-four letters, (J_x);

11. He has seventy names, all of which were revealed to Moses, (J_x);

12. He is the possessor of a heavenly tabernacle called mishkan hanna^{c}ar, (line 157);

13. Metatron stops up the ears of the celestial creatures with the fire of deafness to prevent them from hearing either the voice of the godhead or his own pronunciation of the divine name, (lines 160-162);

14. Metatron pronounces the divine name during the celestial worship service both in the normal way, and also in the language of purity (leshon ṭohorah, lines 163-168);

15. Metatron's name is "like his Master's." (N_X).

Some of these traditions are unique to the Shi^{C}ur Qomah; most can be found elsewhere. Many other traditions about Metatron, including his two most famous roles in Jewish literature, the translated Enoch and the Prince (sar) of the World, do not seem to appear in the text. Some of the traditions we have listed above are quite pertinent to the Shi^{C}ur Qomah, especially the traditions about Metatron's own body and its vast dimensions. Others seem to be ancillary traditions, included in the Shi^{C}ur Qomah perhaps by random attraction to the more specifically relevant traditions. Furthermore, some of the traditions listed are quite obscure, and require further elucidation before parallels can be intelligently sought elsewhere. We shall now try to analyze each of these traditions, and to discover how each one of them links the Shi^{C}ur Qomah to the greater corpus of ancient Jewish literature.

The first two traditions are really one, because it is to his role as source of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah that Metatron owes his title sara rabba de'ashaduta which he is given in the Aqiban texts.[116] It is to the Shi^{C}ur Qomah that we are to understand the term 'ashaduta 'testimony' to be referring.[117] There are no specific references to this role of Metatron outside the Shi^{C}ur Qomah, but there do seem to be certain related traditions. The Aramaic sara rabba is apparently the translation of the Hebrew hassar haggadol, a regular title of Metatron, and one that appears in the standard midrashic corpora, for example, in the Midrash Haggadol to Genesis 1:1.[118] The title is also reminiscent of the Aramaic title safra rabba 'great scribe' that appears in the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum to Genesis 5:24.[119] Safra rabba itself appears in the Hebrew version, hassofer haggadol, of which the Aramaic may be a translation, in the Midrash 'Elleh 'Ezkerah.[120] From these few examples, it can be seen that the title assigned here to Metatron, if unique in detail, is quite regular in its format and is built on a regular model of titles assigned to that angel. The question then remains: is Metatron represented outside the Shi^{C}ur Qomah as a revealer or as a teacher of men? The answer must be a qualified yes, because the texts do speak of Metatron as a teacher, but in such a specialized way that it is difficult to decide if we may extend that category to include Metatron in his role as the sara rabba de'ashaduta. For example, at the beginning of BT ^{C}Avodah Zarah, we read:

> R. Judah said in the name of Rav: The day consists of twelve hours...At the fourth hour, what does He do? He sits and teaches [deceased] school-age children...And who taught them originally [before the destruction of the Temple]? If you want, I can say it was Metatron...[121]

This tradition also appears in the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, a text we have observed to be quite closely related to the Shiᶜur Qomah. There, we read:

> ...and every day, Metatron sits three hours in the exalted heavens and assembles the souls of fetuses who died still in their mothers' wombs and of infants who died while still at their mothers' breasts and of school-age children who died while engaged in the [study of] Torah, and he brings them beneath the Throne of Glory and arranges them in classes [kittot], units [havurot], and sections ['agudot] around him, and teaches them Torah and wisdom, midrash and Talmud, and finishes their [study of the] Torah...[122]

From these texts, we see that the role of Metatron in the Shiᶜur Qomah as a teacher of men is not entirely without its parallels elsewhere. Other traditions portray Metatron not exactly as a revealer of esoteric secrets, but rather as a sort of spokeman for God. A tradition preserved in the Yalqut Shimᶜoni, for example, quotes from the no longer extant Midrash 'Avkir, which speaks of God sending Metatron as His messenger to announce the decision to send forth the flood to Samḥazim, one of the angels who dwelt on earth.[123] These traditions cannot be taken to represent the same tradition as we find in the Shiᶜur Qomah, but they do reveal the basic element in the literary characterization of the personality of Metatron that allowed him to develop from the mere teacher of children to the bearer of divine tidings, and finally, to the revealer of the most recondite secrets about the godhead. The fact that the Shiᶜur Qomah is probably the earliest, not the latest of these sources, should not be used as a yardstick against which to judge the development of the traditions involved.

There is one other aspect to the role of Metatron as the revealer of the secrets of the Shiᶜur Qomah, and that is his relationship to those personalities to whom he is said in the text to have chosen as the recipients of his secrets, R. Aqiba and R. Ishmael. Both personal-

ities are connected with Metatron throughout the hekhalot literature, and even in the midrashic corpora, we find their names associated with his. In the Midrash 'Aggadah to Gen 5:18, for example, the identification of Metatron and Enoch is specifically associated with the name of R. Aqiba.[124] Even more intimately, Metatron is credited, along with the angel Gabriel, with having played a personal role in the process by means of which R. Ishmael's mother conceived him, in one version of the Midrash ᶜAsarah Haruge Malkhut.[125]

The second set of traditions regarding Metatron in the Shiᶜur Qomah centers around the name Metatron, and the other names he possessed. These traditions are numbered three, five, ten and eleven in the list above. The Shiᶜur Qomah traditions may be summarized as follows: Metatron has seventy names, of which Metatron, ruah, pisqonit, itmon, higron, sigron, miton mitan, veneṭiṭ and veneṭif are ten. The name Metatron itself may be written with six, seven, or twenty-four letters, although the latter tradition is quite obscure. The six and seven letters names refer to the fact that the name Metatron in Hebrew may be written either with or without a yod between the first and second letters.[126] Also, he is often called naᶜar 'lad.'

The idea of the seventy names of Metatron appears to form an ancient doctrine and is found elsewhere in the hekhalot literature. They are listed in the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva just after the seventy names of the Holy One, Himself. Later, these names formed the basis for their own midrashic exegetical work, which exists in manuscript and in several printed editions.[127] In the text published by Hugo Odeberg in his edition of 3 Enoch, we read at the beginning of the third chapter:

> R. Ishmael said: When [I ascended to the chariot-throne] I asked Metatron, the Angel, the Angel of the Presence [malakh sar happanim] and said to Him, "What is your name?" He said to me, "I have seventy names...but my King calls me naᶜar ['lad'.][128]

There were also other traditions regarding the number of names possessed by Metatron: Hekhalot Rabbati refers to a tradition of eight names.[129] The version of that section of the 'Otiot to which we have referred above refers to ninety-two names, where our text of the 'Otiot refers to seventy.[130]

When we turn to the specific names mentioned in our text, we find some of them with surprisingly early

attestations. First of all, we may observe that of the ten names mentioned, ruaḥ alone has a clear meaning: it means "spirit" or "wind" and is presumably supposed to suggest Metatron's role in creation, as in Gen 1:2, where the ruaḥ of God (i.e. a sort of amanuensis) hovered over the primeval waters. The final two names, venetit and venetif should possibly be read without the initial vav.[131] It is curious that the vav, if it is the conjunction "and," should be attached to both names. As to the names themselves, a different, usually longer, set appears in almost every manuscript. These divide up, more or less, by manuscript family. The Sefer Hashi'ur manuscript group omits the names entirely.

Of the names that appear in the various lists, the names ruaḥ, pisqonit, sigron and miṭon appear in the list in the 'Otiot. Based on the passage from the Talmud we shall present below, Wertheimer reads ruaḥ pisqonit as one name. This is not impossible grammatically, taking pisqonit as an adjective modifying ruaḥ, but since none of the scribes makes any effort to indicate that the two words constitute a single name, we may assume that, at least in the Shi'ur Qomah, these names represent two separate names. Perhaps, if the names are older than the rest of the text, it is appropriate to take the Talmudic passage we are about to discuss as a sort of midrash on the names that appear in our text. The passage is as follows:

> Abaye said to R. Dimi, "How do they explain the verse 'Go not into argument quickly, lest you know not what to do afterwards; when your fellow embarrasses you, then argue with him, but do not [even when angry] reveal the secret of another'[Pr 25:8-9]?" [He replied,] "When the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Ezekiel, 'Go say to Israel, Your father was an Amorite, your mother, a Hittite [Ez 16:3],' the ruaḥ pisqonit said before the Holy One, blessed be He, 'Master of the Universe! If Abraham and Sarah were to come and stand before You, You would embarrass them by saying this to them; [rather apply the principle:] '...then argue with him, but [even when angry] do not reveal the secret of another.'" Does he then have a right [to say such things?] Yes, [he does,] for R. Yossi b. R. Hanina said, "He has three names: Pisqon, 'Iṭmon, and Sigron. Pisqon, because he argues legal positions [poseq] before God. 'Iṭmon, because he obscures ['otem] the sins of Israel, [and] Sigron, because, once he concludes [soger],

none can re-open the case.[132]

The meaning of this seems to be that the ruah pisqonit is that angel who argues for Israel's defense. Here, the point is that God, by revealing the pagan ancestry of Abraham and Sarah is guilty of doing that which He is enjoined not to do by the proverb of King Solomon, that is, revealing the secret of others in order to rebuke someone else, here, the Israelites of Ezekiel's day. The sense which R. Dimi attributed to the name ruah pisqonit is unclear. The Talmudic redactor, however, perhaps relying on some other source, identified this angel with the subject of a statement by R. Yossi b. R. Ḥanina, a third century Palestinian amora who explained that "he" actually has three names, Pisqon, 'Itmon and Sigron, each of which reveals one specific aspect of his celestial duties. The question of who, or which angel, is the antecedent of the pronoun with which R. Yossi begins his statement may no longer be known. From our Shi^{c}ur Qomah passage, it seems clear that it may have been Metatron. Rashi's comment that the angel under discussion is Gabriel must, apparently, derive from some source no longer known to us.[133] The editor of the Talmud may be presumed to have correctly linked R. Dimi's ruah pisqonit with R. Yossi's Pisqon. A statement of R. Ḥaninah's, possibly the father of R. Yossi, is presented in a later source, the Tanhuma, where we read:

> R. Ḥaninah said, "The ruah pisqonit has permission to speak before the Holy One, blessed be He, like a senator who speaks before the king...[134]

R. Ḥaninah's ruah pisqonit is clearly R. Yossi's Pisqon. The two seem to represent the same figure; in fact, the phrase ruah pisqonit may reflect the midrashic explanation we have seen above for the name Pisqon. This would presume the name Pisqon to have been coined in the tannaitic period, before the time of R. Ḥaninah, who lived in the first half of the third century C.E.

The other names are all quite obscure, and have no discernible meanings. Some of them seem to be generated by the principle of internal rhyme, or assonance with the names found in the sources listed above; others must remain merely obscure. The name Metatron itself has been the focus of a great deal of speculation.[135] Here we will limit ourselves to observing that there is no evidence in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah of any intent on the part of the author to impart a meaning to the name. Possibly, the reference to the fact that the name may be written in six or seven letters recalls the fact that

different spellings were used to suggest different interpretations. In that case, it is feasible that the spelling with the letter yod between the first two letters reflects an etymology from the Greek metathronos or metatyrannos, both terms for a royal vizier of some sort. The shorter spelling would then suggest a Semitic derivation. There are problems with both these suggestions: the Greek transcription is uncertain, and there is no Semitic etymology that explains either the presence of the two letters tet or the form of the word.[136]

One of the most widely found titles for Metatron is na^{c}ar 'lad.' This title is found three times in section L, although the phrase sheshemo metatron 'whose name is Metatron' seems to have been added to the text at a late stage of textual development to guarantee that the reader will understand the reference. The references in section J_{x} to hanna^{c}ar hazzeh metatron 'this youth, Metatron' seem, however, to indicate that the text is quite correct whenever it identifies the youth as Metatron. The text we quoted above from 3 Enoch portrayed Metatron as explaining that he has seventy names, "but my King calls me 'youth.'"[137] Later in the text, R. Ishmael also asks about the name na^{c}ar: "And why do they call you "youth" in the exalted heavens?" To this, Metatron replies, "Because I am Enoch b. Yered..."[138] This tradition, which is earliest attested in the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum quoted above,[139] does not seem to play a role in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and so we may tentatively assume that the statement of 3 Enoch is an explanation of, rather than the ultimate reason for, the title "youth" being given to Metatron. There is a well-known reference to the title "youth" in BT Yevamot:

> R. Samuel b. Nahmani said in the name of R. Yohanan, "The verse 'I was a youth [na^{c}ar], but am now grown old [Ps 37:25]' was said by the Prince of the World [sar ha^{c}olam]..."[140]

The apparent triple identity of the youth, the prince of the world and Enoch with Metatron was the cause of a certain amount of scholarly debate in the medieval period, the upshot of which was the na^{c}ar was not merely taken to be a designation of the Prince, based on Ps 37:25, but was actually a name of Metatron, and, as such, required no particular Biblical derivation.[141] For entirely different reasons, this accords with our view that the identification with Enoch does not provide the ultimate explanation for the title "youth."

Although it is not possible to establish direct historical links, we may nevertheless observe the relative

frequency with which other relgious systems use the title "youth" to designate precisely what is designated here: the delegate of the Deity, whose job it is to represent the Deity in saving acts. If we take sections G and H seriously, then it cannot be denied that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is first and foremost presented, whatever the real motive behind its production, as a theurgic, and only secondarily intellectual, experience. Similarly, in the Manichaen system, the youthful redeemer who comes to earth to combat the powers of evil is called either "tender son" or kumar 'youth', a Parthian loan-word from the Sanskrit.[142] In the famous Syriac hymn, the Song of the Pearl, the young redeemer is cast as a prince sent to Egypt to recover a precious pearl. There, he meets his own savior, one who becomes his intimate comrade, and then disappears from the story, apparently having completed his salvific mission. This comrade is called talya payia hasida 'a fair and well-favored youth.'[143] Similarly, when Hermes appears to Odysseus on Circe's isle, he appears dressed for his explicitly salvific role "in the form of a youth [neenie andri eoikos] with the first down of his beard upon his chin, in whom the charm of youth is fairest."[144] It is not necessary to adduce any further references to make the point that the imagery of the savior figure, especially when he is the bearer specifically of salvific information (gnosis), as a youth is neither irregular nor unusual. The lover described in the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs was identified, at least in the popular mind, with the God of Israel. That, in and of itself, was probably sufficient to suggest that the deputy of that godhead, and specifically the bearer of salvific information regarding the essential bodily characteristics of that godhead, should be called "youth."

Before we leave the question of the names and titles of Metatron, we might notice that one of the most famous midrashic designations of Metatron, as the Lesser Tetragrammaton, seems to be wholly lacking in the texts of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, unless it is to this tradition that the remark in section N_{x} to the effect that Metatron's name is "like his master's" is making reference. This may be evaluated in light of the fact that the scriptural locus for such speculation, Ex 23:21, is quoted in our text, and specifically in a context that would have lent itself to the presentation of that tradition. The idea that Metatron is yhvh haqqatan is found as early as 3 Enoch and is alluded to in the Talmud.[145] Presumably, it is not included here because of an unstated fear that such an identification might lead to the incorrect deduction that it Metatron and not the God of Israel who

is being described in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah.

A third category of traditions about Metatron does concern his own body, called appropriately, qomah. This is item #7 on our list of traditions, and derives from the J_x section of the text. It reads: qomato male' ha^{c}olam 'his body fills the universe.'[146] This appears to be a unique tradition, derived, obviously, from a comparison to the godhead. The comparison is not particularly favorable; whereas the sole of the foot or the pinky-finger of the Deity is said to be one universe-length long, Metatron himself is altogether only that height. The absence of this tradition in other contexts is most readily explained by the obvious fact that in any other context, being a universe-length tall would be taken as a token of grandeur, just the opposite from the impression one gets from this passage.[147]

The fourth group of traditions we shall consider conern the heavenly tabernacle called mishkan hanna^{c}ar 'the tabernacle of the youth' after its primary worshipper and director of ritual. The traditions in this group are numbered four, six, eight, twelve, thirteen and fourteen in our list.

The tabernacle is known from non-mystic midrashic literature. In a late midrashic collection, we find the following midrash of R. Simon, the second generation Palestinian amora:

> To erect the tabernacle [Nu 7:1]: R. Simon said, "When the Holy One, blessed be He, told Israel to erect the tabernacle, He signalled [ramaz] to the attending angels that they too should build a tabernacle. When the [tabernacle] below was erected, so was the [tabernacle] above, and this is the tabernacle of the youth [na^{c}ar] whose name is Metatron, in which he offers up [maqriv] the souls of the righteous to atone for [the sins of] Israel during their dispersion...[148]

Other texts of R. Simon's remarks omit the reference either to "youth" or to Metatron, and refer simply to hammishkan shel ma^{c}alah 'the supernal tabernacle.'[149] The idea is clearly related to the notion of a heavenly Temple, which is a well-known notion in aggadic thought.[150] In most of the other texts that describe the worship in the heavenly tabernacle, Metatron is not the worshipper. Usually, this honor is given to Michael, as in the statement of Resh Laqish in BT Hagigah 12b:

> ...zevul [the fourth heaven]-- in which Jerusalem and the Temple and the altar stand

> built, and Michael the great prince [hassar haggadol] stands and offers sacrifices on it...

This seems to be a slightly different version of the text cited above concerning Metatron. The resemblance between the two is even more striking if the text is continued, as it is in the version offered in the *ʿEn Yaʿaqov*, with the information that Michael offers only the souls of the righteous on this altar.[151] At least one source gives the heavenly worshipper as Elijah.[152] These traditions are representative of the non-mystic traditions. In the early mystic texts, the tradition linking Metatron with the celestial worship service is much clearer. In one of the texts, for instance, of the *Midrash ʿAsarah Haruge Malkhut*, we read the following dialogue between R. Ishmael and Metatron:

> He [R. Ishmael] said to him [Metatron], "What is that before you?" He replied to him, "An altar." He said to him, "Are there then an altar and sacrifices in the supernal world?" He said to him, "All that is below is [also] above."...He [R. Ishmael] said to him [Metatron], "And what do you [pl.] sacrifice on it-- are there then bulls, rams and lambs [in heaven]?" He said to him, "We have no rams, bulls or lambs, but we offer the souls of the righteous on it to the Holy One, blessed be He..."[153]

It must be remarked that there is no hint of a real sacrificial service in the tabernacle over which Metatron is shown to preside in the *Shiʿur Qomah*. The service seems to be entirely liturgical, and Metatron's function is more the heavenly choir-master and beadle than the celestial high priest. The worship service itself may be summarized as follows: The angels who are in the divine presence with Metatron circle the Throne of Glory on which the Deity is seated in the center of them all. One of the celestial creatures goes over the seraphs and descends on the tabernacle of the "youth," Metatron, and then declares in a great voice of thin silence (as in I Kings 19:12), "The Throne of Glory is pure [*zakh*]."[154] Immediately, the various types of angels become silent and still; the *ʿirin* and *qadishin* (as in Dan 4:14) silently shove (themselves and each other) into the river of fire (Dan 7:10). At this point, the celestial creatures turn their faces downwards towards the ground, so to speak, and Metatron brings the fire of deafness which he uses to plug up the ears of the creatures to prevent them from hearing the voice of the Holy One, and the ineffable name which Metatron pronounces

at that time, both in the normal way, and also in the language of purity as well.

Many of these details are unique to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. Those that are regular features of hekhalot literature, as, for example, the daily suicide of certain classes of angels in the river of fire, are discussed below in the commentary.

The link between Metatron and Moses also is clear in those manuscript that present the J_{x} section. In these texts, the section concludes by asserting the secret names of Metatron to have been transmitted, albeit in the greatest secrecy, to Moses. The connection between Moses and the supernal world is, of course, not derived from the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. That aggadic belief, based on the assumption that, while on the mountain, Moses actually ascended to the heavens, is probably as old as the story of the Sinaitic theophany itself. The link between Metatron himself and Moses is also quite old. A targumic tradition to Dt 34:6 already has the notion that Metatron was among those angels who actually buried Moses.[155] In the Midrash Peṭirat Mosheh, even more affectingly, Metatron is pictured as among the first to console God Himself after the death of Moses.[156] This seems to be a specific application of a more general midrashic concept of Metatron as comforter of God, a role, for instance, he also assumed after the destruction of the Temple.[157] The fact that Metatron is not, in these latter traditions, one of the buriers of Moses, but is one of the comforters of God after Moses' death suggests that these are twin traditions which, despite the difference of detail, were intended to imply roughly the same thing.

In the small text, Midrash Gedullat Mosheh, Metatron is specifically given the role of guide and guard of Moses when he ascends to view the celestial realms at the theophany at the burning bush:

> At that time, the Holy One...ordered Metatron, the angel of the Presence, to bring "my servant Moses" to heaven...Metatron said, "Moses cannot ascend to the angels, because they are princes of fire, but he is flesh and blood." Thereupon, the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded Metatron, "Turn his flesh to torches of fire, and make his strength as Gabriel's." Metatron came to Moses. When Moses saw him, he became terrified. He asked him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Enoch b. Jered, your ancestor; the Holy One, blessed be He, has sent

me to bring you up to the Throne of Glory."[158]

Thus it may be seen that the most elevated moments of Moses' life were linked to Metatron. This includes, as we have mentioned, not only the minor theophany at the burning bush, but also the Sinaitic theophany. At that time, midrashic traditions assert, Metatron again functioned as Moses' teacher, this time teaching him the applications of the divine name.[159] The link between Moses and Metatron thus firmly established, and especially the detail in the Ma^{c}ayan Ḥokhmah about the divine names forming a specific part of the revelation of heavenly information by Metatron to Moses, forms the basis for our consideration of the next item on our list, item #9.

That tradition may be quoted from section J_x as follows:

> ...that is Metatron, the angel of the Presence, who is inscribed with the one letter ['ot] with which were created heaven and earth, and [is] sealed with the signet ring [of] Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh, and is written in six or seven letters, and [has] seventy names, in seven qedushot [literally, measures of holiness]...and is given [in the most recondite way possible] to Moses...

Just as Metatron is described in the Ma^{c}ayan Ḥokhmah as having revealed the various permutations of the divine name to Moses, so is he pictured here as having revealed his own seventy mystic names to Moses. His familiarity with the divine is apparent in that he is himself inscribed with the letter with which God created the heavens and the earth,[160] and sealed with the divine name Ehyeh.[161]

The final tradition on our list, that Metatron's name is like his master's, presumably refers to the relatively standard tradition that Metatron is known as the Lesser Tetragrammaton (yhvh haqqaṭan). The exact meaning of this remains obscure, but it is clearly introduced into the text in section N_x as part of the general effort of the redactors of the recensions to make the Shi^{c}ur Qomah into a standard sort of hekhalot text.

We may summarize by saying that Metatron appears in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah both in his regular roles and with his regular titles, and also in a specialized sort of role apparently designed to feature him as a revealer of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah secrets, a sort of combination of his roles

of witness, teacher, divine vizier and valet, and heavenly tourguide. The traditions of his names fit exactly into other traditions known both from mystical and non-mystical sources. In sum, the personality and role of Metatron may be considered a strong link tying the text of the Shi^cur Qomah, unique in so many other ways, to the other branches of mystic and rabbinic literature.

There is a passage at the end of 3 Enoch with which it would be appropriate to end this description of Metatron as he appears in the Shi^cur Qomah. There, regarding the celestial secrets, the text explains, imitating the famous chain of tradition at the beginning of Pirqe 'Avot:

> Metatron brought them out from his house of treasuries and committed them to Moses, and Moses to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Assembly, and the men of the Great Assembly to Ezra, and Ezra the Scribe to Hillel the Elder, and Hillel the Elder to R. Abbahu and R. Abbahu to R. Zera, and R. Zera to men of faith ['anshe 'emunot] and the men of faith meditate upon them and use them to cure all earthly sicknesses.[162]

The reference to R. Abbahu and his pupil, R. Zera, establishes this as an amoraic, or even later, tradition. The "men of faith" are those members of the mystic fraternity to which the author of 3 Enoch belonged. Both he and the author of the Shi^cur Qomah understood that the secret data derived from personal mystic communion with God might be used for theurgic purposes. Just as the "men of faith" used their secrets to cure illness, so did the author of the Shi^cur Qomah list the many boons and benefits that would accrue to one who would recite the Shi^cur Qomah on a daily basis. Both authors cast their texts as revelations from Metatron and so it is Metatron who links both authors, in their own eyes, to their God, and, in our eyes, to each other. In some ways, Metatron continues to reveal the secrets of the mystic experience to men.

V vii COMMENTARIES OF THE SHI^CUR QOMAH

As far as we can determine, there are eight commentaries to the Shi^cur Qomah extant in manuscript or in print, one in a large number of manuscript versions, and seven unique texts. As with most medieval commentaries to ancient mystic texts, the commentaries are often more revealing about the way in which the text was read in the time and place of the commentator, and less about the original meaning of the text. This is particularly the case regarding all of the commentaries to the Shi^cur Qomah; the text is more of a pretext for the expositions of different ideas and philosophical systems, and less of an obscure text requiring elucidation in its own right. This shall become clearer as we discuss each commentary separately.

The first text we shall consider is also the one with the most manuscript attestations. For some reason, the introduction seems to have been preserved separately from the body of the commentary in the manuscript traditions, and it is due to the research and intuition of Gershom Scholem that we can join the two halves and read them as the single work they form together.[163] The body of the commentary appears in at least eight manuscripts known to Scholem at the time of his research. These manuscripts, and the folios on which the commentary appears in each, are as follows:

a. Rome, Angelica Library, Capua ms. 27, ff. 1b-18a;
b. JTS ms. 2637, ff. 100a-103a;
c. Paris ms. 843, ff. 69b-70a;
d. Oxford ms. 1816, ff. 100a-102b;
e. Milan (Ambrosiana), Bernheimer ms. 70, ff. 204-224;
f. Munich ms. 43, ff. 194b-203b;
g. Zurich (Zentralbibliothek), Heidenheim ms. 102, ff. 18a-19a; and,
h. Berlin ms. 942.

The text of the work Sod Hammerkavah appears to be extant in at least five manuscript sources. This work has been identified by Scholem as constituting the introduction to this commentary to the Shi^cur Qomah. The manuscripts in which this work appears are as follows:

a. Milan (Ambrosiana), Bernheimer ms. 57, ff. 18-20;
b. Paris ms. 799, ff. 3-4;
c. Paris ms. 806, f. 311a;
d. JTS ms. 2195, ff. 1-2; and,
e. Ghirondi collection, Steinschneider ms. 110, f. 68. This manuscript is currently

Berlin (Staatsbibliothek) ms. Or. 8° 5038 (Catalogue Allony-Loewinger: Berlin-Marburg, ms. 122.)[164]

The work itself, now that it may be recovered and read in its original order, is a fascinating document that suggests how the old hekhalot mysticism was blended, in some circles, with the new kabbalah of Provence at the end of the thirteenth century.[165] Scholem himself describes the text as follows:

> The book explains the Sefer Haqqomah, generally speaking, according to the tenets of the Ashkenazic pietists, but also leans, already, to the tenets of Kabbalah, i.e. the doctrine of the sefirot, as taught by the sages of Provence, and [the author] knew books like Sefer Habbahir and Sefer Haʿiyyun...He tries to unite these two principles, and this lends a special importance to his book. On the other hand, he also knows other older books, and his quotations from Sefer Sod Haggadol are particularly important. The first part of the commentary is based primarily on this source...[166]

This suggests, obviously, that the commentary is of limited worth for the elucidation of the original meaning of the Shiʿur Qomah, and has its own agenda, and, at that, a quite important one for the history of the kabbalah. Nevertheless, we might examine, at least briefly, some of the basic ideas found here, if only to see how the text came to be read and understood by many of the scribes who copied it. The cardinal principle comes in the second paragraph of the introduction, which we translate from the Milan manuscript, after Scholem's transcription:

> It is a cherub who sits on the Throne, and he is the image [demut] of the Holy One, blessed be He, insofar as His shadow is on him [beʿod sheṣṣilo ʿalav], and thus is it stated, "I shall give myself image ['addameh, here taken as a verbal form derived from demut 'image'] at the hands of the prophets [Hos 12:11]," for the cherub looks like the shadow and the shadow is the stuff of prophecy and sometimes appears like an angel, sometimes like a man, a lion, a horse, a ram, or whatever it desires. And it cannot be said that this is the Holy One, blessed be He, for it has already been stated, "I am the Lord; I do not change [Malachi 3:6]"; rather, it is a cherub who changes and appears in all these

forms [gevanim, literally, 'hues'].[167]
The commentary was composed, it seems, by a certain R. Moses b. Eleazar of Erfurt, a great-grandson of R. Judah the Pious, who is referred to in this text.[168] The notion of this "special cherub" was an important feature of Ashkenazic pietist theosophy, and is the subject of a long study by Joseph Dan.[169] The book on which much of the commentary is itself based, Sefer Sod Haggadol, is apparently the same as the Raza Rabba, probably a Babylonian work with strong affinities to hekhalot literature, to judge from the fragments.[170] The text is characterized by an interest, specifically in the mystic names preserved in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah and their numerical permutations.

Our second commentary is not actually a commentary per se on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, but is actually a long commentary on the Shema Yisrael prayer which incorporates long and elaborate explanations of passages from the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. The text, Sefer Hannavon, was published from manuscript several years ago and is of particular importance because it contains more citations from the Shi^{c}ur Qomah than any other secondary source that do not survive in any manuscript tradition.[171]

The text is preserved in two manuscripts:

a. Berlin - Tübingen no. 239, according to the Allony-Loewinger catalogue of microfilmed Hebrew manuscripts in the Institute for Hebrew Manuscripts in Jerusalem, and
b. Rome (Angelica) ms. 46.

The quotations and paraphrases of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah occupy more than a third of the entire work. The citations are always introduced by the formula "In the Sefer Hekhale Qodesh [and] in the Sefer Haqqomah." Sefer Hekhale Qodesh is the author's name for the Hekhalot Rabbati; he seems to have considered the Sefer Haqqomah and the Hekhalot Rabbati to be quite intimately related works, not unlike the scribe of Oxford ms. 1791, who presented both works almost as two sections of a single larger work.[172] Joseph Dan, who published the text, observed that "the author explains the Shi^{c}ur Qomah by means of number permutations which connect the [mystic] names and measurements listed in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah with [Biblical] verses and rabbinic statements..."[173]

To give an example of the style of the commentary and its conception of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, we have chosen two passages, one from the beginning of the work, which expresses the opinion of the author regarding the nature

of the godhead described in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and one which shows how the author was able to connect the mystic names numerologically with Biblical verses which, in turn, justify his opinions regarding the godhead of whose limbs those are the names.

The first passage is a comment on Dt 6:4, and shows the connection of this text with the commentary we have considered above, both of which reflect Saadianic interpretations:

> Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is One [Dt 6:4]: this has the same numerical value as "The Lord is kind and merciful, [the Lord] is One; His greatness, the Shekhinah, illuminates [His] majesty."[174]
> Even though the Angel of Glory, who is the Tetragrammaton, changes into several appearances and images, the Holy One, blessed be He, does not change, as it is written "I am the Lord; I do not change [Malachi 3:6]."[175]
> And furthermore, when they saw that shape [ṣurah] seated on [the] Throne, it was the Shekhinah and the Angel of Glory and the Tetragrammaton [that they saw], and angels stand to his right and to his left, as it is written, "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne... [I K 22:19]."[176]
> Know that that shape is created and new, as are the Throne and the heavens that support it; they are all created.[177] The Creator created it from the brilliant light and the splendid flash [nogah mavriq] that it should indicate to the prophet about to be sent [on his prophetic mission] that the Creator is with him, and is sending him, but this shape is a wonderful shape, and it is called the Angel of the Glory, and the Shekhinah. And it is alive and exalted, as is the image of the angels... and it is immense, like a shining, shimmering image, one that sparkles in the light of the Shekhinah, and thus is it called the Glory of God, and His Shekhinah...[178]

This is a recapitulation of the Saadianic doctrine and partially related to the doctrines of the Ashkenazic pietists, whose commentary, as we have seen above, made similar use of Malachi 3:6. The reference to the immensity of the Glory seems to make the connection to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah quite explicit.[179]

The second type of passage is typical of the sort of super-midrashic style of the author. He takes

the text "from His thighs to His neck [is a distance of] 240,000,000 parasangs" and comments as follows:

> From His thighs until His neck [is a distance of] 240,000,000 parasangs, [expressing the number twenty-four with the numerical equivalent dodi 'my beloved'], as it is written, "My love [dodi] is splendid and ruddy, pre-eminent among the ten-thousand [Song 5:10]."[180]

The same type of exegesis is applied to the names. For example, the text gave the name Atatsaf for one of the divine eyes. This is analyzed by the author in the following way:

> One eye is called Atatsaf, [the first two syllables] as in the expression "frontlets [totafot] between your eyes [Ex 13:16];" [the final element in the name], saf, as in [the expression] "from one end [sof] of the world to the other, His eye sees." Atatsaf, thus implying that the Holy One, blessed be He, has phylacteries...[181]

The veneration in which the author held the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is evident from his closing remark, which is almost a paraphrase of part of the Sefer Haqqomah:

> He who does not know this Shi^{c}ur Qomah does not know his Creator, may His name be blessed and His memory exalted for all eternity, and he who does know it knows [both] his Creator and his [or, His] faith.[182]

The third text we shall consider has been published in a critical edition, and is in some ways the best understood of these commentaries: the Epistle on Shi^{c}ur Qomah by Moses Narboni.[183] The work is known to exist in three manuscripts, and has actually been published more than once.[184]

The word was written in Perpignan in 1342.[185] The attitude of Narboni, who was both a follower of Averroes and Maimonides, was quite reverential-- he calls the Shi^{c}ur Qomah the "fruit of metaphysics."[186] The point of the whole epistle is to use the Shi^{c}ur Qomah as a springboard from which to launch a long and ambitious redefinition of the Neoplatonic view of God, by defining the totality of all that exists as qomah, and by taking God to be the measure (i.e. the shi^{c}ur) of those existents.[187] This leads to the conclusion that "the sensible existents are abstract forms in the First Cause, and that it thinks them in the most noble way; this being the case, we may call the confining measure of the existents, shi^{c}ur qomah."[188] The whole approach,

it should be clear, has a great deal to do with the philosophy of Averroes and very little to do with the Shi^cur Qomah. Whether Narboni actually considered his epistle to be explaining the true intention of the ancient author of the text cannot be known, but suffice to say that if he took medieval Neoplatonism to represent the original philosophy of Plato, then he could easily also have imagined R. Aqiva and R. Ishmael discussing its finer points in their own ancient forum.

In 1975, Yosef Kafih published a fragment of a fifteenth century Yemenite commentary to the Shi^cur Qomah.[189] The text gives no author or date, and the Yemenite provenance itself is apparent but not explicitly stated.[190] Furthermore, Kafih is able to locate the scribe, if not the author, in southern Yemen for orthographical reasons.[191] The text is basically a comparison of the views of Saadia Gaon and Maimonides regarding the Shi^cur Qomah. The text of Saadia's responsum is of particular interest because the text of that document is only known to us from the Hebrew of the commentary of R. Judah Barceloni to the Sefer Yesirah, which is a translation, more or less, of the original Arabic given here.[192] From the text here, we are able to correct some errors of the translator of the responsum, whose version R. Judah, who did not know Arabic, used in his book.[193] The text concludes with a text of the Shi^cur Qomah itself, which is meant to be taken as the text that had been in the personal possession of Maimonides.[194] Whether or not this is so is hard to determine, but the text is of interest on its own account, as it is quite different from the texts of most of our manuscripts. The text also offers a curse on anyone who believes in the Shi^cur Qomah ('arur hamma'amino) and on its author (ve'arur shehibbro), which suits Maimonides own attitude towards the text, at least in his adult years.

JTS ms. 1869 is an eighteenth century North African manuscript of twenty-three pages. On the last three leaves is a brief text labelled "from an old manuscript of one of the Dara kabbalists, whose name was not revealed: a commentary on Shi^cur Qomah." Dara is the region in southern Marocco, which is almost certainly the locale in which the manuscript was written.[195] The term commentary is used rather broadly, since there are no references in the text to the text of the Shi^cur Qomah. The general idea of this short treatise seems to be that it is possible to explain the different colors of the rainbow as symbolizing different emanations of the Holy Spirit on Metatron. The precise connection

between this information and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is obscure, but since the whole series of ideas is called 'amitat haqqeshet 'the truth about the rainbow,' which is reminiscent of the phrase gufo domeh leqeshet on line 132 of the text, it is likely that this brief commentary is meant to explain that phrase, assuming it to refer to Metatron.

J.D. Eisenstein refers in his 'Oṣar Midrashim to a book, Sod Hammerkavah, by a certain R. Abraham Hakohen, which he describes as containing a commentary on a number of midrashic texts, among them, the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. I have been unable to locate a copy of this book.[196]

Oxford ms. 167 (=Oppenheim 411) is an old German manuscript consisting of 137 folio leaves. Ff. 103a-137b are called by the scribe Derushim Shi^{c}ur Haqqomah by a certain Barukh b. Barukh. Who this Barukh was is unclear. The text has no real connection to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and is, rather, an elaboration of some points in the sefirotic kabbalistic system.

The commentary on the thirteen divine attributes by R. Moses of Burgos, a major figure in the so-called gnostic kabbalah of Castille in the thirteenth century, is actually a commentary on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. The text quotes freely from the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and guarantees that the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah was available in thirteenth century Spain, despite the extreme reticence of the author of the Zohar to cite it in his own anthropomorphic speculation. The author is very careful to link the Shi^{c}ur Qomah to the verses describing the male lover in the Song of Songs, and is apparently the first to do so. The complete text, as found in JTS ms. 1674 was published by Scholem in 1934.[197]

A brief text called A Commentary on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah by R. Jacob b. Jacob Hakkohen was published by Scholem from Paris ms. 835, but does not apparently have any connection at all to the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah that is the subject of our research.[198]

In conclusion, it is possible to view the entire body of commentary literature on the Shi^{c}ur Qomah as a sort of bridge between the earliest efforts of the editors of the various recensions and the attempts on the part of modern scholars to explain and understand the original meaning of the text. The commentators show a uniform interest in maintaining the authenticity and the sanctity of the ancient text, while trying, at the same time, to rescue the text from itself, so to speak,

by explaining it in terms of what the commentators themselves considered to be more reasonable and certainly more fashionable notions and ideas. It is, of course, no longer possible to know to what extent each of the commentators was aware of the degree to which he was deforming the original meaning of the text by forcing its ancient words into new philosophical or kabbalistic systems, but it seems likely that the degree of awareness was probably low, and that each commentator, not unlike every modern student of the text, considered that he had succeeded in finally revealing the "real" meaning of the text to himself and to his contemporaries.

V viii THE SHI^{C}UR QOMAH, SEFER RAZI'EL AND SEFER HARAZIM

Sefer Harazim is the oldest extant work of Jewish literature specifically and entirely devoted to magic. Although it had been known for a long time through citations elsewhere, it was not reconstituted and published until 1966, when Mordecai Margolioth published his edition of the text. Prior to Margolioth's work, the longest section of Sefer Harazim to have been printed was in the Sefer Razi'el, which was first printed in 1701 in Amsterdam, and extant in many earlier manuscripts.[199] Sefer Razi'el is formed of a collection of at least six distinct sources, which all have different authors and topics.[200] The material from Sefer Harazim appears on pp. 34a-25a, several pages before the text of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah. The question of the relationship between these two sources is complicated by the fact that most of section N of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah appears as the final section of Sefer Harazim, as a description of the seventh heaven,[201] as well as in all the complete manuscripts of Sefer Razi'el we have examined, and in the first edition.[202]

This suggests an interesting possible relationship between these books. The opening of Sefer Harazim appears on p. 34a in Sefer Razi'el; the closing pages appear on p. 39a, as the conclusion of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah. This suggests that, at least possibly, the editor of Sefer Razi'el has, for some reason, deleted the body of Sefer Harazim and substituted two shorter midrashic works: the Ma^{C}aseh Bereshit and the Shi^{C}ur Qomah. The question of why the editor would have done such a thing is not hard to answer. The body of Sefer Harazim served as the major source for the Sode Razaya of R. Eleazar of Worms, which appears in truncated form on pp. 7b-24a of Sefer Razi'el. Although R. Eleazar presents the material from Sefer Harazim in paraphrase, there can be no question regarding the source of his material.[203] The editor of Sefer Razi'el, therefore, anxious to avoid redundancy, deleted most of Sefer Harazim and substituted two other esoteric texts (razim, after all, in their own rights) in its stead. Because the seventh heaven material is not quoted in the Sode Razaya, it is not deleted here. This suggests that it might well be the Sefer Harazim that is the source of section N. This explains why some of the best manuscripts of the Sefer Haqqomah omit section N; they either reflect an older recension, before the material was borrowed from Sefer Harazim, or a more critical redactor, who took the presence of section N as an indication of contamination from another source, and so deleted it.

At any rate, we may hypothetically posit that section N originated in the Sefer Harazim tradition, and was introduced into the Shi^{c}ur Qomah at two distinct moments. Neither the original text of Sefer Haqqomah nor the original version of the recension preserved within the Sefer Razi'el originally had section N. Some manuscripts of Sefer Haqqomah, for some reason, borrowed the text from Sefer Harazim, and appended it to their text, while others did not. Later, the editor of Sefer Razi'el, perhaps aware that some editions of Sefer Haqqomah had adopted the seventh heaven text from Sefer Harazim, inserted his own different recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah into the text he was giving of the Sefer Harazim, thereby avoiding redundancy by adding to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah a text already somewhat associated with it.

We can now explain the anomolous presence of a long version of the Zeh Ma^{c}aseh Bereshit text as a prologue to the Sefer Haqqomah text that appears in Oxford ms. 2257. It was presented by a scribe whose understanding of the borders of the Sefer Haqqomah was influenced by the layout of the Sefer Razi'el. Furthermore, a similar process resulted in the presentation of the Zeh Ma^{c}aseh Bereshit text alone under the title Sefer Qomah in Oxford ms. 1786, and this also explains the presence of the introductory passage "This is the Seder Shel ^{c}Olam according to the contents of the Sefer Haqqomah" in Oxford ms. 1960. Both the scribes of Oxford ms. 1786 and ms. 1960 presumed that the Ma^{c}aseh Bereshit text was part of the greater Sefer Haqqomah tradition.[204]

Here we conclude our survey of topics suggested by the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. The text is unique in many ways, but, as we have demonstrated, it can also be made to take its place in the greater framework of ancient Jewish literature. It is a unique and even anomolous text, but not foreign to the corpus of Jewish literature to which it can definitely be shown to belong by virtue of common language, common issues and a common cast of terrestrial and celestial characters.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. The expression was not clear to the translators of the Septuagint, who seem to have read se^{c}ar 'hair' for our sha^{c}ar, and so translated sha^{c}ar benafsho as ei tis katapioi triha 'if one should swallow a hair.' Rashi, also, in his commentary ad locum, takes the word to be connected to the similar word sho^{c}arim 'disgusting' at Jer 29:17.

2. More grammatically, we would expect she^{c}ur, with the inability of the gutteral ^{c}ayin to accept the dagesh forte expressed by the lengthening of the initial hiriq into a ṣere. This does not seem to have occurred, as the practically universal orthography with a yod between the shin and the ^{c}ayin seems to indicate. Possibly, the word shi^{c}ur was assimilated phonetically to the word shiyyur and the two were pronounced homonymically, despite their disparate roots and meanings.

3. M Pe'ah 1:1.

4. The term shi^{c}ur does not imply minimal length, cf. BT Niddah 26a: shi^{c}ur shofar 'the size of a shofar.'

5. This is overlooked in the Brown, Driver, and Briggs Lexicon, s.v. qomah, p. 879.

6. Rashi, ad locum, and see now Marvin Pope, The Song of Songs (Garden City, 1977), pp. 593 and 633.

7. Septuagint to Song 7:8 eipa anabesomai epi toi foiniki.

8. Payne Smith, s.v. qaumtu, p. 495.

9. Lieberman calls the Shi^{c}ur Qomah a midrash to the Song of Songs in his essay, "Mishnat Shir Hashirim," in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 126. The derivation of the term shi^{c}ur qomah from Song 7:8 was, apparently, already noticed and noted by Judah Ḥayyaṭ in his commentary to the Ma^{c}arekhet Ha'elohut (Ferrara, 1557), p. 161a. This is pointed out by A. Altmann, in his article "Moses Narboni's Epistle on Shi^{c}ur Qoma," in Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies, ed. A. Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 236.

10. Lieberman's point on the necessity of establishing the reasons for which a foreign word becomes used in place of perfectly acceptable terms in the borrowing language is found in the beginning of his essay, "Qeles

Qillusin," in ʿAle ʿAyin (Jerusalem, 1948-1952), p. 75, and is well taken.

11. See the items listed in Jastrow's dictionary, s.v. qomah, p. 1332.

12. PT Shabbat 1:1, 2d and Sukkah 1:1, 5d. R. Hananiah b. Samuel was an amora who is citing an apparently anonymous baraita. It is worth noting that when this baraita appears in the BT, at Sukkah 5a, the term shiʿur qomah is missing and the synonymous but far less pregnant midat qomatah is present. It is unclear what bearing this has on the history of the term as it is used in our sources, but it seems to be a relevant point and one worth noting. I am grateful to my colleague, Rabbi Avram I. Reisner, for drawing the citations from BT and PT Sukkah to my attention.

13. Gruenwald does not consider that there might be a link between the baraita and our text of the Shiʿur Qomah.

14. This is my translation of A. Cahana's Hebrew, taken from his edition of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (Jerusalem, 1970), vol. 1, p. 123.

15. Vaillant, Le Livre des Secrets d'Hénoch (Paris, 1952), p. 39.

16. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 130, note to p. 41, line 21.

17. Gruenwald, Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism (Leiden and Cologne, 1980), p. 213.

18. JTS ms. 1904.

19. The title of the text in Oxford ms. 1915, Sefer Habbahir, is an error by the scribe. Sefer Habbahir is an entirely different work.

20. R. Shem Tov b. Joseph, Commentary to the Guide, ad locum.

21. Hayyat's reference is in his commentary to the Maʿarekhet Ha'elohut, ed. Mantua, f. 34a. The reference in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 101, note 5, should be, apparently, to this passage.

22. R. Moses Cordovero, Sefer Pardes Rimmonim 4:1, ed. Munkacs, 1906, p. 15d.

23. See H.J. Rose, "Pseudepigraphic Literature" in the Oxford Classical Dictionary, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1970), p. 894. The difference between pseudepigraphy and plagiarism is discussed more completely in Wolfgang Speyer's "Religioese Pseudepigraphie und literarische Faelschung im Altertum," Jahrbuch fuer Antike und Christentum 8/9 (1965-6), pp. 88ff. Speyer has since published a complete monograph on literary plagiarism in antiquity, Die literarische Faelschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum: Ein Versuch ihrer Deutung (Munich, 1971), in which pp. 150-170 are specifically devoted to the question of Jewish plagiarism in antiquity.

24. Bruce M. Metzger, "Literary Forgeries and Canonical Pseudepigrapha," JBL 91(1972), pp. 3-12. Cicero, De Amiticia, trans. W.A. Falconer (Loeb Classical Library: London and Cambridge, Mass., 1923), pp. 110-113. The phenomenon is also known in Egyptian and Greek literature. On Greek literature, see Alfred Gudeman, "Literary Frauds among the Greeks," in Classical Studies in Honor of Henry Drisler (New York and London, 1894), pp. 52-74. On Egyptian pseudepigrapha, see C.C. McCown, "Hebrew and Egyptian Apocalyptic Literature," HTR 18 (1925), pp. 387ff., and D.S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (Philadelphia, 1964), pp. 182-129. Russell also describes the phenomenon of pseudepigraphy among the Greeks: "This method of ascribing apocalypses to earlier writers was apparently adopted by certain philosophers who experiences visions in which they were rapt to Hades and received authoritative teachings from famous philosophers of earlier ages." See further, Carl F.G. Heinrici, "Zur Characteristik der literarischen Verhaeltnisse des zweiten Jahrhunderts," in Beitraege zur Geschichte und Erklaerung des NT I: Das Urchristentum in der Kirchengeschichte des Eusebius (Leipzig, 1894), pp. 71-78, and A. Dieterich, Nekyia (Leipzig, 1983), pp. 128-133, the latter, a discussion of pseudepigraphy in the Orphic-Pythagorean schools. A bibliography dealing with the question of pseudepigraphy in antiquity may be found in Pseudepigraphie in der heidnischen und juedisch-christlichen Antike, ed. Norbert Brox (Darmstadt, 1973), pp. 335-342. The state of research regarding Christian pseudepigrapha is discussed by Brox in his "Zum Problemstand in der Erforschung der altchristlichen Pseudepigraphie," Kairos, N.S. 15(1973), pp. 10-23, reprinted now in Pseudepigraphie, ed. Brox, pp. 311-334. Related issues are discussed by Ronald Syme in his essay "Fraud and Imposture"; by Morton Smith in his "Pseudepigraphy in the Israeliet Literary Tradition"; Wolfgang Speyer in

his "Faelschung, pseudepigraphische freie Erfindung und echt religioese Pseudepigraphie"; and Martin Hengel in his "Anonymitaet, Pseudepigraphie und 'literarische Faelschung' in der juedisch-hellenistischen Literatur." These four essays are printed in Pseudepigrapha I, ed. Kurt von Fritz (Vandoevres and Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1971.) That volume is no. 18 in the Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique series.

25. McCown, "Hebrew and Egyptian," p. 409.

26. Russell, Method, pp. 132-137. Cf. Speyer, Literarische Faelschung, pp. 150-151. Speyer discusses, mostly the hellenistic Jewish authors, and completely overlooks the questions of rabbinic pseudepigraphy. Also, cf. Frederik Torm, "Die Psychologie der Pseudonymitaet im Hinblick auf die Literatur des Urchristentums," in Studien der Luther-Akademie, vol. 2 (Guetersloh, 1932), pp. 7-55, now reprinted in Pseudepigraphie, ed. Brox, pp. 111-148.

27. BT Hagigah 14b.

28. That is apparently the only meaning the expression can have in the tannaitic period.

29. Cf. Scholem's edition in Tarbiz, 50(1983), pp. 245-283.

30. Of course, if Scholem is right in his second century date for the Shi^cur Qomah, then its composition precedes the composition of almost all of the other hekhalot texts.

31. This was the only time the High Priest entered the Holy Of Holies. Scholem discusses his views on Akatriel Yah in Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 51-55. Cf. R. Ishmael's reference to the Prince of the Presence (but not to Metatron specifically) at BT Berakhot 51a.

32. R. Nathan transmits a teaching in the name of R. Ishmael at BT Pesahim 67b.

33. Alexander Altmann, "Shire Qedushah Besifrut Hehekhalot Haqqedumah," Melilah 2(1946), p. 3. Cf. E.E. Urbach's remarks in his edition of the ^Arugat Habbosem (Jerusalem, 1965), vol. 4, p. 73: "The origin of (Jewish) hymnody is to be found in the study of (Jewish) mysticism." Cf. also Karl-Erich Groezinger, "Singen und Ekstatische Sprache in der fruehen juedischen Mystik," Journal for the Study of Judaism 11(1980), pp. 66-77.

34. Hekhalot Rabbati, ch. 28, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 110-111. Scholem discusses this hymn in Major Trends, pp. 58-59. The whole question of the relationship between the standard Jewish liturgy and hekhalot literature is discussed by Philipp Bloch in "Die Yorde Merkavah, die Mystiker der Gaonenzeit, und ihr Einfluss auf die Liturgie," MGWJ, N.S. 1(1893), pp. 18-25, 69-74, 257-266 and 305-311.

35. The nine are Oxford mss. 1102, 1915 and 1960; Florence Plut. ms. 44.13; JTS mss. 1892, 2130 and 8128; Guenzburg ms. 131 and Munich ms. 40.

36. Hekhalot Rabbati 24:4, ed. Wertheimer, p. 104.

37. The fourteen manuscript are Oxford mss. Hebr. C. 65, 1915, 1960, 2257; Florence Plut. ms. 44.13; JTS mss. 1879, 1892, 1990, 2130, 8115, 8128; JNUL ms. 476, Guenzburg ms. 131 and Munich ms. 40.

38. These are Oxford Hebr. C. 65, 1915, 1960, 2257; JTS 1892; Guenzburg ms. 131 and Munich ms. 40.

39. The value is 236. The scribe of Oxford ms. 2257 adds after the verse and the figure: "this is His gedullah," using gedullah clearly to refer to bigness of size rather than to grandeur or style or might.

40. The text are all similar; we have tranlated the text of JTS ms. 1892. The term "ability to punish" is in Hebrew 'erekh shinav, literally, "long of tooth," and unusual expression but unmistakable in meaning, juxtaposed, as it is, with 'erekh 'apav 'patient,' which means literally "long of nose." Possibly 'erekh shinav is derived from Job 41:6, "fear surrounds His teeth."

41. There are some exceptions. In the Sefer Haqqomah family, Oxford ms. 1960 and Munich ms. 40 begin 'asher mal'akhe seva'ot.

42. This is the text of JTS ms. 1892. The other manuscripts are similar.

43. We are translating here from the Florence manuscript.

44. The "befi yesharim tithallal" section of the Sabbath morning liturgy is based on the same grammatical point.

45. Hekhalot Rabbati 25:2-4, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 105-107.

46. A.Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy and Its Development (New York, 1932), p. 117.

47. There are slight variations between the texts; this is the text of JTS ms. 1892.

48. There are slight variations between the texts; this is the text of JTS ms. 1892.

48. There are slight variations between the texts; this is the text of the Florence manuscript.

49. J. Mann, "Genizah Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service," HUCA 1(1925), pp. 324-325. The words of the text are abbreviated after the first line to their initial letters.

50. Seder Rav ᶜAmram, ed. D. Goldschmidt (Jerusalem, 1971), p. 39. Further medieval references to the prayer under discussion are listed in Goldschmidt, p. 39, note 63, and by Idelsohn, p. 117.

51. S. Wertheimer, Batei Midrashot, ed. A. Wertheimer, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem, 1968), vol. 1, pp. 63-136; Jellinek, BH, vol. 3, pp. 83-108.

52. Wertheimer, p. 73; Jellinek, p. 86. The passages in parentheses are drawn from Jellinek's text. In Wertheimer, this is Hekhalot Rabbati 4:5; in Jellinek, it is Hekhalot Rabbati 4:1.

53. The knotters of the divine crowns are angels. In BT Hagigah 13b, this job is specifically assigned to Sandelphon.

54. Wertheimer, p. 73; Jellinek, p. 86.

55. Eleazar of Worms, Sefer Haroqeah Haqqadol, ed. Schniurson (Jerusalem, 1967), ch. 319, p. 207. It is, of course, possible that R. Eleazar had a certain text in the Sefer Haqqomah text he had in his library and a different text in his prayerbook, just as do we.

56. With minor orthographic differences, this is the text of all the manuscripts.

57. Gedullah is best translated as "bigness" in the context of the Shiᶜur Qomah. The euphony which derives from the Hebrew word lekhah which begins each line cannot be easily rendered into English.

58. This is the text of JTS ms. 1892 and Guenzburg ms. 131; the others vary a bit. We take ʿizzuz as a noun, although it usually functions as an adjective. The only Biblical attestation is Ps 24:8 and is ambiguous; probably it is a nominal form.

59. The manuscripts are all similar; this is the text of Oxford ms. 1960.

60. We take hadar and hadarah as synonyms. JTS ms. 1892 gives hadar twice, but the other texts all have hadarah. The word hadarah is quite unusual; Biblical attestation is only to the genitive construct form hadrat. The terms used to acclaim God in these hymns may be compared to the regular rabbinic terms of acclamation described by Lieberman in his "Qeles Qillusin," in ʿAle ʿAyin: The Salmon Schocken Jubilee Volume (Jerusalem, 1948-1952), pp. 148-152; and S. Leiter, "Worthiness, Acclamation and Appointment: Some Rabbinic Terms," PAAJR 41-42(1973-1974), pp. 137-168.

61. Because of the obscurity of the names under discussion, we give only the consonantal transcription, as it appears in the manuscript. The reader may sometimes be able to see an obvious way to vacalize the text, but in most cases, as in the name vʿns, it is quite unclear how the text should be vocalized.

62. The term is used for a man at I Kings 13:2, with respect to Josiah. The other usages, all with respect to God, are Is 47:4, 48:2, 51:15; 54:5; and Jer 10:16; 31:35; 32:18; 46:18; 48:15; 50:34; 51:19, and 51:57.

63. Mandelkern, Veteris Testamenti Concordantiae..., 9th ed. (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 1965), s.v. ushemo, p. 1193. There are actually twenty-four attestations, but we leave out Zach 14:9, which is an anomalous usage describing rather than giving the name of God.

64. The translation is taken from the Jewish Publication Society edition of the Pentateuch, The Torah, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1967), p. 102.

65. R.E. Witt, Isis in the Graeco-Roman World (Ithaca, 1971), pp. 112 and 121.

66. Cf. F.F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (Grand Rapids, 1951), p. 341.

67. The Works of Dionysius the Aeropagite, trans. J. Parker (London, 1897-1899; rpt. Merrick, New York,

1976), p. 119.

68. Jastrow, s.v. qomes, p. 1333.

69. Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary (Oxford, 1879), s.v. comes, pp. 373-374.

70. Visions of Ezekiel, ed. Gruenwald, p. 129.

71. The mystic names on lines 22-23 are presented as names of the Deity, not of His limbs.

72. The source in the 'Otiot and in the Zohar are given below in the commentary.

73. The text appears in several manuscript, including Oxford ms. 1531.

74. The fog of brilliance is referred to in the very beginning of the barukh shemo bemoshav hadaro hymn in the N_x section. The hidden places of darkness are mentioned on line 195 of the text.

75. The fact that the liturgical counterpart to the celestial worship service, the qedushah, emphasizes specifically verses like Is 6:3 and Ez 3:12 cannot be taken to suggest that the prophets' primary experiences were taken by the rabbis to have been aural. On the contrary, it is man who is limited in his imitation of the divine worship service to aural imitation. It is the spoken nature of prayer that dictates the choice of verses.

76. Ez 2:32.

77. Cf. Ez 10:5. Kaddavar hazzeh is, apparently, a diffferent expression, functioning, perhaps, as a sort of bridge between the two usages.

78. As an afterthought, provoked probably by the homonymity of the Hebrew for "finger" and "toe", the text turns to the toes as a final detail within the Ishmaelian text.

79. Perhaps the facial statistics are meant to provide some sort of mystic exegesis on the large number of references to God as being "long of face" (Hebrew: 'erekh 'apayim) in the Hebrew Bible.

80. Some manuscripts give the figure of 2,300,000,000, presumably ignoring the numerical equivalent of the vav

in verav. The fact that the upper and lower halves of the godhead are each given to be 1,180,000,000 parasangs tall makes it obvious that the vav should be counted, and that 2,360,000,000 is the correct figure. Of course, it is impossible to know whether the numerical derivation is the reason for the figure, or a later attempt to justify it.

81. This is a round figure based on the 603,550 figure of Nu 2:32, a regular rabbinic round number.

82. The identify of the texts in the Shi^{C}ur Qomah and the Talmud was first observed by Saul Lieberman; see above, chapter two. Maimonides, in his Commentary to the Mishnah, ad locum, explains the text in M Bekhorot as though it were describing the perfect nose, but he was quite enamored of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah as a young man when he wrote his commentary, and so was, presumably, aware that the baraita he was citing is found in the mystic text as a description of the divine nose, and so could hardly imply flaw or imperfection. Cf. the commentary of Rashi, ad locum in the Talmud.

83. Shaye J.D. Cohen, "The Beauty of Flora and the Beauty of Sarai," Helios, N.S. 8:2(1981), pp. 41-53.

84. Iliad 2:216-219.

85. Greek Anthology 5.132; A.S.F. Gow and D.L. Page, The Garland of Philip (Cambridge, 1968), vol. 1, pp. 356-359. See further on this topic, J. Fuerst, "Die Personalbeschreibungen in Diktysberichte," Philologus 61(=N.S. 15; 1902), pp. 374-440 and 593-622, and E.C. Evans, "Roman Descriptions of Personal Appearence in History and Biography," HSCP 46(1935), pp. 43-84. I am grateful to Professor Cohen (see above, n. 83) for these references.

86. Horace, epode 8; Ovid, Amores 1.5.19-20. Cf. also the description of Sarah in the Genesis Apocryphon 20:2-8, ed. Fitzmeyer, 2nd ed. (Rome, 1971), p. 63, which goes from the head down. This description is the subject, in part, of Professor Cohen's article, see above, n. 83.

87. Ct 10:17. The verse continues "...God of gods, Lord of lords, the great, mighty and awesome God..." The Biblical text has the phrase "the Lord, your God" rather than "the Lord God," as do most of the other manuscripts. We are translating Oxford ms. 1791.

88. See above, chapter two.

89. M Ḥagigah 2:1.

90. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism. p. 38.

91. Ibid., p. 41.

92. Ibid., p. 123.

93. Ibid., p. 126.

94. Origen's text is found in Migne, Patrologia Latina (Paris, 1844-1880), vol. 13. col. 63.

95. Brown, Driver and Briggs, Lexicon, s.v. davar, p. 183. The text of section N_x uses davar in exactly the same way: devarav yizlu beshamayim.

96. Furthermore, the Targum to the verse glosses ḥuqav with the Aramaic qeyamoi = Hebrew berito 'his covenant.'

97. Regarding Ps 147:4, see above, chapter V iv.

98. Exodus Rabbah 30:9.

99. Cf. Maharzu's comment, ad locum.

100. Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, s.v. hadom, p. 213.

101. BT Giṭṭin 67b, cf. Jastrow, s.v. hadom, p. 373; Payne Smith, s.v. hadam, p. 100.

102. Dan 2:5 and 3:29.

103. BT Sanhedrin 59a.

104. This explanation is given by Jacob Lewy in his dictionary of rabbinic Hebrew (Berlin and Vienna, 1924), s.v. haddam, vol. 1, p. 454.

105. BT Ḥagigah 16a.

106. This also appears at BT Qiddushin 31a.

107. Tanhuma. Ḥayye Sarah. ch. 3, ed. Jerusalem. 1963, p. 31b.

108. BT Sanhedrin 38b. This midrash on the phrase 'al tammer bo is also found there.

109. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 46.

110. M 'Avot 1:13.

111. This detail is absent from the text, but seems to be suggested by Ex 24:1, where Moses is already among the people.

112. Scholem dates R. Idit in the late third century C.E. in Jewish Gnosticism, p. 47.

113. Midrashic and mystic sources about Metatron are collected by R. Margoliot in his Mal'akhe ᶜElyon (Jerusalem, 1964), pp. 73-108. Curiously, Margoliot does not include any Shiᶜur Qomah traditions.

114. We translate both the Hebrew mala'kh and sar as "angel." The two terms appear to be synonymous. Both terms have Biblical attestations, the latter with the meaning of angel, only, however, in the book of Daniel. The term we have translated here "the angel, angel of the presence" is the Hebrew mal'akh sar happanim. This is the most frequent title for Metatron. The acronym for that title is also frequently found in the manuscript sources. Because that acronym consists of the same three Hebrew consonants as the name of Moses (mem-shin-heh), one might wonder if the ambiguity in the meaning of section K cannot be traced back to two different interpretations of the acronym, one scribe taking it to be Moses' name and one taking it for the acronym of Metatron's title.

115. These traditions appear in sections B, D, J_x and L in the text.

116. The reading sara rabbah in Oxford ms. 1791 is a scribal error for sara rabba.

117. The word 'ashaduta is formed by a prosthetic 'alef prefix and the far more common word for "testimony", sahaduta. The 'ashaduta appears four times in the Talmud. Metatron is specifically described as a witness, signing a gift-deed along with God and Adam, in a midrash preserved in the Yalqut Shimᶜoni, section 41, ed. Jerusalem, 1960, p. 23. This detail is actually a later detail added on to an earlier midrash, which makes the concept of Metatron as witness even more striking. The earlier sources are listed by L. Ginzberg in his Legends of the Jews, vol. 5, p. 82, note 28.

118. Midrash Haggadol to Gen 1:1, ed. Margoliot, p. 16.

The title "great prince of x" is found with respect to Metatron in some of the Aramaic incantation bowls originally published by Cyrus Gordon in the Archiv Orientálni. In his article "Aramaic Magical Bowls in the Istanbul and Baghdad Museums," Archiv Orientálni 6(1934), pp. 319-334 and 466-474, Gordon gives a text in which Metatron is called 'isra rabba dekurseh 'the great prince of the Throne.' In a bowl, the text of which Gordon published in his "Aramaic and Mandaic Magical Bowls," Archiv Orientálni 9(1937), pp. 84-95, Metatron is called 'isra rabbah dekuleh ᶜalma 'the great prince of the entire world.' Both texts were reprinted in C. Isbell, Corpus of the Aramaic Incantation Bowls (Missoula, 1975), where they are assigned numbers 49 and 56. The importance of the bowls for establishing the antiquity of rabbinic texts is quite unstudied, as are these texts generally. In another text, published by James Montgomery in his Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur (Philadelphia, 1913), where it is text no. 25, Metatron is definitely identified with the God of Israel in a passage that reads "Blessed art Thou, O Lord...Your name is Yofi'el; they call You Yeḥi'el Sasnagi'el, YHVH, and...Hermes [?, Aramaic: 'rmsh], Meṭaṭron, Yah..." This is text no. 34 in the Isbell edition. The identification of Metatron and God is perhaps related to the standard designation of Metatron as the Lesser YHVH. On the other hand, R. Isaac of Akko himself wrote, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, that the entire Shiᶜur Qomah applies, actually, to Metatron, and not at all to God.

119. Pseudo-Jonathan to Gen 5:24, ed. Ginsburger (Berlin, 1903), p. 11. Ginzberg's assertion in his Legends, vol. 5, p. 163, note 61, that the concept of Metatron the scribe goes back to the heavenly Babylonian scribe Nebo remains unproven, and, to a certain extent, unnecessary.

120. Midrash 'Elleh 'Ezkerah, ed. Jellinek (in BH, vol. 2), p. 66.

121. BT ᶜAvodah Zarah 3b. Note that the reference to Metatron is absent from the text given in the ᶜEn Yaᶜaqov, ad locum.

122. 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, ed. Wertheimer, p. 353. This text is also found in the eleventh century work Bereshit Rabbati of R. Moses Narboni, ed. Albeck (Jerusalem, 1940), p. 28. Moses Narboni knew all about the Shiᶜur Qomah and composed a long epistle regarding it which is discussed below. The idea that Metatron is

the teacher of deceased children appears in the midrashic text Seder Gan ᶜEden, ed. Jellinek (in BH, vol. 3), pp. 134-135.

123. Yalquṭ Shimᶜoni, sec. 44, ed. Jerusalem, 1960, p. 24.

124. Midrash 'Aggadah to Gen 5:18, ed. Buber (Vienna, 1894), p. 15a. The text does not make it precisely clear whether R. Aqiba is making the identification or taking issue with it. Buber seems to assume that it is R. Aqiba who held the identification of Metatron and Enoch to be correct.

125. Jellinek, BH, vol. 6, p. 21. The story seems to possibly originally have been only about Gabriel, and to have had Metatron added in later, but that cannot be taken as more than a hypothesis based on the story line.

126. Possibly, the twenty-four letter name refers to the name plus title: meṭaṭron mal'akh sara rabba de'ashaduta, which has twenty-four letters in Hebrew. The distinction between Metatron spelled with six or seven letters does not appear again in the Shiᶜur Qomah, but it is featured in later texts, notably, the Zohar. These examples are collected in Margoliot, Mal'akhe ᶜElyon, pp. 88-89.

127. The title of the printed edition is Sefer Haḥesheq.

128. 3 Enoch, ed. Odeberg, p. 5. The title naᶜar is discussed below.

129. Hekhalot Rabbati 28:2, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 111-112.

130. Jellinek, BH, vol. 2, p. 116.

131. If the vav is not a prefix, we might prefer to vocalize the names vanṭit and vanṭif.

132. BT Sanhedrin 44b.

133. The Vilna Gaon observes in his notes published on the page of Sanhedrin in question that in his text of Rashi, there was already the marginal note: "this is not so."

134. Tanhuma, vez'ot habberakah, ch. 6, ed. Jerusalem, 1973, p. 125b.

135. These theories are summarized and evaluated by Odeberg in his edition of 3 Enoch, pp. 125-142. His conclusions may be read in light of Saul Lieberman's appendix to Ithamar Gruenwald's book, Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism (Leiden and Cologne, 1980.)

136. Regarding transliteration, for example, senator, in the text of the Tanhuma cited above, is spelled in Hebrew with no attempt to indicate the vowels. The Latin etymology does not apply to any ancient role we find assigned to Metatron, and so may be ruled out, cf. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 43, note 4. Regarding the double ṭeṭ, Odeberg's suggestion that this is related to the obscure passage in Hekhalot Rabbati 26:8, ed. Jellinek, p. 104, where we have the progression '' bb gg dd hh vv zz hh meṭaṭron seems to be mistaken; that passage seems to be an attempt to explain the double letter, rather than its original reason for being there. At any rate, a Greek derivation seems more likely. Greek is known to have influenced the hekhalot authors, cf. Hans Lewy, "Fragments of Greek Laws and Names in Hekhalot Rabbati," (Hebrew), in his ʿOlamot Nifgashim (Jerusalem, 1960), pp. 259-265.

137. 3 Enoch, ch. 3, ed. Odeberg, p. 5.

138. 3 Enoch, ch. 4, ed. Odeberg, p. 6.

139. See above, note 119.

140. BT Yevamot 16b.

141. Tosafot to BT Yevamot 16b, s.v. pasuq zeh sar ha-ʿolam 'amaro. The problem was ascribed to Rabbenu Tam. This problem seems to have brought later kabbalists to the two-Metatron theory, as described by Margoliot, p. 79, note 13.

142. G. Widengren, Mani and Manichaeism, trans. C. Kessler (New York, Chicago and San Francisco, 1965), p. 49.

143. The Hymn of the Soul, line 25a, ed. and trans. A.A. Bevan (Cambridge, 1897), pp. 14-15.

144. Odyssey 10:277, quoted in Hans Licht, Sexual Life in Ancient Greece, trans. J.H. Freese, ed. L.H. Dawson (London, 1932), p. 417.

145. 3 Enoch, ch. 48D, ed. Odeberg, p. 72 (Hebrew section); BT Sanhedrin 38b. The idea is linked to the idea

of the identification of Enoch and Metatron in Bereshit Rabbati, ed. Albeck, p. 28.

146. Some manuscripts do not have this line. The Florence manuscript has the word govho 'his height' instead of gomato 'his body.'

147. The statement of R. Judah in the name of Rav in BT Sanhedrin 38b that Adam's body filled the universe is clearly meant to be complimentary.

148. Numbers Rabbah 12:12, ed. Jerusalem, 1970, p. 49a.

149. Pesiqta Rabbati, ch. 5, ed. Friedmann, p. 22b; Tanḥuma to Nu 7:1, p. 58b.

150. An exhaustive study of the whole notion of the heavenly Temple is found in V. Aptowitzer's "Bet Hammiqdash shel Maᶜalah ᶜAl Pi Ha'aggadah," Tarbiz, 2 (1930-1931), pp. 137-153 and 257-287.

151. This was apparently the text in the edition of the ᶜEn Yaᶜaqov used by Aptowitzer.

152. Aptowitzer, p. 260, quoting from a collection of manuscript readings of the midrash Shoḥar Ṭov to Ps 63 published by Wertheimer in his Battei Midrashot, vol. 1, p. 296. The reference to the supernal Temple is inferred, not explicit.

153. Jellinek, BH, vol. 6, p. 22.

154. Cf. BT Menaḥot 86b, commenting on Ex 27:20: "Our rabbis teach [in a tannaitic source]: zakh means naqi 'clean, pure, innocent.'"

155. Pseudo-Jonathan to Dt 34:6, ed. Ginsburger, p. 366.

156. Midrash Peṭirat Mosheh, end, ed. Jellinek (in BH, vol. 1), p. 129. Cf. Deuteronomy Rabbah 11:9 for the same tradition without the personality of Metatron. The same midrash does appear in the Tanḥuma, ed. Buber, p. 72 (to Dt 3:26.)

157. Midrash 'Ekhah Zuṭa 1:26, ed. Buber, p. 32b, and, according to a different textual tradition, p. 41b.

158. Midrash Gedullat Mosheh, published under the title Midrash Kattapuah BeᶜAse HayyaᶜAr in Wertheimer, vol. 1, pp. 277-285. The identity of these two texts was pointed out by Ginzberg in his Legends, vol. 5, p. 416,

note 117. For Metatron's own recollection of this event, see 3 Enoch, ch. 48D, ed. Odeberg, p. 117.

159. Ma^{c}ayan Hokhmah, ed. Jellinek (in BH, vol. 1), p. 61. Additional sources are listed in Ginzberg, Legends, vol. 6, p. 47, note 248.

160. Odeberg, 3 Enoch, p. 104, seems to identify this letters with 'alef, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, but he does not explain why he thinks so. More probably, 'ot means 'sign' or 'siglum' rather than 'letter,' and refers to one of the general secrets of Creation.

161. See above, chapter V iv.

162. 3 Enoch, ch. 48D, ed. Odeberg, pp. 178-179 (English) and p. 74 (Hebrew).

163. Scholem, Re'shit Haqqabbalah (1150-1250) (Jerusalem and Tal Aviv, 1948), pp. 195-238. Cf. Ursprung und Anfaenge der Kabbala, pp. 96-99.

164. I owe this reference to Mr. Benjamin Richler of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem.

165. Scholem, Re'shit Haqqabbalah, p. 203.

166. Ibid., p. 199.

167. Ibid., p. 213.

168. Ibid., p. 206.

169. J. Dan, "Huq Hakkeruv Hammuyuhad Betenu^{c}at Haside 'Ashkenaz," Tarbiz 35(1966), pp. 349-372. The original idea is at least as old as Saadia Gaon.

170. Scholem, Kabbalah, p. 31.

171. Dan, ^{c}Iyyunim Besifrut Hasidut 'Ashkenaz (Ramat Gan, 1975), pp. 112-133.

172. Ibid., p. 113.

173. Ibid.

174. The value of both passages is 1097; see Dan, ^{c}Iyyunim, p. 120, note 86. The equivalent phrase might be translated in several ways.

175. The idea that the kavod is the Tetragrammaton is an odd one; see Dan, ʿIyyunim, p. 120, note 79.

176. The author is apparently taking the phrase "I saw the Lord" to mean "I saw the Tetragrammaton," which is, of course, what is written in the Biblical text.

177. God Himself is, of course, the only existent that is not created.

178. Dan, ʿIyyunim, pp. 120-121.

179. Ibid., p. 121, note 91.

180. Ibid., p. 127.

181. Ibid., p. 128.

182. Ibid., p. 133.

183. Altmann, "Moses Narboni's Epistle on Shiʿur Qomā," in Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies, ed. Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 239.

184. See Altmann, "Epistle," pp. 225-288. Pinsker's edition was published in the journal Kokhave Yishaq 30(1864), pp. 25-33.

185. Altmann, "Epistle," p. 239.

186. Ibid., p. 241. 'Elohiyut is more precisely "theology" than "metaphysics."

187. So Altmann, "Epistle," p. 247.

188. Epistle, lines 157-160, quoted by Altmann, "Epistle," p. 247.

189. Y. Kafiḥ, "A Fragment of an Early Yemenite Treatise on Sefer Shiʿur Qomah," (Hebrew), in The Jews of Yemen: Studies and Researches, ed. Yeshayahu and Tobi (Jerusalem, 1975), pp. 407-410.

190. Kafiḥ, p. 407.

191. Ibid.

192. See above, chapter two, note one.

193. Kafiḥ, p. 408, note 2.

194. Ibid., p. 410, note 13.

195. The alternative would be the Syrian town of Edrei, which also had a Jewish community in the medieval period. See M. Avi Yonah, "Edrei," EJ, 1972.

196. Eisenstein, 'Osar Hammidrashim (New York, 1915), vol. 1, p. vi.

197. G. Scholem, Leheqer Qabbalat R. Yishaq Hakkohen (Jerusalem, 1934), pp. 305-316.

198. G. Scholem, "Qabbalat R.Ya^{c}aqov VeR. Yishaq bene R. Ya^{c}aqov Hakkohen," Mada^{c}e Hayyahadut, 2(1929), p. 243.

199. Dan, "Sefer Raziel," EJ, 1972.

200. M. Margolioth, Sefer Harazim (Jerusalem, 1966), p. 44.

201. Ibid., pp. 107-109.

202. Cf. Sefer Razi'el (Amsterdam, 1701), f. 39a.

203. Margolioth, pp. 42-44.

204. Regarding this text, see N. Sed, "Une Cosmologie Juive du Haut Moyen Age: La Berayta de Ma^{c}ase Bereshit," REJ, 123(1964), pp. 259-305 and 124(1965), pp. 23-123.

VI THE SHI^{C}UR QOMAH AND ITS PLACE IN PRE-KABBALISTIC JEWISH MYSTICISM

In this chapter, we shall discuss the relationship between the Shi^{C}ur Qomah and the other texts of Jewish mysticism which may roughly be called its contemporaries. Although mystic communion with the God of Israel was a regular feature of Jewish theological inquiry from the earliest times, it was particularly prominent in the age which produced the Shi^{C}ur Qomah and its sister texts of hekhalot mysticism. The texts in the corpus of hekhalot mysticism do not readily lend themselves to being assigned dates with precision; often the best one can do is to attempt to order the texts sequentially, and even in that case, many questions must remain undecided. For that reason, we shall attempt here to merely compare the various texts in the hekhalot corpus to the Shi^{C}ur Qomah and to establish their common genre.

The relationship of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah to the rich literary remains of European kabbalistic thought is a fascinating question, but one that lies beyond the scope of the present study. The Sefer Yesirah is sufficiently unique to warrant a brief discussion here; if the date of that text could be fixed with certainty, it might shed some light on the development of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah, but it cannot be so precisely fixed, and so the relationship between the two works must remain more of a curious possibility than an important historical consideration.

In the introduction to this book, we have had the opportunity to introduce the reader to the phenomenon of hekhalot or merkavah mysticism as it developed in the first centuries of the common era. The terms hekhalot 'palaces' and merkavah 'chariot-throne' are used more or less synonymously to refer to the body of texts produced in those mystic circles which describe and record their authors' efforts to enter and cross through the various celestial realms (hekhalot) and to arrive, finally, in the divine throneroom and to gaze at the God of Israel seated in awful majesty on his chariot-throne (merkavah).[1] The recensions of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah are part of this genre. It seems that the details, descriptive passages, poems and hymns that they add to the original text are mostly, if not entirely, derived from the common literary heritage of hekhalot mysticism. In a certain way, the recensions with which we are dealing restore the Shi^{C}ur Qomah to its original genre. It seems obvious that the original text was composed as a text of theurgy, setting forth the magic names and numbers in a semi-liturgical context for the purpose of

enabling one who would recite the text on a regular basis to acquire the many rewards listed in the text itself. It seems likely that the author of that original text derived those mystic names and dimensions from some already existent fund of information, if he did not actually derive them from his own personal mystic experiences. Regardless of whether they were the product of his own or another's experiences, they presumably derived from a real mystic revelation. The author of the Urtext used his own (or another's) information and made it the basis of his theurgy. This theurgic aspect is played down, and, in some instances, eliminated, in the recensions of the Shi^cur Qomah, which seem to constitute attempts to recast the text in the mold of the other classic texts of hekhalot mysticism. With the exception of the names and dimensions of the divine limbs, the surviving Shi^cur Qomah texts present almost nothing but motifs, ideas and specific details that either remind us of other passages throughout the literature, or else actually appear in other texts.

Because the texts are short and esoteric, and also because they were superceded among "professional" Jewish mystics by later works in the intervening centuries, these works were not well preserved. Many have undoubtedly been lost permanently to us, while others remain embedded in other, longer manuscripts, waiting to be properly identified. This is a serious problem, since most of the manuscripts of early mystic works are vast compendia of texts, often without titles, tables of contents, or clear boundaries setting the works they contain off from adjacent material. Still other texts are known to us from other sources, but are so vaguely described as to make it practically impossible to identify the texts in the manuscripts said to contain them.

Taking all of these factors into account, Scholem was able to identify eight principal works of hekhalot mysticism. These are The Visions of Ezekiel, Hekhalot Zutarti, Hekhalot Rabbati, Merkavah Rabbah, a titleless work published by Scholem under the tentatively assigned title, Ma^caseh Merkavah; a work on physiognomy and chiromancy, Hakkarat Panim Vesidre Shirtutin, also published by Scholem; 3 Enoch and Massekhet Hekhalot. These texts are all known in varying degrees of preservation. Some have been given critical or quasi-critical treatment; others are published in confused, error-ridden transcription. To these works, Peter Schaefer has added the following works: the Shi^cur Qomah, Seder Rabbah Debereshit, The Sword of Moses, Sefer Harazim, Pereq

Shirah, and some published fragments.[2] In this chapter, we shall limit ourselves to discussing the relationship of the Shi^cur Qomah to the principals among these texts. The lesser texts will be used below in the commentary to establish certain notions and to elucidate certain passages, but cannot be considered more fully.

Of all the authors of these texts, the authors of Merkavah Rabbah and Hekhalot Rabbati may be considered to certainly have known the Shi^cur Qomah or some early version of it; the Merkavah Rabbah actually presents a recension of the text and the Hekhalot Rabbati quotes the text. Probably, the author of Hekhalot Rabbati knew the Shi^cur Qomah traditions he cites as single mystic midrashic traditions rather than as excerpts from one of the recensions, or even from the Urtext. Unfortunately, we cannot any longer be certain in what form he found these traditions before him, but the order in which he presents the material suggests, although it certainly does not guarantee, that he did not have any of our recensions of the text before him. The author of Hekhalot Zutarti, on the other hand, presents a large number of traditions that appear in some of the recensions of the Shi^cur Qomah, but almost all are general hekhalot traditions. Still, the intimacy that exists between the two texts is so evident that one scribe, the scribe of JTS ms. 8128, inserted a version of the Shi^cur Qomah between the two halves of the text.

As we have mentioned above, we are able to establish a sequential relationship between the Shi^cur Qomah and only some of the other texts we shall consider. To further confuse the issue, it is unknown, of course, whether any of the hekhalot authors build on older traditions, or if they originated the ideas they present in their works themselves. Consequently, it is wiser to avoid questions of literary borrowings and influence, except to note the existence of such relationships, without trying to determine which text is the source and which the recipient of any specific traditions. At any rate, in addition to the texts mentioned above, several manuscripts survive which are simply vast compendia of traditions apparently uncast in literary units. It seems likely that this is the form in which most of these traditions were originally preserved, until an author gathered together specific ones with the intention of using them as the building blocks of a new literary work.

The first work we shall consider is Hekhalot Rabbati. There are two editions of this work in print, one

quite different from the other, one published by Jellinek and one by Wertheimer.[3] Some scholars have made mention of a critical edition prepared by Scholem and Wirszubski, but this has not been published.[4] We may distinguish between three types of material relevant to our study that are found in Hekhalot Rabbati: parallels of vocabulary and style, actual fragments of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah found in the text of Hekhalot Rabbati, and texts which seem to have been composed for similar reasons and in similar contexts as the texts which constitute the Shi^{c}ur Qomah.

Numerous lexical parallels link the two works, suggesting either common authorship, or at least a common milieu.[5] For example, in the fourth chapter of Hekhalot Rabbati, we find the statement that one who hears the "fifth voice" miyyad nishpakh keqiton, a metonymical phrase meaning literally "he is immediately poured out like [the water in] a pitcher."[6] This unusual phrase, which is found in an entirely different context and with a totally different meaning in Talmudic passages, describes the overwhelming physical effect of the Divine voice upon one who hears it.[7] The same expression appears on line 81 of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah regarding the celestial princes.[8] The specialized meaning of the expression given in these two texts suggests a common provenance.

In the same chapter, we find, as we have discussed above, a fragment of the Mi Kemalkenu hymn more fully developed in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. Apparently, this hymn has its provenance in the same circles that produced both works, but whereas the author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah incorporated it into his work, the author of the Hekhalot Rabbati was merely inspired by it. This seems to have reflected a general tendency, as is suggested by the presence of the long Melekh litany known from section C of the Sefer Haqqomah at the end of the fifteenth chapter of the Hekhalot Rabbati,[9] and then again in chapter twenty-three.[10] Another parallel is the declaration, equally unsuitable in both contexts, that the original recipient of all these revelations was, in fact, Moses, here portrayed in his mythic role as the first of all hekhalot mystics. This appears in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Hekhalot Rabbati and in the Sefer Haqqomah at line 151.[11]

These linguistic parallels suggest either the influence of one work upon the other, or else a common milieu in which both were composed. Morton Smith has shown that at least some of the material presented in the Hekhalot Rabbati can be traced back to the first

century C.E.[12] This date certainly does not prevent the texts from being closely related, since it is, in any event, quite unclear when the text of the Hekhalot Rabbati reached its current state of development. Even Scholem, who fixes a second century date for the Shi^cur Qomah, considers at least the hymns of the Hekhalot Rabbati to be that old.[13] Possibly, the textual history of the Hekhalot Rabbati was similar to the history we have suggested for the Shi^cur Qomah. If that is so, and if the text of the Hekhalot Rabbati that has come down to us does indeed represent a literary reworking of original mystic information in a theurgic context, then it is not surprising that the editors of both works should have chosen similar material from the greater body of hekhalot literary traditions with which to frame the essential and unique sections of their books. At least one passage in the Hekhalot Rabbati is derived from the Shi^cur Qomah; possibly the author of the former work considered the latter to be part of that greater literary corpus, and so felt free to draw from it. At any rate, the passage comes in the tenth chapter (according to Jellinek's text; in Wertheimer's edition, it begins at the end of the eleventh chapter and continues into the twelfth.)[14] The passage is as follows, according to Jellinek's text:

> ...for exaltations and courage and pride and splendor are alone for the King of the Universe and all His servants. For it is fitting for them who serve His Majesty to be proud; and for them who lift up the Throne, it is fitting to be victorious, for from His Throne and up, [there are] 1,800,000,000 parasangs of height. From His right arm until His left arm, there is a width of 700,000 parasangs...[15]

It is clear that the figure of 1,800,000,000 is a variation on the figure of 1,180,000,000 parasangs given for that same distance in the Sefer Haqqomah on lines 14 and 15. The second figure, 700,000, is, equally clearly, derived from the figure 770,000,000 that appears in the text of the Sefer Haqqomah at line 18. The use of the same two figures in both texts guarantees a textual relationship of some sort. Because gigantism is not a feature of the description of the Deity in the Hekhalot Rabbati, it seems here more than likely that it was the author of that work who derived the passage from the Shi^cur Qomah; probably he was citing the Urtext itself. The fact that the figures quoted both derive from the Aqiban text does not present any problem, since that section was certainly part of the Urtext. Wertheimer's text continues differently than Jellinek's:

> And His arms are crossed on His chest. His right arm's name is gnyssyqyh, and his left arm's name is mtqhy'ssyh. His hands are each 4,000,000 parasangs [long.] His right hand's name is hvrzyh and His left hand's name is hssyh. Why is He called the great, mighty and awesome God? Metatron said, "Until here, I saw the height of Yedidiah, the Master of the Universe. Shalom! (?)" How is your beloved better than another, etc. My beloved is brilliant, etc., all of the chapter, until "daughters of Jerusalem [Song 5:9-16.]"[16]

The concatenation of ideas no longer follows the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah text, but all of these ideas and phrases are to be found in the work somewhere. The notion of the divine arms being crossed is found on line 94 of the Sefer Haqqomah. Names of the arms, here left unvocalized, are given in the Sefer Haqqomah text at lines 94-95. The names differ from those given here, but the high degree of variation of names between the various Shi^{c}ur Qomah recensions and manuscript families themselves makes this a less important detail. The dimensions of the hands are given in the Sefer Haqqomah at line 96-97, with the same figure of 4,000,000 parasangs. Here, for the first time, we find two names that may be related: the hvrzzyh of the Hekhalot Rabbati, probably vocalized Hurzazyah, may be a version of the 'shhvzyh of the Sefer Haqqomah, probably vocalized Ashhuzyah. The reference to the "great, mighty and awesome God," taken from the tenth chapter of Deuteronomy, is parallel to line 102 of the Sefer Haqqomah. This entire section, then, by virtue of the concatenation of ideas visible in it, may be presumed to be based on our text, lines 94-102. Possibly, this was a common ending to both the Ishmaelian and the Aqiban texts-- the quote from Deuteronomy still concludes both sections in the Sefer Haqqomah-- and so the author of the Hekhalot Rabbati might well have been citing a single text as it was before him.

The statement of Metatron is a bit unclear, but is preserved in the Merkavah Rabbah recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and is possibly slightly corrupt. At any rate, it is a bona fide Shi^{c}ur Qomah tradition.

Of great interest is the final indication that all of Song 5:9-16 is to be recited at the end of the section. This is important for a number of reasons. First of all, it has no formula of introduction, and is, for that reason, quite similar to the use of those same

verses of lines 115-117 of the Sefer Haqqomah. Above, we suggested that the function of these verses is to provide a liturgical frame of the kind necessary for the transformation of a text of mystical revelation into a text of theurgy. Presumably, these verses play a similar role here. Given the emphasis on the notion of the beauty of the godhead that characterizes the text of Hekhalot Rabbati, these verses are almost more appropriate in this context.

The text of the Hekhalot Rabbati provides even closer parallels to the text of the Shi^cur Qomah. The Hekhalot Rabbati, for example, contains versions of several other hymns which appear in the various recensions of the Shi^cur Qomah. Four of the hymns, in fact, which appear in section N_x of the long version of the Sefer Haqqomah and in the Sefer Razi'el recension, appear as well in the twenty-fifth chapter of Hekhalot Rabbati.[17] It does not seem possible to determine which author composed these hymns and which borrowed them. Far more likely than either possibility is that these were the common liturgy of the mystic circles in which both texts were developed, and, as such, were adapted by both authors. This is important, insofar as it suggests that both texts stem ultimately from the same milieu, and that their differences may be explained as resulting from differences of literary style and of mystic experience, rather than of provenance, locale or, necessarily, of date. The authors of the Hekhalot Rabbati and the Shi^cur Qomah may well have stemmed from the same circles; they differed merely in the metaphoric contexts in which they chose to describe and analyze their experiences.

This difference is probably more rooted in the subjective and personal mystic experience rather than in historical differences of time or place. Furthermore, just as the Hekhalot Rabbati does have some sections that use the notions of gigantism and mystic names to describe the godhead, just as in the Shi^cur Qomah, so are there passages in the various recensions of the latter text that present a description of the godhead rooted in the concepts of lovliness and beauty, just as is most characteristic of the Hekhalot Rabbati. It is in this light that one may understand the choice on the part of the author of the Shi^cur Qomah to include the verses from the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs in his liturgical frame.

Both authors experienced the mystic union/communion with the God of Israel, but whereas the author of the

Shi^{C}ur Qomah was overcome by the divine gedullah, the author of the Hekhalot Rabbati chose to develop the equally authentic theme of beauty. The following passage is found both in section N_X of the Sefer Haqqomah and in the Hekhalot Rabbati:[18]

> King of kings, God of gods, Lord of lords,
> He who is surrounded with chains of crowns
> Who is encompassed by the cluster of the rulers of radiance,
> Who covers the heavens with the wing of His magnificence,
> And in His majesty appeared from the heights,
> From His beauty the deeps were enkindled,
> And from His stature the heavens are sparkling
> His stature sends out the lofty,
> And His crown blazes out the mighty,
> And His garment flows with the precious.
> And all trees shall rejoice in His word,
> And herbs shall exult in His rejoicing,
> And His words shall drop as perfumes,
> Flowing forth in flames of fire,
> Giving joy to those who search them,
> And quiet to those who fulfill them.[19]

Scholem, whose translation we have cited, uses the references in the passage to beauty and stature to link the text to the Shi^{C}ur Qomah.[20] This is plausible, but it seems likely that the origin of the passage is in the Hekhalot Rabbati; the author of the Shi^{C}ur Qomah no doubt accepted as valid the notion that the God of Israel was beautiful. It was simply not in that range of metaphors that he chose to express himself, and, therefore, we may assume that this passage has its origin elsewhere. The reasons for which one mystic might chose to describe his mystic experiences in terms of the divine bigness, while another might choose the concept of divine beauty, are, undoubtedly, rooted deep within the psyches of the men involved; for us it is sufficient to note that both authors apparently accepted the other's chosen frame of reference as valid.

The Merkavah Rabbah is definitely later than the Shi^{C}ur Qomah, and, in fact, presents a recension of the latter text in it. It follows, therefore, that the author of the Merkavah Rabbah had a similar relationship to the Shi^{C}ur Qomah to the one we have described between that text and the author of Hekhalot Rabbati, with a single, important difference: while the author of the Hekhalot Rabbati accepted meditation on the divine bigness and secret names as a valid method of attaining

a state of mystic communion with God, the author of Merkavah Rabbah actually recommended it to his readers. There are three manuscripts of the Merkavah Rabbah known: Oxford ms. 1531, JTS ms. 8128 and Munich ms. 40. The text, if we exclude the actual recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, is quite similar in many ways to the various recensions of the latter text itself. For instance, both authors chose to "validate" the wealth of secret information about the godhead being offered in their books by offering their readers the unimpeachable authority of R. Ishmael paraphrasing the ancient words of the prophet Michaiah:

> R. Ishmael said, "I saw the King of the Universe sitting on a lofty and exalted throne, and one gedud [usually a celestial troop of angels, but here, apparently, a type of angel] stood from the earth to the heavens, and his name was Sandelphon...[21]

There is a particularly interesting section of the recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah that appears in the Merkavah Rabbah; it follows the section parallel to section H of the Sefer Haqqomah. This passage, which only appears in this particular recension, seems to provide us with an invaluable key towards understanding the way in which the author of the Merkavah Rabbah understood the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. In this passage, R. Ishmael is made to tell us precisely what is in store for the man who piously recites the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah on a daily basis:

> [R. Ishmael said,] "Aqiba and I are agreed that he who learns this great mystery, learns [the equivalent of?] of Mishnah every day after his prayers. Let him say it in purity at home or in the synagogue. I adjure you, Metatron, [you,] whose name is like your Master's, to join with me to accomplish my desires and to make my face glow and my body be pleasing to me and the fear of me to be over all men, and that my good reputation precede me to all places in Israel, and that my dreams be peaceful to me and that my Torah [study] be peaceful and kept in my body and that I never forget [even] a single word, not from my mouth and not from my heart, and that you bestow of your goodness on me in this world, and that you resurrect and resuscitate me to the world to come, and that you plead for mercy on my behalf before the Throne of Glory that all the sins of my youth be forgiven me and that the evil inclination have

> have no effect on me and that you save me from [all kinds of malevolent spirits] and from thieves and from all sorts of evil men, from wild animals, from snakes and scorpions and from all sources of injury in the universe, and that you stop up the mouths of all them who speak evil of me. Blessed are You, Lord, who hears prayers.[22]

It seems likely that the original Urtext did have some sort of statement recording all of the good things in store for one who would faithfully recite the Shi^cur Qomah on a daily basis; this would possibly have been quite like section G of the Sefer Haqqomah. Section H of the Sefer Haqqomah (and its parallels) and the section of the Merkavah Rabbah recension cited above would then constitute similar attempts on the parts of later redactors to expand the original text to present a more complete list of rewards and boons, perhaps to make the theurgic nature of the text even more clear. The date of the Merkavah Rabbah is not known.[23] It seems likely, however, that its author and the author of the Sefer Haqqomah were contemporaries. At the very least, one can assert that they shared a common understanding of the meaning of the Shi^cur Qomah.

The anonymous and titleless hekhalot text published by Scholem as an appendix to his book on Jewish gnosticism is extant in four manuscript: the three listed above as containing versions of Merkavah Rabbah and also Munich ms. 22.[24] The text does not contain any direct quotations of the Shi^cur Qomah, but several passages suggest a common milieu for both.

> In the fourth paragraph of that work, we read: [R. Ishmael said,] "...hear what R. Aqiba told me and revealed to me-- that all men who have in their hearts the praise [shevah] of Rozyy Yvy, the God of Israel, and [to whom] is revealed this great mystery, let him learn it every day at the first glimmer of dawn and cleanse himself of sin and lying, and all evil, and Rozyy Yvy, the God of Israel, will deal justly with him in this world and stand over him as an honor to him, and he may be certain of his place in the world to come.[25]

The features of a conversation between R. Aqiba and R. Ishmael, the use of the term shevah to refer to the divine glory, the injunction to learn the mystery every day and the use of the expression "he may be certain of his place in the world to come," all together lead us to

conclude that this text is somehow linked to lines 110-127 of the Sefer Haqqomah which contains all of those features. The author of this text does not make explicit precisely to what mystery he is making reference; it seems that he considered that his readers would understand his veiled allusion. Regardless of whether he was or was not making reference to the mystery of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, the point remains that both he and the author of the Sefer Haqqomah had access to the same literary traditions and so formulated their thoughts in precisely the same way.

It seems at least plausible that this text is using the vague term "mystery" (raz) to refer to the secrets of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. In paragraph seven of the work, we read as follows:

> R. Ishmael said, "When R. Nehunya b. Haqqanah said to me [or, perhaps, "recited to me] the...secret [raz] of the chambers of the Palace of the Chariot-Throne and also Torah, of [neither of] which shall I forget a [single] thing, I saw the King of the Universe sitting on an exalted and lofty throne, and all the chambers of his holy name and power were sanctifying His name by declaring His shevah...[26]

Shevah, usually simply "praise", has a specialized and technical meaning in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, where it is used to refer specifically to the glorious image of the godhead seated on the chariot-throne in the seventh heaven. Furthermore, the statement, "I saw the King of the Universe sitting on an exalted and lofty throne..." appears at the beginning of section D in the Sefer Haqqomah. That the statement has its origin in I Kings 22:19 does not imply that both authors simply used the same Biblical passage as their inspiration. Far more likely is the possibility that both authors came from the same milieu and both knew that verse to provide Scriptural sanction for the type of mystic activity in which both were engaged. The author of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah recommended the recitation of the divine shevah by men on earth, while the author of this text imagines the angels on high reciting it. The difference is of detail; the author of the titleless text simply assumed that the angels worshipped God in no less perfect a way than do earthly men.

The author of this text has one final piece of information to impart regarding the development of the technique of mystic communion. The Shi^{c}ur Qomah, as we have seen, is a bridge between theurgy and liturgy.

Despite the liturgical setting in which we find the mystic information, the original technique, by means of which the mystic would use the mystic revelations of others as the stuff of his own meditative communion, is still apparent. It seems that the author of this titleless text knew a mystic technique that was solely founded on liturgy:

> R. Ishmael said, "R. Aqiba said to me, 'I said a prayer and I beheld the Shekhinah and I [also] saw all that is done before the Throne of Glory.'" And what is that prayer?...[27]

The prayer that follows is long and quite interesting, but has no magic names, no difficult or incomprehensible passages and no meaningless syllables, except for a few tongue-twisting permutations of the Tetragrammaton. The notion that the mere utterance of a prayer is sufficient to bring someone into the company of the godhead shows a different orientation than we find in the Shi^cur Qomah. Here one recites a liturgical text to come into the presence of the Deity; in the Shi^cur Qomah, it is information derived from that experience of mystic union forms the basis for the daily liturgy, the recitation of which will acquire for the mystic all the boons stored up for one who would recite the divine shevah.[28] To put it another way, in this text we find liturgy leading to communion; in the Shi^cur Qomah it is the stuff of mystic communion that becomes liturgy.

Hekhalot Zutarti is extant in at least four manuscripts, and has recently been printed as well.[29] The difficulties surrounding the text are legendary; even its identification is highly questionable.[30] The printed edition, for example, presumes that the lengthy version of the Sefer Haqqomah text which appears in the middle of the manuscript text on which that edition is based not to be part of the text of Hekhalot Zutarti at all, and simply excludes it from the text.[31] Assuming that the published text is Hekhalot Zutarti, an assumption rendered qutie uncertain by the absence of title at either the beginning or the end, the presence of the Shi^cur Qomah in the middle of the text, and the fact that the identification rests on the basis of a single quote from R. Hai Gaon,[32] we may assume that the text that appears in JTS ms. 8128 between the two halves of the Hekhalot Zutarti and the text that appears in Munich ms. 40 immediately after the text, do not actually constitute a separate recension of the Urtext of the Shi^cur Qomah. If we, therefore, follow the suggestion of the editor and excise the Shi^cur Qomah from the text, and examine the remaining texts, we do

find traces of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah sprinkled throughout the body of the work. All of the relevant citations are noted in the commentary to the Sefer Haqqomah below.

There is one point in the text of the Hekhalot Zuṭarti where we find a particularly high concentration of traditions familiar to us from the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. On lines 231-253 and 281-282 of the published text, we find roughly the same material we find in sections H, I and J of the Sefer Haqqomah. There are fairly serious textual variations, but the similarity is undeniable, and so we must conclude that the authors both of the Hekhalot Zuṭarti and the Shi^{c}ur Qomah must have had access to a common body of material which both used in creating a context for the parts of their texts which were unique and special.

The Shi^{c}ur Qomah has ties of different sorts to almost all the works in the corpus of hekhalot literature. The date we have suggested above for the Shi^{c}ur Qomah does not absolutely exclude Scholem's suggestion that the composition of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah preceded the composition of almost all of the other works in the hekhalot literary genre. If that theory is correct, then the Shi^{c}ur Qomah had quite an important effect on those other works. Even if their sequential relationship is more complex, it can still be asserted with certainty that the Shi^{c}ur Qomah and these other works have a clear inner relationship of some sort, and that all are members of a common genre. If the Shi^{c}ur Qomah seems to stand alone in certain profound ways, this will be shown not to have so much to do with the order in which the works were composed, as it does with the different reasons for which different authors might attempt to express their own mystic experiences within the confines of human language in essentially different ways.

Scholem considered the Sefer Yesirah to have been written by a Palestinian Jew some time between the third and the sixth centuries C.E.[33] Nevertheless, the date of that work has yet to be firmly established, and, if the work was composed in the sixth century, it is not out of the question that the author knew of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. "The author, who endeavored to 'Judaize' non-Jewish speculations which suited his spirit, presents a parallel path to Jewish esoterism of the Hekhalot type of literature, which has its roots in the same period."[34] The implication of this notion is that the author, finding certain deep truths in the Neoplatonism of his day, sought to integrate those ideas into a Jew-

ish context by applying them to Jewish notions and categories, and thereby creating a new Jewish expression of the doctrine of creation. In other words, the author was revising his notion of standard Jewish theology to accomodate new ideas. His revising factor was the introduction of the type of alphabet mysticism we have described as being characteristic of the gnostic author, Marcus. These ideas are sufficiently identifiable so as to have allowed Baeck to explain the entire book as a Judaization of the philosophy of the fifth century Neoplatonist, Proclus (c. 410-485 C.E.).[35] It is not generally asked what exactly the author considered to be the alternative against which he was striving. In other words, what did the author of the Sefer Yeşirah take to be the Jewish text that his text, with its newer and more valid ideas, would now supersede? We consider it at least plausible that it was a work of hekhalot literature. That an author imbued with the spirit of Neoplatonism (as Baeck) or Neopythagoreanism (as Scholem) would find the use of gigantism and magic names a primitive and foolish technique almost goes without saying.[36] We may therefore wonder if the Sefer Yeşirah was not composed as a sort of great leap forward from the unsophisticated meditative technique of the Shi^cur Qomah and its sister texts of hekhalot mystic literature.

We find certain passages which suggest some sort of linguistic or intellectual link between the two works. We may compare two passages:

Sefer Haqqomah	Sefer Yesirah
The circumference of His head is 2,000,033 and a third [parasangs], which is that which the mouth cannot utter and that which the ear cannot hear; its name is 'Atar Huriyah Ve^catasiyah.[37]	...how does He join [the simple letters into syllables?] Two stones [i.e. letters] build two houses [i.e. the may be combined in two different ways]; three [letters] build six houses; four build twenty-four houses; five build 120 houses; six build 720 houses; seven build 5,040 houses. Further go and calculate that which the mouth cannot utter, and that which the ear cannot hear.[38]

The common usage of the phrase "that which the mouth cannot utter and that which the ear may not hear" to express a number imagined to be too large for human

reckoning suggests a link of sorts between the two passages. That expression appears in two other contexts in tannaitic literature, in a baraita quoted twice in the Babylonian Talmud,[39] and in a passage in Sifre Bammidbar.[40] Both those passages refer to the ability of God to speak two words (in the Talmud) or to three people (in Sifre) simultaneously, an ability which human beings cannot fathom. The use of the expression to express large numbers is apparently unique to these two passages, and as such speaks for a common provenance or at least for the influence of one text upon the other.[41]

In light of this observation, many references in the Sefer Yeşirah, especially in the longer recension, take on new meaning. For example, the ten numbers are described in the very beginning of the text as constituting the stuff of creation in the following language:

> The numbers [sefirot] of nothingness; ten and not nine, ten and not eleven. Understand with wisdom and study with intelligence. Test them and study them. Know and think and draw and stand the idea [literally: the thing] up in its true sense. Seat the Creator on His place for He is the Maker and the Creator. He is unique and has no other, and His measure is ten [middato ᶜeser] and they [i.e. the ten numbers] are infinite.[42]

The fact that the Sefer Yeşirah is a text about the creation more than justifies its interest in the Creator. The author, if he knew of the Shiᶜur Qomah can only have been appalled at the fact that the Shiᶜur Qomah describes the Being whose dimensions are given in the text as the Creator. The author of the Sefer Yesirah makes this point: there is only one Creator, and His measure (middah) is "ten," i.e. He may be described physically (much less measured) only with reference to the tools He used to create, the ten primal numbers.

Whether or not we can detect the influence of the Shiᶜur Qomah on the Sefer Yeşirah, there can be no arguing that the influence of the Shiᶜur Qomah on subsequent Jewish mystic literature has not been remarkably slight. By the time of the promulgation of the Zohar, it had become regular to understand the phrase shiᶜur qomah as referring to the kabbalistic doctrine of the ten sefirot laid out in the world of emanation in the shape of a human body. As far as we can be certain, there are no clear-cut citations of any recension of the Shiᶜur Qomah, despite the fact that the use of anatomical terms to describe the godhead is a regular feature of almost every Zoharic text. In fact,

there is only one place of which we are aware in which the author of the Zohar makes even passing reference to the Shi^cur Qomah.[43] Undoubtedly, the issue is tied to the more general tendency on the part of that author to demote the secret traditions about the chariot-throne to a far inferior position to the doctrines and secrets stemming from the story of Creation.

Nevertheless, kabbalistic authors who lived both before and long after the lifetime of the author of the Zohar can be shown either definitely or tentatively to have known the text of one of the recensions of the Shi^cur Qomah and to have held it in esteem, even while they were attempting to fit it somehow into their own kabbalistic systems. These authors include R. Abraham b. David, R. Isaac the Blind, the author of Sefer Ha^ciyyun, R. Azriel of Gerona, R. Isaac b. Jacob Hakkohen, R. Jacob b. Jacob Hakkohen, R. Moses of Burgos, the author of the Ma^carekhet Ha'elohut, R. Menahem of Recanti, R. Menahem Ziuni, R. Judah Hayyat and R. Meir ibn Gabbai, to limit the list to pre-sixteenth century figures.[44]

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. The word merkavah means "chariot" in Hebrew, but is used in this genre of literature to mean "throne." The merkavah is never actually described as a chariot; presumably the term is a reflex of the ancient Near Eastern motif of the divine chariot-throne; see below, section D, n. 4. Actually, the term merkavah is, generally, limited to certain formulae and technical expressions. When the Throne is mentioned in passing, it is normally called kisse' 'throne' or kisse' hakkavod 'throne of glory,' a term derived from Ez 1:26, 10:1 or Is 6:1. The term kisse' hakkavod, oddly enough, does not appear in either Isaiah or Ezekiel, but is found at Jeremiah 14:21 and 17:21.

2. Peter Schaefer, Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur (Tübingen, 1981), pp. vi-viii. The fragments were published by I. Gruenwald in Tarbiz 38-40 (1969-1971).

3. Jellinek, Bet Hammidrash, vol. 2, pp. 83-108; Wertheimer, Batte Midrashot, vol. 1, pp. 63-136.

4. M. Smith, "Observations on Hekhalot Rabbati," in Biblical and Other Studies, ed. A. Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 143-160.

5. The scribe of Oxford ms. 1791, for example, presents Sefer Haqqomah and the first twelve chapters of the Hekhalot Rabbati together as a single work.

6. Hekhalot Rabbati 4:1, ed. Jellinek, p. 86; Ibid. 5:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 73.

7. The Talmudic passages are discussed below in the commentary to line 81 of the Sefer Haqqomah.

8. The text is slightly corrupt in some of the manuscripts.

9. Hekhalot Rabbati 15:4, ed. Jellinek, p. 95; Ibid. 18:4, ed. Wertheimer, p. 95.

10. Hekhalot Rabbati 23:3, ed. Jellinek, p. 100; Ibid. 24:4, ed. Wertheimer, p. 104.

11. Hekhalot Rabbati 26:4, ed. Jellinek, p. 103; Ibid., 27:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 109.

12. Smith, "Observations," p. 143.

13. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 31-35.

14. Smith, "Observations," p. 143.

15. Hekhalot Rabbati, ch. 10, ed. Jellinek, p. 91; Ibid., 11:4-12:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 87.

16. Wertheimer, p. 87.

17. Hekhalot Rabbati 23:3 and 24:1-6, ed. Jellinek, pp. 100-102; Ibid. 24:4 and 25:2-4, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 104-107.

18. Hekhalot Rabbati, ch. 24, ed. Jellinek, p. 101; Ibid., 25:1-2, ed. Wertheimer, p. 105.

19. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 62; cf. above, pp. 6-7.

20. Ibid.

21. Mossayef, Merkavah Shlemah (Jerusalem, 1921), p. 7a.

22. Mossayef, Merkavah Shlemah, p. 5b.

23. See Peter Schaefer, "Prologomena zu einer kritischen Edition und Analyse der Merkava Rabba," Frankfurter Judaistische Beitraege 5(1977), p. 82.

24. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 101-117.

25. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 103, § 4.

26. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 107.

27. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 115.

28. On the term shevah, see below, the commentary to Sefer Haqqomah, section G, note 5.

29. JTS ms. 8128, Munich mss. 22 and 40 and Oxford ms. 1531; Rachel Elior, Hekhalot Zutarti (=Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought, Supplement I; Jerusalem, 1982.)

30. See Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 6, note 13 and now, Peter Schaefer, "Aufbau und redaktionelle Identitaet der Hekhalot Zutrati," Journal of Jewish Studies 33(1982; =Essays in honour of Yigael Yadin), pp. 569-582.

31. Elior, p. 30, lines 288-289. See, however, Elior's remarks in her book, p. 14. The Shi^{c}ur Qomah does not appear in the middle of any of the other manuscript texts, although it is also so that each of the other manuscripts does give a text of some recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah elsewhere in it. In Munich ms. 22, for example, a very similar text is given right after the text of Hekhalot Zutarti. Munich ms. 40 actually gives two other texts-- one of the Sefer Haqqomah tradition and one from the Merkavah Rabbah family. Oxford ms. 1531 gives a Merkavah Rabbah text as well.

32. See B.M. Levin, 'Oṣar Hagge'onim, vol. 4 (Jerusalem, 1932), p. 14.

33. Scholem, Kabbalah (New York, 1974), pp. 27-28.

34. Scholem, Kabbalah, p. 28.

35. L. Baeck, Aus drei Jahrtausenden (Berlin, 1938), pp. 382-397; cf. his "Zum Sepher Jezirah," MGWJ 70 (1926), pp. 371-376 and "Die Zehn Zephiroth im Sepher Jesirah," MGWJ 78(1934), pp. 448-455.

36. Scholem, Kabbalah, p. 27.

37. Sefer Haqqomah, lines 74-76.

38. Sefer Yesirah 4:4 (long recension), printed as an appendix to the printed editions.

39. BT Rosh Hashanah 27a and Shavu^{c}ot 20b.

40. Sifre Bammidbar §102, ed. Horowitz, p. 100.

41. It is unfortunate that this certainty cannot be extended later than the tannaitic period owing to a lack of concordances to later literature.

42. Sefer Yeşirah 1:3 (long recension), cf. Ibid. 1:4 (short recension).

43. Zohar II 175b-176a.

44. R. Abraham b. David, as cited by his nephew R. Asher b. David, see Moses Souave's untitled article in the 'Osar Nehmad 4(1863), p. 37, and cf. the Ma^{c}arekhet Ha'elohut, chapter 10, ed. Mantua, 1558, p. 157a; Sefer Ha'eshkol, ed. S. Albeck, part I, p. 223; M. Kasher, Torah Shlemah, vol. 16, pp. 290-291; Scholem, Re'shit Haqqabbalah, pp. 75-76, and the ^{c}En Ya^{c}aqov to BT Ta^{c}anit, ch. 1. R. Isaac the Blind quotes the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in his commentary to Sefer Yeşirah 1:4, published as an appendix to Scholem, Haqqabbalah Befrovence, appendix, p. 3. Sefer Ha^{c}iyyun: ed. Hasidah, in Hassegullah 28(1935), p. 3, lines 31 and 32. R. Azriel of Gerona: in his commentary to the Talmudic 'aggadot, ed. Tishby, pp. 36-37, and p. 78. R. Issac b. Jacob Hakkohen: in his Ma'amar ^{c}al Ha'aşilut Hassemalit, published in Scholem, "Qabbalat...," Mada^{c}e Hayyahadut 2(1929), p. 243. R. Moses of Burgos: in his Sod Shelosh ^{c}Esreh Middot, published in Scholem, Leḥeqer Qabbalat R. Yiṣḥaq Hakkohen (Jerusalem, 1934), pp. 305-316. Ma^{c}arekhet Ha'elohut, ed. Ferrara, pp. 190a and 191b, and pp. 158a-162a. R. Menahem of Recanti: quoted by R. Judah Ḥayyaṭ, in the latter's commentary to the Ma^{c}arekhet Ha'elohut, ed. Ferrara, p. 39b. R. Menahem Ziuni: Sefer Siyyoni, ed. D.Z.Y. Kazevnikov (Lwow, 1902; rpt. Jerusalem, 1964), p. 35a. R. Judah Ḥayyaṭ: in his commentary to the Ma^{c}arekhet Ha'elohut, ed. Ferrara, p. 160b. R. Meir ibn Gabbai: Sefer ^{c}Avodat Haqqodesh, ed. Warsaw, 1901, p. 78a.

VII A TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY OF SEFER HAQQOMAH, OXFORD MS. 1791, FF. 58-70

SECTION A

The Book of the [Divine] Body [and] Varia Regarding the Chariot-Throne.[1]

[1] Blessed art Thou,[2] O Lord, our God, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, the great [2] mighty and awesome God,[3] the exalted God, the Creator of heaven and earth.[4] You are He who is the King [3][5] of the kings of kings, God of gods and Lord of lords. Blessed be Your name, exalted be [4] Your name and appelation forever and ever, for all eternity and for all time.[6] [5] And Your seat[7] on the Throne of Glory; and the [celestial] creatures ascend to the Throne of Glory.[8] You are fire [6] and Your throne is fire,[9] and Your [celestial] creatures and servants are fire. Your are fire consuming fire.[10] You are prince [7] over the princes, and your merkavot[11] are on the 'ofanim.[12] Send me![13] ṣ-d-d-r-b-n.[14] And he[15] [8] is appointed over the servants of God, and he will set the Torah[16] in my heart, that they[17] should cry out to me in my throat like a river [9] that flows vigorously.[18] Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Your great, mighty and awesome name is over [other] names.[19] [10] Be exalted in Your strength, O Lord, and we shall sing of Your mighty deeds[20] and let them give thanks to Your great and awesome name; [11] it is holy.[21]

NOTES TO SECTION A

1. The title of this work in this manuscript is Sefer Haqqomah; the reference to "varia" refers to what follows in the text, actually a section of Hekhalot Rabbati.

2. We retain the archaic English structure to indicate the traditional Hebrew liturgical formulary; cf. Ex 3:6, 3:15 and 4:5.

3. Cf. Dt 10:17. See below, section B, note 13.

4. Cf. Gen 14:19 and 22. The entire benediction is in the abbreviated versions of the evening prayer repeated by the reader during the Sabbath evening service. The history of this text is discussed in E. Levy's Yesodot Hattefilah (Tel Aviv, 1947), pp. 175-177.

5. Dt 10:17.

6. These terms for eternity are all rather synonymous in Hebrew.

7. Hebrew: moshav, literally, "seat," but from context, here apparently the part of the godhead that sits on the throne, cf. the German Gesaess, and see below, section B, note 7.

8. The celestial creatures (Hebrew: ḥayyot) are first portrayed by Ezekiel as appearing directly beneath the throne (Ez 1:26), and later, as actually supporting it on their shoulders.

9. Cf. Ez 1:27 and Dan 10:6.

10. Some variant readings delete the final 'esh 'fire,' influenced, perhaps, by Ex 24:17, Dt 4:24, Dt 9:3 or Is 30:27. The reading here, 'esh 'okhelet 'esh, is almost definitely correct, cf. the baraita cited in BT Yoma 21b; the piyyuṭ for the Qedushah of Rosh Hashanah by R. Benjamin b. Samuel cited in the Maḥzor Layyamim Hannora'im, ed. D. Goldschmidt (Jerusalem, 1970), vol. 1, p. 122; and the anonymous piyyuṭ taken from the French rite found in the Maḥzor, ed. Goldschmidt, vol. 1, p. 124.

11. Merkavot here means either "chariots" or "thrones." See note 12, and section D, note 4.

12. 'Ofanim: In Ez 1:15 and 1:20f., the 'ofanim are the wheels of the chariot-throne, but these were personified and described as celestial creatures in their own right as cousins to the ḥayyot. Cf. BT Ḥagigah 12b and 13b and Rosh Hashanah 24b, and also the qedushah dishivah section of the daily morning liturgy. Here the ambiguity is maintained: the merkavah 'chariot' rests on wheels, while the merkavah 'throne' rests on the 'ofanim. See section D, note 4.

13. Cf. Is 6:8.

14. A slash after each letter suggests that these letters form an acronym, although the meaning is obscure. There is the slight possibility that these letters are related somehow to the expression dedarin raba 'the great dweller(s)', a reference to the angels, in the titleless merkavah text published by Scholem as an appendix to his Jewish Gnosticism §20, p. 111. From the context, it would apparently be desirable for ṣ-d-d-r-b-n to be a name, since the text goes on to identify him as the one who is "appointed over the servants of God."

The last three letters correspond to the rabbana title of Metatron used below on line 13, but the initial three letters remain obscure.

15. The reference should be to Metatron, whose name is perhaps somehow hidden in the s-d-d-r-b-n acronym. See note 14.

16. The term is the Aramaic 'oraita in an otherwise entirely Hebrew sentence. Why the Aramaic term is used is unclear.

17. Other manuscripts offer the plural here, presumably referring to the words of the Torah.

18. The underlying idea seems to be intriguing one of the words of Torah pouring forth uncontrollably from the mouth of the mystic like rapidly flowing water.

19. Literally: Your...Name is on names.

20. Cf. Ps 21:14.

21. Ps 99:3.

SECTION B

[12] R. Aqiba said: I give testimony based on my testimony that Metatron said to me,[1] [Metatron,[2] who is] the great prince [13] of testimony,[3] our lord and master,[4] who exalts our blood[5] and who saves us [14] and redeems us from every evil thing.[6] From the place of the seat of His glory[7] and up [is a distance of] 1,180,000,000 [15] parasangs. From His glorious seat and [16] down [is a distance of] 1,180,000,000 parasangs.[8] His height [17] is 2,300,000,000 parasangs. From the right arm [across] until [18] the left arm is 770,000,000 parasangs. [19] And from the right eyeball until the left eyeball [is a distance of] 300,000,000 [20] parasangs.[9] The skull of His head is 3,000,003 and a third [parasangs.][10] [21] The crown[11] on His head is 600,000 [parasangs], corresponding to the 600,000 [22] Israelite minions.[12] This He is called the great, mighty and

awesome God[13] kaliote [klyvtyh]; [23] sazioyte [ṣzyvytyh]; haqtas [hqts]; baᶜavur [bᶜbvr]; masos [msvs].[14] Blessed be He and blessed be [24] the name of the glory of His kingdom forever.[15]

NOTES TO SECTION B

1. Most manuscripts read simply "Metatron...said to me..." A certain number of manuscripts give this text in the name of R. Ishmael, and in fact, the opening here is quite similar to the opening of the longer Ishmaelian text which begins on line 47. The Hebrew text uses a verbal and nominal form based on the same Hebrew root for "testimony" and "to give testimony", but this does not have the redundant ring it has in English.

2. On Metatron, see below, section D, note 9, and above, chapter V vi.

3. Aramaic: sara rabba de'ashaduta. Here, sara rabba is equivalent to the Hebrew hassar haggadol, and may be compared to the title hassofer haggadol hassar given to Metatron in Midrash 'Elleh 'Ezkerah, ed. Jellinek, p. 66. Cf. Lieberman, in Gruenwald, Apocalyptic, pp. 238-239. In the Sefer Ḫanokh text published by Jellinek (in BH, vol. 2, p. 166), the title is even more elaborate. In the Tosefta Betargum Resh Sefer Yeḥezq'el, ed. ed. Wertheimer, p. 139, we find the simpler version, "Metatron, great prince (sara rabba.)" The title as it appears in the Sefer Ḫanokh appears as well in the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 354-355, where it is followed, in a fashion similar to the text of the Sefer Haqqomah, with the expression, "The Lord, God of Israel, is my Witness in this matter." Cyrus Gordon has published the text of a magic bowl in the Archiv Orientálni 6(1934), p. 328, in which Metatron is called sara rabba dekurseh 'the great prince of the throne.'

4. Hebrew: marana verabbana, i.e. the regular honorific form of address, not necessarily implying any particular function or ability. This expression is best known liturgically from the zimmun formulary which is used to call diners to grace.

5. Aramaic: dmn' mnṭln' (unvocalized). The expression is obscure and grammatically difficult. The context calls for a verb and object referring back to Metatron. dmn' could also be read demana' 'of the vessel,' in which case it should be attached to the words which

precede it, to read "lord and master of the vessel, who exalts and saves us..." The references here in either case remain obscure: the exaltation of blood is not a recognizable metaphor, but neither is the notion of Metatron being lord over any particular vessel. Professor Shaye J.D. Cohen suggests that dmn' might perhaps be taken as a transcription of the Latin domine 'lord,' in which case the whole expression could be taken to refer to Metatron, who exalts the Lord. Domine appears transliterated in the rabbinic corpus at 'Avot Derabbi Natan, text B, ch. 6, ed. Schechter, p. 10a and other places as well; see Lieberman, "Qeles Qillusin," p. 76 and p. 80 note 13. If this is correct, then mntln' can be connected to the following phrase to yield "Lord, who takes and saves us..."

6. See below, lines 126-127, for a list of the special rewards that are for him who recites the Shi^{C}ur Qomah on a daily basis. The author of this prayer correctly understood the text to be basically theurgic in nature.

7. This text appears in the following version in the 'Otiot Derabbi ^{C}Aqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 370: "118 from His loins upward and 118 from the loins downward." The text is also given, with translation, in Eisenmenger, p. 4. In his translation, he explains that 118 stands either for 1,180,000 or 1,118,000. See below, note 8, for Eisenmenger's other double readings of figures. The use in the 'Otiot of motnaim 'loins' in place of bet motav yiqare 'the place of the sitting of His glory', i.e. the buttocks, is apparently a modest circumlocution. See the reference to maqom moshavo below, line 134.

8. Qirqisani (translated by Nemoy in his "Al Qirqisani's Account of the Jewish Sects and Christianity," HUCA 7(1930), p. 350) states: "...His height from the sole of His foot up to His entire stature comprises 236,000 parasangs." His contemporary, Salmon b. Yeruhim preferred to rely on the Ishmaelian text, and so gives the figure of 100 billion parasangs for the total height of the godhead; see below, lines 117-118. This passage also inspired Kallir, see Baer's Seder ^{C}Avodat Yisra'el p. 655; Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 129, note to p. 41, line 8, and cf. the passage in the 'Otiot, ed. Wertheimer, p. 370: "...it is taught that the body of the Shekhinah is 2,360,000,000 parasangs." Eisenmenger, p. 4, gives this citation from the 'Otiot with the figure of 2,360,000, but notes in his translation that the larger figure was known to him as an alternate text. Cf. also Hekhalot Rabbati 12:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 87.

9. A parasang is a Persian mile, the equivalent of about three quarters of a mile. The Hebrew parsah (=Greek parasagges; Syriac farseho) is a loan word from the Persian, see below, section E, note 3.

10. The skull is specifically mentioned both later on in the text, where it is called ᶜiggul ro'sho 'the circle of the head,' and also in Midrash Mishle 10:20, ed. Buber, p. 34a, where it is called gadgod 'skull.' See below, notes to line 74. Cf. also the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 391: Resh (the letter of the Hebrew alphabet): This refers to the head of the Holy One, blessed be He, which resembles finest gold. His locks are curled and as black as a raven's, as it is written, "His head is finest gold... (Song 5:11.)"

11. Hebrew: ᶜaṭarah.

12. Six hundred thousand is the regular rabbinic approximation of the 603,550 figure found in Nu 2:32. The figure given is presumably the diameter of the crown, since the circumference of the skull is five times greater. Possibly, both figures give height, in which case, the crown is simply 20% taller than the head.

13. Cf. Dt 10:17. This is the opening phrase of the Shemoneh ᶜEsreh prayer; its earliest liturgical use is apparently in Neh 9:32. See below, line 102, and our discussion of Dt 10:17 above in chapter V v.

14. The meaning and function of these obscure words are unknown. Some of the words have meanigs: kaliote means "his kidneys"; baᶜavur masos means "on behalf of joy." Together the words appear to be meaningless. In this instance, and in the rest of the text, we give obscure and untranslatable terms both vocalized and in their consonantal spellings. These vocalizations are merely intended to facilitate scholarly discourse by providing a pronounacable version of each name. Generally, the names have been vocalized by the insertion of the vowel a between consonants, except where some other vowel suggests itself for reasons of euphony.

15. The familiar rabbinic doxology, recited as part of the recitation of the Shema prayer and originating in the liturgy of the Second Temple, cf. the commentary of Bertinoro to M Taᶜanit 2:5. An etiology is given in BT Pesaḥim 56a, to which may be compared the less mythic attempt in Sifre Devarim §306, ed. Finkelstein, p. 342.

SECTION C

And all[1] who know this secret[2] are certain [to acquire] the world to come.[3] [25] The Holy One, blessed be He, will save him from every evil thing, and from all kinds of sorcery and from the evil eye and from the evil inclination [26] and from evil thoughts and from all kinds of destroyers,[4] and from all kinds of damagers,[5] and from poverty [27] and from evil plans.[6] And do not bring us to need the gifts of [other] men.[7] [28] Therefore are we obligated to praise, beautify,[8] glorify, exalt, bless and magnify [29] [the] great King, mighty King, strong King, powerful King, brave King, [30] King of truth, fair King, balanced King,[9] honored King, living King [31] existent King, holy King, sanctified King, pure King, first King, [32] ruling King, one King, divine King, superior King, certain King, [33] supernal King, King of splendor, lofty King, exalted King, precious King, [34] King of beauty and splendor, honored King, King of strength, strong King, splendid King, [35] good King, beneficent King, forgiving King, excusing King, [36] luminous King, King who grants atonement, benevolent King,[10] King who causes to die, King [37] who revives, King who wounds, King who heals, King who impoverishes, King who enriches, [38] King who casts down, King who raises up, shining King, King who sustains, King [39] who nourishes,[11] King who supports, proud King, mighty King, merciful King, [40] gracious King, King who makes, King who creates, King who is Judge,[12] King of judgement, [41] King who is arbiter,[13] King of justice, jealous King, King who seeks vengeance, King who saves, [42] King who redeems, awesome King, precious King, King whose name is King of the kings of [43] kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, and His is the kingdom and the greatness and the might and mercy and forgiveness.[14] [44] King who pardons all your sins and who heals all your illnesses.[15] King who [45] makes a sign with us[16] for good, for the sake of His great, mighty and revered name, [46] as it is stated [in Scripture]: He tells His words to Jacob, His laws and His statutes to Israel.[17]

NOTES TO SECTION C

1. We read vekol for veki 'and because,' both from context and because of the strong variant readings in the other manuscripts of the Sefer Haqqomah.

2. Hebrew: raz, the technical term for theurgic truths, as in the title of the magic compendium, Sefer Harazim.

3. Literally: "is assured of the world to come." Cf.

below, lines 122-124.

4. Hebrew: mashhit, a genus of demon.

5. Hebrew: maziqin, also a genus of demons.

6. Hebrew: mimmahashavot ra^{c}ot, as opposed to the "evil thoughts" mentioned just above (Hebrew: hirhurim ra^{c}im.) The latter are evil thoughts one might have oneself, while the former are probably the evil plans others might hatch against the supplicant.

7. This is a quotation from the rabbinic grace after meals. The following hymn is quoted in its entirety in the Shevet Musar of R. Elijah Hakkohen of Smyrna (Lwów, 1859), pp. 22c-d.

8. Hebrew: lefa'er, i.e. to declare to be (rather than to make) beautiful.

9. Hebrew: nakhon, i.e. fair, not predisposed in judgement.

10. Hebrew: ma^{c}avir, literally, "who causes to pass away," referring either to the sins of men, as in Job 7:21 or 2 Sam 24:10; or, possibly, to men themselves, as in M Rosh Hashanah 1:2, or possibly to the divine glory itself, as in Ex 33:19.

11. Hebrew: matrif, as in Pr 30:8.

12. Hebrew: dayyan.

13. Hebrew: shofet, a synonym of dayyan. Our translation preserves the euphony of the Hebrew dayyan juxtaposed against din 'judgement.'

14. Cf. the similar litanites in Hekhalot Rabbati and Hekhalot Zuṭarti. A short version appears in the eighteenth chapter of Hekhalot Rabbati, ed. Wertheimer, p. 95; a longer version is found in the twenty-fourth chapter, ed. cit., p. 104. The other manuscripts of the Sefer Haqqomah offer quite different versions of this hymn, most of which are acrostic hymns, and most of which give away their composite nature by offering between four and nine lines of poetry for each letter of the alphabet. A version appears in Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, p. 32, lines 333-348.

15. Ps 103:3. The archaic Hebrew is in the Biblical source as well.

16. Ps 86:17.

17. Ps 147:19. The use of this verse here is probably more because of its use as the regular doxology in the various sections of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah than as a real proof-text in the classical midrashic sense. See above, chapter V v.

SECTION C_x

(N.B. Sections C_x, J_x, L_x and N_x, which are the sections present in the long versions of the Sefer Haqqomah, are translated here from JTS ms. 1892.)

[1] To You, God, [belong] greatness and power and splendor and victory and beauty, for all is in heaven and on earth. Yours, God is [2] the kingdom; You exalt Yourself over the heads of all men.[1] Who can recount the mighty acts of the King of the kings of kings, [3] and who can detail the praises of the King, and who can tell of the mighty acts of Him of great power, and who can tell the [4] power of His deeds and who can relate His many wonderful acts and in whom is there sufficient intelligence to encompass His glory, and in whom [5] is there sufficient wisdom to relate His merciful deeds?[2] Happy is Israel, who put their trust in Him,[3] and who desired His commandments [6] very much, for the Holy One blessed be He, loves them and has mercy on them, as does a father on his sons, and He directs them in the path of life and saves them [7] from the path of [death].[4] Direct me, N.,[5] with You, Your slave, the son of Your maidservant, direct me in the path of life,[6] [8] for I have put my trust in You. Who is like our Lord? Who is like our God? Who is like our King? Who is like our Savior? [9] There is none like our God. There is none like our Lord. There is none like our King. There is none like our Savior. Let us give thanks to our God. Let us give thanks to our Lord. Let us give thanks [10] to our King. Let us give thanks to our Savior.[7] Yours is the greatness; Yours is the power. To You greatness and kingship are fitting. [11] Yours is the beauty; Yours is the loveliness. To You, beauty is becoming. Yours is the kingship; Yours is strength. You are exceedingly strong;[8] to You, honor and strength are becoming,[9] [12] for You are great and a doer

of wonders.[10] You alone are God. You made the highest reaches of heaven [13] and all the heavenly hosts, the earth and all that is in it.[11] They acknowledge[12] You, O God, first and final God,[13] for You are first and last, [14] a mighty Hero and diligent Savior.[14] O Lord, happy is the man who places his trust in You.[15]

NOTES TO SECTION C_x

1. I Ch 29:11.

2. This progression is an expansion of Ps 106:2.

3. The text uses the Hebrew preposition ᶜal in an unusual way, apparently in imitation of the usage found at Pr 28:25, 31:15, 37:5 or Jer 49:11.

4. Cf. Jer 21:8.

5. Hebrew: peloni. The scribe means that the supplicant should insert his own name and the name of his mother. Some scribes actually inserted their own names.

6. Cf. Ps 16:11.

7. See above, ch. V iii regarding the use of the 'En Kelohenu hymn in the various recensions of the text.

8. Hebrew: ᶜizzuz.

9. This hymn is discussed above in chapter V iii.

10. Cf. Ps 136:4.

11. Cf. Neh 9:6.

12. Hebrew: yodu, or "give thanks to."

13. Cf. Is 44:6 and 48:12.

14. Cf. Jer 14:9 or Zeph 3:17.

15. Ps 84:13.

SECTION D

[47] R. Ishmael[1] said: I saw[2] the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, as He was sitting[3] [48] on an exalted throne[4] and His soldiers[5] were standing before Him to the right and to the left.[6] [49] [Thereupon] spoke[7] to me the angel, the prince of the presence,[8] whose name is Metatron [mṭṭrvn],[9] Ruaḥ [rvḥ], Pisqonit [pysqvnyt], [50] Itmon ['yṭmvn], Higron [hygrvn], Sigron [sygrvn], Meton [mṭvn], Mitan [mytn] and Neṭiṭ [nṭyṭ] [51] and Netif [nṭyp].[10] R. Ishmael says: What is the measure[11] of the body of the Holy One, blessed be He,[12] who [52] lives and exists for all eternity, may His name[13] be blessed and His name[14] exalted? The soles of [53] His feet fill the entire universe, as it is stated [in Scripture]: The heavens are My seat, the earth, My footstool.[15] [54] The height of His soles is 30,000,000 parasangs;[16] its name is Parmeseh [prmsyyh].[17] [55] From His feet until His ankles is 10,000,500 parasangs. The [56] name of His right ankle is Atarqam ['trqm],[18] and [the name] of the left [one] is Ava Tarqam ['v' ṭrqm].[19] From His ankles [57] until His knees is 190,000,000 parasangs. Qanangi [qnngy] is its name.[20] The name of His right calf is Qangi [qngy];[21] [58] the name of the left [calf] is Mehariah [mhryh].[22] [59] From His knees until His thighs is 120,000,000 parasangs.[23] [60] The name of His right knee is Setamnegatz [stmngṣ],[24] and the name of the left [knee] is Pedangas [pdngs].[25] [61] The name of the right thigh is Vihmai [vyhmyy],[26] and the name of the left [thigh] is Partmai [prtmyy].[27] From His thighs [62] until His neck is 240,000,000 parasangs.[28] [63] The name of the innermost part of His loins[29] is Asasnigiyahu ['ssnygyhv].[30] And on His heart[31] are seventy names:[32] [64] ṣaṣ [ṣṣ], tzedeq [ṣdq], tzehu'el [shv'l], tzur [ṣvr], tzevi [ṣby], tzadiq [ṣdyq], sa^{c}af [s^{c}p], [65] saḥan [shn], yyy, yehu [yhv], hhh, 'ahah ['hh], ṣṣṣ, pa'af [p'p], [66] ppp, yod [yvd], 'a'alef ['''lp], tzaḥ [ṣḥ], ve'edom [v'dvm], niṭar [nyṭr], niṭra [nyṭr'], [67] hah [hh], yah [yh], yhvh, shadai [shdy], tzeva'ot [sb'vt], 'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh ['hyh 'ashr 'hyh], [68] ḥefetz [ḥfṣ], haṣaṣ [hṣṣ], rokhev ^{c}aravot [rvkb ^{c}rbvt], vihu [vyhv], hi [hy], hah [hh], mmm, [69] nnn, qasheh [qshh], hadar [hdr], va'el [v'l], hahu [hhv], vehah [vhh], zakh [zk], veyashar [vyshr], 'a'a'a ['''], [70] ^{c}a'a'a [^{c}''], pahah [phh], heḥai [hhy], ram [rm], bakav [bkb], bbb, ṭṭṭ, 'amaṭ ['mṭ], [71] 'el ['l], yah [yh], kelil [klyl], bekhakh [bkk], 'i ['y], zeha' [zh'], tze^{c}a [ṣ^{c}'], 'ay'a ['y'], 'ahi ['hy], [72] zi' [zy'], sis [sys], 'otiotav ['vtyvtyv]. Blessed and revered be the name of the glory of His kingdom [73] forever.[33]

His neck is 130,000,000 parasangs [74] tall. The name of His neck is Samanhu Vihteratz [smnhv vyhtrs].[34] The circumference of His head [75] is 10,000,033 and a third [parasangs], that which the mouth cannot [76] express,[35] and that which the ear cannot hear. [77] 'Atar Huriyah Va^{c}atasiyah ['tr hvryh v^{c}tsyh] is its name.[36] His beard is 11,500 parasangs; [78] its name is Hadarqamsiah [hdrqmsyh].[37] The appearance of the face and the appearance of the cheeks[38] are in the image of the [79] spirit[39] [and in the form of the soul] and [as such,] no man is able to recognize it.[40] His body is [80] like tarshish.[41] His splendor is luminous,[42] [and] awesome[43] from within [the] darkness; cloud and fog surround Him[44] [81] and all the princes of the presence [supplicate] before Him as [obedient as water] poured from a pitcher.[45] We have naught in our hands save the names [82] which are revealed alone.[46] The nose, Mag Bag Ve'akhargag Ṭafia [heḥai hashash; hḥy hshsh mg bg v'krgg tpy'] is [83] its name.[47] His tongue [stretches] from one end of the universe to the other, as it is stated [in Scripture]: He tells His words [84] to Jacob.[48] The width of His forehead is 130,000,800 parasangs;[49] [85] the name of the width of His forehead is 'Istanyahu ['stnyhv; vocalization in text].[50] And on His forehead [86] are written seventy letters: yh, yh', hh', hv', [87] hyh, vyhh, 'hh, yhv, vhh, qv, 'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh ['hyh 'shr 'hyh], [88] 'h, hy, vyh, tzava' [ṣb'], hhv, hhv, hv, [89], leh [lyh], vesam [vsm], hh.[51] The black of His right eye is 10,000,500 [90] parasangs. The name of its prince is Raḥmi'el [rhmy'l].[52] The name of the white of His right eye is Paḥarkasiah [pḥrksyh],[53] [91] and the name of the left is Bazaqtzatqiah [bzqstqyh].[54] From His right shoulder[55] to His left shoulder is [92] 160,000,000 parasangs. The name of the right shoulder is Tatmehininiah [ttmhynyny'][56] [93] and the name of the left is Shalmehinini'el [shlmhynyny'l].[57] From His right arm until His left arm is [94] 120,000,000 parasangs. His arms are folded.[58] The name of [95] His right arm is Gevar Hodiah [gbr hvdy'][59] and the name of the left is Va^{c}ans [v^{c}ns].[60] His cheeks are like a bed [96] of spices.[61] And thus you begin to count from the big one.[62] The palms of His hands [97] are [a distance of] 40,000,000 parasangs; its name is 'Ashhuzia ['shhvzy'].[63] The fingers of His hands are 15,000,000 [98] parasangs, 13,000,000 parasangs [99] each finger.[64] Its name is Tatmat [ttmt], Tatmetzatz [ttmṣṣ], Gagat [ggt], Menat [mnt], [100] Gag [gg].[65] His toes[66] are 100,000,000 parasangs; its name is [101] 'Adarmatz ['drms], Kakhmenat [kkmnt], Zu [zv], Zayin [zyyn], Menon [mnvn], Zayin [zyyn].[67] And thus you begin [102] to count from the big one.[68] Therefore is He called

the great, mighty and awesome God[69] [103] as it is stated [in Scripture]:"For the Lord God is the God of gods etc."70 And it is [further] written:"And you shall know that [104] the Lord your God is God, the faithful God, etc."71

NOTES TO SECTION D

1. R. Ishmael is specifically connected to visions akin to these in the titleless merkavah text published by Scholem in his Jewish Gnosticism, § 7, p. 107; Merkavah Rabbah, beginning, ed. Mossayef, p. 1a (and cf. p. 5b); Midrash Mishle 10:12-23, ed. Buber, pp. 33b-34a; and less clearly, in BT Berakhot 6b in the famous passage the encounter between R. Ishmael and Akatriel Yah, the Lord of Hosts.

2. Cf. 2 K 22:19 and Is 6:1. There may be a point to the statement that R. Ishmael saw the Deity. In sections G and H, praise is directed towards those who know the measurements, which is apparently a lesser level of mystic achievement than actually seeing them on high. The idea is, more simply, that the results of the mystic communion of one generation is intended to serve as the meditative stuff of subsequent generations. It is by knowing what R. Ishamel saw that the latter-day mystic may achieve his own mystic experience. Ultimately, the latter-day mystic has the same relationship to R. Ishmael that the latter does to Metatron; cf. the text in section B, in which R. Aqiba does not see anything, but merely learns the mystic facts from Metatron. In the short Maʿayan Ḥokhmah text, ed. Jellinek, p. 61, it is noted that Moses received all sorts of esoteric pieces of information from the angels regarding the divine names. It is also noted there (ed. cit., p. 59) that, although even the angels cannot discern the location of the godhead, Moses did actually gaze upon (ra'ah) the Deity. The idea is that Moses, being the greatest of all prophets, and, by extension, of all mystics as well, could not appropriately use the mystic revelation of any earthly predecessor as his meditative stuff and so was allowed to make use of angelic sources of mystic information. The suggestion that even Sandelfon, who makes crowns for the Deity behind the throne, does not know His place appears at BT Ḥagigah 13b. Cf. J. Dan's article on the concept of knowledge in the Shiʿur Qomah in the Altmann Festschrift (University, Alabama, 1979), pp. 67-73, and also the similar turn of phrase in Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, p. 23, lines 86-87.

3. The Hebrew shehu' yoshev suggests more of a stative, permanent position, and would perhaps be better translated, "who sits" or "seated."

4. Apparently, the word ram has fallen out of the text of this manuscript, but it may easily be restored based on the other manuscript readings. Adding ram and making another slight emendation in the text yields the translation "...on a lofty and exalted throne." The word kisse' 'throne' is derived from Is 6:1 and 2 K 22:19. The word merkavah 'chariot' is not the regular term for the divine throne in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. In other texts, kisse' and merkavah are used more or less interchangeably, as, e.g., in the Hekhalot Rabbati 1:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 67 or 5:3, ed. cit., p. 74. The word merkavah, despite its later development into the title for the entire literary genre, does not actually appear in either of the Biblical passages from which most of the throne imagery is taken, Ezekiel 1 and Isaiah 6. Kisse', on the other hand, appears in both, at Ez 1:26 and Is 6:1. I Ch 28:18 already appears to use merkavah in its later meaning of "throne," but the exact meaning there is hard to fix. To read "throne" already in I Ch 28 is to assume that merkavah had already developed the double meaning of "throne" and "chariot" it came to have in rabbinic Hebrew, as well as in Syriac. Cf. Payne Smith's dictionary, s.v. markebah, p. 301. Rashi, for one, understands merkavah in I Ch 28 to mean "chariot", although he does allude, apparently, to the ambiguity of the term by explaining that the reference is to the cherubs on which the "Shekhinah rides [rokhevet]." Cf. his comments ad locum in I Ch and also the comments of R. David Kimhi to that same passage. The possibility exists that Rashi did take merkavah to mean "throne" and used rokhevet to mean "sits," deriving the term via paranomasia from the term merkavah itself. The earliest unambiguous use of merkavah to refer to the divine throne is in Ben Sira 49:11, ed. Segal, p. 338 (=Greek 49:8): "Ezekiel saw a vision and told of (the various) species (of creature supporting?) the merkavah." The Greek translators took this literally and translated epi harmatos 'on a chariot.' The earliest rabbinic text to use merkavah for the Biblical kisse' is M Ḥagigah 2:1. The term in Ben Sira is discussed briefly by Scholem in his article on merkavah mysticism in the Encyclopaedia Judaica, 1972, vol. 11, col. 1386. Given the clearly attested meaning of merkavah, we may assume that the use of kisse' in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is intended to reveal, at least to a certain extent, the author's intent to rely on the Biblical text rather than on any other, later texts. The author of the angelic

liturgy at Qumran, ed. Strugnell, p. 336, refers to kisse' merkavah, thus using both expressions. The redundancy of the expression is unnatural and suggests some other motive than simple clarity, especially since the throne is quite stationary, and does not roll around at all, at least not in the texts we have examined, and certainly not in the Shi^cur Qomah. In later Hebrew, the 'ofanim to which reference is made in Ezekiel 1, 3, and 10 are not literally wheels, but are celestial creatures, cousins of the hayyot described in the first chapter of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel, they are, of course, wheels, and it is perhaps the image of a throne (kisse') with wheels ('ofanim) that leads to the use of the term merkavah to mean "throne." Cf. the use of the expression "a lofty and exalted throne" in Massekhet Hekhalot, ed. Jellenik, p. 40 and cf. the distinction Yannai makes between kisse' and merkavah in his poem, ed. Zulai, 5:112-114, p. 15 as well as his identification of them, ed. cit, 16:21-22, p. 38. On the larger picture of the chariot-throne, see H.P. L'Orange, Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World (Oslo, 1953), pp. 48-63 and 124-138.

L'Orange shows that, whatever its original source, the idea of a deity or king sitting on a throne with wheels was a regular one in Sassanian Persia, and offers a selection of illustrations to back up his assertion that the motif of a chariot-throne was also current in early Christian iconography. L'Orange does not have any knowledge of Jewish merkavah mysticism, and so does not propose that at least the Christian (if not the Persian) iconographic traditions might have been inspired by Jewish post-Biblical literature, and not only by Biblical tradition (as preserved, for example, in Ezekiel) and the general Near-Eastern tradition of a chariot-throne. Whatever the precise relationship is between all of these motifs and ideas, there can be no real doubt that the notion of a god seated on a chariot-throne is a common and regular one throughout Jewish, Christian and Near-Eastern literature and iconography.

5. The term hayyalotav 'his soldiers' for the celestial creatures is used in a parable found in the Visions of Ezekiel, lines 34-38, ed. Gruenwald, pp. 111-113. The term is also used in the Ma^cayan Hokhmah, ed. Jellinek, p. 59. Rashi, who clearly understood the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs to be referring to the anthropomorphically conceived godhead, comments on the phrase "pre-eminent among the ten-thousand" (Song 5:10) with the gloss "distinguished by many soldiers." The usage is obviously derived from the Biblical use of ṣava'

'army' to denote the host of angels in heaven. Especially pertinent, perhaps, is the use of the expressions sar şeva' yhvh 'the prince of the host of the Lord' (Jos 5:14 and 15) or sar haşşava' 'prince of the host' (Dan 8:11.) If the guardian angels (sarim) are the "princes of the host," then the masses of angels are mere hayyalim 'soldiers' in the supernal army.

6. Cf Is 6:1 and 2 K 22:19. The Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^{c}ezer, ed. Warsaw, 1852, ch. 4, p. 9b, gives the details of which angels stand to which side. In the 'Otiot Derabbi ^{c}Aqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 365, there is a reference to the "many soldiers of the princes of fire" who surround God as He sits on His throne. In Hekhalot Rabbati, there are not separate sets of angels on the right and on the left. In the tenth chapter, ed. Wertheimer, p. 84, it is explained (slightly obscurely) how the wheel of the throne grabs the angels on the left and switches them with those on the right. Similarly are the angels in front of the throne exchanged with those behind the throne. There is no reference in this passage in the Sefer Haqqomah to angels in front of and behind the throne. In the Seder Rabbah Debereshit § 46, ed. Wertheimer, p. 45, it is calculated that there are 9,060,000,000 angels on either side. The angels that surround the throne should not be confused with the celestial hayyot who are found below the throne, as in Ez 1:26 or above and below, as in 3 Enoch, ch. 1, ed. Odeberg, p. 4. The number 9,060,000,000 is a variant of the figure 960,000,000 given in the medieval Sod Ha'egoz, ed. Dan, p. 82, where it is added that a river of fire separates each of those almost two billion angels. Cf. Yannai 132:133, ed. Zulai, p. 335, and also Hekhalot Zuţarti, ed. Elior, p. 25, line 100.

7. The syntax here is a bit confused. 'Amar li... Meţaţron means "Metatron said to me" and presumably is spoken by R. Ishmael. The problem is that there follows a list of Metatron's own mystic names, and no immediate quote. Line 51 begins with a new quotation, "R. Ishmael says..." The manuscripts offer a variety of possibilities. Oxford ms. 2257, for example, continues on line 51 with "and he said to me, 'Ishmael my friend, I shall tell you...'" thus making the entire text a revelation of Metatron to R. Ishmael. This solves the problem, but leaves others in its stead, not the least of which is that in most of the other manuscripts, it is only the Aqiban portion of the text that is specifically cast as a revelation from Metatron. The Siddur Rabbah recension gives ve^{c}omed instead of 'amar li, thus merely having R. Ishmael remark that Metatron

stands while the Deity sits on His throne. This is somehow related to the famous story of the apostasy of Elisha b. Abuyah in BT Ḥagigah 15a, where it is observed that this rabbi saw Metatron seated and began to speculate whether there might not be two "authorities" in heaven. The Talmud explains that Metatron sits because he functions as the divine scribe, a title by which he is, in fact, called in several recensions of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. A third possibility is that the phrase 'amar li metatron is being spoken by the mystic narrator, who is informing us that his knowledge of what R. Ishmael said and saw in the celestial throneroom was the result of a revelation of Metatron. In this case, the author would be casting his mystic information as a revelation (by Metatron to R. Ishmael) within a revelation (by Metatron to the mystic author.) We could then distinguish between the opening lines of section D, which are presented as a baraita in the name of R. Ishmael, and the rest of the section, which is cast as a direct revelation of Metatron to the author. Cf. Hekhalot Rabbati 12:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 87, "Metatron said, 'Until here did I see the height of Yedidiah, the Master of the Universe.'" This remark also appears in the Merkavah Rabbah recension of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. A fourth possibility is that the text is incomplete, and that Metatron's statement is absent. Perhaps simplest of all is to assume that the phrase is meant to anticipate line 104, or that it should be read just before line 104 and is displaced in our text.

8. Hebrew: sar happanim, literally: "prince of the face." The name presumably implies that Metatron, being the valet of the godhead, is allowed to gaze on the face of the Deity, a right not offered to the other angels. The acronym formed from this designation is identical, consonantally, to the Hebrew name of Moses, and this identity seems to have caused some confusion as to which personality is meant in certain traditions.

9. The figure of Metatron has generated a great deal of research. The most comprehensive surveys are in Odeberg's introduction to 3 Enoch, pp. 111-135; Margoliot, Mal'akhe ^{c}Elyon, pp. 73-108; Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 43-55; Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 43-55; Scholem, Les Origines de la Kabbale, pp. 132-135 and 225-231; Scholem, Kabbalah, pp. 373-378; and, most recently, Lieberman's appendix no. 1 to I. Gruenwald's book, Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism, pp. 235-241. On Metatron in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, see above, chapter V vi.

10. These are apparently a sampling of the mystic names

of Metatron, of which there are usually recorded seventy, as, for example, in the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 353, where, among the seventy, are some of these names as well. The ruaḥ pisqonit also appears in BT Sanhedrin 44b, where we find the phrase, "Said the ruah pisqonit before the Holy One, blessed be He..." Rashi, ad locum, comments that this ruah 'spirit' is the angel Gabriel. This remark in the Talmud is apparently, but not explicitly, attributed to R. Dimi, the Palestinian amora of the third and fourth centuries, who went to Babylonia at a certain point in his career, bringing many Palestinian traditions with him. At the same place in the Talmud, we have the further statement of R. Yossi b. Ḥanina, a late third century Palestinian amora, to the effect that "he" has three names: pisqon, 'iṭmon and sigron, which stand for his three roles in heaven. Pisqon refers to his role as legal adjudicator in the heavenly tribunal (poseq); 'Iṭmon indicates that he obscures ('otem) the sins of Israel; Sigron, that his discision in these matters is final (kevan shessoqer, shuv 'eno poteaḥ.) Rashi, ad locum, understands Sigron to refer to the fact that after he asks for justice, neither he nor any other angel can ask for mercy. Why Rashi chose to explain that these references are to Gabriel is not clear. Attention may be drawn to the section on the names of Metatron in Margoliot's Mal'akhe ᶜElyon, 2nd ed., pp. 85-87, where reference is made to the discussion of the name Sigron in the Tiqqune Hazzohar 18, ed. Margoliot, p. 31b and to Zohar II 279b, which must be corrected to 249b. Wertheimer, in a note to the passage from the 'Otiot cited above, refers to a passage in the Tiqqune Hazzohar that mirrors the statement of R. Yossi b. Ḥanina, but his reference seems to be incorrect, unless he is referring to the discussion of the name Metatron in the fifty-seventh tiqqun, ed. Margoliot, p. 91b, where some of the mystical names of the angels are said to change according to the precise mission in which the angel is engaged at that moment. The names there are quite like the names in the Talmud, and the name Piṭḥon is added to mirror Sigron, thus making Metatron into both the "closer" and the "opener" of the gates of prayer.

11. The phrase shiᶜur qomah is discussed above in chapter V i.

12. The more regular term for the Deity in the Shiᶜur Qomah is yoser 'Creator,' but the use of the most standard rabbinic term here points to a desire on the part of the author to leave no ambiguity regarding the identity of the figure described in the text.

13. Hebrew: shem.

14. Hebrew: zekher.

15. Cf. Is 66:1. The universe-length dimensions of the foot stand in contrast to the other limbs, which are given precise numerical lengths, as is the foot itself. Perhaps there is some relationship, presumably an antagonistic one, between this statement and the midrash on Ex 17:6 in the Mekhilta Derabbi Shim^{c}on b. Yohai, ed. Epstein-Melamed, p. 118; cf. the passage in the Mekhilta Derabbi Yishma^{c}'el, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, 2nd ed., p. 175.

16. The constant reference to "soles" instead of "feet" is possibly intended to underscore the fact that the description is not intended to be taken metaphorically. The term "feet of the Shekhinah" is a familiar rabbinic turn of phrase, as in the statement of R. Issac preserved in the BT Hagigah 16a (and Qiddushin 31a): He who sins in secret, it is as though he would have shoved the feet of the Shekhinah. R. Isaac also offers Is 66:1 as his proof-text. On the other hand, elsewhere the term is used, as here, literally to designate the feet of the godhead, as in the Seder Rabbah Debereshit § 19, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 30-31: "And beyond all these (zones of the universe) are the celestial creatures, and the 'ofanim and the Throne of Glory and the feet of the Shekhinah surround them overhead, as it is written... Just as the Shekhinah is on high, so is the Shekhinah down below, as it is written...and "the heavens are My throne; the earth, my footstool (Is 66:1)," and there are 100,000,000 attending angels who stand around the feet of the Shekhinah and praise Him with all types of praise." The text in the Seder Rabbah goes on to explain that the feet of the Shekhinah are surrounded by 18,000 worlds, 4,500 in each direction. This text also appears in Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 34, in a slightly different version.

17. The Ishmaelian text (lines 47-104) is different from the Aqiban text in that it presents mystical names for the limbs and organs along with their measurements. I. Gruenwald's comments on the significance of these names in his Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism, p. 214-215 may be consulted.

18. The meaning of the name is unclear.

19. The meaning of this name is unclear. It is clearly based on the name of the right ankle. The various

manuscripts are at considerable variance with each other.

20. It is not clear of which body part Qanangi is the name. The names of the knees are given below and the names of the ankles above. Possibly, Qanangi is the name of one of the calves, but they are named immediately blow. At any rate, this section is quite out of order. It is clear that we should rearrange it so as to read, in order, the distance from the ankles to the calves, the names of the calves, the distance from the calves to the knees, the names of the knees, the distance from the knees to the thighs, and the names of the thighs. This requires a bit of emendation and reconstruction, but it seems plausible to assume that the text was once better organized, as are many of the other manuscripts of the text. Qanangi may ultimately be dismissed as a variant of Qangi, and is absent, in fact, from the majority of manuscripts.

21. The significance of the names of the limbs is discussed in chapter V 4 above. All of the consonants in the name Qangi are used elsewhere to obfuscate the meaning of the other names, and the meaning remains unclear.

22. Possibly meaning, "God is swift."

23. Yannai, who was firmly grounded in the texts of merkavah mysticism, had an image not unknown from other texts of the various divine limbs inhabiting various sections of the heavens. The knee, for example, unless Yannai's rekuv should be taken as a poetic term for merkavah, is to be found in ʿAravot, according to Yannai 132:122, ed. Zulai, p. 334. ʿAravot is the seventh heaven, cf. Yannai 5:113, ed. cit., p. 15. The reading rekuv for a single knee, while unusual in Hebrew, is found at BT Ḥagigah 13a, and cf. Midrash Tehillim to Ps 104:3, ed. Buber, p. 221a, where rekuv means "chariot."

24. Meaning unclear. Setam possibly means "hidden." If we eliminate the last three letters of the name, in accordance with the principle of interpreting the names based on the elimination of the regularly added letters of obfuscation, we may take the whole name to refer to God as the "Hidden One."

25. The name Pedanges is corrupt according to Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 98, who reads Pharanges, based on the text of Oxford ms. Hebr. C. 65. The name Pharanges appears, in Scholem's words, on an "innumerable number of magical gems, amulets and splints of

Greek, Coptic and Latin provenance, beginning in the early third century." The name also appears in some magic bowl incantation texts, cf. Scholem, p. 98 and Montgomery, Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur (Philadelphia, 1913), p. 146.

26. This name seems to be a permutation of some sort of the Tetragrammaton.

27. The meaning of this name is obscure. The fact that it rhymes with the name of the right thigh, Vihmai, suggests that the suffixes are artificially formed.

28. The parasang is a Persian loan-term, equal to about three-quarters of a mile. See above, section B, note 9.

29. Hebrew: motne motnayhu, literally: the loins of His loins. Nominal duplication generally indicates a superlative of some sort, possibly of either immensity or quintessence. Possibly, the duplication here, however, is merely indicative of a certain reticence to speak baldly about the divine loins.

30. If we eliminate the initial three letters, we have the meaning of "splendor" (Hebrew: nogah).

31. The divine heart is the only internal organ mentioned in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. In BT Sanhedrin 99a, the heart of the godhead is contrasted with the limbs.

32. Actually, there follow only sixty-six terms. It is possibly that some of the names have dropped out, but cf. the situation in Sefer Hanokh, ed. Jellinek, p. 114, which begins, "The Holy One, blessed be He, has seventy names exactly (beferush), and these are they..." and then goes on to give seventy-two names. Below, line 86, the reference to seventy letters is followed by twenty-three words, comprising only sixty-six letters. The fact that both references to the number seventy in our text are followed by only sixty-six items is possibly significant, but it is no longer possible to say with certainty in what way, and, at any rate, coincidence is a more likely explanation. Later in the text of Sefer Hanokh, there is a reference to ninety-two names "like the Tetragrammaton," but these are not enumerated in the text. If "like the Tetragrammaton" means permutations of the letters yod, heh and vav, then these would be even more similar to the "letters" of our text on line 86. The seventy names are also presented in the 'Otiot, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 350, where it is explicitly stated that there are seventy names that are

explicit, but that there are an infinite number of ineffable names. There follow exactly seventy names, all ending in the suffix -iron. There is also a reference in the 'Otiot, text A, ed. cit., p. 354, to the ninety-two names "like the Tetragrammaton" but these are not given in the printed text.

33. The text of the names in Oxford ms. 1791 is quite different from the other manuscript readings. All have in common, however, a mixture of divine epithets, recognizable Hebrew words (albeit with no clear significance in this context), meaningless combinations of Hebrew letters, often a triple repetition of the same letter, and the written out names of some Hebrew letters. Of a certain interest is the insertion of the expression ṣaḥ ve'adom 'glistening and ruddy' into the text, which is taken from the description of the male lover in Song 5:10. The closing doxology is part of the regular daily liturgy and was apparently used in the Temple service as well.

34. The name is obscure. Even by removing the theophoric elements, the remaining root letters, while recognizable, yield no clear meaning.

35. That is, the crown of the head, literally, "the circle of the head," reading rosh'o for rish'on, along with most manuscripts. This is what Midrash Mishle calls qodqodi and what the Aqiban Shi^{c}ur Qomah text calls gulgolti. See above, comments to line 19. Cf. I K 7:23 and 25; II Ch 4:2; M 'Ohalot 12:6 and T Miqva'ot 5:8 for similar usages. The expression "that which the mouth cannot express..." appears in the Sefer Yeṣirah 4:18 to express the infinity to which may be carried the geometric progression expressing the formula for calculating the number of words which may be formed from a given number of letters. The relationship between the two texts is discussed in chapter six. The expression also appears at BT Rosh Hashanah 27a and Shavu^{c}ot 20b and at Sifre Bammidbar §102, ed. Horowitz, p. 100.

36. The name has no obvious connotation.

37. The name is discussed above in chapter V iv. Qomes is a term used for "servant" in describing Metatron's role before the godhead in the Visions of Ezekiel, ed. Gruenwald, p. 129. Cf. the remarks of Lieberman in Gruenwald's Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism, p. 239. The name might be taken to mean "splendor is the servant of God." The beard is the

single most intricately described part of the divine body in the Idra sections of the Zohar.

38. Hebrew: leset, meaning "cheek" or "jaw."

39. In the medieval kabbalistic revision of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, the face and cheeks of the Supernal Adam who is the sefirotic system were taken to represent the three uppermost sefirot, which, being the domain of the 'Arikh 'Anpin, the most recondite aspect of the world of emanation, were beyond all human ken. This, of course, did not mean that the Zohar does not describe in the most minute detail that most recondite of all sefirotic emanations. See Recanati on Genesis, apud Eisenstein, 'Oṣar Hammidrashim, vol. 2, p. 561.

40. If the verb lehakkir has its normal meaning of "to discern, recognize," then the sentence implies that because of the ethereal quality of the substances involved, they cannot be discerned by the average man. A similar remark in Hekhalot Rabbati 4:3, ed. Wertheimer, p. 72, suggests that neither mortal nor celestial are able to gaze upon the godhead, here called either Vehadari'el or Zohari'el (see the text in Jellinek, BH, vol. 3, p. 86.) Here the verb is lehistakkel 'to gaze upon,' but the context suggests that it is a question not of inability to discern, but of the inability of one gazing upon the garment to withstand its overpowering splendor. If lehakkir is being used here in its usual sense, then it may be linked with what precedes it; if it is being used similarly to lehistakkel, then it may be linked to what follows it regarding the splendor of the body. Also, cf. Hekhalot Rabbati 10:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 84, and the almost exact parallel in Hekhalot Zutarti, ed. Elior, p. 26, lines 132-133.

41. The word here is evidently referring to the gem of that name referred to both in Ez 1:16 and in Song 5:14. In some texts, tarshish refers, however, to the sea, as in Hekhalot Rabbati 10:4, ed. Wertheimer, p. 85 (variant.) The text given by Jellinek in BH, vol. 3, p. 90, is preferable to Wertheimer's text. M. Mishor has written a brief study of the word tarshish in the sense of "sea" in Leshonenu 34(1970), pp. 318-319. This citation from the Shi^{c}ur Qomah is not mentioned by him there, presumably because the text here merely quotes Dan 10:6 without adding any observations to it. Mishor draws his readers' attention to the statement of R. Abin in PT Rosh Hashanah 2:4, 58a, which describes the physical appearance of the angels, using the passage

from Dan 10 which the Shi^{c}ur Qomah uses to describe the godhead. The context of Dan 10 is not any more decisive than is the identity of the heavenly man the text is describing clear. A similar use of the verse is found in BT Ḥullin 91b. Finally, Mishor quotes a passage from a poem by Qallir in which tarshish can only mean "ocean" or "sea." See below, line 193 and cf. Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. cit., p. 26, line 139.

42. Hebrew: muvhaq.

43. Hebrew: nora', unless the word is an Aramaism and should be read nura' 'fire.' The meaning would be clearer, that the godhead is luminous, like fire surrounded by darkness. On the other hand, the passage shows no other Aramaisms, although there are Aramaic passages in the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, mostly at the beginning of the Aqiban text.

44. A similar image is evoked in BT Ḥagigah 12b: There (in ^{c}Aravot) are the 'ofanim and the seraphim and the holy beasts and the attending angels, and the Throne of Glory (and) the King, the exalted Living God, dwells over them in ^{c}Aravot...and darkness and clouds and fog surround Him, as it is written, "He made darkness His screen; dark thunderheads, dense clouds of the sky, were His pavilion round about Him [Ps 18:12]."

45. We read sare for shene, with most manuscripts of the text. Cf. the similar usage in BT Soṭah 42b and Shabbat 62b. The expression is used in the Talmud in an entirely different context. In BT Ḥullin and Sukkah 36a, the expression is used as a metonym to refer to something (here, the putrefied meat in the lung of a slaughtered animal) that pours as smoothly as water flows from a pitcher. In Hekhalot Rabbati 5:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 73, the expression is used to express the state of paralyzed ecstasy that accompanies hearing the fifth voice of the celestial host singing their hymns. The expression is repeated in that work at 10:1, ed. cit., p. 84.

46. Cf. the remarks of Gruenwald in his Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism, p. 215.

47. The text of Oxford ms. 1791 reads hhy hss, which we emend, based on the other manuscripts to hahoṭem 'the nose.' Possibly, the dimension has fallen out. The word v'krgg tpy' demand special attention. In many manuscripts, the first word is read as two, of which the first is v'br. That many manuscripts suppressed this

reading or altered it suggests that they understood this to be a veiled reference to the divine 'ever 'genital organ.'

48. Ps 147:19. It is unclear how this verse proves the assertion immediately preceding it. The use of Ps 147:19 in the Shi^cur Qomah is discussed above in chapter V v.

49. The forehead is the only body part to be assigned a width. The idea is probably that the seventy letters are written across the forehead, so the width is the pertinent dimension. In the Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^cezer, ch. 4, ed. Warsaw, 1872, pp. 9b-10a, we read that a crown (^catarah) is on the divine head and that a crown (keter) of the Ineffable Name is on His forehead. See the remarks of R. David Luria, ad loc.

50. The name is given vocalization in the text of Oxford ms. 1791, which makes it quite unique. What compelled the scribe is unknown and unclear, but he was possibly concerned that mispronunciation might yield a name that would mean "Satan is God."

51. These are apparently almost all permutations of the four letters of the Tetragrammaton, which is why they are called 'otiot 'letters' in contradistinction to names, as above, lines 63-72. Cf. our note to line 63 for a discussion of the fact that there follow here only twenty-three words made up of sixty-six letters. What is clear is that the text means letters when it says so, and not symbols, signs or words.

52. Why, of all the organs, the pupil of the divine right eye should have a guardian angel (sar) is not obvious, but is possibly linked to the Biblical reference at Zach 2:12 to the divine eye-ball in some way.

53. The meaning of this name is unclear, but the high number of manuscript variants suggests that the name is corrupted, probably hopelessly.

54. This name is discussed above, chapter V iv.

55. Hebrew: shekhem. Generally, shekhem is the "back" but most Biblical references are ambiguous, and here, since the godhead has a right and a left one, the meaning of "shoulder" is the preferred one. That shekhem can mean "shoulder" with no further qualification is clear from many texts.

56. This name apparently is derived from the Hebrew tamah 'to wonder at, to be amazed' and means, "God is my wonder." The manuscript variants are all quite different.

57. This is obviously related to the name of the right shoulder, just as we have noticed linguistic similarities between the names of the right and left of limbs elsewhere. The name is apparently formed from the Hebrew root shalam 'to be at peace' or 'to requite' and a theophoric element. The nuns in each name seem to be letters of obfuscation, as explained above in chapter V iv.

58. Hebrew: kefulim. This also appears in Hekhalot Rabbati 12:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 87, and cf. the expression, "My hands are on My arms" in Hekhalot Rabbati 11:2, ed. cit., p. 86, in which the text seems to be saying that the arms of the godhead are folded on His chest when the celestial hosts sing their hymns of sanctification. For kaful 'double' = qaful 'folded,' see, among other examples, M Kelim 16:1 and 21:1.

59. The first element gever is the Hebrew word for "man." The second element means "thanksgiving." The name as a whole may be taken to mean "a man of [i.e. given to] thanksgiving [to God]." Different names for the divine arms are given in Hekhalot Rabbati 12:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 87.

60. The manuscripts give such a wide range of readings here that it is quite difficult to establish the original text of the name of the left arm. The name as it stands in the manuscript text we are translating is not clearly interpretable.

61. Song 5:13. This line is apparently out of place, and is absent from most of the manuscripts.

62. This line, like the preceding phrase, is apparently out of order, and should be read on line 100 after the names of the fingers, parallel to the expression on lines 101-102 that follows the names of the toes. This is the case in most manuscripts. Haggadol 'the big one' apparently refers to the thumb, and merely tells us which name goes with which finger.

63. The name begins with the Hebrew 'esh 'fire' and apparently means 'He [God] is fire.' Absent from the text here are any references to the divine fingernails, although specific references to them is made in Midrash

Mishle 10:20, ed. Buber, p. 34a. The distinction between the names of the right and the left hands found in many manuscripts, but not in Oxford ms. 1791, was found in the copy of the text before R. Moses Taku, as is obvious from his paraphrase in the Ketav Tamim, ed. Kirchheim, p. 62. In a silluq by Qalir published by Baer in his Seder ʿAvodat Yisra'el, p. 655, we read "Thus it is that the measure of His created world/Is equivalent to the size of His palm..." Whereas it is the soles of the feet of the godhead that correspond in our text to the size of the universe, it was the palms of the divine hands that seem to have appeared in the text that was before the poet. It is interesting to note that both references are to soles and palms, not to feet or hands. Later in his poem, the poet reiterates: "The measure of the universe is as large as the palm of the hand," and then later, "The measure of the universe is as from the pinky finger to the thumb." Different names for the hands are given in Hekhalot Rabbati 12:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 87.

64. The figure 13,000,000 is clearly incorrect and should read 3,000,000, which is correctly one fifth of the total of 15,000,000. There is an interesting reference in the 'Otiot Derabbi ʿAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 354: "His fingers, with which all the ranges of [that part of heaven called] ʿAravot were sealed, and with which were sealed the fates of the heavenly angels...and the fate of the angel of death and the fate of every nation and kingdom." Eventually, the divine fingers came to be used in medieval mystic circles as units of measurement themselves, as in the Sod Ha'egoz, ed. J. Dan, p. 80: "The cloud is made of fire and hail; it is the cloud with which the Holy One, blessed be He, shows His glory to his prophets. Its height is 720,000,000 [parasangs, which is] seventy-two divine fingers." The conclusion, that a divine fingerlength equals ten million parasangs, seems to contradict the text here.

65. The names here are quite corrupt, cf. the large number of manuscript variants. The names for the thumb and the index finger are related, as are the names for the middle and pinky-fingers. All the names appear to be meaningless, and are composed mostly of the same letters which are used as letters of obfuscation in the other names.

66. The divine toes are specifically mentioned in Midrash Mishle 10:20, ed. Buber, p. 34a. The text before Salmon b. Yeruhim apparently divided the total of 100,000,000 into five units of 20,000,000, as do

several of the manuscripts. A certain amoung of confusion derives from the fact that the Hebrew 'esbaᶜot, with no further qualification, can mean either "fingers" or "toes." In fact, it is certainly the homonymity of the terms that lets the author refer to the toes here in the first place, instead of discussing them at the beginning of the text, when the divine feet are being discussed.

67. These names seem, like the names of the fingers, to be artificially created and without any particular meanings.

68. It is interesting to compare the order in which the body parts of the godhead are listed in the Shiᶜur Qomah with the various lists of the body parts of the celestial creatures found elsewhere. That list is found in BT Hagigah 13a; Massekhet Hekhalot, ed. Jellinek, p. 43; and the Tosefta Betargum Resh Sefer Yehezq'el, ed. Wertheimer, p. 138. The lists are as follows:

Sefer Haqqomah	Talmud	Massekhet	Tosefta
soles of feet	feet	feet	feet
ankles	ankles	ankles	
calves	calves	calves	
knees	knees		knees
thighs	thighs	thighs	bowels
loins	torso	torso	wings
heart	neck	neck	mouth
neck	head	head	head
skull	horns	horns	horns
beard			
forehead			
eyes			
shoulders			
cheeks			
hands			
fingers			
toes			

69. This is the opening phrase of the Shemonah ᶜEsreh prayer. Its earliest liturgical usage is apparently in Neh 9:32.

70. Dt 10:17.

71. Dt 7:9.

SECTION E

But[1] he said to me the calculation [105] of the parasangs.[2] How much is their measure? Each parasang[3] is four mils,[4] and each mil [106] is ten thousand cubits,[5] and each cubit is three zeratot.[6] And His zeret [107] fills the entire universe, as it is stated [in Scripture]: Who measured the waters with the hollow of His hand, and the skies, with His zeret, [108] gauged, etc.[7]

NOTES TO SECTION E

1. This passage seems to have been added in to the Sefer Haqqomah and the other recensions as an already formulated literary unit, see above, chapter V iv. The phrase of transition, 'aval 'but' seems awkward and a bit forced here.

2. The manuscripts offer a variety of different figures for the conversion of supernal measurements into earthly terms. Versions are given in R. Judah Ḥayyaṭ's commentary to the Maᶜarekhet Ha'elohut, ed. Mantua, 1558, p. 123b; R. Eleazar of Worms, in his Hilkhot Hakkavod, ed. Kamelhar, p. 31; Idem., Sefer Roqeah Haggadol, ed. Schniurson, p. 21 and p. 110; Eisenmenger, p. 4; and JTS ms. 1886, f. 62a. Of greater antiquity and interest are the texts that appear in the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 370 and the Massekhet Hekhalot, ed. Jellinek, p. 41 (=ed. Wertheimer, p. 56, under the title Maᶜase Merkavah); and cf. the poem of Kallir for the Sabbath of Sheqalim, in Baer, Seder ᶜAvodat Yisra'el, p. 653. A similar list of measurements given both in supernal and terrestrial terms is found in the seventh chapter of the astronomical Beraita Deshemu'el, ed. Eisenstein, p. 545-546.

3. See above, section B, note 9; the Greek parasang was equal to thirty stades, or 1800 feet.

4. I.e. 2,000 cubits (=3,000 feet). Mil is a loan word from the Latin. In Roman terms, one mile equaled 1,000 paces, or 5,000 feet. The exact sense of mil here is not known.

5. In rabbinic literature, either five or six handbreadths (ṭefaḥim), the latter being the distance from the tip of the middle finger to the elbow, which is about eighteen inches. The five-handbreadth cubit (i.e. from the elbow to the base of the fingers) was the Greek puqme; the six handbreadth cubit was called the pekhus.

6. Zeret is an ambiguous term; it can refer to the pinky finger, as, for example, at BT Menaḥot 11a or Ketubot 5b, or it can refer to the handspan, the equivalent of the Greek spithame. The zeret is specifically defined in T Kelim B.M. 6:12, ed. Zuckermandel, p. 585, as being half as long as the six-handbreadth cubit. Kallir seems to have taken zeret in the Shi^cur Qomah as the latter length, see his silluq in Baer, Seder, p. 653, line 12. On the other hand, R. Judah Ḥayyaṭ opted for the former definition, see above, note 1. Cf. Rabbenu Ḥannan'el to BT ^cEruvin 21a, bottom.

7. Is 40:12.

SECTION F

R. Nathan,[1] the student of R. Ishmael, says: Even [with respect to the] nose,[2] he[3] gave [109] me an exact measurement.[4] And likewise [regarding] the lip and likewise regarding the cheeks.[5] Even though he gave me the measurement of [110] the forehead, he gave me the measurement of a cubit.[6] The width of the forehead is as the height of the neck.[7] And so [111] is [it] as the length of the little finger.[8] The name of the upper lip is Gevarhaṭia [gbrhty'].[9] The name of the lower lip [112] is Horgia [hrgy'].[10] His mouth is fire consuming fire, He who speaks, [113] its name is Ḥesed Resa [hsd rs'].[11] He who [so] desires, speaks--Koaḥ [kḥ] is its nickname.[12] The crown on[13] His head [114] is 500,000 by 500,000; its name is Israel [ysr-'l].[14] And on the precious stone that is between [115] His[15] horns is engraved "Israel, my people; Israel, my people, is Mine."[16] My beloved is shining and ruddy, [116] pre-eminent among the ten thousand.[17] His head is finest gold.[18] His eyes are like doves by water-courses [117] etc.,[19] two thousand parasangs.[20] It turns out that the entire measurement is [118] 100,000,000,000 parasangs[21] tall and 10,000,000,000 parasangs [119] wide.[22]

NOTES TO SECTION F

1. R. Nathan was a fourth generation tanna, the son of the Babylonian exilarch, and historically speaking,

indeed a student of R. Ishmael.

2. Hebrew: 'af hahotam. Either word may mean "nose"; either 'af is the regular preposition, as translated above, or hotam is a gloss. The force of the preposition is to say that even as small a body-part as the nose has its own measurement.

3. I.e., Metatron.

4. Hebrew: mezumman. Some texts read meyumman; both terms refer to relative rather than to numerical measurements.

5. Hebrew: leset, or "jaw."

6. Hebrew: 'amah. 'Amah, generally speaking, does mean "cubit" in these texts, but here, as that meaning does not particularly suit the context, we may assume that 'amah has another meaning, presumably a body part. As such, 'amah may mean either "forearm," "arm," or "penis." Because the arms are dealt with at length elsewhere in the text, we favor the latter meaning here. Cf. Jastrow, s.v. 'amah, p. 75, for substantiating references. Of course, both the meanings of "cubit" and, more euphemistically, "penis" are derived from the meaning of "arm." That the penis is mentioned in the context of facial features rather than in the context of the divine loins may be explained by the fact that this information was transmitted specifically in the name of R. Nathan. At any rate, the fact that the reference is a mere allusion and has no details at all connected to it does not require any further explanation beyond the modesty the rabbis urged in such delicate matters. For other possible references to the divine genitalia in the Sefer Haqqomah, see above, section D, note 47 and below, note to line 132. Note also that Oxford ms. 1915 and JTS ms. 1892 refer specifically at this point in the text to 'amah shel ʿeryah 'the 'amah of the pudendum.'

7. These proportions were probably derived from anatomical observation, cf. Lieberman, Hellenism in Jewish Palestine (New York, 1962), pp. 182-183.

8. Cf. Salmon b. Yeruḥim, ed. Davidson, p. 123, lines 57-59, which read, "They wrote the calculation of its width was the height from the shoulders to the neck/ Calculating by [means of] the length of the nose, which equals the length of the pinky-finger." This reflects a clearer text than the one before us, and is similar

to several manuscripts. The text of Salmon's and of those manuscripts that are similar to his is supported by the striking fact that the only fragment of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah that is parallel to a section of the Talmud is precisely this one, relating the appropriate proportion of nose to pinky-finger, and indicating thereby the point at which nose-length may be considered a defect of sufficient gravity to invalidate a priest's right to serve in the Temple. Lieberman, in Sheqi^{c}in, p. 12, discusses that passage in BT Bekhorot 44a, and was the first to draw attention to it in this context. He points out that whereas Rashi understands the Talmud to be defining the defect, which could certainly be logically understood from the context, Maimonides, in his commentary to that mishnah (ed. Kafiḥ, vol. 3, p. 175) assumes that the Talmud is offering, not a description of a defect, but rather of a perfect nose, as he says, "...because the nose of the average man is the length of the pinky-finger and if it is longer or shorter, this is to be considered a defect." Maimonides, who was quite enamored of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah in his youth, could hardly have explained that the Talmud was citing a description of the divine nose to define a priestly blemish. A Genizah fragment, Oxford ms. Hebr. C. 65, as well as several other manuscripts, add at this point in the text, "...and such is the dimensions of all men," and this was presumably in the text that was before Maimonides. The divine pinky finger itself was understood to have played a certain midrashic role in the creation of the world, cf. Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 25.

9. The meaning of this name is obscure. The first element is the Hebrew word for "man." Many manuscripts add the size of 770,000 parasangs.

10. The name is obscure, and is quite different in the other manuscripts.

11. The text here is quite difficult. Regarding the fire that consumes fire, see section A, note 10, and also the text in the 'Otiot, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 380: The Holy One, blessed be He, is a devouring flame, residing in the midst of minions of fire...and whence do we know that He is called a devouring flame? [We know it from Scripture,] as it is written, "He makes His angels into the winds; His servants, into burning fire [Ps 104:4]." It is also stated in the 'Otiot, text A, ed. cit., p. 389, that the mouths of Moses and Aaron spewed forth flames when they spoke to Pharoah. Apparently, this is one way in which they resembled

the Deity. Their identification with the godhead, or more precisely, with a member of the celestial retinue, is explicit there: When [Pharoah] saw that Moses and Aaron resembled the ministering angels..." In case the point was still lost on Pharoah, their staff had the Tetragrammaton engraved on it. See above, section A, note 10.

12. The text here is quite difficult, and the manuscripts offer many variant readings. Not the least problems are the fact that koah is not written as though it were a name, and that this term actually means "power" or "strength" in Hebrew, and that the regular term in these texts for "name" is shem, not kinnui.

13. Cf. Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^{c}ezer, ch. 4, ed. Warsaw, 1852, p. 9b; Massekhet Hekhalot, ed. Jellinek, p. 46 (=ed. Wertheimer, p. 62, as Ma^{c}ase Merkavah); the 'Otiot De-rabbi ^{c}Aqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 366; Hekhalot Rabbati, 5:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 73; Seder Rabbah Debereshit § 8, ed. Wertheimer, p. 24; Ma^{c}ayan Hokhmah, ed. Jellinek, p. 59; BT Hagigah 13b. Of particular interest is the fact that the Yalqut Re'uveni, ed. Amsterdam, 1700, p. 24c, gives this tradition as a description of Metatron's crown. Whether that is an error, or whether that reflects a variant tradition, is unclear.

14. In Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 39, Yisra'el is the name of the celestial beast that leads the heavenly hosts in the portion of the daily liturgy called the Borekhu: "And one beast [hayah] stands in the center of the firmament and says, 'Bless ye the blessed God!'...and on its forehead is engraved, 'Israel! Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one [Dt 6:4].'" The name Israel, used with the notion of engraving and of foreheads, strongly suggests a connection between this passage and lines 114-115 of the Sefer Haqqomah, especially if we assume the reference to the forehead to be parallel to the reference in the Sefer Haqqomah to the space between the horns.

15. Or, "its," i.e. the horns of the crown. The idea that the godhead has horns is absent from the rest of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, and is unknown, as far as we can tell, in other sources.

16. Cf. Hos 2:25.

17. Song 5:10. Cf. Hekhalot Zutarti, ed. Elior, pp. 34-35, lines 431-437.

18. Song 5:11.

19. Song 5:12.

20. It is unclear of what this figure is a measurement. At this point, many of the manuscripts continue with verses from the fifth chapter of the Song of Songs, mystical names and words, and some extra physiognomical details. Of particular interest is the declaration "and all who do not conclude [hotem, i.e. as in a benediction formula] with this verse err," which appears in many manuscripts at this point. This warning seems to have been added to the Urtext, which seems to have been both theurgic and liturgical in nature. Many of the redactors of the various recensions, realizing the inappropriateness of such a warning in literary texts such as the ones they were producing, chose to omit it.

21. This is probably a simplification of the triple rov rube revavot that appears in many manuscripts. The latter term is hard to calculate exactly, unless it is a poetic term for one trillion (i.e. $10,000^3$). Probably, it is a term meant to suggest infinity without having to use terms that might bring the actualy physical existence of the Deity into question. In Oxford ms. 1531, f. 50b, there is a term ribe ribo revavot, and the context there suggests the poet merely meant to indicate a great amount. Cf. Hekhalot Rabbati 26:8, ed. Jellinek, p. 104, and the Nishmat prayer from the Sabbath morning liturgy, in Baer's Seder ʿAvodat Yisra'el, p. 207.

22. The 10:1 proportion between height and width seems too thin for a normal man. Some manuscripts give the figure 1,000,000,000, but 100:1 is even less reasonable a proportion. Probably, these are not meant to be correlated, or possibly the width refers to the forehead, which is, after all, the only body part for which a width is actually given, although a different number appears in the text. It is impossible to derive either of these figures, even roughly, by totalling the figures given in the body of the text.

SECTION G

[120] R. Ishmael[1] said: When I said this thing[2] before R. Aqiba[3], he said to me, "Whosoever [121] knows this measurement of his Creator[4] and the glory[5] of the Holy One, blessed be He, [122] is secure[6] in this world and [in] the world to come; he [lives] long[7] in this world, and he [lives] long [123] and well in the world to come. He does good[8] in this world, and does good in the world to come."

NOTES TO SECTION G

1. This text is quoted, in slightly different versions, in the question posed by the Jews of Fez to R. Hai and R. Sherirah Gaon published by Levin in his 'Osar Haq-ge'onim, vol. 4, pt. 2, p. 11; in Ibn Ezra to Ex 33:21, ed. Weiser, vol. 2, p. 216; by Salmon b. Yeruhim in his Sefer Milhamot 'Adonai, ed. Davidson, p. 124; and by R. Judah Ḥayyaṭ's Commentary to the Sefer Maᶜarekhet Ha'elohut, ed. Mantua, 1558, p. 123a and 124a (which, oddly enough, give different readings). Cf. the untitled text published in Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, § 4, p. 103. That text is quite similar to this one, and may be compared to it with interesting results.

2. Hebrew: davar zeh, presumably the Shiᶜur Qomah itself.

3. The motif of actual dialogue between R. Aqiba and R. Ishmael is found in Merkavah Rabbah, ed. Mossayef, p. 1a, and cf. p. 5b. The literary figure of R. Ishmael revealing what R. Aqiba said to him is found in other contexts, e.g. Oxford ms. 1531, f. 58b, where the context is quite similar to the Shiᶜur Qomah: "R. Ishmael said, 'Thus did R. Aqiba say to me, 'I said a prayer and beheld the Shekhinah...'.'"

4. Saadia realized that the use of the term Creator here makes his theory of the created light highly implausible, at least as far as the original meaning of the text is concerned.

5. There are tannaitic examples of the use of shevah to imply physical appearance, specifically in the name of R. Aqiba, who is being quoted here. Cf. the Mekhilta Derabbi Yishmaᶜ'el, ed. Horowitz-Rabin, p. 127: "And Israel said to the other nations, 'Do you then know Him? Let us recount to you [just] some of His shevah-- My love is brilliant and ruddy, pre-eminent among the ten thousand [Song 5:10].'" In the parallel version that appears in Sifre Devarim, ed. Finkelstein, p. 399, the

word shevah is explicitly used in conjunction with the word na'ut 'beauty.' The phrase in Hekhalot Rabbati 9:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 82, shivḥo shel melekh vekis'o, clearly refers to the appearence of the King and of His throne, as is clear from the context. Cf. the text in the Maʿayan Hokhmah, ed. Jellinek, p. 59, and, less obviously, at BT Megillah 18a and 25a, the latter reference having a parallel at Berakhot 33b. If it is so, then, that the word shevah meant specifically "the glory connected with the splendid appearence of the anthropomorphically conceived Deity," then it is no wonder that the famous ʿAlenu Leshabbeaḥ hymn was accepted, if not composed, in these early mystic circles. It seems that eventually, the noun shevah came to have the secondary meaning of a hymn in which the divine glory is recounted or described, see A. Altmann in Melilah 2 (1946), p. 2. The Greek doksa has a similar semantic range, see Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon... (Chicago, 1957), pp. 202-203.

6. Hebrew muvtaḥ, generally, "mentally certain or secure" about something, but here, apparently, "secure" more in the sense of physical well-being. The mystic is secure and comfortable in this world and secure in the knowledge that he shall acquire a portion of the world to come.

7. Hebrew: maʿarikh, literally, "to lengthen," or "to prolong." Here, in the context of reward, the term is obviously being used to refer to a long life. The expression is a shortened form of the more precise maʿarikh yamim found in many places in rabbinic literature.

8. Hebrew: meṭiv, generally used of God's beneficence towards men, so perhaps we should translate, "He [God] does good [for the mystic] in this world and in the next."

SECTION H

[125] R. Ishmael[1] said: I and R. Aqiba are guarantors[2] in this matter, that in this world [126] [he is secure][3]

in a good life, and in the world to come, [he may be secure] in a good name, [but] only [127] if he recites[4] this as a mishnah every day.[5] And His body's[6] name is Melo' Kevase [128] Shel 'Esh Vedonag[7] [ml' kbsyyh shl 'sh vdvng], and they have half of His names,[8] its name is Galshuv [glshvb].[9] [129] And the name of one eye, with which He sees from one end of the universe to the other is 'Aṭaṭsat ['ttst].[10] [130] And the sparks that go forth from it give light to all men.[11] And the name of His other eye [131] with which He looks behind Himself [to see] that which is yet to be, is 'Aṭaṭvesat ['ṭvṭvst, vocalization in text].[12]

NOTES TO SECTION H

1. This text is quoted, generally in an abridged version, in the question asked by the Jews of Fez to R. Hai and R. Sherirah Gaon, published in Levin's 'Osar Hegge'onim, vol. 4, pt. 2, p. 11; Ibn Ezra to Ex 33:21, ed. Weiser, vol. 2, p. 216; Ibn Ezra, Yesod Mora', ed. Creizenach, p. 50; Moses Taku, Ketav Tamim, ed. Kirchheim, p. 62; Eisenmenger, p. 4; and Salmon b. Yeruḥim, Sefer Milḥamot 'Adonai, ed. Davidson, p. 124. Cf. Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, pp. 28-29, lines 231-235.

2. Hebrew: ᶜarevim. Cf. the version cited by R. Hirz Treves in his commentary to the liturgy, apud Jellinek, BH, vol. 3, p. xvii, note 2.

3. This expression is inserted into the text based on the preceding passage on line 122.

4. Hebrew: shoneh. Cf. the passage in Merkavah Rabbah, ed. Mossayef, p. 5b, and also the similar passage in Hekhalot Zutarti, ed. Elior, p. 22, line 2.

5. The manuscripts read either "in the Mishnah" or "as a mishnah," or, simply, "as mishnah." The fact that the Hebrew letters bet and kaf are so similar in the handwriting of most of the scribes makes it quite difficult to decide which reading is correct in any particular case. The reading "as a mishnah" is probably the most logical, although it is unclear precisely what it means to read something that is not a mishnah as a mishnah. Probably, the mystic is being enjoined to recite the text in the fashion of a mishnah, i.e. out loud, orally, and as the basis for intricate commentary. Cf. the end of the Talmud, BT Niddah 73a.

6. Hebrew: qomato. The word qomah is discussed above in chapter V i.

7. This is an uncharacteristic name for the text, both because of its length and its relative clarity of meaning. The word kevase is a bit problematic; the rest means "the fullness of kevase is of fire and wax." Kevase has many attestations meaning "a cluster of grapes," but in at least two passages in the Talmud, BT Shavu^{c}ot 41a and Bava Meṣi^{c}a 101b, it refers, by euphemistic extension, to the testicles. If this name means to suggest that the divine testes are filled with fire and wax, then it remains difficult to say precisely what it is that the author is trying to say. We have seen that the author does like to make veiled allusions to the divine genitalia by making obscure references concealed in the mystic names of other organs, cf. above, section D, note 47. The variant readings seem to be attempts to find more reasonable readings, in most cases, by reading kurse 'his abdomen' for kevase. Several manuscripts insert after these words a reference to the divine hair. That passage is mentioned in Azriel of Gerona's Commentary to the [Talmudic] 'Aggadot, ed. Tishby (Jerusalem, 1945), p. 78.

8. The word for name, kinnui, is not the regular shem found elsewhere in the text.

9. The name means "the wave returns," but a great majority of manuscripts read Gal Sherav 'a burning wave.'

10. The name is obscure and is formed entirely of letters used in other names as letters of obfuscation.

11. This is possibly meant to be taken in a spiritual sense, as if to say that man sees by the light of the divine eyes. Possibly, this is meant to excuse and somewhat mitigate the hubris inherent in the entire notion of gazing upon the godhead. If man sees by the light of God's eyes, then whatever he sees is, at least in theory, seen with divine permission.

12. The fact that the divine eyes see both the present and the future is reflected in the beginning of Hekhalot Rabbati (1:2), ed. Wertheimer, p. 67, where it is stated that also those who attain the divine throne are able to know the future. This name appears vocalized in the Hebrew text.

SECTION I

[132] His body[1] resembles a bow,[2] and the bow is [something] like the semblance of fire [forming] a house around it.[3] [133] And the name of His bow is Qasti'el [qsty'l].[4] And the name of His sword is Matzmatziyahu [mṣmṣyhv].[5] [134] The name of His throne of glory is Durifa [dvrp', vocalization in text];[6] the name of the place of His seat is Perufa [135] Rodpos [pyrvp' rvdpvs].[7]

NOTES TO SECTION I

1. Rashi, in his commentary to BT Ḥagigah 13a, s.v. hen hen divre merkavah, remarks that the verse on which this line is based, Ez 1:28, is one of the two with which the rabbis were particularly concerned when they forbade the expounding of merkavah mysteries before just one pupil, because "they [the verses] speak of the shape of the Shekhinah and its appearance." The other verse is the immediately preceding verse in the text of Ezekiel. The phrase on lines 132-133 is actually a quote from Ez 1:27, with the substitution of the word qeshet 'bow' for the obscure ḥashmal. None of our manuscripts offer the verse exactly as it appears in the Biblical text. This passage may be compared with a similar passage in Oxford ms. 1531, ff. 42b-43a, and cf. Hekhalot Zutarti, ed. Elior, p. 29, lines 237-238 and p. 30, lines 281-283.

2. Cf. BT Ḥagigah 16a: "Who is [the Mishnah referring to when it remarks at M Ḥagigah 2:1 that it would be better for one who is not scrupulous regarding the dignity of his Maker not to have been born]? R. Abba says, 'This refers to him who gazes at the qeshet...'" The qeshet to which R. Abba is making reference is the luminous aura which surrounds the divine body, as originally noted at Ez 1:28, and as confirmed here in the text of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah. This may be compared with the story preserved in BT Ḥagigah 14b, to the effect that once, when R. Joshua and R. Yossi the Priest were together, the latter suggested that they expound an issue of merkavah mysticism. R. Joshua thereupon began to expound, and, although it was midsummer, the sky clouded over and a kind of qeshet appeared in the sky. This story is also preserved in PT Ḥagigah 2:1, 77a. Qeshet here seems to simply mean "rainbow," but it is not unlikely that the rainbow that appeared in the sky was not meant to confirm the Noahide covenant, as might be expected, but rather to allude by means of a sort of visual homonym to the splendor of the divine, and to the pleasure that the Deity experiences when His

mysteries are properly expounded on earth. To these texts may be compared the passage in the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 390, "His qeshet is fire; his arrows, flames." Cf. further, Yalquṭ Re'uveni, ed. Amsterdam, 1700, p. 24c, where this passage is applied, not to God at all, but to Metatron.

3. Cf. Ez 1:27, and see above, note 1.

4. The name seems to be derived from the word qeshet itself, with the substitution of the Hebrew letters samekh for shin and ṭet for tav.

5. The name of the sword is obscure. Cf. the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 390: "His spear is a torch; His shield, clouds; His sword, lightning and not iron." The angels were also armed, at least in later times, cf. the Tiqqune Hazzohar 57, ed. Margoliot, p. 91b, where all their weapons, including their horses and chariots are said to have been made of fire.

6. The meaning of the name is unclear.

7. The idea suggested by the order in which our text reveals the divine names, namely that the knowledge of the divine throne is even more esoteric than the knowledge concerning the godhead itself is confirmed somewhat by the text of Midrash Mishle 10:20, ed. Buber, p. 34a, which, immediately after referring to the knowledge of the anthropomorphic shape of the godhead, declares, "Greater than any of these, [however], is [knowledge concerning] the throne of glory." In the titleless text published by Scholem in his Jewish Gnosticism, § 10, p. 108, it is estimated that there are 400,000,000 parasangs between the foot of the throne and the seat on which the Deity sits. The text in JTS ms. 1904 deserves comment. In place of meqom moshavo 'the place of His seat,' we read meqom kevod mosheh 'the place of honor of Moses.' This has curious assonance to the mysterious seat of Moses mentioned in Matthew 23:2, on which the scribes and Pharisees are said to sit, and could certainly support the antiquity of the text. If that is the original reading, then it is not hard to understand why other scribes would have altered their texts to eliminate this reference to a defunct institution that, for some reason, does not seem to have had much of an impact on later generations. It should be kept in mind, however, that the consonants of Moses' Hebrew name form a well known acronym for Metatron's name and title, and

that this lone reference could easily and cogently be taken to be referring to that celestial vizier. Cf. the reference to the Yalqut Re'uveni above, n. 1.

SECTION J

And so,[1] between[2] the legs of His throne of glory there are the hayyot[3] [136] [who] stand beneath it. The name of the first leg[4] of the throne, which is a hayyah is Bab Keli [137] Pe^{c}u [bb kly p^{c}v].[5] The name of the second leg of the throne, which is a hayyah, is Matzmatz Ke'amatz [138] Masma' [mṣmṣ k'mṣ msm'].[6] The name of the third leg of the throne, which is a hayyah, is 'Aglay Nayay ['glyy nyyy].[7] [139] The name of the fourth leg of the throne, which is a hayyah, is Haqtzimatz Yayy [hqṣyms yyy].[8] And the image [140] of their faces [is as follows]: the imprint[9] of a lion and the stamp of an eagle and the image of an eagle[10] and the image of [141] a man, [which] is obscure.[11] Each has four faces, and each corner has four faces, [142] four faces to every corner. And there are four faces to each hayyah [143] and each one has four wings. And each wing has four wings, four wings for every wing.[12] [144] There are four wings to every hayyah. The name of the prince of the humanoid face is Hu'aliah [hy'lyh]. [145] The name of the prince of the lion's face is Mafsiah [mpsyh].[13] The name of the prince of the ox' face is 'Amtziah ['msyh].[14] [146] The name of the prince of the eagle's face is ^{c}Afefe Lehuzi'el [^{c}ppy lhvzy'l].[15] And when Israel sinned, [147] the face of the ox was hidden and in its stead was brought a cherub.[16] The prince of the cherub's face [148] is Naqia Pasiah ^{c}Amaṭ Hallel Yah [nqy' psyh ^{c}mṭ hll yh].[17] They all say Qadosh and they all say [149] Barukh,[18] as it is stated [in Scripture]: He tells His words to Jacob, His laws and statutes [150] to Israel, etc.[19]

NOTES TO SECTION J

1. Knowledge of the differences between the four legs of the throne is specifically mentioned in Midrash Mishle 10:17, ed. Buber, p. 34a, as esoteric information known to the mystics. Cf. the text as it appears in Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, p. 29, lines 248-253.

2. Hebrew: beni, like the more regular ben 'between.' Many manuscripts read kinuye for beni, thus yielding the translation "And such are the name of the legs... which are the hayyot."

3. The hayyot (singular: hayyah) are the celestial creatures described in the first chapter of Ezekiel.

4. The plural "legs" in Oxford ms. 1791 is an error, and should be emended to regel 'leg' based on all the other manuscript readings.

5. The meaning of this name is obscure. The variant readings culled from the other manuscripts are all quite different both from this reading and from each other.

6. The meaning of this name is also obscure.

7. The meaning of this name is also obscure.

8. This name, too, is obscure.

9. Hebrew: teva^{c}, literally, "stamp", as on a coin. Some of the Sefer Razi'el manuscripts read kova^{c} 'helmet' here.

10. "Eagle" is copied by the scribe from the preceding phrase instead of "ox", which is found in all the other manuscripts.

11. Perhaps we should read "the face of a man" instead of "the image of a man" in light of the other manuscript readings. This would eliminate the repetition of the word demut 'image' in two consecutive phrases.

12. The final total of faces and wings should be sixty-four, as in most of the manuscripts. The idea seems to be that each of the four creatures has four sides, and each side has a face with four corners, on each of which is a smaller face. Thus each hayyah has sixteen faces, and all four together have sixty-four. The wings work the same way, except that each wing has four smaller wings growing out of it. Cf. the similar presentation of the organization of faces and wings in 3 Enoch, ch. 21, ed. Odeberg, p. 32 (Hebrew) and p. 71 (English). The text here, which is based on Ezekiel 1:6 seems to contradict the information given on line 196 below, which is based on Is 6:2 and which assigns six wings to each celestial being. This discrepancy does not seem to bother the redactor of our text, but

it did bother the anonymous exegete whose solution is preserved in BT Ḥagigah 13b. He explains that the larger number of wings pertained when the Temple yet stood. After the destruction of the Temple, the number of angelic wings diminished. The Biblical text itself provides the simplest answer: the creatures with six wings are seraphs; the creatures with four wings are the ḥayyot.

13. The meaning of this name is obscure.

14. This name means "God is strong."

15. This name seems to be based on the expression used to describe the angelic ability to fly, cf. Is 6:2.

16. Many of the manuscripts add here that the particular sin to which reference is being made is the sin of the golden calf.

17. The first element in this name means "clean" or "innocent." The last two mean "praise God," as in the plural form, halleluyah.

18. The reference to the verses Qadosh (Is 6:3) and Barukh (Ez 3:12) together is so familiar to us from the Qedushah section of the liturgy that it seems almost superfluous. In fact, there was no unanimity regarding the inclusion of the latter verse in the celestial liturgy. In a hekhalot text published by Jellinek in BH, vol. 3, pp. 161-163, it is stated that all three groups of angels sing Qadosh. The text continues: "And why do they omit Barukh? Because the Shekhinah is omnipresent. In the future, when the Shekhinah returns to her place, they will sing Barukh." Cf. the statement of R. Berekhiah in Exodus Rabbah 23:15 and the view of R. Aqiba on this subject in Sifre Bammidbar, ed. Horowitz, p. 101. See A. Altmann, "Shire Qedushah Besifrut Hehekhalot Haqqedumah," Melilah 2(1946), p. 7, and the sources mentioned by him in note 31.

19. Ps 147:19.

SECTION J_x

(N.B. Sections C_x, J_x, L_x and N_x, which are the sections present in the long versions of the Sefer Haqqomah, are translated from JTS ms. 1892.)

[1] His splendor fills all.[1] Batallions[2] of fury [are] to His right, and batallions and platoons[3] of [2] fury are to His left and the platoons are grouped in sevens.[4] And within the platoons are shining [light] are darkness and cloud and fog[5] and slimy [3] mud.[6] And before Him is a field sown with stars,[7] in which is the star which is the source of lightning bolts. Between one lightning bolt and another is the gateway of [4] hashmal,[8] and above are spirits and thunder-bolts, thunder-claps and lightning-bolts and the folds of the [rain]bow,[9] and ropes of [the divine] seal[10] ascending [5] and descending[11] in it. On the Holy One, blessed be He, are grace and mercy and glory and compassion and beauty[12] and loveliness[13] and splendor[14] and magnificence and majesty.[15] And the hand [6] of the Holy One, blessed be He, rests on the head of the lad[16] His servant, whose name is Metatron. They say ᶜIzzuz[17] and Gibbor[18] and they say Qadosh[19] and Barukh.[20] And they say [7] Hamulah.[21] They come [and] stand before the lad and the lad comes and bows before the Holy One, blessed be He, 'Ahah ['hh] is His name,[22] and praises [Him], [8] saying: "Blessed be the glory of God from His place;[23] yehu [yhv], hu [hv], yohi [yvhy], hi [hy], yah [yh], yehi [yhy]."[24] They say after him:[25] "Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom [9] forever and ever."[26] And he enters beneath the throne of glory [and when he goes[27] beneath the throne of glory,] there go to the right, a quireme of fire[28] and [10] hailstones and walls of fury and to the left go the wings of storm and the potencies of a whirlwind.[29] And when [the lad][30] [11] enters beneath the throne of glory, the Holy One, blessed be He, holds him in [the] facial radiance[31] [12] and all the attending angels come and say before the Holy One, blessed be He: "the great, mighty and awesome God."[32] And they praise the Holy One, blessed be He, three times [13] every day [led] by the lad. And the Holy One, blessed be He, gives of His brilliance and beauty[33] to the [guardian] angels of the nations of the world.[34] And this lad's is the height [14] of the entire universe[35] and the Holy One, blessed be He, calls him "lad." And this lad is Metatron, prince of the presence, who is written [as] the great prince of the world [15] over all the princes, and over all. The attending angels[36] stand[37] before him and he stands in the most exalted heights, and [16] consuming fire serves before him, Resa' [rs'] is its name.[38]

This is Metatron, prince of the presence, who is written in [the] one letter, with which were created heaven [17] and earth[39] and sealed[40] with the [signet-]ring of Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh ['hyh 'shr 'hyh], and he is written in six letters and in seven letters[41] and in twenty- [18] two letters and in seventy names,[42] and in seven measures of holiness[43] and he gives on six of his names.[44] And it[45] is engraved on [19] twelve stones and written in seven voices,[46] in six by a height of six,[47] and put in the innermost chamber, [20] in the most recondite hiding place and in the most intense wonder, for Moses.[48]

NOTES TO SECTION J_x

1. Some manuscripts read tevel 'world for hakkol 'all.' Still others read hekhal '[celestial] palace,' thus noting that the divine splendor fills His supernal residence. Gruenwald, in his Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism, prefers to read the text in light of Is 6:3, so as to yield the expression tif'arto melo' hakkol 'His splendor is the sum total of all things.' This seems unnecessarily pantheistic, and we prefer to translate the text as above, even despite a slight grammatical inconsistency, because of the similarity of the form to the famous kevodo male' ᶜolam passage from the Sabbath liturgy and Ps 72:19, despite the evidence of Is 6:3.

2. The gedudim are mentioned as forming part of the celestial retinue also in the Visions of Ezekiel, line 39, ed. Gruenwald, p. 114. They are also mentioned in Midrash Konen, see below, section L, note 2. In the 'Otiot Derabbi ᶜAqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 380, we find a reference to the gedudim of fire. The gedudim are mentioned as a group distinct from the angels (mal'akhim), the celestial creatures (ḥayyot), the cherubs and the 'ofanim in Seder Rabbah Debereshit §15, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 26-27, and cf. the references in §39, ed. cit., p. 41 and §43, ed. cit., p. 43. Finally, cf. Oxford ms. 1531, f. 52b: "The celestial gedudim shall forever praise Your name."

3. Hebrew: simanim shel zaᶜaf. Simanim 'platoons' is a loan usage from the Greek semeia or semeion, which have similar semantic ranges.

4. Cf. section L, note 2.

5. Cf. Massekhet Hekhalot, ed. Jellinek, p. 41: "And thus the Holy One, blessed be He, surrounded [the splendor of the glory] with clouds and fog around it, as it is written, 'He made darkness His screen; His

pavilion was around Him [Ps 18:12].'"

6. Cf. Ps 40:3. The slimy mud is mentioned in the Visions of Ezekiel, lines 23 and 28, ed. Gruenwald, p. 107, as one of the seven sections of the earth. Gruenwald points out that similar lists appear in other midrashic sources, e.g. Leviticus Rabbah 29:11, ed. Margoliot, pp. 680-681; Pesiqta Derav Kahana, R.H. sec. 10, ed. Mandelbaum, pp. 342-344; 'Avot Derabbi Natan, text A, ch. 37, ed. Schechter, p. 180, but the reference to the mud does not appear in any of those lists, and is apparently unique to this list. The mud does appear in Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 34, as the final barrier before what the midrash calls the "limitless, infinite chaos surrounding the throne." In the same work, ed. cit., p. 38, the slimy mud is said to constitute the fourth ring of hell in the shape of a cube, each side of which would take a man five hundred years to walk across. This text also appears in the Seder Rabbah Debereshit § 22, ed. Wertheimer, p. 31.

7. Apparently, this text, with or without its context, was known in the earliest European kabbalistic circles. R. Isaac the Blind (1160-1239), a major figure in the early history of the kabbalah, quotes it in his commentary to Sefer Yeşirah. It is also quoted in the commentary to the Talmudic legends of R. Azriel of Gerona, ed. Tishby, pp. 36-37.

8. Cf. Ez 1:4, 27 and 8:2.

9. To what, exactly, this refers is unclear. Perhaps the "folds" (Hebrew: gefalim) are the different colored bands that together form the rainbow.

10. This reference is obscure.

11. The uncommon hypostasization of the divine virtues is an interesting feature of the text. Even in later kabbalistic speculation about the sefirot, the divine attributes, albeit reified as the supernal limbs of the sefirotic universe, never acquired real personalities. The idea is much more like the Zoroastrian notion of the seven Amesha Spentas, which are officially the six archangels that serve Mazda, but which are really more like reified divine attributes.

12. Hebrew: hod.

13. Hebrew: vehadar.

14. Hebrew: ve^{c}aṭeret.

15. Hebrew: vetif'eret vege'ut, reading ge'ut for the meaningless b'vt in the text.

16. This may be compared with the intimate relationship between God and Metatron described below in section L.

17. I.e. Ps 24:8. On the practice of using the "names" of the verses used in the celestial liturgy, see above, section J, note 18.

18. Either part of the name of Ps 24:8, or a reference to Ps 33:16. Gibbor 'hero' is not the first word in the latter verse, but the presence of the words verav koaḥ, known as a sort of reference to the Shi^{c}ur Qomah because of their presence in Ps 147:5, makes it at least plausible that Ps 33:16 was presumed to be part of the celestial liturgy.

19. I.e. 6:3; see above, section J, note 18.

20. I.e. Ez 3:12, see above, section J. note 18.

21. I.e. Ez 1:24.

22. I.e. the Ehyeh name without the third letter. The significance of this permutation is unknown.

23. Ex 3:12.

24. These are various permutations of the Tetragrammaton.

25. This seems to contradict the preceding passage which suggests that it is the entire celestial host that is singing, not Metatron alone. Perhaps the entire service is to be understood as performed antiphonally, like the terrestrial Qedushah, which is its counterpart and which allows man to participate in the angelic service on high.

26. I.e. the familiar Temple doxology, retained in the liturgy as part of the recitation of the Shema.

27. Hebrew: mehallekh. Perhaps the image is that he actually circumambulates the throne, which would be less redundant and which would echo the probably force of the pi^{c}el in Ps 55:15. This passage is added based on other mansucripts, but is absent in JTS ms. 1892 because of a scribal error. The space below the throne is mentioned also in Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, p. 23, line 59.

28. Hebrew: liburni shel 'esh. Liburni is a loan word from the Greek liburnis, a type of ship associated with the Liburnians, a people who lived in the Adriatic region. See the Targum Ps.-Jonathan to Is 33:12; the so-called Targum Yerushalmi to Nu 24:24 and to Dt 28:68; BT Rosh Hashanah 23a, Yoma 77b and Baba Meṣi^{c}a 80b.

29. Hebrew: sufah. On the importance of metereological data as the stuff of mystic revelation, see M.E. Stone, "Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature," in Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright, ed. Cross, Lemke and Mille (Garden City, 1976), pp. 414-452.

30. Reading hanna^{c}ar for lanna^{c}ar.

31. Hebrew: mehazqo be'or panav.

32. I.e. Dt 10:17.

33. Hebrew: ziv vehadar.

34. Hebrew: malakhe 'ummot ha^{c}olam. Some manuscripts read malkhe 'the kings of the nations of the world.'

35. This is, of course, only the smalled fraction of the height of the godhead.

36. The princes are, of course, angels as well.

37. Hebrew: ^{c}omdim, literally: 'they stand.' Some manuscripts read 'omrim, literally 'they say,' but here, as in all hekhalot literary texts, the technical term for the singing of hymns. Cf. Hekhalot Rabbati 1:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 67.

38. Cf. lines 112-113, where the mouth of the Deity, which is consuming fire, is named Ḥesed Resa'.

39. It is unclear to what this refers.

40. Hebrew: vehatmah, an odd grammatical form. We prefer either to emend to venehtam 'and he is sealed,' or else to assign a similar meaning to the form given in this and most manuscripts.

41. The name Metatron may be written with or without a yod between its first two letters, that is, in either six or seven letters. The point to the distinction is

unclear; cf. Scholem, Kabbalah, p. 380.

42. The seventy names of Metatron were eventually elaborated into a complex mystic tradition in their own right. See Lieberman's appendix to Gruenwald's Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism, pp. 240-241, especially note 54.

43. Hebrew: uvesheva^{c} qedushot.

44. It is unclear to what this refers. Perhaps he offers his sacrifice at the moment six names of the seventy are said.

45. I.e. his names are engraved.

46. It is unclear what it means to be written in voices.

47. It is unclear of what six is a measure: either it is the stones or the names or the voices.

48. This leads right into section K in those manuscripts that have both sections. It is clear that the only way to understand those manuscripts that have both sections is to assume that the subject of section K is the revelation of the mystic names of Metatron to Moses. If this section is original, then the first to delete it has, apparently, deliberately obscured the original meaning. Since the antecedent of the "it" on the first line of section K is quite unclear without section J_x leading into it, we may presume it to have been an original part of the text of the Sefer Haqqomah.

SECTION K

And the Holy One, blessed be He, gave [permission][1] to use it neither to the first man [151] nor to Shem nor to Abraham, nor to Isaac, nor to Jacob, [but] rather to Moses[2] [152] alone, as it is stated [in Scripture]:[3] "Behold, I am sending an angel before you, etc."[4] And the Holy One, blessed be He, [153] warned Moses [regarding] using it,[5] as it is stated [in Scripture]: "Be on your guard before him and obey him...do not [154]

rebel against him,"[6] [which is to say:] do not confuse him and Me.[7]

NOTES TO SECTION K

1. The word reshut 'permission' is given in many manuscripts as the object of the sentence. but it may not be necessary to restore the term at all, since natan can mean "to permit" by itself. Without section J_X, one gets the impression that this passage refers to the entire Shi^{C}ur Qomah, but in those manuscripts that do give the material between sections J and K, the impression is given that the subject of this passage is Metatron and his mystic names and secrets. This following verse also suggests that the original intent was to declare the permission to use (i.e. in magic spells) the magical names of Metatron was only given to Moses, and therefore the text refers to Ex 23:20-21, which are taken to refer to Metatron in a widely known midrash, cf. BT Sanhedrin 38b, and Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 46-47.

2. See Hekhalot Zutarti, ed. Elior, p. 22, lines 9-10.

3. The tradition that the Shi^{C}ur Qomah was originally revealed to Moses rather than to R. Ishmael or R. Aqiba is well rooted in the traditional literature of merkavah mysticism. Apparently, our author found no contradiction between the two traditions. In the 'Otiot Derabbi ^{C}Aqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 355, we read: "Metatron said, 'The Lord, God of Israel is my witness in this matter, that when I revealed this mystery [raz] to Moses...'" In a later passage in the same text, ed. cit., p. 366, we find all of lines 150-152 of the Sefer Haqqomah expanded to read as follows: "...but to Moses, He revealed all the explicit names: those engraved on the throne of glory, those engraved on the ring on His hand, those which stand as pillars of flame around the throne, those that hover [in the air] around the Shekhinah like the eagles of the throne, those [names] with which were sealed heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land, the mountains and the hills, the serpents of the deep, the foundations of the world, the ranges of [the acts] of Creation, the chambers of [those parts of heaven called] Me^{C}onot, Zevul, ^{C}Aravot, the throne of glory, the treasure houses of life and the storehouses of blessing, dew, rain, lightning. clouds, winds and the souls of the living and the dead, as it is written, 'He reveals His ways to Moses [Ps 103:7].' And why did He reveal His ways neither to Abraham, nor Isaac...nor Jacob... We learn that He did not reveal [His ways] to Abraham because of the descendants of Ishmael who were destined

to fall to Hell. To Isaac, He did not reveal [His ways] because the descendants of Esau were destined to fall to Hell. And why did He not reveal His ways to Jacob... because He said that his [i.e. Jacob's] ways were hidden from the Creator...therefore He did not reveal [His ways] to him." This tradition regarding the revelation of the divine names to Moses is also found in a much briefer form at the end of the fortieth chapter of the Pirqe Rabbi 'Eli^Cezer, ed. Warsaw, 1856, pp. 95a-b. These traditions are all stimulated, of course, by Moses' question in Ex 3:13 regarding God's name, and by God's statement in Ex 6:3 that the name had not been revealed to the earlier patriarchs. The notion that long before the tannaitic period, these mysteries had once been revealed to Moses is reflected also in Hekhalot Rabbati 27:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 109: "You did not hide any of Your majesty [gevurah] from [Moses]." In fact, the entire text of the short midrash Ma^Cayan Hokhmah, published by Jellinek in BH, vol. 2, pp. 59-61, deals with Moses' experiences in heaven when he ascended there to receive the Torah. It is specifically mentioned there that along with the Torah, Moses received esoteric information from the angels regarding medicines and their uses, as well as the uses of the various permutations of the divine name (p. 61.)

The verb "to use" (lehishtammesh) in the sense of "using" magical spells and formulae appears both in tannaitic sources, e.g. M 'Avot 1:13, and in later merkavah texts, e.g. Oxford ms. 1531, f. 53b: "He who would use this great mystery [must] recite it with all his strength, so that he does not forget a thing."

The specific rejection of Adam is probably based both on the fact that there were rabbinic speculations regarding Adam's immense size (as, e.g. at Bereshit Rabbah 8:1, ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 230; 'Avot Derabbi Natan, text B, ed. Schechter, pp. 11b-12a, and others listed in Ginzberg, Legends of the Jews (Philadephia, 1928), vol. 5, p. 79, note 22) and also on the fact that it was, after all, Adam who was specifically said to have been created in the divine image. The text here is careful to point out, therefore, that Adam, despite his own physical size and beauty, was not privy to the sscrets that were first revealed to Moses.

An interesting attempt to link the revelation both to R. Ishmael and to Moses is quoted in the Yalqut Re'uveni, ed. Amsterdam, 1700, p. 27d: "[R. Ishmael said,] 'Metatron...said to me...'When Moses ascended on high, the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded me, and gave me some of His shi^Cur qomah [which was] 70,000 parasangs'.'" The transference of divine parasangs from the godhead to his deputy is not exactly a reference

to the Shi^cur Qomah, but the inclusion of Moses and R. Ishmael together, and the specific use of the term shi^cur qomah, seem to suggest that the author intended a close relationship between the two men and the text.

4. Ex 23:20.

5. The term hizhir 'warn' was possibly a technical term of the merkavah mystics for the curbs placed by the authorities on the dissemination of their traditions. Cf. Seder Rav ^cAmram, ed. Warsaw, 1865, p. 42. We read lehishtammesh bo for the difficult lehishtammshehu in some manuscripts.

6. Ex 23:21.

7. Playing on the assonance of the Biblical 'al tammer 'do not rebel' and 'al tamir 'do not exchange.' The danger of confusing Metatron and God is discussed in the BT Hagigah 15a. where Elisha b. Abuya makes just that error, and cf. BT Sanhedrin 38b. where R. Idi (or, perhaps, R. Idit) specifically cites Ex 23:21 in this regard. See above, chapter V v.

SECTION L

And [the] angels[1] which are with him come and encircle [155] the throne of glory.[2] They are on one side and the [celestial] hayyot are on the other side,[3] and the Shekhinah is on the throne of [156] glory in the center.[4] And one hayyah goes up over the seraphs[5] and descends on [157] the tabernacle[6] of the lad whose name is Metatron[7] and says in a great voice, a thin voice of silence[8] [158] "The throne of glory is glistening!"[9] Immediately, the angels fall silent and the ^cirin and qadishin are still.[10] [159] They hurry[11] and hasten into the river of fire.[12] And the hayyot turn their faces [160] towards the earth,[13] and this lad whose name is Metatron, brings the fire silently[14] [161] and puts [it] in the ears of the hayyot so that they do not hear the sound of the speech of the Holy One, blessed be He,[15] [162] and the explicit name[16] that the lad, whose name is Metatron,[17] utters at that time [163] in seven

voices, in seventy voices, in his living, pure, honored, [164] holy, awesome, worthy, brave, strong and holy name.[18] 'ah ['h], dad [dd], [165] 'ah ['h], heḥai [ḥḥy], yah [yh], 'eheyeh 'asher 'eheyeh ['hyh 'shr 'hyh], 'ah ['h], yah [yh], yah [yh], yah [yh], [166] vah [vh], hu [hv], yehu [yhv], hayah [hyh], be ᶜolamim [hy ᶜlmym].[19] That is His name forever, and that is His appellation [167] for all generations.[20] And its explanation in the language of purity[21] is yehu [yhv], lah [lh], yhvh, heḥai [ḥḥy], [168] 'ah ['h], hah [hh], 'a'adir ['dyr].[22] Our Lord, how mighty is Your name in all the earth![23] [169] And the Lord shall be King over, etc.[24] You are holy and Your name is holy. Your appellation and [170] servant say Qadosh every day.[25] Blessed [171] art Thou, the holy God.[26]

NOTES TO SECTION L

1. Hebrew: mal'akhim. These angels seem to be identical with the seraphs mentioned on line 156. This passage is quoted by Salmon b. Yeruḥim in his Sefer Milhamot 'Adonai, ed. Davidson (New York, 1934), p. 118.

2. This should be compared with the statement in Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 34, to the effect that the feet of the Shekhinah are not only in the center of 1,000,100 angels, but also are at the center of a massive solar-type system of 1,000,000 planets that surround them. On the notion of centrality and equilibrium in heaven, see below, notes to line 155. The centrality of the throne in heaven mirrors the centrality of the Temple in the Land of Israel and, by extension, in the world. The notion of the centrality of the throne returns at the end of Midrash Konen, ed. cit., p. 38: "Just as the Holy One, blessed be He, created four directions and surrounded the whole world with them such that the creatures of the world stand in the center, so did He create four directions around the throne of glory, and the throne is in the center, above them all."

3. This is apparently in contradiction with the notion found above that the ḥayyot support the throne and are found, therefore, beneath it.

4. The use of the term 'emṣaᶜ to indicate the location of the throne in the heavens is reflected in the Sefer Yeṣirah 1:3, where it is stated that the primordial equilibrium was characterized by the fact that the divine covenant (berit yahid) was exactly in the center of the ten primal numbers. Far more explicit is the statement found in the fourth chapter: "The holy palace is set

precisely in the center." The primordial equilibrium later became the subject of quite abstruse speculation in the Zohar. Cf. Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, p. 30, line 274.

5. These apparently are the angels mentioned on line 154.

6. The tabernacle of Metatron is known from Bammidbar Rabbah 12:12, to which may be compared the following Zoharic sources: Zohar II, 143a, 159a, 169b; Tiqqune Hazzohar, introduction, ed. Margoliot, p. 13a. Cf. Margoliot, Mal'akhe ᶜElyon, p. 98 and Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, pp. 49-50.

7. The identification of the lad (naᶜar) with Metatron is left out by many scribes, apparently taking the term as so obviously referring to Metatron so as to preclude the necessity of saying so explicitly. For the designation of Metatron as naᶜar, see Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, p. 50; Lieberman in Gruenwald, Apocalyptic, pp. 238-239 and Margoliot, Mal'akhe ᶜElyon, pp. 89-90.

8. I K 19:12. In Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 33, the thin, quiety voice is presented as constituting the ninth zone out from the throne. This strange reification of a sound is, as far as we know, unique to this source. Cf. the Seder Rabbah Debereshit § 19, ed. Wertheimer, p. 30, where it is the tenth zone, but this seems to be directly derived from Midrash Konen. The term demamah daqah 'a thin silence' came to be a term used, paradoxically, for the celestial liturgical hymns described, e.g. in Oxford ms. 1531, f. 59b: kulam teᶜunim demamah daqah shevah 'omrim. Cf. Hekhalot Rabbati 26:8, ed. Jellinek, p. 104 and cf. Altmann, "Shire Qedushah..." in Melilah 2(1946), p. 17 and notes 6 and 7.

9. Hebrew: zakh.

10. The ᶜirin and qadishin are derived from references in Dan 4 (vv. 10, 14 and 20.) They are further described in 3 Enoch, ch. 28, ed. Odeberg, pp. 45-47 (Hebrew) and pp. 97-101 (English). Cf. the passage in the Maᶜayan Hokhmah, ed. Jellinek, p. 59: "Immediately, the celestial hosts quiver and quake and the holy creatures are silent and the seraphs of holiness roar like a lion and the seraphs answer, "Holy, holy, holy..."

11. Hebrew: hoshu, which may be emended, on the basis of the other manuscripts to hashim. The term could also be taken to mean "they are silent", in which case we

could take qadishin as the subject and read "...the angels fall silent, the ʿirin are still and the qadishin are quiet. They shove..."

12. The river of fire referred to here is derived from Dan 7:10. The Talmud contains a fuller account of the story which explains why the silent creatures are shoved into the fiery stream at BT Ḥagigah 14a: "Samuel said to Ḥiyya b. Rav, 'You scholar! Come and I will tell you one of those fine things your father used to say. Every day [new] ministering angels are created from the River of Fire, and they sing hymns [of praise to God] and are [then] destroyed, as it is written, 'There are new ones each morning, great is Thy faith [Lam 3:23].'" At the movement of Metatron, apparently, the singing stops, and the angels are destroyed. Our text has two additional points of information: also included with the angels are the ʿirin and qadishin, and also, that the angels meet their end in the same fiery stream from which they were created. The notion that the angels must be replaced after one performance of the celestial liturgy appears in 'Ekha Rabbati to Lam 3:23, ed. Buber, p. 132-133 in two different statements, one in the name of R. Samuel and one in the name of R. Ḥelbo, citing R. Samuel b. Naḥmani. These statements may also be found in Bereshit Rabbah, ch. 78, ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 916, where the former R. Samuel is exactly identified as the same R. Samuel b. Naḥmani. Cf. the traditions preserved in the hekhalot text published by Jellinek in Bet Hammidrash, vol. 3, pp. 162-163, to the effect that every day 101,000,000 angels are devoured by the river of fire because they did not sing the hymns of the celestial liturgy exactly in unison. Cf. further, the statement in Seder Rabbah Debereshit, ed. Wertheimer, p. 45, regarding both the rivers and sea of fire which surround the throne of glory. These rivers of fire are apparently different from the rivers mentioned in that same work in § 47, ed. cit., p. 46, in which the celestial hosts immerse themselves for reasons of purity. Finally cf. the elaborate description of the river of fire in Maʿayan Ḥokhmah, ed. Jellinek, pp. 59-60, and in Yannai 33:89-90, ed. Zulai, p. 88. On the name Rigayon used for the river, see J. Lewy in Tarbiz 12(1940), p. 167.

13. In Seder Rabbah Debereshit §47, ed. Wertheimer, p. 46, reference is made to the fact that the celestial creatures cover their faces with their wings so as not to gaze upon the image of God seated on the Throne. Apparently, the reference later in that paragraph to the effect that their faces are swathed in lightning is

not connected to this tradition directly. Their faces are always wrapped in lightning; they specifically cover their faces to avoid gazing upon the godhead. Cf. Massekhet Hekhalot, ed. Jellinek, p. 44: "...and all of their wings are as high as their heads, and [the wings] are fire and swathe their faces so that they do not gaze on or discern the image of the face of the Shekhinah."

14. According to the text, the word harishit must be taken as an adverb meaning "silently," a word unattested elsewhere. A slight emendation to read 'esh haḥarishut would yield the meaning "the fire of deafness," which is reasonable given the context, and the attested meaning of harishut 'deafness.' Cf. Gruenwald, Apocalyptic, p. 216. On the notion of stopping up the orifices likely to be damaged by theophany, see Gruenwald, "Qeta^{c}im Ḥadashim Missifrut Hehekhalot," Tarbiz 38(1969), p. 360, line 44, and also his remarks in Tarbiz 39(1970), p. 216. There, the mystic is told to dig his finger and toe nails into the ground of the firmament and to stop up his ears, nostrils and anus with a tampon so that his soul does not take flight before the encounter with the godhead. Here the reason is not the same, but the notion of stopping up the ears is quite the same, and it can be assumed that if the mystics on earth did engage in preventative measures, then they must have found it easy to imagine that the same rule applied in heaven.

15. It is not exactly explained what it is that the Deity says. See BT Berakhot 7a for some theorizing regarding the prayers that God might say.

16. I.e. the Tetragrammaton.

17. This phrase is not included in most manuscripts.

18. "Holy" is mentioned twice either because the scribe has joined together two different versions of the text, or because of simple scribal error.

19. 'eheyeh 'asher 'eheyeh is the "I am what I am" name from Ex 3:14. See our discussion of this name in chapter V v. The rest of the names are almost all permutations of the Tetragrammaton, which is itself, of course, presented in the Pentateuchal text as a variant of the 'eheyeh name.

20. Cf. Ex 3:15.

21. This is an obscure phrase.

22. These names are apparently derived from the Tetragrammaton, which is the third element on the list. This would seem to be a more "pure" elaboration that the longer preceding list, but it is unclear what precisely is the relationship between the two lists. It is also unclear precisely what it means for one list to be more pure than the other. The final element 'a'adir is the second word in Ps 8:2 or 8:10, with a reduplicated first letter. The Tetragrammaton is the first word in both these verses, so perhaps these names are meant to be taken withthe following quotation from Ps 8 as one very elaborate citation of that verse.

23. Ps 8:2,10. This citation is lacking in most of the manuscripts.

24. Zach 14:9.

25. The idea that the divine name recites Is 6:3 every day is obscure and seems to be a singular reification of the divine name. The whole passage is absent from most of the manuscripts.

26. As in section A, the archaic English is introduced to preserve the liturgical character of the benediction. This is the third benediction of the daily Shemoneh ᶜEsreh prayer.

SECTION L_x

(N.B. Sections C_x, J_x, L_x and N_x, which are the sections present in the long version of the Sefer Haqqomah, are translated from JTS ms. 1892.)

[1] God by Your own fiat;[1] Our Lord of Justice;[2] the Army of [2] Israel, and more![3] They who wish for your justice shall be justified, selah.[4] Your acts of righteousness[5] will exalt You to exalt You;[6] together they shall open their mouths. They shall break out in song [3] and declare: "God, our Lord, how great is Your name in all the earth, in that You have put Your majesty on the heavens."[7] You are holy [4] and Your name is holy; You are great and Your name is great. You are courageous and Your name is courageous; You are truth and Your

name is truth. You are [5] blessed and Your name is blessed;[8] You are youthful and Your name is youthful. You are big and Your name is big; You are heroic and Your name is [6] heroic. You are proud and Your name is proud; You are noteworthy and Your name is noteworthy. You are beautiful and Your name is beautiful; You are old[9] [7] and Your name is old. You are permanent and Your name is permanent. You are pure[10] and Your name is pure; You are refined[11] and Your name is doubly refined. [8] You are strong and Your name is strong; You are living and Your name is living. You are pure and Your name is pure; You are precious and Your name is precious. [9] You are honest and Your name is honest. You are mighty and Your name is mighty; You are luminous and Your name is luminous.[12] You are exalted[13] and Your name [10] is exalted; You are sweet and Your name is sweet. You are awesome and Your name is awesome; You are pleasant and Your name is pleasant. You are venerable and Your name is venerable. [11] You are [all-]supporting[14] and Your name is [all-]supporting. You are brave and Your name is brave; You are ancient and Your name is ancient. You are splendid and Your name is [12] splendid;[15] You are righteous and Your name is righteous. You are bright[16] and Your name is bright; You are holy and Your name is holy. You are merciful and Your name is merciful; [13] You are lovely and Your name is lovely. You are Shaddai[17] and Your name is Shaddai; You are perfect and Your name is perfect. Blessed are thou, [14] the holy God.[18]

NOTES TO SECTION L_x

1. The syntax of the opening line is quite open to interpretation. We could also read "O God! By Your fiat, our Lord of justice..." Cf. Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, p. 27, line 185 for the expression bema'amar panekhah 'with the fiat of Your face..."

2. Or, 'our Lord! Justice of the army of Israel!"

3. Or, "and [even] more [than that] to me."

4. I.e. the familiar pausal indicator, here added in quite archaically in a non-Biblical text.

5. Or, in some manuscripts, "Your acts of righteousness, selah, will exalt You..."

6. Hebrew: yeromemu leromem lekhah. The redundancy is less jarring to the ear in Hebrew.

7. Ps 8:2.

8. Hebrew: baḥur, or, less gramatically, "chosen."

9. Hebrew: vatiq.

10. Hebrew: zakh.

11. Hebrew: zoqeq, or, in some manuscripts, zaquq.

12. Hebrew: lohet.

13. Hebrew: matoq.

14. Hebrew: sovel.

15. Hebrew: pe'er.

16. Hebrew: sah.

17. I.e. the regular Biblical divine epithet, cf. Gen 17:1, Ex 6:3, Ez 1:24 and 10:5, et al.

18. This is the third benediction from the Shemoneh ᶜEsreh prayer. The identical endings of sections L and L_x may suggest that they originally functioned as alternatives in the text.

SECTION M

[172] It is our [duty][1] to praise You and to declare Your beauty, and to bless You[2] and to magnify You and to crown You[3] and to declare Your unity, Lord of all [173] men, God of all souls, God of all spirits,[4] [174] Essence of Life,[5] the First and the Last.[6] The Lord is King, He is robed in grandeur; the Lord is robed, He is girded in strength; [175] the world stands firm, it cannot be shaken. Your throne stands firm from of old; from eternity [176] You have existed, etc., until, Your decrees are indeed enduring; holiness befits Your house, O Lord [177] for all times.[7] I will let him live to a ripe old age, and I shall show him My salvation.[8] [178] A psalm of David. The earth is the Lord's

and all that it holds, the world and its inhabitants, etc.[9] A psalm [179] of David. Ascribe to the Lord, O divine beings, ascribe to the Lord, glory and might.[10] And You rule [180] over all and in Your hand are power and might, and in Your hand is [the power] to magnify and to strengthen all. And You are our God; [181] we give thanks to You and praise Your splendid name,[11] 'ahah ['hh], yahah [yhh], [182] 'eheyeh 'asher 'eheyeh ['hyh 'shr 'hyh].[12] May [Your] power be great[13] to remove and to nullify from me [183] Your anger and Your wrath and Your fury and Your ire from me, N.N.,[14] [184] and from my children and [be] my refuge[15] from Your indignation [...][16] and from Your people, and from Your city and from Your inheritances. May Your mercy be stirred up on my behalf, [185] and Your faith,[17] it have mercy on and protect me and Your treasures.[18] And they shall declare: the Lord is God, [186] the Lord is God.[19]

NOTES TO SECTION M

1. Hebrew: ᶜalenu leshabbeḥakhah. These opening words are almost identical to the opening words of the famous Alenu prayer, which is now an integral part of the daily liturgy, although it was, apparently, originally composed as part of the additional service for the New Year. That that hymn has its provenance within the world of merkavah mysticism is demonstrated by the fact that it is included, with only some mild textual variation, in the merkavah text published by Scholem as an appendix to Jewish Gnosticism (§5, pp. 105-106). It is likely that this expression comes to the Shiᶜur Qomah from that hymn itself. On the Alenu prayer, see Baer's Seder ᶜAvodat Yisra'el, p. 131; E. Levy, Yesodot Hattefilah (Tel Aviv, 1947), pp. 232-233; B. Friedman, Maqor Hattefilot (Bene Brak, 1963), pp. 35b-36a; the medieval Sefer Kol Bo, ed. Leiter, §16, p. 9b; Maḥzor Vitry, ed. Horowitz, p. 75; ᶜArugat Habbosem, ed. Urbach, vol. 3, pp. 468-471; and cf. PT Rosh Hashanah 1:3, 57a and PT ᶜAvodah Zarah 1:2, 39c.

2. This term is absent from most of the manuscripts.

3. This term is absent from most of the manuscripts.

4. The terms for "soul" (neshamah) and "spirit" (nefesh) do not have the distinction in Hebrew that they might have in English.

5. Hebrew: ḥai hehayyim, literally, "The Living One of Life," or "The Life of Lives."

6. Cf. Is 44:6 and 48:12.

7. Ps 93:1,2, and 5. This is the translation of the Jewish Publication Society (Philadelphia, 1913), p. 97. The word "until" means that the reader is to supply verses 3 and 4 from his memory, prayerbook or Bible.

8. Ps 91:16, trans. Jewish Publication Society, 1972, p. 96. This citation is lacking in almost all of the manuscripts.

9. Ps 24:1, trans. Jewish Publication Society, 1972, p. 22.

10. Ps 29:1, trans. Jewish Publication Society, 1972, p. 27.

11. I Ch 29:12b and 13.

12. These words are apparently intended to be taken as the names of splendor mentioned in the preceding verse. The Ehyeh name is from Ex 3:14. See above, section L, note 19.

13. Cf. Nu 14:17.

14. Hebrew: peloni b. peloni. The scribes of some of the manuscripts insert their own names into this passage.

15. Cf. 2 Sam 22:2, or Ps 18:3, 40:18, 70:6 or 144:2, unless we read palţeni for umefalţi (following, for example, JTS ms. 8128), which yields "allow me to escape from Your indignation..."

16. The scribe's error here produces the strange notion that the mystic is praying for deliverance from the Jewish people and from Jerusalem. The manuscripts offer a wide variety of alternative readings. Either we may read umippalgotai for umefalţi and delete mizzaʿamekhah 'Your indignation' to yield "...from me and from my children, from my family [taking palgah to refer to a family division] and from Your people," or else we may delete umibbanai umefalţi as well as mizzaʿamekhah to yield "and from me and from Your people..."

17. Hebrew: ve'emunatekhah, i.e. "My faith in you." To preserve this word, which is absent in the vast majority of manuscripts, it is necessary to emend vetahus to tahus, but given the overwhelming manuscript evidence in favor of deleting the term altogether, it seems more logical to maintain vetahus and to take it to mean "and

You shall have mercy." The second person masculine singular and the third person feminine singular verb forms are homonymous in Hebrew in the imperfect aspect of the verb.

18. Hebrew: segulotekhah. A majority of manuscripts read segulatekhah in the singular, which is preferable. The treasure is the Jewish people itself, as in the familiar Biblical expression.

19. A familiar Deuteronomic phrase, e.g. Dt 4:35; 4:39; 7:9; I K 8:60; I K 18:39. The repetition of the phrase marks this as a citation of I K 18.

SECTION N

And you shall fall on your face.[1] He who dwells in Shamayim, who resides in Sheme Shamayim, [187] Dararpe'el, the Name, Rokhev ʿAravot, He who dwells in Zevul and in Maʿon, He who dwells in [188] Shehaqim, sits on a lofty and supernal throne in the seventh heaven.[2] He is all light; [189] [with] seventy times [the light of] the luminaries, all the [heavenly] residences will shine.[3] And in it is established the throne of glory [190] on the four hayyot of glory, and the treasuries of life and the treasuries of souls.[4] And there is no boundary [191] or end to the great luminary that is in it,[5] and from the glory that is in His fullness, the earth is illuminated.[6] [192] And angels grasp the pillars of fire;[7] and their light is like the light of [the planet] Venus;[8] it shall not be extinguished. [193] For their eyes are like tarshish[9] and like sparks of lightning and their stance is on top of light.[10] [194] And in fear, they declare You alone beautiful who sits on the throne of glory and knows what [195] is in the hidden places of darkness,[11] for light is stationed with Him,[12] and You wrap [Yourself] with light as [though it were] a cloak.[13] And the hayyot [196] and the 'ofanim[14] exalt Him, and they fly with wings.[15] Each has six wings [197] and with their wings, they cover their faces, and turn their [198] faces downward,[16] and they do not lift up their faces because of the terror and fear that is [199] over them.[17] When He raises Himself up, the mighty are afraid.[18]

And the pillars tremble at His roar.[19] [200] And the doorposts shake at the [sound of] His voice.[20] And they wrap themselves with a covering of white fire.[21] [201] And they proclaim[22] in a strong and brave voice; and one calls to the other and says, "Holy, [202] holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. The earth is full of His glory."[23] And He [was] before the Garden of Eden.[24] [203] And He [will endure] until the heavens and the earth [disappear].[25] [204] He is unique and there is none other with Him. And there is not [205] anything aside from Him. He hangs Me^{c}onah on His arm,[26] and the fear of Him is on all the me^{c}onot. And the awe of Him is on [206] all the angels, for they were hewn out by the breath of His mouth and they stand up to glorify His strength.[27] [207] And He is one,[28] and has no second, and has no substitute and none is like Him and there is none else. [208] And if He commands, there is none to void [the command]. He lives, King over all the kings of the earth. He investigates hearts before they are [209] created[29] and knows hearts and thoughts before they come into being.[30] Blessed be His name, and very blessed, [210] the honor of His splendor, forever and for all eternity and for all time.[31] For there is none [211] except Him, and aside from Him, there is no God. And with His voice, He causes the earth to quake [212] and He is the Ancient of Days.[32] He destroys mountains with His anger[33] and calms the sea with His might.[34] And He bears [213] all in His arms.[35] And He makes the ancient pillars sway with His glance,[36] and He supports [214] all and carries all in His arm.[37] He is invisible to the eyes of all men,[38] and He rules over all the [215] worlds. There is none other than Him.[39] And all the constellations, sun, moon, and stars [216] bow down to Him, and it was He who revealed [Himself] in the Garden of Eden and He who planted a tree [217] of life in His garden. And He is very blessed[40] in the supernal me^{c}onot and [He is the] Ancient of Days. With Him is strength [218] and righteousness,[41] and He is very blessed in the beauty of His honor. He understands knowledge, knowledge, knowledge, knowledge.[42] [219] The End.[43]

NOTES TO SECTION N

1. Falling on one's face is the standard rabbinic metaphor for supplication. Judah Halevi took the whole point of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah to be to instill fear and reverence in man as he contemplates God, cf. the Kuzari, ed. and trans. Hirschfeld (London, 1905; rpt. New York, 1964), p. 212. Falling is used elsewhere in hekhalot literature to describe the ecstatic state induced by being admitted to the seventh heaven. In Hekhalot Rabbati 24:3, ed. Wertheimer, p. 104, the state of man at that moment is described as follows: "And such a man trembles and quakes and recoils and is consumed by terror and fear, and he faints and falls back..." In another text, published by Jellinek in Bet Hammidrash, vol. 3, pp. 161-163, it is pointed out that even one of the three heavenly choirs that recites the celestial Qedushah is made up of members that fall on their faces when they recite their prayer. Cf. Seder Rabbah Debereshit §47, ed. Wertheimer, p. 47. Metatron asserts that the angels fall on their faces at the sight of him in 3 Enoch, ch. 14, ed. Odeberg, p. 20 (Hebrew).

2. Dararpe'el is apparently a scribal error for dar ^{c}Arafel 'He who resides in ^{c}Arafel.' The names given here together are a version of the names of the seven heavens. These differ considerably from text to text, more with respect to their order than with respect to their names. The following sources may be compared to the list found here: Visions of Ezekiel, ed. Gruenwald, pp. 115-116; Pesiqta Derav Kahana, R.H. §10, ed. Mandelbaum, p. 343; BT Ḥagigah 12b; 'Avot Derabbi Natan, text A, ch. 37, ed. Schechter, p. 110; Deuteronomy Rabbah 2:32; Yalqut Shim^{c}oni, ^{c}eqev, § 855; Bereshit Rabbah, ed. Albeck, p. 5; Leviticus Rabbah 29:11, ed. Margoliot, p. 680; Numbers Rabbah 12:17; Song of Songs Rabbah 6:4:2; Esther Rabbah 1:12 (to Esther 1:2); Midrash Tehillim 114:2, ed. Buber, p. 236; Midrash Haggadol to Gen 1:1, ed. Margoliot, p. 15; 3 Enoch, ch. 17, ed. Odeberg, pp. 23-24; Ginzberg, Ginze Schechter, vol. 1, pp. 184-187; Yalquṭ Hammakhiri to Ps 24 §22, ed. Buber, p. 820 and Sefer Yeṣirah 4:13 (long version), ed. Warsaw, part 2, p. 32a.

3. The material here through the end of section N and well into section N_x is given as a description of the seventh heaven in Sefer Harazim, ed. Margoliot (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 107-109. Cf. the version of this material given in the Sodi Razi of Eleazar of Worms extant in Oxford mss. 1572 and 1573, ff. 58b-59a and 56d and 57b, respectively.

4. The tradition that R. Ishmael saw the various celestial treasuries is known from other midrashic contexts. Cf., for example, Midrash 'Elleh 'Ezkerah, ed. Jellinek, p. 67.

5. The luminary is not the sun, but rather the source of the primeval light that preceded the creation of the sun. See Altmann, "Gnostic Themes in Rabbinic Cosmology," in Essays in Honour of the Very Rev. Dr. J. H. Hertz, ed. Epstein, Levine and Roth, pp. 28-32; Altmann, "A Note on the Rabbinic Doctrine of Creation," JJS 7(1956), pp. 195-206; Aptowitzer, "Zur Kosmologie der Aqada: Licht als Urstoff," MGWJ N.S. 36(1928), pp. 363-390. Cf. also, R. Lowe, "The Divine Garment and Shi^ur Qomah," HTR 58(1965), pp. 153-166.

6. Hebrew: umekubbad shebbemelo'o. We may emend umekubbad to umikkavod, based on several manuscripts, but it seems unnecessary to emend shebbemelo'o to simlato 'His garment'. The Hebrew melo', used here apparently to mean "heaven," is the exact equivalent of the Greek pleroma, used in gnostic speculation in just the same sense. The Hebrew term was used in exactly the same way in the Sefer Habbahir, as described by Scholem in Ursprung und Anfaenge der Kabbala (Berlin, 1962), pp. 59-62. If we elect to retain the text as it appears in this manuscript, then it seems that the Shi^ur Qomah anticipated the usage in the Bahir by at least several centuries.

7. The Hebrew 'ahuzim, although somewhat odd grammatically, is obviously based on Song 3:8, and need not be corrected to the more grammatically regular 'ohazim as several scribes did.

8. Hebrew: nogah.

9. Cf. Dan 10:6, and see above, section D, note 41.

10. I.e. they have no support other than the divine light.

11. Cf. Ps 18:12, and, perhaps more pertinently, Dan 2:22.

12. Reading honeh for hammah, as do most of the manuscripts. Literally, honeh means "to camp", as an army, but the word does have a poetic, derived meaning of simply "to dwell," and that is probably the sense here. Light dwells with, that is to say, emanates from, the Deity. This seems to be a Hebrew translation of Dan 2:22.

13. Cf. Ps 104:2. Most of the manuscripts read ya^{c}ateh for ta^{c}ateh, thus preserving the third-person structure of the verse. See above, note 5.

14. The hayyot are the celestial creatures mentioned in the first chapter of Ezekiel. The 'ofanim are the personifications of the wheels of the divine chariot-throne. See above, section A, note 8.

15. Cf. Yannai 132:133-134, ed. Zulay, p. 335. Both the passage in Yannai and this passage are based on Is 6:2.

16. Cf. above, lines 159-160, and section L, note 13.

17. The expression is a bit obscure, but is apparently an attempt to explain how a creature with four faces can look down without simultaneously looking up.

18. Job 41:17.

19. Job 26:11, with the addition of the idea that it is the divine voice that causes the pilllars of heaven to tremble. The identification of the pillars as being the pillars of heaven is not included in any of the manuscript sources.

20. Is 6:4.

21. White fire is mentioned in Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 21, as being the material, so to speak, on which the primordial Torah was written in letters of black fire. Cf. Midrash Tehillim 90:12, ed. Buber, p. 196a.

22. Reading ve^{c}onin for ve^{c}onekhah. Apparently, there was some speculation given to separating those angels that recited Qadosh (i.e. Is 6:3; Hebrew: meqaddshin) from those to whom it was recited. Those to whom it was recited were called "the receivers of holiness" (Hebrew: meqabble qedushah) in the Visions of Ezekiel, lines 62-63, ed. Gruenwald, p. 125, and they are said to be found in the second heaven. The meqaddshin were generally thought to be found in the fifth heaven, see Gruenwald's note, ad locum.

23. Is 6:3.

24. This is a pun based on Gen 2:8, where the garden is said to have been planted by God miqqedem, generally translated "in the East." Here God is said to have been miqqedem 'pre-existent' to the Garden.

25. Literally: until there is neither heaven nor earth.

26. Me^{c}onah (or me^{c}on) is the name for the sixth heaven, see above, section N, note 2. The word itself means dwelling, and so, in the plural, can apparently refer generically to the various layers of the heavens. In Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 33, it is the heaven called ^{c}Aravot that is supported by the divine arm. Cf. Seder Rabbah Debereshit §18, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 29-30, and see Wertheimer's note, ad locum.

27. The text of this manuscript seems superior here to the others.

28. Cf. Job 23:13. In the version of this text present in the Sefer Harazim, ed. Margoliot, p. 108, the citation of this verse is a bit longer, and thus far more recognizable. Cf. the hymn 'Adon ^{c}Olam, in Baer, Seder ^{c}Avodat Yisra'el, p. 35.

29. Cf. Jer 19:10 or Ps 139:23. The suggestion that God knows the secrets of men's hearts before they are created is a development of the Biblical idea.

30. Almost all the manuscripts exclude the reference in this clause to the heart. Probably, the scribe brought it down inadvertently from the preceding line.

31. These terms are all roughly synonymous in Hebrew.

32. Cf. Dan 7:9, 13 and 22. Some texts read uma^{c}atiq yamim 'and He who moves the seas; and one manuscript reads uma^{c}atiq harim 'and He who moves mountains,' apparently based on Job 9:5.

33. I K 19:11. Cf. 'Otiot Derabbi ^{c}Aqiva, text A, ed. Wertheimer, p. 390: "His word shatters mountains."

34. This suggests that the reading above "who moves the sea" is incorrect.

35. Hebrew: nose' hakkol bezero^{c}otav. The notion of the divine arm carrying something is a common motif in merkavah texts. Cf. BT Ḥagigah 12b: "The storm is hung on the arm of the Holy One, blessed be He..." Cf. PT Ḥagigah 2:1, 77a. In Midrash Konen, ed. Jellinek, p. 23, it is stated that the primeval Torah hung from the divine arm, and in Seder Rabbah Debereshit it is stated that the entire world hangs from the arm of God (§47, ed. Wertheimer, p. 48.) Cf. Yannai 132:133, ed. Zulay, p. 335.

36. These are the pillars of heaven, cf. Job 26:11, and see above, note 19.

37. Sovel means "to support" in this same context in the Seder Rabbah Debereshit §8, ed. Wertheimer, p. 23, and cf. §18. ed. cit., pp. 29-30 and §46. ed. cit., p. 45.

38. Cf. Job 28:21.

39. Reading kokhavim 'stars' instead of the singular.

40. Hebrew: mevorakh, in the pi^{c}el construction, an emphatic form of the regular barukh 'blessed.'

41. Hebrew: ^{c}ateq usedaqah, as in Pr 8:18.

42. The reason for the fourfold repetition of the Hebrew da^{c}at is obscure. Repetition of a single word added magical potency, cf. Hekhalot Zutarti, ed. Elior, p. 23, line 33.

43. Hebrew: seliq, i.e. the end of Sefer Haqqomah. The scribe continues on the next line with the first chapter of Hekhalot Rabbati.

SECTION N_x

(N.B. Sections C_x, J_x, L_x and N_x, which are the sections present in the long versions of the Sefer Haqqomah, are translated from JTS ms. 1892.)

[1] It is in the heart[s] of them who were created by Him[1] to discern and know the strength of the awe surrounding His name. Blessed is [2] His name in the seat of His beauty,[2] and [He is] very blessed[3] in the splendor of His strength. Blessed be His name in the treasure-houses of snow, and [He is] very blessed in the rivers of [3] flames. Blessed be His name in the fogs of His brilliance.[4] and very blessed in the cords of fire. Blessed be His name in the claps and peels of thunder, [4] and very blessed in the flashes of lightning bolts. Blessed be His name in the mouth of every soul and very exalted in the mouth of every living creature. Blessed be His name [5] in all the deserts and very blessed in

the waves of the sea. May His name alone be blessed in His throne and very blessed in the council of His might. Blessed be His name [6] forever and ever; amen, amen, amen, selah. Hallelujah. My son, do not forsake my Torah and keep my commandments with you. Do not reject the chastisement of [7] God, my son, and do not be revolted by His admonitions. Keep my commandments and live, and [keep] my Torah as [you care for] your eyes. May this [8] book of the Torah not move from your mouth, etc. Have I not commanded you: be strong and of good courage, etc. Daily God commends His grace, and in the evening, His song is with me, [9] a prayer unto the living God. Blessed forever be the name of His great kingdom.[5] 'Adrihu ['dryhv']; 'ahadabbi ['hdby]; [10]hahi [hhy]; yhvh, 'eheyeh 'asher 'eheyeh ['hyh 'shr 'hyh]; hehai [hhy]; yhvh, yuai [yv'y]; havah [hbh]; hah [hh]; vah [vh]; havah [hvh]; vahu [vhv]; hah [hh]; hi [hy]; hah [hh]; hah [hh]; yehi [yhy]; hi [hy]; hi [hy]; [11] hi [hy]; havah [hvh]; he ᶜolamim [hy ᶜvlmym]. This is His name forever, His appelation for every generation, and blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom [12] forever.[6] And its version in the language of purity is: yehu [yhv]; hahah [hhh]; hayah [hyh]; hi [hy]; yah [yh]; hah [hh]; yah [yh]; hu [hv]; hi [hy]; havah [hvh]; yayhah [yyhh]; yehu [yhv]; [13] hahi [hhy]; vehi [vhy]; hah [hh]; yah [yh]; yehu [yhv]; hu [hv]; hahayu [hhyv]; hayu [hyv]; hu [hv]; yhvh; yehu [yhv]; hahu [hhv]; hi [hy]; havah [hvh]. Blessed be the name of His glorious [14] kingdom forever.

As His name [is], so is His greatness,[7] and as His greatness, so is His praise. And as His praise, so is His kingship, [15] and as His kingship, so is His holiness. And as His holiness, so is His splendor, and as His splendor, so is the length of His years.[8] And as the length of His years, so is His patience, [16] [and as His patience,] so is the abundance of His mercy. And as the abundance of His mercy, so is His might. And as His might, so is His vengeance. And as His vengeance, so is His greatness.[9] And as His greatness [17] so is the abundance of His compassion. And as the abundance of His compassion, so is His goodness. Therefore, it is appropriate to honor His name. [And His are] the greatness, [18] the might, and the kingdom, and the splendor and the victory and the majesty, for all is in heaven and on earth.[10] His name is from Him, and thus is the name of His splendor, and forever has His name been in glory, [19] and [so shall it be] forever and always. The supernal beings bless His name, and the resplendant and beautiful glory [of the divine.] Yah [yh]; ᶜalav [ᶜlyv]; puah [pvh]; 'el ['l]; [20] vihah [vyhh]; ᶜalav [ᶜlyv]; pahaz [phz]; 'eli ['ly]. Blessed,

blessed, blessed be Your name and very blessed be Your name, and very great be Your name, and very praised be [21] Your name, and very splendid be Your name, and very holy be Your name, and very lauded be Your name, and very exalted be Your name above all blessed and song of praise, [22] for Your name is in You and in You is Your name. For before all, Your name was established, and Your name [shall be] established forever. Because of Your name, [23] the batallions of fire quiver[11] and the batallions of flame declare Your name splendid. They praise Your name and the seraphs laud and the celestial creatures sanctify [24] Your name. And the 'ofanim declare Your name pure, for Your name made all created beings and heaven...[12] Because of Your name,[13] the sea flees backwards [25] and all its breakers and waves declare Your name mighty. And all them who dwell on high, and every [celestial] residence, quiver and quake [26] because of Your [name.] Heaven and earth, and its residents, Tehom and Abbadon,[14] desert and death-dark [wasteland],[15] man and beast, mountains, and valleys and hills, seas [27] and rivers, and fire and hail, snow and smoke and whirlwind, and the angels of fire and the angels of water tremble because of Your name. All them who have the [28] spirit of life in their nostrils,[16] they all give glory to Your name.[17] And I, [Mr.] X, son of [Mr.] Y,[18] dust and ashes, depressed of heart [29] and humble of spirit, a worm and a leech,[19] a passing shadow, a bloom of the pasture, I have come to lay [before You] my supplication and prayer, to find [30] favor and mercy and justice and mercy before the throne of the glory of Your kingdom. For You are close to them who call upon you[20] and may be found by all them who seek You,[21] [31] O holy and awesome One. Blessed are You, [and] full of compassion. Blessed are You [and] pure, good and forgiving. Blessed are You, [who are the] Provider, a good and beneficent God. [32] Blessed are You, [and] splendid. Do, [therefore], my desire and request and favor before the throne of Your glory. Open, also [33] for me, Your slave, the gates of prayer, the gates of repentence, the gates of Torah and the gates of wisdom and the gates of understanding and the gates of knowledge and the gates of science, and the gates of [34] charity and the gates of compassion and the gates of the fear of heaven and the gates of blessing and the gates of sustenance and support [35] and honor.[22] And inscribe me in the book of life, and put my lot and destiny in the Garden of Eden with the righteous,[23] and inscribe me for a good life for the sake of [36] Your great, mighty, awesome, explicit, brave, strong, exalted, wonderful, holy and worthy Name. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the earth is

filled with His glory.[24] [37] [You,] to whom the angels of Your [celestial] hosts ascribe joy; to You, they ascribe [38] beauty; to You, the ascribe courage. You, they coronate and sing melisma[25] and declare resplendent, holy, exalted, [39] and glorious.[26] And they open [their] mouths in song,[27] and acclamation[28] and praise, song and melody, blessing, glory, praise, acclamation, thanksgiving and thanks, [40] victory-songs, melody and higayon[29] merriment[30] and might, beauty, strength, ᶜillus, ᶜilluz,[31] exaltation,[32] wonders and salvation, rest and consolation [41] and peacefulness,[33] quiet and freshness, security, goodness, love, delightfulness and delight, grace and mercy, loveliness, [42] attractiveness, light and kindness, brilliance and effulgence, merit, shining, appearance, and decoration, effulgence, light and [its] branch,[34] refined incense,[35] [43] source of illumination, strength, power[36] and sternness,[37] power, height and preciousness, strength, dominion and courage and bravery, exaltation, splendor [44] holiness, purity, cleanliness, might, strength, power, greatness, pride, kingship, majesty, and beauty and honor and splendor [45] to Zohari'el, YHVH, the God of Israel,[38] resplendent in splendor, whose praises are [woven] in the fabric of [celestial] song,[39] crowned in splendor, beauty [46] and royalty, splendor and majesty, and a crown of awesome deeds, [He] whose name suits Him and whose appellation is sweet to Him and whose crown splendidly becomes Him and whose beauty is appropriately His [47] and whose glory suits Him and whose servants sing Him songs of pleasantness; Israel recalls the mightiest of His wonderful acts.[40] O King [48] of the kings of kings and God of gods and Lord of lords,[41] He who is surrounded by the intertwining bonds of kingship, He who is encircled by the branches [49] of the princes of effulgence,[42] in a branch of whose majesty is the throne of heaven, He who appears from the [celestial] heights. By [the power of] His mouth were the depths split open[43] [50] and [by the power of] His appearance were hewn out proud heavens. His appearance is His wonder.[44] And the mighty are splintered[45] from His crown...[46] [51] and all trees rejoice in His word and the grasses celebrate in His joy and His words flow in the heavens[47] and go forth and out [52] and down in flames of fire, and the creatures present...to those who attend them in peace,[48] to those who bring them to fruition.[49] O beloved, innocent and charming King, who[50] vaunts Himself over [53] the kings, the tall One, who exalts Himself over [all] them who are proud.[51] Proud One, who declares Himself beautiful over all those who are [themselves] beautiful; beautiful One, who raises Himself over the mighty; [54] mighty One, who lifts Himself

over all the awesome ones; splendor to the kings, praise to the chosen ones, greatness to the holy ones and available to all and sweet to them [55] who wish well for His name.[52] Good in all His paths,[53] honest in all His deeds, pleasant in all His attributes, shining in advice and knowledge, clear[-headed] [56] in wisdom and intrigue,[54] Judge of all souls, Witness of all events, and Adjudicator to every attribute,[55] Lord[56] of wisdom and all; [57] mighty One, in purity and [in] holiness.

Unique King of truth; King alive and everlasting for eternity; King who kills and revives; King [58] who makes every wound and who creates every remedy; King who fashions every blessing and prepares all good things; King of all His works [59] and who sustains all His creatures; King who is king to the downtrodden and mighty to the strong. He is exalted and raised up, supernal and wonderful, [60] dear and honored, dear, ancient and mighty and strong, heavenly and modest, holy and pure, righteous and honest and faithful, pious and powerful, [61] great and mighty, strong and mighty, King who sits on an exalted and uplifted, strong, [62] mighty, dear and awesome throne, surrounded by the intertwining knots of grandeur,[57] perfected with crowns of splendor in the chambers of the palace of grandeur.

He sees the hidden secrets and looks in the secret places and He is in every place. [63] It is neither possible to deny His word nor to deny His will or desire. One cannot defect, neither is there a place to escape from Him [64] nor secret lair in which to be hidden from Him. He shall rule forever; His throne shall rule in every generation.

He is a merciful and compassionate, forgiving [65] and excusing King who overlooks and passes over [the sins of man]. Be beautiful in every hymn; be resplendent in every [musical] note. [66] Be exalted in every palace of grandeur; be lifted up in every splendid palace. Be supernal over all creation; be grandiloquent over all created beings. Be honored on Your throne of glory; [67] be revered because of Your charm. Be blessed by every blessing; be praised by every [song of] praise. [68] Be lauded with every [song of] praise; be acclaimed by every [song of] joy. Be great forever; be holy for all eternity, Totrosi YYV [=YHVH], the God of Israel, King of [69] all worlds, Lord of all things, Sage, [who understands] all secrets, who rules all the generations. One God who has ruled [70] forever, unique King, forever and always, selah. May Your name be blessed forever and for all eternity and for all time. [71] Who is like You, King who is called Totrosi YYV, God of Israel?

Lord of lords, to You shall the throne of Your glory sing praises. [72] To You, shall they ascribe grandeur. Yours are salvation, strength and splendor. To you shall they ascribe strength might, newness, happiness, [73] joy, blessing, glory, exaltation, splendor, supernality, beauty, [74] song, unity, coronation, eternity, melisma, mirth, effulgence, [75] acclamation, holiness, praise, song and pleasantness. To You, Totrosi YYV, the God [76] of Israel, Your servants sing a new song,[58] and You, they coronate with crowns, and they shall acclaim You King forever and You shall [77] be called "One" for all eternity, Totrosi YYV, the God of Israel. All is Your domain, and Your dominion is over all. Blessed are You [78] our God, God of Israel,[59] our God, King of the universe, King over all the secrets and Lord over all the hiding places. And when the Holy One, blessed be He, [79] calls the Youth, thus does He call him: zehuvdia [zhvbdy']; zehuvad [zhvbd]; zehuvad [zhvbd]; and his nickname is 'ahahari^{c}i ['hhry^{c}y]; 'ahadar ['hdr], nezihah [nzyhh]; [80] yah [yh], malhaṭat [mlhṭt]; 'ashia ['shy']; ^{c}ivit [^{c}ybyt], 'andir ['ndyr]; vozriah [vzryh]; bag [bg], [thus is] the name[60] of the Lad, which one is liable to be killed if one does not learn, [81] yet which one is guilty if one uses [profanely]. From his loins down, each side resembles the other, but from his loins [82] up, they do not resemble each other. The name of the Lad is like his Master's, as it is written, "...for my name is in him."[61] The name [83] of the Holy One, blessed be He, has seventy-two letters, and the name of the Lad has seventy-one letters, [both] when he ascends with six letters [84] and when he descends with seven letters.[62] The glory of God is in the hidden things, lest you be removed from the world. [85] Here concludes the seder of the King of the Universe...[63]

NOTES TO SECTION N_x

1. Hebrew: lev yere'av. Some manuscripts read lire'av 'to them who fear Him' and still others leverua'v 'to His creations.' Other manuscripts have still other readings.

2. Because of the use, especially in this portion of the text, of many synonyms and near-synonyms for the glory and beauty of the godhead, we have attempted to translate consistently, although this has not always been absolutely possible because of the peculiarities of the English language. The terms and their regular equivalents are as follows:

tif'eret	splendor

pe'er	resplendence
hod	majesty
hadar	beauty
to'ar	appearance
ziv	brilliance
muvhaq	lustrous
sah	bright
zakh	pure
nogah	effulgence
kavod	glory
yaqar	precious
ge'ut	magnificence
ᶜaṭeret	royalty
gavoah	tall
gadol	great, big
gibbor	mighty
'adir	noble
nisa'	lofty
ram	exalted
merummam	very exalted.

3. Hebrew: mevorakh. When the piᶜel form seems to merely be the emphatic form of the qal, we translate with the same term as the qal, but with the modifying adjective "very."

4. Hebrew" ᶜorpele ziv.

5. This is an amalgam of Biblical verses, some misquoted: Pr 3:1a (reading "forsake" for the Biblical "forget"); Pr 2:1b; Pr 3:11; Pr 7:2; Josh 1:8; Josh 1:9 and Ps 42:9.

6. This is a combination of Ex 3:15 and the familiar rabbinic doxology. These names are mostly permutations of the Tetragrammaton.

7. Or, "His bigness' (gedullato.) Probably, this hymn, which is discussed above in chapter V iii, had a separate provenance, but was accepted into the longer recensions of the text because of its glorification of the divine gedullah. Usually, of course, in a liturgical context, the epithet gadol would refer to the divine grandeur or greatness, but its simplest meaning is "big" and that is obviously how the editor of the Sefer Haqqomah intended that it be taken here.

8. Reading 'orekh shenotav in place of 'orekh shinav, literally "the length of His teeth," signifying, perhaps the extent of the divine wrath and ability to inflict punishment, as opposed to the term 'orekh 'apav,

literally, "the length of His nose (or face)," which generally signifies the quality of divine patience and willingness to forgive. The metaphoric reference to the length of the divine teeth seems to be highly original, if that is the correct reading, and is not known to us from any other source. Those manuscripts which spell shinav with a yod after the initial letter cannot be mistaken, but several other manuscripts give shinav in four letters, leaving open the possibility that the scribes read shanav 'His years' as a variant of shenot-av. The reference to the divine teeth is possibly based on Job 41:6. At any rate, given the nature of the Shi^{c}ur Qomah, it is hardly startling to learn that the godhead also has long teeth.

9. Hebrew: gedullato, as above, note 7. The repetition of the same divine attribute does not necessarily point to a composite text, since the term gedullah 'bigness' is, in fact, the key to the inclusion of the hymn in the text in the first place.

10. I Ch 29:11.

11. Or, "before Your name," On the use of the term gedud, see above, section J, note 2.

12. The reading l' hzv mishimekhah seems corrupt.

13. Or, "before Your name," as above, and throughout.

14. Tehom is the name of the vaguely personified "deep" of Gen 1:2. The personification, perhaps influenced by the standard mythology of the ancient Near East, is already apparent in some Biblical texts, e.g. Ps 42:8 or Job 28:14. Abbadon is a poetic name for the more standard Sheol and is found at several points in the books of Psalms and Job.

15. Hebrew: salmavet, best known from Ps 23:4, but actually appearing seventeen times in the Hebrew Bible, all but eight of which are in the book of Job. The expression here, ṣiyah veṣalmavet, is taken from Job 2:6.

16. Cf. Gen 7:22.

17. Reading shimekhah for shemo.

18. Hebrew: peloni bar peloni.

19. Hebrew: rimah vetole^{c}ah. Both terms really refer to worms, cf. Is 14:11.

20. The phrase is based on Ps 145:18.

21. This phrase is based on Is 55:6. The passage here confirms that the command of the Biblical verse is a real possibility.

22. These gates are listed in 3 Enoch, ch. 8, ed. Odeberg, pp. 13-14 (Hebrew), pp. 23-24 (English), and cf. Odeberg's notes, ad loc., p. 23 (English).

23. The Garden of Eden is, of course, inhabited by the righteous after their deaths. Cf. the use of the notion of the dead retiring to the Garden of Eden in the deathbed testimony of R. Yohanan b. Zakkai given in BT Berakhot 28b, and the additional sources listed by Kohut in the ᶜArukh Hashalem (Vienna and New York, 1878-1892), vol. 2, p. 314.

24. Is 6:3.

25. Hebrew: yesalselu; regularly in rabbinic Hebrew, with the meaning of "to curl the hair," cf. Jastrow, Dictionary, s.v. silsel, pp. 995-996, but here, probably referring to a kind of melismatic hymn.

26. Hebrew: yeshabbhu, here meaning, from the context, "to ascribe shevaḥ 'physical beauty' to the godhead." For shevaḥ meaning physical beauty, see above, section G, note 5.

27. Hebrew: vayiftehu beshir. The long list of words that follows is apparently made up either of types of songs (shirah, zimrah, etc.), types of praise (shevah, hallel, qillus, etc.), or, by metonymy, the names of the divine attributes ascribed to the godhead in the type of song to which the word refers (i.e. 'emet, sedeq, which refer, respectively, to the songs which ascribe truth and justice to the Deity.) A similar list appears in Hekhalot Rabbati, ed. Wertheimer, p. 105, to which we may compare the text published by Jellinek in BH. vol. 3, pp. 100-101; the list in the text published by Scholem in Jewish Gnosticism, p. 115; and the list in Oxford ms. 1531, f. 58a, published by Altmann in Melilah 2(1946), p. 23.

28. Hebrew: qillus. Cf. Lieberman, "Qeles Qillusin," in ᶜAle ᶜAyin: the Salmon Schocken Jubilee Volume (Jerusalem, 1948-1952), pp. 75-81.

29. The Hebrew word generally means "speculation" or "introspection." Here it is apparently meant to refer

to a kind of song related to the kind of recitation mentioned in BT Berakhot 38b or in PT Sanhedrin 10:1, 28a. Cf. Ps 92:4, where higayon is a type of musical instrument.

30. The following standardized translations for words denoting gladness and joy are used in our translation as consistently as possible:

simhah	joy
sason	happiness
rinah	mirth
gilah	gladness
sahalah	merriment
ḥedvah	glee.

31. We transliterate here because of the importance of assonance and alliteration in the structure of the expression; the euphony is the generative factor.

32. Hebrew: sigguv, derived from sagav 'to lift up' or 'to exalt.'

33. Hebrew: shalvah, translated as "peacefulness" to distinguish it from the nearly synonymous shalom 'peace.'

34. Hebrew: 'or ve^{c}anaf. The reading seems secure, but the meaning is unclear, unless the branch is a ray of light emanating from the divine source of all light.

35. Hebrew: roqaḥ memullaḥ, derived from Ex 30:35, where the words are found together, but not as a single expression, at least according to the Massoretic text. The author of this section was either unaware or unconcerned with that tradition, and took the two words as a single expression meaning "refined incense." Memullah probably means "salty," but that does not seem to be the sense either in Exodus or in this passage. Roqaḥ has a variety of meanings, but the context in Exodus suggests the meaning of "incense" and that probably was intended by the author here as well.

36. Hebrew: 'adirut ve'azirut.

37. Hebrew: ^{c}arişut, which usually means "tyranny" or "violence", but which here apparently means simply "sternness" or "strength," as in Hekhalot Rabbati 24:1, ed. Jellinek, p. 101, where the same combination of terms occurs. Cf. Oxford ms. 1531, f. 58b: 'adirut ve^{c}arisut 'strength and power.'

38. In Hekhalot Rabbati 25:1, ed. Wertheimer, p. 105,

the list of types of songs and praises is also followed by a similar section.

39. Hebrew: mehuddar beriqme shir, either to be taken literally, in which case the image is of the hymns wafting about surrounding the King in their warp and weft, or figuratively, in which case it is to be supposed that the reference is to the King who is clad in garments of song.

40. Hebrew: veyisra'el mazkirin ᶜizzuz nifle'otav.

41. Cf. Dt 10:17.

42. Hebrew: beᶜanfe negide nogah. Naqid 'prince' could be taken as a synonym for ᶜanaf 'branch' if it were to be derived from the Aramaic negad 'to stretch, pull, draw out.' Negide nogah could then be taken to refer to the emanation of the divine splendor, based on the use of negad in the Talmud to mean "to spread out, as a cloak," cf. BT Bekhorot 44b or ᶜEruvin 94a. The term apparently had some currency in Hebrew speaking circles, as is suggested by M 'Avot 1:13, where the expression negad shema refers to one who "spreads out his name," i.e. one who boasts.

43. Reading, in light of Gen 7:11, nivqeᶜu for nitvaᶜadu. Other manuscripts offer different readings, including nitbaᶜaru '(the depths) were immolated,' nidᶜakhu '... were crushed,' and nitvaᶜadu '...were delineated,' which is preferable in terms of meaning and is nicely parallel to nitzu 'were hewn' which follows in the next clause. Still, the evidence of Gen 7:11 makes a strong case for the text presented above.

44. This line and the beginning of the following line are quite difficult and are probably corrupt textually.

45. Hebrew: nitzu. See above, note 43.

46. Hebrew: viqarim tored belqo, meaning unclear.

47. Hebrew: udevarav yizzlu beshamayim, cf. Dt 32:2.

48. Hebrew: leshoharin beshalvah, taking shoher to mean "to seek out" or "to search out" as in Pr 11:27 or Ps 78:34.

49. Reading lemeqime bam, literally, "to them who erect them," although the force of the bet prefix is unclear.

50. Cf. the texts in Hekhalot Rabbati 25:2, ed. Wertheimer, pp. 105-106, and ed. Jellinek, p. 101, and cf. Hekhalot Zuṭarti, ed. Elior, p. 25, line 440.

51. Hebrew: hammitqa'eh ᶜal kol hagge'im. God Himself, of course, is the only one to whom ge'ut is becoming, cf. Ex 15:1.

52. Hebrew: umaṣu' lekol meyahel shemo, possibly suggested by the juxtaposition of Ps 33:21 and 22.

53. Cf. Ps 145:17.

54. Hebrew: barur bevinah uveᶜalilah.

55. Dayyan and shofeṭ, translated here as "judge" and "adjudicator" respectively, are synonymous terms in Hebrew.

56. Hebrew: 'abir, cf. Gen 49:24, Ps 132:2 and 5, and especially, Is 1:24.

57. Hebrew: salul ᶜal qishre qa'avah.

58. Cf. Ps 96:1.

59. Hebrew abbreviation: ''y, possibly to be an acronym for 'elohenu 'elohe yisra'el.

60. Hebrew: shem, as opposed to kinui 'nickname' above.

61. Ex 23:21b; see above, line 154.

62. This refers to the question of whether Metatron's name is spelled with a yod between the first two letters or not. The exact importance of this distinction is unknown.

63. Ths scribe continues with more hekhalot traditions, but he apparently concludes the received recension of the Sefer Haqqomah at this point. Seder is a technical term in Hebrew for an organized literary text.

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II Manuscript Sources

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Berlin 924*

Cambridge Add. 405,4

Florence Plut. 44, no. 13

Ghirondi 11 (=cat. Steinschneider 110)

Guenzburg 90 (Moscow)

Guenzburg 131 (Moscow)

Guenzburg 302[29]* (Moscow)

Guenzburg 738* (Moscow)

JNUL 381 (Jerusalem)

JNUL 476 (Jerusalem)

JTSA 1746 (New York)

JTSA 1869 (New York)

JTSA 1879 (New York)

JTSA 1886 (New York)

JTSA 1892 (New York)

JTSA 1904 (New York)

JTSA 1990 (New York)

JTSA 2130 (New York)

JTSA 2195 (New York)

JTSA 2367 (New York)

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British Library Or. 10384 (London)

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Milan 57* (Ambrosiana)

Milan 70 (Ambrosiana)

Montefiore 279 (London)

Mossayef 145 (Jerusalem)

Munich 22

Munich 40

Munich 43

Oxford Hebr. C. 65

Oxford 1102

Oxford 1531

Oxford 1606

Oxford 1657

Oxford 1748

Oxford 1791

Oxford 1816

Oxford 1915

Oxford 1960

Oxford 2250

Oxford 2257

Oxford 2456*

Paris 799*

Parus 806*

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Parma 1390

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Sassoon 290

Sassoon 522

Zurich Heidenheim 102

IX INDEX AND LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

(N.B. Works mentioned here are fully described in the bibliography.)

BH	Jellinek, Bet Hammidrash
BM	Wertheimer, Batte Midrashot
BT	Babylonian Talmud
EJ	Encyclopaedia Judaica
HSCP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JNUL	Jewish National and University Library
JTS(A)	Jewish Theological Seminary of America
LXX	Septuagint
M	Mishnah
MGWJ	Monatschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
PAAJR	Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research
PT	Palestinian Talmud
REJ	Revue des Etudes Juives
T	Tosefta

The books of the Bible: Gen Ex Lev Nu Dt Jo Jud 1S 2S 1K 2K Is Jer Ez Hos Joel Am Ob Jon Micah Nah Hab Zeph Mal Ps Pr Job Song Ruth Lam Ecc Es Dan Ezra Neh 1Ch 2Ch