

Enoch Is Metatron

by Moshe Idel

The study of Jewish mysticism in its various periods has produced many surprising findings. One of them is a notable absence from Heikhalot literature: it has no developed mystical conceptions regarding the cosmic nature of Adam.

It is the intent of this essay to indicate the existence of remnants of a myth which preserves the role of primordial man, the "Supernal Adam" or Adam Qadmon, with his place being taken by Enoch who became Metatron. These remnants are to be found in Heikhalot literature and in the Kabbalah.

The Problem

There is a twofold difficulty in the fact that conceptions of the cosmic image of Adam are lacking in Heikhalot literature. On the one hand, the various Gnostic theosophies that emerged in the initial period of Heikhalot literature developed quite detailed conceptions of this kind. The discussions consist, in a few instances, of commentaries on biblical verses; these texts use the Hebrew name Adam or the derivative name Adamas.¹ On the other hand, there are a great number of discussions of the mystic nature of the Supernal Adam, or Adam Qadmon, in the early kabbalistic literature in Provence, and

The original Hebrew version of this article appeared in Joseph Dan ed., *Early Jewish Mysticism* (Jerusalem, 1987), pp. 151–170. The translator was Edward Levine.

1. As the subject has been discussed extensively in the scholarly literature, I shall list only the most important bibliography: Gilles Quispel, "La Conception de l'homme dans la gnose valentinienne," *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 15 (1947), 249–286, "Der gnostische Anthropos und die jüdische Tradition," *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 22 (1953), 195–234, and "Ezekiel 1:26 in Jewish Mysticism and Gnosis," *Vigiliae Christianae* 34 (1980), 1–13; Michel Tardieu, *Trois mythes gnostiques* (Paris, 1974), pp. 85–139; Gedaliahu A.G. Stroumsa, *Another Seed — Studies in Gnostic Mythology* (Leiden, 1984), esp. p. 51, n. 63.

especially in the Spanish Kabbalah.² By contrast, the writings of the Hasidim of Ashkenaz (the Franco-German center)³ lack anything parallel to this characteristic conception of the Provencal-Spanish Jewish theosophy that preceded the accelerated development of the Kabbalah in Spain.⁴

A mystical conception of Adam is also absent from the Karaite criticism of Heikhalot literature, as well as from that literature itself and among the Hasidim of Ashkenaz. That all those three kinds of sources lack it is even more surprising if we compare some of the details of the kabbalistic Supernal Adam with certain Gnostic conceptions. There is a close affinity between them, as I have attempted to show elsewhere.⁵ Indeed, our surprise at this is compounded, for it is also possible to find many conceptions regarding Adam's unique character (as we shall see below) in the talmudic and midrashic literature, that is in literary corpora that are not essentially mystical. Furthermore, even in the writings of Philo of Alexandria it is possible to find a hypostasis of Adam as Logos.⁶

It appears, consequently, that Heikhalot literature — excluding the later midrash, Otiyot de-Rabbi Akiva — intentionally disregarded an outstanding topic that was present in the Jewish mystical tradition. At the very least, it was disregarded both in the redaction of those Heikhalot texts which have reached us and among the Ashkenazi Hasidim.

It should be noted that Heikhalot literature is closely connected to the commentary on Ezekiel's chariot, where the "semblance of a man upon it above" is mentioned.⁷ Likewise, Heikhalot literature is replete with anthropomorphic descriptions, both of God Himself and of other central topics in its theology.⁸ Despite all that, this literature did not develop the concept of the cosmic primordial man.

-
2. See my "Demut ha-Adam she-me'al ha-Sefirot" ("The Image of Man above the *Sefirot*"), *Daat* 4 (1980), 41–55, the French version (Charles Mopsick tr.), "Une figure d'homme au-dessus des sefirot," *Pardes* 8 (1988), 131–150, and "Ha-Sefirot she-me'al ha-Sefirot" ("The *Sefirot* above the *Sefirot*"), *Tarbiz* 51 (1982), 239–277.
 3. It seems to me that the conception of the "Supernal Adam" was revived in the literature of the circle of the special cherub, in northern France; the Hasidim of Ashkenaz did not use the expression "upper Adam" or Adam Qadmon.
 4. I hope to write at length in another place on the affinities between the theological literature of Ashkenaz and the early Kabbalah. In the meantime, see my "Ha-Sefirot she-me'al ha-Sefirot" (note 2 above), pp. 278–279, and *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven and London, 1988), pp. 96, 98–99.
 5. See (note 2 above) my "Demut ha-Adam," pp. 46–47, the French version, pp. 135–136, and "Ha-Sefirot she-me'al ha-Sefirot," pp. 274–277.
 6. See W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London, 1948), pp. 47–49; also S.A. Horodezky, "Adam Qadmon," *Ha-Goren* 10 (1928), 107–109.
 7. Ezek. 1:26; cf. the statements by Rabad and Rabbi Joseph of Hamadan cited below; and similarly in Gilles Quispel, "Ezekiel 1:26 in Jewish Mysticism and Gnosis" (note 1 above).
 8. See my "Tefisat ha-Torah be-Sifrut ha-Heikhalot we-Gilguleha ba-Kabbalah" ("The Conception of the Torah in Heikhalot literature and its Revived Version in the Kabbalah"), *Mebkerei Yerushalayim be-Mabshevet Yisrael* 1 (1981), 23–49, and "Olam ha-Malakhim bi-Demut Adam" ("The World of Angels in the Image of Man"), *Sefer Tisbi*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1984), 1–15.

What is the explanation for this omission? One suggested answer is Jewish opposition to Gnosis as a factor in downplaying Adam's cosmic importance. This explanation, however, runs up against a complex problem: From where did the Gnostics receive a mystical portrayal of Adam? Several modern scholars of Gnosticism point to Judaism in this regard.⁹ Consequently, Jewish opposition to Gnosis would have been expressed, first and foremost, in the repression of those early Jewish traditions which had become the source of the Gnostic conceptions. In other words, internal tension between different trends within early Jewish mysticism led to the repression in Heikhalot literature of Jewish mystical traditions regarding Adam, examples of which are to be found in Gnosis. This repression was apparently successful for hundreds of years, such that only during the Middle Ages did those traditions reemerge and flourish in the kabbalistic literature. It was likely to have been connected with a concern to stress the Merkavah (the Divine Chariot) and the Shiur Qomah (the "measure" of the body of God) as against mysticism concerned with primordial man.

Another explanation is also possible. Repression of Jewish mysticism concerned with primordial man could have been connected to opposition to Christianity and especially to the notion of Jesus.¹⁰ A well-known passage in

9. See Quispel (note 1 above), "Der gnostische Anthropos" and esp. "Ezekiel 1:26 in Jewish Mysticism and Gnosis."

Regarding the relationship between Merkavah literature and rabbinic literature and the Gnostics, see Ithamar Gruenwald, "The Problem of the Anti-Gnostic Polemic in Rabbinic Literature," in R. Van Den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren eds., *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions* (Leiden, 1981), pp. 171–189; also the bibliography listed there, esp. on pp. 188–189. Similarly, Gruenwald's "Jewish Sources for the Gnostic Texts from Nag Hamadi?," *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress for Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem, 1977), vol. 3, English section, pp. 45–56, and "Knowledge and Vision," *Israel Oriental Studies* 3 (1973), 63–107. Also P.S. Alexander, "Comparing Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism: An Essay in Method," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 35 (1984), 1–18.

In this context, note the interesting essay of E. Peterson, "La Libération d'Adam de l'Anagke," *Revue Biblique* 55 (1984), 200–214, esp. p. 209, where the author alludes to the Jewish character of the prayer of Adam, who wishes to return to his situation in the Garden of Eden by identifying with the Lord of the Universe — an image parallel to Metatron. For allusions to the connection between Metatron and Adam Qadmon, see H. Odeberg, in the introduction to his edition of the Hebrew Book of Enoch (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 122–123, and (following in his footsteps) Erik Sjöberg, *Der Menschensohn im Äthiopischen Henochbuch* (Lund, 1946), p. 178.

10. Regarding the ties between early Christianity and Jewish anthropomorphism, later reflected in the Merkavah literature, see Jarl Fossum, "Jewish-Christian Christology and Mysticism," *Vigiliae Christianae* 37 (1983), 260–287; Gedaliahu A.G. Stroumsa, "Form(s) of God: Some Notes on Metatron and Christ," *Harvard Theological Review* 76 (1983), 269–288. Furthermore, as Yehudah Liebes proposed in his essay, "Malakhei Qol ha-Shofar we-Yeshua Sar ha-Panim" ("The Angels of the *Shofar* and Yeshua Sar ha-Panim"), in Joseph Dan ed., *Early Jewish Mysticism* (Jerusalem, 1987), pp. 171–196, Jewish mysticism contains remnants of Jewish-Christian thought in the expression *yeshua sar ha-panim* in the clear context of Enoch and Metatron. See also Ithamar Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden, 1980), pp. 200–201, and David Flusser "Jesus and the Sign of the Son of Man," in his collec-

Paul connects Jesus as the “last Adam” with the “first Adam” and “first man” (in the Greek of 1 Corinthians 15:45–47, both translations of the single Hebrew term are used to designate Adam). It is a fact, however, that the Kabbalah that developed the concept of the Supernal Adam flourished precisely in Christian regions, where speculation on this topic grew at the expense of speculation about the Merkavah; the latter was eventually relegated to a realm of inferior status. In areas under Islamic influence,¹¹ by contrast, nothing of the kind came to the surface during the hundreds of years preceding the growth of the Kabbalah in Europe.

Any suggestion that originally Jewish conceptions were suppressed for centuries in Jewish sources has inherent difficulties. Nevertheless, it is likely to be more convenient than the alternative: that Gnostic traditions concerning the concept of the Supernal Man penetrated into Judaism during or after the Amoraic period, becoming, for whatever reason, a part of Jewish mysticism and transmitted as the esoteric teachings of the Torah, until they were committed to writing in the works of the kabbalists.¹² In either case, however, we must assume the existence of a quite lengthy esoteric tradition of which we do not possess detailed evidence. An explanation that supposes a continuity of the Jewish traditions lessens one great difficulty, namely how Gnostic traditions became Jewish esoterica.

In the remaining sections of this essay, we shall first look at two ways in which Enoch is connected with Adam in Heikhalot literature and some related sources: 1) by becoming Metatron, Enoch regained the status originally bestowed on Adam, but lost by him; 2) Enoch willingly atoned for Adam’s sin. Then we shall examine the version of the Kabbalah: through a process of mystic union, Enoch identified with Metatron, the preexistent Adam Qadmon. Finally, some methodological comments about this kind of approach will be made.

Enoch’s Regaining of Adam’s Lost Status

Like Elijah (cf. 2 Kings 2:11), Enoch was commonly regarded in Jewish sources as a human being who did not die but was taken up directly into heaven while still living. Speculations about Enoch start from the verse Genesis 5:24: “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.” They include the idea, in some sources, that after his ascent to heaven Enoch was transformed into Metatron, a cosmic figure.

tion of essays, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 526–534, esp. p. 533, n. 20.

11. As is well-known, mystical conceptions of the “perfect man” are prevalent in Islamic mysticism. See H.H. Schaeder, “Die islamische Lehre vom vollkommenen Menschen,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 79 (1925), 192–268; Louis Massignon, “L’Homme parfait en Islam et son originalité eschatologique,” *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 15 (1947), 287–314; Henri Corbin, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism* (London, 1978).
12. This is the opinion of G. Scholem in *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem, 1974), p. 45. Compare, however, my *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (note 4 above), pp. 30–32.

When those discussions about Enoch's ascent and his transformation into Metatron are compared with Jewish discussions about Adam's fall from his initial exalted status, one finds considerable similarity in the details. For example, the Midrash says:

"And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins" (Gen. 3:21) — in the teaching of Rabbi Meir we find that it is written: "Garments of light — these are the garments of Adam."¹³

In contrast with the loss of the garments of light by Adam, in the Hebrew Book of Enoch (3 Enoch) Metatron identifies himself as Enoch and describes how a luminous garment was bestowed upon him after his ascent:

He made for me a garment of kings with all manner of lights in it, and He dressed me in it, and He made me a cloak of glory containing all manner of fine appearance and splendor and brilliance [and] adornment.¹⁴

This conception is partially congruent with the description in the earlier Slavonic Book of Enoch (2 Enoch), in which the archangel Michael makes a garment of glory for Enoch.¹⁵ To the best of my knowledge, Enoch is the only living person for whom we learn that luminous garments, reminiscent of Adam's lost garments of light, were made.

Another important detail concerns the complementary nature of the contrast between the fate of Adam and Enoch. We read in the Midrash and in the Talmud:

-
13. Genesis Rabbah 20:12 (Albeck ed., pp. 196–197). Cf. the statements cited in the name of an unidentified midrash in the sermons of Rabbi Joshua Ibn Shuaib, *Ki Tisa* (Cracow, 1573), 39c, regarding Adam whose appearance is as glittering as the brilliance of the firmament, or regarding Adam's brilliance which dims the sun. See also Alexander Altmann, "Gnostic Themes in Rabbinic Cosmology," in *Essays Presented to J.H. Hertz* (London, 1942), pp. 28–32.
 14. The Hebrew Book of Enoch, ch. 12 (Odeberg ed., p. 17; see also *ibid.*, p. 15). Cf. the commentary by Rabbenu Bahya ben Asher on Gen. 5:24, regarding Enoch's attachment to the supernal light. See also Otiyot de-Rabbi Akiva, Wertheimer ed., *Batei Midrashot*, vol. 2, p. 352. It is of interest that in a citation entitled "Otiyot de-Rabbi Akiva" in Rabbi Judah Hadasi, *Eshkol ha-Kofer*, folio 36c, the motif of Adam's size was combined with that of the brilliance. Special attention should be paid to this conception, but this is not the place for an elaborate discussion.
 15. Slavonic Book of Enoch 22:8. Compare the description of Michael the archangel, which is similar, from several points of view, to that of Metatron; cf. Michael E. Stone, *The Testament of Abraham* (New York, 1972), pp. 14–17. There Michael is described as an angel of light, similar to the sun; according to another description, *ibid.*, pp. 70–71, the archangel is described as a huge man. According to Box's opinion, this huge size of Michael points to a cosmic concept of the archangel; see George H. Box, *The Testament of Abraham* (London, 1927), p. 45, n. 2. These two features of Michael endorse Scholem's view that the concept of Metatron incorporated some of the features of Michael; see G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (New York, 1965), pp. 43–51. Cf. the interesting material on the garbing of the righteous in garments of honor and brilliance when they enter the Garden of Eden, which was collected by Yisrael Weinstock, "Alpha Beta shel Metatron u-Ferushah" ("The Alphabet of Metatron and Its Interpretation"), *Temirin 2* (Jerusalem, 1982), p. 62, n. 3. See also Charles Mopsick's translation of *Tomer Devorah* as *Le Palmier de Deborah* (Paris, 1985), pp. 134–135, n. 83; Stroumsa, *Another Seed* (note 1 above), p. 92 and n. 40.

“And God said, let us make man” ...His creature filled the entire world from east to west...from north to south...even the empty space of the world.¹⁶

The end of the gigantic Adam is well-known: he was severely reduced in his human dimensions. Enoch, on the other hand, merited undergoing the reverse process:

And I was elevated and elongated as the measure of the length and breadth of the world.¹⁷

Jewish mystical literature indicates, too, a certain similarity between the enlarged states of Adam and Enoch. It is said of both that their immense size caused an error of faith, namely other creatures were induced to belief that two powers governed the universe, not God alone. In rabbinic literature, Elisha ben Avuyah is notorious as a prominent sage who became a heretic. Various explanations are given for his apostasy. One is that he caught sight of the immense Metatron and imagined him to be a second power over the universe. For inducing this error, Metatron was punished with sixty fiery lashes.¹⁸ Similar things are stated about Adam in Otiyot de-Rabbi Akiva:

-
16. Genesis Rabbah 8:1 (Albeck ed, pp. 55–56); bHagigah 12a; Pesikta de-Rav Kahana, Mandelbaum ed., p. 2. Regarding Adam's tremendous size and the role that this idea played in rabbinic thought, see Allan F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven* (Leiden, 1977), pp. 110–115; B. Barc, “La Taille cosmique d'Adam dans la littérature juive rabbinique des trois premières siècles après J.C.,” *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 49 (1975), 173–185; Susan Niditch, “The Cosmic Man: Man as Mediator in Rabbinic Literature,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 34 (1983), 137–146. According to Niditch, the idea of the tremendous size of Adam is to be understood in the context of rabbinic thought, without linking it to Gnostic thought as A. Altmann and E.E. Urbach had done. See *ibid.*, pp. 137–139. Also G. Scholem, *Pirkei Yesod ba-Havanat ha-Kabbalah u-Semaleba* (“Toward an Understanding of the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism”; Jerusalem, 1976), p. 385; Quispel, “Der gnostische Anthropos” (note 1 above), pp. 225–226. The influence of the Gnostic conception on the rabbinic conception of Adam is emphasized by Alexander Altmann, *Panim shel Yabadut* (“Facets of Judaism”; Tel Aviv, 1983), pp. 31–43; see also his “Gnostic Themes” (note 13 above).
17. The Hebrew Book of Enoch, ch. 9 (Odeberg ed., pp. 14–15); cf. the work *Shiur Qomah*, in which it is stated, regarding Metatron, “And the body of this youth fills the world”: M.S. Cohen, *The Shi'ur Qomah — Texts and Recensions* (Tübingen, 1985), p. 159. See also M.S. Cohen, *The Shi'ur Qomah — Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (University Press of America, 1983), p. 162, n. 147.
18. bHagigah 15a; the Hebrew Book of Enoch, ch. 16 (Odeberg ed., p. 25). See Saul Lieberman's statement in the appendix to Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (note 10 above), pp. 239–240, where he brings these references, together with the description of Adam as one who was enslaved by the angels (following Genesis Rabbah 8:9). However, he does not draw any conclusion from the proximity between them, despite his stating: “This passage of the Talmud and the parable in the Midrash reflect the same situation.” The “same situation” is that of Adam before the sin and that of Metatron (i.e., of Enoch after his ascent); they are syntonic. In the opinion of one scholar, an early Jewish conception also attributed a syntonic role to Moses; see Pieter W. Van der Horst, “Moses' Throne Vision in Ezekiel the Dramatist,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 34 (1983), 24–27. Van der Horst emphasizes (p. 24) the similarity between Enoch and Moses; see also David Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot* (Tübingen, 1988), pp. 417–439.

This teaches that initially Adam was created from the earth to the firmament. When the ministering angels saw him, they were shocked and excited by him. At that time they all stood before the Holy One, blessed be He, and said to Him: "Master of the Universe! There are two powers in the world, one in heaven and one on earth." What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do then? He placed His hand on him, and decreased him, setting him at one thousand cubits.¹⁹

In both cases, the fear of heresy is aroused. Accordingly, both Adam and Metatron are punished for the errors of others.

The garb of light, the enormous dimensions and the issue of heresy are thus three motifs shared by Adam and Enoch-Metatron. They point to a significant link between the two characters, a link found in Otiyot de-Rabbi Akiva and the Book of Enoch:

The Holy One, blessed be He, said: "I made him strong, I took him, I appointed him" — that is Enoch, son of Jared, whose name is Metatron, My servant, who is one [unique] among all the children of heaven. "I made him strong" in the generation of the first Adam...And "I took him," Enoch, son of Jared, from among them... "I appointed him" over all the treasures and stores that I have in every heaven.²⁰

Two stages in the history of Metatron are described in this passage: the first in the generation of Adam, the second in the generation of the Flood, when he

19. Wertheimer ed., *Batei Midrashot*, vol. 2, p. 412; Genesis Rabbah 8:9 (Albeck ed., p. 63); according to other versions, which are associated with Rabbi Meir, the measure of Adam's body was 100 cubits; see bBava Batra 75a; bSanhedrin 100a. Early traditions on the worship of Adam by the angels were recorded by Quispel in "Der gnostische Anthropos" (note 1 above), p. 226, n. 57.

20. Wertheimer ed., *Batei Midrashot* vol. 2, p. 351, and the Hebrew Book of Enoch, ch. 48 (Odeberg ed., pp. 165–166), version K; Bereshit Rabbati, Albeck ed. (Jerusalem, 1940), p. 27. Regarding this paragraph, see Phillip Alexander in James H. Charlesworth ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (New York, 1983), vol. 1, p. 311. Here Alexander cites the different interpretations for the verb *ibbartiw* ("I made him strong," "I made him preeminent," etc.). According to Alexander, the expression "the generation of Adam" alludes to the fact that Enoch was still alive at the end of Adam's lifetime. Despite the existence of such a tradition, I am not convinced that this interpretation exhausts the meaning of the expression, since it occurs close to where Enoch is also described as someone who lived in the Flood generation. In my opinion, the anonymous author alludes to the existence of Metatron parallel to Adam.

It is possible (cf. the use of the verb *ʔbr* in Otiyot de-Rabbi Akiva, Wertheimer ed., *Batei Midrashot*, vol. 2, p. 424) that *ibbartiw* has the meaning of "creating" in the context of the mission assigned to Adam; this is so for "Moses" and for Enoch. Cf. the Ethiopic Book of Enoch, ch. 71, in which it is stated to Enoch, "You are the man who was born for charity," following Erik Sjoberg, *Der Menschensohn* (note 9 above), pp. 56, 152. Of especial importance is Sjoberg's argument on pp. 173–177, which is based on an essay on Metatron by Odeberg, published in Swedish after he wrote his work on the Hebrew Book of Enoch (note 9 above). According to Sjoberg, *ibbartiw* alludes to the prior existence of Metatron as a sort of "general soul," a conception that undoubtedly was influenced by the Kabbalah, in which Metatron is both the "Supernal Adam" and the totality of all the souls. It seems, following an early tradition, that Enoch was preordained for a special task. See Erwin Goode-nough, *By Light, Light* (New Haven, 1935), p. 330.

was “taken” and later “appointed.” Metatron’s status in respect of the generation of Adam is not made clear; possibly he is regarded as an entity different from Adam, as we learn from another source as well.²¹ This understanding too, however, cannot blur the connection, from the historical aspect, between two conditions of Metatron: an earlier condition in the generation of Adam and a later condition during the Flood generation. A connection between Adam and Metatron as way stations in the history of Metatron is to be found here, even if its meaning is unclear.

The opinion cited by Radak (Rabbi David Kimhi) is more explicit:

For the Lord brought in Enoch [and] Elijah alive to the Garden of Eden, in soul and in body while they were still alive, eating of the fruit of the tree and serving the Lord, as Adam had been before he sinned, and they will remain there until the messianic²² era.²³

Radak makes it perfectly clear that Enoch reverted to what had been the state of Adam before he sinned. He states it not as his personal opinion, but rather as a widely prevalent view:

And the opinion of our masses, as well as that of our sages, is that the Lord brought him [Elijah] into the Garden of Eden with his body, as Adam had been before the sin, and He also brought in Enoch there.²⁴

Midrashic sources do not relate Enoch to the state of Adam before the latter’s sin. Apparently, then, Radak is testifying to the existence of a more elaborate conception than that of the midrashim regarding the entrance of Enoch alive to the Garden of Eden.²⁵

An interesting development of the affinity between Adam and Enoch is found in the writings of Rabbi Solomon Molkho. In a passage in which the Hebrew word *adam* refers alternately to Adam and to man in general, Molkho gives his opinion that the intent of the Lord

was to create Adam whole, to rule all the creatures...and the ministering angels were jealous of him. It was from this aspect that the snake went to seduce him.... And if His will was that man would rule all the creatures, His will, may He be blessed, has already been fulfilled, for a man still rules all the heavenly princes. This is Enoch, as it is written in the Book of

21. Yalqut Shimoni, *be-reshit* 41: “He brought the writ and he wrote upon it a bill of giving, and it was signed by the Holy One, blessed be He, Metatron, and Adam.” A bizarre parallel to this tradition was discussed by Scholem, *Pirkei Yesod ba-Havanat ha-Kabbalah* (note 16 above), p. 388, n. 16; there angels do present to Metatron a letter of agreement concerning the creation of Adam. See, however, the opinion of Joseph Dan, in “Anafiel, Metatron we-Yotzer be-Reshit” (“Anafiel, Metatron and the Creator”) *Tarbiz* 52 (1983), 456; Dan determines that Metatron could not have taken part in the Creation, since he appeared only after the apotheosis of Enoch. See Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism* (note 15 above), pp. 49–51. See also E.E. Urbach ed., *Sefer Arugat ha-Bosem* (Jerusalem, 1939), vol. 1, pp. 240, 241.

22. The appearance of Enoch and Elijah before the coming of the Messiah was a concept widely disseminated among Christians; this topic requires a separate discussion.

23. Radak on Gen. 6:24.

24. Radak on 2 Kings 2:1.

25. Derekh Eretz Zuta, ch. 1; Yalqut Shimoni, *be-reshit* 42.

Heikhalot²⁶ on the verse “And Enoch walked with God...called by the name of your Maker in seventy languages, and you are greater than all the princes, and are higher than all the angels? ...Immediately my flesh became....” And for this the Holy One, blessed be He, took Enoch, for two reasons: the first, that he would complete His will and intent, which was to create man perfect; and the second, if Adam would explain, saying that the reason for his sin was that he was created from the elements, the Holy One, blessed be He, says to him: “Behold, here is Enoch, who did not sin, even though he was created from elements.”²⁷

Enoch is described here as having regained the pristine situation of man, since he attained the status initially intended for Adam. It is clear, however, that Molkho did not follow the direction of Heikhalot literature despite his quotation from the Book of Enoch, nor did he follow Radak. According to Molkho, the perfection of Adam lies in his powers of magic,²⁸ not in his size or splendor; it is this perfection which was restored to Enoch. It seems that Molkho was aware of the phenomenological connection between these two men as the apex of the human race, and he added an explanation of his own for the completion of God's will in the creation of the perfect man capable of ruling all creatures. According to this conjecture, different traditions regarding the connection between Adam and Enoch were prevalent, and these traditions received differing interpretations.

Enoch's Atonement for Adam

Whereas Heikhalot literature conceives of Enoch as a flawless being, a different picture of him occurs in rabbinic literature. In general, the sages viewed him as a basically wicked person, as a flatterer who possessed other bad qualities as well. It seems, however, that Heikhalot literature preserved an ancient tradition, which undoubtedly drew upon the pseudepigraphic literature about

26. Odeberg's edition of the Hebrew Book of Enoch (note 9 above), p. 6.

27. *Sefer ha-Mefoar* (Jerusalem, 1962), 26b–c. An interesting parallel to the opinion of Molkho is to be found in another messianic character, who was active in Italy about a generation before Molkho: Rabbi Asher ben Meir Lemlein. At first he states that “when Adam was created, he was created to remain forever” (MS Kaufmann-Budapest 179, p. 165). Afterwards he mentions the ascent of Elijah, quotes the statement in *Alpha Beta de-Rabbi Akiiva* regarding Enoch and Metatron, and immediately afterwards sums up (*ibid.*, p. 166):

And I have brought you the complete dictum, to show you that we have also seen in the books of the [true] worshipers concerning the pure soul — and after we have proven — that the intent of the Lord, may He be blessed, was at the beginning of the creation of Adam that he would be eternal and exist forever, and that he would be perfect in his service, and behold, His thought was not realized because of and due to the receiver, who corrupts because of his indulgences; at any rate, he will not be found to be restrained because of this, for at some time this must be realized, for “the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand” [Prov. 19:21], and “the thoughts of His heart to all generations” [Ps. 33:11], for His initial thought constitutes the eventual action.

28. See my “Shelomo Molkho ke-Magiqon” (“Solomon Molkho as Magician”), *Sefunot* 3 (18) (1985), 213–216.

Enoch, but which was nevertheless also preserved in rabbinic literature. Midrash Aggadah states:²⁹

It is only that God took him; since he was a righteous one, the Holy One, blessed be He, took him from humans and transformed him into an angel, who is Metatron. There is a disagreement between Rabbi Akiva and his colleagues on this matter. And the sages say: "Enoch was righteous at times and wicked at times."

Thus, unlike the majority of the sages, Rabbi Akiva regarded Enoch as someone who was always "righteous," in the wording of the first section of this passage. Is it incidental that it was Akiva who maintained the positive opinion of Enoch held by Heikhalot literature? For, as we saw, it was Akiva's disciple, Rabbi Meir, who taught about Adam's garment of light, while elsewhere a like garment is bestowed upon Enoch. At any rate, such a connection clearly exists in two sources, each of which is apparently independent of the wording of the other. According to the Armenian work entitled "The Words of Adam and Seth":

"But he [Adam], not having observed the commandments, and having been stripped of the divine light, and having been thrown outside the Garden, became an equal of the dumb beasts." And Enoch considered these things, and for forty days and for forty nights he did not eat at all. And after this he planted a luscious garden, and he planted in it fruit bearers. And he was in that garden for five hundred and forty-two years, and after that, in body, he was taken up to heaven, and was found worthy of the divine glory and light.³⁰

Adam lost the light because of his eating in the Garden of Eden.³¹ Enoch, by contrast, fasted, withstood the test of eating from the tempting trees, and at last reattained the lost light. The statement that Adam resembled "dumb beasts" is of a certain interest in light of a tradition about Enoch in MS Oxford 1947:

"He turned his flesh into fiery torches" — this teaches that it was as if he were stripped of the natural animal skin and were garbed in spiritual qualities.³²

The stripping of Enoch's "natural animal" characteristics in this passage is reminiscent of the "dumb beasts" motif in the Armenian work. The interesting feature of this text is the fact that Enoch, and not Seth, is the one who atones for the sin of Adam. Therefore it is he, and not Seth, who merits the divine splendor. The direct transition from Adam to Enoch is striking.

29. S. Buber ed. (Vienna, 1894), p. 15. See also Flusser, *op. cit.* (note 10 above), pp. 532–533; Louis Ginsberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1947), vol. 5, pp. 156–157, n. 58, and pp. 163–164, n. 61.

30. Michael E. Stone, *Armenian Apocrypha Relating to the Patriarchs and Prophets* (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 12–13; see also p. 85.

31. Regarding the lust for food as constituting Adam's sin in early Christianity, see F.F. Church, "Sex and Salvation in Tertullian," *Harvard Theological Review* 68 (1975), 86.

32. Folio 10a. The passage is quoted in its entirety below.

The idea that Enoch atoned for Adam's sin also appears in Armenian sources. When Seth tells Enoch that Adam is sad because he was sent forth from the Garden, Enoch says: "The debt of the father must be repaid by the son."³³ And Enoch does indeed plant a garden; for a long period of time he eats nothing, thereby meriting that the angels will elevate him while alive to the Garden of Eden. This "Enoch" is not Enoch son of Jared, but Enoch son of Cain. Nevertheless, it should be noted that "Enoch" views himself as a "son," who in the other versions receives the inheritance from his father: the brilliance of light.

There is a parallel to this direct transition from Adam to Enoch in the midrash preserved in Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer:³⁴

[The Holy One, blessed be He,] would intercalate the year, and afterwards transmitted it to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as it is written, "This is the book of the generations of Adam" [Gen. 5:1].... Adam transmitted it to Enoch and he was introduced into the secret of intercalation, and he intercalated the year, as it is written: "And Enoch walked with God."

Now let us examine the evidence of the Zohar, in Midrash ha-Ne'elam on the Song of Songs:

When the Holy One, blessed be He, created Adam, He placed him in the Garden of Eden, in a garment of glory out of the light of the Garden of Eden...and those garments left him, and the luminous soul ascended³⁵ ...and he remained bereft of all...and that luminosity of the supernal soul which left him ascended upwards, and it was stored in a certain treasury, that is the body, up to the time that he begat sons, and Enoch came into the world. Since Enoch came, the supernal light of the holy soul

33. J. Issaverdens, *The Uncanonical Writings of the Old Testament* (Venice, 1901), p. 65.

34. Ch. 8. See also Yalqut Shimoni, *be-reshit* 41; cf. op. cit., 42: "From Adam to the Flood 1,656 [years]; Enoch buried Adam, and lived after him 58 years." Cf. the passage cited by Yaaqov Geles, *Sefer Tosafot Shalem* (Jerusalem, 1982), vol. 1, p. 175, from MS Oxford 268 (possibly by Rabbi Eleazar Rokeah): "Enoch educated himself to serve the Lord, and he buried Adam; this is the meaning of 'And Enoch walked with God'; this is the meaning of 'Adam who was created in the image of God.'" See also the statement by Rabbi Shem Tov ben Shem Tov in *Sefer ha-Emunot* (Ferrara, 1556), folio 20a; and similarly E.E. Urbach, *The Sages* (Jerusalem, 1979), p. 335.

It may reasonably be assumed that an allusion to the close relation between Adam and Enoch is also to be found in the prevalent saying that the Holy One, blessed be He, is fond of figures of seven, and Enoch was the seventh [generation] from Adam; see, e.g., Midrash Ha-Gadol, Genesis, Margulies ed., p. 132, and the comments by the editor there. According to this conception, Enoch constitutes the conclusion of a cycle which began with Adam. See the statement in Geles, *Sefer Tosafot Shalem*, vol. 1, p. 178, which maintains: "Enoch is Metatron, and the Holy One, blessed be He, chose him because he was the seventh generation." Regarding the selection of Enoch, see also the end of note 20 above.

35. The matter of *zihara*, namely "brilliance," is undoubtedly connected to the concept of the *haluka de-rabbanan* as emphasized in Lurianic Kabbalah; this matter requires detailed study. See also Odeberg, in his introduction to the Hebrew Book of Enoch (note 9 above), pp. 122–123. Cf. also the use of the expression "Metatron" as the most exalted part of the human soul, in a citation entitled "midrash" in *Yalqut Reuveni* (Jerusalem, 1962), 23a: "'And God created man in His image' — in the

descended into him, and Enoch was enwrapped in the supernal soul that had left Adam.³⁶

A comparison of this statement in the Zohar with the Armenian sources teaches that, even prior to the Zohar, there was a tradition of the transfer of the divine splendor from Adam to Enoch. In the Jewish source, as in the Armenian text, it is Enoch, and not the natural heir "sons," who receives the splendor, or the holy soul.

It is possible, certainly, that the author of the Zohar was familiar with some Book of Adam, which was similar to the Armenian Book of Adam, and in this manner a possibly Christian conception of the atonement by Enoch for the sin of Adam entered the Jewish source.³⁷ No less plausible, however, is the possibility of the survival of an apparently pre-Christian conception, which was preserved and expressed separately in the sources cited above.

Enoch as the Ideal Mystic

Although the passages cited above treat Enoch as a kind of second Adam, I have not found in Heikhalot literature an explicit identification of Enoch or Metatron with the Supernal Adam. Nor is this identification to be found even in the later sources cited above. It may reasonably be assumed, however, that the tradition identifying Metatron with the Supernal Adam existed before the middle of the twelfth century. Rabad (Abraham ben David of Posquieres) already maintains, in one of the few extant passages from the mystic tradition attributed to him, the following:

image [of God] and the image of Metatron. If man merits, he merits the image...the first God is the living God, [which is] an allusion to Metatron."

36. Zohar Hadash, Margalioth ed., 69a-b. Cf. Rabbi Naphtali Tzvi Bacharach, *Sefer Emeq ha-Melekh* (Amsterdam, 1648), 20b: "The image of Jacob was as that of Enoch, and that of Enoch was as that of Adam, because Enoch received the soul of Adam, from whom an upper brilliance sprouted." In note 46 below a further quotation from this passage is given. See also Yeshayahu Tishbi, *Torat ha-Ra we-ha-Qelippah be-Kabbalat ha-Ari* ("The Teaching on Evil and the Shell in Lurianic Kabbalah"; Jerusalem, 1984), pp. 95, 103. Prof. Yehuda Liebes has kindly drawn my attention to a Lurianic text where it is written in the name of ancient Jewish sages (*Rabboteinu Zal*) that "Enoch was Adam ha-Rishon." Printed in D. Touitou ed., *Liqqutim Hadasim me-ha-Ari* (Jerusalem, 1985), p. 20. On the relationship between Adam and Enoch, see also the important text translated by Charles Mopsick from one of R. Joseph of Hamadan's works, MS Paris, BN 851, fol. 265a, in *Le Livre Hébreu d' Hénoch* (Paris, 1989), pp. 209-210.
37. It is well-known that the Zohar frequently mentions both "the Book of Adam" (*Sefer Adam*) and "the Book of Enoch." Modern scholars, however, regard with suspicion the possibility that the author of the Zohar had access to such sources; they regard them as the product of that author's imagination. This matter requires fresh study. Regarding the Christian influences on the Zohar, see Yehudah Liebes, "Hashpaot Notzriyot al Sefer ha-Zohar" ("Christian Influences on the Zohar"), *Mehkerei Yerushalayim be-Mabshevet Yisrael 2* (1983), 43-74; English version, *Immanuel 17* (Winter 1983/84), 43-67.

How do we know that the Holy One, blessed be He, puts on phylacteries,³⁸ [this is said] about *sar ha-panim* whose name is as that of his Master?³⁹ ...and he is the one who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, who appeared to Ezekiel as the “semblance of a man upon it above.”⁴⁰ ...Whoever knows the measure of the Creator⁴¹ is assured of possessing the World to Come; this is the meaning of the verse:⁴² “Let us make man in our image.”⁴³

The connection between the human individual mentioned in the verses in Genesis (1:26) and Ezekiel (1:26) and *sar ha-panim* (lit., the prince of the divine face, i.e., Metatron)⁴⁴ is extremely reasonable. Of especial interest is the identification between *sar ha-panim* and the force revealed to Moses in the burning bush; according to Rabad, this was Metatron. A similar conception appears in Shahrastani’s description of the beliefs of the Magharian sect; according to him, it was an angel that was revealed to Moses and spoke to him.⁴⁵

Apparently with no connection to Rabad’s statement, the identification of Metatron and the Supernal Adam reappears in the ecstatic Kabbalah. Rabbi Nathan writes, seemingly under the influence of his teacher Rabbi Abraham Abulafia:⁴⁶

The world of souls alludes that the Supernal Adam is Metatron, *sar ha-panim*.⁴⁷

38. Published in *Otzar Nehmad*, vol. 4 (1863), p. 37. Regarding this passage, see G. Scholem, in R.J.Z. Werblowsky ed., *Origins of the Kabbalah* (Princeton and Philadelphia, 1987), pp. 212–216.

39. bBerakhot 6a.

40. bSanhedrin 38b.

41. Ezek. 1:26.

42. Gen. 1:26.

43. *Shi’ur Qomah*, M.S. Cohen ed. (note 17 above), p. 52.

44. If it had not been for the power that manifests itself as *sar ha-panim*, it would also have been possible to suggest that Rabad refers here to the angel Anafiel; in the texts known to me, however, this angel is not called *sar ha-panim*.

45. See H.A. Wolfson, “The Preexistent Angel of the Magharians and al-Nahawandi,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* (NS) 51 (1960–61), 92. See also Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah* (note 38 above), pp. 212–213. It is of interest that Rabbi Isaac of Acre also knew of the tradition of the revelation of Metatron to Moses, in a text whose literal meaning refers to the Holy One, blessed be He; see *Sefer Meirat Etnayim*, Amos Goldreich ed. (Jerusalem, 1984), p. 116. It may reasonably be assumed that these traditions are connected to the appellation of Metatron as “little YHWH,” and the Tetragrammaton in the Bible is interpreted as referring to Metatron.

46. See my *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (Albany, New York, 1988), pp. 83–84. Also *Sefer Emeq ha-Melekh* (in the continuation of the passage quoted in note 36 above), 20b: “And know that *ze’ir [anpin]* is Adam, and Enoch is from his navel downwards, i.e., the glory of *ze’ir*, for Adam includes all the souls of Israel...and he is the light of the souls of Israel.” See also the kabbalistic text, similar to that of R. Yaaqov ben Yaaqov ha-Kohen, preserved in MS Milano-Ambrosiana 62 folio 79a: “Man has six dimensions which are the secret of Metatron, who [stands for] the six dimensions,” or “Six dimensions [are attributed to] man, and man, who is Metatron, [stands] on the dimensions.”

47. Abulafia uses the expression “Supernal Adam” as an appellation of the active intellect, which is identified in other places in his writings with Metatron; see *Sefer Sitrei*

The acquaintance or disciple of Rabbi Nathan, Rabbi Isaac of Acre, writes in his *Sefer Meirat Einayim*:

That is to say, this is our great and powerful master, as we have said. And I received a true tradition that this measure is of none other than the created Metatron, who is the Supernal Adam.⁴⁸

The identification of Metatron with the Supernal Adam became very prevalent in the Kabbalah from the end of the thirteenth century.⁴⁹ It is especially widespread in the book *Tikkunei Zohar*.⁵⁰ The words of the anonymous kabbalist are to be understood against the background of the statement by Rabbi Joseph of Hamadan (the late thirteenth-century kabbalist):

The Adam mentioned in the pericope of *Be-Resbit* is an allusion to Metatron, the great prince who is called the "Supernal Adam" ...and this is the Merkavah seen by Ezekiel, as it is written: "a likeness as the semblance of a man upon it above."⁵¹

It may reasonably be assumed that this constitutes a new version of a motif that preceded by a great deal of time the statement by Rabad, and that this motif maintained the identification of Metatron with Adam.

We will now engage in a short survey of the descriptions by Jewish mystics of the union of man with the active intellect or with an angel of the Most High as the union of Enoch with Metatron. In the Middle Ages the union of the mys-

Torah, MS Paris BN 774, folio 134a-b; *Sefer Hayei ha-Nefesh*, MS Munich 408, folio 6a. The question should be studied whether there is a connection between the tradition under discussion here and the appellation *ishim* (men) as it appears in Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of the Fundamentals of the Torah 2:7. Here *ishim* refers to the tenth company of angels, corresponding to the active intellect, which is *sar ha-olam* (the prince of the world) in Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed* 2:6. Since *sar ha-olam* alludes to Metatron, it is possible that the (albeit indirect) connection between Metatron and *ishim* springs from the tradition linking Metatron to Adam. On the other hand, in the *Guide* it is also possible to identify one of the meanings of "Adam," as the active intellect, with *sar ha-olam* (= Metatron). See Warren Z. Harvey, "Hasdai Crescas' Critique of the Theory of the Acquired Intellect," (Diss. Columbia University, 1973), pp. 205-212. If so, it may be assumed that a similar conception regarding Adam-Metatron existed prior to Maimonides and Rabad.

48. *Sefer Meirat Einayim*, Goldreich ed. (note 45 above), p. 40. Does the source of the Kabbalah lie in the statement of Rabbi Nathan (cited above) or in similar teachings that Rabbi Isaac learned from him? If Rabbi Isaac was indeed influenced by Rabbi Nathan, then he was familiar with his views already at the beginning of his writing of *Sefer Meirat Einayim*. See, in contrast to this view, the opinion of Goldreich, p. 100 of his edition. See also my *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (note 46 above), p. 114. Cf. *Sefer Meirat Einayim*, p. 27: "And Adam, prior to his eating, was entirely spiritual, and was garbed in angelic garb, as Enoch and Elijah." This is the opinion of Rabbi Ezra of Gerona, which was copied by Rabbi Isaac; see Scholem, *Pirkei Yesod* (note 16 above), p. 196. It should be noted that the expression "The created Metatron" reappears in *Sefer Meirat Einayim*, pp. 112, 114.

49. See my "Olam ha-Malakhim" (note 8 above), pp. 53 ff., esp. n. 198.

50. See Reuven Margalioth, *Malakhei Elyon* ("Angels of the Most High"; Jerusalem, 1945), pp. 94-97.

51. See my "Olam ha-Malakhim" (note 8 above), p. 53.

tic with Metatron also encapsulates within it a union with the ideal Adam, in a manner reminiscent of the identification of Enoch with the "son of man" in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch (1 Enoch).

Attention should be paid to the place of Enoch's ascent in Jewish mysticism. There is no doubt that Heikhalot literature continues a conception already existing in Jewish thought according to which Enoch is transformed into an angel.⁵² It stands to reason that this concept is part of a broader view regarding the eschatological value of honesty and righteousness.⁵³ What is characteristic of Heikhalot literature, however, is the emphasis placed on Enoch's physical change or transmutation, at the expense of the discussion of his spiritual change. A spiritual change does indeed occur, and it stands out in the emphasis of the transmission of the upper and lower secrets to Metatron.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, this literature speaks mainly of a clear case of apotheosis.

As Scholem has already noted, the description of the process undergone by Enoch is similar to the experiences of those descending to the Merkavah.⁵⁵ It follows that the figure of Enoch, which was rejected as an ideal in rabbinic literature, reappears in Heikhalot literature as a model of a mystic. The Kabbalah continued to develop his image as the ideal mystic, but emphasized another element: the mystical experience is no longer a transfiguration of the body, but

52. See the Ethiopic Book of Enoch, chs. 69–71, and the Slavonic Book of Enoch, A. Vaillant, *Le Livre des secrets d'Enoch* (Paris, 1952), 26.18–27.2. See also Madeleine Scopello, "The Apocalypse of Zostriano (Nag Hamadi VIII.1) and the Book of the Secrets of Enoch," *Vigiliae Christianae* 34 (1980), 376–385. Regarding the other influences on the ascent of Enoch and his transformation into an angel in Gnosticism, see Francis T. Fallon, *The Enthronement of Sabaoth* (Leiden, 1978), p. 35. See P. Schäfer, "New Testament and Hekhalot Literature," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 35 (1984), 34–35, regarding the experience of Paul.

53. See Fallon (preceding note), pp. 35–36; *Megillat ha-Hodayot*, Jacob Licht ed. (Jerusalem, 1957), pp. 51, 84; the statement by Rabbi Meir on Song of Songs Rabbah 2:7, S. Dunsky ed. (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 1980), p. 64; Midrash Ha-Gadol, Gen. 5:24 (Margulies ed., p. 132). See also the transition from "prophet" to "angel" in the study by Naomi G. Cohen, "From *Nabi* to *Mal'ak* to 'Ancient Figure,'" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 36 (1985), 12–24; and Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven* (note 16 above), pp. 180, 188.

54. See the Hebrew Book of Enoch, Odeberg ed., pp. 14, 16, 67, 68. Regarding the connection in this book between the Supernal Adam and wisdom, see the essay by Fossum (note 10 above), pp. 279–280. It is possible that there is some connection between the perception of Adam as full of wisdom and the transmission of all esoteric wisdom to Enoch. Compare the description of Enoch in Y. Yadin ed., *The Ben Sira from Masada* (Jerusalem, 1965), p. 38: "Few like Enoch have been created on earth. A Sign of Knowledge to all generations." Cf. Flusser (note 10 above), p. 528 and nn. 7–8.

Another similarity between Adam and Metatron is that each has a special throne; see Meir Bar-Ilan, "Kise ha-Shem — Ma she-mi-tahtav, Ma she-ke-negdo u-Ma she-etzlo" ("The Throne of the Lord — What Is Below It, What Is Facing It, and What Is with It") *Daat* 15 (1985), 32–33.

55. *Jewish Gnosticism* (note 15 above), p. 60. In another place I intend to compare the descriptions of the "brilliance" of Enoch-Metatron with those of the High Priest according to early Jewish texts. It is possible to demonstrate the continuity of the early tradition of the transformation of the body into light — or in kabbalistic terminology "transparency" — from the early texts to Lurianic kabbalism.

rather a transmutation of the soul. Enoch adheres to Metatron — who is perceived as an already existing entity⁵⁶ — and by means of this adherence he is identified with him. Thus, for example, an anonymous kabbalist writes in a work entitled *Sod wa-Yesod ha-Qadmoni*:

And this attribute⁵⁷ was transmitted to Enoch, son of Jared, and he kept it, and would attempt to know the Creator, blessed be He, with the same attribute. And when he adhered to it, his soul longed to attract the abundance of the upper [*sefirot*]⁵⁸ from the [*sefirah* of] wisdom, until his soul ascended to and was bound by the [*sefirah* of] discernment, and the two of them became as one thing.⁵⁹ This is the meaning of what is written: “And Enoch walked with God....”⁶⁰ And it is written in the *Alpha Beta de-Rabbi Akiva* that he transformed his flesh into fiery torches, and he became as if he were one of the spiritual beings.⁶¹

We clearly see here the transformation from the myth of the physical ascent, accompanied by the garment of skin being changed into the garment of light, to a mysticism dealing with the attachment of the soul. This passage is extremely close, both in terms of ideas and terminology, to the description of the transformation of Enoch, son of Jared, in MS Oxford 1947, a portion of which was cited above. To further our discussion, this passage should be quoted in full:

Enoch, son of Jared, would make use of the power of Metatron to attain and know the reality of his existence and to know and attain the measure of his qualities, and for this he was called by his name, and became as an intimate when there were revealed to him all the hidden things and all the secrets planted [...] surrounding the Divine Presence. And what it says, “He turned his flesh into fiery torches” — this teaches that it was as if he were stripped of the natural animal skin, and were garbed in spiritual qualities, and the Divine mystery would enwrap him, and he would master every idea, every day, every time, and every hour, until he was considered as if he and He were he [i.e., one and the same] within his perception. Regarding this they said, in *Pirkei Merkavah*, that Enoch is Metatron,

56. See note 21 above.

57. The *sefirah* of intelligence (*binah*). There is an allusion to some sort of connection between Metatron and the *sefirah* of intelligence in *Raya Mehemna*, Zohar 3:217b.

58. This terminology is connected in the Zohar with the activity of prayer, see Zohar 3:198b. Its precise meaning, however, requires a clarification that is not possible within the context of the current essay.

59. This expression is related to the perception of the experience of Enoch as a *unio mystica*. The expression recurs a few times in the Middle Ages, demonstrating the existence of the conception of the *unio mystica* more than is reflected in the scholarly literature. See my *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (note 46 above), pp. 1–31, and “Universalization and Integration: Two Conceptions of Mystical Union in Jewish Mysticism,” in M. Idel and B. McGinn eds., *Mystical Union and Monotheistic Faith* (New York and London, 1989), pp. 27–57.

60. Gen. 5:24.

61. MS Jerusalem 1959 8°, folio 200a. The work was apparently written in the second half of the thirteenth century.

and thunder and lightning issue forth from him, and [if] you shall know this, [then] the light shall shine on your path.⁶²

As in *Sod wa-Yesod ha-Qadmoni*, emphasis is placed here on Enoch's education as a central factor in his attachment to the force named "Metatron," and his transformation into a spiritual being. Of especial interest in this context is Abraham Abulafia's description of the physical sensation of the mystic during a state of ecstasy:

And it will appear to him as if his entire body, from head to foot, has been anointed with the oil of anointing, and he was the anointed of the Lord and His emissary, and he will be called the angel of the Lord; his name will be similar to that of his Master, which is Shaddai, who is called Metatron, *sar ha-panim*.⁶³

This describes two planes: that of physical sensation, on the one hand, and the spiritual experience of transformation into an angel, on the other. The transmutation signifies the attachment of human intelligence to the active intellect, which is Metatron. Abulafia alludes to this attachment when he uses the wording: "Enoch is Metatron; verily, he and he [are one]."⁶⁴ Abulafia views the transformation of man into an angel or into "men" [*ishim*]⁶⁵ as the goal of the entire Torah, and it is easy to see how Enoch-Metatron became an outstanding religious ideal.⁶⁶

An important kabbalist, Rabbi Isaac of Acre,⁶⁷ followed in the footsteps of those kabbalists. The following is an example of his viewing Enoch's ascent as *unio mystica*:

It will attach itself to the divine intellect, and it will attach itself to it...and it and the intellect become one thing, as when a person pours a pitcher of water into a bubbling spring, with everything becoming one. This is the

62. MS Oxford 1947, folio 10a-b. Regarding this text, see Goldreich, *Sefer Meirat Einayim* (note 45 above), p. 397.

63. *Sefer Hayei ha-Olam ha-Ba*, MS Paris BN 777, folio 109. For an analysis of the context of this passage, see my *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (note 46 above), pp. 15-16. We should stress the messianic tone that accompanies the transformation to an angel, especially on the basis of the messianic background of the identification of Enoch with the Son of Man in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch. See Matthew Black, "The Throne-Theophany Prophetic Commission and the 'Son of Man,'" in *Jews, Greeks and Christians — Religious Cultures in Late Antiquities: Essays in Honor of W.D. Davies* (Leiden, 1976), pp. 57-73. Regarding the connection between the apotheosis of Enoch and anointing with oil, see the Ethiopic Book of Enoch 22:8.

64. *Sefer Sitrei Torah*, MS Paris BN 774, folio 123a; see also folio 129b. For Abulafia's conception of Metatron, see my *Kitvei R. Avraham Abulafiya u-Mishnato* ("The Writings and Thought of Rabbi Abraham Abulafia"; Jerusalem, 1976), pp. 320-321.

65. See notes 46 and 47 above.

66. See my *Kitvei R. Avraham Abulafiya* (note 64 above), p. 335. It is noteworthy that the possibility that Enoch was transformed into an angel was brought as an example of the possibility of *unio mystica* in Pico della Mirandola's *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, see A.R. Caponigri's translation (Chicago, 1967), p. 9.

67. See my *Kitvei R. Avraham Abulafiya* (note 64 above), p. 230; Goldreich, *Sefer Meirat Einayim* (note 45 above), p. 397.

secret of the intent of the sages of blessed memory, when they said that Enoch is Metatron.⁶⁸

These examples are sufficient in order to discern the existence of an extreme mystical interpretive tradition of the ascent of Enoch, a tradition which develops a specific element found in the earlier literature — Metatron as the knower of all esoteric knowledge — into a conception of mystic union by the activity of the ideal intellect. There is no doubt that on this topic there is a certain degree of continuity between the early Jewish mysticism and that of the Middle Ages.

Admittedly, new central elements found their way in, such as the Aristotelian conception of the union of the intellect and the intelligibles when the intellect is active, as well as the central role of the active intellect as Metatron. But both the ecstatic Kabbalah, which concentrates on intellectual processes, and the theosophical Kabbalah, which deals with the theosophy of the Supernal Adam or Adam Qadmon, actualize the mystic possibilities embodied in Heikhalot literature. A lack of sensitivity to the elements shared by the different strata of Jewish mysticism will harm our understanding of the later stages of this mysticism; nor will it enhance our understanding of Heikhalot literature.

In this context, mention should be made of the continuity (with changes, of course), from Heikhalot literature to hasidism, of a certain tradition — an early one, in my opinion. This tradition views Enoch as a shoemaker who merits to ascend to the level of Metatron on the basis of his devoted work, with the unification of the Name of God. An examination of the texts in which the tradition is preserved (whose findings cannot be discussed here) reveals the closeness between the first and last stages of the Jewish mystical tradition.

Methodological Remarks

The kind of argumentation used to reach the conclusions drawn above calls for a few methodological comments. My argument employed texts from a diverse range of sources belonging to different bodies of literature: Heikhalot literature, midrashic-talmudic literature, the Apocrypha, and kabbalistic literature. Despite the great differences between the natures of those sources, it was essential to combine them in order to complete some sort of picture of an ancient Jewish conception that had been repressed and whose remnants were scattered in many directions.

Although there may not appear to be any organic link between the sources cited, such a link does indeed exist. These literatures are branches of early Jewish thought that evolved in differing forms and in different literary contexts. Expressions of this thought were frequently changed, distorted and taken out of their original context, to be made subservient to new ideic frameworks. These changes, however, did not create an absolute separation between motifs that had a common source in ancient Jewish literature. As was shown above, a medieval kabbalistic text (in this case the Zohar) is closer in some regards to the Armenian Book of Adam than to Heikhalot literature. On the subject under

68. *Sefer Otzar Hayim*, MS Moscow-Ginzburg 775, folio 111a. See also my *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (note 4 above), pp. 67–68.

discussion, the midrashic-talmudic literature complements the conception of Heikhalot literature in preserving the tradition of the reduction of Adam's size and the loss of his garb of light.

An understanding of the material to be found in each of these literatures, which differ so greatly, is likely to contribute to the recovery of the original conception. Only an attempt to collect the relevant material from the many bodies of literature can facilitate the reconstruction of early conceptions or an intellectual system not explicitly found in any of the extant texts.

Support for that "reconstructionist" approach has now come from an unexpected source. Scholars studying Heikhalot literature have recently begun to stress the importance of the redaction of the Heikhalot works, noting that different versions of writings belonging to Heikhalot literature have survived.⁶⁹

This is also quite noticeable in the work of David Halperin, who analyzes the material dealing with the Merkavah in rabbinic literature. He also distinguishes between the different strata, with their different approaches to the significance of the Merkavah.⁷⁰ If the argument is correct, as I believe it is, then the redaction of the material dealing with the Heikhalot and the Merkavah is so important that the literary framework of the works need not be seen as a fact of decisive importance regarding the ideic material they contain. We are forced to conclude that units found in the different works are closer to one another than are the different parts of a single work. Consequently, from the thematic point of view, a comparison of motifs aids us in clarifying their significance by means of the reconstruction of a system of thought that is not systematically developed in the works themselves, for they did not from the outset tend to order their theological teachings.

The reconstruction is undoubtedly problematic in a number of regards. There is a danger of constructing, from shreds of texts, a distorted picture or even one that never existed in reality. This difficulty derives not only from the need to make use of materials from different sources, but also from the fact that early Hebrew literature was not noted for systematically committing its theological concepts to writing. Not that Jews did not possess such concepts, but their motivation to write them down in explicit detail is not comparable with what is found in Greek culture, for example.

Accordingly, the reconstruction of concepts standing behind specific Jewish texts is not a matter of merely writing down anew some ways of thinking that had already been summarized and committed to writing in lost works. It is rather a reconstruction of conceptions that had not been explicitly formulated in the ancient period. Such a reconstruction is not always dependent upon the talent of the scholar or any special intuition. We can make use of more developed stages of Jewish thought, in our case the Kabbalah. In many instances, kabbalistic literature preserved earlier theoretical conceptions and committed them (in some cases for the first time) to writing.⁷¹

69. See Peter Schäfer, "Tradition and Redaction in Hekhalot Literature," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 14 (1984), 172–181.

70. David J. Halperin, *The Merkavah in Rabbinic Literature* (New Haven, 1980).

71. See my essays cited in notes 2 and 8 above. See also my *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (note 4 above), pp. 32–34.

Critical use of the traditions of the kabbalists about how to understand early Jewish material is likely to be of assistance in the reconstruction of earlier Jewish conceptions. Emphasis should be placed on the word "critical." Not every kabbalistic conception is an early one, and early conceptions also underwent changes within the context of medieval kabbalistic thought. In certain instances, nonetheless, the kabbalistic commentary on midrashic-talmudic texts and on texts in Heikhalot literature can be a source of inspiration for the reconstruction. That reconstruction, however, must be based on the early material. The main criterion of validity will be that the early material is consistently explained by the reconstruction.

Of course, the more reliable the texts upon which the analysis is based and the more self-explanatory they are, the more accurate the general analysis will be.⁷² Nevertheless, advice to await the complete clarification of all the relevant texts, wise as it may sound, is in great measure theoretical. Waiting for critical editions of all the midrashic and talmudic texts, of the Qumran literature, of the apocalyptic literature in all its various languages, and of the various Gnostic writings, as a condition for beginning an ideic analysis of Heikhalot literature, would constitute a conscious deferment of any attempt to understand it.

If the advice adds that it would be preferable to base ourselves on all-inclusive analyses of each of the bodies of literature, analyses in which the exact place of any given motif in the ideic structure of a given literature would be determined,⁷³ then it is liable to turn into bad advice.⁷⁴ In the nature of things, there are no "final" results regarding comprehensive analyses. Moreover, the place of any given motif may at times be the result of the special conception of a given scholar.

I do not propose to wait forever for authoritative conclusions in the realms close to Heikhalot literature, as a condition for progress toward an ideic analysis. Instead, I attempt to approach the material belonging to this literature with the aid of traditions preserved in literatures that are close to it in time or linked to it in other ways.⁷⁵ It is in the very nature of this fragmented literature

72. Mention should be made in this context of the great contribution made by Peter Schäfer and Arnold Goldberg in their publication of texts from Heikhalot literature and their analysis of their literary structures.

73. See Peter Schäfer, "New Testament and Hekhalot Literature" (note 52 above) and "Merkavah Mysticism and Rabbinic Judaism," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104:3 (1984), p. 541.

74. It is of interest that scholars of Gnostic literature and those of the Dead Sea literature did not wait for the completion of the survey of midrashic and Heikhalot literature before writing an extensive scholarly literature on the writings from Nag Hammadi. Despite the difficult philological and historical problems, the researchers of Gnosticism have advanced our conceptual understanding of this literature much more than have the researchers of Heikhalot literature until now. Incidentally, it is circular reasoning to demand, as a precondition for scholarly work, certain achievements in related fields, for any field is liable to come to a standstill while waiting for a breakthrough by scholars in another field.

75. An extremely important criterion for the correctness of a reconstruction is the quantity of relevant material supporting the proposed picture. There is a vast difference between an idea alluded to in only two or three texts and an idea reflected in dozens of citations in different forms. In this case, the charge of "parallelomania"

that it poses severe problems that textual scholarship is unable to overcome. Research in this ideic realm can be judged only on the basis of its ability to clarify the material with which it deals. Methodological considerations, however interesting, generally reflect the path that the scholar chose to follow from the outset.

I will conclude with an apposite passage from Sefer Bahir:

Whoever is dealing with the Act of Creation and the Merkavah must inevitably fail, as it is written, "And let this ruin be under your hand" [Is. 3:6] — these are things that a person cannot understand, unless he fails in them.

Immanuel 24/25

made by Schäfer, "New Testament and Hekhalot Literature," (note 52 above), p. 33 is unreasonable.