

# OUTLINE

OF THE

# NEO-HEBRAIC APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE.

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**CARPENTIER**

## PREFACE.

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THE brief sketch of Neo-Hebraic Apocalyptic Literature contained in the following pages was written originally for the Jewish Encyclopedia. My manuscript, however, suffered in the reviser's office a number of serious changes, of which I could by no means approve, and, being unable to effect the restoration of the original, I was obliged to withdraw the article. Its publication in Volume I of the Jewish Encyclopedia is not authorized by me, nor am I responsible for anything in its form or contents there which is at variance with the original, as published here.

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iii



## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTORY, . . . . .	1-8
Growth of the Neo-Hebraic out of the Older Apocalyptic Literature—The Nature and Object—General Tone and Coloring—External Characteristics—Production in Talmudic Period—Historical Value.	
I. THE HEBREW BOOK OF ENOCH, . . . . .	9-15
II. AN APOCALYPTIC FRAGMENT, . . . . .	16-18
III. THE ASCENSION OF MOSES, . . . . .	19-21
IV. THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES—A FRAGMENT, . . . . .	22
V. THE REVELATION OF R. JOSHUA B. LEVI, . . . . .	23-24
VI. THE ALPHABETS OF R. AKIBA, . . . . .	25-29
VII. THE HEBREW ELIJAH APOCALYPSE, . . . . .	30-32
VIII. THE APOCALYPSE OF ZERUBBABEL, . . . . .	33-36
IX. THE WARS OF KING MESSIAH, . . . . .	37-38
X. THE REVELATION OF R. SIMON B. YOHAI, . . . . .	39-40
XI. THE PRAYER OF R. SIMON B. YOHAI, . . . . .	41
XII. THE MIDRASH OF THE TEN KINGS, . . . . .	42
XIII. THE PERSIAN APOCALYPSE OF DANIEL, . . . . .	43-44
XIV. ESCHATOLOGICAL DESCRIPTIONS, . . . . .	45

## ABBREVIATIONS OF BOOKS AND PERIODICALS CITED.

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   Cat. Bodl., . . . . Catalogus librorum Hebræorum in Biblioth. Bodl.  
   Hebr. Bibl., . . . . Hebräische Bibliographie.
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- WOLF, BIBL. HEBR., . . . Joh. Chrph. Wolf, Bibliotheca Hebræa.
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- ZDMG, . . . . . Zeitschrift d. deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft.
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## INTRODUCTORY.

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THE Neo-Hebraic apocalyptic forms but one<sup>2</sup> branch of apocalyptic literature, a species of literature exhibiting many ramifications, and represented in a complex but unbroken chain from the time of the Maccabean War, in which period the oldest example—the Canonical Book of Daniel—originated, down to the close of the Middle Ages. It is characteristic of apocalyptic literature from its very beginning that it did not remain confined to its native Palestine. It made its way almost immediately to Hellenistic Alexandria, where it appears in the Greek language, under the mask of the heathen Sibyl, and with other mythological embellishment. The same thing occurred again, *mutatis mutandis*, when, at the rise of Christianity, the Church took over the apocalyptic from the synagogue, in its essence and with all its trappings, and made it her own (a fact admitted by all modern New Testament critics), and the apocalyptic writings, thus naturalized in the literatures of the Occident as of the Orient, may be traced thenceforward like a red line through the centuries. Nor did this transplanting process take place only in apostolic times. In the course of its development, the Christian apocalyptic drew freely from younger Jewish sources, and, on the other hand, the later Jewish writings were influenced directly or indirectly by the apocalyptic of the Church. Considering this uninterrupted flux and reflux of apocalyptic literature during upward of a millennium and a half, it seems, on the face of the matter, improbable that the Neo-Hebraic apocalyptic should date no farther back than the middle of the eight century, as Zunz (*cf. LG. pp. 603 sqq.; GV. p. 295. ch. ix. p. 417 sq.*) and Grätz (*Gesch. V, p. 441; Monatsschrift, VIII, pp. 67 sqq. 103 sqq. 140 sqq. IX, pp. 60 sqq.*) maintained, and still more improbable that

**Growth  
out of the  
Older.**

it should exhibit, as these scholars believed (*cf. opp. cit. ib.*), an entirely new character and trend of thought, the resultant of the specific influences and tendencies operating in mediæval times. The zealous apocalyptic research of the last few decades, together with fresh discoveries that have been made in this field, has proved, indeed, that quite opposite conclusions, as to the date and character, must be drawn. It has shown ever more convincingly that the characteristic feature of apocalyptic literature is the constancy in the ideas, the same set of thoughts being handed down from generation to generation without undergoing any material modification. It has pointed out further (and there are records which show that the view is correct), that the intricate connection among the different apocalypses, where direct literary influence is frequently out of the question, can be explained only by the assumption of an apocalyptic tradition, transmitted orally as an esoteric doctrine. In the same way as Christianity created no new and characteristic apocalyptic expectations, so a later age adopted the stuff for the apocalyptic ready for use from the past; the Middle Ages did not create nor invent in this province, they merely worked over the material handed down to them, put, so to speak, a new stamp on the old coin; their task was, on the one hand, to apply the old hopes and promises to the present, and, on the other, to interpret the present according to these. In the case of the Neo-Hebraic apocalyptic it was precisely the same.

The nature and object of the Neo-Hebraic are the same as those of the older apocalyptic. The great question in it, too, is, "How" and "When" will the period of Messianic glory be realized?—a question which proposed itself naturally in post-exilic times, in the face of the unfulfilled promises of the prophets. And the answer in the Neo-Hebraic apocalyptic to this question does not differ a particle from the solution given in Daniel and the succeeding apocalypses. The answer lay in the dualistic

conception of two worlds: a present world (עולם הזה) **Substance.** —*ὁ αἰὼν ὁ ὄντων*); and a world to come (עולם הבא—*ὁ αἰὼν ὁ μέλλων*), or, more fully, a present world, essentially corrupt by reason of the evil powers inherent in it; and a future ideal world,



necessarily supramundane—a conception of things due, in part at least, to foreign influences, probably to the Iranian mythology (Parseeism) rather than to the Assyrio-Babylonian cosmogony. The logical conclusion from this dualistic belief was, on the one side, that God's plan of salvation could be realized only after all the obstructing evil powers (the demons with Satan at their head, and the heathen world subject to them) were annihilated, together with the world itself; and, on the other side, that the future world, with all its blessings, pre-existed from eternity in heaven, whence it (having as its center the perfect, glorious New Jerusalem) would descend in the end-time in place of the old world. In the Neo-Hebraic, as in the older apocalyptic literature, the eschatological drama is enacted, not in one era, but in two—the temporary Messianic interim, and the everlasting kingdom of heavenly bliss (the latter set off by the eternal torments of hell in store for the wicked). This idea of duality in respect to the end-kingdom arose from the interfusion of the prophetic hopes fixed upon the present with the supernatural perspective (to which, as noted above, foreign influences contributed) regarding the future world.

In general tone and coloring the older apocalyptic served as model for the Neo-Hebraic. It shows the same harsh particularism and narrow nationalism which predominate in the later, according to which the kingdom of God means salvation for faithful Israel alone; for the heathen world, on the contrary, damnation.\* In like manner, the gross sensuousness in the detailed description of the joys of the Messianic and supramundane world is quite common in the older apocalyptic; also the circumstance that, besides the revelations regarding the end of time and the occurrences in that time, there are not infrequently revelations concerning other supernatural subjects—for instance, heaven and hell and paradise, the mysteries of the creation and of the course of the universe, angels, and the whole world of spirits, together with God Himself—and in these revelations the phantasy in the older apocalyptic is quite as unrestrained and extravagant as that

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\* Similarly the Christian apocalyptic grants the future bliss only to the faithful adherents of the Church.

in the later. Similarly, the one-sided emphasis laid in the Neo-Hebraic apocalyptic upon the ideal way in which the Torah is to be fostered in the future world, and on the pouring out of the Holy Spirit over all men, is in conformity with the spirit of the older apocalyptic; in fact, is in accord with the whole development of the religious life and thought of the Jews from the time of the Maccabees—the Torah had come to be considered not only the creative, preservative principle, which existed ages before the creation of the world as the essence of God's consciousness, but also the sum and center of God's design with man (*cf. JSir XXIV. Bar III, 14-IV, 1. En XLVIII, 1. XCI, 10. Sibyll III, 757 sqq. 769 sqq. 787. Pirke Abot VI, 10. Peshaim 54a. Zebahim 116a. Mechilta 68b ed. Weiss. Baba Batra 75a. Pesitka R. Kah. 107a ed. Buber, etc.*). And the absurdities on this subject in the Talmud and in the oldest Midrashim, in no wise fall short of those in the Neo-Hebraic apocalyptic. Schürer's remark is to the point, that fulfilment of the Law, and hope of future glory, were the two poles around which the whole religious life of later Judaism revolved (*Gesch. 3d ed., II, pp. 466 sq.*). This explains, too, how besides the revelation of the future and other supernatural mysteries, the apocalypses repeatedly contain instructions in, and expositions of, the Law; see *Book of Jubilees* and *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* for the older literature, and the *Alphabets of R. Akiba* and *Otot*, or *Milhamot Melek ha-Mashiah*, for the Neo-Hebraic.

Finally, the Neo-Hebraic apocalypses show also all the external characteristics which mark the older ones. Like these, they claim to be supernatural revelations made through the medium of angels, and their authors conceal their real identity by pseudonyms, borrowing for this purpose the names of celebrated holy men of the past—hence the name *Pseudepigrapha* for the apocalyptic writings. The revelations regarding the end are also in the younger literature in enigmatical form, though, on the whole, the form is more transparent—like that shown by the older literature in the Sibylline Oracles. The metaphorical style, too, has almost disappeared, and naturally enough, for a literature in which the

**General  
Tone.**

**External  
Character-  
istics.**

activity of successive generations has been confined to mere reproduction, must become ever less fresh and less vivid. The wonderful calculations regarding the end, however, are to be found in all their variations in the younger writings, and are quite as numerous as in the older. They are supposed to be a secret of which one can gain knowledge only through revelation. The authors skillfully add plausibility to the claim that their writings are ancient prophecies by making a review of contemporary, and frequently also of past, history, as if it were but a vision of the future which the alleged author is recording. In this way every apocalypse contains the key to the date of its origin, this date concurring with that period at which the *vaticinia post eventum* break off and the real prophecy of the future begins, namely, the prediction of the immediate approach of judgment for the wicked and of salvation for the good. This pious deception, in which the apocalyptic writers took refuge, was for the purpose of stirring up in the hearts of their readers, in a present of gloom and bitter trial, that belief in the blissful future promised them, with which their own souls were filled; for the apocalypse was essentially the literary medium through which, in times of oppression and persecution, the minds of the faithful were worked upon; yet it could gain such effectiveness only through its alleged sanctity as an ancient revelation.

This leads us back to the other point touched upon above, namely, that by reason of the character and tendencies of apocalyptic literature, it would seem from the outset impossible that all productive activity in this line should have lain dormant during the Talmudic period. As far as we are in a position to follow this literature through the different periods and among the different nations which fostered it, we find that every age of great political agitation and revolution produced its apocalypses. Thus the oldest apocalyptic monument, the Book of Daniel, is the direct fruit of the fanatical religious persecution exerted by Antiochus Epiphanes. And when the Jews came into conflict with the Roman Empire, a conflict lasting for two centuries, we find every phase of this varying drama accompanied by apocalypses, from the conquest of Jerusalem by Pompey on the one hand, and

the despotic rule of Antony and Cleopatra in Egypt on the other, down to the last desperate struggle and bloody persecution under Hadrian. In like manner we shall find apocalypses contemporaneous with the great political vicissitudes of the Sassanian period. But apart from these apocalypses preserved to us, there is in the Talmud a by no means inconsiderable amount of apocalyptic matter, that not only attests the burning interest with which the Jews followed the wars of Sapor I and Sapor II, against Rome, in the belief that these wars were the unmistakable signs of the imminence of God's kingdom, but proves also beyond doubt that apocalyptic writing flourished no less in

**Produced  
in Talmudic  
as well as  
in Post-  
Talmudic  
Times.**

Talmudic than in Post-Talmudic times. For example, we see from a passage in *Yoma* 10a, for which R. Joshua b. Levi, a contemporary of Sapor I, is mentioned as the authority, how, in presence of the victorious wars of Sapor I against Rome, the prophecy contained in *Dan.* viii about the war between the Medo-Persian and the Grecian kingdoms was believed to refer to Sapor's wars with Rome. And to determine the ultimate issue of these wars, an old apocalyptic tradition was cited, according to which, before the advent of the Messiah, Rome, the fourth and last world-monarchy, would for the space of nine months extend her godless dominion over the whole world. Similarly in *Shevuot* 6b there is a passage, dating from the time of Sapor II's wars with Rome, in which the statement in *Dan.* vii, 23 about the fourth world-monarchy is quoted to show conclusively that no other outcome is possible than that Rome should triumph over Persia. In *Sanhedrin*, 97-98 there are preserved a number of apocalyptic calculations of those times; also, among other things, excerpts from revelations which the above-mentioned R. Joshua b. Levi—who also figures as the author of an apocalypse (see below)—was supposed to have received from the mouth of the prophet Elijah, as well as from the Messiah himself.

The entire apocalyptic literature is of extreme historical value. Toward the close of antiquity and through the Middle Ages it exercised extensive and permanent influence on the

thought of the times, thus forming one of the most important factors in shaping the history of those centuries. It reflects the different feelings, the hopes and fears which swayed the masses for over fifteen hundred years, and reflects them more directly than any other kind of contemporary literature. All the strange, erratic thoughts, which appear to us but the outgrowth of a morbid fantasy, so grotesque and unmeaning do they seem, were once full of life and keenest significance, and of power to move the readers to the depths of their being. The uneasiness and solicitude about the approaching end of the world, which were of constant recurrence during the Middle Ages, were, at bottom, nothing more than the impressions made by the threats and promises of the apocalypses upon minds already susceptible and excited by external events. And in the history of the Jews in particular, apocalyptic was one of the most telling factors, contributing, as it did in such large measure, to determine the unique course of its development until long after the close of the Middle Ages. The courage and persistency in their belief, which the Jews have shown again and again, from the time of the Maccabees down even into modern times, their indomitable hope under persecution, their scorn of death, were nourished by apocalyptic literature. The darker their present grew, the more desperate their condition in the later mediæval period, the more eagerly did their minds turn to the comfort offered by the apocalyptic promises and draw fresh strength from the assurance that the present persecution indicated the end of their suffering and the dawn of their delivery. And as it was through the influence of apocalyptic literature that, during the Jewish-Roman war, religious enthusiasts arose, proclaiming that they were divinely called to deliver their people, and in each case found thousands of sincere followers (this happened even during the siege of the city—see *Jos. Bell. Jud.* VI, 5, 4), so it is to be attributed to the hold this literature had upon the minds of the people that pseudo-Messiahs have arisen again and again, and even in modern times, and have always found the masses ready to accept them.

**Historical  
Value.**

LITERATURE.—Smend, *Über jüdische Apokalyptik*, ZATW, V, pp. 222 sqq.; Schürer, *Gesch.* 3d ed. II, pp. 498 sqq. III, pp. 182 sqq.; Holtzmann, H. J., *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, I, pp. 68 sqq.; Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche* (Bousset receiving his idea in this work from Gunkel's *Schöpfung und Chaos*, was the first to prove clearly and convincingly the constancy of the eschatological thoughts throughout apocalyptic literature); Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, VI, pp. 226 sqq.; *Gesch.* pp. 123 sqq. 164 sqq. 253 sqq.

The following outlines of the separate apocalypses will illustrate the points already mentioned as characteristic of the Neo-Hebraic Apocalyptic Literature. The writings which come in question for us will not be taken in alphabetic order, as it will better serve our purpose to arrange them according to internal criteria; and only certain general points will be treated, since the preliminary investigation upon which any exhaustive treatment would have to be based, has, to a large extent, not yet been made in this branch of apocalyptic literature.

### I. The Hebrew Book of Enoch, ספר חנוך.

Even up to the present day this book has been confused with *Pirke Hekalot* (which was likewise claimed to be written by R. Ishmael), and hence has been called erroneously also ספר היכלות. That ספר חנוך is the original title is established by a manuscript in the Bodleian Library, and also by the fact that the apocalypse is quoted under that name in the older mediæval literature.

There are two editions of this book, one by Jellinek, bearing the title ספר היכלות ונקרא גם כן ספר חנוך (*Bet ha-Midrash*, V, pp. 170-190), and giving the text of the Munich Codex, No. 40, fol. 121b-132 (not fol. 94-102, as stated by Jellinek); the manuscript title is: ספר רטיבהש [רטיבהש] פ' ס' היכלות. The other appeared under the title ספר היכלות מהתנא ר' ישמעאל כהן גדול (together with a prayer attributed to R. Ishmael), in Lemberg, 1864, and was reprinted in Warsaw, 1875. According to the title-page, it gives the text of a very old manuscript, and in many cases has better readings than Jellinek's edition. An unedited manuscript of this apocalypse is in the Bodleian library (Oppenheimer, 556; old number, 1061), and bears the title ספר חנוך לר' ישמעאל כהן גדול (see Neubauer, *Cat. Bodl.* No. 1656, 2; Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.* pp. 532 sqq.). Both the printed edi-

Name.

MSS. and Editions.

tions are incomplete, but fortunately supplement each other. Chs. I–XIV of the Lemberg–Warsaw edition are identical with §§ I–XVI of Jellinek's (pp. 170–176, l. 21.) Chs. XV–XX are not in the latter at all; but Jellinek states (*Bh.M.* VI, p. xliii, n. 5) that they are contained elsewhere in the Munich MS. Chs. XXI–XXVI cover §§ XVII–XXII of Jellinek's (pp. 176, l. 22–180, l. 5.) At this point the Lemberg edition suddenly breaks off; what follows does not belong to our apocalypse, but is taken from *Hekalot Rabbati*, with the exception of the "Addition" (תוספה) in Ch. XXIX, which is taken, probably, from one of the rescensions of the *Alphabets of R. Akiba* (see below). As the Opp. MS. contains (according to Neubauer's *Catal.*) forty-eight chapters, it is probable that in it we have the apocalypse complete; for the number of paragraphs in Jellinek, supplemented by the six chapters of the Lemberg edition, is exactly forty-eight.

This apocalypse is quoted very often in the rabbinical literature of the Middle Ages, particularly in the cabalistic branch.

**Quotations in Rabbinical Literature.** In the *Zohar* it is even twice called ס' ראיון רחוק ("The Book of the Secrets of Enoch") (at the beginning of Peric. *Tesawweh*, II, f. Sob, ed. Amst.; for other passages in the *Zohar*, in which the book is quoted, see Zunz, *Etwas über Rabbinische Literatur*, p. 13). Excerpts of Chs. I–XVI are contained in the manuscript works of Eleazar of Worms (Cod. Munich, No. 81), "with many better readings" than in Jellinek (see Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibl.* XIV, pp. 32 sqq.). Since it stands thus with the text, a new, critical edition is much to be desired; and, in connection with such an undertaking, it would have to be examined to what extent the quotations from the "Book of Enoch" in the rabbinical literature of the Middle Ages belong to this book, or are taken from other books of Enoch. There are, for example, lengthy quotations from "The Book of Enoch" in the manuscript work *Mishkan ha-Edut* of Moses de Leon, which are not in the book under consideration.\*

\* Jellinek published the passages in part in *Bh.M.* II, p. xxxi. III, pp. 195 sqq., and to these Steinschneider published in *Hebr. Bibl.* IV, pp. 152 sq. a large number of variants offering better readings.



This book is an interesting specimen of the apocalypse, and illustrates strikingly many of the points mentioned above as characteristics of the literature to which it belongs.

It shows the closest relation of dependence to the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch* discovered some years ago in a Slavonic translation. A brief synopsis of the book will best show the metamorphosis which the old pseudographic writing underwent, and what new elements from other apocalypses were added in the process; it will also show that we are justified in holding it for a genuine apocalypse and treating it altogether apart from the Hekalot Literature.

**Relation to  
Secrets  
of Enoch.**

The book opens with the verse *Gen.* v, 24, concerning Enoch's godly life. Thereupon R. Ishmael narrates how, when he ascended into heaven to see the Merkaba, after he had passed through the six heavenly halls, Metatron, at his petition, came to meet him at the entrance to the seventh and conducted him inside, leading him straight before the celestial chariot into the presence of God (*cf. Secr. En.* XXI, 2b-5). At the sight of the heavenly hosts Ishmael fell unconscious, but God motioned them back and Metatron restored Ishmael to consciousness. Ishmael then proclaimed the glory of the Lord and all the angels joined in. In Ch. II Metatron con-

**Contents.**

quers the objection of the angels to Ishmael's approach to God's throne. In Chs. III-V and VII-XVI Metatron relates to Ishmael that he is Enoch b. Jared, and that at the time of the Deluge God had him translated to heaven in a chariot of fire by his angel 'Anpi'el, that he might there bear eternal witness against his sinful contemporaries; that God, overcoming the protest of the heavenly hosts, transfigured him with the rays of heavenly glory and made him as one of themselves, in order that he might serve before His throne as one of the highest angel-princes (*cf. Secr. En.* XXII, 6b-10); that first, however, the Angel of Wisdom, at God's command, had instructed him in all wisdom and knowledge (*cf. ib.* XXII, 11. 12. XXIII), and had imparted to him all the mysteries of creation, of heaven and earth, of past and future things, and of the world to come (*cf. ib.* XXIV-XXXIII, 2). In Ch. VI Metatron tells Ishmael that, after Adam was

driven out of Paradise, God abode under the tree of life on a Cherub, and the angels and heavenly hosts descended to the earth in many divisions, and Adam and his generation, sitting at the entrance to Paradise, beheld the heavenly glory until, in the time of Enosh, 'Aza and 'Aza'el led men to idolatry (*cf. Secr. En.* XXXI, 2, where it is said, referring, however, to the time Adam dwelt in Paradise, "God made the heavens open to him that he might behold the angels, etc.," and the obscure words following: "And he was constantly in Paradise"). Chs. XVIII-XXII (not in Jellinek's edition) describe the seven heavens with their hosts of angels, and the courses of the sun, moon and stars, dwelling with special minuteness on the highest heaven and its hosts. This description is an interesting mixture of the description of the seven heavens contained in *Ascensio Isaiæ*, and of that in the *Secrets of Enoch*. As in *Asc. Is.*, the seven heavens are represented as being inhabited by angels, increasing in glory in each successive heaven, and are described in the descending order. And as the recension A of the *Secr. En.* mentions, besides the seven heavens, an eighth, *Muzaloth*, and a ninth, *Kukhavim*, and above them all a tenth, *Araboth*, the seat of God's glory, so this book has a separate heaven for the sun and moon, together with the stations of the moon (כיולית), another for the stars (כיכבים)—with the difference, however, that these two are under the seven heavens—and a highest heaven over them all, called here also *Araboth*, the abode of God and of the highest angelic hosts. In Ch. XXIII Metatron describes to Ishmael the winds issuing from the cherubim of the heavenly chariot, and tells how these, after traversing the universe, enter Paradise to waft the fragrant odors and exquisite perfumes there unto the pious and just, for whom Paradise and the tree of life are prepared as an eternal inheritance (*cf. Secr. En.* IX, and the somewhat obscure passage in VIII, 5d-6). In Chs. XXIV-XXVI Enoch-Metatron gives Ishmael a description of the chariot and of the many-eyed, radiant, God-praising Ophanim and Seraphim (*cf. ib.* XX, 1. XXI, 1), the latter of which burn the accusations which Satan, in conspiracy with the patron-angel of Rome and the patron-angel of Persia, sends in against Israel. In Ch.

XXVII he describes to him the archangel Radveri'el, the heavenly registrar and keeper of the archives (*cf. ib.* XXII, 11 sq.); in XXVIII-XXIX the "Irin and Kaddishin," who daily sit in judgment with God; in XXX-XXXIV the judgment itself; in XXXV-XL he tells how the heavenly hosts pass into the presence of God to praise and glorify Him with the song, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord Zebaoth!", and how, at that, the Ophanim, Cherubim, Hayyot, and Seraphim, standing around His throne, prostrate themselves in adoration, joining in with "Praised be the glory of His Kingdom forever!" (*cf. ib.* XX, 3b-XXI, 1). In Chs. XLI-XLVII Enoch-Metatron reveals to Ishmael the mysteries of creation, and shows him the repositories of the rain, snow, and hail, of the thunder and lightning; the courses of the stars; the spirits of angels, punished because they did not give praise to God at the right time, and whose bodies were turned to great fiery mountains (the analogy to the *Ethiopian Book of Enoch*, XVIII, 11-16. XXI is striking); the souls of the righteous departed, who in the form of birds hover around God's throne, and the souls of the righteous yet unborn; the places of punishment and the tortures of the wicked in hell (*cf. Secr. En.* X). Then Ishmael sees how the souls of the patriarchs and of all the righteous ascend out of their graves to heaven, beseeching God to deliver His people Israel from their bondage among the heathen, but God answers them that the sins of the wicked retard the delivery of His people and the realization of His kingdom; while the patriarchs are weeping at this declaration, Michael, Israel's patron-angel, intervenes, pleading for Israel's delivery. Thereupon Metatron lets Ishmael survey all past and future ages from Adam to the end of time: he sees Messiah b. Joseph and his age, and Messiah b. David and his age, together with the wars of Gog and Magog and the other events of the Messianic era. In the concluding chapter (XLVIII), Metatron shows Ishmael God's right hand cast backwards because of the destruction of the Temple, and lets him see the glorious future Jerusalem, where the souls of the just are standing, praying for its advent upon earth. At the same moment God's right hand emits five streams of tears which, falling into the

ocean, cause the world to shake; and God asseverates that, although there is no righteous man upon earth whose intercession could effect the delivery of Israel, yet He will save them for His own sake, for the sake of His justice and His own merit: God prepares Himself to reveal his mighty power to the heathen, whereupon Israel will be immediately delivered, and the Messiah appear to them in order to conduct them to Jerusalem, where they will inherit His kingdom, the heathen being excluded, and God will be king over the whole earth.

Apart from the fact that R. Ishmael, of the period of the Hadrianic persecution, figures as the author, and from the allusion in the last chapter to the destruction of the temple (through which data the *tempus a quo* is fixed), there are no definite references to historical events or conditions from which the date of composition could be more exactly determined.

**Date of Composition.** There is, however, a passage in *Berakot* 7a about R. Ishmael which suggests itself naturally in connection with this apocalypse, and which enables us to set up at least the *terminus ad quem*. The passage reads:

“R. Ishmael b. Elisha related: ‘Once I entered into the inmost regions to offer incense; there I saw Akatriel Yah YHWH Zebaoth sitting upon the high and exalted throne of mercy (*cf.* MS.), and He said to me: “Ishmael, my son, bless me!” Thereupon I spoke: “May it please thee that thy mercy conquer thine anger, and that thy mercy gush forth as is the way of mercy (*cf.* MS.); mayest thou deal with thy children according to thy mercy, and reunite them, though contrary to the rules of the rigid law.”’”

Compare also the passage immediately preceding:

“What does God pray? Raba says, ‘May my mercy conquer my anger, and may my mercy gush forth as is the way of mercy, and may I deal with my children according to my mercy, and reunite them though contrary to the rules of the rigid law.’”

The parallel is obvious. The passages quoted force us to the conclusion that the *Hebrew Book of Enoch* can not have been written later than the time of the completion of the Babylonian Talmud.

NOTE.—In publishing this sketch in its present form, I take occasion to point out here that the *Hebrew Book of Enoch* is of great importance for the critical study of the *Secrets of Enoch*—(1) for the light it might throw upon the question of the original language of the *Secrets of Enoch*; and (2) for the aid it might furnish in ascertaining the relation of Recensions A and B of *Secrets of Enoch* to each other. The material in our book, bearing upon this second question, would seem to be of a more substantial character than that bearing upon the first. A thorough examination of these points, however, would be possible only after the completion of such a critical edition of the *Hebrew Book of Enoch* as was referred to above.

## II. An Apocalyptic Fragment.

An apocalyptic fragment, in which R. Ishmael likewise figures as the author, is preserved in the *Siddur of R. Amram Gaon* (of the second half of the ninth century), fol. 3b. 12b-13a. It is contained also in one of the recensions of the *Legend of the Ten Martyrs* (published by Jellinek in *BhM.* VI, pp. 19-30), where, however, it does not fit in naturally, and is to be considered, therefore, a later insertion. It was first printed in *Yihus ha-Zaddikim*, by Gerson b. Asher Scarmela, (which appeared in Mantua in 1561), but with additions at the beginning and end, which, in different versions, are all to be found in the various recensions of the *Legend of the Ten Martyrs*, and are contained in part also in Chs. IV-V of the *Hekalot Rabbati*. These portions betray themselves as later additions by the fact that the last of those at the end treats of the preparations, which, in the Legend, precede Ishmael's ascension, but which, from the context here, would seem to be events following his return from heaven. By reason of the relationship of these additions to Chs. IV-V of the *Hekalot Rabbati*, Jellinek published them, together with the Fragment, as *Hekalot-Zusätze* in *BhM.* V, pp. 167-169. Gaster gave a translation of the Fragment in the *JRAS*, 1893, pp. 609 sqq.

In this fragment, R. Ishmael relates that Sngir, one of the chief angels, revealed to him the sufferings in store for Israel; and when he expressed wonder that Israel could ever endure these, the angel showed him still greater sufferings awaiting her—captivity, famine, and pillage. As Ishmael then left the angel, he heard a voice proclaiming in Aramaic:

“The sanctuary will be destroyed, the temple burned down, and the royal palace made desolate; the king's sons will be killed, and his wife widowed, and youths and maidens be dragged

away as booty; the altar will be sacrilegied, and the table of the show-bread be carried off by the enemy; Jerusalem will be turned into a wilderness, and the land of Israel will become a picture of desolation."

Upon this announcement Ishmael fell unconscious to the ground, but was restored by another of the chief angels, whom he then asked if there were no remedy for Israel. As answer, the angel led him to the place where salvation and comfort were prepared; and he saw there groups of angels weaving garments of salvation for the righteous of the future world, and making magnificent crowns out of precious stones and pearls, perfumed with nectar and all sorts of fragrant odors, one of which crowns was of especial brilliance. The angel informed him that the crowns were intended for Israel, the very magnificent one being for David, king of Israel. Amid the motion of the heavens, with their armies of stars and all the hosts of angels, and amid the sound of a great rustling which proceeded from Paradise, Ishmael heard proclaimed: "YHWH reigns forever, thy God, O Zion, to all generations! Hallelujah!" He then saw David, king of Israel, approach, followed by all the kings of his dynasty, each one with a crown on his head, David's crown, however, outshining all the others and sending out its brilliance over the whole world. David went up to the heavenly temple, placed himself upon the throne of fire, prepared for him near God's throne, and presented his homage to God in hymns of praise, proclaiming the eternal duration of His kingdom. Metatron with his angel-hosts, heaven and earth, and, lastly, all the kings of the house of David joined in this praise, calling out: "YHWH will be king over the whole earth; on that day YHWH will be One and His name One!"

The Messianic doctrine in this fragment, in which David figures as the Messiah, is unique, not only as far as the Neo-Hebraic, but as far as apocalyptic in general, is concerned. It forces us to hold this fragment quite apart from *the Book of Enoch* (treated above), as the work of an altogether different author. It bespeaks further a very early origin, and this is fully confirmed by the *vaticinium*

Date of  
Composi-  
tion.

*post eventum*. As the Ishmael in this apocalypse, too, can be only the Rabbi Ishmael, extolled in legend as a martyr of the Hadrianic persecution, and as, hence, the date of composition must fall after the destruction of the temple, the only event which can come into consideration as making such a prophecy comprehensible is the disastrous termination of the reign of Bar-Cochba. At that juncture the conditions and events furnished a basis for the *vaticinium post eventum* contained in this apocalypse—that the temple would be sacrilegiously destroyed, the royal palace desolated, Jerusalem turned into a desert, and the whole land of Israel made a picture of horror. And, indeed, the Fragment reads as if it were written under the immediate impression of the Hadrianic persecution. To the present writer it seems further plausible that this book was the intermediary through which the peculiar metamorphosis of the *Secrets of Enoch* into the *Neo-Hebraic Book of Enoch* was accomplished.



### III. The Ascension of Moses.

The Latin version of *The Assumption of Moses*, which is preserved to us only as a fragment, must certainly have contained, in the lost part, a narration of the death of Moses, and of the dispute between the Archangel Michael and Satan (or the Angel of Death) over the dead body. The ascension of Moses was possibly also narrated in this book, though, more probably, it formed the subject of a separate apocalypse. Among the Neo-Hebraic apocalypses there is an *Ascension of Moses*, as well as a fragment which, besides revelations of the future, tells of the death of Moses, and of the strife ensuing upon his death.

*The Ascension of Moses* was published for the first time in Salonica in 1727, under the title גִּדּוּלַת מֹשֶׁה, and has been printed several times since (in Amsterdam, 1754; Warsaw, 1849, etc.). It has been translated by Gaster (l. c. pp. 572-588) under the title, *The Revelation of Moses*. An Arabic translation also exists in the Karaite manuscript, written in 1828, and discovered by Tischendorf (Codex Tischendorf, XLIV in the University Library of Leipsic; described by Tischendorf in *Anecdota Sacra et Profana*, p. 74, and by Jellinek in *Monatsschrift*, II, pp. 245. 360 sq., and *Bh.M.* II, pp. IX sq. XIX sq.). This translation has a longer introduction, and varies somewhat in the text from our recension.

**Editions  
and  
Translations.**

The contents of the book may be thus summarized:\*

On account of the modesty which Moses displayed when God summoned him to appear before Pharaoh and to liberate the Israelites, God commands Metatron-Enoch to let Moses ascend into heaven. After Metatron has transformed Moses' body into a fiery figure, like that of the angels, he conducts him up through the seven heavens. In the first, Moses sees waters "standing in lines," and windows to let

**Contents.**

\* According to Gaster's translation, as the original was not accessible to the writer.

in and out all the things pertaining to human life and its needs; in the second, he sees the angels who are placed over the clouds, the winds, and the rain; in the third, the angels placed over vegetation; in the fourth, those over the earth, sun, moon, stars, planets, and spheres; in the fifth, "angels half of fire and half of snow;" in the sixth, the "Irin Kaddishin;" in the seventh, Araboth, he sees first the angels "Wrath and Anger," then the Angel of Death, then the Hayyot standing before God, and finally, an angel engaged in teaching the souls which were created by God at the time of the creation and placed in Paradise. (At this point occur two passages of later interpolation, one from Pesahim 54a-b, treating of Nebuchadnezzar's presumptuous desire 'to ascend the heights of the cloud, and to be like the Most High' [Is. xiv, 14], and the other from Zohar, intended to show that Moses really ascended to heaven.) God then tells Moses that He will confer on him the further privilege of seeing hell and Paradise; and, at God's command, the angel Gabriel conducts him to hell. There he sees the manifold torments and punishments of the different classes of sinners: those who were envious of their fellow-men, and bore false witness against them; women who exposed their charms to young men; persons who committed adultery, theft, and murder; those who perjured themselves, who profaned the Sabbath, despised the learned, and persecuted orphans; those who committed sodomy and idolatry, and cursed their parents; those who accepted bribes, put their fellow-men to shame, delivered their brother Israelite to the Gentile, and denied the oral law; those who ate all kinds of forbidden food; usurers, apostates, and blasphemers; those who wrote the ineffable name of God for Gentiles, and ate on Yom Kippur. Gabriel then leads Moses into Paradise. Here he sees first the guardian angel of Paradise, sitting under the tree of life, who shows him the several costly thrones erected in Paradise, each surrounded by seventy angels—the throne for the Patriarchs, for the scholars who studied the Law day and night for the sake of heaven; for the pious men, for the just, and for those who repented—and a throne of copper, prepared for the wicked whose sons are pious, as in the case of

Terah. Finally, he sees the fountain of life welling forth from beneath the tree of life, and dividing itself into four streams, and four rivers flowing under each throne, "the first of honey, the second of milk, the third of wine, and the fourth of pure balsam." (Here another passage from Zohar interrupting the narrative is inserted.) As Moses is leaving Paradise, a voice calls from heaven: "Moses, . . . as thou hast seen the reward which is prepared for the just in the future world, so also in the days to come shalt thou see the rebuilding of the Temple and the advent of the Messiah, and shalt behold the beauty of the Lord, and shalt meditate in His Temple."

No attempt has been made, up to the present, to ascertain the date of composition of this apocalypse; but the *tempus a quo* is obtained from the allusion in the last chapter to the rebuilding of the Temple. The descriptions of the different sinners in hell, and of their punishment, are strikingly similar—in fact, are in parts identical with those found in a number of Christian apocalypses, namely, *The Apocalypse of Peter*, that of *Pastor Hermas*, and the second book of the *Sibylline Oracles* (all three written in the second century), and the younger apocalypses of *Esdras* and *Paul*, both, perhaps, dependent upon *The Apocalypse of Peter*. It is possible that a critical examination of these relations might help us to get nearer the date of composition of *The Ascension of Moses*. Jellinek's statement (*Monatschrift, ib.*) that the *Apocalypse of R. Joshua b. Levi* was the source of this book is without basis. This will be clear from a perusal of the contents of that apocalypse (see below).

**Relation to  
Christian  
Apoc-  
alypses.**

#### IV. The Assumption of Moses.

This is a fragment preserved in the *Midrash Bereshit Rabati of R. Moses ha-Darshan* (a manuscript in the library of the Jewish congregation in Prague), and published by Jellinek in *Bh.M.* VI, pp. xxii sq. It is intended as exegesis to Gen. xxviii, 17b.

In this fragment it is related that, as Moses' time of death approached, God allowed him to ascend into heaven, and unveiled to him the future world. Middat ha-Rahamim stepped

up to him and said, "I will announce to thee good tidings." Turning his gaze, as directed, to the throne of mercy, Moses saw God building the Temple out of precious stones and pearls and the rays of the Godhead, and near by, Messiah b. David with the Torah in his arms, and his own brother, Aaron, in priestly robes. Aaron imparted to him that his death was near at hand, whereupon Moses asked for permission to speak with the Messiah. The Messiah then revealed to him that the sanctuary which God was constructing was the Temple and the Jerusalem, which would be established for Israel in the future world for all eternity, and that God had shown the same Jerusalem to Jacob in his dream in Bethel. To Moses' question when the New Jerusalem would descend to earth, God replied, "I have not yet revealed the end to any one: should I reveal it to thee?" Whereupon, Moses said, "Give me at least a hint from the events of history;" and God answered, "After I have scattered Israel among all the nations, I shall stretch out my hand to gather them in a second time from all the ends of the earth." Moses then joyfully departed from heaven, followed by the Angel of Death, who demanded his soul. Moses refused to surrender it; but God appeared to him, and he gave up his soul willingly and cheerfully to God.

### V. The Revelation of R. Joshua b. Levi.

It has already been noted that the Babylonian Talmud mentions revelations which R. Joshua b. Levi was supposed to have received from the prophet Elijah and from the Messiah. In the present apocalypse R. Joshua figures as the author. This book first appeared in the collection *Likkutin Shonim* published in 1519 in Constantinople under the title, *מעשה דר' יהושע בן לוי*, and it has been printed several times since under the same title; finally by Jellinek in *BhM.* II, pp. 48-51. Gas-  
Editions.  
 ter published a translation of it (l. c. pp. 591-596) with the correct title, *The Revelation of R. Joshua b. Levi*; for the contents leave no doubt that it really is an apocalypse.

An Aramaic version also existed, a fragment of which is preserved in Moses b. Nahman's *Torat ha-Adam*. (It is to be found in different editions of the book, and also in Jellinek's *BhM.* V, pp. 43 sq.) Jellinek points out that this  
Aramaic Version.  
 Aramaic version is a proof of the ancient origin of the apocalypse. (l. c. II, p. xviii.)

The contents are as follows :

As R. Joshua b. Levi's death was drawing near, God sent the Angel of Death to him, commissioning him to fulfill whatever R. Joshua might wish. R. Joshua requested to be shown the place awaiting him in Paradise, and had the angel give over his sword to him. Upon arriving at Paradise, Joshua, against the Death Angel's will, leaped over the wall. God allowed  
Contents.  
 him to remain there, but commanded him to return the sword. Elijah called out: "Make way for the son of Levi!" R. Gamliel, having heard of this incident from the Angel of Death, sent the latter back to ask R. Joshua to explore Paradise and hell, and send him a description of them. R. Joshua acted in accordance with this request. Now follows the description of the different compartments of Paradise, seven in number. In

the first dwell the proselytes to Judaism; in the second, repentant sinners with King Menasseh presiding over them; in the third, the Patriarchs and the Israelites who came out of Egypt, David and Solomon, and all the kings of their line; in the fourth, the perfectly righteous; in the fifth, which is of special splendor and exquisite beauty, are the Messiah and Elijah, Elijah caressing the Messiah and saying to him, "Be comforted, for the end draweth nigh!" In the same strain at certain times the Patriarchs speak, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, and all the kings of Israel and Judah. In the sixth dwell those who died while performing a pious act; and in the seventh, those who died because of the sins of Israel. To his question, whether any of the heathen, or even any of his brother Esau's descendants were in Paradise, R. Joshua received the answer that they, having obtained the reward for their good works in this world, must in the other world dwell in hell; but that in the case of the sinners in Israel just the opposite principle was followed. Hell could not be viewed immediately, as just at that moment the news came of the execution of the Ten Martyrs. When R. Joshua entered hell some time later, he saw there ten heathen nations over whom Absalom, the son of David, was presiding, in punishment for his disobedience to his father. Seven times a day they are burned by angels in pits of fire, being brought out whole again every time; the only one excepted from this punishment is Absalom, who sits upon a throne, honored with the honor of a king.

## VI. The Alphabets of R. Akiba, אֵלֶפֶת בֵּיתָא (אוֹתִיּוֹת) דְּרַבִּי יִקְיָבָא.

This group comprises a number of writings treating the same theme. The central thought of all of them is the mystical signification, already spoken of in the Talmud, of the letters of the alphabet and of their written characters, and the mysteries of the names of God made up of four, twelve, and forty-two letters. In the Jerusalem Talmud (*Hagiga* II, 1 toward the end) there is a discourse upon the letters by means of which the world was created; and just as in the writings which fall under the present heading, it is stated that the present world was created with He (ה) and the future world with Yod (י), and eschatological theories are built up out of the forms of these letters. Also in the Babylonian Talmud (*Shabbat* 104a) all sorts of similar interpretations are given in regard to the names, forms, and combinations of the various letters, and are made to bear upon eschatological questions in the same way as in this group of writings. And in *Kiddushin*, 71a it is said that the mysteries of the three names of God were treated as esoteric doctrine, and that whoever became thoroughly initiated into the mystery of the name of forty-two letters might be sure of inheriting both the present and the future world. Similarly, R. Akiba, the reputed author of the *Alphabets*, is especially commended in the Talmud as interpreter of the strokes, dots, and flourishes of the letters (*cf. e. g. Menuhot* 29b). Up to the present time, the pseudepigrapha under consideration have been generally thought to be mystical writings in which eschatological questions received some attention, not real apocalypses; but the different compositions, as far as they are known, show clearly that the real theme of all of them is the eschatological problem, and that the discussion of the other supernatural mysteries only goes hand in hand with this, as in the apocalypses already noticed.

So far two of the *Alphabets* have appeared in print, one of which is three times as long as the other—the longer was published first in Constantinople in 1519 (in the above-mentioned collection), and again in Venice in 1546. Both editions are incomplete; but the gaps are filled in part by the Cracow edition, which was published in 1579, and reprinted in Amsterdam in 1708, and which contains also the shorter version. Jellinek published both in *BHM.* III, pp. 12-49. 50-64; the longer, however, according to the incomplete Constantinople-Venice edition. Manuscripts of both are preserved in the Munich Codex, No. 22, fol. 70-103, which supplies the gaps purposely left in the longer composition in the Cracow-Amsterdam edition; and in the Vatican Codex, No. 228, 3 (see Wolf, *Bibl. Hebr.* II, p. 1258, and Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibl.* XIV, p. 7); and in the Bodleian Library there is a manuscript of one of them (see Neubauer, *Catal.*, No. 1927; of this no exact information is given, but according to the number of its pages, it is probably the shorter *Alphabet*). A fragment of the shorter one is contained in the Bodl. MS. No. 1322 of Neubauer's *Catal.* There are, besides, three other manuscripts in the Bodleian Library containing *Alphabets of R. Akiba* (*cf. ib.*, Nos. 1104, 3; 2287, 11; 2289, 7; the catalogue does not give any details of their contents, but from the fact that none of them is marked "printed," we have probably to conclude that they are not identical with the published *Alphabets*).

A fragment consisting of two leaves יסוד ("Mysterium") אֵלֶּף בֵּית, also differing from the published *Alphabets*, is in the Almanzi Library (Cod. No. 195, XIV), and deserves special notice, inasmuch as it furnishes strong support to our theory that the writings under the present heading are genuine apocalypses. It begins אֵלֶּף זֶה הַקְּבָה (which, in the Constantinople-Venice edition, is the beginning of § 10), and the conclusion contains the following passage:

"Eighteen hundred years after the destruction of the second temple the Kedarenes will decrease in numbers; . . . at the



end of 295 years, according to the calendar of the Gentiles (לְכַנֵּן הַגּוֹיִם) [the Hegira is meant here], their kingdom will vanish from the earth; . . . at the end of 304 years, according to their calendar, the son of David will come, God willing . . . for רֵעַ is called in Persian בֶּן־בְּנֵת בִּישׁ כּוּלִיָּהּ. (See Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibl.* V. 104, and *Apocalypsen* in ZDMG, XXVIII, p. 631, n. 6.)

This fragment originated in the Orient, as is shown by the words לְכַנֵּן הַגּוֹיִם, used to mean dating from the Hegira; more exactly, as we may infer from the concluding words of the passage, it originated in Persia.

Jellinek's distinction of the two published *Alphabets* as "Erste Recension" and "Zweite Recension" (*Bh.M.* III, pp. xiv, sqq. VI, pp. xl sq.) is misleading; for in respect not only of length but also of contents, they differ so radically that they must be considered as altogether distinct and independent of each other. In the longer of the published *Alphabets*, as in the *Hebrew Book of Enoch*, Enoch-Metatron is represented as the revealer of the secrets disclosed in these writings, and there is also a very brief and condensed narration of Enoch's assumption into heaven, of his transformation into one of the angels of the heavenly throne, and of his initiation into all the mysteries of heaven and earth. This piece is not in the Constantinople-Venice edition; it is, however, to be found in the Cracow-Amsterdam edition, and also in the Munich Codex.\* The latter has, also, the seventy or seventy-two names of God and the ninety-two names of Metatron, which, from religious scruples, were omitted in the Cracow-Amsterdam edition. The names of God are obtained from combinations of the different letters of the alphabet, already alluded to as characteristic of this group of writings.

Closely bound up with the relation of the above mysteries is the glorification of the Torah as the aim and end of creation and the center of future bliss. Because of its observance, Israel will

\* Jellinek published this piece separately from *The Alphabets* in *Bh.M.* II, pp. 114-117, calling it erroneously "Buch Henoch;" in *Bh.M.* VI, p. xliii, however, he recognized that it belonged to *The Alphabets*.

inherit the joys of Paradise; whereas the heathen, having disregarded it, will be given over to hell. God Himself, surrounded by His hosts of angels, will expound the Torah to the righteous in Paradise, whereupon Zerubabel will proclaim God's glory, so that it will resound over the whole world; the sinners of Israel and the pious among the heathen joining in from hell with *amen* to this glorification, they will be found worthy of admittance to Paradise. The pleasures of the righteous in Paradise are described in a glowing, sensuous style: God Himself dwells among and associates with them like one of themselves, contributing actively to their entertainment. (As the materializing of God in this gross manner has hitherto been considered a sure proof of the later origin of a work, it may be well to call attention to the fact that there is a parallel to this description in the oldest Midrash, *Sifra*, 225a, ed. Malbim; *cf.* also *Ta'anit* 31a.) The circumstance that in these writings the Torah is placed in such prominence explains, too, their eminently parenetic character.

In regard to the alleged authorship of R. Akiba, it may be recalled that, as early as the Jerusalem Talmud, the legend was current that R. Akiba enjoyed the superhuman privilege of ascending to heaven, and having the secrets of God revealed to him (*Hagiga* II, 1; *cf.* also *Talmud Bab. ib.* 14b.). It seems further worthy of mention that in the fragment, referred to above, of an *Alphabet of R. Akiba* in the Lemberg edition of the *Book of Enoch*, XXIX, 2 the story of Enoch's assumption, etc. (condensed to a few sentences), is narrated as if Akiba had heard it in heaven.

Until all the manuscripts have been published, it must be considered premature from the quotations from *The Alphabets of R. Akiba*, which are found in the mediæval literature—but which are not in the editions—to conclude with Jellinek and Steinschneider (*cf.* *BhM.* III, p. xvii, n.2; and *Hebr. Bibl.*, XIV, p. 7) anything further than that the latter are incomplete to the extent mentioned above.

It will be in place here to refer again briefly to the view of Zunz and Grätz regarding the origin of the theosophical speculations contained in the apocalypses which have been discussed thus far. If both hold Islam responsible for the theosophy in these Neo-Hebraic apocalypses, because similar vagaries and stretches of imagination are found in its literature (see Zunz, *GV.* p. 171, and Grätz, *Monatsschrift*, VIII, pp. 115 sq.), it is because they have missed the fact, so aptly observed by Steinschneider, and corroborated by Nöldeke, the foremost Arabist of the present time, that later Jewish literature had the widest and most far-reaching influence in the formation and development of the views and teachings of Islam (see *Hebr. Bibl.* IV, pp. 69 sq.; *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1862, pp. 750 sqq.). From the presence of mystical speculations about the essence and being of God, etc., in the Arabic literature, similar to those in the Neo-Hebraic, it is quite impossible to conclude that they found their way from the former into the latter; in fact, just the opposite conclusion would be justified.

## VII. The Hebrew Elijah Apocalypse, ספר אליהו.

This apocalypse appeared first in Salonica in 1743, in the same volume with several other pieces, and was reprinted by Jellinek in *B.H.M.* III, pp. 65-68. A critical edition, **Editions.** according to a Munich manuscript, with translation and explanatory notes, and an attempt to ascertain the date of composition, was published by the present writer (*Die Hebräische Elias-Apocalypse*, etc.).

The result reached in this study was, that in this book we have to distinguish between the original apocalypse and a later addition consisting of a dispute among the Doctors of the Law of the second and third centuries A. D. about the name of the **Date and** last king of Persia. The apocalypse proper was written **Place** amidst the confusion of the year 261, caused by **of Compo-** Sapor I's wars against Rome and his taking Valerian **sition.** prisoner; but in its original form it was probably more voluminous. The author lived, in all probability, in Palestine. During the exciting period of the Perso-Roman wars of Chosroes I (540-562), or Chosroes II (604-628), the apocalypse was furnished with the addition mentioned above, in order to make the prophecies appear in accordance with the changed times and conditions; for the outcome of the dispute is that *K'esra* (the Arabic form of Chosroes) must be the name of the last Persian king.

The contents of the book are:

Michael reveals the end of time to Elijah on Mt. Carmel. Elijah is conducted to various heavenly regions, then the revelations regarding the end are imparted to him. The last king of **Contents.** Persia will march to war against Rome in three successive years, and will finally take three military leaders prisoner. Then Gigit will advance against him, "the [little] horn," the last king hostile to God who will rule upon

earth, as Daniel beheld. This king will instigate three wars, and will "also stretch out his arm against Israel." The three wars and the attack upon Israel are described in detail in the following part. Then the Messiah, whose name is Winon, will appear from heaven, accompanied by hosts of angels, in order, first, in a series of battles to annihilate the armies of Gîgît and of his adversaries, and then to vanquish all the remaining heathen. After this Israel will enjoy the blessings of the Messianic kingdom for forty years, at the end of which time Gog and Magog will muster the heathen to war around Jerusalem; but they will be annihilated and all the heathen cities will be destroyed. The day of doom will then set in, lasting forty days. The dead will be awakened in order to be brought before judgment; the wicked will be delivered over to the torments of hell, but to the good the Tree of Life will be given; the glorious Jerusalem will descend for them from heaven, and peace and knowledge of the law will reign among them.

From this summary it will be noticeable how close the picture of the future world given in this apocalypse comes to the *Revelation of John*. The description of Elijah's transportation through the heavenly regions shows striking relations to the *Ethiopic Book of Enoch* (*cf. ib.* XIV, 8. 9. 12-19. 22a; XVIII, 13-15; XXII, 1. 11.). Worthy of attention is the description of the adversary of the Messiah (Antichrist), who, before the advent of the Messiah, will subdue the world and persecute Israel. This description is a conventional feature of a great number of Neo-Hebraic apocalypses. It is found, for instance, in much the same form in all those treated below. In the latter, however, the adversary is called Armilus (Romulus); while in the *Elijah Apocalypse* he is called Gîgît, which is an enigmatical designation of Odhenat, the duke of Palmyra (see Buttenwieser, l. c. p. 72). The description of the adversary in the present apocalypse shows also, as Bousset has pointed out (l. c. p. 57), striking parallels to the description of the Antichrist in the *Coptic Elijah Apocalypse*, discovered a few years ago, the manuscript of which can in no case be later than the beginning of the fifth century (see Steindorff,

**Relation  
to Other  
Apoc-  
alypses.**

*Apocalypse des Elias*, p. 6), while the apocalypse itself dates probably from the third or fourth century. Of other Christian apocalypses with descriptions of the Antichrist, offering no less remarkable parallels to the apocalypses to be treated in the following paragraphs, and also in part to the *Elijah Apocalypse*, may be mentioned: *Testament of the Lord*, *Apocalypse of Esdras*, *Pseudo-Johannis Apocalypse*, and the *Armenian Seventh Vision of Daniel* (cf. also Bousset, l. c. pp. 101 sq.). The reader will find the descriptions of the Antichrist in these apocalypses—with the exception of the last-mentioned—in James, *Apocrypha Anecdota in Texts and Studies*, II, 3, pp. 151 sqq.

## VIII. The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel, ספר זרובבל.

There are various recensions of this apocalypse—one which appeared in print in Constantinople in 1519 in the collection mentioned above, and was reprinted in Wilna, 1819, together with *Sefer Malkiel* (excerpts from this edition are to be found in Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judentum*, II, pp. 708 sq.); another edited by Jellinek (*BhM.* II, pp. 54-57), based on two MSS. in the Leipsic City Library, which, however, the present writer, on examining the manuscripts, found to be inexact; and a third, differing from both the above, contained in a Bodl. MS. (Neubauer, *Catal.*, No. 160, 2). There is, besides, in the Bodleian Library, a manuscript of one of the printed editions (see *ib.* No. 2287, 4). Under these circumstances a new critical edition is desirable.

**Various  
Recensions.**

As this book predicts the year 990 or 970 after the destruction of the temple by Titus as the time of delivery, it must have been written in the eleventh century at the latest. Zunz's conjecture, however, that "in older recensions an earlier date must have stood" (*LG.* p. 603) is very likely, but it will not be possible to decide this point until all the material at hand has been published.

**Date  
of Compo-  
sition.**

In this apocalypse it is related how Zerubbabel is carried in spirit "to Nineveh, the City of Blood," "the Great Rome," where Metatron reveals to him the occurrences at the end of time. He sees the Messiah there, whose name is Menahem b. Amiel, and who was born in the time of King David, but was brought thither by the spirit to remain concealed until the end of time.

The description of the course of events in the end-time is, apart from a few details, very much the same as in *The Wars of King Messiah, Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai*, and in *Common with Wars Messiah, Revel. and Prayer of Simon b. Yohai*. Only one very important feature is to be noticed in the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel* which is not in any of the others. In all of them the name of the evil adversary at the last is Armilus (the Aramaic form of 'Ρομῶλος), and in all, except *Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai*, is found the curious fancy that he is to be born of a marble statue in Rome. According to *The Wars of King Messiah, and Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai*, he will be produced through sexual intercourse of the sinful heathen with the statue, while according to the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel* he will be begotten out of the statue by Satan. *The Wars of King Messiah* has also the epithet *Satan* applied to him. In *Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai*, however, it is merely stated of him that "he is a creation of Satan and Diabolus" (הוא בריה דכטנא ודאבנא; read ודאבנא instead of ודאבנא). The description of Armilus in the *Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai* has more resemblance to that in the *Elijah Apocalypse*, whereas in the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*,\* in *The Wars of King Messiah* and *Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai*, he is described as a human monstrosity. *The Wars of King Messiah* and *Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai* relate further that he will give himself out as the Messiah and a god, and that he will be accepted by the heathen as such, whereas Israel will refuse to acknowledge him. In the Constantinople edition of the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, as Bousset has observed (l. c. p. 86, n. 3), Satan is called בלִיַּעַל, *Belial*, the name by which the Antichrist is called in the *Sibylline Oracles* II, 67; III, 63; *Test. XII Patr.*, *Dan* and *Asc. Is.* This circumstance is of great importance, inasmuch as by means of it the Armilus legend, as it is found in the above-mentioned apocalypses, seems particularly

\* Bousset's statement (l. c. p. 68) that the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel* has no description of Armilus, rests upon an error. This description is to be found at the end of the book in both the Constantinople edition and the Leipsic Cod. h. No. 38.



adapted to throw light upon various points in the Antichrist legend which have hitherto been obscure.

All four apocalypses have the legend of Messiah b. Joseph in common: he will gather the Israelites around him (among whom, according to *The Wars of King Messiah* and *Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai*, a part of the Ten Tribes will be found), march up to Jerusalem, and there, after overcoming the hostile powers (in the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel* the king of Persia is the hostile power; in *The Wars of King Messiah* and *Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai*, the Roman Empire; **b. Joseph.** in *Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai* there is no definite statement on this point), re-establish the worship of the Temple and set up his own dominion. This will be but of short duration; for Armilus, with the heathen, will appear before Jerusalem in battle against him and will slay him.\* Then the time of the last extreme suffering and persecution will begin for the people of Israel, from which they will seek refuge by flight into the wilderness.\* There Messiah b. David and the Prophet Elijah will appear to them (in *Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai* the latter is not mentioned), and lead them up to Jerusalem, where the Messiah will destroy Armilus and all the armies of the heathen. In the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, as in *The Wars of King Messiah*, Messiah b. David, in company with Elijah, will resurrect Messiah b. Joseph, lying slain at the gates of Jerusalem. Another point common to the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel* and *Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai* is that the Israelites will at first, upon his advent, not acknowledge Messiah b. David.

The one feature referred to above, which the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel* alone shows is, that besides the two Messiahs, a woman, Hephṣibah, the mother of Messiah b. David, plays a rôle. According to the text in Jellinek's **Hephṣibah.** edition she will come upon the scene five years before Messiah b. Joseph, and a great star will light up her path. She will slay two kings and assist Messiah b. Joseph in his war against the king of Persia; and during the flight into the wilderness she

\* Bousset's statement (*ib.* p. 68) in reference to these events in the apocalypses which come in question here, is not correct.

will shelter Israel from the persecution of Armilus. This last feature of the description makes the whole remind us of the flight of the woman in the *Revelation of John* (XII, 13-17), and of the description of Tabitha in the *Coptic Apocalypse of Elijah*.

The picture of the future world in the *Zerubbabel-Apocalypse* is also distinctive, inasmuch as, besides the establishment of the **Picture of** heavenly Jerusalem upon five mountains (Lebanon, **the Future.** Moriah, Tabor, Carmel, and Hermon), there is nothing else referred to than the resurrection of the generation buried in the wilderness, and of the faithful who met death during the general persecution ("the ocean" which is spoken of in this connection must be understood in its symbolical signification, as it is used as early as *Dan.* VII, 3 sq.).

## IX. The Wars of King Messiah, מלחמות מלך המשיח.

Other names of this book are ספר מלחמות יהוה, *The Book of the Wars of YHWH*; האותות אשר יתגאלו בביאת המשיח, *The Occurrences upon the Advent of the Messiah*; and מלחמות גוג ומגוג ומשיח בן יוסף, *The Wars of Gog and Magog, of Messiah b. Joseph, Messiah b. David, and Elijah the Prophet*. This apocalypse had a very wide circulation, as is evidenced by the many manuscripts in which it is preserved. It is contained

**MSS. and Editions.**

in a Parisian (Cod. Hebr. No. 716), in a Leipsic (Cod. h. No. 12), and in a Halberstam MS., in three Bodl. MSS. (see Neubauer *Catal.* Nos. 1466, 15; 2274, 6; 2360, 9—the first of these is complete; in the second the introduction and conclusion are missing; the third seems to be only a fragment), and in the Munich MS. (Cod. Hebr. No. 312; the introduction and conclusion are also omitted in this); it was also included in *Mahzor Vitry*, in which, however, because of a gap in the manuscript, only the first and last parts are preserved. This work was printed in the Constantinople collection mentioned above, in 1519, and also in *Abkat Rokel* by Jacob Mahir. From the latter Jellinek reprinted it in *BhM.* II, pp. 58-63, omitting, however, the introduction and conclusion, which he added in Vol. VI, pp. 117-120. The Munich MS. the present writer found, by collating it with the text in *Abkat Rokel* and with that in Jellinek, to contain a number of better readings and variants than the latter.

In regard to the contents of this book, to what was remarked above, the following may be added:

A parenetic discourse forms the introduction; then it is depicted how unusual phenomena will herald the approach of the end-time—unnatural, pestilence-producing heat, poisonous dew, and an eclipse of the sun lasting thirty days. The Roman kingdom will, for the space of nine months,

**Contents.**

spread its dominion over the whole world\* and persecute Israel most cruelly, and at the end of this time Messiah b. Joseph will appear. From this point on, the description continues as outlined above. After Messiah b. David shall have destroyed Armilus and the heathen armies, together with "wicked Rome," the dead will arise, and the Israelites, dispersed over all lands, will be gathered in to Jerusalem. The heathen even will convey them thither, and offer homage to Israel; the Ten Tribes also, together with the descendants of Moses, will return, enveloped in clouds, from the regions of the Chaboras and from Halach and Media; and as they march the earth will be transformed before them into a paradise. The conclusion contains a description of the New Jerusalem and of the other blessings of the future world, which are here of a more spiritual character. In the various editions it is said of Armilus, "The nations call him Antichrist." But the Munich MS. reads here, "He is called Gog and Magog;" and for "palace of Julian" it reads "palace of Hadrian."

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\* This period of duration for the dominion of Rome at the end of time is found as early as Joma 10a; *cf.* above p. 6.

## X. The Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai,

נסתרות ר' שמעון בן יוחי

This apocalypse was printed in Salonica in 1743, in the collection already mentioned, and was reprinted by Jellinek in *BhM.* III, pp. 78 sqq. It is preserved also in a Munich MS. (Cod. Hebr. No. 222), which contains better readings in some places. The apocalypse really ends with כלם צריקים, p. 81, l. 13 in Jellinek; what follows, as Grätz already recognized (*Gesch.* V. p. 446), was added later, probably from the *Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai*.

As Grätz shows (*ib.*), this apocalypse was written during the stormy period of the deposition of the Omniads (750). It describes plainly the wars of Mervan II, who is even mentioned by name, his flight after the battle on the bank of the Great Zab, his capture and assassination.

**Date  
of Compo-  
sition.**

The revelations about the end are made by Metatron to R. Simon b. Yohai, while the latter is dwelling in a cave, hiding from the Roman emperor. The history of Islam is reviewed from the appearance of the Prophet up to the events just mentioned. From this point on, we have the real prophecy of the future. It begins with the prediction that after Mervan's successor will have reigned three months, the nine months' dominion of the "wicked empire" will set in for Israel; then the course of events is depicted as given above under *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*; and finally the picture of the future world is drawn. After the dispersed Israelites will have been gathered together, and the earthly Jerusalem together with the heathen part of its population consumed by fire from heaven, the glorious New Jerusalem will come down from heaven; Israel will dwell in it for two thousand years in perfect peace, and as in the *Apocalypse of Baruch* (XXIX, 4) and *4 Esdras*

**Picture of  
the Future.**

(VI, 52), will feast on the Behamot and the Leviathan. At the end of this time, God will descend into the valley of Josaphat to hold judgment, and heaven and earth will disappear; the heathen will be put into hell, while Israel will enter into Paradise; the sinners in Israel, however, will suffer the tortures of hell for a year before being admitted to Paradise.

## XI. The Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai,

תפלת ר' שמעון בן יוחי.

This apocalypse was published by Jellinek in *BhM.* IV, pp. 117-126, according to a manuscript of Mortara's. It shows the closest relation to the preceding one, and begins with a similar retrospect of the Mohammedan history, but carries it on to a later date, and speaks finally of events in which, as Jellinek observes (*ib.* p. viii), the crusades may be unmistakably recognized. Grätz thought the apocalypse contained allusions to the inroads of the Mongols in 1258-60, and believed that these events led directly to its composition (l. c. VII, pp. 139. 449 sqq.). But this is out of the question; for the passage about the appearance of deformed, swift-footed men from the far East, upon which Grätz based his argument, occurs in the middle of the historical retrospect, and not in the description of the events immediately preceding the end. In this part of the apocalypse the reference is solely to the crusades, and could hardly be plainer. The point in question is a favorite one in apocalyptic description, and is simply taken from older writings: *The Wars of King Messiah* contains it also; but in this latter the picture of the monstrosities is still more horrible, and bears more resemblance to the description in *Revelation of John*, IX, 13 sqq., which is the oldest example of the sort.

גירון—written erroneously in one place גירון, and in another הגירון—the collapse of which is taken in *Revelation of R. Simon b. Yohai* and in *Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai*, as well as in the apocalypse treated below, *Midrash of the Ten Kings* (which latter also has the corruption גירון) as an ominous prognostication of the imminent fall of the Islamic kingdom, is nothing else, as Steinschneider clearly proved (*Apocalypse*, pp. 639 sqq.), than the famous Eastern Gate, Bâb Gîrûn, of the Mosque in Damascus.

Date  
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sition.

Bâb Gîrûn.

## XII. The Midrash of the Ten Kings, מדרש עשרת המלכים.

This belongs to the same class as the two preceding apocalypses. It has been published by Ch. M. Horowitz in *Sammlung Kleiner Midrashim (Bet 'Eked ha-Agadot)*, I, pp. 37-55, according to a De Rossi manuscript.

The apocalypse begins with a very diffuse description of the eight kings who have already ruled—the first, God; the last, Alexander the Great—relates, in connection with this subject, the destruction of the Temple by Titus, and the Hadrianic persecution, and leads over in this way to Simon b. Yohai's hiding from the Roman emperor in a cave, and to the revelations regarding the end, which he received while there. As in the two

**Contents.** preceding books, the different Islamic rulers, beginning with Mohammed, are described. The two rulers mentioned at the beginning of page 53 are beyond doubt to be identified as Hisham and his successor, Walid II. Of the other six rulers the mentions are so vague that one can not arrive at any certain conclusion regarding their identity. The remainder of the book is taken up with the prophecy of the future, in which, at first, occasional allusions to historical matters seem to be interspersed. The exclusive prophecies of the future begin here, too, with the announcement of the ninth months' period of intense persecution, whereupon Armilus will reign forty days; the conception of him is the same as in the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*. At the termination of his reign, Messiah b. Joseph will appear and restore the Temple in Jerusalem, and establish for Israel an epoch of peace. At the conclusion of this period, Gog and Magog will march upon Jerusalem, Messiah b. Joseph will fall in battle against him, and three-fourths of the Israelites will wander into exile. God will then destroy the armies of Gog and Magog, and Israel, including the "nine and a half tribes," will return to Jerusalem. The rulership will recur to the house of David, and Messiah b. David rule as ninth king over the whole world: Israel will enjoy the blessings of the Messianic kingdom. At the end of two thousand years God will descend to judgment.



### XIII. The Persian Apocalypse of Daniel, קצ"ה דניאל.

This apocalypse was published and translated by Zotenberg in Merx, *Archiv*, I, pp. 386-427. It also belongs to the group just treated; but at the same time it occupies, as Bousset observes (l. c. p. 69), a peculiar place within the Neo-Hebraic Apocalyptic, by reason of the rôle which Messiah b. Joseph plays in it. The account of the latter, however, is not perfectly clear.

First, a diffuse legendary narrative is given of the events of the time of Daniel, that is, from the appearance of the Prophet Jeremiah down to the time of Darius I. Hystaspis. Then it is related how Daniel mourns and fasts because of the destruction of the Temple, and how an angel appears

#### Contents.

to unveil the future to him. Here follows abruptly, regardless of the thousand intervening years, a transparent description of Mohammed and the Islamic rulers following him. In the ruler with three sons (p. 411, l. 12 from the bottom), as Bousset observed, Harun al-Raschid and his three sons are to be distinguished with certainty. Two further rulers are mentioned, then the prophecy of the future begins; the nine months' sovereignty of Rome is predicted, and the appearance of one who is not mentioned by name, but whose description corresponds exactly with that of Armilus in the preceding apocalypses. The army of Gog and Magog will unite with him, and, as in *The Wars of King Messiah* and *Prayer of R. Simon b. Yohai*, he will claim to be the Messiah. He will subdue the world and persecute Israel. "A man of the children of Ephraim" will then appear, and the Israelites will all gather around him and "go with him to that wicked one" and demand from him that he prove by miracles, particularly by waking the dead, that he is the Messiah. Enraged at this demand, he will persecute them anew, and the Israelites will flee before him into the wilderness. There Michael and Gabriel will appear to them and announce to them their delivery. Then they will kill him who claims to be the Messiah;\*

\* The Biblical quotation וּבְרוּחַ שְׁפָתַי יָבִית רֶשֶׁן can not have stood in the original text: it does not fit in logically.

and also the Messiah son of Joseph will be killed and the flag of the Messiah son of David will be raised. The latter will destroy the whole army of Gog and Magog; then Elijah will appear; the dead will arise, and the Israelites will come to the Messiah from all quarters of the world on the wings of Simurg (!). The Messianic kingdom will endure for thirteen hundred years. The description of it and of the Last Judgment which succeeds it, does not differ materially from that in the preceding apocalypses. Certain details in the description of the last judgment occur also in *The Alphabets of R. Akiba*. The apocalypse has, besides, a

**Date** brief description of the different divisions of hell.  
**of Compo-** On the basis of the historical setting of this apoc-  
**sition.** alypse it is safe to conclude, with Bousset, that it was written in the first half of the ninth century.

## XIV. Eschatological Descriptions.

In concluding this sketch the following eschatological descriptions may be mentioned:

The one in *Pesikta Zuttarta*, Peric. *Balak* (IV, pp. 258 sqq. ed. Buber), included by Jellinek in *BhM.* III, pp. 141-143, under the title אגרת נשיח, *Haggadah of the Messiah*; the conclusion of *Midrash Vayosha* in the recension edited by Jellinek (*BhM.* I, pp. 55-57); פרקי נשיח, *Chapters on the Messiah*, in Jellinek, *BhM.* III, pp. 68, l. 4 from the bottom-78, contained also with many better readings in the Munich Codex, No. 222 (see in regard to the beginning of this piece as given here, Bittenwieser, *Elias-Apocalypse*, p. 10); כעורה גן ערן, *Repast in Paradise*, כעורה ליתן, *The Feast of the Leviathan* in Jellinek, *BhM.* V, pp. 45 sq. VI, pp. 150 sq.; אכירות לעתיד, *Prophecies of the Future*, existing only in manuscript form in Cod. De Rossi, Nos. 1240. 541 (*cf.* Zunz, *LG.* p. 604, and Steinschneider, *Apocalypsen*, p. 635, n. 18); the description of Saadia in *Emunot Vedot*, ch. VIII; that of Hai Gaon in *Ta'am Zekenim*, Frankfort a/Main, 1854, pp. 59 sqq.: and that of Meir Aldabi in *Shebile Emunah*, X, 1.

The *Haggadah of the Messiah* is the only one of the above-mentioned which contains a description differing somewhat from all the other representations met with in the course of this article:

From the wilderness, whither the Israelites will flee after the fall of the Messiah, they will march to Rome at the command of a voice from heaven, and seize the city, whereupon Messiah b. David will reveal himself to them.

It is also worthy of note that the burning of Death and Satan in the Lake of Fire at the Last Judgment forms part of the description in the *Feast of the Leviathan*, as in the *Revelation of John*. All the others offer nothing new. *Chapters on the Messiah* is a very late compilation (*cf.* Jellinek, *BhM.* III, p. xix), as is also *Prophecies of the Future*.

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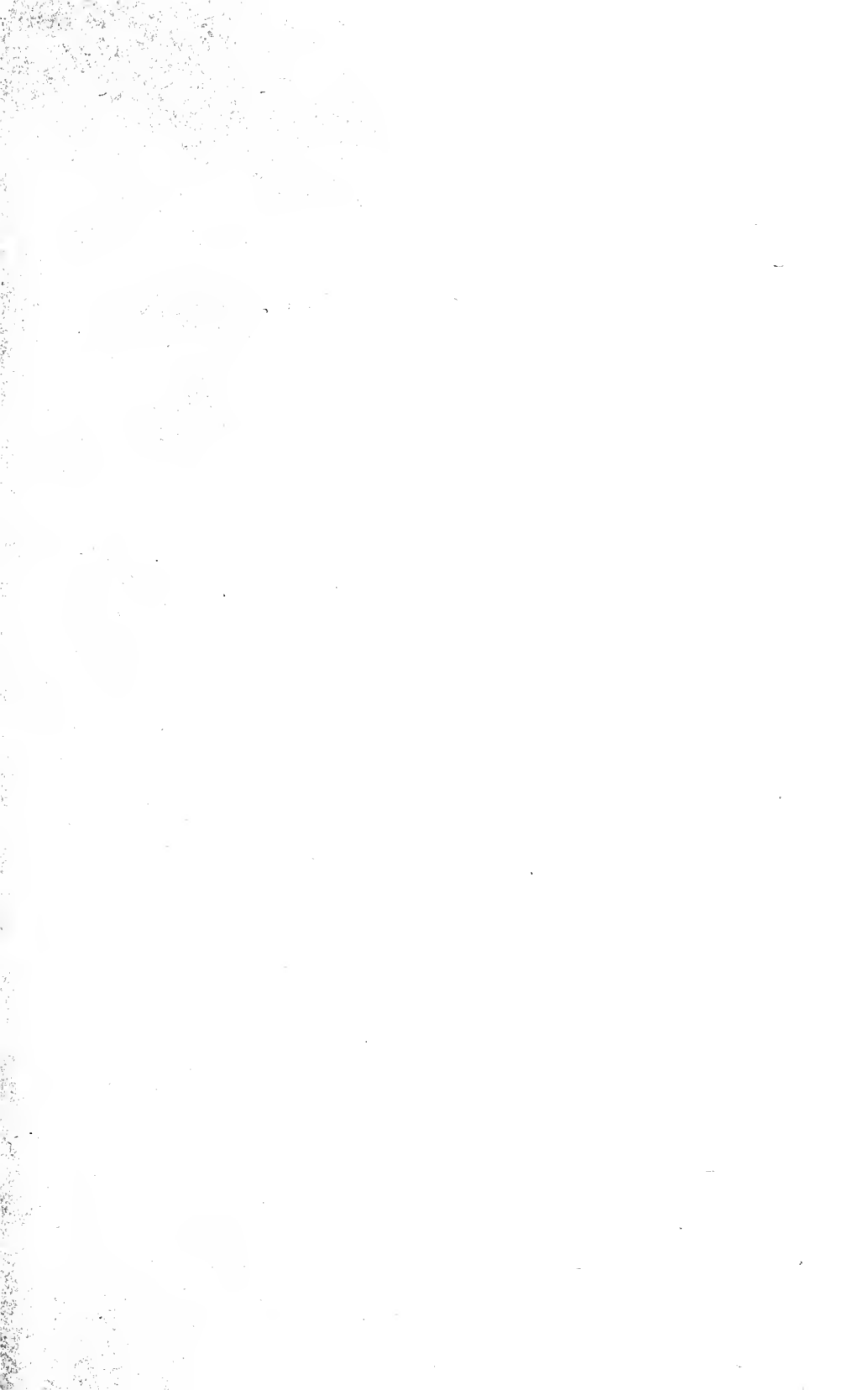
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