

## In My Father's House

Q: #1

What is Messiah doing right now?

### Ikvot HaMashiach

In the Jewish understanding, the footsteps encompass everything dealing with the coming of the Mashiach. The term is derived from Tehillim 89:51 More specifically the **beginning** of redemption.

**Tehillim 89:49** LORD, where is your steadfast love of old,  
which by your faithfulness you swore to David?  
50 Remember, O LORD, how your servants are mocked,  
and how I bear in my heart the insults<sup>6</sup> of all the many nations,  
51 with which your enemies mock, O LORD,  
with which they mock the **footsteps of your anointed.**

**Bereans (Heb) 6:1** Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Messiah and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faithfulness to God,<sup>2</sup> and of instruction in ritual immersions, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

**Acts 3:19** Repent therefore, and turn around, that your sins may be blotted out,<sup>20</sup> that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the LORD, and that He may send the Messiah appointed for you, Yeshua,<sup>21</sup> **whom heavens must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.**<sup>22</sup> Moshe said, 'The LORD God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.<sup>23</sup> And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.

**Yochanan (John) 14:1** "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.<sup>2</sup> In my Father's<sup>8</sup> house are many rooms. If it were not so, would **I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?**<sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

<sup>8</sup>House – families, possessions, His Kingdom.

Thus, Yochanan can be read, he (Messiah) goes to prepare a Kingdom for us.

House can also be a reference to the Temple Acts 2:4 Cf. **Shemot (Exodus) 25:8-9** *And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.*

**Shemot 25:40** *And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.*

In the NT *μονή* occurs only twice in John's Gospel (14:2, 23). Probably intentionally, the two statements correspond. In 14:2 **the heavenly dwellings which means the goal of salvation (the movement is from below upwards)**, and to which believers will go after

their earthly separation from G-d, are called abiding places which are fully prepared for them in the Father's house.<sup>3a</sup>

According to the Talmudic view the abodes of the ministering angels and the blessed righteous stand in concentric circles around the throne of God as the innermost section (מְחִיצָה) of heaven.<sup>b</sup>

**Concentric circle or levels of elevation known as Hekhalot (palaces)**

Rabbi Akiba said

Who is able to contemplate the **Seven palaces?**

and behold the heavens of heavens

and see the chambers of chambers

and say: I saw the chamber of The Holy One

Ma'aseh Merkabah, Synopse 554

1 Enoch 45:3-6

<sup>3</sup> On that day **Mine Elect One** (Messiah) will sit on the throne of glory

And will **try** their works, (Judgment seat of Messiah)

And their places of rest will be innumerable.

And their souls will grow strong within them when they see Mine elect ones,

And those who have called upon My glorious name:

<sup>4</sup> Then will I cause Mine Elect One to dwell among them.

And I will transform the heaven and make it an eternal blessing and light:

<sup>5</sup> And I will transform the earth and make it a blessing:

And I will cause Mine elect ones to dwell upon it:

But the sinners and evil doers will not set foot thereon.

<sup>6</sup> For I have provided and satisfied with peace My righteous ones

And have caused them to dwell before Me:

But for the sinners there is judgement impending with Me,

So that I will destroy them from the face of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles, R. H. (Ed.). (1913). *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Vol. 2, p. 214). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

**Talmud - Mas. Chagigah 12b**

Said R. Judah, "There are two firmaments: 'Behold unto the Holy One your G-d belongs the heavens, and the heavens of heavens' (Dt. 10:14)."

ר"ל אמר שבעה ואלו הן וילון רקיע שחקים זבול מעון מכון ערבות וילון אינו משמש כלום אלא נכנס שחרית ויוצא ערבית ומחדש בכל יום מעשה בראשית שנאמר (ישעיהו מ, כב) הנוטה כדוק שמים וימתחם כאהל לשבת רקיע שבו חמה ולבנה כוכבים ומזלות קבועין שנאמר (בראשית א, יז) ויתן אותם אלהים ברקיע השמים שחקים שבו רחיים עומדות וטוחנות מן לצדיקים שנאמר תהלים עח, כג (ויצו שחקים ממעל ודלתי שמים פתח וימטר עליהם מן לאכול וגו

<sup>a</sup> Hauck, F. (1964–). μένω, ἐμ-, παρα-, περι-, προσμένω, μονή, ὑπομένω, ὑπομονή. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. 4, p. 580). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

<sup>b</sup> Hauck, F. (1964–). μένω, ἐμ-, παρα-, περι-, προσμένω, μονή, ὑπομένω, ὑπομονή. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 4, p. 580). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Reish Lakish said: **There are seven heavens, and they are as follows: Vilon, Rakia, Shehakim, Zevul, Ma'on, Makhon, and Aravot.** The Gemara proceeds to explain the role of each firmament: *Vilon*, curtain, is the firmament that **does not contain anything, but enters at morning and departs in the evening, and renews the act of Creation daily, as it is stated: "Who stretches out the heavens as a curtain [Vilon], and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in" (Isaiah 40:22).** *Rakia*, firmament, is the one **in which the sun, moon, stars, and zodiac signs are fixed, as it is stated: "And God set them in the firmament [Rakia] of the heaven" (Genesis 1:17).** *Shehakim*, heights, is the one **in which mills stand and grind manna for the righteous, as it is stated: "And He commanded the heights [Shehakim] above, and opened the doors of heaven; and He caused manna to rain upon them for food, and gave them of the corn of heaven" (Psalms 78:23–24).**

Thus, the seven heavens, **"They are seven, and these are they: [following Abraham's notes:] curtain, firmament, clouds, lofty abode, dwelling, residence, heavy cloud.**

- 1.) Vilon,<sup>19</sup>
- 2.) Rakia',<sup>20</sup>
- 3.) Shehakim,<sup>21</sup>
- 4.) Zebul,<sup>22</sup>
- 5.) Ma'on,<sup>23</sup>
- 6.) Makon,<sup>24</sup>
- 7.) 'Araboth.<sup>25</sup>

### **Hermeneutic So'od**

1. Vilon (Curtain) serves no purpose except that it enters in the morning and goes forth in the evening<sup>26</sup> **and renews every day the work of creation**, for it is said: That stretched out the **heavens as a curtain**,<sup>27</sup> and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.<sup>28</sup>

**Yeshayahu 40:22** It is he (Messiah) who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are (resemble the smallness of ) the grasshoppers; **who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,** and spreads them like a tent to dwell in;

### **The Creation of the World**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning of God's creating the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the abyss. And the Ruach Elohim over the face of the waters agitated them.

### **Spirit of Messiah**

**Midrash Rabbah B'reshet II.4.** R. Simeon b. Lakish applied the passage to the [foreign] Powers. NOW THE EARTH WAS TOHU (E.V. 'UNFORMED') symbolizes Babylonia: I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was tohu-E.V. 'waste' ([Jer. IV, 23](#));<sup>2</sup> AND BOHU (E.V. 'VOID') symbolizes Media: They hastened (wa-yabhillu) to bring Haman ([Est. VI, 14](#)).<sup>3</sup> AND DARKNESS symbolizes Greece, which darkened the eyes of Israel with its decrees, ordering Israel, 'Write on the horn of an ox that ye have no portion in the God of Israel.'<sup>4</sup> UPON THE FACE OF THE DEEP-this wicked State<sup>5</sup>: just as the great deep cannot be plumbed, so one

cannot plumb [the depths of iniquity of] this wicked State. AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD HOVERED: this alludes to the spirit of Messiah, as you read, And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him ([Isa. XI, 2](#)). In the merit of what will [this spirit] eventually come? [For the sake of that which] HOVERED OVER THE FACE OF THE WATERS, i.e. in the merit of repentance which is likened to water, as it is written, Pour out thy heart like water ([Lam. II, 19](#)). R. Haggai said in the name of R. Pedath: A covenant was made with water<sup>6</sup> that even in the hot season a breeze stirs over it.<sup>7</sup>

(4) The reference is to Antiochus who endeavored to annihilate Judaism and implant Hellenism in its stead; 'write on the horn of an ox' probably implies a public disavowal of Judaism.

(5) Pesik. R.: to the wicked State of Edom-i.e. Rome.

(6) I.e. it is the eternal nature of water.

(7) He translates '*ruah*' literally, wind, and also stresses the present tense of *merahefeth*, lit. 'hovers'; thus, the verse means that at all times a breeze, caused by God, stirs over the waters

**Or, at all times Messiah works to restore the negativity of the enemy.**

2. **Rakia'** is that in which sun and moon, stars and constellations are set, for it is said: And God set them<sup>29</sup> in the firmament [Rakia'] of the heaven.<sup>30</sup>
3. **Shehakim** (clouds) is that in which millstones stand and grind<sup>31</sup> manna for the righteous for it is said: And He commanded the skies [Shehakim] above, and opened the doors of the heavens; and He caused manna to rain upon them for food etc.<sup>32</sup>

## Hermeneutic Remes

2 Cor 12:1 I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord.<sup>2</sup> I know a man in Messiah who **fourteen years** ago was caught up to the third heavens—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows.<sup>3</sup> **And I know that this man was caught up into paradise**—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—<sup>4</sup> and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.<sup>5</sup> On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses—

The concept of the third Heaven, also called *shamayi h'shamayim* (שמי השמים or "Heavens of Heavens"), is mentioned in such passages as Genesis 28:12, Deuteronomy 10:14 and 1 Kings 8:27 as a distinctly spiritual door to the realm containing (or being traveled by) angels and God.

## Hermeneutic Midrash

4. **Zebul** is that in which [the heavenly] Jerusalem<sup>33</sup> and the Temple and the Altar are built, and Michael, the great Prince,<sup>34</sup> stands and offers up there on an offering, for it is said: I have surely built Thee a house of habitation [Zebul], a place for Thee to dwell in forever.<sup>35</sup> And whence do we derive that it is called the heavens? For it is written: Look down from heaven, and see, even from Thy holy and glorious habitation.<sup>36</sup>

N:1 'Elevation, height, lofty abode;' 'Temple.' Jastrow: '(place of offering or entertainment) residence, specially Temple'.

5. **Ma'on** (**Dwelling, habitation**) is that in which there are companies of Ministering Angels, who utter [divine] song by night, and are silent by day for the sake of Israel's

glory,<sup>37</sup> for it is said: By day the Holy One doth command His lovingkindness,<sup>38</sup> and in the night His song is with me.<sup>39</sup> Resh Lakish said: Whoever occupies himself with [the study of] the Torah by night, the Holy One, blessed be He, draws over him a chord of lovingkindness<sup>40</sup> by day, for it is said: ‘By day the Holy One doth command / His lovingkindness’? Because ‘by night His song<sup>41</sup> is with me’. And there are some who say: Resh Lakish said: Whoever occupies himself with the study of the Torah in this world, which is like the night, the Holy One, blessed be He, draws over him a chord of lovingkindness in the world to come, which is like the day,<sup>42</sup> for it is said: ‘By day the Holy One doth command His lovingkindness, for by night His song is with me’.

R. Levi said: Whoever leaves off the study of the Torah and occupies himself with idle talk, he is made to eat coals of broom,<sup>43</sup> for it is said: They pluck salt-wort through idle talk,<sup>44</sup> and the roots of the broom are their food.<sup>45</sup> And whence do we derive that it<sup>46</sup> is called heaven? — For it is said: **Look forth from Thy holy habitation [ma'on], from the heavens.**<sup>47</sup>

## Hermeneutic So'od

6. **Makon**<sup>48</sup> (Fixed or established place, foundation, residence) is that in which there are the stores of snow<sup>49</sup> and stores of hail, and the loft of harmful dews and the loft of raindrops,<sup>50</sup> the chamber of the whirlwind and storm,<sup>51</sup> and the cave of vapor, and their doors are of fire, for it is said: The Lord will open unto thee His good treasure,<sup>52</sup> But are these to be found in the firmament? Surely, they are to be found on the earth, for it is written: Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea-monsters, and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind, fulfilling his word!<sup>53</sup> — Rab Judah said in the name of Rab: David entreated concerning them, and caused them to come down to the earth. He said before Him: Lord of the universe, Thou art not a G-d that hath pleasure in wickedness; let not evil sojourn with Thee; <sup>54</sup> righteous art Thou, O Lord, let not evil sojourn in Thy abode.<sup>55</sup> And whence do we derive that it<sup>56</sup> is called heaven? For it is written: Then hear Thou in heaven, **Thy dwelling place [Makon].**<sup>57</sup>
7. ‘**Araboth (to be dark)** is that in which there are Right and Judgment and Righteousness,<sup>58</sup> the treasures of life and the treasures of peace and the treasures of blessing, the souls of the righteous and the spirits and the souls<sup>59</sup> which are yet to be born, and dew wherewith the Holy One, blessed be He, will hereafter revive the dead. Right and Judgment, for it is written: Right<sup>60</sup> and judgment are the foundations of Thy throne.<sup>61</sup> Righteousness, for it is written: And He put on righteousness as a coat of mail.<sup>62</sup> The treasures of life, for it is written: For with Thee is the fountain of life.<sup>63</sup> And the treasures of peace, for it is written: And called it, ‘The Lord is peace’.<sup>64</sup> And the treasures of blessing, for it is written: he shall receive a blessing from the Lord.<sup>65</sup> The souls of the righteous, for it is written: Yet the soul of my lord shall be bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God.<sup>66</sup> The spirits and the souls which are yet to be born, for it is written: For the spirit that en-wraps itself is from Me, and the souls which I have made.<sup>67</sup> And the dew wherewith the Holy One, blessed be He, will hereafter revive the dead, for it is written: A bounteous rain didst Thou pour down, O God; when Thine inheritance was weary, Thou didst confirm it.<sup>68</sup> There [too] are the Ofanim<sup>69</sup> and the Seraphim,<sup>70</sup> and the Holy Living Creatures,<sup>71</sup> and the Ministering Angels,<sup>72</sup> and the Throne of God; and the King, the Living God, high and exalted, dwells over them in ‘**Araboth**, for it is said: Extol Him that rideth upon Araboth<sup>73</sup>

whose name is the Lord.<sup>74</sup> And whence do we derive that it<sup>75</sup> is called heaven? From the word ‘riding’, which occurs in two Biblical passages. Here it is written: ‘Extol Him that rideth upon Araboth’. And elsewhere it is written: Who rideth upon the heaven as thy help.<sup>76</sup> **And darkness and cloud and thick darkness surround Him**, for it is said: He made darkness His hiding-place, His pavilion round about Him, darkness of waters, thick clouds of skies.<sup>77</sup> **But is there any darkness before Heaven?**<sup>78</sup> For behold it is written: He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth, what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him.<sup>79</sup> — There is no contradiction: the one [verse]<sup>80</sup>

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(19) I.e., ‘Curtain’, from Lat. Velum.

(20) I.e., ‘Expanse, firmament’.

(21) Lit., ‘Clouds’, from שָׁחַק, ‘dust’ (cf. [Isa. XL, 15](#)).

(22) B.D.B.: ‘Elevation, height, lofty abode’; N.H., ‘Temple’. Jastrow: ‘(place of offering or entertainment) residence, especially Temple’.

(23) I.e., ‘Dwelling, habitation’.

(24) I.e., ‘Fixed or established place, foundation, residence’.

(25) V. Ps. LXVIII, 5. Levy: Perhaps from עָרַב, ‘to be dark’ (cf. עֶרֶב evening) and syn. with עֶרְפֵּל: (thick darkness, heavy cloud, in which God dwells; cf. [Ex. XX, 18](#)).

(26) According to Rashi, Wilon (‘Curtain’) draws in every morning, and thus causes the light of day to become visible; in the evening it draws out and hides the daylight. This process constitutes the renewal of the work of creation. But Tosaf. explains that Wilon produces the light of day, and when it withdraws at night darkness prevails. (27) Thus there is a curtain-like heaven.

(28) [Isa. XL, 22](#).

(29) I.e., the heavenly luminaries.

(30) [Gen. I, 17](#).

(31) There is probably a play here on the meaning of שָׁחַק (the root of shehakim), which means ‘to rub away, pulverize, grind’ (cf. [Ex. XXX, 36](#) and Job, XIV, 19).

(32) [Ps. LXXVIII, 23, 24](#).

(33) Cf. Ta’an. 5a: ‘The Holy One blessed be He, said: I shall not enter the Jerusalem which is above, until I enter the Jerusalem which is below’.

(34) Michael is Israel’s Guardian Angel; cf. [Dan. XII, 1](#) and Yoma 77a. Num. Rab. s. 2, Hul. 40a.

(35) [I Kings VIII, 13](#); the earthly Temple corresponds to the heavenly Sanctuary.

(36) [Isa. LXIII, 15](#).

(37) Because Israel utters God’s praise by day.

(38) By silencing the angels by day. God shows lovingkindness to the children of Israel, who are thus permitted to win divine grace by their prayer. Cf. also A.Z. 3b on the same verse.

(39) [Ps. XLII, 9](#). I.e., by night the song of the angels joins mine (says Israel), which I uttered by day (Rashi).

(40) I.e., of His protection.

(41) I.e., the Torah.

(42) Cf. Aboth IV, 16,17.

(43) This is the punishment for slander and a figurative expression for Gehinnom; cf. Yal. Shim. s. 120, Midr. Till. to [Ps. CXX](#), and Gen. Rab. 98.

(44) Heb. שִׁיחַ, which may represent two totally different words of identical spelling: one means ‘shrub’ (or, according to some, ‘wormwood’) which is the natural meaning here, the other means ‘complaint, musing, talk’, which is the sense in which it is homiletically understood by R. Levi.

(45) [Job. XXX, 4](#).

(46) I.e., Ma’on: the explanation of the seven heavens is here resumed.

(47) [Deut. XXVI, 15](#).

(48) According to Rashi, this heaven contains stores of punishments, the snow etc. being employed not for the world’s benefit, but for retribution, Tosaf., however, holds that the contents of Ma’on are used for good as well as evil, and compares Ta’an. 3b and [Isa. LV, 10](#).

(49) For these stores cf. [Job XXXVIII, 22f](#) also [Isa. XXIX, 6](#).

(50) Rashi: to smite down the produce.

(51) Omitted by R. Elijah of Wilna,

(52) Deut. XXVIII, 12; implying also the existence of a bad store, i.e., of punishments; but the ‘Ein Jacob’ reads here [Jer. L, 25](#).

- (53) [Ps. CXLVIII, 7, 8.](#)
- (54) Ibid. V, 5.
- (55) Note how the Talmudic explanation of the verse transforms the negative description of God into a positive one, and changes ('with Thee' into 'in thy abode' to prevent any misconception about God's perfection.
- (56) I.e., Makon.
- (57) [I Kings VIII, 39.](#)
- (58) Heb. [הַקָּדוֹשׁ](#) , which implies righteous actions and is often used in the sense of charity.
- (59) Rashi explains that either 'spirits' and 'souls' are synonymous, or else 'spirit' means the soul that has bodily form (ectoplasm?).
- (60) E.V. 'Righteousness'.
- (61) [Ps. LXXXIX, 15.](#)
- (62) [Isa LIX, 17.](#)
- (63) [Ps. XXXVI, 10.](#)
- (64) [Judg. VI, 24.](#) Rashi renders: He (the Lord) called it (peace) unto Him.
- (65) [Ps. XXIV, 5.](#)
- (66) [I Sam. XXV, 29.](#)
- (67) [Isa. LVII, 1.](#)
- (68) [Ps. LXVIII, 10.](#) The verse refers to the Revelation at Sinai, when, according to the Midrash, the souls of the children of Israel momentarily left their bodies, but God with His bounteous rain or dew of resurrection revived them. Cf. Cant. Rab. to [Cant. V, 6.](#)
- (69) Lit., 'Wheels', i.e., wheel-like angels; v. [Ezek. I, 15f.](#)
- (70) V. [Isa. VI, 2;](#) in Rabbinic literature they are understood to be angels of fire, cf. Deut. Rab. s. 11. But v. B. D. B. s.v.
- (71) V. [Ezek. I, 5f.](#)
- (72) Apparently distinct from those dwelling in Ma'on (v. p. 70).
- (73) A.V. 'upon the heavens'; R.V. 'through the deserts'.
- (74) [Ps. LXVIII, 5.](#)
- (75) I.e., Araboth.
- (76) [Deut. XXXIII, 26.](#)
- (77) [Ps. XVIII, 12.](#)
- (78) I.e., God.
- (79) [Dan. II, 22.](#)
- (80) I.e., the latter.

### **Talmud - Mas. Chagigah 13a**

refers to the inner chambers,<sup>1</sup> the other to the outer chambers. And R. Aha b. Jacob said: There is still another Heaven above the heads of the living creatures, for it is written: And over the heads of the living creatures there was a likeness of a firmament, like the colour of the terrible ice, stretched forth over their heads above.<sup>2</sup> Thus far you have permission to speak, thenceforward you have not permission to speak, for so it is written in the Book of Ben Sira:<sup>3</sup> Seek not things that are too hard for thee, <sup>4</sup> and search not things that are hidden from thee. The things that have been permitted <sup>5</sup> thee, think thereupon; thou hast no business with <sup>6</sup> the things that are secret.<sup>7</sup>

It is taught: R. Johanan b. Zakkai said: What answer did the Bath Kol <sup>8</sup> give to that wicked one, <sup>9</sup> when he said: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High? <sup>10</sup> A Bath Kol went forth and said to him: O wicked man, son of a wicked man, grandson <sup>11</sup> of Nimrod, the wicked, who stirred the whole world to rebellion against Me <sup>12</sup> by his rule. How many are the years of man? Seventy, for it is said: The days of our years are threescore years and ten, or even by reason of strength fourscore years. <sup>13</sup> But the distance from the earth to the firmament is a journey of five hundred years, and the thickness of the firmament is a journey of five hundred years, and likewise [the distance] between one firmament and the other.<sup>14</sup> Above them <sup>15</sup> are the holy living creatures: the feet <sup>16</sup> of the living creatures are equal to all of them [together]; <sup>17</sup> the ankles of the living creatures are equal to all of them; the legs of the

living creatures are equal to all of them; the knees<sup>18</sup> of the living creatures are equal to all of them; the thighs of the living creatures are equal to all of them; the bodies of the living creatures are equal to all of them; the necks of the living creatures are equal to all of them; the heads of the living creatures are equal to all of them; the horns of the living creatures are equal to all of them. Above them is the throne of glory; the feet of the throne of glory are equal to all of them; the throne of glory is equal to all of them. The King, the Living and Eternal God, High and Exalted, dwelleth above them. Yet thou didst say, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High!<sup>19</sup> thou shalt be brought down to the nether-world, to the uttermost parts of the pit.<sup>20</sup>

NOR [THE WORK OF] THE CHARIOT IN THE PRESENCE OF ONE. R. Hiyya taught: But the headings of chapters<sup>21</sup> may be transmitted to him. R. Zera said: The headings of chapters may be transmitted only to the head of a court<sup>22</sup> and to one whose heart is anxious within him.<sup>23</sup> Others say: Only if his heart is anxious within him.<sup>24</sup> R. Amimi said: The mysteries of the Torah may be transmitted only to one who possesses five attributes, [namely], The captain of fifty, and the man of rank, and the counsellor, and the cunning charmer, and the skillful enchanter.<sup>25</sup> R. Ammi further said: The teachings of the Torah are not to be transmitted to an idolater,<sup>26</sup> for it is said: He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for His ordinances, they have not known them.<sup>27</sup> **R. Johanan said to R. Eleazar: Come, I will instruct you in the 'Work of the Chariot'.**<sup>28</sup> He replied: I am not old enough.<sup>29</sup> When he was old enough, R. Johanan died.<sup>30</sup> R. Assi [then] said to him: Come, I will instruct you in the "Work of the Chariot". He replied: Had I been worthy, I should have been instructed by R. Johanan, your master. R. Joseph was studying the '**Work of the Chariot**'; the elders of Pumbeditha<sup>31</sup> were studying the '**Work of Creation**'. The latter said to the former: Let the master teach us the 'Work of the Chariot'. He replied: Teach me the 'Work of Creation'. After they had taught him, they said to him: Let the master instruct us in the 'Work of the Chariot'. He replied: We have learnt concerning it: **Honey and milk are under thy tongue.**<sup>32</sup> The things that are sweeter than honey and milk should be under thy tongue.<sup>33</sup> R. Abbahu said: [It<sup>34</sup> is inferred] from this verse: The lambs [Ke-basim] will be for thy clothing.<sup>35</sup> The things which are the mystery [Kibshono] of the world should be under thy clothing.<sup>36</sup> They<sup>37</sup> [then] said to him: We have already studied therein as far as, And He said unto me: '**Son of man**'.<sup>38</sup> He replied: This is the very [portion of the] 'Work of the Chariot'.<sup>39</sup> An objection was raised: How far does [the portion of] the 'Work of the Chariot' extend? Rabbi said: As far as the second And I saw.<sup>40</sup> R. Isaac said: As far as **Chashmal**<sup>41</sup> — As far as 'I saw'<sup>42</sup> may be taught;<sup>43</sup> thenceforward, [only] the heads of chapters<sup>44</sup> may be transmitted. Some, however, say: As far as 'I saw', the heads of chapters may be transmitted; thenceforward, if he is a Sage able to speculate by himself, Yes; if not, No. But may one expound [the mysteries of] **Chashmal**? For behold there was once a child<sup>45</sup> who expounded [the mysteries of] **Chashmal**, and a fire went forth and consumed him! — [The case of] the child is different, for he had not reached the [fitting] age. Rab Judah said: That man be remembered for blessing,<sup>46</sup> namely, Hananiah b. Hezekiah: but for him, the Book of Ezekiel would have been withdrawn,<sup>47</sup> for its words contradict the words of the Torah.<sup>48</sup> What did he do? Three hundred garab<sup>49</sup> of oil were brought up to him, and he sat in an upper chamber and expounded it. The Rabbis taught: There was once a child who was reading at his teacher's house the Book of Ezekiel, and he apprehended what **Chashmal** was,<sup>50</sup> whereupon a fire went forth from **Chashmal** and consumed him. So they<sup>51</sup> sought to suppress the Book of Ezekiel, but Hananiah b. Hezekiah said to them: If he was a Sage, all are Sages!<sup>52</sup> What does [the word] **Chashmal** mean? — Rab Judah said:

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(1) Cf. supra p. 23, n. 5.



- (2) [Ezek. I, 22](#).
- (3) Cf. [Ecclesiasticus III, 21, 22](#). The author, whose full name seems to have been Jesus b. Simeon b. Eleazar b. Sira, is the only writer of the Old Testament or Apocrypha who signed his work (v. *ibid.* L, 27). His date falls in the first third of the second century B.C.E. He wrote in Hebrew, the Greek translation being made by his grandson, of whom it is known that he went to Egypt in 132; the greater part of the Hebrew original has been recovered from the Cairo Genizah. According to Tosef. Yad. II, 13, the writings of Ben Sira do not defile the hands, i.e., are uncanonical, and so rank the works of 'Minim' or heretics. Eccl. Rab. XII, 11 forbids one to have Ben Sira's book in the house. R. Akiba (J. Sanh. 28a) includes the readers of uncanonical writings such as those of Ben Sira among those who have no share in the world to come; v. further the discussion in Sanh., Sonc. ed., p. 680f and nn. a.l. on R. Akiba's prohibition. The exclusion of Ecclesiasticus from the canon and the prohibitions with which it was surrounded were probably due to its epicurean and Sadducean tendencies. Notwithstanding, the book remained popular with Jews, and is frequently quoted in early Jewish literature as well as in the Talmud and Midrash. V. J.E. vol. XI, pp. 388f.
- (4) E.V. 'that are above thy strength'.
- (5) E.V. 'commanded'.
- (6) E.V. 'no need of'.
- (7) For a variant version of this quotation v. Gen. Rab. VIII, which contains two additional clauses.
- (8) Lit., 'daughter of a voice'. According to Lampronti, Levy, Kohut (*Aruch Completum*) and Jast., it means an echo; but L. Blau holds (J.E. vol. II, pp. 588f) that it means 'sound', 'resonance'. For its secular use, v. Ex. Rab. XXIX, end; bit in our passage and Rabbinic literature *passim*, it refers to a heavenly or divine voice.
- (9) I.e., Nebuchadnezzar, who, in R. Johanan b. Zakkai's time, possibly suggested Titus.
- (10) [Isa. XIV, 14](#).
- (11) As Tosaf. a.l. points out, this statement is not to be taken literally; Nebuchadnezzar is to be regarded as a spiritual descendant of Nimrod because of the similarity of their deeds (the latter persecuted Abraham — cf. Targ. pseudo-Jonathan to [Gen. XIV, 1](#); Gen. R. XLII, 5; Cant. R. VIII, 8 — and the former led into captivity Abraham's descendants) and of their place of origin (Babylon).
- (12) Lit., 'against himself', an obvious emendation, dictated by a pious desire to avoid blasphemy, of 'against Me' i.e., God. In 'Er. 53a the text has been 'corrected' as here; but in Pes. 94b, Gen. R. s. 26 etc., the original reading is preserved.
- (13) [Ps. XC, 10](#).
- (14) V. p. 69.
- (15) I.e., the seven heavens; v. n. 5.
- (16) I.e., the thickness of the hooves.
- (17) I.e., 15 (7 heavens and 8 interspaces) X 500 years. But in J. Ber. 13a the figure is given as 515, the numerical sum of *ישרה*, 'upright'; cf. [Ezek. I, 7](#) (Tosaf.).
- (18) Properly, the knee and its surrounding parts; cf. Hul. 76a.
- (19) E.V. 'Yet' etc.
- (20) [Isa. XIV, 14f](#).
- (21) Probably, the leading words of each section or subject (cf. Rashi a.l. and Jast. s. פּרָק ). Levy explains it as 'the interpretations of single verses'. V. *infra* p. 77.
- (22) Ab Beth din, lit., 'Father of a Beth din' (house of judgment). The Beth din consisted of three (according to another view, five) members for monetary cases, and of twenty-three for capital cases; whilst the Beth din ha-Gadol ('High Court'), or Great Sanhedrin, was comprised of seventy elders and the Nasi, who acted as president. The Ab Beth din of the Sanhedrin was the vice-president and most important of the seventy members (cf. Sanh. I, 1-4, Sonc. ed. pp. 1-4; and J.E. vol. lii, pp. 114f).
- (23) I.e., he is reverential and not given to levity.
- (24) I.e., one must have both qualifications viz., be the head of a court and reverential.
- (25) [Isa. III, 3](#). For the explanation of these qualifications v. p. 85.
- (26) This, and not Cuthean (substituted on account of the censorship), is undoubtedly the correct reading. Dicta of this kind were directed against heathens, and were inspired by the fear lest the knowledge of the Torah be unscrupulously used against Jews. Cf. the story of the Roman commissioners referred to in B.K., Sonc. ed., p. 215; and R. Johanan's statement in Sanh., Sonc. ed., p. 400 and Num. Rab. s. 13.
- (27) [Ps. CXLVII, 20](#),
- (28) The 'Work of the Chariot' and the 'Work of Creation' mentioned in the next passage, were Baraitas (Rashi), which apparently, took the relevant passages of Genesis and Ezekiel as the basis of their expositions.
- (29) Cf. p. 85, where the 'captain of fifty', mentioned *supra* as one of the qualifications of the man to whom the mysteries of the Torah may be transmitted, is explained as one who is fifty years of age.
- (30) Lit., 'R. Johanan's soul was at rest' (cf. [Isa. LVII, 2](#)).
- (31) Lit., 'mouth of Beditha' (a canal of the Euphrates). It was the seat of a great Jewish academy.

- (32) [Cant. IV](#), 11.
- (33) I.e., the mysteries of the Chariot may not be taught, cf. our Mishnah (p. 59). The Rabbis considered the whole of Canticles as a figurative expression of the mystical relationship between God and Israel; thus the verse quoted, which the Bridegroom says to the Bride, is really the injunction of God to Israel.
- (34) I.e., the prohibition to teach the 'Chariot' mysteries.
- (35) [Prov. XXVII](#), 26.
- (36) I.e., in thy bosom, a secret. The reading in MS.M. brings the Midrashic deduction out more clearly: Read not kebasim ("lambs") but kebushim ("hidden things") things which are the mystery (kibshono) of the world must be kept under one's clothing'.
- (37) I.e., the elders of Pumbeditha.
- (38) [Ezek. II](#), 1.
- (39) I.e., if you have learnt thus far, you have learnt much, for this passage included the very verses ([Ezek. I, 27, 28](#)) the teaching of which the Rabbis prohibited.
- (40) [Ezek. I, 27](#), excluding Hashmal; v. n. 12.
- (41) Ibid., including Hashmal (E.V. 'electrum'). By Hashmal, the whole subject thereof, which is described in this verse, is meant, not merely the word itself, which already occurs in v. 4. The objection here raised is that the statements of Rabbi and R. Isaac apparently contradict the statement of R. Joseph above, which seemed to imply that the passage dealing with the 'Work of the Chariot' extended to [Ezek. II, 1](#).
- (42) I.e., 'I saw' according to Rabbi, or 'Chashmal' according to R. Isaac,
- (43) I.e., Rabbi and R. Isaac indicated not how far the 'Work of the Chariot' extended, but how far therein it was permissible to teach.
- (44) V. p. 75, n. 3.
- (45) Aram. חַשְׁמַל, a term applicable to a boy from infancy to school age. Hot-tinger's view (De Incestu etc., p. 54, quoted by A. W. Streane) that not a child in years but in knowledge of Talmud is meant is unlikely. Cf. the frequent use of the term in the Zohar.
- (46) Cf. [Neh. V](#), 19.
- (47) Heb. נִגְנוּ lit., 'hidden, stored away', i.e., declared un-canonical. The idea and name of the Greek 'Apocrypha' have often been traced to this technical significance of the verb נגן in the Talmud; but this is denied by G. F. Moore, v. J.E., vol. II, pp. 1-2 and 6.
- (48) Cf. Ezek. XVIII, 4, 20 with [Ex. XX](#), 5, [XXIV](#), 7; [Ezek. XLIV](#), 31 with [Lev. XXII](#), 8; [Ezek. XLIV](#), 22 with [Lev. XXI](#), 14; also [Ezek. XLV](#), 20, which mentions a sacrifice for the seventh day of the first month, entirely unknown from the Torah. V. Rashi to the above verses of Ezek., and Men. 45a, and Kid. 78a.
- (49) 'A bottle, keg', as a 'measure (Jast.); 'an earthen jar', (Levy). The oil was to provide light for study.
- (50) Jast. translates: 'speculated over the Hashmal'. Had the child drawn a picture of it? (V. J.E. vol. III, p. 148, s. 11).
- (51) I.e., the Rabbis.
- (52) I.e., the case of the child is exceptional: having a Sage's understanding of the mysteries of Chashmal, he endangered his life by his speculation; but ordinary readers of Ezekiel would not run any risk.

### **Talmud - Mas. Chagigah 13b**

Living creatures speaking fire.<sup>1</sup> In a Baraita it is taught: [Chashmal means], At times they are silent, at times they speak.<sup>2</sup> When the utterance goes forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, they are silent, and when the utterance goes not forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, they speak.

(1) I.e. חַשְׁמַל is explained as an abbreviation of חַיִּים אֲשֶׁר מְמַלְלִים

(2) I.e., Chashmal is an abbreviation of חֶשֶׁת מְמַלְלוֹת, 'silent, speaking'.