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Apocrypha

3 Enoch

(Hebrew Book of Enoch)

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Anonymous, ascribed to Rabbi Ishmael

Hekhal Targum Project

Credits

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About:

The third book of Enoch, also called the Hebrew Book of Enoch or Sefer Hekhalot ("Book of the Palaces"), is a work of Jewish mysticism written in Hebrew, probably between the 5th and 9th centuries, with older traditions.

It is not a continuation of 1 Enoch (Ethiopic) or 2 Enoch (Slavonic): it belongs to the literature of the heavenly "palaces" and the divine chariot (merkavah).

Rabbi Ishmael, a 2nd-century sage, tells how he rose to heaven through the seven palaces and was received by Metatron, the Prince of the Presence.

Metatron reveals that he is Enoch, the patriarch whom God took (Genesis 5:24), transformed into an angel of fire, with seventy names, a throne and a crown, and called "the lesser YHWH".

He then shows Ishmael the hierarchies of the angels and the princes of each heaven, the throne of glory, the records of human deeds, the souls of the righteous and the wicked, and the curtain before God on which the whole history of the world is written.

The Hebrew is the short text printed by A. Jellinek (1873) and reprinted by J. D. Eisenstein (Otzar Midrashim, 1915); chapters 16 to 22C come from H.

Odeberg's edition (1928), and parts 48B–48D from the "Book of Enoch" printed by Jellinek. The chapter numbering is Odeberg's.

The English translation is by the Hekhal Targum Project (hekhal.org), which describes it as a machine-assisted draft not yet reviewed by scholars.

Source: https://hekhal.org/texts/3-enoch/

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CHAPTER 1

✦

1 ”And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.” R. Ishmael said: When I ascended on high to look intently upon the vision of the chariot, I was entering through six palaces, chamber within chamber.

1.2 And once I reached the door of the seventh palace, I stood in prayer before the Holy One, blessed be He, and lifted my eyes upward, and said: Master of the Universe, I beseech You, that You cause for me at this hour the merit of Aaron son of Amram, lover of peace and pursuer of peace, who received the crown of priesthood from before Your glory on Mount Sinai, so that Kaftziel the prince and the angels of his wrath may not have dominion over me, and let none have dominion from the heavens.

1.3 At once He summoned for me Metatron, His servant, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, and he flew with his wings and came out toward me with great joy to rescue me from their hand.

2 And he grasped me with his hand before their eyes and said to me: Your coming be in peace, for you have found favor before the high and exalted King, to look intently upon the visions of the chariot.

3 At that hour I entered the fourth palace, and he led me to the vision of the Shekhinah and set me before the throne of glory to look intently upon the chariot.

3.2 And when the princes of the chariot and the seraphim of flame saw me and fixed their eyes on me, I quaked and recoiled and fell from my standing-place and fell into a stupor because of the brilliance of the sight of their eyes and the radiance of the appearance of their faces, and my soul

flew away, until the Holy One, blessed be He, rebuked them and said to them: My ministers, My cherubim and My ofanim, cover your eyes from before Me, and hearken to My beloved, My dear one, and My glory, so that he not recoil and not quake.

3.3 At once Metatron, the Prince of the Presence, came and restored my soul to me and set me on my feet.

4 And still I had no power to utter song before the throne of glory of the King of Glory, noble over all kings, potentate over all potentates, until an hour had passed.

5 After an hour the Holy One, blessed be He, opened to me gates of understanding, gates of wisdom, gates of peace, gates of power, gates of might, gates of speech, gates of song, gates of sanctification, gates of sweetness; and He illumined my eyes and my heart with utterances of laudation and praise and jubilation and thanksgiving and melody, beauty and comeliness, acclamation and strength. And when I opened my mouth and praised in song before the throne, the holy living creatures beneath the throne of the King of Glory and above the throne answer after me and say: “Holy, holy, holy,” and “Blessed be the glory of YHWH from His place.”

CHAPTER 2

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: At that hour the youths of the chariot and the ofanim of flame and the seraphim of consuming fire were coming and asking: From which people is he? From which tribe is he? What is the nature of this one?

1.2 Metatron answers them and says to them: From the people Israel, chosen by the Holy One, blessed be He, to be His people; from the tribe of Levi is he, raised up to His name; from the seed of Aaron is he, whom He chose for Himself as minister, upon whom the Holy One, blessed be He, Himself bound the crown of priesthood at Sinai.

1.3 At once they began and said: Surely this one is worthy to look intently upon the chariot, as it is written: “Happy is the people for whom it is thus.”

CHAPTER 3

✦

[1] R. Ishmael said: At that hour I asked Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence; I said to him: What is your name? He said to me: Seventy names have I, corresponding to the seventy tongues that are in the world, and all of them are upon the name of the King of the kings of kings; but my King calls me Youth.

CHAPTER 4

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: I said to Metatron: Why are you called by the name of your Maker with seventy names, and you are greater than all the princes, and higher than all the angels, and more beloved than all the ministers, and more honored than all the hosts, and exalted above all the noble ones in kingship and in greatness and in glory, and why do they call you Youth in the heavens on high?

1.2 He answered and said to me: Because I am Enoch son of Jared. When the generation of the flood sinned and said to God, "Depart from us, and the knowledge of Your ways we do not desire," the Holy One, blessed be He, brought me up from among them to be a witness against them in the heavens on high to all who come into the world, so that they should not say, "The Merciful One is cruel! What did all those multitudes sin?

2 And if they sinned, their wives, their sons and their daughters, their horses, their mules, their cattle and all their possessions, and all the birds that are in the world, which the Holy One, blessed be He, destroyed with them in the days of the generation of the flood: what did they sin, that they were gathered in together with them?"

2.2 Therefore He brought me up in their lifetime, before their eyes, into the heavens on high, to be a witness against them for the world to come. And the Holy One, blessed be He, joined me on high as prince and ruler among the ministering angels.

3 Uzza and Azael, of the ministering angels, were against me in the heavens on high, and they said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Master of the Universe, did not the first ones speak well before You: "You shall not create man again"? The Holy One, blessed be He, answers and says to them: "I have made, and I will bear, and I will carry, and I will deliver."

3.2 And when they saw me, they said before Him: Master of the Universe, what is the nature of this one who has gone up to the height of heights? Is he not of the sons of those who perished in the days of the flood?

3.3 Again the Holy One, blessed be He, answers, and said to them: What is your nature, that you come in to speak [rebellion] concerning the one in whom I have delighted more than all of you, to be prince and ruler over you in the heavens on high?

4 At once they all rose and went out to meet me, and prostrated themselves before me, and said to me: Happy are you, and happy are your parents, for your Maker has taken pleasure in them. And because I am small among them, and a youth among them in days and in months and in years, therefore they call me Youth.

CHAPTER 5

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: From the day that the Holy One, blessed be He, drove the first Adam out of the Garden of Eden, the Shekhinah was dwelling upon a cherub beneath the tree of life. And the ministering angels would spring up and come and go down, band upon band, from the heavens, to roam through the whole world entire.

1.2 And the first Adam and Eve were sitting at the entrance of the Garden of Eden to gaze upon the likeness of the form of the radiance of the Shekhinah, because the radiance of the Shekhinah went from one end of the world to the other, at three hundred and sixty-five thousand times the wheel of the sun.

1.3 For whoever gazes upon the radiance of that Shekhinah, no flies or gnats settle upon him, and he does not fall sick, and no harmful spirits whatever are able to harm him; and not only that, but angels have no dominion over him.

2 And the Holy One, blessed be He, was going and roaming from the Garden to Eden and from Eden to the Garden, and from the Garden to the firmament and from the firmament to the Garden of Eden; and all were gazing upon the radiance of the likeness of His Shekhinah and were not harmed,

3 until the men of the generation of Enosh came, and they went from one end of the world to the other, and each and every one brought silver and gold and precious stones and pearls, like mountains upon mountains and

hills upon hills, and they made them into idols in the world, to the measure of a thousand parasangs.

3.2 And they brought down sun and moon, stars and constellations, to stand before them, on their right and on their left, to minister to them in the way that they used to minister to the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said: "All the host of heaven standing over Him on His right and on His left."

3.3 And how was there power in them, that they could bring them down and make use of them? Uzza and Azael were teaching them sorceries, so that they could bring them down and make use of them; for were it not so, they would not have been able to bring them down.

4 At that hour the ministering angels raised an accusation before the Holy One, blessed be He, and said before Him: Master of the Universe, what have You to do with the sons of men?

4.2 "What is enosh, that You remember him?" It does not say "What is adam" but "What is enosh", for he is the head of idolatry. Why have You left the uppermost heavens of heavens, the abode of Your glory, and the high and exalted throne that is in the height of Aravot, and gone among the sons of men who worship idols, who have made You equal with idolatry?

4.3 Now You are on the earth and idolatry is on the earth: what is Your business among the inhabitants of the earth, worshippers of idolatry? The Holy One, blessed be He, removed the Shekhinah from the earth, from among them.

5 At that hour the ministering angels came, from the troops of the hosts and the armies of Aravot and a thousand myriads of hosts, and they took up the trumpets and grasped the shofars in their hands, and surrounded the Shekhinah with songs and with hymns, up to the heavens on high, as it is said: “God has gone up with a shout, YHWH with the sound of the shofar.”

CHAPTER 6

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: When He sought to bring me up on high, at first He sent to me Anafiel the prince, and he took me from among them before their eyes, and conducted me in great glory upon "a chariot of fire and horses of fire" and ministers of glory, and brought me up to the Shekhinah, to the heavens on high.

1.2 And as soon as I reached the heavens on high, the holy living creatures, and the ofanim, seraphim and cherubim, and the wheels of the chariot, and the ministers of consuming fire were smelling my scent at a distance of sixty-five thousand three hundred parasangs, and they said: "What is the scent of one born of woman, and what is the taste of a white drop, that he goes up into the heavens on high and should serve among the hewers of flame?"

2 The Holy One, blessed be He, answers and said to them: "My ministers, My hosts, My cherubim, My ofanim and My seraphim, let not your heart be grieved over this matter. For all the children of men denied Me and My great kingdom, and went and served idols, and I removed the Shekhinah from among them and went up on high. And this one whom I took from among them, he is the choicest of them all, and this one is weighed against all of them in faith and in righteousness and in fitness of deed; and this one I took as My wage in My world under the heavens."

CHAPTER 7

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: When they took me from among the children of the generation of the flood, they bore me up on the wings of the wind of the Shekhinah to the uppermost firmament, and brought me into the midst of the great palaces that are on high in Aravot, the firmament, where are the throne of glory, the Shekhinah, and the chariot.

1.2 And there are troops of fire, and armies of fury, and shinanim of anger, and cherubim of torch, and ofanim of coal, and ministers of flame, and hashmalim of lightning-flash, and seraphim of lightning. And they stationed me to serve the throne of glory each and every day.

CHAPTER 8

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Before they stationed me to serve the throne of glory, the Holy One, blessed be He, opened to me one thousand three hundred thousand gates of wisdom, and three hundred thousand gates of understanding, and three hundred thousand gates of prudence, and three hundred thousand gates of life, and three hundred thousand gates of peace, and three hundred thousand gates of the Shekhinah, and three hundred thousand gates of might and valor, and three hundred thousand gates of power, and three hundred thousand gates of grace and lovingkindness, and three hundred thousand gates of love, and three hundred thousand gates of delight, and three hundred thousand gates of humility, and three hundred thousand gates of fear of sin.

2 At that hour the Holy One, blessed be He, added to me wisdom upon wisdom, understanding upon understanding, prudence upon prudence, knowledge upon knowledge, mercy upon mercy, Torah upon Torah, love upon love, lovingkindness upon lovingkindness, delight upon delight, humility upon humility, might upon might, power upon power, valor upon valor, brilliance upon brilliance, loveliness upon loveliness, form upon form. And I was honored and glorified with all these good and praiseworthy qualities more than all the children of the heights.

CHAPTER 9

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: After all these qualities the Holy One, blessed be He, laid His hand upon me and blessed me with three hundred and sixty-five thousand blessings. I was exalted and lifted up to the measure of the length and breadth of the world.

1.2 And they caused seventy-two wings to grow on me, thirty-six wings on one side and thirty-six wings on the other side, and each and every wing was like the fullness of the world. And He fixed in me three hundred and sixty-five thousand eyes, and each and every eye was like the great luminary.

1.3 And there was no kind of radiance, form, loveliness and light in the world that He did not fix in me.

CHAPTER 10

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: All this the Holy One, blessed be He, did for me. He made me a throne in the likeness of the throne of glory.

1.2 Over me He spread a covering of radiance and of brilliance, of form and glory, loveliness and lovingkindness, in the likeness of the covering of the throne of glory, and every kind of radiance of the luminaries that are in the world is fixed in it. He set it at the door of the seventh palace and seated me upon it.

1.3 And the herald went out into each and every firmament, saying: "Metatron My servant: I have made him prince and ruler over all the princes of My kingdom and over all the children of the heights. Excepted are the eight princes, the honored and the awesome, who are called YHWH after My name, Prince of the World.

2 Every angel who has a matter to speak before Me shall go before him and speak to him. And every word he speaks to you in My name, you shall keep and you shall do, because the Prince of Wisdom and the Prince of Understanding minister to him, to teach him the wisdoms of the upper ones and the lower ones, the wisdom of this world and the secret of the world to come. I have also appointed him over all the treasuries of the palace of Aravot and over all the storehouses of life that are in the heavens on high."

CHAPTER 11

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: The Holy One, blessed be He, revealed to me every wellspring of the hidden things of Torah, all the mysteries of wisdom, all the depths of the perfect Torah, and all the thoughts of the hearts of created beings.

1.2 All the mysteries of the world and all the hidden things of the beginning are revealed before me, just as they are revealed before the Former of the beginning. And from then on I have gazed, to contemplate the mysteries of her depth and the secret of her wonder. Before a man thinks, I know; before he hides anything in hidden places, I see; before a man acts, I know. Nothing on high is concealed or too deep for me.

CHAPTER 12

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Out of the love with which the Holy One, blessed be He, loved me more than all the children of the heights, He made for me a garment of exaltation in which every kind of luminary is set, and He wrapped me in it.

1.2 And He made for me a crown of kingship in which are set forty-nine stones, burning with the light of the wheel of the sun, whose radiance goes forth into the four Aravot, the firmament, and into the seven firmaments, and into the four winds of the world.

1.3 And He bound it upon my head, and He called me the lesser YHWH before the whole household that is on high, as it is said: “For My name is in him.”

CHAPTER 13

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Out of the great love and the great compassion with which the Holy One, blessed be He, loved me and cherished me more than all the children of the heights, He wrote with His finger, with a pen of flame, upon the crown that is on my head the letters by which heaven and earth were created; the letters by which seas and rivers were created; the letters by which mountains and hills were created; the letters by which stars and constellations, lightnings, wind and thunders, voices, snow, hail, whirlwind and storm were created; the letters by which the needs of the world and all the hidden things of the beginning were created.

1.2 And each and every letter shines, face against face, like the appearance of the going-forth of the sun, and the moon, and the stars.

CHAPTER 14

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: When the Holy One, blessed be He, bound this crown upon my head, all the princes of kingdoms in the height of Aravot quaked before me, and all the armies of each firmament; and even the princes of the elim, and the princes of the tafsarim, and the princes of the erelim, who are greater than all the ministering angels who serve before the throne of glory, were quaking and shaking before me.

1.2 And even Samael the wicked, head of all the accusers, who is great among all the kingdoms on high, was fearing and quaking.

2 And even the angel of fire, the angel of hail, the angel of wind, the angel of lightning, the angel of wrath, the angel of thunder, the angel of snow, the angel of rain, the angel of day, the angel of night, the angel of the stars and the constellations, who leads the whole world through their hands, were quaking and shaking before me when they saw me.

3 And these are the names of the princes who lead the world: Gabriel, the angel of fire; Baradiel, the angel of hail; Ruhiel, the angel who is appointed over the wind; Barakiel, the angel who is appointed over the lightnings; Zaamiel, who is appointed over wrath; Zikiel, who is appointed over the sparks; Zoiel, who is appointed over the tremors; Zaafiel, who is appointed over the fury; Raamiel, who is appointed over the thunders; Raashiel, who is appointed over the earthquake; Shalgiel, who is appointed over the snow; Matariel, who is appointed over the rain; Shimshiel, who is appointed over the day; Lailiel, who is appointed over the night; Galgaliel,

who is appointed over the wheel of the sun; Ofaniel, who is appointed over the wheel of the moon; Kokhaviel, who is appointed over the stars; Rahatiel, who is appointed over the constellations.

4 And all of them fall upon their faces when they see me, and they are not able to gaze upon me because of the grandeur and splendor, the radiance, the brilliance, the loveliness, the form, and the brightness, and the light of glory that is upon my head.

CHAPTER 15

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, the splendor on high of all, said to me: As soon as the Holy One, blessed be He, took me to serve the throne of glory, and the wheels of the chariot, and all the needs of the Shekhinah, at once my flesh was turned into flame, and my sinews into fire, and my bones into coals of broom-wood, and the light of my eyelids into the brilliance of the firmament, and the globes of my eyes into torches of fire, and the hair of my head into blaze and flame, and all my limbs into wings of burning fire, and the body of my stature into blazing fire.

1.2 On my right, hewers of flames of fire; and on my left, a torch of fire burns; and round about me a wind of storm and whirlwind is blowing; and the sound of quaking upon quaking is before me and behind me.

CHAPTER 16

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, the splendor on high of all, said to me: At first I was sitting on a great throne at the entrance of the seventh palace, and I judged all the children of the heights, the household on high, by permission of the Holy One, blessed be He.

1.2 And I apportioned greatness and kingship, lordship and rule, splendor and praise, and a diadem and a crown of glory, to all the princes of kingdoms, when I was sitting in the session above, and the princes of kingdoms were standing by me, on my right and on my left, by permission of the Holy One, blessed be He.

2 And when Aher came to gaze upon the vision of the chariot and set his eyes on me, he was fearing and quaking before me, and his soul was dismayed to the point of going out from him, because of the dread of me and the awe of me and the fear of me, when he saw me sitting on a throne like a king, and the ministering angels standing by me like servants, and all the princes of kingdoms, binding crowns, surrounding me.

3 At that hour he opened his mouth and said: “Surely there are two powers in the heavens!” At once a heavenly voice went forth from the heavens, from before the Shekhinah, saying: “Return, backsliding children”, except Aher. At that hour Aniyel the prince came, the honored, splendid, desir-

able, wondrous, fearsome, revered one, on the errand of the Holy One, blessed be He, and he struck me with sixty lashes of fire and stood me on my feet.

CHAPTER 17

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, the splendor on high of all, said to me: Seven are the great princes, comely, fearsome, wondrous, honored, who are appointed in the seven firmaments. And these are they: Michael, Gabriel, Shatkiel, Shahakiel, Bakhriel, Badariel, Pahriel.

1.2 And all of them are princes of the host of a firmament, and with each one are four hundred and ninety-six thousand myriads of ministering angels. Michael, the great prince, is appointed over the seventh firmament, the highest, which is in Aravot. Gabriel, the prince of the host, is appointed over the sixth firmament, which is in Makhon.

1.3 Shatkiel, the prince of the host, is appointed over the fifth firmament, which is in Maon. Shahakiel, the prince of the host, is appointed over the fourth firmament, which is in Zevul.

2 Badariel, the prince of the host, is appointed over the third firmament, which is in Shehakim. Barakhiel, the prince of the host, is appointed over the second firmament, which is in the height of the firmament. Pazriel, the prince of the host, is appointed over the firmament which is in Vilon, which is in the heavens.

3 Below them is Galgaliel, the prince who is appointed over the wheel of the sun, and with him are ninety-six angels, eminent and honored, who bring down the wheel of the sun in the firmament. [Below] them is Ofaniel, the prince who is appointed over the wheel of the moon, and with

him are eighty-eight angels who bring down the wheel of the moon three hundred and fifty-four thousand parasangs each and every night, all the time that the moon stands in the east at its turning.

3.2 And when does it sit in the east at its turning? You must say: on the sixteenth of each and every month. Below them is Rahatiel, the prince who is appointed over the constellations, and with him are seventy-two angels, great and honored. And why is his name called Rahatiel?

4 Because he makes the constellations run in the wheels and in their paths three hundred and thirty-nine thousand parasangs every night, from the east to the west and from the west to the east, because the Holy One, blessed be He, made one tent for them all, for the sun and for the moon and for the constellations and stars, which go by night from the west to the east.

5 Below them is Kokhaviel, the prince who is appointed over all the stars, and with him are three hundred and sixty-five thousand myriads of ministering angels, great, honored, who bring down the stars from city to city and from province to province in the firmament of the heavens.

5.2 And above them there are seventy-two princes of kingdoms on high, corresponding to the seventy-two tongues that are in the world. And all of them are bound with crowns of kingship and clothed in garments of kingship and wrapped in garments of kingship. And all of them are mounted on horses of kingship and hold in their hand scepters of kingship.

6 And each and every one, when he goes in the firmament, there run before him, in great glory and in much honor, attendants of kingship, in the manner that they go on earth with chariot and horsemen and many armies, and in glory and in greatness, praise and laudation and beauty.

CHAPTER 18

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, the splendor on high of all, said to me: The angels of the first firmament, when they see their prince, go down from their horse and fall upon their faces. And the prince of the first firmament, [when he] [sees] the prince of the second firmament, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face.

1.2 And the prince of the second firmament, when he sees the prince of the third firmament, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And the prince of the third firmament, when he sees the prince of the fourth firmament, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face.

1.3 And the prince of the fourth firmament, when he sees the prince of the fifth firmament, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face.

2 And the prince of the fifth firmament, when he sees the prince of the sixth firmament, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And the prince of the sixth firmament, when he sees the prince of the seventh firmament, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face.

3 And the prince of the seventh firmament, when he sees the seventy-two princes of kingdoms, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And the seventy-two princes of kingdoms, when they see

the guardians of the door of the first palace that is in Aravot, the uppermost firmament, would remove the crown of kingship from their head and fall upon their faces.

3.2 And the guardians of the door of the first palace, when they see the guardians of the door of the second palace, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces. And the guardians of the door of the second palace, when they see the guardians of the door of the third palace, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces.

4 And the guardians of the door of the third palace, when they see the guardians of the door of the fourth palace, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces. And the guardians of the door of the fourth palace, when they see the guardians of the door of the fifth palace, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces.

4.2 And the guardians of the door of the fifth palace, when they see the guardians of the door of the sixth palace, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces. And the guardians of the door of the sixth palace, when they see the guardians of the door of the seventh palace, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces.

5 And the guardians of the door of the seventh palace, when they see four great princes, the honored ones, who are appointed over the four camps of the Shekhinah, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces.

5.2 And the four great princes, when they see Tagatz, the great and honored prince, in song, laudation, at the head of all the children of the upper ones, remove the crown of glory from their head and fall upon their faces.

5.3 And Tagatz, the great and honored prince, when he sees Bartatiel, the great prince of three fingers in the height of Aravot, the uppermost firmament, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face.

6 And Bartatiel, the great prince, when he sees Hamon, the great and fearsome, honored and desirable and revered prince, who shakes all the children of the heights when the time arrives to say "Holy", as it is said: "At the sound of the tumult peoples fled; at Your upliftings nations were scattered", removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face.

7 And Hamon, the great prince, when he sees Tatrasiel, the great prince, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And Tatrasiel YHWH, the great prince, when he sees Atrugiel, the great prince, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face.

7.2 And Atrigiel, the great prince, when he sees Naaririel YHWH, the great prince, removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And Naaririel YHWH, the great prince, when he sees Sasnigiel, the great prince, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face.

7.3 And Sasnigiel YHWH, when he sees Zazriel YHWH, the great prince, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face. And Zazriel YHWH, the prince, when he sees Gevuratiel YHWH, the prince, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face.

8 And Gevuratiel YHWH, the prince, when he sees Arafiel, the prince, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face. And Arafiel YHWH, the prince, when he sees Ashruyilu, the prince, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face.

9 And Ashruyilu YHWH, the prince, head of every session of the children of the heights, when he sees Gallitzur YHWH, the prince, who reveals all the mysteries of the Torah, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face.

9.2 And Gallitzur YHWH, the prince, when he sees Zakhzakhiel YHWH, the prince, who is appointed to write the merits of Israel, which they perform, upon the throne of glory, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face.

9.3 And Zakhzakhiel YHWH, the great prince, when he sees Anafiel YHWH, the prince, who guards the keys of the palaces of Aravot, the firmament, would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face. And why is his name called Anafiel?

10 Because his grandeur and his splendor and his crown and his radiance and his brilliance branch over all the splendors of Aravot, the uppermost firmament, like the Former of the world. As of the Former of the world it is written: “His grandeur covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His laudation”, so too Anafiel YHWH, the prince: his grandeur and his splendor cover all the splendors of uppermost Aravot.

11 And when he sees Soter Ashiel YHWH, the great and fearsome and honored prince, he would remove the crown of glory from his head and fall upon his face. And why is his name called Soter Ashiel?

11.2 Because he is appointed, within, over the four heads of the river of fire, facing the throne of glory, and each and every prince who goes out and comes in before the Shekhinah does not go out and come in except by his permission, because the seals of the four rivers of fire are given into his hand.

11.3 And not only that, but the height of his stature is seventy thousand myriads of parasangs, and he tears down the fire of the river of fire, and he goes out and comes in before the Shekhinah to set forth what is of all who come into the world, as it is said: “The court sat, and the books were opened.”

12 And Soter Ashiel, when he sees Shoked Hozi YHWH, the great, mighty and fearsome and honored prince, would remove the crown [of glory] from his head and fall upon his face. And why is his name called Shoked Hozi? Because he weighs all merits in the pan of a balance before the Holy One, blessed be He.

13 And when he sees Zehanpuryin YHWH, the great, mighty and fearsome, honored, splendid prince, revered in all the household on high, he removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And why is his name called Zehanpuryin? Because he is in fury against the river of fire and quenches it in its place.

13.2 And when he sees Azbogah YHWH, the great prince, honored and fearsome, honored and splendid, wondrous and lofty, desirable and revered among the great princes who are acquainted with the mystery of the throne of glory, he removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And why is his name called Azbogah?

13.3 Because he [girds] garments of life and wraps a robe of life, in the time to come, upon the righteous and the pious of the world, so that they may live in them an everlasting life.

14 And when he sees the two great princes, eminent and honored, who stand above him, he removes the crown of glory from his head and falls upon his face. And these are their names, the angels, the princes: Sofriel

YHWH, who puts to death, the great prince, honored, splendid, pure, aged, strong; Shofriel YHWH, who gives life, the great prince, honored, splendid, pure, aged and strong.

14.2 And why is his name called Safriel YHWH, who puts to death? Because he is appointed over the books of the dead, for everyone whose day of death has arrived, he writes him upon the books of the dead. And why is his name called Shofriel YHWH, who gives life?

14.3 Because he is appointed over the books of the living, for everyone whom the Holy One, blessed be He, desires in life, he writes him in the books of the living, by the permission of the Omnipresent.

15 And lest you say: Since the Holy One, blessed be He, sits on a throne, they too sit and write, Scripture says: "And all the host of the heavens standing by Him." "The host of the heavens": this teaches that even the great princes, who have none like them in the heavens on high, do not perform the needs of the Shekhinah except when they are standing. And how do they write while they are standing?

16 Rather, this one stands on wheels of whirlwind, and that one stands on wheels of storm. This one is clothed in mantles of kings, and that one is clothed in mantles of kings. This one is wrapped in a robe of exaltation, and that one is wrapped in a robe of exaltation. This one is bound with a band of kingship, and that one is bound with a band of kingship.

16.2 This one has a body full of eyes, and that one has a body full of eyes. This one has an appearance as the appearance of lightnings, and that one has an appearance as the appearance of lightnings. This one has eyes as the sun in its might, and that one has eyes as the sun in its might.

16.3 This one, [his stature] is as the height of seven firmaments, and that one, [his stature] is as the height of seven firmaments. This one has wings as the days of the year, and that one has wings as the days of the year.

17 This one has wings as the expanses of the firmament, and that one has wings as the expanses of the firmament. This one has lips as the gates of the east, and that one has lips as the gates of the east. This one has a tongue as the height of the waves of the sea, and that one has a tongue as the height of the waves of the sea.

17.2 From the mouth of this one a flame goes forth, and from the mouth of that one a flame goes forth. From the mouth of this one lightnings go forth, and from the mouth of that one lightnings go forth. From the sweat of this one the fire is kindled, and from the sweat of that one the fire is kindled.

17.3 From the tongue of this one a torch burns, and from the tongue of that one a torch burns. Upon the head of this one is a sapphire stone, and upon the head of that one is a sapphire stone.

18 Upon the shoulders of this one is the wheel of a swift cherub, and upon the shoulders of that one is the wheel of a swift cherub. In the hand of this one is a scroll of coal, and in the hand of that one is a scroll of coal. In the hand of this one is a pen of flame, and in the hand of that one is a pen of flame.

18.2 The length of the scroll is three thousand myriads of parasangs, and the measure of the pen is three thousand myriads of parasangs. The measure of each and every letter that they write is three hundred and sixty-five parasangs.

CHAPTER 19

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Above these three angels, these great princes, there is one prince, chief and honored, noble and resplendent, splendid and revered, mighty, stout, and great and magnified, stalwart and beautified, wondrous and lofty, pure and desirable, sovereign, exalted and high, aged, strong, whose like there is not among all the princes, all of them.

1.2 Rikhbiel YHWH, [the prince], the great and the fearsome, is his name, who stands beside the chariot. And why is his name called Rikhbiel? [Because] he is appointed over the wheels of the chariot, and they are given into his hand. And how many wheels are there? Eight, two and two to each and every wind.

1.3 And round about them four winds surround them, and these are their names: a wind of whirlwind, a wind of storm, and a strong wind, and a wind of earthquake.

2 And from beneath them four rivers of fire are drawn out and go forth, a river of fire to each and every side. And between them four clouds are set around, and these are they: clouds of fire, clouds of torch-flame, clouds of coal, clouds of brimstone, planted and standing opposite their wheels.

2.2 And the feet of the living creatures are set upon the wheels, and quaking upon quaking is between wheel and wheel, and thunder upon thunder is between wheel and wheel.

2.3 And when the time comes to say song, the multitude of wheels shake, the multitude of clouds tremble, all the captains shake, all the horsemen are in tumult, all the mighty ones recoil, shaking, [all] the hosts quake, all the troops [are filled with dread], all the appointed ones hasten, all the princes and armies are dismayed, all the ministers melt away, [all] the angels and divisions writhe.

3 And wheel makes a voice heard to wheel, cherub to cherub, living creature to living creature, ofan to ofan, seraph to seraph: "Extol Him who rides [in Aravot], by Yah is His name, and exult before Him."

CHAPTER 20

✦

[1] R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Above them there is one prince, great and stalwart, Hayliel YHWH is his name: a prince noble and fearsome, a prince [chief] and mighty, a prince great and fearsome, a prince before whom all the children of the upper ones quake, a prince who is able to swallow the whole world at one time.

[1.2] And why is his name called Hayliel YHWH, his name, the prince? Because he is appointed over the living creatures with lashes of fire, and he beautifies them when they give laudation, praise, jubilation, and he hastens them to say "Holy" and "Blessed be the glory of YHWH from His place."

CHAPTER 21

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Four living creatures, corresponding to the four winds. Each and every living creature is as the full extent of the whole world. And each and every one has four faces, and each and every face is as the face of the east.

1.2 And each and every one has four wings, and each and every wing is as the covering of the world. And each and every one has faces within faces, and each and every one has wings within wings. The measure of the faces is two hundred and forty-eight faces, and the measure of the wings is three hundred and sixty-five wings.

2 And each and every one has two thousand crowns bound upon its head, and each and every crown is as the bow in the cloud, and its radiance is as the radiance of the wheel of [the sun], and the sparks that go forth from each and every one are as the radiance of the star Nogah in the east.

CHAPTER 22

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Above them there is one prince, noble and wondrous, valiant and praised with every kind of praise, Keruviel YHWH is his name: a mighty prince, full of the power of mighty acts; a prince of exaltation, and exaltation is with him; a righteous prince, and righteousness is with him; a holy prince, and holiness is with him; a prince beautified with thousands of hosts; a prince adorned with myriads of armies.

1.2 At his indignation the world shakes, and at his rage the camps are in fury, and from awe of him the foundations writhe, and at his rebuke Aravot shakes. His stature is full of coals.

1.3 The height of his stature is as the height of seven firmaments, and the breadth of his stature is as the breadth of seven firmaments, and the thickness of his stature is as the thickness of seven firmaments.

2 The opening of his mouth is as a torch of fire, and his tongue consumes fire, and his eyelids are as the brilliance of lightning, and his eyes are as flashes of fire of brilliance, and the appearance of his face is as blazing fire.

2.2 And a crown of holiness is upon his head, on which the explicit Name is engraved, from which lightnings go forth, and the bow of the Shekhinah is between his shoulders. And his sword is upon his loins, and arrows as lightning are upon his girdle, and a shield of consuming fire is upon his neck, and coals of broom-wood are round about him.

3 And the radiance of the Shekhinah is upon his face, and the horns of grandeur are upon his wheels, and a turban of kingship is upon the crown of his head. And his body is full of eyes, and the height of his stature is all of it wings.

3.2 On his right a flame flames, and on his left a blaze blazes, and coals burn from his body, and torches go forth from him, and lightnings flash from his face. And with him always is thunder upon thunder, and beside him always is quaking upon quaking. The two princes of the chariot are in his place.

4 And why is his name called Keruviel YHWH, the prince? Because he is appointed over the chariot of the cherubim, and the cherubim of might are given into his hand. And the crowns of their heads he beautifies, and the diadem of the crown of their heads he polishes.

4.2 The praise of [their form] he rouses, and the beauty of their exaltation he hastens, and the abundance of the greatness of their honor he magnifies, and the song of their laudation he sings, and the strength of their beauty he sharpens, and the brilliance of their glory he makes shine, and the beauty of the grace of their lovingkindness he makes fair, and the delight of their brightness he embroiders, and the compassion of their loveliness he makes lovely, and the rightness of their splendor he makes splendid, and the order of their praise he adorns, to prepare a seat for Him who sits upon the cherubim.

5 And the cherubim stand beside the holy living creatures, and their wings are as the height of their heads, and the Shekhinah is upon their backs, and the brilliance of glory is upon their faces, and song and laudation are within their mouths, and their hands are beneath their wings, and

their feet are covered by their wings, and horns of splendor are upon their heads, and the radiance of the Shekhinah is upon their countenances, and the Shekhinah is upon their backs.

5.2 And sapphire stones are round about them, and pillars of fire are on their four sides, and pillars of torch-flame are at their sides. One sapphire is on this side; beneath their sapphires are coals of fire of broom-wood.

6 One cherub is on this side and one cherub on that side, and the wings of the cherubim, one with another, are set around over the crown of their heads in glory, spread out, to sing with them a song to Him who dwells in Shehakim and to proclaim with them in reverence beauty to the King of angels. And Keruviel YHWH, the prince who is appointed over them, orders them in orders comely and lovely and sweet, and adorns them with every kind of adornment of honor and glory, and hastens them in glory and strength to do the will of their Maker at each and every moment, for upon the height of their heads there is always the great glory of the King who sits upon the cherubim.

22B – 22C

✦

1 [B] R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: How do the angels stand on high? He said to me: Like a bridge that is laid over the river, and all the world passes over it, so a bridge is laid from the head of the entry to its end. And three ministering angels go around it and say a song before YHWH, the God of Israel.

1.2 And there stand before Him the swift ones of awe, the captains of fear, a thousand thousands and myriads of myriads, making sweet praise and laud before YHWH, the God of Israel.

2 How many bridges are the bridges of fire? How many are the bridges of hail? How many are the rivers of hail? How many storehouses of snow are there? How many are the wheels of fire? How many are the ministering angels? Twelve thousand myriads: six above, six below. Twelve thousand rivers of hail: six above, six below. Twelve thousand storehouses of snow: six above, six below.

2.2 Twenty-four myriads of wheels of fire: twelve above, twelve below. And they go around the bridges, the rivers of fire, the rivers of hail. And how many ministering angels there are, entry upon entry, for each and every created being, who stand within it, corresponding to the paths of the firmament of the heavens.

3 What does YHWH, the God of Israel, the King of Glory, do? He covers His face, the great and fearsome God, mighty in might. In Aravot six hundred and sixty thousand myriads of angels of glory stand facing the throne of glory, and those hewn of fire, flames.

3.2 And the King of Glory covers His face; if it were not so, Aravot, the firmament, would be split by its weight, because of the splendor, the radiance, the loveliness, the form, the delight of the brilliance of the noonday lights of the praise of the appearance, blessed be He.

4 How many ministers do His will! How many kings! How many princes in Aravot, His delight! Fearsome among the potentates of the Most High, lifted of face, splendid in song, making mention of love, dismayed by the brilliance of the Shekhinah. Their eyes are sickened by the light of the loveliness of the radiance of their King, and their faces have blackened, and their power has failed.

5 Rivers of joy flow, streams of gladness, rivers of rejoicing, streams of jubilation, rivers of love, streams of friendship [another reading: quakings], joining together and going forth from before the throne of glory, and they grow stronger and go on through the gates of the paths of Aravot, the firmament, from the sound of the pains and the tune of His living creatures, and from the sound of the jubilations of the timbrels of His ofanim, and from the sound of the melody of the cymbals of His cherubim; and it grows stronger and goes forth with a roar, with "Holy, holy, holy is YHWH of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."

6 [Lmr] There is a court before the throne of glory, which no seraph or angel can enter. And it is thirty-six thousand myriads of parasangs, as it is written: "Seraphim stand above Him", thirty-six. According to the count of thirty-six there are bridges there. And there are twenty-four myriads of wheels of fire there. And the ministering angels are twelve thousand myriads.

6.2 And twelve thousand rivers of hail. And twelve thousand storehouses of snow. [And in the seven palaces are chariots of fire and flames, without number, or end, or searching out.]

7 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: What is the measure between bridge and bridge? Twelve myriads of parasangs. In their going up, twelve myriads of parasangs, and in their going down, twelve. Between the rivers of awe and the rivers of fear, twenty-two myriads of parasangs.

7.2 Between the rivers of hail and the rivers of darkness, thirty-six myriads of parasangs. Between the chambers of lightnings and the clouds of consolations, forty-two myriads of parasangs. Between the clouds of consolations and the chariot, eighty-four myriads of parasangs. Between the chariot and the cherubim, one hundred and forty-five myriads of parasangs.

7.3 Between the cherubim and the ofanim, twenty-four myriads of parasangs. Between the ofanim and the chambers of chambers, twenty-four myriads. Between the chambers of chambers and the holy living creatures, two thousand parasangs.

8 Between wing and wing, twelve myriads, and their breadth is the same. And so between the holy living creatures and the throne of glory, the same, myriads of parasangs. And from the foot of the throne of glory to the place where He sits, forty thousand myriads of parasangs. And His name is sanctified there.

9 And the arches of the bow are set upon Aravot, a thousand thousands and myriads of myriads high, a measure corresponding to the measure of the Watchers and Holy Ones, as it is written: “My bow I have set in the

cloud."

9.2 "I will set in the cloud" is not written here, but "I have set": already. Thick clouds that surround the throne of glory. When His thick clouds passed, angels of hail, coals of fire.

9.3 And a fire of the voice came down from beside the holy living creatures, and because of the breath of the voice there is running, to pass over to another place; and they fear lest it say to go there; and returning, so that it should not do harm from the other side. Therefore: "running and returning."

10 And those arches of the bow are lovelier and clearer than the whiteness of the sun at the season of Tammuz, and they are whitened by flaming fire, and they are great and lovely. And above, the wheels of the ofanim are set upon the arches of the bow, a thousand thousands and myriads of myriads high, a measure corresponding to the measure of the seraphim and the troops.

11 B: R. Ishmael said: I asked R. Akiva: What is the measure between bridge and bridge? He said to me: R. Ishmael, uprightness and piety are in your heart, to know what measure there is in the heavens. He said to him: When I went up into the first palace I was noble. In the second palace I was pure. In the third palace I was upright. In the fourth palace I was blameless.

11.2 In the fifth palace I brought sanctification before the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He. In the sixth palace I said sanctification before Him who spoke and the world came to be, and formed,

and commanded all the created beings, so that the ministering angels should not destroy me. In the seventh palace I stood with all my power, and I recoiled, and so on.

CHAPTER 23

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: How many winds blow from beneath the wings of the cherubim! A hovering wind blows, as it is said: "And the wind of God was hovering." A strong wind blows, as it is said: "And YHWH drove the sea with a strong east wind." An east wind blows, as it is said: "And the east wind carried the locusts."

1.2 The wind of the sea blows, as it is said: "And a wind set out from YHWH and swept quails from the sea." A wind of jealousy blows, as it is said: "And a wind of jealousy passes over him." A wind of earthquake blows, as it is said: "And after the wind an earthquake; YHWH was not in the earthquake." An evil wind blows, as it is said: "And the evil wind would depart from upon him."

2 A wind of wisdom and understanding, a wind of counsel and might, a wind of knowledge and fear blows, as it is said: "And the wind of YHWH shall rest upon him, a wind of wisdom and understanding, a wind of counsel and might, a wind of knowledge and of the fear of YHWH." A wind of rains blows, as it is said: "The north wind brings forth rain."

2.2 A wind of lightnings blows, as it is said: "He made lightnings for the rain, bringing out the wind from His storehouses." A wind that stills water blows, as it is said: "And God made a wind pass over the earth, and the water subsided."

2.3 A wind of wrath and worry blows, as it is said: “A great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men.” A wind of storm blows, as it is said: “Wind of storm, doing His word.” And the Satan stands among them.

3 These winds blow only beneath the wings of the cherubim, as it is said: “And He rode upon a cherub and flew, and He swooped upon the wings of the wind.” And where do the winds go and come to an end?

3.2 This teaches that from beneath the wings of the cherubim they go out and fall upon the wheel of the sun, as it is said: “Going to the south and turning to the north, turning, turning goes the wind, and upon its circuits the wind returns.”

3.3 And from the wheel of the sun they return and fall upon the mountains and the seas and the hills, as it is said: “For behold, the Former of mountains and the Creator of wind.”

3.4 And from seas and rivers they return to the settled land, and from the settled land they return and fall upon the towns and the provinces, and from there they fall to the Garden, and from the Garden they fall to Eden, as it is said: “walking in the Garden at the wind of the day.”

4 And within the Garden of Eden they mingle and blow from this side to that side, and they are perfumed from the spices of the Garden of Eden, and from the perfumes of the Garden of Eden, until they part and are filled with the scent of pure spice, and they bring the scent of the perfumes and spices of the Garden of Eden before the righteous and the pious, the heirs of the Garden of Eden and the tree of life in the time to

come, as it is said: “Awake, north, and come, south; breathe upon my garden, let its spices flow. Let my beloved come to his garden and eat the fruit of his choice things.”

CHAPTER 24

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, the splendor on high of all, said to me: How many chariots the Holy One, blessed be He, has! He has chariots of the cherub, as it is said: "And He rode upon a cherub and flew." He has chariots of wind, as it is said: "And He swooped upon the wings of the wind."

1.2 He has chariots of the swift cloud, as it is said: "Behold, YHWH rides upon a swift cloud." He has chariots of clouds, as it is said: "Behold, I come to you in the thickness of the cloud." He has chariots of the altar, as it is said: "I saw the Lord standing upon the altar." He has chariots of myriads, as it is said: "The chariots of God are myriads, thousands of shinan."

1.3 He has chariots of the Tent of Meeting, as it is said: "And YHWH spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting."

2 He has chariots of the kapporet, as it is said: "And he heard the voice speaking to him from above the kapporet." He has chariots of sapphire stone, as it is said: "And under His feet, as it were a work of sapphire brick." He has chariots of eagles, as it is said: "And I bore you upon the wings of eagles."

2.2 He has chariots of the shout, as it is said: "God has gone up with a shout." He has chariots of Aravot, as it is said: "Extol Him who rides in Aravot, by Yah is His name." He has chariots of thick clouds, as it is said: "Who makes the thick clouds His chariot."

2.3 He has chariots of the living creatures, as it is said: “And the living creatures running and returning”: running by permission and returning by permission, for the Shekhinah is above the height of their heads. He has chariots of the galgal, as it is said: “And He said: Go in between the galgal.”

3 He has chariots of the swift cherub, as it is said: “He rode upon a swift cherub.”

4 And at the hour when He rides upon a swift cherub, and sets one foot upon its back and has not yet set His second foot, He surveys eighteen thousand worlds in a single survey, and discerns and sees into the populations, and knows these and these, until He has set His second foot upon its back, as it is said: “Eighteen thousand.”

4.2 And whence do we know that He surveys all these every day? As it is said: “God looked down from heaven upon the children of man, to see if there is any who understands, who seeks God.” He has chariots of ofanim, as it is said: “And the ofanim are full of eyes round about.” He has chariots of the holy throne, as it is said: “God sits upon His holy throne.” He has chariots of the throne of Yah, as it is said: “For a hand is upon the throne of Yah.”

5 He has chariots of the throne of glory, as it is said: “A throne of glory, on high from the beginning, the place of our sanctuary.” He has chariots of the high and exalted throne, as it is said: “And I saw the Lord sitting upon a high and exalted throne.”

CHAPTER 25

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Above them there is one prince, great and fearsome, mighty and honored, chief and revered, aged and strong, and Ofafniel YHWH is his name.

1.2 He has sixteen faces, four on each and every side, and he has eight thousand seven hundred and sixty-four eyes, as the number of the hours of the days of the year: two thousand one hundred and ninety-one, and sixteen, on each and every side.

1.3 And those two eyes that are in his faces, in each and every one, flash lightnings, and in each one torches burn, and no created being is able to gaze upon them, for whoever gazes upon them is at once burned.

2 And the height of his stature is a journey of two thousand five hundred years, which no eye of a created being is able to see, and no mouth is able to tell the power and the mighty acts of his strength, except the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, alone.

3 And why is his name called Ofafniel? Because he is appointed over the ofanim, and they are given into his hand. And he stands each and every day and ministers to them and fills them with dread and delights them, and he orders and adorns their running, and assembles their platform, and delights their dwelling, and waters their corner, and fattens their seat.

3.2 And he rises early and stays late over them, night and day, to increase their beauty and to magnify their exaltation and to make them swift in the praise of their Maker. And the ofanim are all full of eyes and full of

wings, eyes facing wings, wings facing eyes, and from between them shines a light like the light of brightness.

4 And seventy-two sapphire stones are set upon the crown of each and every one; its radiance goes forth to the four winds of Aravot, like the wheel of the sun, whose radiance goes forth to the four winds of the world. And why is his name called Tzadkael? Because his radiance resembles the appearance of Tzedek. And booths of radiance surround them, booths of brilliance, booths of the light of sapphire and emerald, because of the appearance of the likeness of eyes.

CHAPTER 26

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Above them there is one side, wondrous and noble, precious, mighty and formidable, chief and ruler, splendid and honored and delightful.

1.2 And all of him is full of radiance, and all of him is full of praise and brightness, and all of him is full of brilliance, and all of him is full of light, and all of him is full of loveliness, great delight.

1.3 His likeness is as angels and his body as eagles; his radiance is as lightnings, his form as torches, and his loveliness as lightning-flashes, and his grandeur as streams; his splendor is as hashmalim; his brightness is as the light of brightness; his appearance is as the great luminary; his height is as seven firmaments; and the light of his eyelids is as the sevenfold light.

2 And a sapphire stone is upon his head, as the full extent of the world, like the radiance of the very heavens for purity. And his body is full of eyes, like the stars of heaven, which cannot be searched out and have no end. And each and every eye is as the star Nogah, and some of them are as the small luminary and some of them as the great luminary.

2.2 From his ankles to his knees, as the stars of lightning; and from his knees to his thighs, as the stars of brightness; and from his thighs to his loins, as the luminary of the moon; and from his loins to his neck, as the luminary of the sun; and from his neck to the crown of his head, as light that does not fail. And the crown that is upon his head is as the radiance of the throne of glory.

3 The measure of the crown is a journey of five hundred and two years, and there is no kind of radiance, and no kind of brilliance, and no kind of brightness, and no kind of luminary in the world that is not set in that crown.

4 And that prince, Serafiel YHWH is his name, because he is appointed over the seraphim, and the seraphim of flame are given into his hand. And he stands over them night and day and teaches them song and laudation, beauty, strength, exaltation, to beautify their King with every kind of praise and sanctification. And how many are the seraphim?

4.2 Four, corresponding to the four winds of the world. And how many wings do they have? Six, corresponding to the six days of creation. And how many faces do they have? Sixteen faces, four to each wind. And the measure of the wings: each and every wing is as the full extent of a firmament. The measure of the faces: each and every face is as the face of the east, shining.

5 Each and every one is as the radiance of the throne of glory, so that even the holy living creatures and the ofanim of grandeur and the cherubim of splendor are not able to gaze upon him, for whoever gazes upon him, his eyes grow dim from the great radiance that is upon him.

6 And why is their name called seraphim? Because they burn the tablets of Satan. Each and every day the Satan sits with Samael the wicked, the prince of Rome, and with Demuel, the prince of Persia, and writes the iniquities of Israel on his tablets, and they give them to the seraphim to bring them in before the Holy One, blessed be He, to destroy Israel from the world.

6.2 And the seraphim know by sight that the Holy One, blessed be He, does not want this nation of the Holy One, blessed be He, Israel, to fall. What do the seraphim do?

6.3 Each and every day they take them from the hand of the Satan and burn them in the blazing fire that is opposite the high and exalted throne, so that they shall not come in before the Holy One, blessed be He, at the hour when He sits in judgment and judges the whole world as one.

CHAPTER 27

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Above the seraphim there is one prince, more excellent than all the princes, more wondrous than all the ministers: Dabriel YHWH is his name, who is appointed over the treasuries of His books.

1.2 And he brings out and brings in the cases, and he opens and takes the books and gives them into the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He; and the Holy One, blessed be He, takes them from his hand and gives them, before Him, into the hands of the scribes, to read in the great court that is in the height of Aravot, the firmament, in the presence of the household on high.

1.3 And why is his name called Dabriel? Because from each and every utterance that goes forth from him there is an angel, and it stands in the hymns of the ministering angels, and they say a song before Him at the hour when the time arrives to say “Holy”.

CHAPTER 28

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Above all these there are four great princes, Watchers and Holy Ones is their name: high and honored, fearsome and desirable, wondrous and noble, greater than all the children of the upper ones; and there is none like them among all the princes of the upper ones, and none of their worth among all the ministers, all of them, for each and every one is weighed against them all.

1.2 And their enclosure is over against the throne of glory, and the radiance of their likeness is of the kind of the radiance of the Shekhinah, and they are made beautiful from the beauty of the Shekhinah and are praised with the praise of the Shekhinah.

2 And not only that, but the Holy One, blessed be He, does not do a thing in His world until He has taken counsel with them first, and afterwards He does the thing in His world, as it is said: "By the decree of the Watchers is the matter, and by the word of the Holy Ones the question." Watchers, two; Holy Ones, two. And how do they speak before the Holy One, blessed be He? This teaches that one Watcher stands before the Holy One, blessed be He, on this side, and one Holy One stands on that side,

3 and forever they raise the lowly up on high and they bring the proud down to the earth. And each and every day, when the Holy One, blessed be He, sits on the throne of judgment and judges the whole world entire,

and the books of the living and the books of the dead are open before Him, all the children of the upper ones stand before Him in fear, in dread and trembling.

3.2 At that hour the Holy One, blessed be He, sits as a judge on the throne of the Presence: His garment white like snow, and the hair of His head like clean wool, and His robe all of it like the light of brightness, and all of Him full of righteousness as a coat of mail.

4 And they, the Watchers and Holy Ones, stand before Him like officers before the judges, and they debate each and every matter and conclude the matter that has come before the Holy One, blessed be He, in judgment, as it is said: "By the decree of the Watchers is the matter, and by the word of the Holy Ones the question."

4.2 Some of them decide the matters, and some of them decree in the great court that is in Aravot; some of them ask the questions from before the Power, and some of them conclude the matters toward what is above; some of them establish the decrees on the earth below, as it is said: "And behold, a Watcher and a Holy One came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and thus he said: Hew down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit."

5 And why is their name called Watchers and Holy Ones? Because they sanctify the body and the soul with their lashes on the third day of judgment, as it is said: "He will revive us after two days; on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live before Him."

CHAPTER 29

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Seventy names has each and every one of them, corresponding to seventy tongues, and all of them are upon the name of the Holy One, blessed be He. And each and every name is written with a pen of flame upon a fearsome crown that is on the head of the high and exalted King.

1.2 And from each and every one flashes of fire and lightnings go forth from it, and from each and every one horns of brilliance are set around it, and from each and every one lights flash from it, and from each and every one booths and tents of understanding are set around it, so that even seraphim and living creatures, who are greater than all the children of the upper ones, are not able to gaze upon them.

CHAPTER 30

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: At all times the great court sits in the height of Aravot, the firmament. They are the great princes who are called YHWH, by the name of the Holy One, blessed be He. And how many are the princes?

1.2 Seventy-two princes of the kingdoms that are in the world, besides the Prince of the World, who speaks in praise of the world before the Holy One, blessed be He, every day, at the hour of the opening of the book in which all the deeds of the world are written, as it is said: “The court sat, and books were opened.”

CHAPTER 31

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: When the Holy One, blessed be He, sits upon the throne of judgment, righteousness stands at His right and lovingkindness at His left and truth before His face.

1.2 And at the hour when a wicked man comes to be judged before Him, the attribute of lovingkindness goes forth toward his face and stands opposite him. At once the man falls upon his face; all the angels of destruction at his right fear and quake, as it is said: “And His throne shall be established in lovingkindness, and He shall sit upon it in truth.”

CHAPTER 32

✦

[1] R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: When they open the book before the Holy One, blessed be He, arrows of fire and arrows of flame go forth from before Him at each and every moment, to execute with them the judgment of the wicked. And His sword is drawn from its sheath, and its radiance gleams like lightning and goes from one end of the world to the other, and sparks go forth from it, to the measure of the stars of the firmament, as it is said: “the lightning of My sword.”

CHAPTER 33

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: At the hour when the Holy One, blessed be He, sits upon the throne of true judgment, angels of mercy stand at His right and angels of peace stand at His left and angels of destruction stand facing Him. One scribe is below Him and one scribe is above Him.

1.2 And seraphim of glory surround the throne of glory on its four sides with walls of lightnings, and ofanim surround them with torches round about the throne of glory, and clouds of fire and clouds of torch-flame are set around them on the right and on the left.

1.3 And the holy living creatures bear the throne of glory from beneath them, each and every one eight thousand and seven hundred and six thousand parasangs.

2 And from beneath the feet of the living creatures seven rivers of fire are drawn out and go forth, and each and every river, its length is three hundred and sixty and five thousand parasangs; its length is beyond searching out and beyond number. And each and every one turns in them like a kind of dome on the four sides of Aravot, the firmament, and falls and comes to its end at Maon, and from Maon to Zevul, and from Zevul to Shehakim, and from Shehakim to the firmament, and from the firmament to the heavens, and from the heavens upon the heads of the wicked who

are in Gehinnom, as it is said: “Behold, the storm of YHWH, wrath, has gone forth, and a whirling tempest; upon the head of the wicked it shall whirl.”

CHAPTER 34

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: The hooves of the feet of the living creatures are surrounded by seven clouds of coal.

2 In front of the clouds of coal seven walls of flame are set around, and in front of them seven walls of torch are set around, and in front of them seven stones of hail, and in front of the stones of hail circles of flames are set around, and in front of the circles of flames upper rooms of storm, and in front of the upper rooms of storm walls of fire and water are set around, and in front of those are set around those who say “Holy”, and in front of them those who say “Blessed”, and in front of them thick clouds of purity, and in front of them coals of broom-wood are set around, and in front of them a thousand camps of fire and a myriad hosts of flame are set around; and between camp and camp and between host and host a thick cloud is set around between them, so that they are not burned by the fire.

CHAPTER 35

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Four hundred and ninety-six thousand myriads of camps has the Holy One, blessed be He, in the height of Aravot, the firmament, and each and every camp is four hundred and ninety-six thousand angels.

1.2 And each and every angel, the height of his stature is as the great sea, and the appearance of his likeness is as the appearance of lightning, and their eyes are as torches of fire, and their arms and their feet are like the gleam of burnished copper. And the princes of the army stand at the head of each and every row.

1.3 And some of them say "Holy", and some of them say "Blessed", and some of them run on errands, some of them stand in service, as it is said: "A thousand thousands ministered to Him, and a myriad myriads stood before Him; the court sat, and the books were opened."

2 And at the hour when the time has arrived to say "Holy", first a wind of storm goes out from before the Holy One, blessed be He, and falls upon the camp of the Shekhinah, and there is a great tempest among them, as it is said: "Behold, the storm of YHWH, wrath, has gone forth, and a whirling tempest." At that hour a thousand thousands of them are made torches, saying Amen; glowing ones, saying Amen; flames, saying Amen; males, saying Amen; females, saying Amen; burning fires, saying Amen; angels of flame, saying Amen; flashing flashes of fire, saying Amen; hash-

malim of light, saying Amen; for they take upon themselves the yoke of the kingdom of the High and Exalted One, the Former of them all, in fear, in shuddering, in quaking, in wrath and anguish, in dread and trembling.

3 And afterwards they are returned to their first measure, so that the fear of their King may be before them at each and every hour, so that they may direct their heart to say song at every hour, as it is said: “And one called to another and said: Holy.”

CHAPTER 36

✦

[1] R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: At the hour when the ministering angels seek to say song, the river of fire rises with many thousand thousands and myriad myriads of power of mighty acts of fire, and it flows on and passes beneath the throne of glory, between the camps of the ministering angels and the troops of Aravot.

[1.2] And all the ministering angels first go down into the river of fire and immerse themselves in the fire of the river of fire, and they immerse their tongue and their mouth seven times in the river of fire, and afterwards they come up and put on a garment of hashmal and stand in four rows facing the throne of glory, in each and every firmament.

CHAPTER 37

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: In seven palaces stand four chariots of the Shekhinah, and before each and every one stand four camps of the Shekhinah.

1.2 And between camp and camp a river of fire flows and passes, and between river and river thick clouds of purity are set round about, and between each and every one stand pillars of brimstone. And between pillar and pillar wheels of flame stand encircling, and between wheel and wheel flashes of the torch encircle, and between flash and flash storehouses of lightnings encircle.

1.3 After the storehouses of lightnings there encircle the wings of the whirlwind, the treasuries of the storm, winds, voices, thunders, sparks. After the sparks, quakings encircle.

CHAPTER 38

✦

[1] R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: At the hour when the ministering angels say “Holy”, all the pillars of the firmaments and its sockets totter, and the gates of the palaces and Aravot, the firmament, are shaken, and the foundations of the world and Shehakim quake, and the chambers of Maon and the palaces of Makhon writhe, and all the hidden things of the firmament, constellations and stars, are dismayed, and the wheel of the sun and the wheel of the moon hasten and flee from their paths and run backward twelve thousand parasangs, and they seek to cast themselves from the heavens, because of the thunder of their voice and the din of their extolling and the flashes of fire that go out of their mouths, as it is said: “The voice of Your thunder was in the wheel; they lit up”, and so on; until the Prince of the World calls to them and says to them: “Be silent in your place, and do not be afraid, for the ministering angels are saying a song before the Holy One, blessed be He”, as it is said: “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted.”

CHAPTER 39

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: When the ministering angels say “Holy”, all the explicit names that are engraved with a pen of flame upon the throne of glory fly off like eagles, with sixteen wings, and they encircle and go round the Holy One, blessed be He, at the four winds of the place of His Shekhinah.

2 And the angels of the host, and the ministers of flame, and the ofanim of might, and the cherubim of the Shekhinah, and the holy living creatures, and the seraphim, and the erelim, and the tafsarim, and the troops of consuming fire, and the ranks of the torch, and the hosts of blaze, and the princes of the holy ones, and the princes of crowns, clothed in kingship, wrapped in noble glory and beauty, girded with magnificence, belted with exaltation, fall upon their faces three times and say: “Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever.”

CHAPTER 40

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: At the hour when the ministering angels say "Holy" in its proper order before the Holy One, blessed be He, the ministers of His throne go out with great joy from beneath the throne of glory, and each and every one has in their hands a thousand thousands and a myriad of myriads of crowns of stars, resembling the appearance of the radiance of the star Nogah, and they bind them on the ministering angels, on the great princes, those who say "Holy", three crowns: one because they say "Holy", and one because they say "Holy, holy", and one because they say "Holy, holy, holy, YHWH of hosts".

2 And at the time when they do not say "Holy" in its proper order, a consuming fire goes out from before the little finger of the Holy One, blessed be He, and falls into the midst of His ranks, and it is divided into four hundred and ninety-six thousand myriads of parts, corresponding to the four camps of the ministering angels, and they consume them all at one time, as it is said: "Fire goes before Him and sets ablaze His foes round about."

2.2 And afterward the Holy One, blessed be He, opens His mouth and speaks one word, and creates in their place new ones like them. And each and every one stands in song before the throne of His glory, and they say "Holy", as it is said: "New every morning; great is Your faithfulness."

CHAPTER 41

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Come and I will show you the letters by which heaven and earth were created; the letters by which seas and rivers were created; the letters by which stars and constellations were created, the wheel of the moon and the wheel of the sun, Orion and the Pleiades, and all the kinds of luminaries of the firmament; the letters by which the ministering angels were created; the letters by which seraphim and living creatures were created; the letters by which the throne of glory and the wheels of the chariot were created; the letters by which all the needs of the world were created; the letters by which wisdom and understanding, knowledge and insight, humility and uprightness were created, by which the whole world entire is sustained.

2 And I went to him, and he took hold of me with his hand and raised me up on his wings and showed me those letters, all of them, that are engraved with a pen of flame upon the throne of glory, and sparks and lightnings go forth from them and cover all the chambers of Aravot.

CHAPTER 42

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Come and I will show you where the waters are suspended in the height, and where fire blazes in the midst of stones of hail, and where thunders thunder in the midst of the heights of the Most High, and where a flame blazes in the midst of burning fire, and where a voice makes itself heard in thunder and in roaring.

1.2 And I went, and he took hold of me with his hand and raised me up on his wings and showed me all of them. And I saw waters suspended in the height of Aravot, the firmament, by the name "Yah, I am that I am", and from them rains come down and water the face of the world, as it is said: "From the fruit of Your works the earth is sated."

2 And I saw fire and snow and hailstones kindled one within another, and they are not harmed, by the name "consuming fire", as it is said: "For YHWH your God is a consuming fire," and so on. And I saw lightnings that flash in the midst of flames of fire, and they are not harmed, by the name "Yah, YHWH, the rock of ages", as it is said: "For in Yah, YHWH, is the rock of ages."

2.2 And I saw thunders and voices that roar in the midst of flames of fire, and they are not harmed, by the name "a hand upon the throne of Yah", as it is said: "For a hand is upon the throne of Yah," and so on.

2.3 And I saw rivers of fire in the midst of rivers of water, and rivers of water in the midst of rivers of fire, and they are not harmed, by the name "He makes peace in His heights", for He makes peace between fire and wa-

ter, and between wind and cloud, and between wrath and sparks.

CHAPTER 43

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Come and I will show you the souls of the righteous that have been created [in bodies] and have returned, and the souls of the righteous that have not yet been created.

1.2 And he raised me up beside him and took hold of me with his hand and led me to the throne of glory and showed me those souls that have been created and have returned, that are flying above the throne of glory before the Holy One, blessed be He.

1.3 And afterwards I went and expounded this verse, which I found on the matter: “For a spirit from before Me enwraps itself, and souls I have made.” These are the souls of the righteous that have not yet been created in a body.

CHAPTER 44

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Come and I will show you the souls of the wicked, how they go down, and the souls of those in between, how they stand. And he said: The souls of the wicked go down to Sheol by the hands of two angels of destruction, and these are they: Zaafiel and Samkhiel.

1.2 Samkhiel is over the souls of those in between, to support them and to purify them from sin, in the abundance of the mercies of the Omnipresent. Zaafiel is over the souls of the wicked, to bring them down from before the Holy One, blessed be He, from the judgment of the Shekhinah, to Sheol, to judge them with fire in Gehinnom, with rods of coals.

1.3 And I went to him, and he took hold of me with his hand and showed me all with the fingers of his hands.

2 And I saw the likeness of the appearance of their faces, like the sons of men, and their bodies like eagles; and not only that, but the radiance of the likeness of those in between is like green herbs, because of their deeds, in which there is blemish, until they are purified from their iniquity by fire; and the radiance of the likeness of the souls of the wicked is like the bottom of a pot, because of the multitude of their evil deeds.

3 And I saw the souls of the fathers of the world, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the rest of the righteous, when they raise them from their graves, and they go up to the firmament and pray before the Holy One, blessed be He, and say in prayer: Master of the Universe, how long will

You sit upon a throne like a mourner who sits in the days of his mourning, with Your right hand behind You, and You do not redeem Your children and reveal Your kingdom in the world? And You have no mercy on Your children, who serve as servants among the nations of the world; and on Your right hand that is behind You, with which You stretched out and spanned the heavens and the heavens of heavens, You have no pity.

4 At that hour the Holy One, blessed be He, answers each and every one of them alone and says: Because of these wicked ones, who sinned before Me thus and thus, when they did iniquity before Me thus and thus, and when they rebelled before Me thus and thus, how then can I save My children from among the nations and reveal My kingdom in the world before the eyes of the nations, to save My great right hand, which is fallen and cast down by their hand?

4.2 At that hour He calls me and says to me: Metatron, My servant, take the books and read their deeds. And there are found thirty-six offences of cutting off that each and every wicked one has transgressed; and moreover, that they transgressed all the letters of the Torah, as it is said: “And all Israel have transgressed Your Torah.”

5 It does not say “against Your Torah” but “Your Torah”, for they transgressed from alef to tav, thirty-six offences of cutting off in each and every letter. At once Abraham wept by himself, Isaac by himself, Jacob by himself.

5.2 And afterward the Holy One, blessed be He, said to them: Abraham, who loves Me, Isaac, My chosen one, Jacob, My firstborn, now I am not able to save them from among the nations of the world. And at

once Michael, the prince of Israel, came, crying out and weeping in a loud voice, as it is said: “Why, YHWH, do You stand from afar?”

CHAPTER 45

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Come, and I will show you the curtain of the Omnipresent, which is spread before the Holy One, blessed be He, on which all the generations of generations of the world and all the deeds of the generations of the world, both what they have done and what they are doing, until the end of all the generations, are engraved. And I went, and he showed me with the fingers of his hands, like a father who taught his son the letters of the Torah.

2 And I saw generation after generation and their potentates, generation after generation and their heads and their shepherds, generation after generation and their guards and their taskmasters and their tormentors and their overseers and their judges and their bailiffs and their teachers and their helpers and their pious ones and their rulers and their parents and their sages and the heads of their houses of study and the heads of their academies, generation after generation and their officers and their princes and their chiefs, generation after generation and their elders, generation after generation and their leaders.

3 And I saw Adam and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Methuselah and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Noah and the generation of the flood, their thoughts and their deeds; Shem and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Nimrod and the generation of the division, their thoughts and their deeds; Abraham and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Isaac and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Jacob and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds;

Joseph and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; the tribes and their generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Amram and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Moses and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Aaron and his generation, their thoughts and their deeds; Miriam and her generation, and so on; Eli and his generation, and so on; Elkanah and his generation, and so on; Samuel and his generation, and so on; Saul and his generation, and so on; David and his generation, and so on; Solomon and his generation, and so on; the kings of Judah and their generation, and so on; the kings of Israel and their generation, and so on; the kings of the nations of the world and their generation, and so on; the potentates of Israel, and so on; the chiefs of Israel, and so on; the chiefs of the nations of the world, and so on; the rich of Israel, and so on; the rich of the nations of the world, and so on; the sages of Israel, and so on; the sages of the nations of the world, and so on; the princes of Israel, and so on; the princes of the nations of the world, and so on; the heads of the academies of Israel, and so on; the heads of the nations of the world, and so on; the men of renown from Israel, and so on; the men of renown from the nations of the world, and so on; the judges of Israel, and so on; the judges of the nations of the world, and so on; the children's teachers of Israel, and so on; the teachers of children from the nations of the world; the interpreters of Israel, and so on; the interpreters of the nations of the world, and so on; the prophets of Israel, and so on; the prophets of the nations of the world, and so on; and every battle and war that the nations of the world wage with Israel in the days of their kingdom.

4 And I saw the Messiah son of Joseph and his generation, and all their deeds that the nations of the world do there. And I saw the Messiah son of David and his generation, and every battle and war of their deeds and their works that they do with Israel, whether for good or for evil.

4.2 And I saw all the battles and wars that Gog and Magog wage in the days of the Messiah, and all that the Holy One, blessed be He, does with them in the time to come. And there are the stewards of the generation and all the deeds of the generation, whether in Israel or among the nations of the world.

4.3 Whether they have done them or are doing them in the time to come, until generations of generations, until the end, all of them are engraved on the curtain of the Omnipresent.

5 And I saw them all with my eyes, and at the last, when I had seen, I opened my mouth and said in praise of the Omnipresent: “Because the word of the king has power, and so on.” “He who keeps a commandment will know no evil thing, and so on.” And it says: “How many are Your works, YHWH.” And it says: “How great are Your works, YHWH.”

CHAPTER 46

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: The spirits of the stars that are deep in the firmament, and each and every night, at the word of the Omnipresent, where they go and where they stand.

1.2 I went to him, and he took hold of me with his hand and showed me all of them with the fingers of his hands, and they were like sparks of the flame of the chariots of the Omnipresent. What did Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, do at that hour? He struck his palm upon his palm and made all of them fly from their place.

1.3 At once they flew from their place on wings of flame, and they uncovered and covered on the four sides of the throne of the chariot. And he told me, of each and every one, their names and their by-names, as it is said: "He counts the number of the stars; to all of them He calls names."

2 This teaches that the Holy One, blessed be He, set a name for each and every star. And all of them enter by count, by the hand of Rahatiel the angel, into the firmament of the heavens to serve the world, and they go out by count to praise the Holy One, blessed be He, with songs and with praises, as it is said: "The heavens recount the glory of God, and the firmament tells the work of His hands."

2.2 And in the time to come the Holy One, blessed be He, renews them, as it is said: “New every morning; great is Your faithfulness.” And they open their mouth and utter song. And what song do they utter? As it is said: “When I see Your heavens,” and so on.

CHAPTER 47

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron said to me: Come and I will show you the souls and the spirits of the ministers whose bodies are burned by the fire of the Omnipresent, which goes out from His little finger, and they become coals of fire within the river of fire, and their spirits and their souls stand behind the Shekhinah.

1.2 Whenever the ministering angels utter song not at its time, and not as is fitting, and not as is proper, they are burned and set ablaze by the fire of their Maker and by the flame of their Creator, in their place; and a wind of storm blows upon them and casts them into the river of fire, and there they become mountains upon mountains of burning coal, and their spirits and their souls return to their Creator, and all of them stand behind their Maker.

2 And I went to him, and he took hold of me with his hand and showed me all of them, the souls of the angels and the spirits of the ministers, standing behind the Shekhinah. At once a storm passed by, and walls of fire were surrounding them.

2.2 At that hour Metatron opened for me the gates of the walls of fire within which they stand behind the Shekhinah, and at once I lifted up my eyes and saw them: the likeness of each and every one was as the likeness of angels, and their wings were like a bird's, a work of flame, the workings of burning fire.

2.3 At that hour I opened my mouth in praise of the Omnipresent and said: “Great are the works of YHWH,” and so on.

48A

✦

1 R. Ishmael said: Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, said to me: Come and see His right hand, which is sent behind because of the destruction of the Temple, from which all kinds of radiance of luminaries shine forth, by which nine hundred and fifty-five firmaments were created, at which even seraphim and ofanim are not permitted to gaze until the coming of the day of salvation in the time to come.

1.2 And I went to him, and he took hold of me with his hand and raised me up on his wings and showed it to me, and every kind of praise, jubilation and laud; for the mouth is not able to tell its praise, and no eye is able to gaze at it, because of its greatness and its praiseworthiness and its preciousness and its glory and its beauty.

2 But all the souls of the righteous who are found worthy and see the joy of Jerusalem, they stand beside it and extol before it and beg mercy from before it, and say three times every day: "Awake, awake, put on strength, arm of YHWH, awake", and so on; and in the same manner: "Who made the arm of His beauty go at the right hand of Moses",

3 At that hour the right hand of the Holy One, blessed be He, was weeping, and five rivers of tears flow and go forth from its five fingers and fall into the great sea and shake the world, as it is said: "Breaking, the earth is broken; crumbling, the earth is crumbled; reeling, the earth shall reel like a drunkard, and it shall sway like a hut." See, five times, corresponding to the five fingers of His great right hand.

4 And when the Holy One, blessed be He, sees that there is no righteous man in the generation and no pious man on the earth and no righteousness in the hands of man, and no man like Moses and no intercessor like Samuel who would beg mercy from before the Omnipresent for the salvation, that He should bring it back before Him to work salvation by it for Israel, at once the Holy One, blessed be He, remembers His own righteousness and His lovingkindness and His mercy, and saves His great arm for Himself, and all His righteousness supports Him, as it is said: "And He saw that there was no man", and so on, "and His arm wrought salvation for Him", and so on.

5 No man like Moses, who would beg mercy many times in the wilderness for Israel and annulled the decrees from upon Israel; and that there was no intercessor like Samuel, who entreated the Holy One, blessed be He, and He answered, and he called to Him, and the Holy One, blessed be He, did his will for him, even when it was not fitting, as it is said: "Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call to YHWH", and so on.

5.2 And not only that, but he was paired with Moses, as it is said: "Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among those who call upon His name", and so on. And it says: "If Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me", and so on.

6 "And His arm wrought salvation for Him": the Holy One, blessed be He, said at that hour: How long shall I wait for My children to work salvation for My arm by their righteousness?

6.2 I, for My own sake and for the sake of My righteousness and My merit, will save My arm and deliver My children from among the nations of the world, as it is said: "For My own sake I will act, for how shall I wait?"

6.3 At that hour the Holy One, blessed be He, reveals His great arm in the world and shows it to the nations of the world, for its length is as the length of the world, from the end of the world to its end, and its breadth is as the breadth of the world, and the form of its radiance is as the brilliance of the sun in its might at the season of Tammuz.

7 At once Israel are redeemed from among them, and Messiah appears to them, who will bring them up from the four winds of the world, and the nations of the world do not dwell with them, as it is said: "YHWH has bared the arm of His holiness before the eyes of all the peoples, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God", "YHWH alone leads him, and there is no foreign god with Him", and it is said: "And YHWH shall be king over all the earth", and so on.

48B

✦

1 The Holy One, blessed be He, has seventy names that are explicit, and the rest, that are not explicit, have no searching out and have no number. And these are the seventy names of the Holy One, blessed be He. These are the names of the Holy One, blessed be He, that go forth with many crowns of fire, with many crowns of flame, with many crowns of lightning-flash, with many crowns of hashmal, with many crowns of lightning, from before the throne of glory.

2 And with them are a thousand camps of the Shekhinah and a myriad of myriads of hosts of might, who conduct them like a king, with trembling, with shuddering, with awe and quaking, with grandeur and splendor and fear, with dread, with greatness and glory, with honor, with vigor, with understanding and knowledge, with a pillar of fire and with a pillar of flame and lightning; and their light is like gleams of light and like the appearance of hashmal.

2.2 They give them glory and strength and call out before them: "Holy, holy, holy," as it is said: "And one called to another and said: Holy, holy, holy." They roll them through each and every firmament that is on high, like the sons of kings, noble and honored.

3 And when they bring them back to the place of the throne of glory, all the living creatures that are in the chariot open their mouths in praise of the glory of the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, and say: “Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever.”

48C

✦

1 Alef. The Holy One, blessed be He, said: I made him strong, I took him, I appointed him: Metatron My servant, who is one, singled out from all the children of the heights, all of them. I made him strong in his first generation.

1.2 And when I looked upon the men of the generation of the flood, that they were growing ever more corrupt, I removed My Shekhinah from among them and went up on high with the sound of the shofar and with a shout, as it is said: “God has gone up with a shout, YHWH with the sound of the shofar.”

1.3 And I took him, Enoch son of Jared, from among them, and brought him up on high with the sound of the shofar and with a shout, to be a witness for Me, as far as the four living creatures that are in the chariot, for the world to come.

2 I appointed him over all the treasuries and storehouses that I have in each and every firmament, and the keys of each and every one I delivered into his hand, over the princes. And I made him a minister to the throne of glory: the palaces of Aravot, to open their doors for him; and the throne of glory, to adorn it and set it in order; the holy living creatures, to bind crowns upon their heads; and the ofanim of splendor, to crown them with strength and glory; the cherubim of grandeur, to clothe them in splendor; and the sparks of brilliance, to recall to them the radiance of brilliance; the seraphim of flame, to wrap them in exaltation; the hashmalim of light, to gird them with illumination.

3 Each and every dawn, to prepare a seat for Me when I sit upon My throne in glory and honor, to see My glory on high, My strength, in the mysteries of the upper ones and in the mysteries of the lower ones.

4 I raised above you the height of his stature, among all those of lofty stature, seven thousand parasangs. I made his throne great from the grandeur of My throne, and I increased his glory from the grandeur of My glory. I turned his flesh into torches of fire and all the bones of his body into coals of fire.

4.2 I made his appearance like the appearance of a lightning-flash, and the light of his eyelids like a light that does not fail. I made his face shine like the light of the radiance of the sun, and the brilliance of his eyes like the radiance of the throne of glory.

4.3 I made his clothing glory, grandeur and splendor, and the covering of his robe beauty and exaltation and strength; a diadem, a crown of kingship, of five hundred by five hundred parasangs. And I put upon him of My grandeur and of My splendor and of the radiance of My glory that is upon the throne of glory.

5 I called him by My name, the lesser YHWH, Prince of the Presence and knower of mysteries. And each and every mystery I revealed to him in love, and each and every secret I made known to him, as I set his throne at the entrance of My palace, outside, to sit and to do judgment. And all My household that is on high, and each and every prince, I stationed before him, to receive permission, to do his will for him.

6 Seventy names I took from My names and called him by them, to increase glory for him. Seventy princes I gave into his hand, to command them in every tongue the commands of My words: to bring low by My

word the proud down to the earth, and to raise up by the utterance of My lips the lowly up to on high; to strike kings from their kingship, to set up potentates over their dominion, as it is said: "And He changes the times and the seasons, He removes kings and sets up kings," and so on.

7 To give wisdom to all the kings of the world, and understanding and knowledge to those who understand knowledge, as it is said: "He gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who know understanding"; to reveal to them the mysteries of My words, and to teach them the decree of My judgment, as it is said: "So shall My word be that goes out from My mouth: it shall not return to Me empty, but has done that which I desired," and so on. It does not say "but I will do" but "but has done": this teaches that each and every word and each and every utterance that goes out from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, Metatron stands and does it of himself, and fulfils the decree of the Holy One, blessed be He.

8 "And has prospered in that for which I sent it": it does not say "and prospers" but "and has prospered": this teaches that each and every decree that goes out from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, upon a man, once he has repented, they do not send it as punishment for him, but they send it to another man, as it is said: "The righteous is delivered from trouble, and the wicked comes in his place,"

9 and not only that, but each and every day Metatron sits for three hours in the heavens on high and gathers all those souls: of the unborn who died in their mother's womb, and of the sucklings at the breast who died at their mother's breasts, and of the schoolchildren who died over the five books of the Torah.

9.2 And he brings them beneath the throne of glory and seats them band upon band, company upon company and group upon group, around his face, and teaches them Torah and wisdom and aggadah and tradition, and completes for them the book of the Torah, as it is said: “Whom shall he teach knowledge, and whom shall he make understand tradition? Those weaned from milk, those taken from the breasts.”

48D

✦

1 Ninety-two names has Metatron, and these are they. And his last name is Sagnazgael, the prince of wisdom. And why is his name called Sagnazgael? Because all the treasuries of wisdom, all of them, are delivered into his hand.

1.2 And all of them were opened to Moses from Sinai, until they were taught to him in forty days, when he was standing on the mountain: the Torah in seventy faces of seventy tongues; the Prophets and the Writings, the halakhot, the traditions, the aggadot and the additions, and all of them in seventy faces of seventy tongues.

1.3 The Prophets in seventy faces of seventy tongues, the Writings in seventy faces of seventy tongues, the halakhot and the traditions in seventy faces of seventy tongues, the aggadot and the additions in seventy faces of seventy tongues.

2 And when the end of forty days had come for him, all of them were forgotten by him in one hour, until the Holy One, blessed be He, called Yefefiah, the prince of the Torah, and gave them to Moses as a gift, as it is said: "And YHWH gave them to me." And afterward it remained firm in his hand. And from where do we know that it remained firm with him?

2.2 As it is said: "Remember the Torah of Moses My servant, which I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel, statutes and judgments." "Torah": these are the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings.

2.3 “Statutes”: these are the halakhot and the traditions. “And judgments”: these are the aggadot and the additions. And all of them were said to Moses at Sinai.

3 These are the ninety-two names, after the likeness of the explicit Name, and He set them upon the name of Metatron: names of his by which the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, and the ministering angels call in the heavens on high. And twenty-two seals that His finger impressed, by which all the orders of the firmament of Aravot were sealed; and by it are sealed the writs of the princes of kingdoms that are on high, in kingship and in dominion, in lordship and in greatness; and by it are sealed the writs of the angel of death and the writs of every nation and kingdom.

4 Metatron, the angel, the Prince of the Presence, the angel, the prince of the Torah, the angel, the prince of wisdom, the angel, the prince of understanding, the angel, the prince of glory, the angel, the prince of the palace, the angel, the prince of kings, the angel, the prince of potentates, the angel, the prince of the princes, high and lofty, high and honored, who are in heaven and on earth, said: YHWH, the God of Israel, He is my witness in this matter. When I revealed this mystery to Moses, all the armies on high that are in each and every firmament were in uproar against me, and they said to me: Why do you reveal this mystery to the sons of man, born of woman, bearers of blemish, bearers of impurity, bearers of blood, bearers of flux, bearers of putrid drops?

5 The mystery by which heaven and earth were created, sea and dry land, mountains and hills, rivers and springs, Gehinnom, fire and hail, the Garden of Eden and the tree of life, and by which were formed man and

cattle and the living things of the field and the birds of heaven, and the fish of the sea, Behemoth and Leviathan, detestable things and creeping things, the swarming things of the sea and the creeping things of the deserts?

5.2 Torah and wisdom, knowledge and thought of the house of those above, and the fear of heaven: why do you reveal it to flesh and blood? I said to them: Because the Holy One, blessed be He, gave me permission.

6 And moreover I took permission from the high and exalted throne, from which all the explicit names go forth like lightnings of fire and like sparks of brilliance and like hashmalim of flame.

6.2 And their mind was not cooled until the Holy One, blessed be He, rebuked them and drove them out with a rebuke from before Him, and said to them: I desired, and I delighted, and I appointed, and I delivered it to Metatron My servant alone, for he is one out of all the children of the heights.

6.3 And Metatron shall deliver it from My house of treasuries to Moses, and Moses to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Assembly, and the men of the Great Assembly to Ezra the scribe, and Ezra the scribe to Hillel the Elder, and Hillel the Elder to R. Abbahu, and R. Abbahu to R. Zeira, and R.

6.4 Zeira to the men of faith, and the men of faith to the masters of faiths, to take heed with it and to heal with it all the sicknesses that break out to come into the world, as it is said: “And YHWH said: If you will indeed hearken to the voice of YHWH your God, and do what is right in

His eyes, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, all the sickness that I put upon Egypt I will not put upon you, for I am YHWH, your healer."