

חלום, מלאך ואוצר: על לחש לשאלת חלום בגניזת קהיר  ^[PDF]

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משאלות . יובל הררי בוחן ומפענח מחדש קמע לשאלת חלום . , שנמצא בגניזת קהיר . , ושתכליתו הייתה לזמן את המלאך [מטטרון](#) כדי שיגלה לחולם את מקומו של אוצר זהובים . בשנת .

Metatron

Not to be confused with Megatron or Magnetron.

For other uses, see Metatron (disambiguation).

Metatron (Hebrew מֵטַטְרוֹן) or **Mattatron** (a differentiation of Metatron^[1]) is an archangel in Judaism and in Christian folklore. According to Jewish medieval apocrypha, he is Enoch, ancestor of Noah, transformed into an angel. There are no references to Metatron as an angel in the Jewish Tanakh or Christian scriptures (Old and New Testament); however, Genesis 5:24 is often cited as evidence of Enoch's bodily ascension into heaven —"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Although he is mentioned in a few brief passages in the Talmud, Metatron appears primarily in medieval Jewish mystical texts and other post-scriptural esoteric sources, such as the Books of Enoch:1 Enoch: Book of Parables, 2 Enoch, and 3 Enoch. In Rabbinic tradition, he is the highest of the angels and serves as the celestial scribe.^[2]

Origins

The Book of Parables presents two figures: the son of man and Enoch. At first these two characters seem to be separate entities. Enoch views the son of man enthroned in heaven. Later however they prove to be one and the same. Many scholars believe that the final chapters in the Book of Parables are a later addition. Others think they are not and that the son of man is Enoch's heavenly double similarly to the Prayer of Joseph where Jacob is depicted as an angel. The Book of Daniel displays two similar characters: the Ancient of Days and the one like a man. Parts of the text in Daniel are Aramaic and may have been changed in translation. The Septuagint reads that the son of man came as the Ancient of Days.

The identification of Metatron with Enoch is not explicitly made in the Talmud although it does reference a Prince of the World who was young but now is old. However, some of the earliest kabbalists assumed the connection. There also seems to be two Metatrons, one spelled with six letters (מֵטַטְרוֹן), and one spelled with seven (מֵיטַטְרוֹן). The former may be the transformed Enoch, Prince of the Countenance within the divine palace; the latter, the Primordial Metatron, an emanation of the "Cause of Causes", specifically the tenth and last emanation, identified with the earthly Divine Presence. Furthermore, the Merkabah text Re' uyot Yehezkel identifies the Ancient of Days from Daniel as Metatron.

Talmud

The Talmud relates that Elisha ben Abuyah (a rabbi and Jewish religious authority born in Jerusalem sometime before 70 CE), also called *Acher* (אָחֵר, "other", as he became an apostate), entered Paradise and saw Metatron sitting down (an action that is not done in the presence of God). Elishah ben Abuyah therefore looked to Metatron as a deity and said heretically: "There are indeed two powers in Heaven!"^[3] The rabbis explain that Metatron had permission to sit because of his function as the Heavenly Scribe, writing down the deeds of Israel (Babylonian Talmud, Hagiga 15a).

The Talmud states, it was proved to Elisha that Metatron could not be a second deity by the fact that Metatron received 60 "strokes with fiery rods" to demonstrate that Metatron was not a god, but an angel, and could be punished.

The Babylonian Talmud mentions Metatron in two other places: Sanhedrin 38b and Avodah Zarah 3b. In Sanhedrin 38b a Minim tells Rabbi Idith that Metatron should be worshiped because he has a name like his master. Rabbi Idith uses the same passage Exodus 23:21 to show that Metatron was an angel and not a deity and thus should not be worshiped. Furthermore as an angel Metatron has no power to pardon transgressions nor was he to be received even as a messenger of forgiveness. Avodah Zarah 3b: In the fourth quarter God sits and instructs the school children. In the preceding three quarters Metatron may take Gods place or God may do this among other tasks. B Yevamot 16b

records an utterance attributed to the Prince of the World. "I have been young and now I am old." In rabbinic tradition this utterance is attributed to Metatron.

Kirkisani

The tenth century Karaite scholar Kirkisani believed that rabbinic Judaism was the heresy of Jeroboam I. He quoted a version of Sanhedrin 38b. Which he claimed contained a reference to the "lesser YHVH." Gershom Scholem suggests that the name was deliberately omitted from later copies of the Talmud. However, Kirkisani may have misrepresented the Talmud in order to embarrass his Rabbanite opponents with evidence of polytheism. Extra-talmudic mystical texts such as *Sefer Hekhalot* do speak of a "lesser YHVH", apparently deriving the concept from Exodus 23:21, which mentions an angel of whom God says "my name [understood as YHVH, the usual divine Proper Name] is in him".

Merkabah and later mystical writings

Metatron also appears in the Pseudepigrapha, most prominently in the Hebrew Merkabah Book of Enoch, also called 3 Enoch or *Sefer Hekhalot* (Book of [the Heavenly] Palaces). The book describes the link between Enoch, son of Jared (great grandfather of Noah) and his transformation into the angel Metatron. His grand title "the lesser YHVH" resurfaces here. The word *Metatron* is numerically equivalent to Shaddai (God) in Hebrew gematria; therefore, he is said to have a "Name like his Master".

Metatron says, "He [the Holy One]... called me, 'The lesser YHVH' in the presence of his whole household in the height, as it is written, 'my name is in him.'" (12:5, Alexander's translation.) The narrator of this book, supposedly Rabbi Ishmael, tells how Metatron guided him through Heaven and explained its wonders. 3 Enoch presents Metatron in two ways: as a primordial angel (9:2–13:2) and as the transformation of Enoch after he was assumed into Heaven.^{[4][5]}

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. [Genesis 5:24 KJV.]

This Enoch, whose flesh was turned to flame, his veins to fire, his eye-lashes to flashes of lightning, his eye-balls to flaming torches, and whom God placed on a throne next to the throne of glory, received after this heavenly transformation the name Metatron.^[6]

The Zohar calls Metatron "the Youth", a title previously used in 3 Enoch, where it appears to mean "servant". It identifies him as the angel that led the people of Israel through the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt (again referring to Exodus 23:21, see above), and describes him as a heavenly priest.

In the later Ecstatic Kabbalah Metatron is a messianic figure.

Etymology

There are numerous possible etymologies for the name Metatron.^{[7][8]} Some scholars, however, such as Philip Alexander, believe that if the name Metatron originated in Hekhalot-Merkabah texts (such as 3 Enoch), then it may be a made-up word like the magic words *Adiriron* and *Dapdapiron*.^[9]

Hugo Odeberg, Adolf Jellinek^[10] and Marcus Jastrow^[11] suggest the name may originate from either Mattara (מַטָּרָא) "keeper of the watch" or the verb MMTR (מַמְטֵר) "to guard, to protect". An early derivation of this can be seen in *Shimmusha Rabbah*, where Enoch is clothed in light and is the guardian of the souls ascending to heaven. Odeberg also suggests that the name Metatron might be taken from the Persian name Mithras. Citing Wiesner,^[12] he lays out a number of parallels between Mithras and Metatron based on their positions in heaven and duties.

Metatron seems to be made up of two Greek words for *after* and *throne*, μετὰ θρόνος (*meta thronos*), taken together as "one who serves behind the throne" or "one who occupies the throne next to the throne of glory". The two words do not appear separately in any text known to Gershom Scholem, who therefore dismisses the idea^[13] with the words

"this widely repeated etymology.... has no merit."^[14]

The word σύνθρονος (*synthronos*) is used as "co-occupant of the divine throne";^[15] however, like the above etymology, it is not found in any source materials. It is supported by Saul Lieberman and Peter Schäfer, who give further reasons why this might be a viable etymology.^[16] The Latin word *Metator* (messenger, guide, leader, measurer) had been suggested by Eleazar ben Judah of Worms (c. 1165 – c. 1230), Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, and brought to light again by Hugo Odeberg. When transliterated into the Hebrew language, we get מט'טור or מטטור. Gershom Scholem argues that there is no data to justify the conversion of *metator* to *metatron*. Philip Alexander also suggests this as a possible origin of Metatron, stating that the word *Metator* also occurs in Greek as *mitator*—a word for an officer in the Roman army who acted as a forerunner. Using this etymology, Alexander suggests the name may have come about as a description of "the angel of the Lord who led the Israelites through the wilderness: acting like a Roman army metator guiding the Israelites on their way".^{[17][18]} Another possible interpretation is that of Enoch as a metator showing them "how they could escape from the wilderness of this world into the promised land of heaven". Because we see this as a word in Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, and Greek, Alexander believes this gives even more strength to this etymology.

Other ideas include μέτρον (*metron*, "a measure").^[19] Charles Mopsik believes that the name Metatron may be related to the sentence from Genesis 5:24 "Enoch walked with God, then he was no more, because God took him."^[20] The Greek version of the Hebrew word "to take" is μετετέθη (it was transferred). רן, meaning RON, is a standard addition to מטטור, metatron, and other angelic names in the Jewish faith. So Mopsik believes if we concentrate on מטט, MTT, he believes it appears to be a transliteration from the Greek μετετέθη.

In the entry entitled "Paradigmata" in his study, "'The Written' as the Vocation of Conceiving Jewishly", John W McGinley gives an accounting of how this name functions in the Bavli's version of "four entered pardes".^[21] This account maintains that "Ishmael ben Elisha" is a rabbinically sanctioned cognomen for Elisha ben Abbuyah (the "Akher" of the Bavli's account). This hypothesis explains why the generators of the "chambers" portion of the Heikhalot literature make "Ishmael ben Elisha" the major protagonist of their writings even though this Rabbi Ishmael was not directly mentioned in the Bavli's account (in the Gemara to tractate Khaggigah) of "The Work of the Chariot".

Solomon Judah Leib Rapport in Igrot Shir suggests that Metatron is a combination of two Greek words which mean to "change" and "pass away" referring to Chanoch (Enoch) who "changed" into an angel and "passed away" from the world.

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- [12] in Ben Chananja, 1862, p. 384; 1866, pp. 600-625
- [13] Scholem, *Major Trends*, 69.
- [14] Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism*, 91, and 43.
- [15] *synthronos*, the Greek term *metaturannos*, which can be translated as "the one next to the ruler". Philip Alexander, "3 Enoch"
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- [21] McGinley, John W; *"The Written" as the Vocation of Conceiving Jewishly*. ISBN 0-595-40488-X. The entry "Paradigmatia" gives an accounting of the meaning of "Metatron" as it is used in the Bavli's version of "four entered pardes".

External links

- G. G. Stroumsa, "Form(s) of God: Some Notes on Metatron and Christ" (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1509524>), *Harvard Theological Review* 76 (1983), 269–288
- Rabbi Geoffrey W. Dennis, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Myth, Magic and Mysticism*, Llewellyn Publications (2007), ISBN 978-0738709055
- Excerpts about Metatron from books by Andrei A. Orlov:
 - The Etymology of the Name "Metatron" (<http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/metatronname.html>)
 - Metatron as the Deity: Lesser YHWH (<http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/metatronyhwh.html>)
 - Metatron as the Mediator (<http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/metatronmediator.html>)
 - Metatron as the Prince of the World (<http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/metatronprinceworld.html>)
 - Metatron as God's Shiur Qomah (<http://www.marquette.edu/maqom/metatronshiurqomah.html>)
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