CHAPTER 4

THE ASHKENAZI HASIDIC MOVEMENT

ONE OF THE most important contributions of Ger-
shom Scholem to the study of Jewish culture in the Middle
Ages in central Europe was his integral inclusion of the Ash-
kenazi Hasidic movement in the history of Jewish mysticism
and pietism. Scholem was the first to study this movement
as a whole, including in one and the same analysis a discus-
sion of the movement’s ethics as well as its mysticism, two
elements which all previous scholars had treated separately.
Scholem revealed the mystical element in the pietistic and
ethical works of this movement and demonstrated the inte-
gral unity between these two factors. He then went on and
analyzed the relationship of the whole body of literature pro-
duced by the Ashkenazi Hasidim to the more general outlines
of development of Jewish culture in medieval Europe.

Ashkenazi Hasidism (Jewish pietism in Germany) was the
most important religious movement among the Jews of Ger-
many in the Middle Ages, flourishing between 1170 and 1240.
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Its central school was that of the Kalonymus family located in the cities along the Rhine, mainly Mainz, Spier, and Worms. The three generations of teachers were those of Rabbi Samuel ben Kalonymus, known as the “Hasid, Saint and Prophet,” his son Rabbi Judah the Pious (died in 1217), the great teacher of the movement, and his disciple and relative, Rabbi Eleazar ben Judah of Worms (died about 1230). There were also other schools, circles, and groups of mystics and writers of esoteric theology in Germany at the same period.

Ashkenazi Hasidism is best known for its ethical system, presented in Sefer Hasidim (The Book of the Pious), written mainly by Rabbi Judah the Pious, which had an enormous impact on the history of Jewish ethical thought and practice. Besides their ethical works, however, the Ashkenazi Hasidim also created an extensive esoteric theology, which includes several mystical trends and which was united with kabbalistic mysticism at the end of the thirteenth century. The history of the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement and its mystical and esoteric literature demonstrates the continuity of esoteric speculation in Judaism throughout the ages. Unlike the kabbalah, which relied on sources unknown to us, and whose earliest appearance is shrouded in mystery, the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement openly described its sources. The movement both claimed and substantiated its origins in the remote past, connecting itself with ancient times in Eretz Israel and Babylonia. While Ashkenazi Hasidism is clearly a medieval phenomenon, deeply rooted in the historical reality of central Europe in the twelfth century, its leaders derived their inspiration from many earlier layers of Jewish mystical and esoteric literature and traditions.
A demonstration of the combination of legend and historical fact in the traditions of this movement is the story of the mystic and magician, Rabbi Aaron ben Samuel of Baghdad. A great writer of Ashkenazi Hasidic esoteric literature, Rabbi Eleazar ben Judah ben Kalonymus of Worms recorded in his commentary on the prayers the history of the secrets concerning the structure and mystical meaning of the daily prayers. His description includes a list of previous generations of scholars in medieval Germany from whom he received his esoteric knowledge.

This list states that the medieval German Jewish mystics received their traditions from southern Italy, from where the Kalonymus family emigrated to Mainz in the ninth century. The Jewish center in southern Italy received its esoteric information, according to Rabbi Eleazar's statement, when a mysterious messenger arrived from Babylonia, Rabbi Aaron of Baghdad, bringing with him the true meaning of the Jewish prayers and other secrets. According to Rabbi Eleazar, Aaron came to Italy "because of a certain affair," which he leaves unspecified. This "affair," however, happens to be described in detail in another source, the family history found in the Ahimaaz Scroll, a literary work written in southern Italy in the eleventh century. According to this account, Rabbi Aaron was the son of the gaon, the head of the academy. He was expelled from his country because of an inappropriate use of his magical knowledge. When his donkey was devoured by a lion, in his anger, Rabbi Aaron made the lion work in the donkey's place by magical means. As the king of the animals should not be treated in this way, Rabbi Aaron was sent into exile and went to southern Italy. There he communicated his esoteric knowledge to the sages of the
Kalonymus family. A few generations later some members of this family were invited by the emperor to reside in Mainz. Thus the great center in Ashkenaz was founded, in which the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement, generations later, began to develop.⁷

While the details of Rabbi Aaron’s career may be legendary, there is no reason to doubt that there is a historical basis to the main point, namely, that there were contacts between the Jewish sages in Italy and the great center in Babylonia in the eighth century, and that some of the traditions, mainly those concerned with the “esoteric meaning of the prayers,” were indeed received by Europe’s scholars from Eastern sources via an oral tradition.

Scholem included a chapter on the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement in Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism.⁸ He saw in this movement one of the major expressions of Jewish mystical and esoteric creativity, but he never actually described it as “mystical” in the technical sense. Moreover, he differentiated between the historical role of this movement and subsequent mystical movements which relied on the works of the Ashkenazi Hasidim. He recognized that although this movement was closely interwoven with the historical fabric of Jewish mysticism, this does not necessarily mean that its speculations were mystical, nor that its sages and teachers were mystics.

II

The Hekhalot and Merkabah mystical literature served as a basis for all Jewish European mystical schools, from the book
Bahir in the late twelfth century to modern Hasidism of the eighteenth century. While our knowledge concerning the transmission of Hekhalot mysticism from the East to Europe is incomplete, there is no doubt about the way that this mysticism spread in Europe from the twelfth century onward. Even today, the most important manuscripts containing the works of the Hekhalot mystics are preserved in manuscripts which were copied and edited by the Ashkenazi Hasidim. The works of these Hasidim themselves are full of quotations and paraphrases of Hekhalot works.\(^9\) They also mentioned, and made use of, several works of Eastern Jewish mysticism which are lost to us, and the few quotations included in the Ashkenazi Hasidic works are all that we know about them. Sometimes only the title is known.\(^10\) There can be no doubt that the spiritual world of the Ashkenazi Hasidim was based on the Hekhalot mystics. Among the Ashkenazi Hasidim the most popular literature was commentaries on the Sefer Yeẓirah;\(^11\) their works include commentaries on the Shiur Komah\(^12\) and various parts of Hekhalot literature, especially the hymns.\(^13\) When Rabbi Eleazar of Worms set out to describe the various sections of the celestial and divine worlds in his esoteric Sodei Razaya (The Secrets of the Prayers), he reproduced several parts of the Hekhalot literature; others were presented in paraphrased and re-edited versions.

Not only the texts of the Hekhalot literature served as a basis for Ashkenazi Hasidic speculations; their central ideas remained the main inspiration of the Ashkenazi Hasidim spiritual world. The creation, according to their detailed works on the subject, was based on the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, as the Ashkenazi Hasidim understood this teaching as
presented in the *Sefer Yezirah*. The idea, which may be inherent in the *Sefer Yezirah* itself, that the mystic studying this work can follow the Creator to some extent and use the same methods to create something himself—e.g., a *golem*, a homunculus—was known to the Ashkenazi Hasidim. They also prepared manuals for carrying out such projects, and it is possible that these speculations did not remain merely on the theoretical level. When Scholem described the history and development of the idea of the *golem*, his main source was the writings of the various Ashkenazi Hasidic sects.

Several stories, some of them old and some of them of later origin, connect the sages of the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement with the creation of just such a creature.

When Rabbi Eleazar commented on *Sefer Yezirah* he gave detailed instructions, possibly tried out by his circle on how actually to perform the process of creation. Does the same rule apply to his descriptions of the seven heavens, the throne of glory, the hosts of angels, the divine glory itself? Did the Ashkenazi Hasidim treat the traditions of the ascension to the divine world only as a theory, to be understood and transmitted, or also as instructions for the contemporary mystic in the ways of religious worship of a very high degree, to be followed by the elect, namely by the sages of Ashkenazi Hasidism?

The works of the Ashkenazi Hasidim do not state clearly that the traditions of ancient Jewish mysticism they preserved and commented on are to be followed in practice. There are no clear instructions concerning the actual performance of mystical ascensions, nor do we find any records of personal experiences of this sort. Yet, in several places, the tone of
the presentation suggests that mystical ascensions were not a purely academic, theoretical subject in their eyes. That some of the persons mentioned in Ashkenazi Hasidic traditions are described as prophets, and that there was a practice of receiving halachic information from heaven in these circles seems to indicate that the Ashkenazi Hasidim might have had an element of actual mystical experience in their spiritual world. The frequency and depth of these experiences cannot be determined from the sources we have today. There is no doubt that the impact of the various sects of the Ashkenazi Hasidim was based not on the achievement of personal mystical visions, but on the detailed knowledge and erudition they showed in the preservation and presentation of the ancient materials of the Hekhalot mystics.

III

"The Secrets of the Prayers" seems to have been one of the main concerns of Ashkenazi Hasidic esoteric lore. In their explorations in this field they may have approached mystical practice. Rabbi Eleazar of Worms wrote an extensive commentary on the prayerbook, which was his "magnum opus" and may have been written and rewritten several times by the author himself. This commentary is the earliest full commentary on the daily Jewish prayerbook to reach us. We do have, however, many quotations, preserved in several Ashkenazi Hasidic sources, from a previous commentary on the prayers written by Rabbi Eleazar's teacher, Rabbi Judah ben Samuel ben Kalonymus the Pious, the leader and greatest
sage of Ashkenazi Hasidism. This lost work might have been the earliest commentary on the prayers written in Hebrew.

That the Ashkenazi Hasidim were the first to expound on the prayers indicates that they saw in the Jewish daily prayerbook hidden strata of meaning and religious avenues unknown or unmentioned by their predecessors. This possibility is strengthened when we check the actual contents of their commentaries.

Rabbi Eleazar's commentary on every section of the prayerbook is divided into three parts. One is the detailed explanation of the words themselves in an almost literal fashion, connecting them with the biblical verses that used the same words, sometimes hinting at rabbinic passages which include the same term or the same idea. This part is really a literal commentary of a quite elementary nature.

The second part of the commentary deals with what Rabbi Eleazar calls the "secret," which in this context means the theological background of the terms used in the prayers. The divine glory, the various angelic powers, the nature of Man and his soul, and many other subjects are dealt with in detail in this part of the commentary. Rabbi Eleazar regarded the "secret" hidden in the prayers as denoting the theosophy and philosophy of the Ashkenazi Hasidic theology. He concluded that the ancient prayers, composed by the sages of antiquity, already included all the ideas accepted by the teachers of his medieval movement.

The third part of the commentary presents a system which analyzes the numerical structure of each prayer, and even of each sentence or word within a prayer. The numerical struc-
tution takes into account the number of words, the number of letters, the number of specific words (like divine names), the number of specific letters, the number of final letters, etc. He also uses the numerical value of individual letters, words, or even complete sentences, indicating a deep sense of mathematical awareness and a world view which sees numerical constructions in everything. The figures he discovered in the prayers themselves are compared and harmonized with corresponding numbers found in other parts of Jewish sacred literature, mainly the Bible itself, but also in the Talmud and Midrash traditions. According to Rabbi Eleazar, there is a basic harmony between the numbers found in the analysis of the prayers and those hidden in the structure of biblical verses and chapters. His main endeavor in his commentary is to discover and present the deep unity between the prayers and the biblical sources, which can be revealed only by such numerical analysis.

The same harmony is also found between numbers in the text of the prayers and numbers apparent in creation and history and in the cosmos as a whole. Chronological dates, numbers of years, numbers of miles between heaven and earth, and other such figures share the basic harmony found in the sacred compositions. There is no doubt that this commentary reflects a well-developed world view, which sees existence as a whole as governed by the relations inherent between numbers and the characters of the Hebrew alphabet. The origin of this system is undoubtedly to be found in the ancient Sefer Yezirah.

The quotations we have from Rabbi Judah the Pious's commentary on the prayers seem to indicate that he dealt
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exclusively with numerical harmony. It seems that Rabbi Judah wrote his voluminous work to prove how those who introduce changes into the text of the prayers for various reasons based on the actual content, or literal meaning, of the prayers, are incorrect. Rabbi Judah insisted that since the main source of the sanctity of a prayer is the numerical harmony reflected in it, then the smallest change in a single word or even a single letter can destroy this harmony completely. He attacked certain rabbis, described as those of "France and the Islands" (meaning, probably, the British Isles), who introduced such changes, and listed the mathematical basis for his opposition.

The concentration of the Ashkenazi Hasidim on the exposition of the hidden meaning of the prayers was motivated by their insistence that the texts of the prayers as they had received them from their elders were the only true ones, and even the minutest change could not be tolerated. They also believed that numerological analysis of the prayers reveals the hidden divine design underlining the structure of the whole universe, and is harmoniously connected with other parts of sacred literature as well as the secrets of the creation and of history. Rabbi Eleazar also demonstrated in his commentary that the interpretation of the prayers proved the validity of Ashkenazi Hasidic theology. While these reasons certainly suffice to explain the Ashkenazi Hasidic interest in the prayers, their structure, their literal, philosophical, and esoteric meanings, there is still a question of whether or not there was also a mystical dimension to their interest.

After reading the detailed expositions by the Ashkenazi Hasidim of "The Secrets of the Prayers," one may ask whether
these secrets have anything to do with the everyday practice of prayer. Should one—or at least the elect, the sages of Ashkenazi Hasidism themselves—use this knowledge when actually praying? Is there a difference between a prayer said without the knowledge of these secrets and one said when the devout Jew concentrates on the knowledge of these esoteric things? Does the numerical harmony exposed by the commentators serve a religious purpose?

Answers to these questions are decisive when we try to analyze the mystical element in Ashkenazi Hasidic thought. If indeed the expositions of "The Secrets of the Prayers" were not intended for polemical and theological reasons only, but also constituted a system of "intentions" (kavanot) in prayer, then the mystical character of the whole movement becomes much more pronounced. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient material in the works of these sages to decide with certainty that they really had such a system of intentions. Indeed, Scholem was justified in presenting the mystical character of the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement in a most qualified manner.

IV

Scholem emphasized the eclectic character of the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement's theology and its heavy reliance on the works of the early Jewish philosophers. The Ashkenazi Hasidim did not come into contact with Jewish philosophy as such, that is, with works written in a formal philosophical manner, influenced by Arabic philosophy and ultimately by
the Greek philosophers. The Ashkenazi Hasidim, most probably were not familiar with even one such work, because none was available at that time in Hebrew. Arabic, which was used by most Jewish philosophers up to the end of the twelfth century, was unknown to them. It also seems that they did not have any direct access to Latin philosophy because of their deep negative attitude to the Latin language which was, unlike Arabic, not the language of countries and peoples but the language of the Church. The only philosophical sources they could use were those either written in Hebrew or translated into Hebrew.

The most important text was the "paraphrase" of Rav Saadia Gaon's two philosophical works Beliefs and Ideas and the Commentary on Sefer Yezira. They did not have the accurate translation of the first made by Rabbi Judah ibn Tibbon late in the twelfth century, and the Commentary on Sefer Yezira was not translated in a philosophical manner at all. They received an earlier, probably eleventh-century translation of both works, probably made by an anonymous Jew in the Byzantine empire. This work, called usually the "paraphrase" of Saadia, contains no philosophical terminology; it is written in a poetic style, as if the content of these two works were not the result of logical deliberation but of mystical revelation. The style of the "paraphrase" is very close to that of some of the sacred poets who wrote in Eretz Israel before the Islamic conquests. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Ashkenazi Hasidim described Rav Saadia as a master of esoteric knowledge, and not as the founder of Jewish rationalistic philosophy. The poetic style of the "paraphrase" had great impact on the contents and style of Ashkenazi Hasidic theology.
One of their earliest theological works, the *Shir ha-Yihhud* (*A Hymn for Divine Unity*), which Scholem believed could have been written by Rabbi Judah the Pious himself, clearly reflects both the ideas and the style of this "paraphrase."

Among the other important sources of the theology of the Ashkenazi Hasidim were the works of Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra, the philosopher and commentator on the Bible, who wrote in Hebrew so that Jews in Christian countries could read him, and also traveled in Europe and the East, where his personality left a mark together with his philosophy. Rabbi Judah the Pious wrote a commentary on a chapter of Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra's brief theological and ethical treatise, *Ye-sod Mora* (*The Foundation of the Fear of God*). Indeed, ibn Ezra's discussions of the structure of the human soul served as the basis for Rabbi Eleazar of Worms' treatment of the subject in his book on psychology, *Hochmat ha-Nefesh* (*The Wisdom of Natural Perfection*). Even descriptions of the creation of a *golem* were attributed by one of the Ashkenazi Hasidic sects to ibn Ezra and his disciples.

Another important influence on Ashkenazi Hasidic theology were the works of an early twelfth-century Hebrew philosopher in Spain, Rabbi Abraham bar Hijja. Scholem dedicated several essays to his impact (which was all very important in connection with the book *Bahir* and the early kabbalah) on the Ashkenazi Hasidic theology, especially its conception of the five "worlds" (*olamot*). It seems that bar Hijja adopted a neo-Platonic attitude, telling of five spiritual worlds which he adapted to Hebrew terminology and world view. This fascinated some of the Ashkenazi Hasidic writers, who inserted this into their description of the celestial realms.
The Ashkenazi Hasidim do not seem to have had any clear knowledge of the works of Rabbi Judah ha-Levi, and only a minimal knowledge of the works of Maimonides. They certainly did not know anything about Maimonides’ central philosophical work, *Moreh Nevuchim* (*The Guide for the Perplexed*), which caused a major controversy in European Jewry after the Hebrew translation by Rabbi Samuel ibn Tibbon became known, especially in the years 1232–1235. Rabbi Eleazar of Worms may have heard about the structure of Maimonides’ great legal work, *Mishneh Torah*, because like Maimonides he dealt with ethics in the beginning of his own legal work, the *Roqueah*.

An Ashkenazi opponent of Jewish philosophy, Rabbi Moses Taku, who also attacked the works of Rabbi Judah the Pious, wrote a polemical work called *Ktav Tamim* (*A Book on Simple Faith*) probably in the second or third decades of the thirteenth century. Although he attacked several sections in Maimonides’ *Mishneh Torah*, even he was ignorant of the *Moreh Nevuchim*.

Scholem described Rabbi Moses Taku as one of the two great reactionaries of the Jewish Middle Ages. Taku’s polemics are directed mainly against the theories presented by Saadia Gaon concerning divine revelation and immanence, but he also included the Ashkenazi Hasidim in his attack because he believed, with good justification, that they followed the works and ideas of Saadia. Taku insisted that one should never deviate from the literal meaning of the scriptures when they describe divine phenomena, even if these descriptions can be interpreted as thoroughly anthropomorphic. All speculations concerning the nature of the divine realms are forbidden, and
dealing with such ideas is sinful and leads directly to heresy. Taku's criticism is the only historical polemical work which we have which attacks Ashkenazi Hasidism together with Jewish philosophy, especially the works of Rav Saadia Gaon, which he regarded as heretical and which he compared in their common threat to that of Christianity. While Taku undoubtedly opposed the philosophical influence on Ashkenazi Hasidism, his basic world view is not very far from that of his opponents, who did not expound Jewish philosophy in the technical sense. Rather, they developed their theology by assembling scattered, unorganized, and unsystematic ideas derived from the very few Hebrew philosophical works which could be obtained in the middle of the twelfth century.

The influence of the philosophers on Ashkenazi Hasidic theology is most apparent in its thorough and lengthy analysis of the phenomenon of divine revelation. This problem interested the Ashkenazi Hasidim for two reasons. First, they wanted to cleanse the scriptural verses of anthropomorphic expressions, which usually appear in the context of biblical accounts of divine revelations, like those to Moses on Mount Sinai and in Exodus 33, to Isaiah in the Temple in Jerusalem (chapter 6), or Ezekiel's vision of the chariot on the river Kvar. Second, they had an intense religious interest in the structure of the divine realm, hoping that a knowledge of the structure would let them come into contact with that realm.
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during religious worship and ritual, and especially during prayer.

The main contribution of the Ashkenazi Hasidim in this area was a reformulation of the idea of divine glory, which had a clear mystical character in the works of Hekhalot mysticism, but which the philosophical discussion of the early Middle Ages in Babylonia and Europe had almost completely erased, only to see it resurrected to some extent by the works of the Ashkenazi Hasidim. While the shekhinah and the divine glory (kavod) were terms denoting divine powers in the texts of the early Jewish mystics of antiquity, medieval philosophy tried to deprive them of their status as divine attributes and described them instead as created, angelic powers. In this the Jewish philosophers, especially Saadia, followed the practice of the translators of the Bible to Aramaic, i.e., they replaced clear anthropomorphic references to God in the biblical accounts of revelations by the use of the term kavod or yeqar, denoting that this term refers to something which is below or beside God himself.

Rav Saadia (and some Karaites in the tenth century) systematized the intuitive work of the translators of the Bible into Aramaic by formulating the idea that a certain great angel revealed the divine power to the prophets. God created the angel specifically to fulfill the task of revelation to the prophets and serve as a sign and witness to the divine origin and veracity of the prophecy. According to Saadia, this angelic power is called by the Bible kavod, and by the Talmudic sages the shekhinah. Both terms refer to the same created entity. All anthropomorphic descriptions which could not be explained as metaphors or parables should be understood as
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describing this special angel. Saadia’s views, with some variations, were accepted by many Jewish rationalists.34

The Ashkenazi Hasidim respected Saadia very much as an early gaon and the possessor of many esoteric traditions, but they did not accept his views concerning the kavod and revelation. They made use of a passage, not completely clear in itself, in ibn Ezra’s commentary on Exodus 33, which seems to include the idea that the divine glory, the kavod, has two aspects, or “faces,” one turned toward God himself, which cannot be seen by humans, and a second, the lower, which is the one revealed to the prophets and all those who achieve an exalted religious status. It seems that ibn Ezra described an emanated divine glory (as opposed to Saadia’s created one), which is an integral part of the divine realm. Rabbi Judah the Pious, Rabbi Eleazar of Worms, and other Ashkenazi Hasidic writers developed this symbol to describe the divine glory revealed to the prophets as an emanated divine entity. They thus introduced into Jewish medieval thought the idea that the divine realm is a divided one, including several strata of divine powers emanating one from another.35

The Ashkenazi Hasidim were primarily interested in the study of divine glory to remove anthropomorphic elements, since they believed that the revelation of a lowly divine power does not affect the complete transcendence of the Godhead itself. But they also succeeded in retaining the divine character of the phenomenon of prophecy, which, in the works of the philosophers, tended to become either a psychological phenomenon occurring within the heart of the prophet, or the revelation of an angelic, created power, which deprived prophecy of its sanctity.

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The Ashkenazi Hasidim raised a major question undreamt of by the philosophers: If there is a divine power, emanated from the Godhead, which is revealed in part to the prophets, why can it not perform other divine functions? The divine glory need not be restricted only to the task of revelation. If it is really divine, it can serve and appear in other religious contexts; for example, when guidance of the created world is needed, or to be the power that accepts the prayers of the worshippers.

Ashkenazi Hasidism was not one monolithic group in which a system was formulated and then adhered to by all. There were various sects and groups, some of them unconnected to and unaware of the existence of others. The central group or circle, that of Rabbi Judah the Pious and Rabbi Eleazar of Worms, was also not united in every respect, and some differences of opinion and attitude can be discerned even between them. The differences among the various Ashkenazi Hasidic circles and groups are the greatest concerning the nature and tasks of the divine glory. They were united in the belief in the existence of this secondary divine power and its being a part of the divine realm itself (thus opposing Saadia’s views), but the actual descriptions of the kavod differ considerably.

The author of the Sefer ha-Hayim (The Book of Life), for instance, describes a system of ten kvodot, “divine glories,” each emanating from the one above it, in a way that brings it close to the picture of the divine realm drawn by the kabbalists. He did not, however, give a detailed account of the nature and tasks of each of these powers.

More complicated is the system developed by the circle
which used the pseudepigraphic works attributed to Joseph ben Uzziel.\(^{38}\) Scholem sensed a deep affinity in their system to that of some early kabbalistic sources, as well as some mystical elements hidden within the theosophic speculations. They went one step further than the system developed by Rabbi Judah the Pious and Rabbi Eleazar (probably independently, and they may have preceded the central group). According to them, the \textit{kavod} itself, while being an emanated power, is too exalted to be the power revealed to the prophets. That task is relegated to another emanated power below the divine glory, called \textit{ha-keruv ha-meyuhad}, “the special cherub,” a name probably based on Saadia’s description of the angel whose task it is to provide revelation to the prophets. This cherub sits on the throne of glory while the \textit{shekhinah} is above it. It is called God’s \textit{gedulah} (greatness) and it is the power described in the \textit{Shiur Komah} texts which measure the limbs of the Creator. He is stationed in the eastern side of the divine realm, while the \textit{shekhinah} traditionally is in the west. The power above the cherub is also called the \textit{kedushah}, or “divine holiness,” and it has no characteristics that will enable it to be perceived by human beings. The main task of this \textit{kedushah-kavod} is to accept the prayers of human beings.\(^{39}\) Indeed, one of the most detailed descriptions of this hierarchy is found in a short treatise presented as an answer to the question, toward whom should one pray—where man should direct his prayers. The author insists that prayers should never be directed toward a revealed power, only toward the hidden divine holiness and glory above the special cherub.\(^{40}\)

It seems that Rabbi Judah the Pious and Rabbi Eleazar of Worms regarded divine glory and divine revelation as esoteric, and therefore did not discuss them in treatises intended
for wide circulation. They wrote several works of the *sodot ha-yibbud*, “secrets of the divine unity,” type, with the goal of fighting anthropomorphic conceptions. In these brief works they did not emphasize the many tasks of the divine glory, and only hinted at its purpose concerning the prayers. But in their more esoteric works, which were given only to selected disciples after a specific ritual, they revealed some of their more radical ideas.

The Ashkenazi Hasidic *kavod* theories had a considerable impact on the symbolism of the later kabbalists, though there is no basis for believing that it was this influence which brought about the formulation of the kabbalistic system of the ten *sefirot*. The works of the Ashkenazi Hasidim do not contain the mythical element which so profoundly shaped the ideas of the kabbalists, nor do we find any significant element of gnostic influence in their works. In the very few places in this literature where there is the possibility of an Eastern, gnostic or at least mythological element, it is clear that the Ashkenazi Hasidim only copied the ancient sources, but made no use of their terminology and imagery when formulating their own ideas. The importance of the various Ashkenazi Hasidic theories concerning the divine glory is that they prove that the drive toward a more complicated, structured, and variegated picture of the divine realm was not exclusive to the kabbalists, but a basic characteristic of twelfth-century Jewish thought.

VI

The most influential works of the Ashkenazi Hasidim on subsequent Jewish thought were their ethical books. The
most important among these was the *Sefer Hasidim (The Book of the Pious)*, written mainly by Rabbi Judah the Pious in the first years of the thirteenth century. Rabbi Eleazar of Worms also wrote several ethical treatises, as did other writers who belonged to, or were influenced by, the Ashkenazi Hasidic movement. (Scholem was the first scholar to combine a discussion of Ashkenazi Hasidic esoteric theology with a study of their ethical teachings in an effort to show the underlying themes that led to the creation of both systems.)

Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics insist on traditional values, rejecting all innovation as such and believing that all truth was revealed to the forefathers of the Hasidim, yet they also developed radically new approaches and attitudes which departed from accepted norms quite drastically. The Hasidim did not see this as paradoxical, however. They believed that every idea presented in their works had a foundation in tradition, and that close reading of the scriptures and of Talmudic ethical sections led without deviation to their ethical values.

Scholem believed there were close connections between the ethical norms described by the Ashkenazi Hasidim and the influence of the surrounding non-Jewish culture. He felt that their system of repentance (discussed below) reflected a Christian influence. He even found certain ancient ideas, like that of the *ataraxia* of the Stoics, in their works. There is no doubt that the Ashkenazi Hasidim were greatly influenced by the surrounding society, an influence clearly revealed in their beliefs concerning magic, sorcery, demonology, and folklore; they even used Germanic names for many such phenomena. The larger problem of specific non-Jewish sources...
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for specific ethical ideas and practices is, however, not yet completely settled.\(^\text{48}\)

Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics, as expressed by Rabbi Judah the Pious and Rabbi Eleazar of Worms, define ethical behavior as the striving to achieve what is beyond the minimal norms of the *halachah*. Their attitudes clearly reflect the world of Europe during the Crusades, when every generation brought forth a new wave of the crusading movement, and each of these waves started with massacres and persecutions of the Jewish communities of central Europe. Believing that these cruel historical circumstances were the results of divine decrees, they derived from them moral strength and made them the cornerstones of their moral teachings.

The highest ideal of these generations of German Jews was the "sanctification of the name," *kiddush ha-shem*, i.e., martyrdom, which meant the supreme victory of the pietist over the crusading persecutors. If a Jew died for the sanctity of God, refusing to save his life by conversion to Christianity, he attained the highest possible religious achievement and earned a high place in paradise.\(^\text{49}\) Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics aimed to prepare German Jews for this ordeal by developing a martyrrological attitude toward life as a whole, and insisting that *kiddush ha-shem* was the preferred resolution of man's earthly life and religious efforts.\(^\text{50}\)

The feeling of persecution should direct every deed of a Jew's religious practice. He should always view every attempt of his evil inclinations not to perform even the minutest daily details of ritual in the most complete and perfect way, as an example of a *kiddush ha-shem* situation. He should always see himself as tried by God as to whether he can overcome the
demands of the material body and sacrifice his desires to the religious martyrrological ideal. Thus religious life was viewed as a constant struggle in a situation when persecution was only a supreme culmination of everyday strife. Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics are, therefore, extreme and demanding, as well as spiritualistic in character. The material world, the persecutions by the gentiles, the material body, and the evil inclinations within one's heart are all part of the great trial that God uses to test adherence of the righteous to His commandments.

The same feeling of persecution is expressed in the Sefer Hasidim even with regard to the status of the righteous within Jewish society. The Ashkenazi Hasidim defined the term "hasid" as derived from "white," explaining that a "hasid" is a person who can remain unmoved when criticized and denounced by his neighbors and friends. This Scholem interpreted as reflecting the attitude of ataraxia, the complete negation of all feelings and responses to events in the surrounding world, a counterpart to the Hebrew term hishtavut which conveys a similar meaning in Hebrew philosophical texts.

The detailed descriptions found in the Sefer Hasidim of the difficulties endured by the pietists from the contemporary society surrounding them might be the result of a basic martyrrological attitude of the Ashkenazi Hasidim; it can hardly be based on historical fact. The Kalonymus family, to which most of the Ashkenazi Hasidim of the central group belonged, was the most prominent in German Jewry, and one can hardly believe that people like Rabbi Judah the Pious or Rabbi Eleazar were ridiculed and denounced by the society they lived in. The problem of the historical meaning of the
descriptions of the social standing and social activities of the
groups of the Hasidim is still open to various interpretations.

The attitude of martyrdom is to be found in the Ashkenazi
Hasidim system of penitence, presented in the *Sefer Hasidim*
and in several works of Rabbi Eleazar of Worms.\(^5^4\) This sys-
tem emphasized an element not found in previous Jewish dis-
cussions of repentance, either in the ancient Talmudic and
Midrashic sources or the ethical works of the medieval phi-
losophers: *sigufim*, self-inflicted pain and suffering. According
to this system, the penitent had to assume enough pain and
suffering to outweigh the pleasure he had derived from his
sin (the “sin” usually indicated was explicitly or inexplicitly
a sexual one). This he could do either by following the bib-
lical punishment for that crime, or by devising self-tortures
equivalent to his sinful pleasures. Usually these tortures were
just long periods of fasting from sunrise to sunset, but some-
times more picturesque tortures are mentioned. It must be
stressed that these Hasidim discuss this self-inflicted suffering
only in the context of penitence and not as a required way of
life for the righteous in general. They generally practiced ab-
stinence, not *sigufim*.\(^5^5\)

Was there a mystical drive behind their extreme ethical
demands, their self-negation and their spiritual denial of the
demands of the flesh? It is very difficult to answer this ques-
tion. There is no doubt that the idea of the proximity of the
*shekhinah*, a distinct emanated power from the Godhead which
is not as transcendent and hidden as He is, had an effect on
the way of life described by the ethical teachings of this
movement. The *shekhinah* or the *kavod* can be present only in
places and situations of complete purity and sanctity, unlike
the immanent Godhead, which is present equally everywhere, regardless of the circumstances. Because of its exalted stature and transcendence, the Godhead cannot be affected by any specific detail of earthly existence; like sunlight, dirt does not leave any impression on it. But the revealed divine glory can be affected by evil and sin, and therefore can appear only where purity of body and heart can be achieved. Sometimes the act of kiddush ha-shem is perceived as containing an element of union with the divine glory, and there is no doubt that a righteous life, according to Ashkenazi Hasidism, leads the pious to the proximity of the shekhinah, sometimes during life itself though more usually after death, when the righteous receive their rewards around the throne of glory in paradise. While there might be some mystical element in this attitude, it is a minor and subdued one. The Ashkenazi Hasidim did not develop a literature describing their personal religious and spiritual achievements, which might have enabled us to discern the mystical element in it.

VII

In all his works concerning the early development of Jewish mysticism in medieval Europe, Scholem repeatedly emphasized the impact of Ashkenazi Hasidic ideas and traditions. They preserved for the European mystics not only the mystical literature of the Hekhalot and Merkabah, but also much of the esoteric traditions concerning the secret names of God and their interpretations. They developed, from traditional sources, the esoteric systems of using the letters of
the Hebrew alphabet and numerical values and computations to a degree never found earlier, but often found later in the works of medieval mystics. They opened the paths of a non-philosophical use of philosophical terminology, turning it into theosophic symbolism. They established schools and centers of esoteric lore which spread their influence among circles of mystics in southern Europe. Their disciples, real or imaginary, relied on them when they developed kabbalistic systems in the second half of the thirteenth century. Some kabbalists even insisted that the kabbalah itself was received from the Ashkenazi Hasidim who preserved it after receiving it from the sages in the East.

A school of German-Jewish kabbalists developed in central Europe late in the thirteenth century, and flourished for several generations. Most of the kabbalists who belonged to this school absorbed the teachings of the Ashkenazi Hasidic esoteric theology, and combined it with the new kabbalistic symbolism developed by the Jewish mystics in Spain and Provence. Among them were the direct descendents of Rabbi Judah the Pious himself.

However, some great kabbalistic writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, like Rabbi Menachem Ziuni, a commentator on the Bible who wrote several mystical works, or the editor of the great kabbalistic treasury Yalkut Reuveni, made use of the works of Rabbi Judah the Pious, Rabbi Eleazar of Worms, and other Ashkenazi Hasidic sources, believing that the esoteric theology found in them was identical with the kabbalah itself. For later generations, therefore, Ashkenazi Hasidic teachings were completely fused with the kabbalah to create a new whole. Yet it should be emphasized
that relatively speaking this was a minor source of influence, which could not compete with the great mystical works of the Spanish kabbalists.

Some of the ideas and symbols of the Ashkenazi Hasidim made their way into the mainstream of kabbalistic thought, usually by means of their inclusion in the Zohar. One of these was the system of the four *kelipot*, the four shells which surround the holy chariot, found in Ashkenazi Hasidic commentaries on Ezekiel’s chariot, which might have been based on ancient sources. From this the Zohar developed the symbolism of the “external” powers, the powers of evil, which surround the divine realm. A school of Jewish mystics in Spain in the second half of the thirteenth century, headed by Rabbi Jacob and Rabbi Isaac, relied heavily on material received from the Ashkenazi Hasidim, and they described themselves as disciples of Rabbi Eleazar of Worms’s school. Their teachings were absorbed by later Spanish kabbalists, and thus still more ideas of Ashkenazi Hasidic origin penetrated into the world of the kabbalists.

Though this influence of Ashkenazi Hasidic thought on later kabbalistic ideas was meaningful, there can be no doubt that it is relatively insignificant when compared to the impact of Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the *Sefer Hasidim* and works that followed it were the almost exclusive source of ethical instruction to the Jewry of central Europe. When great Jewish centers began to be built in eastern Europe by Jewish emigrants from the West, the teachings of the Ashkenazi Hasidim spread into these new centers. Even in the great center of Jewish thought in the sixteenth century, Safed, where the central
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figures were refugees from the Spanish expulsion in 1492, the teachings of the Ashkenazi Hasidim were revived, reinterpreted and combined with the emergent ethical system of the kabbalah. Ashkenazi Hasidim was the first movement which combined esoteric and mystical speculations with practical ethical teachings; it showed for the first time that such speculations and achievement of the highest possible religious and ethical standards go hand in hand. Other movements in the sixteenth century and later followed, knowingly or, more often unknowingly, this example, thus shaping Jewish life, in thought and deed together, according to their mystical drives and profound symbols.

NOTES

1. The main discussions of Scholem on Ashkenazi Hasidim are: Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, 3rd rev. ed. (New York: Schocken, 1954) [henceforth cited as Major Trends], pp. 80–118; Kabbalah (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), pp. 35–40; Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbala (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1962), index, s.v. "Chassidim, deutsche." It is interesting to note that in Scholem’s letter to Bialik, written soon after his arrival in Jerusalem (1925), he wrote a list of mystical texts that needed to be published in scholarly editions. At the top of his list he put Sefer ha-Hayim (The Book of Life), an esoteric work he connected with the Ashkenazi Hasidim. See Gershom Scholem, Devarim Be-Go (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1976), vol. 1, p. 65.

2. See J. Dan, The Esoteric Theology of the Ashkenazi Hasidim [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1968) [henceforth cited as The Esoteric Theology], pp. 14–20. Rabbi Aaron of Baghdad was the subject of an interesting controversy between Scholem and Israel Weinstock. The latter claimed to have discovered the key to identify the works of R. Aaron using the system of gematria, i.e., computations of the numerical value of Hebrew letters. Weinstock argued that Aaron identified himself with the angelic
name Adiriron, and ascribed to him every appearance of this name or its numerical value. Scholem responded to Weinstock in great detail, analyzing the manuscript he used (British Museum 752), and ultimately disproving his thesis. Scholem could not refrain from noting that the numerical value of Adiriron is exactly that of the name Weinstock! See I. Weinstock, "Discovered Legacy of Mystic Writings left by Abu Aaron of Baghdad" (Hebrew), Tarbiẓ, 32 (1963), pp. 153-59, and Scholem's response, "Has a Legacy been discovered of Mystic Writings left by Abu Aaron of Baghdad?" (Hebrew), ibid., pp. 262-66. Cf. also Weinstock's rejoinder, "Otzar ha-Sodot shel'Abu Ḥahron: dimyon ṭo metzi'ut?", Sinai, 54 (1964), pp. 226-59.

3. A. Grossman recently published a new study of the historical problems involved with the story of the immigration of the Kalonymus family from Italy to Germany which cast some doubt about the accuracy of the traditions quoted by Rabbi Eleazar. See A. Grossman, "The Migration of the Kalonimos Family from Italy to Germany" (Hebrew), Zion, 40 (1975), pp. 154-85. The history of this family requires further study before a clear historical picture will emerge.


5. See G. Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 41, 84, and 355, n. 2.


7. See A. Grossman, op. cit., pp. 174-83. Grossman concluded that it was chronologically impossible for any emperor by the name of Karl (Charles) to have been involved in this immigration. He suspected that Rabbi Eleazar was carried away by the legends of Charles the Great, and therefore the whole story is legendary. The difficulty with this view is that we do not find in Ashkenazi Hasidic literature any reference to Charles the Great and there is no reason to believe that his legends were known to them.

8. G. Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 80-118.

9. An example of the attitude of the Ashkenazi Hasidim to the Hekhalot hymns is discussed in J. Dan, "The Ashkenazi Hasidic Commen-

10. One of the most important examples is that of the book \textit{Raza Rabbah} (\textit{The Great Secret}), some quotations of which Scholem discovered in the works of an Ashkenazi descendant of the Rabbi Judah the Pious and published as an appendix to \textit{Reshit ha-Qabbalah} (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1948), pp. 195–238. Another example pointed out by Scholem is the \textit{Sefer ha-Kavod she-masar ha-Malakh le-Rabbi Akiva}, (\textit{The Book of Divine Glory given by the Angel to Rabbi Akiva}). See ibid., pp. 65, 205; and cf. J. Dan, \textit{The Esoteric Theology}, p. 56, n. 21 and p. 206.

11. Rabbi Eleazar’s commentary was printed in Przemishel, 1883 [re-printed in Brooklyn, 1978]. Another commentary on \textit{Sefer Yezirah} stemming from the Hasidei Ashkenaz was that of Rabbi Judah the Pious, now lost, which was known to Abraham Abulafia, a kabbalist of the second half of the thirteenth century.


14. Rabbi Eleazar wrote a book on the process of creation, which constituted the first treatise in his large collection of esoteric works, \textit{Sodei Razaya} (\textit{The Secrets of Secrets}). The book was organized in the form of a commentary on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. A part of the book was printed in the anthology, \textit{Sefer Raziel} (Amsterdam, 1701), beginning on fol. 7a.

15. For references, see above, ch. 2, n. 85. See also G. Scholem, \textit{Kabbalah}, pp. 351–55.

17. Scholem discussed this phenomenon in *Major Trends*, pp. 102, 11-113.

18. See G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 102. A version of the "Questions and Answers from Heaven" was attributed to Eleazar of Worms. Scholem paid particular attention to the Ashkenazi Hasidic tradition concerning a special ritual to be followed before a rabbi could transmit the secret of the Holy Name to the disciple. The ritual is described in the first part of Eleazar's *Sefer ha-Shem*, extant in several manuscripts, e.g. Munich 81 and British Museum 737. See G. Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism*, p. 136, and cf. J. Dan, *The Esoteric Theology*, pp. 74-76.

19. The three most important manuscripts of this central work differ considerably from each other, differences which may have resulted from the author's own editing. They are: Ms. Oxford Bodleian Lib., Neubauer Catalogue no. 1204; Ms. Paris 772; and Ms. Vienna 108. See J. Dan, *The Esoteric Theology*, p. 65.


21. See ibid., pp. 91-92.


23. The first translations of philosophical works by Judah ibn Tiqwa were not known to the Ashkenazi Hasidim in the beginning of the thirteenth century. The first Ashkenazi Hasid who used this material (along with other sources from Spain) seems to have been Eleazar's disciple, Abraham ben Azriel of Bohemia, who wrote the voluminous commentary on the piyyutim entitled ʿArugat ha-Boshem. The work was published in four volumes by E. E. Urbach (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1939-64), with a detailed introduction in vol. 4. See my review of this work in *Studies in Ashkenazi Hasidic Literature*, pp. 58-71.

24. See I. Baer, "The Social and Religious Background of the *Sefer Hasidim*" (Hebrew), *Zion*, (1938), pp. 1-50. Baer concluded that the Ashkenazi Hasidim were familiar with Latin and were acquainted with theological works of their Christian neighbors. The only further support for this possibility was supplied by G. Vajda in his study of the works of Elhanan ben Yaqar of London. See Vajda, "De quelques infiltrations chrétiennes dans l'oeuvre d'un auteur anglo-juif du XIIIe siècle," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* (1961), pp. 15-34. Vajda
presented examples which attested to the fact that Elhanan, who wrote his commentary on Sefer Yezirah after 1230, was familiar with some sections of Christian theological works. We do not, however, have any proof that Judah the Pious or Eleazar of Worms knew any Latin or that they were using Latin theological works in any way.

25. See Scholem’s comment on the paraphrase in Kabbalah, p. 38.
27. This section from R. Judah’s esoteric work was published in J. Dan, Studies in Ashkenazi Hasidic Literature, pp. 152–60.
28. See Hokhmat ba-Nefesh (Lvov, 1876), f. 7a–b, following ibn Ezra’s commentary to Exodus 22:22.
29. See G. Scholem, “The Idea of the Golem,” On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism, p. 190. This story is included in an Ashkenazi Hasidic commentary on Sefer Yezirah attributed to Saadia Gaon but written by the circle of mystics who followed the tradition of Jonathan ben Uzziel; see below, n. 38.
31. Judah the Pious did not know the Kuzari itself. However, he heard a story, probably originating from a false description of the book, about an Arab king in Spain who was converted to Judaism and used this story as a format for a theological work in which several Jewish scholars argue with that king. See J. Dan, Studies in Ashkenazi Hasidic Literature, pp. 26–33.
32. The only part of this work that is extant was published by A. Kircheim on Otzar Nehmad (Vienna, 1980), vol. 3, pp. 54–99.
33. For Scholem’s comments on Moses Taku, see his study “New Contributions to the Biography of R. Joseph Ashkenazi of Safed” (Hebrew), Tarbiẓ, 28 (1959), pp. 59–89, 201–35.
34. Concerning this problem, see above, ch. 3, pp. 85–86.
35. The doctrine of kavod was discussed by Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 11–16; see J. Dan, The Esoteric Theology, pp. 104–68.
109–29. Marcus pointed out deep differences between Eleazar of Worms and his teacher, Judah the Pious, with respect to their attitude toward ethical problems.


38. The literature and traditions of this unique circle of mystics were described by me in Studies in Ashkenazi Hasidic Literature, pp. 89–111.


41. For a list of the main treatises written by members of this group, see J. Dan, Studies in Ashkenazi Hasidic Literature, pp. 72–88.

42. The problem of the appearance of some symbols in the works of Eleazar of Worms which closely resemble kabbalistic terminology was discussed by Scholem in Reshit ha-Qabbalah, p. 37, n. 1, and p. 60, n. 3. Cf. G. Scholem, Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbala, pp. 162–66. See also J. Dan, The Esoteric Theology, pp. 118–29, where I tried to show that these terms appear in a text attributed to Rav Hai Gaon which was received by Eleazar as an ancient tradition.

43. Scholem discussed Sefer Hasidim and its teachings in Major Trends, pp. 88–106. The edition of the book he used was published by J. Wistinetzki and J. Freimann (Frankfurt am Main: Wahrmann, 1924). An inferior edition was later published by R. Margalioth (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1957). The latter was based on the traditional printed edition of Bologna, 1538, and contains little more than half the material contained in the Parma manuscript used by Wistinetzki and Freimann. For a survey of previous scholarship on the subject, see I. Marcus, Piety and Society, pp. 2–10; see my review of this work in Tarbiz, 51 (1982), pp. 319–25.


45. In this Scholem agreed with Baer who in his detailed study, “The Social and Religious History of Sefer Hasidim” (see above, n. 24), pointed out similarities between Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics and contemporary attitudes in Christianity; see G. Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 83–86.

46. See G. Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 96–97, and see below, n. 48.

47. On Ashkenazi Hasidic demonology, see M. Guedemann, Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Kultur der Juden in Frankreich und Deutschland
48. It should be pointed out that while Baer and Scholem were certain that Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics was deeply influenced, in several instances, by the surrounding Christian culture, studies in the last twenty years by I. Marcus, H. Soloveitchik, and me have failed in their attempts to substantiate this claim with specific examples of influence. The subject should be viewed as still uncertain and awaiting further study.


51. These and other key elements in Ashkenazi Hasidic ethics were studied in great depth by H. Soloveitchik, “Three Themes in the Sefer Hasidim,” Association for Jewish Studies Review, 1 (1976), pp. 311–57.

52. The exegesis is based on an interpretation of the fact that the stork in Aramaic is called hivarat, i.e., “white,” whereas in Hebrew it is called hasidah, i.e., “pious,” thus equating “white” with “pious” and concluding that a pietist is one who lets his face be “whitened,” that is, insulted, in public. See Wistinetzki and Freimann, eds., Sefer Hasidim, sec. 975, pp. 240–41.

53. See G. Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 96–97. Tishby raised the objection that Sefer Hasidim cannot really be regarded as supporting ataraxia insomuch as it gives great importance to the honor of the pious in paradise. See J. Dan, Hebrew Ethical and Homiletical Literature, p. 142.


55. See G. Scholem, Major Trends, pp. 104–05.

56. A description of the righteous in paradise sitting around the Shekhinah was given by R. Eleazar in Hokhmat ha-Nefesh (Lvov, 1876), f. 1 a–c.

57. This tradition probably originated in the circle of R. Jacob and

58. A survey of works written in this manner, a combination of Ashkenazi Hasidism and kabbalah, can be found in J. Dan, *The Esoteric Theology*, pp. 251–62.

59. This subject, which is part of the tradition describing the divine world in the form of a nut and its shells, was discussed by A. Altmann, "Eleazar of Worms' *Hokhmat ha'-Egoz*," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 11 (1960), pp. 101–13, and by me in *The Esoteric Theology*, pp. 207–10; "*Hokhmat ha'-Egoz*, its Origins and Development," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 17 (1966), pp. 73–82, and in "On the History of the Text of *Hokhmat ha'-Egoz*" (Hebrew), *Alei Sefer*, 5 (1978), pp. 49–53.
