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Zoharic Narratives and Their Adaptations¹

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About a decade ago Yehudah Liebes advanced a closely argued thesis that the Zohar was not written by a single author, that is Rabbi Moses de Leon, but by a number of authors.² This thesis, which underlies the present article, could be applied to number of different historical situations which might have existed simultaneously or consecutively.

- 1 The present article is part of a comprehensive study of the Zohar and its manuscripts which is supported by the Israel Science Foundation and the Jewish Memorial Foundation, New York. While surveying Zohar manuscripts for the purpose of this study, the various textual variants presented here were discovered. Neta Sobol, Gad Sagiv, Yael Rinot, and Keren Arbel assisted in this survey, and they have my thanks for their help. I hereby thank my friends Prof. Yehudah Liebes and Prof. Eli Yassif. The former's stamp is considerable on the present study. It was produced both as a response to his studies of the Zohar and out of a constant dialogue with him. Several of his comments have been integrated in my remarks about the tale "The Rose and its Scent", also in places where this is not explicitly indicated. The second friend helped me to refine the literary aspects of the article – I hope that, as a result of my discussions with him, I have succeeded in polishing more extensively my formulations in this area. I would like also to thank another friend – Dr. Boaz Huss, for his comments and his additional bibliographical suggestions. Thanks are due to Prof. Menahem Kaddari for his linguistic comments. Finally, I thank the State Library in Munich, the University of Toronto Library, the Friedberg Collection, and the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, for the permission given me to publish the excerpts discussed here from manuscripts in their possession. The foreword to the present article was taken and summarized from R. Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza: the Spiritual Biography of Rashby or: The Original Structure of the Zohar* (Hebrew, in print).
- 2 Y. Liebes, 'How the Zohar was Written', *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 8 (1989), pp. 1–72 (Hebrew). In brief and without proofs, this thesis was raised for the first time by A. Jellinek, *Moses Ben Shem-Tov de Leon und sein Verhaeltniss zum Sohar*, Leipzig 1851, p. 23. For another comment on this matter, also see M. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives*, New Haven 1988, p. 396, n. 66 (Hebrew). For the dispute aroused on account of this thesis, see the introduction to Ch. Mopsik, *R. Moses de Leon's Sefer Sheqel ha-Qodesh: Critically Edited and Introduced*, Los Angeles 1996; Y. Liebes, 'Review Essay: Charles Mopsik, Moses de Leon's Sefer Sheqel Ha-Qodesh, with an introduction by Moshe Idel', Los Angeles 1996, *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts* 2 (1997), pp. 271–285 (Hebrew), and Ch. Mopsik, 'Moïse de Léon, le Sheqel ha-Qodesh et la rédaction du Zohar: Une réponse à Yehuda Liebes', *Kabbalah* 2 [1997], pp. 271–285, *Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts* 3 (1998), pp. 177–218.

* The authors of the Zohar were part of a literary movement – or school of thought – which began in a group that Gershom Scholem called “the circle of Gnostic kabbalists” and led to kabbalists who until now have been considered imitators or followers, such as Rabbi David ben Yehudah he-Hasid, or Rabbi Yosef of Hamdan. From this viewpoint we are dealing with literary activity that flourished for about a century, starting before the middle of the 13th century.

* The link between the various authors was created through a teaching institution, a *beit midrash*, with a structural format of one sort or another in which there was a hierarchy among teachers and students, as well as a measure of latitude – some of the students regularly attended it, whereas others came only occasionally. It may well be that several similar institutions existed at that time.

* The authors of the Zohar were joined together in a fellowship with a leader at its head. This meant a deep personal and spiritual commitment for a long period of time as well as extremely intensive ties among the members. Possibly the academic fellowship involved a degree of seclusion from the rest of the world, even from other scholars, and perhaps several similar fellowships existed simultaneously.

Perhaps, as we have said, there was also a certain overlapping of all these possibilities. For example, a literary movement or one concerned with ideas may have taken shape, sometimes in the setting of a *beit midrash* or study fellowship, and sometimes with members going their separate ways. Or it may have been a scholarly institution functioning as a fellowship, but open to additional students who used it as a study house. If indeed we are talking about activity that spread over almost a century, it was only natural that changes occurred in personnel as well as in the format of relationships among them. In any event, the central distinction between the three possibilities is tied to the degree of intensity of relations between the members, with the borders between these possibilities not being sharply defined and unambiguous.

It seems to me that already at this stage of research, sufficient proof has accumulated in favor of this thesis. Due to the vast quantity of detailed evidence, I shall try to present here only the aspects and considerations focusing on the composition of the Book of Zohar itself and not on the literary activity which preceded or followed it. The nature of most of the evidence is such that an isolated detail may not possess the force of independent proof of the thesis. Rather, it is only the accumulation of evidence that would be compelling. For example, consider the argument that will be presented below as to the multiplicity of opinions expressed in the Zohar: In principle it is impossible to determine the boundary between the reasonable number of changes that one might expect from one author and the number that would attest to a multiplicity of authors. Since we are dealing with thousands (!) of differences it seems to me that the balance leans towards the thesis under consideration here. However, there still remains room for the discretion of the researcher.³

In any event, I would argue that the proofs to be presented here will suffice to create a solid block and endow them with historical validity.

Furthermore, most of the considerations that will be presented here support the general argument of the multiplicity of authors, but only a few of them relate to the nature of the relationships among the authors. The proofs in this area will therefore bear slightly less validity than the general argument. The term “fellowship” has become customary among researchers (myself as well) chiefly due to the forcefulness of the Zohar’s narrative, not specifically because more proofs exist in its favor than in favor of other formats of relationship between the authors. We may classify the considerations supporting a multiplicity of authors according to different categories. I will present here one such division, and in order not to overly dilate on the matter, I will content myself with just a few examples or references to other studies.

A. Internal and External Textual and Bibliographic Proofs

1) *The multiplicity, variety and even contradiction between the opinions presented in the various parts of the Book of Zohar.* In fact, one may use for this purpose almost the whole research literature written to this day! There is almost no study that surveys the opinions of the Zohar on any particular subject that does not point to this trait of wondrous multiplicity and internal contradictions. Isaiah Tishby has done this more than anyone else. His monumental book, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, systematically surveyed (sometimes numerically⁴) the varying opinions expressed in the book on each and every matter, whether a mountain or a molehill, and this despite the fact that Tishby still firmly held that there was only a single author of all this.

2) *The awareness of internal contradictions or disputes.* We find in the Zohar not only a multiplicity of opinions but also innumerable disputes. The approach of the book’s authors is to disagree with their colleagues in a fashion so refined and indirect to the point that often we do not sense a controversy or their awareness of a controversy.⁵ However, sometimes, as in the following example, they present their disputes explicitly.

The following example, which revolves around the status of the Sabbath as a

- 3 In light of such problems as mentioned here we might choose a more cautious claim, namely that the Zohar is a collection of texts, and that we cannot conclude whether they were written by a single author or by several ones. In such a case we might still discuss some relations between the texts, for example – which is earlier and which is later. But since we cannot ignore the following considerations in favor of real ‘personal’ relationships I think we should nevertheless try to consider the option of many texts as well as many authors.
- 4 For instance, the five divisions of the soul that appear in the *Midrash ha-Ne’elam*; see I. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2, Jerusalem 1961, pp. 32–35 (Hebrew).
- 5 My two other articles deal at length with such concealed critiques. See R. Meroz, ‘The

three stories that appear in two different variants each; one variant is apparently a reworking of the other. Nevertheless, this is not the first and only example. In one of his articles Gershom Scholem,⁹ for instance, published what appeared to him to be an early variant of a known and published text from *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*. The abovementioned article by Yehudah Liebes expands the evidence for the existence of proto-Zoharic texts of the *Sifra di-Tseniutha* and the *Idra Rabbah*. Furthermore, quite a number of Zohar texts are known to us today in two variants – one in Hebrew and one in Aramaic,¹⁰ whereas in another group of texts we find stories that contain certain homilies, while in other manuscripts we find the same homilies abstracted from any narrative context.¹¹

5) *The Biblio-Historical Testimonies as to the Process of Crystallization of the Book of Zohar*. It is known to us that from the beginning the Book of Zohar was disseminated in separate quires,¹² although we do not know the nature of the division between the quires. The first quotations from the Zohar appear under various names – *Midrash Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay*, *Midrash Yerushalmi*, *Sitrei Torah*, etc.¹³ Perhaps the very existence of different quires and different names attests to there being several sources or authors. Sometimes these first quotations seem to have actually been taken from the Book of Zohar; sometimes it is more fitting to call these quotations “paraphrases”; in some other cases they seem to be the words of the author, a parallel variant and not a quotation.¹⁴ In Yehudah Liebes’ opinion, cases like these may bear out that the author used the material as if it were his own, precisely because he was one of the fellows who had produced it.¹⁵

Perhaps we need to add that headings are found in the printed copies and manuscripts of the Zohar. Certain parts are called *Sitrei Torah*, *Sifra di-Tseniutha*, and so on. Again – the very existence of different headings may attest to there having been distinct compositions from the beginning.¹⁶

6) *The condition of the manuscripts of the Zohar.* As we know, the outer

9 G. Sholem (sic!), 'A Lost Chapter of the Midrash ha-Neelam', in S. Lieberman, S. Spiegel, S. Zeitlin, A. Marx eds., *Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume*, New York 1945, pp. 425–446 (Hebrew).

10 For a scientific edition and an analysis of these texts, see Liebes and Meroz, article in preparation.

11 See Meroz, 'Zoharic Homilies and Their Adaptations to Narratives' (in preparation).

12 I. Tishby and F. Lachower, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1, p. 31 in the introduction (Hebrew).

13 Tishby and Lachower, *ibid.*, pp. 37–38 in the introduction.

14 For example, in Rabbenu Bahya. On this matter see E. Gottlieb, *The Kabbalah of Bahya ben Asher*, Jerusalem 1970, p. 169 (Hebrew).

15 As to Rabbenu Bahya, see Liebes, 'How the Zohar was Written', p. 9; and as to Rabbi David ben Yehudah heHasid, *ibid.*, p. 58.

16 And in my book (Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza*) I continue this line of

format and the size of the Book of Zohar that we now have were determined by the first printers in the middle of the sixteenth century. They themselves announced that they had created this format by combining several manuscripts. Indeed, except for manuscripts dependent on the printed version, there is no manuscript that includes all that the printed versions contain. All the manuscripts contain various combinations of the Zohar material. I am now devoting most of my time to researching the Zohar manuscripts and to the history of their editing. I also hope soon to begin to publish my conclusions.¹⁷ However, we may even now point out a salient fact – certain literary units within the Zohar “wandered” from one part to another in the various manuscripts. One such example that is found in the printed editions as well (which obviously are based on different manuscripts), is the case of the *Sifra di-Tseniutha*. In the Mantua printed edition, and in printed versions which followed it, this section is found as part of the portion *Terumah*, whereas in the Cremona printed edition it is in the portion of Genesis. This phenomenon can be explained in various ways; however, from our vantage point, we should mention the possible deduction that *Sifra di-Tseniutha* (as well as other literary units) stood apart from the rest of the Zohar material, since its source was different. Since it stood apart, the various editors of the Zohar over the generations made different decisions as to how to integrate it into the Zohar as a whole. In general, we may say that the very fact that various manuscripts are essentially different in their interior order, and in their way of organizing the literary units, attests to their separate origin. Perhaps this was because they were written by different people.¹⁸

B. Literary Considerations

1) *The Multiplicity of Styles*. One of the most important, most closely reasoned arguments of Gershom Scholem as to the manner of composing the Zohar was his discernment of the relative stylistic homogeneity of the book and its proximity to the Hebrew writings of Rabbi Moses de Leon.¹⁹ However, Yehudah Liebes commented on this point:²⁰

thought and show that indeed the texts under different headings differ from each other in style and opinions as well.

¹⁷ See note 1.

¹⁸ For the sake of clarity, we indicate that the argument here differs from the argument in the preceding section on two matters. First, in the previous paragraph we considered testimonies about manuscripts that are no longer extant, whereas here we are considering testimony about manuscripts that have survived; secondly, in that it not only stresses the crumbling of the Zohar material, but its separation precisely in conformity with the division into known literary units, such as the *Sifra di-Tseniutha*.

¹⁹ G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, New York 1941, pp. 156–243.

²⁰ Liebes, ‘How the Zohar was Written’, pp. 2–3.

Despite all the parallels [between the Zohar and the Hebrew writings of Moses de Leon], there is still a broad gap in literary and conceptual power between the Book of Zohar and the writings of Moses de Leon. In contrast to the uniformity in the Hebrew writings [of Moses de Leon] that belong to a genre widespread in their time, the Zohar is a work *sui generis* in the Middle Ages in its variety and richness of expression and its originality of thought and imagination... This gap is also reflected in the historical success. While the Zohar became the fundamental work of the Kabbalah, the decisive majority of the writings of Rabbi Moses de Leon were never even published by the kabbalists... In addition, even from the stylistic and grammatical standpoints, there is no full identity between Rabbi Moses de Leon’s writings and the Zohar, and in addition to resemblance differences can also be found... Why, then, should we consider only the similar and not the different? After all, other authors too in Rabbi Moses de Leon’s period and in the generation after him wrote in the idiom of the Zohar and sometimes even in Aramaic, such as the author of *Ra’aya Mehemna* and *Tiqquney Zohar*, or Rabbi Yosef of Hamdan, or Rabbi David ben Yehudah he-Hasid, or Rabbi Yosef Angelino... It is true that each one of them had distinctive stylistic traits which are not found in the Zohar. But – do we have a clear criterion for measuring stylistic proximity and distance?

Further on in the article, Yehudah Liebes stresses the stylistic differences between *Midrash ha-Ne’elam* and the literature of the *Idrot*. In fact, he was not the first to indicate stylistic differences between the various parts of the Zohar. Isaiah Tishby believed that the book had one single author. Nevertheless he more than once indicated stylistic differences. This is especially prominent in his survey of the literary units that make up the book.²¹ Ephraim Gottlieb, who also accepted Scholem’s thesis of single authorship nevertheless assigned space to the considerable stylistic differences in the Zohar. He especially elaborated on detailed analysis of the style of the tractates *Matnitin* and *Tosefta* in the Zohar, and indicated that “These tractates are [therefore] a separate section in the Book of Zohar”.²² The present article too makes a certain contribution to discerning the multiplicity of styles in the Zohar texts.

As we have argued above, isolated stylistic differences cannot constitute proof of the multiplicity of authors. After all, even a single author might utilize several styles in one and the same work. All the more so when the writing stretches out over years. Here too there is room for the researcher’s reasoning and for his judgement as to where the border lies beyond which a multiplicity of styles necessarily attests to the presence of many authors. If it had to do with numerous differences in ideas, but found in similar stylistic settings, our argument would

²¹ Tishby and Lachower, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1, pp. 17–21.

²² Gottlieb, ‘Matnitin’, pp. 167–168.

be weakened. Since there exist in the Zohar extremely numerous stylistic differences as well, and even correspondence between stylistic differences and differences in ideas,²³ our argument is therefore strengthened.

2) *The multiple existence of narrative and homiletic motifs.* The Zohar has more than three hundred stories worked into it. Many of them are divided into subgroups in which we find different variants of the same story. The present article, too, gives several such examples. This kind of phenomenon is considered in modern research the most outstanding characteristic of a folk tale and in fact as a condition for defining a story as such:²⁴

[the definition] now accepted in the theory of folkloristics [for characterizing a story as a folk tale] is the concept of "multiple existence". A folk tale is a story that exists orally or in writing within a given cultural group and that we find in *various variants*.²⁵ The possibility of proving the "multiple existence" of a given story is a necessary condition for defining it as a folk tale.

However, it should be stressed that the defining criterion "folk" is also different today:

The "folk" is any social group that is unified by one common factor at least, such as language, tradition, profession, natural or institutional social setting, and related traits. According to this outlook, even extremely educated social groups, such as scientists in nuclear research laboratories, the medical staff of a hospital or the officers of an elite military unit, have a folk culture like every other social stratum and these too should be seen, no less than others, as "the folk"... The elitistic, snobbish approach... as if folklore were the creation of an inferior sub-culture that should be distinguished from "original", sophisticated elite culture... is more wishful thinking than reality.²⁶

From this viewpoint, "the folk" who created the stories of the Zohar was the very sophisticated elite group of the authors of the Zohar. In other words, the phenomenon of "multiple existence" which is revealed in the Zohar as a whole, and in the present article in particular, can attest to the existence of such a "folk". However, we need to be precise and make clear that the definition of a folk tale presented above is obviously based on the unstated premise that the different forms of the tales have different sources. Here on the other hand, the source of all the stories is one, the Book of Zohar. And is there no one single

man who is capable of creating different literary variations of the same collection of motifs? It seems to me that in view of this, it would be correct to see the phenomenon of "multiple existence" as proof of the multiplicity of authors only in combination with the additional characteristics of multiplicity of styles and multiplicity of opinions.

Together with the phenomenon of "multiple existence" of narrative motifs, even more commonplace in the Zohar is such a phenomenon concerning homiletical motifs. Several examples of this will be presented below. I propose seeing this second phenomenon too, like the first one, as evidence for a multiplicity of authors.

3) *The literary fiction.* The Book of Zohar was written in Spain towards the end of the thirteenth century, but its protagonist, Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay, lived in the Land of Israel in the second century CE. In addition to Bar Yohay, dozens of sages, *tannaim* and *amoraim*, are mentioned in the book. Thus it seems that the narrative aspect is fictional and not based on the lives of the book's authors. In any event, we do not have any direct evidence at all of such a nexus. Nevertheless, the researchers have been inclined time and again to connect the narrative to historical reality. For example, Yehudah Liebes claimed the existence of a fellowship that had produced the Zohar²⁷ and even tried to locate a historical figure living in the thirteenth century, to whom the fellowship members had alluded in their remarks about their spiritual leader.²⁸ In fact, Yitzhak Baer had already gone in that direction, for instance, when he drew several historical matters out of the Zohar, such as the way of life of the Jewish preacher. His initial assumption was formulated in the following manner:²⁹

Through the mystic haze shrouding it [the Zohar], a real-life setting is clearly discernible. The tales told in the Zohar are not fragments of the imagination, invented to provide a frame for the discussions and teachings of the ancient sages. They are, without doubt, as much a part of the contemporary scene and events as are the stories concerning St. Francis of Assisi and his companions. While the author of the Zohar put his teachings into the mouths of sages of the Mishna and the Talmud, he made no effort to conceal the true social setting of his work.

According to our method we shall say that if such a transition as this one, from fiction to historical reality, is done with particular care,³⁰ then it is legitimate;

27 Liebes, 'How the Zohar was Written', p. 7.

28 Y. Liebes, 'The Messiah of the Zohar: on the Messianic Figure of R. Shimon bar Yohay', in *The Messianic Idea in Jewish Thought: A Study Conference in Honour of the Eightieth Birthday of Gershom Scholem Held 4-5 December 1977*, Jerusalem 1982, pp. 91, 141, 127, 204 (Hebrew); idem, 'How the Zohar was Written', appendix B, pp. 68-71.

29 Y. Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, Philadelphia 1978-5738, I, p. 267.

30 On the problems in such a transition, see Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza*.

23 For many additional examples, see Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza*.

24 E. Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktales: History, Genre, Meaning*, Jerusalem 1994, p. 5 (Hebrew).

25 Emphasis in the original.

26 Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktales*, p. 4.

and when it deals with the issue of the authors of the Book, it is legitimate only because there is much to support it (as described in this article).

Examination of the fictions hints at several possibilities of relations between sages who had a hand in producing the Book of Zohar:

a) *Creative Work in the Setting of Several Fellowships*. The fiction about the fellowship of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay is the one that has attracted the most fame. According to the opening of the *Idra Rabbah* (Zohar III, 127b) this fellowship numbered ten members. Their names are listed there. Since most of the Zohar is presented in the format of discussions among the fellows, it seems that despite the hierarchy among them, they all participated in one way or another in bringing up ideas. At the same time, the fiction claims, not all the fellows wrote down their words. Hence, Rabbi Abba was assigned by Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay to record in writing the thinking of the fellowship (Zohar I, 217a). Nevertheless, this is not the only fellowship mentioned in the Zohar: Nehorai Saba meets Shimon bar Yohay and tells him that he is part of the fellowship of hermits which dwells in the desert (Zohar II, 183b–187b). Likewise, it turns out that another fellowship dwells in Kapotkia³¹ and it sends an emissary to Shimon bar Yohay and his fellowship in order to consult in regard with the secrets of prayer (Zohar I, 132a). In the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* we find sometimes other figures who appear in the role of spiritual leader – for instance, Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (Zohar I, 98a–99a) and in the text that we are publishing in another article, “the King” is the leader of the fellowship, and explicitly (not by allusion) this does not refer here to Shimon bar Yohay.³²

Among the characteristics of the fellowship are permanent contact, hierarchy, and emotional commitment. The fellows accept the dominance of their leader up to the point of issues of life and death³³ and are committed by ties of love to all of the other members.³⁴

From this fiction it emerges therefore that there were many partners in producing this work. And even if there was only one man assigned to write things down in Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay's group, the situation was not necessarily the same in the other fellowships.

31 This probably refers to the Cappadocians who lived in Sepphoris and views them as inhabiting a separate village. For more details see Tishby and Lachower, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, I, p. 76 of the introduction.

32 Meroz, ‘And I Was Not There?’.

33 For example, Rabbi Yeissa who dared to put his teacher to the test paid for it with his life, Zohar, III, 79a.

34 On the deep emotional bond between the fellows, see, for example, Zohar, I, 76a–b. On the importance of love in the life of the fellowship, see Liebes, ‘The Messiah of the Zohar’, pp. 157–165, as well as M. Oron, ‘“Place Me Like a Seal Over Your Heart”: Studies in the Poetics of the Zoharic *Saba deMishpatim*’, in M. Oron and A. Goldreich, eds., *Massu'ot: Studies in Kabbalistic Literature and Jewish Philosophy in Memory of Prof. Ephraim Gottlieb*, Jerusalem 1994, pp. 1–24 (Hebrew).

b) *Creative Work in the Setting of Several Study Houses*: Sometimes we find in the Zohar more open formats. Every one who has a question, a difficult problem to solve, or a thirst for study can come and go just as he likes. Sometimes we even find a combination of the two formats – the one open and one requiring greater commitment. In the tale that appears in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* in the Zohar Hadash (15b–d), the spiritual leader is Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay. Rabbi Abbahu, Rabbi Hiyya and Rabbi Nathan hear words of Torah from him. Rabbi Abbahu remains afterwards for thirty days to study with him “every moot point”. Rabbi Hiyya leaves. However when he hears later on about the wisdom of Rabbi Elazar he returns to him and stays with him for twelve years. Now, all this implies that Rabbi Nathan does not remain there at all. According to another story that appears in the main part of the Zohar (II, 36b–39b) Rabbi Hiyya and Rabbi Yosei take up the mystical doctrine, and introduce innovations in it. When they come up against a difficult matter that they have not succeeded in solving, they decide to turn to Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay, whom they have heard positive things about. They go to visit him in his study house in Tiberias; thus their assumption is that the study house of Shimon bar Yohay is also open for those who are not regular students there. In the end, they are deeply impressed by his answer and they stay there.

4) *A Similar Literary Fiction from a Source External to the Zohar*. The book *Mashal ha-Qadmoni* was written in 1281, that is, while the Zohar was in the process of being written, by the contemporary and fellow townsman of Moses de Leon, Rabbi Isaac ibn Abu Sahula.³⁵ Here too we find a description of a fellowship which very much resembles the fellowships mentioned in the Zohar.

In this book, a fellowship is mentioned which became famous among “the people of the city”. It is described as “the glory of the assembly of the refined”,³⁶ that meets regularly for study. The fellowship is hierarchical. At the head is “the old prophet”,³⁷... the Nazirite”.³⁸ (chap 33). Around him are the students – “They sat before him, the senior one as his favorite”. The penitents wear black (chap 33). The relationship between the teacher and his students is warm. When the teacher arrives –

They bowed down before him and came joyfully towards him... and the Nazirite asked how they were faring and how their Bible studies were faring/ And how their Talmud studies and their Mishnah studies were faring/ And they said: Peace [= faring well]. Glory to the dweller of my dwelling./

35 Rabbi Isaac ibn Abu Sahula, *Mashal ha-Qadmoni*, I, Jerusalem 1953 (Hebrew). The book is written in rhymed verse.

36 Based on Isaiah 47:8.

37 Based on I Kings 13:25.

38 The Nazirite is married, by the way, and we learn this from the fact that he has a daughter, whom he marries off to his chosen student (chap 32).

Blessed art thou for My Lord./ Indeed one *halakhah* is still unclear to us and remains to be explained... (chap. 30)

Love and devotion were extremely important. The senior disciple declares before his teacher:

Since the sweet sap of your words you sated me³⁹/ and of the virtues of good qualities you informed me/ Here I am fulfilling your purified words/ gladly and most pleasantly/ and all the days of my life I shall pass before you/ Thus and more may the Lord do to me if anything but death parts me from you (chap. 32)⁴⁰

As in the Zohar, the fellowship has a role in the spiritual leadership of the people of the city.⁴¹ For that reason, when, according to *Mashal ha-Qadmoni*, the people of the city propose to the senior disciple that he leave his teacher and set up a new study house, his response is, "As the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you" (chap 33).⁴² At the commandment of the teacher, the disciple agrees, despite everything, to the request. A relationship of mutual contribution develops between him and his new city:

And they prepared for him a house and excellent slaves/ and spacious rooms/ and he became the city's shield and breastplate/ Resting quietly the earth burst out in song⁴³/ And he led them according to Torah and ethics/ And he was their minister/ And he instructed them in the law of penitence.../ And they were his sons and students (chap. 33)

His teacher too had contributed to the welfare of the community in aspects that are not mentioned in the Zohar. At the beginning of his path he was a merchant, but after he did penitence, he described his new path as follows:

And I took a vow for my crimes and my sins/ The vow of a Nazirite to be devoted to God... And I turned all my possessions into an endowment... And I rose up and built a temple house/ to God, a small sanctuary⁴⁴ [= a synagogue]/ And I erected it east of the city/ to call to all passersby and to awaken them/ And I attracted to myself fellows and students... and I taught

39 Compare to similar language which appears in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* and is presented below near notes 88, 89.

40 According to Ruth 1:17; a story of Platonic love which is not dependent on anything.

41 On the role of the head of the fellowship as "the Tree of Life" and the spiritual leader of the whole community, see Zohar, III, 200b–202b.

42 Based on the words of Elisha to his teacher Elijah (II Kg 2:2,4,6). It may be that these words allude also to the words of the Shunamite to Elisha (II Kg 4:30) or to the words of Ruth to her mother-in-law (Ruth 1:15).

43 According to Isaiah, 14:7.

44 Based on Ezek 11:16.

Torah in public/ And I gave each man in accordance with the fruit of his deeds/ In the house that is called in my name⁴⁵/ And I increased within it wealth and glory/ and very much silver and gold⁴⁶/ And everything was prepared for the poor/ And for the redemption of captives (chap. 29).

Thus it seems that the fellowship described in *Mashal ha-Qadmoni* has several roles. Its primary role is study of the Torah for adults who devote all their time to that. The study of Torah is linked to a clearly spiritual and moral aspect. It is not said explicitly that they are involved in the hidden wisdom of mysticism, but we may find an allusion to this in the fact that their leader is called "Prophet". The sources of income of the fellowship are the private endowment of the teacher,⁴⁷ and contributions by members of the community.⁴⁸ The second group of roles is social – a spiritual contribution to the people of the city, charity for the poor, and the redemption of captives.⁴⁹

This fellowship therefore possesses a broader spectrum of roles than what is exhibited in the Zohar fiction; however, we have found several points of proximity so that we can see them as parallel fellowships.

C. Historical Considerations

Information about the Existence of Fellowships in Spain. Activity in the format of a fellowship is well known in Castile and Aragon starting from the thirteenth century up until the expulsion.⁵⁰ The fellowships had varied goals – charitable

45 Based on Jer 7:10 and additional sources.

46 The wealth of the House also emerges from its description as "a house, its beloved covering there that is of gold" (chap. 32), based on the association with the words of Song of Songs (3:9–10): "King Solomon made him a palanquin of wood from Lebanon. He made its posts of silver, its covering of gold, its seat of purple wool".

47 And this fits in with the claim of Yom Tov Assis that the fellowships in Spain rose out of private initiatives and with private financing, not at the initiative of the communal leadership. See Y. T. Assis, 'Welfare and Mutual Aid in the Spanish Jewish Community', in H. Beinart ed., *The Sephardi Legacy*, I, Jerusalem 1992, pp. 318–345; idem., 'Poor and Rich in Jewish Society and Mediterranean Spain', *Pe'amim* 46–7, 1991, pp. 115–138 (Hebrew).

48 Concerning the Teacher's fellowship, this is perhaps known through the formulation, "And I increased its wealth and its glory." It was explicitly said of the disciple that the people of the city were the ones who financed his home and his study house, after he became the teacher (see above).

49 Shimon Shtober claims that in Spain the redemption of captives was carried out by the leaders of the community rather than by private initiative. See Sh. Shtober, 'Charity Fellowships in Christian Spain', A. Morgenstern ed., *Collected Papers in Memory of A. Spigelman*, Jerusalem 1979, p. 167 (Hebrew).

50 Assis, 'Welfare and Mutual Aid'; idem., 'Poor and Rich in Jewish Society'; Shtober, 'Charity Fellowships'; A. Blasco Martínez, 'Instituciones socioreligiosas judías de Zaragoza (siglos XIV–XV): sinagogas, cofradías, hospitales', *Sefarad* 50 (1990).

and benevolent activities, study of Torah, and instruction of adults and children, prayer, etc. In regard to the kabbalists too we possess certain information that they came together in the fellowship format.

For example, we may have testimony that such a format existed in Gerona. In any event, the terms *havurah* (fellowship) and *haverim* (fellows, members) appear in respect of the kabbalists in Gerona. Rabbi Solomon Montpellier writes in this vein to the kabbalists of Gerona (who chronologically preceded the Zohar, as we know): "And therefore my lord and his holy fellowship, take care to investigate this for the glory of our God". Likewise, Nahmanides treats Rabbi Ezra ben Solomon as one of "the fellows".⁵¹ In regard to Rabbi David ben Yehudah he-Hasid too, who followed in the path of the Zohar fellowship, we possess several pieces of evidence as to his activity in this setting; in his writings "*haverim*" (fellows) are mentioned and even "*rosh havurah*" (head of a fellowship).⁵² However, it may be that even Moses de Leon hints at the existence of a fellowship when he writes in the *Sefer ha-Rimmon*:

And those who grasped the Torah hid themselves in their words... And for this reason, the exalted Torah was forgotten in Israel, until God, blessed be He, awakened another spirit and men took good counsel to return to the true knowledge of the Creator, may He be blessed, and understood things in the words of our Rabbis, may their memory be for a blessing, in the slight awakening that they experienced.⁵³

*

This article is dedicated to one layer in this massive structure, to the examination of three pieces of evidence for the repeated reworking of the Zohar texts. What is common to the following three texts, is that they are all structured as stories. Each one of these three tales has been discovered in two textual variants. Various signs attest that these were not the only textual variants. It seems that many Zohar texts underwent several reworkings.⁵⁴ The present article scrutinizes the differences between the two variants that were discovered with the purpose of

pp. 3–46 (I thank Prof. Assis for drawing my attention to this article).

51 According to G. Scholem, *The Beginning of Kabbalah: 1150–1250*, Tel-Aviv 1948, p. 239 (Hebrew); Nahmanides' commentary on the Torah, C. B. Chavel ed., Jerusalem 1959–1960, Lev. 19:19, p. 121 (Hebrew).

52 M. Idel, 'The Image of Man above the Sefirot', *Da'at* 4 (1980) pp. 41–42 (Hebrew); idem, 'Kabbalistic Materials from the School of Rabbi David ben Yehudah he-Hasid', *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 2 (1982/3), pp. 169, 194 (Hebrew); Liebes, 'How the Zohar was Written', pp. 57–64.

53 E. R. Wolfson, *The Book of the Pomegranate: Moses de Leon's Sefer Ha-Rimon*, Atlanta, 1988, p. 392; Liebes, 'How the Zohar was Written', p. 7.

54 See notes 58, 72, and 138 and surrounding text.

recovering the motives for producing them, and of indicating internal developments in the Zohar that led to the need to rework an existing story. As we shall become aware, it is likely that these motives were divided into three kinds – various linguistic preferences, literary creativity, and most important of all, conceptual developments.

THE FIRST TALE – "THE TALE OF RABBI YOSEI BEN PAZI"⁵⁵

When we first examine the two variants of the first text, it seems that the differences between them are no more than the fruit of accidents or of the unfocussed freedom of the copyist. However, a closer examination of these differences strengthens the possibility that Variant Text B is a deliberate reworking of Text A, a reworking that was done in one of the stages of editing the Book of Zohar. We will point out several of these differences as part of an attempt to explain how they were formed, but we will begin first of all by describing the plot common to both textual variants.

The tale deals with a sage who migrated from one country to another, and with his ultimate neighbor, Rabbi Yosei. The plot of the tale is built out of oscillation between short events (such as the words of the Teacher or the decisions of the neighbor) and the relatively long-term implications that these events had on the neighbor's life. The moral of the tale may be presented in the statement: Whosoever studies Torah even not for its own sake will eventually study it for its own sake. In another wording, which is close to the emphases of the story itself, we may compare the possibilities of reward for studying the Torah – rewards in this world (that is, wealth and honor) for Torah studying not for its own sake; and the rewards in the next world for Torah studying for its own sake.⁵⁶ This moral lesson is set into the structure and contents of the tale in both variants, but it is presented explicitly only in Variant B (lines 84–86).⁵⁷ From the formal standpoint, the tale is presented (in both variants) as an etiological story⁵⁸ as well, concerning the source of the name of a family of sages which is in fact mentioned tens of times in the early-rabbinic literature, the Ben Pazi

55 Here I have used part of the title that was given by the copyist of the Moscow manuscript, Ginzburg 262, to the story: 'The Tale of Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi and Why He Was Called Pazi'.

56 In Baer's opinion, the story serves the author's position in the class struggle – rich against poor, and the values of the first against the values of the second. See Baer, *History*, I, pp. 261–266, and in particular p. 265.

57 For more on this matter, see the text close to note 140.

58 It may be that the gap existing in Textual Variant A between the message structured into the story but not presented explicitly and the explicit etiological message attests to an earlier history of the story, a history that precedes even Textual Variant A, and which contained slightly different story contents but focused on the etiological tale.

family.⁵⁹ Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi⁶⁰ here becomes the legendary father of the family, whose deeds gave his family its name over the generations.

The beginning of the story (The First Episode) presents a great teacher. On account of his greatness in Torah, his countenance shone like the sun (only in Variant A) and many crowded at his door (lines 1–4, 9). His neighbor, Rabbi Yosei, in contrast (as is implied in the continuation of the story) is poor and ignorant at that time. The neighbor's interest in Torah is awakened; however, the Teacher puts him to a test, as he was accustomed to doing to everyone – whether he is interested in studying Torah for its own sake (that is, is he ready to wait for a reward in the life of the world to come) or not for its own sake (expecting wealth and honor in this world) (lines 5–8). It seems that the neighbor does not view this as a test but as an offer of two legitimate possibilities.

The Second Episode opens after the neighbor's autonomous, inner choice, when he has chosen the Torah out of the expectation of wealth and honor (lines 10–13). Before these expectations have been fulfilled, Rabbi Yosei is already being called “the possessor of wealth and honor” (line 21). Several events take place over the course of the second episode. Some are natural, some miraculous. In the first event, the neighbor again demonstrates his autonomy. He loses his patience when his expectations of riches are not fulfilled (or, alternatively, when the Teacher's promise of wealth is not kept) (line 24–25). We should point out that according to Variant A his expectations of honor are apparently realized, since he succeeds not only in learning a great deal but also in attracting many students (line 22–23). The Teacher is disappointed with his student since he has not withstood the test, neither at the decisive moment nor later on. He considers punishing him, but a divine voice that prophesizes a positive future for the student leads the Teacher to continue, despite everything, to encourage his student in his studies (lines 26–33). The next event too, which serves as a transition to the third episode, is miraculous in nature and reflects the divine intervention throughout the plot: unexpectedly, a stranger appears, childless but rich, who is ready to contribute his wealth in order to have someone who will study on his behalf. The Teacher brings together these two contrasting personalities – the neighbor and the stranger. Neither has sufficiently learnt Torah but while the neighbor is interested in learning Torah in order to enrich himself in this world, the stranger is ready to give away his great wealth in order to earn merit in the world to come.

The Third Episode then opens with the wondrous appearance of the stranger

who had given away his vast riches to the neighbor, who is called from now on, Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi [=‘son of fine gold’]. The neighbor's wish is entirely fulfilled and it seems that he is happy to continue his studies (lines 34–60). Nevertheless, the deeper and deeper that he gets into his studies of Torah, his reasoning changes as does his choice (another inner, autonomous event). The love of Torah enters his heart instead of the greed for money, and now he prefers the life of the world to come over the life of this world.

The Fourth Episode opens with the return of the wealth to its owner in order for him to share it among the poor of the world; from now on the neighbor will learn Torah for himself and for the stranger despite his poverty in this world. But he and his family will always be called ben Pazi (lines 61–86).⁶¹

Thus the story spreads over four episodes:

The neighbor is ignorant and poor and is called Yosei.

The neighbor is a poor wise scholar and is called Rabbi Yosei, the possessor of wealth and honor.

The neighbor is a rich wise scholar and is called Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi.

The neighbor is a wise scholar, poor in material things but rich in spirit and is called Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi.

The tale opens with a continuing situation of imperfection – ignorance – but it ends with a utopian situation, apparently permanent – wisdom and study for the sake of Heaven. Indeed, the principal motor force in the plot is the inner, autonomous strength of the neighbor and the nature of his choices, but without the delay necessary for this force to find its way, the story would not arrive at its positive ending, and this delay is wondrously produced by Heaven, both through the heavenly voice and through the appearance of the rich stranger.

One of the most prominent traits of the Zohar story is the repetition of combinations of several motifs – the phenomenon of “multiple existence”; sometimes the same motifs are developed to a much greater extent, and sometimes in a more limited manner; sometimes new motifs are interwoven with them.⁶² A pair of textual variants of each story presented in this article exemplifies one aspect of the phenomenon – it seems that in this case the link between the pairs is clearly textual. But sometimes the story has more distant “relatives” who share only a small part of their motifs while their styles or their

59 The family included sages such as Rabbi Yehudah bar Simon, his son, Rabbi Shimon or Simon, and his son's son, Rabbi Yehudah. Likewise known is Rabbi Hanina ben Pazi (or Hanin or Hanan) who may have been the brother of Rabbi Shimon.

60 Rabbi Yossa ben Pazi is mentioned in the *JT* Shabbat 4:1. Rabbi Yosei is mentioned again several times in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* in the *Zohar Hadash*, e.g., in 11b; 13b; 14b.

61 Thus, the moral of the story does not fit in with the words of *Pirquey Abot* (2:4) that, “Whoever fulfils the Torah out of [a state of] poverty his end [will be] to fulfil it out of a [state of] wealth” [tr. – J. Israelstam]. And perhaps it is more appropriate to say that our story takes matters out of their simple meaning and sees the wealth promised in *Pirquey Abot* as spiritual wealth, which justifies in a deeper sense the name “ben Pazi”.

62 For a short discussion of the phenomenon of “multiple existence”, see the foreword to the present article. For additional discussion of the meaning of the phenomenon in respect of the Zohar stories (together with examples), see Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza*.

moods are different. It is quite possible that the link between them might be oral, not necessarily textual. Our story too (in both variants) has such a "relative"; its links to our tale might be oral. From the literary point of view, the following story, called "The Illumination of the Face of Rabbi Hiyya", is more meager than the pair of tales about R. Yosei ben Pazi:⁶³

... Whoever exerts himself in the Torah day and night, inherits two worlds – the upper world and the lower world. He inherits this world – although he did not study it [the Torah] for its own sake, and he inherits the upper world – if he studies it for its own sake. Come and see what is written: "In her right hand is length of days, in her left, riches and honor" (Proverbs 3:16)... After all, Rabbi Hiyya, when he came from there to the Land of Israel, he read the Torah until his face was shining like the sun. And when they used to stand before him, all those toilers in the Torah, he used to say: This one exerts himself in the Torah for its own sake and this one does not exert himself for its own sake. And he used to pray for him who occupied himself [with it] for its own sake that he would be so always and would merit the world to come, and for the one who did not occupy himself with it for its own sake, that he would come to occupy himself with it for its own sake, and would merit eternal life.⁶⁴

One day he saw a disciple who was toiling in the Torah and his face was turning green. He said – surely he is pondering about sin.⁶⁵ He kept him in front of him and drew on him words of Torah [from above] until his [the

63 Zohar, III, 189b–190a: עלמא עלאה – עלמא תתאה. אחסין תרין עלמין – עלמא עלאה – עלמא תתאה. אחסין האי עלמא – אף על גב דלא אתעסק בה בר נש לשמה, ואחסין ההוא עלמא עלאה – כד אתעסק בה בר נש לשמה. תא חזי, מה כתיב? 'ארץ ימים בימינה, בשמאלה עשר וכבוד' [משלי ג:טז]... דהא רבי חייא כד אתא מהתם לארעא דישראל קרא באורייתא עד דהוו אנפוי נהירין כשמשא. וכד הוו קיימין קמיה כל אינון דלעזאן באורייתא הוה אמר – דא אשתדל באורייתא לשמה ודא לא אשתדל לשמה, והוה צלי על ההוא דאתעסק לשמה לדיהוי הכי תדיר ויזכי לעמא דאחי, וצלי על ההוא דלא אתעסק בה לשמה דייתי לאתעסקא בה לשמה ויזכי לחיי עלמא. יומא חד תמא חד תלמיד דהוה לעי באורייתא ואנפוי מוריקן. אמר – ודאי מהרהר בחטאיה איהו דנא. אחיד ליה לקמיה ואמשך עליה במלין באורייתא עד דאחישב רוחיה בגויה. מן ההוא יומא ולהלאה שוי על רוחיה דלא ירדוף בתר אינון הרחרין בישין וישתדל באורייתא לשמה

64 Like the prayer of Rabbi Safra in the Gemara, *BT Berakhot* 17a – "And all those who deal [with it] not for its own sake, may it be [His] will that they deal with it for its own sake".

65 The link between the countenance and the moral condition of a person was already presented by the Talmudic sages. For example, "There are four signs: Dropsy is a sign of sin; jaundice is a sign of causeless hatred..." (*BT Shabbat* 33a, tr. H. Freedman). Also: "Dropsy is a manifestation of lewdness" (*BT Yebamot* 60b, tr. – I. W. Slotki). This link is developed of course in the magical literature dealing with chiromancy and physiognomy. "Jaundice" as a sign of sinful thoughts or as a sign of moral wavering appears in the Zohar in other places. For example, in Zohar, III, 193b, it is sign of transgression in general, and in the tale of the Ten Martyrs (*Midrash ha-Ne'elam Ruth, Zohar Hadash*, 89c), it is a sign of moral wavering which produces pollution.

disciple's] mind was settled within him.⁶⁶ From that day on [the disciple] set his mind so that he would not chase after those evil thoughts and would exert himself in the Torah for its own sake.⁶⁷

Similarly to the tale about R. Yosei ben Pazi (as will be emphasized below), so the tale about R. Hiyya is set into the homily about the verse from Proverbs and is meant to illustrate it. Likewise are some of the repeated narrative motifs – the migration to the Land of Israel of a sage from Babylonia,⁶⁸ the shining face (parallel only to Variant A) and the interest of the sage in the question of studying Torah for its own sake or not for its own sake. In both tales the Teacher and the student are placed in contrast – in the first, one is a sage and the other (by implication) an ignoramus, in the second – one has a shining face and the other – a face turning green. In both tales, the Teacher displays extraordinary talents – here he succeeds in intuitively identifying who studies for its own sake and who – not for its own sake, and there "he bent over" or "entered his room" (in Aramaic – his *Idra*) in order to hear the opinion of the higher powers in regard to the student. In both tales, the Teacher succeeds in raising his student to the (permanent) situation in which he learns for its own sake.

On the whole, the atmosphere is more natural and of this world in the tale about R. Hiyya; in order to attain the religious achievement of studying for its own sake, the Teacher urges the student to act in a psychological manner of channeling his thoughts – while in both variants of the tale about R. Yosei ben Pazi there is a clearly miraculous, legendary element. From this we learn that despite the borrowing by the various authors of the Zohar of narrative and homiletical motifs from each other, there is no *midrash* and no tale without something new, or without a personal stamp. The authors do not simply repeat the words of their colleagues, rather they use them in order to exhibit a different picture of the world. Here we may highlight the central difference between the tales as a difference between the natural world and a world which is in need of supernatural intervention. Alternatively, one might highlight this as a difference between optimism and pessimism, as a difference in assessing one's ability to achieve religious attainments: the tale about R. Hiyya is fundamentally optimistic and expresses the sense that man has, through the natural means in his possession, the capability of reaching religious attainments and of arriving on the level of learning for its own sake; the tales about R. Yosei ben Pazi are much more

66 And does this suggest that while pondering sin, his face turned green because he lost his soul as if he was dead?

67 The formulation here has been softened. The Talmudic sages present the link more resolutely – the study of Torah prevents evil thoughts of various kinds. See, for example, *BT Qiddushin* 30b; *BT Berakhot* 5a; *Abot d'Rabbi Nathan*, Version A, Chap. 16 and Chap. 20; *Sifre Numbers*, Paragraph 45, pp. 103–104.

68 And see around notes 78–80 below.

pessimistic – indeed they ascribe importance to man's autonomous decisions and to his desires, but in the last analysis, they express the sense that without heavenly intervention, man cannot advance on his path, and certainly cannot reach the degree of learning for its own sake.

We now return to the tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi and we shall point out a number of the differences between the two textual variants:

1. Both variants are set into a different homiletical framework. The homiletical framework of Variant A in the manuscript was printed (despite the fact that the variant itself was not printed) and belongs to the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*.⁶⁹ The homiletical framework of Variant B, in contrast, was printed in the Margoliouth edition under the heading *Sitrei Torah* (and in another formulation, as will become clear below: next to the text of *Sitrei Torah*).⁷⁰

Considerable parts of the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* are structured as a series of homilies and stories; sometimes the tale is meant to exemplify one of the claims of the homily, and at other times the homily is meant to clarify one of the aspects of the tale. Thus our story fits in with this general structure. In contrast, *Sitrei Torah* is structured as a detailed commentary on the Bible, and stories are not included in it.⁷¹ Therefore, this tale stands out as deviant in the *Sitrei Torah* section. We are therefore bound to conclude that the natural place and source of the story is in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*, and that someone liked the story and chose it to be added to *Sitrei Torah* as well. If this was not the decision of the author of *Sitrei Torah*, then it was probably that of an editor who came after both *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* and *Sitrei Torah*. The logic behind such a decision is clear: both homiletic settings are focussed on a verse from Proverbs (3:16) which deals with the value of wisdom: "In her right hand is length of days, in her left, riches and honor". Both understand this verse in the light of the remark in the Babylonian Talmud (Shabbat 63a), which identifies wisdom with the Torah. The tale that exemplified this message in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* was thus also capable of serving as an illustration for the *Sitrei Torah*.

Furthermore, it seems that another story in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* (*Zohar Hadash*, 11b-c) recognizes the biography of R. Yosei ben Pazi, and precisely in a version that has him as a bachelor (Variant B, line 10). It should be stressed (as we said at the start of our discussion) that this does not mean that the tale from the *Zohar Hadash* recognizes specifically Variant B; however, it is aware of some variant, whether A or B, or perhaps an additional variant according to

which R. Yosei was a bachelor.⁷² In any event, according to this tale R. Yosei ben Pazi meets, when he is already "a great man and a sage of the generation", a child named Ahava ('Love'). The child hesitates whether it is proper to speak with him because he sees a sign on him that he has received his *neshamah*, the refined aspect of his soul, only a short while before and not at birth. R. Yosei indeed confesses that "I was a bachelor when I toiled in the Torah and a *neshamah* was bestowed on me". Further on, the text differentiates between two kinds of men: the possessor of vitality (*nefesh hayyah*) ("Who does not know nor recognize the work of his Creator") and in contrast, the possessor of a *neshamah* ("He who knows and recognizes the work of his Creator"). The child thus feels (and R. Yosei indeed confirms this) that R. Yosei has merited recognizing his Creator through his *neshamah* only at a later stage in his life, when he was a "bachelor", that is, a mature man but not married. Together both stories – "The tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi" and the story now mentioned from the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* in *Zohar Hadash* – produce a fragment of a biographical legend. This fact reinforces our inclination to see the source of "The tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi" precisely in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*, and not in the *Sitrei Torah*.

The advantage of the considerations presented here (as well as that of some of the following considerations) lies in their reinforcing the methodological argument that stylistic and literary distinctions within the Zohar have value not only in themselves but also by virtue of their help in sharpening our diagnoses in matters of text and ideas.

In any event, since in our estimation both the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* and the *Sitrei Torah* are the work of the second generation of members of the Zohar fellowship, then the process of editing was likely carried out as early as the third generation or in one of the later generations up to the time of printing the Zohar.⁷³

2. In Variant A, the migrating sage is Rav Kahana,⁷⁴ while in Variant B, he is

⁷² See next to note 54.

⁷³ As to the writing of the Zohar being spread over a lengthier period than Scholem and Tishby conjectured, and as to the need to see its writing as a part of a broader literary movement, see Liebes, 'How the Zohar was Written' and this article's introduction. According to my research (Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza*) the Zohar was written over the course of four generations. In the first generation, we find texts such as the *Mamtitin*, *Toseftot*, and *Sifra di-Tseniuta*; in the second generation (the seventies and eighties of the thirteenth century), we find the Hebrew writings of R. Moses de Leon, *Sitrei Torah*, considerable parts of *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*, and others; and in the third generation (the nineties of the thirteenth century), the epic section (a narrative section containing some twenty tales, which include well known stories such as the two *Idrot*) as well as a substantial part of other tales of the Zohar (despite my lack of success in defining the unit they belong to); and in the fourth generation (the first quarter of the fourteenth century), a few of the tales of the Zohar as well as *Tikuney Zohar*, and the *Ra'aya Mehemna*.

⁷⁴ In the sources, we have another story about the migration of Rav Kahana (an *amora* of

⁶⁹ This framework was printed in the *Zohar Hadash*, the portion of Lekh Lekha, 24a. The story itself was not printed there but there is a reference to it.

⁷⁰ The homiletic framework of Variant B was also printed in the Cremona edition but it was not indicated there that it pertained to *Sitrei Torah*.

⁷¹ For a detailed description of the style of the *Sitrei Torah* section, see Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza*.

R. Abba.⁷⁵ This change fits a general tendency in the Zohar, that Gershom Scholem pointed out years ago. It is that in the passage from the early parts of the Book of Zohar (such as *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*) to the later parts there is a process of changing names of the sages who speak, together with a reduction in their number and increasing focus on the group around R. Shimon bar Yohay.⁷⁶ Indeed, R. Abba was a member of this Zoharic fellowship, but not Rav Kahana.

Further, in Variant A the migration from Babylon to the Land of Israel is described by the words "he went up to there" whereas in Variant B by the words "he came from there". Describing the Land of Israel as "there" turns Babylon into a "here", which seems to be a scribal mistake; after all it is customary to argue that the plot of the Zohar takes place in the Land of Israel.⁷⁷ However, perhaps it is appropriate to refresh this thought and to estimate that Variant A was written as part of a plot that occurs both in Babylonia and in the Land of Israel, wherein Variant B the plot focuses in the Land of Israel alone. Scrutiny of the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*, for example, will bring to our attention that it not only focusses on *tannaim* but on many *amoraim* too, many of them natives of Babylonia. Indeed, the central plot of the Zohar takes place in the Land of Israel, however it may be that the author of the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*, or some of its authors, thought of creating a broader plot – broad in time and place. In any case, the repetition of this "mistake" in other places in the Book of Zohar can strengthen this argument. See for example, "When Rav Hamnuna Saba went up [immigrated] there" (!),⁷⁸ and likewise also on the matter of Rav Hunna and Rav Safra.⁷⁹ This, incidentally, is a further example that the story of

the second generation) from Babylonia to the Land of Israel: *BT* Baba Qama 117a–b. Additional sages by this name are known; not one of them belonged to the generation of the historical Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay.

75 If the reference is to R. Abba bar Ibo, that is, Rav, after all there is no special story in our sources devoted to describing his migration and if the reference is to R. Abba, who is also called R. Ba, an Amora of the third generation, then certain details about his immigration are given in *BT* Berakhot 24b, and in *BT* Ketubbot 112a, but they do not reach the point of forming a real story. In both cases, this R. Abba is not a contemporary of the historical Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay.

76 Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 182; idem, 'A Lost Chapter', p. 427; Tishby and Lachower, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1, pp. 27–28 in the introduction; as well as Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Marza*, in the foreword. These comments have been additionally reinforced a great deal by my research. An example, one of many, may be examined in the Oxford Bodleian manuscript, 1564, film number 16932, in which this phenomenon is very commonplace. Another example is found in the tale "The Rose and its Scent", to be discussed below (see next to note 144).

77 See for instance, Tishby and Lachower, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 1, pp. 75–76 in the introduction.

78 Zohar, III, 72b.

79 Zohar, II, 174b; Scholem, 'A Lost Chapter', p. 442. On the other hand, in Zohar, I, 190a,

immigration to the Land of Israel or from it is also a recurrent motif among the tales of the Zohar, another example of the phenomenon of "multiple existence" in the Zohar.⁸⁰

3. According to both textual variants, at the beginning the sage is angry with his student when it turns out that the latter did not study for the sake of Heaven, but further on he overcomes his anger, and this occurs after the prophecy of the heavenly voice as to the student's positive future (lines 28–33). According to Variant A, the sage hears the heavenly voice when "he bent over" whereas according to Variant B, it was when he "entered his room". It seems that the differences between the two variants reflect different tendencies in the conception of prophecy.

Voices from heaven that intervene in the course of the lives of the sages appear in all the strata of the Zohar. In the *Mishnayot* of the first generation no circumstantial setting is specified for the appearance of the voices, although it is rather clear that they represent God's words in one form or another.⁸¹ In the third generation, the dominant setting for creation of the link with the upper worlds is the ceremonial setting with numerous participants that is called "*Idra*"; the literal meaning of the word being earthly room as well as Heavenly Chamber.⁸² In another text, which apparently belongs to the second generation, we find (just as in Variant B of "The tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi") Rabbi Elazar entering on his own, without any special ceremony, into his "*idra*". There hearing a heavenly voice, which discusses, among other things, the Heavenly Chambers, he is considered as someone who has actually entered them.⁸³ In the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*,⁸⁴ in contrast, we find a case more similar to Variant A of our tale – R. Zmira repeatedly bends toward the ground, lowers his ears and hears voices. It turns out from the continuation of the story that he is listening to the voices of those being punished in Gehenna. Thus it seems that also in the tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi while bending over Rav Kahana hopes to hear the words of dead souls. This conjecture is strengthened by another Zohar text in which R. Metivta considers the ability of the sorcerers to bend over towards the ground in order to hear the voices of the dead, and promises R. Shimon ben Yohay to have him comprehend the full truth about this area.⁸⁵

the immigration of R. Hiyya to the Land of Israel is described in the "corrected" manner: "R. Hiyya, when he came from there to the Land of Israel".

80 See also in the foreword to the present article and around note 62 above.

81 An example of a text from the first generation, in which the circumstances are not specified for the hearing of the heavenly voice – Zohar, I, 121a, Tosefta.

82 On the variegated field of meanings of this word, see Y. Liebes, 'Sections of the Zohar Lexicon', Dissertation, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 1976 (Hebrew), under "*idra*". The best examples for the *idra* ceremony are of course *Idra Rabbah* and *Idra Zuta*.

83 Zohar, I, 89b–90a (*Sitrei Torah*).

84 Zohar *Hadash*, Ruth 84b–c.

85 Zohar, III, 169a. It may be that this technique of "bending over" has an Ashkenazi

4. On line 72–73 in Variant A, we find a verbal description exceptional in the Zohar literature, which describes the neighbor's weeping – “the voices flow out of me like water!” This description is omitted from the second variant.

An additional unconventional verbal combination is found in Variant A and is missing in Variant B. Towards the end of the tale, the neighbor goes up onto the straight path and chooses the Torah for the sake of Heaven, rather than for the sake of wealth. The Teacher's joy is presented in Variant A (line 69–70) in a text that must have probably been corrupted: ‘ש"מ דטלפיהון דטלפין כד עקרייא דקייא' – “עד לאו דרבייא לאו אורח ארעא”⁸⁶. Despite the corrupt text, it seems that we may discern in it the remnants of an epigram, something like: The scorpion too needs to grow up in order to improve its sting. In the background of this saying was probably the remark in the *Pirqey Abot* 2:10 (or similar sayings) that the Torah of the wise scholars is like the sting of a scorpion.⁸⁷

Our text is not the only case in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* where it seems that the text makes use of verbal combinations that are not found in other parts of the book, or of combinations that resemble proverbs. For instance, ‘מאי... לית’; ‘פומך מנטף מתקא דדובשא דחכמתא?’ that is, “Why ... does your mouth not drip the sweetness of the honey of wisdom?”⁸⁸ And in another place, when R. Hiyya beseeches R. Abbahu: דאטעום ממהוא מיתקא דדובשא דאמצית מגורית – ‘במטו מינך, ר' אבהו, דאטעום ממהוא מיתקא דדובשא דאמצית מגורית’ קדישין עילאין. That is, “Please, R. Abbahu, let me taste from that sweetness of honey that you wrung out of the instruction⁸⁹ of the upper holy beings”.

background, since necromancy was common among Ashkenazi peitists. For more on the possible ties to Ashkenaz, see below around notes 119 and 122, as well as the following studies: E. Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*, NY, 1989, pp. 104, 106, 168 (notes 183, 186, and 189), 175 (note 231); I. Ta-Shma, *Ha-Nigle SheBanistar – The Halachic Residue in the Zohar – A Contribution to the Study of the Zohar*, 1995 (Hebrew); Idem, ‘More on the Ashkenazi Origins to the Zohar’, *Kabbalah – Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts* 3 (1998), pp. 259–264 and vol. 5 (2000), pp. 353–358 (Hebrew); E. Kanarfogel, *Peering through the Lattices – Mystical, Magical and Pietistic Dimensions in the Tosafist Period*, Detroit 2000 p. 153.

86 Indeed, the copyist of the Moscow manuscript, Ginzburg 262, commented here too, “I didn't understand.” The text of the Moscow manuscript דטלפיהון instead of דטלפין; דקייא instead of דקייא; דטלפין instead of דטלפין.

87 Like the comparison of the bee's sting to the words of the Torah – *Deuteronomy Rabbah*, ed. Lieberman, Jerusalem 1992, 1:6 – Just as the bee is sweet to her master and stinging to others, so are the words of Torah the sap of life for Israel and the sap of death for star worshippers.

88 *Zohar Hadash*, 12b, *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* on Bereshit. The link between the sweetness of honey and wisdom, the Torah, the word of God, or the secrets of the Torah is very widespread in our sources. See, for example, Ezek 3:13; Ps 19:9–11; Prov 16:24; *BT Hagigah* 13a; *Exodus Rabbah*, 47:7. And compare with similar language appearing in the remarks of the first one to quote the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*, R. Isaac ibn Sahula, above near note 39.

89 The *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* uses here, as is customary in it, the root *gzt* in the sense of

R. Abbahu answers him: ‘חררתא דאפיקותא וסוכתא דדובשא לא מתיישבי כחדא’. The answer appears to be a puzzling epigram that maybe should be translated: “The palm branches and the filth of the honey (date honey) do not go together”,⁹⁰ or perhaps, “The cake (of honey) and the filth of honey do not fit together”,⁹¹ or even: “Bits of excrements and the goodness of honey do not go together”.⁹²

instruction and not in its usual sense, namely, decree. This usage is apparently connected to the teacher's title – ‘Melekh’ (king). For more detail, see Meroz, ‘And I Was Not There?’.

90 *Zohar Hadash*, 15d, *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* on the portion of Bereshit. חררתא is perhaps a corruption of חרותא. See Rashi on *BT Sukkah* 32a: “חרותא – palm branch that has hardened for two years and three years and fronds (*lulavim*) have come out of it... and have become hard... and become wood. One turns this way and one turns that way”. אפיקותא – perhaps a corruption of אפותא. Rashi there: “the trunk of palm tree which is smooth and no branch comes out of it in any direction...” And also see, B. Huss, ‘A Dictionary of Foreign Words in the Zohar’, *Kabbalah – Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts*, 1 (1996), p. 173 (Hebrew): “אפותא דקטפא – the roots of grasses or branches of the palm tree”. And these are also the words of the *Derekh Emet* on the expression – אפותא דקונטא or in another version, אפותא דקופתא which appears in the *Zohar*, II, 61a. סוכתא – apparently from the word סוכותא, that is, pollution. Rabbi Ashlag, in contrast, translates this saying: “Fronds of the top of the palm tree and the beverage (סוכאות) of honey cannot be together”, deriving חררתא from סוכיאה (intoxicating drink). The meaning of the saying according to Rabbi Ashlag is: “Rabbi Hiyya was not yet a wise scholar, but he resembled the branches of the palm tree which are to bear fruit in the future. And Rabbi Abbahu said to him that there is still a great distance between the branches of the palm tree and the honey that issues forth from the dates that will grow along it. And for that reason, he is not yet worthy of drinking the honey.” According to the translation by Rabbi Ashlag, Rabbi Hiyya seeks to taste the honey and Rabbi Abbahu answers him that he cannot drink it. According to my translation, on the other hand, sharp criticism of Rabbi Hiyya is noticeable in the remark of Rabbi Abbahu. After all, earlier in this story when Rabbi Hiyya was allowed to hear these words of holiness, he chose not to remain; thus he befouled, as it were, the sweetness of the honey. Furthermore, according to Rabbi Ashlag, the metaphor of a palm tree relates to Rabbi Hiyya, whereas according to my approach, the metaphor of a palm tree relates to the teaching of the holy teachers, who are probably seen as righteous like the palm tree. Incidentally, it should be mentioned that *Tanhuma* on the portion Ki Tavo, chap. 3, rejects in principle the possibility of pollution of honey: “Just as honey does not become polluted, so the Torah does not become polluted...”. Here and in the next two notes the following dictionaries should be consulted – J. Levy, *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim*, Berlin und Wien 1924; M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, NY 1971; M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period*, Ramat-Gan 1990.

91 Here I saw a corruption of חררתא, one of the meanings of which is cake; אפיקותא is according to this trend of thought אפתא, that is, bread. And perhaps together they are a loaf of cake, or some baked cake dish, an allusion to a kind of honey cake.

92 This option was raised by Prof. Liebes. Here חררתא means either a cake or excrements (see Nathan of Rome, *The Complete Arukh*, ed. H. Kohut, Wien 1878–1892 [Hebrew]),

Another example of unconventional verbal combinations is found in the next sentence: 'כד נטא שמשא גדפוי למהך בחקיפוחא דגלגלוי, מבטשי בטלפיהון כטרפי אילנייא דגנתא דערין'.⁹³ That is, "When the sun inclines its wings to go with the force of its wheels, its legs tread on the leaves of the trees in the Garden of Eden!"⁹⁴ From the stylistic viewpoint, we should distinguish between the trait mentioned here, that is, rare combinations of known words, and the inclination of the *Matnitin* and the *Toseftot*⁹⁵ to use unknown words (an inclination that influenced almost all the other layers of the Zohar), "Zoharic words", such as 'קטורי רמאי דקסטורי' and 'דוהסטרא', and the like.⁹⁶

In Variant B the remnants of the epigram dealing with the scorpion have disappeared (perhaps because its formulator did not know it? or perhaps his style did not favor epigrams? or perhaps he did not favor unusual combinations of words?). Instead of this, the author of Variant B put into the mouth of the Teacher words that create a contrast with a previous event, in which he was disappointed with his student when the latter still held on to the expectation of riches:

line 26–27: He said, That means that he does it *not* for the sake of Heaven!

line 68–69: He said, Now it means that he does it for the sake of Heaven!

The author of Variant B also sharpens the comparison between the first appearance of the neighbor in the Teacher's house and the appearance of the rich stranger, and again he does this by creating parallel formulations.

The following are the two introductory conversations according to Variant A:

טובתא אפיקותא means excrements, while טובתא might be considered a corruption of טובתא. Prof. Kaddari, on the other hand, suggested that the epigram speaks about the impossibility of having 'cakes of excrements'. Here חררתא means a cake again, טובתא אפיקותא means excrements, while טובתא is considered to be a corruption of the abovementioned טובתא.

⁹³ *Zohar Hadash*, 17d, *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* on Bereshit.

⁹⁴ Not only does this epigram resemble the epigram about the scorpion by the very existence of an unusual combination but here there is an actual repetition of words derived from the same root. In the epigram about the scorpion, "טלפיהון דטלפין" whereas here "מבטשי בטלפיהון" (the common word to both expressions – טלפיהון – means – 'their hooves') (a comment by Neta Sobol). Further, it may be that this unconventional combination was created out of the corruption of the description of a cosmological structure. We ought to recall that according to the cosmology of the Talmudic Sages, the universe is made up of layer upon layer: under our earth there are abysses; and above the earth there are the firmaments (which include the celestial bodies) as well as the chariot with its wheels and its Beasts. A discussion joining the wheels of heaven to the hooves (טלפים) of the Beasts sometimes appears. See, for example, *Seder Rabbah deBereshit*, Sh. A. Wertheimer, *Batey Midrashot*, Jerusalem 1950, part I, especially p. 43.

⁹⁵ As said above, these sections belong to the first generation, in my view.

⁹⁶ This combination appears in Zohar, I, 62a. For a discussion of these words, see Tishby and Lachower, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, I, pp. 78–79 in the introduction, as well as Gottlieb, 'Matnitin'.

line 12–13: He said to him, Rabbi, I seek the merit of Torah in order to have wealth.⁹⁷

line 37–50: He said to him, Rabbi, I seek to have a portion in the wages of the Torah.

He said to him, What are your deeds?

He said to him, Father left me gold and silver... And I was not granted a son... And I came to find someone who wants silver and gold and he shall study Torah and it will be counted my merit as if I myself had studied it.

And these are the two introductory conversations according to Variant B:

line 12–13: He said to him, Rabbi I seek to study Torah in order to have wealth.

line 40–51: He said to him: Rabbi, I want to merit the Torah... since I have great wealth.

This last example also shows the ability of the author of Variant B to shorten, to choose his words, to be precise with them in good taste⁹⁸ – out of high moral awareness he strove to avoid all unnecessary verbiage. We can find several additional examples of this distinction between the two variants but a few shall suffice here. According to Variant A, when the neighbor became wiser, he understood that he had given up the world to come for the sake of riches (line 61–66), and afterwards he repeated this insight before the Teacher (lines 71–76). Variant B makes do with one short presentation of this insight before the Teacher (line 65–67). By the same token we may note that Variant A goes far in describing the neighbor's academic successes (lines 22–23, 57–60) while he is still not learning for the sake of heaven. However, does not a story of success such as this one weaken the moral lesson?! Do his students not sense his materialism? The author of Variant B senses this contradiction, apparently, and gives up entirely on giving these descriptions. As we have said, any account that does not lead to a moral lesson is superfluous for him.

Emerging from all this is that while the author of Variant A reflects a stylistic trait of *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* (the use of epigrams and of combinations that are not common in the rest of the Zohar), the style of Variant B is characterized by an inclination to literary uniformity, to structural coherence,⁹⁹ to economy and

⁹⁷ The text presented here was created by combining the Munich and Vatican versions, and likewise below.

⁹⁸ Also comparison with the other versions of the neighbor's words shows to what extent the author of Variant B was precise in choosing his words; this is not the place to expand on all these matters.

⁹⁹ Only in one case does Variant A draw a parallel between different situations, whereas Variant B waives doing so. According to Variant A, Rav Kahana's face is shining and the golden cup that the stranger brought gleams in the house. Since R. Yosei is called from here on ben Pazi [= 'son of fine gold'], it is implied that from now on he too is linked to light. It may be that the author of Variant B is not interested in drawing a parallel between

to meticulous, carefully chosen formulation. It may be that the next example too points to such an inclination.

5. In both variants, a strange man appears, bringing with him a valuable golden vessel (line 35). Further on, it becomes clear that this cup is in fact one of thirteen cups (line 45; according to the versions in the Vatican and Moscow manuscripts it is one of twelve cups). The homiletic framework of Variant B describes the reward in the world to come through the metaphor – among other ways – of thirteen rivers of balsam. It may be that whoever joined the story to this new framework also tried to create a parallel by way of negation – the choice between thirteen golden cups (more exactly, of one that represents them all), as a symbol for the pleasures of this world, and the thirteen rivers of balsam, as a symbol of the pleasures of the world to come.

This explanation is reinforced if we note the irony concealed in the Teacher's usage of a verse from the Book of Job (28:17) which describes Wisdom in the following way: "Gold or glass cannot match its value, [nor] vessels of fine gold be exchanged for it" (line 55–56). In a simple understanding of the Biblical text, this verse is built as a parallelism, in which the negative term also serves its second half: It is impossible to weigh the value of wisdom in gold, glass, or a vessel of fine gold. However, the Teacher, disappointed with his student, hints at his bitter evaluation of the student's understanding of the worth of wisdom, that is, the Torah. It is impossible indeed to weigh wisdom like gold or glass, but some make do, like his student, with what seems to them to be its material equivalent – vessels of fine gold. It seems that in the Teacher's opinion, the student understands too simplistically both the verse from Proverbs and the following words of the Talmudic Sages: "What does it mean – 'Gold or glass cannot match its value, [nor] vessels of fine gold be exchanged for it'? He said to him, These are words of Torah that are difficult to obtain, like golden vessels and vessels of fine gold, and that are easy to lose, like glass vessels".¹⁰⁰ In the student's comprehension, a parallel and an equation are created between the verse cited from Job and the verse from Proverbs mentioned above (3:16): "In her right hand is length of days" – corresponds to wisdom in its exalted aspect; "In her left, riches and honor" – corresponds to another acceptable aspect of wisdom – its equivalent material value which can be measured in valuable vessels. It is superfluous to indicate that in the Teacher's opinion, the combination of both verses attests precisely to the abyss-opened up between the two

the sage, R. Abba, and the one who acquired his wisdom in such a twisted way. Hence, he also waived praising the sage. Another explanation may be that on account of his thrift with words he waived drawing a parallel that was not helpful for the moral lesson. And another explanation – that praise of the sage was simply deleted from the texts that we now have.

¹⁰⁰ *BT Hagigah* 15a and parallel passages.

possibilities. The author of Variant B aspires, apparently, to widen this abyss even more: he who chooses wisdom or Torah according to the one way chooses length of days, eternal life, and the thirteen rivers of balsam, whereas he who chooses it the other way chooses riches and honor in this world, or the thirteen golden cups.¹⁰¹

6. The plot in both variants leaves us wondering. If that stranger is so rich, why does he not use his money to teach his son Torah?! By such an act, he could not only fulfill an obligation imposed on him as a father,¹⁰² but even actually enter into paradise. On the other hand, neglect of this action is likely to bring him to Gehenna. In the words of the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*: "Everyone who brings a son into this world, and teaches him Torah and good deeds, the angels of destruction and of Gehenna do not rule over him... so that a man shall not say, 'The Torah I have studied and the good deeds I have done protect me, and therefore I shall not deal with being fruitful and multiplying.' Yet, despite his having studied Torah and having done good deeds, he does not enter into the enclosure of the Holy One blessed be He, and he does not have a portion in the world to come".¹⁰³

Variant A responds to this wonderment quite simply: "I do not have a son" (line 46), whereas Variant B does not relate to this problem. There are two possible conclusions in this situation. Variant B might be the earlier one and when it was reworked, the rewriter felt this lack and added it to the new variant, which was Variant A. Alternatively this matter was omitted accidentally from Variant B, which is later than A. The latter possibility is the preferred one in my view according to the totality of considerations presented here.

Before concluding, we shall add another comment: a Hebrew paraphrase of our story is found in the book of R. Abraham Saba', *Tseror ha-Mor*. We know by the style that we are talking about a paraphrase and not another variant worked

¹⁰¹ In another formulation, one can say that the student makes a hermeneutical mistake; he makes a faulty combination between the two verses, since the plain meaning of the figurative verse indeed gives an equal status to both things of matter and of spirit, whereas the verse from Job grades them differently. The student is not sufficiently aware of "his hermeneutical ambience" and hence he arrives at the wrong conclusion. Again, in another formulation, one may say that he is not sufficiently aware of prevailing values that condition the acceptable hermeneutical steps.

¹⁰² The value of this obligation is stressed often in the Zohar. See, for example, the following stories, "Rav Metivta", Zohar, III, 164a; "Saba d'Mishpatim", Zohar, II, 95a; "The Expulsion of the Angel of Death", Zohar, I, 217b.

¹⁰³ *Zohar Hadash, Midrash ha-Ne'elam Ruth*, 89b. We have here a widening of the idea that appears in *BT Sanhedrin* 104a: "A son confers privileges on his father but a father confers no privilege on his son (tr. – H. Freedman)." And see the two tales printed in the *Zohar Hadash* which are meant to illustrate this principle: one, in *Zohar Hadash*, 49a-b, the portion of Aharey Mot and the second in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam Ruth, Zohar Hadash* 84b-c.

up by members of the Zohar fellowship.¹⁰⁴ In any event, the stylistic and content elements which distinguish our two variants are not noticeable here, and it may be that this paraphrase rests on a third, slightly different variant. The sage here is Yohanan, the language of the student is cruder here than in our two variants, and many motifs are lacking. As in the Zohar, the presentation of the tale is meant to teach the reader a moral lesson. And this is the variant which is found in Saba':¹⁰⁵

... for beginners and for the fool if they are not told to worship the Lord for the good things of this world, etc., they will not worship the Lord on account of His greatness and exaltedness. And perhaps later on they will recognize the truth and will say: This is the straight path before a man and the other one leads to death.¹⁰⁶

And likewise, they said of Rabbi Yohanan that a student came before him and said that he wanted to learn Torah in order to be rich, and he accepted him. And he ordered his students to call him, 'R. Yosei, the possessor of wealth'.

And he [the student] was busy with Torah and he succeeded and he used to say that he had a good name and did not have wealth!

104 For example, unlike the Zohar – the predominance of indirect speech instead of direct speech; expressions like, "He recognized the truth", and many others. And indeed according to Gross' research most of the Zohar was not available to Saba' and he therefore relied on his memory. See A. Gross, *Iberian Jewry from Twilight to Dawn: The World of Rabbi Abraham Saba'*, Leiden-New York-Köln 1995, p. 68.

105 R. Abraham Saba, *Tseror haMor*, Bnei-Braq 1990, part I, p. 100, commentary on Genesis 18:17: ...למתחילים ולאנשים הפתאים, אם לא יאמרו להם שיעבדו את השם בעבור טובות העולם הזה: 18:17: וכיוצא בזה – לא יעבדו את ה' מצד גדולתו ורוממותו. ואולי אחר כך הם יכירו האמת ויאמרו – זה דרך ישר לפני איש ואחריתו דרכי מות. וכיוצא בזה אמרו רבני יוחנן שבא לפניו תלמיד ואמר שהיה רוצה ללמוד תורה על מנת להיות עשיר וקבלו, וצוה לתלמידיו שיקראו לו ר' יוסי מארי דעותרא. ועסק בתורה והצלח והיה אומר שהיה לו שם טוב ולא היה לו עשרה! יום אחד בא לפניו ר' יוחנן איש עשיר מאד, שהגיה לו אביו עושר גדול ומרגליות כלי פז, ולא קרא ולא שנה ובא לבית מדרשו. וא"ל שאחר שהוא לא עסק בתורה שהיה מביא עמו כלי פז לתת לתלמידים. והרב קבלו ונתן לרבי יוסי מארי דעותרא, וקרא שמו ר' יוסי בן פזי, והיה עוסק בתורה בשמחה. אחר שקרה [!] ושנה ונכנס לעומקה של תורה וראה חמדת התורה, הנאמר עליה 'הנחמדים מזהב ומפז רב' [תהי יט:יא] אמר בלבו – אוי ואבוי שהנחתי חיי עולם בשביל חיי שעה! והלך ואמר לו לרב – למה רמיתני?! ואתה צודה את נפשי לקחתה! כי אין לי לעסוק בתורה אלא בשביל גדולת השם ולא בשביל כסף וזהב. וחזר אותו כלי פז לרב לחלקו לעניים. והכיר האמת ולכן נקרא על שמו ר' יוסי בן פזי בכל התלמוד. וזהו שאמרו 'לעולם יעסוק אדם בתורה ובמצות אפילו שלא לשמה, שמתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה'... ולכן הדרך הראשון [יראת הרוממות] הוא הדרך האמיתי... שהוא גדול ונורא, ולא יראת העושר, אלא למתחילים ולטפשים הדרך השני הוא דרך נאות

106 The last words are based on Proverbs 14:12. From the present text it emerges that the request for a reward in this world stands – for the author – in the same category as "fear of His punishment", and is contrasted with "awe of His exaltedness". This pair of terms is not used by the members of the Zohar fellowship in our story.

One day, a very rich man came before R. Yohanan. His father had left him great wealth and pearls, vessels of fine gold, and he didn't read and he did not study, and he came to his [R. Yohanan's] study house. And he said to him that since he had not been occupied with the Torah, he was bringing with him a vessel of fine gold to give to the students. And the Rabbi accepted it and gave it to Rabbi Yosei, 'the possessor of wealth', and he called him by the name 'R. Yosei ben Pazi' and he came to busy himself with the Torah joyously.

After he had learned and entered into the depths of the Torah he felt desire for the Torah, of which it is said, "more desirable than gold, than much fine gold" [Ps 19:11], and he said to himself, "Woe is me that I put aside eternal life for the sake of life for the moment!"¹⁰⁷

And he went and said to the Rabbi, "Why did you deceive me?!¹⁰⁸ And you hunt my soul in order to take my life!¹⁰⁹ Because I should not busy myself with Torah save for the greatness of God, and not for silver and gold".

And that same vessel of fine gold came back to the Rabbi to give it away for the poor. And he recognized the truth and therefore [his family] was named after him "Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi" throughout all the Talmud.

And this is what they said: "A man shall forever busy himself with Torah and the commandments even if not for its own sake, since out of not for its own sake he came [to do it] for its own sake...". And therefore, the first way [namely, awe of His exaltedness] is the true way.... since He is great and terrible, and not the fear of punishment; but for beginners and fools the second way is the proper way".

In conclusion: What is common to both variants of "The tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi" (in contrast to the tale "The Illumination of the Face of Rabbi Hiyya") is the importance of the supernatural in the routine of religious life. I assume that the source of the story about R. Yosei lies in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*; afterwards it was inserted into the text of *Sitrei Torah* and during this process it was reworked. The differences between the two variants of this tale rest on verbal, literary and conceptual issues – during editing, verbal expressions that may have been less acceptable to the editor were omitted; its literary form was sharpened and it was made much more uniform and concise so that the opposition between the two different paths laid out before a man (studying for its own sake or not for its own sake) was emphasized; and finally, its terminology was adjusted to the conceptual changes which had taken place in the time that had passed between writing the two variants – now focussing on members of the fellowship

107 Following BT Shabbat 10a.

108 Based on Gen 29:25 or I Sam 19:17 or I Sam 28:12.

109 Based on I Sam 24:11

of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay and stressing the importance of the *idra* as a means to attaining mystical knowledge.

THE SECOND TALE – “THE FOWL AND THE CHILDREN”

On the face of it the two variants that represent this tale are different in length. Variant A is the shorter one, Variant B is the longer. The principal difference between them rests on one visual image – the arrows – which is developed in Variant B and is lacking in Variant A. The systematic absence of this image in Variant A, despite its being scattered among the various parts of Variant B, attests that the absence is neither accidental, nor a scribal error. Since I have not succeeded in imagining an argument to explain why any kabbalist might have wanted to remove precisely this image from his text, the reasonable explanation is that Variant A is also the earlier one, whereas Variant B is the product of creative elaboration.

Both variants are uniform in the lesson they impart. Their conceptual background assumes that each people has a guardian angel. The rule of the Holy One blessed be He over the peoples is carried out through His rule over those guardian angels. The removal of the guardian angel from his post or his demotion causes the destruction of his people or at the least its conquest by others; strengthening the guardian angel in Heaven makes it possible for his people to rule over other peoples.¹¹⁰ As is indicated at the end of both variants, and as we find in several parallels in the Zohar, the removal of a guardian angel from his post is carried out by burning him in the the Fiery Stream (*Nehar Dinur*) and proclaiming this fact throughout all the worlds.¹¹¹

110 See, *Exodus Rabbah* 21:8; “God does not cast down a nation before He destroys their guardian angel first” (tr. S.M. Lehrman). With more elaboration, E.E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*, Cambridge Mass. 1987, I, pp. 137–139.

111 This opinion is extremely widespread in the Zohar (or: formulated in the spirit of the thesis of multiple-authorship – it must have been widespread among the members of the Zohar circle). One may see in it an example of the “multiple existence” of midrashic motifs, in parallel to the phenomenon of the “multiple existence” of literary motifs, as described in the foreword to the present article and in note 135. This opinion, with slight changes, appears in the following places, for example: Zohar, I, 69a; Zohar, II, 18b, 19b, 46b, 49a, 52b, 54b, 175a, 239b, 252b. In fact we find here a combination of two ideas that were already expressed by the Talmudic sages: One is: “Every day the ministering angels are created from the fiery stream and utter a song and cease to be”, *BT Hagigah* 14a (and see too *Genesis Rabbah* 78:1, ed. Theodor-Albeck, Jerusalem 1996, pp. 916–917 and the notes there); and the second was mentioned in the last note. The second idea also appears among Ashkenazi Peitists (see *Sefer Hasidim*, ed. Margulies, Jerusalem 1957, sign 1160, p. 575) and in Bahya’s commentary on Pentateuch, ed. C.B. Chavel, Jerusalem 1966–1968, Part II, p. 119 (commentary on Exodus 14:25). In contrast, the opinion of R. Joseph Gikatila on the topic of the rise and fall of princes of the nations is

In both of our variants, four guardian angels are mentioned. It seems that the background to this is the messianic conception which anticipates the coming of redemption at the end of the four exiles of Israel, in the spirit of the Book of Daniel. The guardian angels are, one, overseeing Egypt while the three others are overseeing three Roman peoples. The three guardian angels which oversee the Roman peoples devastate the land of the single guardian angel as presented in relatively great detail (lines 24–31, 44–49). This entails messianic benefit at least according to Variant A (lines 30–31), since the enemies of Israel are striking at each other, and indirectly aiding in the resurgence of Israel.¹¹² Egypt is mentioned indeed in the visions of Daniel (chap. 11), but it is doubtful whether this point of origin is valid, since Rome is not mentioned there. It is more reasonable to assume that we have here a grafting together of two models of redemption – the model of the four exiles, or the four empires, according to the Book of Daniel, and the model of the Exodus from Egypt, according to which the first redemption, that is the Exodus from Egypt, is the model for the last redemption.¹¹³ The grafting together of the two models creates a pattern in which the last empire is the empire of Egypt.¹¹⁴

It is an interesting question as to whether we ought to view this struggle between the guardian angels as a general example or a specific allusion. Is the unconventional combination of three guardian angels who all oversee Roman peoples meant to hint at a certain historical situation? With a certain hesitation, I can offer the following explanation: Rome regularly symbolizes Christendom, whereas Egypt may symbolize the Islamic domain. Is it possible that the war of a “Christian coalition” against Islam, entailing the destruction of existing buildings and rebuilding, refers to the Crusader conquest of the Land of Israel? If this is indeed the case, it is clear that these words were written before the downfall of the Crusader kingdom in 1291. On the other hand, is it proper to call the Land of Israel, even under Islamic rule, by the name of Egypt? Furthermore, the Zohar generally expresses fierce hatred towards Roman rule and hopes for its ruin. Could this have changed? Another explanation might see Egypt as a symbol of the Exile in Spain, where the writer of the tale in question

presented through a totally different array of terms. See Joseph Gikatila, *Sha'arei Orah*, ed. J. Ben-Shlomo, Jerusalem 1971, I, gate 5.

112 According to Variant B the rule of the guardian angels overseeing Rome causes damage to Israel too (line 30–31).

113 Based on “The future Redeemer will be like the former Redeemer” (*Ruth Rabbah* 5:6; tr. L. Rabinowitz) and parallels; and possibly also based on, “In Nisan [the month of Passover, of the Exodus, tr.] they were redeemed, in Nisan they will be redeemed” (*BT Rosh haShanah* 11a).

114 Another possible interpretation is that Egypt represents the first exile and Rome represents all the empires that come after it, whether the reference is in fact to a variety of empires like Babylonian, Persia, Greece, and Rome itself.

was located. Then could it be that the war mentioned here alludes to the wars of the Reconquista?¹¹⁵

In any event, the humiliation of the one guardian angel and the strengthening of the three others is described in several ways:

R. Yosei rises at dawn (is it again a messianic allusion to the redemption that bursts out like the dawn?¹¹⁶) and hears a heavenly proclamation which speaks from the mouth of a flying fowl. The words of the proclamation are enigmatic – it discusses the guardian angels without saying this explicitly. The dominion of one of them is unstable; he sits and does not sit on the throne of power (line 12), and in the end he is indeed removed from rule, whereas three of them stay stable. In Variant B, the fowl adds a visual illustration to the puzzle: the fowl soars three times and one time flies lower down (line 7).

In Variant A, the fowl illustrates his tidings by throwing down three wings from his right wing and one from his left wing (line 21–22). This visual picture is not clear and even less so is the image of the sniffing of the wings (line 25). It may be that in the background of matters stands Daniel's vision of the four beasts (chap 7). The first beast in Daniel's vision, a winged lion, is indeed raised up from the earth (like the fowl in our vision) but its wings have been plucked, as a sign of its defeat (verse 4). In any event, it seems that since the image is not clear from the visual viewpoint, it was reworked into Variant B and became the four arrows. This change produced an opening for further changes: The arrows, by their very nature, are heralds of violence. For that reason, this image suits the violent behavior (at least in the author's view) of the Gentile nations and their rulers, both on earth and in heaven. This violence is expressed in "the uncontrolled behavior" of the arrows when they come down to earth. When R. Elazar picks them up they unexpectedly wound him (line 25)¹¹⁷ (and this apparently contains an allusion to the severe decrees imposed by these on the Jewish people – line 30–31) or they produce black fire (line 33). Even the end of the one arrow is by violence (just the one probably only for the moment since in the future the others will be destroyed too), while it is being burned (line 50; again, like Daniel's vision, in which the horned beast is given over to be burned in fire – 11:11).

115 This option might be reinforced by the suggestion made by Hananel Mack that Nahmanides' attitude towards Pharaoh is a reflection of his attitude towards his king, Jaime I. See H. Mack, 'From the Eyes of Nahmanides: His Attitude to Pharaoh of Egypt and Jewish Status in the Kingdom of Aragon-Catalunia', *Sefunot: Studies and Sources on the History of the Jewish Communities in the East*, New Series 7(22) (1999), pp. 33–48 (Hebrew). I thank Dr. B. Huss for bringing this article to my attention.

116 *JT* Berakhot 1:1, as well as *JT* Yoma 3:2. Also see the Midrash on Psalms, ed. S. Buber, New York 1945, at the end of Psalm 18.

117 And perhaps we find here an image opposite to the often vented curse against Satan – "An arrow in your eyes" (See, for example, *BT* Qiddushin 30a).

The last device that the texts utilize in order to indicate their message is the wondrous appearance of three mysterious children. Each one of them reads a verse or a seeming verse, which prophesies the ruin of Egypt, and then vanishes.

It seems that our story is based to some extent on the tale that appears in the Gemara (*BT* Gittin 56a), despite its general tendency being different from ours. In it, too, we find a similar combination of motifs – an arrow, the movement of which is based on the forces On High, rather than on any forces of nature, a child who is capable of reciting a suitable Biblical verse and the hope of vengeance against the Gentiles.

Thus in five ways that are based on the senses, the fellows obtain a prophecy (as is said on line 53 of Variant B; in Variant A we find "perfect wisdom") – the embodiment of the heavenly herald, the fowl; the manner of its flight; the fowl's casting off of wings and arrows; the burning of one arrow of the four arrows; the verses recited by the three mysterious children.

Several of the ways have a touch of magic – deciphering the calls of the fowls of heaven or the ways that they fly (the science of flight, 'the Wisdom of Tayar') is as we know a widespread magical technique. The unnatural flight of the arrows too may have a magical background.¹¹⁸ However, the last three ways also have extraordinary traits: it seems that these marvelous events were produced ad hoc especially for the sages; the reality of the vision is stressed by the fact that the arrows revealed in it are capable of actually wounding R. Elazar. The details of the doctrine of prophecy which underlies the vision are not given, but it seems that the spirit of R. Saadiah Gaon's doctrine of prophecy looms over them. According to *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions* (second article, chap. 10) the object of the prophetic vision is a "form" which is created for the moment for the purpose of this particular prophecy. The uniqueness of the prophecy here also stands out from a comparison with the story that will be considered in the following section. There the sage will pick up a rose that he happened to find in his path in order to demonstrate what "great wisdom" is (line 15). That is, there he makes use of existing nature. Here – unnatural events occur especially for the sages, in order to have them comprehend the secret of redemption.

This special prophecy is not understood by the fellows in an immediate, direct manner. They need the mediation and explanation of R. Elazar in order for him to reveal "the secret of wisdom" which is concealed in it (lines 52–65). Riddles already existed in the Bible as one of the prominent aspects of prophecy; Moses' prophesying is presented in the Scriptures through this trait as a contrast to the prophesying of most prophets:

118 On the arrows, see in the above-mentioned story from the tractate Gittin. On the fowls, see J. Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: a Study in Folk Religion*, New York 1979, p. 211.

When a prophet of the Lord arises among you, I make Myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses; he is trusted throughout My household. With him I speak mouth to mouth, plainly and not in riddles, and he beholds the likeness of the Lord (Num 12:6–8).

Perhaps then the marvelous, extraordinary capacity of R. Elazar in deciphering the clues in his vision alludes to his status being equal to that of Moses.

Whatever may be the precise details of this doctrine of prophecy, they impart a clearly surrealistic hue to the vision described in our text, and may bring the vision close to Ashkenazi Pietists, who sympathized with R. Saadiah's doctrine of prophecy.¹¹⁹

In conclusion, the conceptual side is common to both variants; however it seems that the difference existing between the two is not accidental but is based on literary motives, in other words – on richer visual images which are meant to illustrate the prophetic vision more forcefully.

THE THIRD TALE – “THE ROSE AND ITS SCENT”

The differences between the two variants of the third tale are greatest and most meaningful, in comparison with the preceding two pairs of stories. In my view, we have here a deliberate reworking of an earlier story on account of a change in the kabbalistic conception of the world. These changes have slight implications for the structure of the tale but more so – for the homilies presented in it. I shall open with a systematic account of the opinions presented in each variant, I shall continue with a comparison of their literary aspects, and only at the end of the discussion will I set forth my evidence as to the precedence of one and the secondary nature of the other.

The earlier variant presents one single idea in several different ways; in other words – it presents the repeated reflection of one principle on different levels of the world, the ‘principle of *shoshanim*’. The principle, taken from the words of the Sages,¹²⁰ is that God's providential action is a combination of two opposed qualities or attributes (*Middot*) – *Din* (Stern Judgment) and *Rahamim* (Compassion); these are symbolized by two colors – red and white, the colors of the roses, that is the *shoshanim*. The quality which is thus created is called here the quality of *Hesed* (Mercy), and it is represented by a scent. As long as these qualities represent the moral qualities of God, there is a correspondence between the opinion expressed in this story and that one of the Talmudic Sages.

¹¹⁹ Additional links to Ashkenazi Pietists are offered above and below in the discussions that consider the early versions of the first and third texts (around notes 85 and 122).

¹²⁰ *Pesiqta Rabbati* 40, ed. M. Friedman, Tel-Aviv 1963, p. 167; *Genesis Rabbah* 12:15, p. 113.

However, in a kabbalistic context, they also have the meaning of *Sefirot* and clearly the specific relations described here do not correspond to the opinion of the central trend in Kabbalah – that in general *Rahamim* is a result of the combination of *Hesed* and *Din*. As Prof. Moshe Idel has shown,¹²¹ there is indeed a different kabbalistic tradition, the version of which corresponds to our text. This tradition has been preserved chiefly in Ashkenaz,¹²² and some of the Catalanian and Castilian kabbalists were aware of it.

The reflection of this principle is presented in several examples. First, in nature, that is, in the rose. Corresponding to both *Din* and *Rahamim*, the rose has both colors, red and white, and, corresponding to *Hesed*, a pleasant scent emanates from it (lines 28–32). In fact, from the literary standpoint, the moral of the story is anchored precisely in this example, that begins with Rabbi Ba taking advantage of a coincidental opportunity to pick up a rose in his hand and teach his friends a word of wisdom (lines 7–15), that is, to illustrate through the rose the recurrent reflection of a certain principle. From the homiletic standpoint, this principle appears to be the exegetical development of the verse from the Song of Songs (6:3) which considers the *shoshanim* (that is, roses) – Just as the Holy One blessed be He leads the world according to the principle of the *shoshanim*, mankind too is supposed to worship their Sovereign according to this principle and thereby theurgically reinforce this positive pattern within the divinity. It seems that the ways of worshipping God were determined in such a way that mankind could respond to their Lord in the same coin and could create the quality of *Hesed* by combining *Din* and *Rahamim*, namely, act according to the principle of *shoshanim*.

Indeed, incense offered to God is based on the same principle: from the ingredients, some of them red and some white, the smoke and the scent rise (lines 53–57). Thus also in regard to the sacrifice – from the red blood and the white fat the aroma rises (line 59–62). After the Destruction of the Temple, prayer and fasting took the place of Temple worship. Hence, the same principle is found in them too. The morning and afternoon prayers correspond to *Rahamim* and *Din*, whereas the evening service, which, so to speak, includes both of them, takes the place of the quality of *Hesed* (lines 75–81). The nature of the evening prayer as *Hesed*, a quality that corresponds to aroma in general, is noticeable, for example, in the way the aromatic myrtle is used at the end of the Sabbath (line 82). Even the prophets of Baal were aware of this principle – they

¹²¹ See: M. Idel, ‘Notes on Medieval Jewish-Christian Polemics’, *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 3 (1983/4), pp. 689–698 (Hebrew); idem., ‘More on Middat Hesed’, *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought* 4 (1984/5), pp. 219–222 (Hebrew). For another remnant of this terminology in the Zohar, see below in note 137.

¹²² On another possible proximity to Ashkenazi thought, see above around notes 85 and 119.

waited for the hour of afternoon prayer, that is the hour when the *Din* quality is active in order to intensify it through self-laceration – probably up to creating an imbalance which will serve their goals (lines 69–73). Finally, in a fast, too, a process similar to the sacrifice is believed to take place; the fat and blood of the person fasting, are – as it were – burned and offered up as the smoke of a sacrifice to heaven (lines 96–105).

It seems that the author of the later variant changed and reworked the early tale because of two reasons. First, his kabbalistic position differs regarding the relations among the three qualities – *Din*, *Rahamim* and *Hesed*. He belongs to the central stream of Kabbalah that holds that *Din* and *Hesed* stand in opposition to each other, while *Rahamim* unites the two. In this version too we may see *Rahamim* as the opposite of *Din* (in as much as it includes *Hesed* too), but there is no doubt that *Hesed* is not what constitutes their unity.

Secondly, he made a different choice from the store of opinions of the Talmudic Sages concerning the relationship between *Din* and *Rahamim*. While the point of origin of the early variant is the conduct of the world on the basis of joint effort between two opposed qualities, that is, the qualities of *Din* and *Rahamim*, the point of origin of the later variant is the broad choice of sayings of the Talmudic Sages that stress the contrast between them and see them as alternatives. For example, “‘Turn my beloved and be thou like [a gazelle]’ (Songs 2:17)-eventually I will change My treatment of you from the attribute of *Din* to the attribute of *Rahamim* and hasten your deliverance like a gazelle or a hart”.¹²³ Or: “If you make your way of life acceptable [to me, then] ... from the throne of *Din* I shall rise and take My seat on the throne of *Rahamim* whence filled with *Rahamim* for you I shall spare you and for your sake turn harsh measure of *Din* into the gentle measure of *Rahamim*”.¹²⁴ In this world, too, the two qualities stand as alternatives – the righteous are capable of transforming the quality of *Din* into the quality of *Rahamim*, while the evildoers affect an opposite action; they transform the quality of *Rahamim* into the quality of *Din*.¹²⁵

We also find among the Talmudic Sages several additional verbs which emphasize the contrast between *Din* and *Rahamim*. For instance, “May it be My will that My *Rahamim* may suppress My anger, and that my *Rahamim* may prevail over [My] other attributes ... so that I may deal with My children in the attribute of *Rahamim* and on their behalf stop short of the limit of *Din*”.¹²⁶ “And

the force of Your *Rahamim* will overcome the quality of *Din*, as it says, ‘And now, I pray Thee, let the power of the Lord be great’” (Num 14:17);¹²⁷ “For lo! The Lord shall come forth from His place” (Isaiah 26:21). He comes forth from one attribute for another; He leaves the quality of *Din* for the quality of *Rahamim* for Israel;¹²⁸ ‘And now, I pray Thee, let the power of the Lord be great’ (Num 14:17); the quality of *Rahamim* will defeat the quality of *Din*”.¹²⁹

Thus, many sources of this kind moved the later author to favor the principle of opposition between the *Hesed* or *Rahamim* on the one hand and *Din* on the other over the principle of a combination of *Hesed* and *Din*. This preference is noticeable in the fact that it (and not the previous preference) is presented at the start of the new variant (lines 2–6). However, both for literary reasons – that is, since the author of the later variant did not go out to compose a new story but made use of the earlier variant¹³⁰ – and since he did in fact accept, with only a slight change, the earlier principle, we find in his words a certain combination of the two principles.

Three times in the new story the principle of opposition between the qualities is demonstrated through the rose or the *shoshan* (lines 3, 28–29, 83–86). It seems that the idea behind this example is the preparation of rosewater. The inversion between the colors or the qualities which they represent, was carried out by brewing, or by the power of fire. The rose (or *shoshan*) is red this time¹³¹ and therefore represents the principle of *Din*, whereas water, which represents *Rahamim*, is white. I am inclined to conjecture that the process of producing rosewater¹³² by brewing roses in water, is described here by the peculiar word ‘מוצקין’ (“*mozqin*”, from the root *mzq*?). It seems that since the printers of the Cremona edition of the Zohar too (or their sources) thought about rosewater, they chose to print “*moziqin*”; this is derived from the root *yzq*, (to pour) which is connected by its very nature to water. In the subsequent appearances of this word in our story (lines 40, 85, 88), its meanings are broadened for any process of brewing or burning. In contrast, in line 88, it seems that the word “*nizmaq*” is derived from the root *zmq*; and perhaps this should be corrected to “*nimzaq*” which is capable of being derived once again from the root *mzq* or perhaps the

¹²³ *Songs Rabbah*, end of portion 2; tr. – M. Simon.

¹²⁴ *Pesiqta d’Rav Kahana*, ed. Mandelbaum, New Ark 1987, 23:8, Tr. – W.G. Braude & I.J. Kapstein. Also *ibid.*, 23:3, 23:9, and *Leviticus Rabbah* 29:4, ed. Margulies, Jerusalem – New York 1993, p. 674; *Midrash Psalms*, Psalm 47.

¹²⁵ *Genesis Rabbah*, 73:3, p. 847; *ibid.*, 33:3, p. 308.

¹²⁶ *BT Berakhot* 7a, tr. – M. Simon. This verb in the context of the principles of *Din* and *Rahamim* is found in additional sources, such as *Sifrei*, ed. Horowitz, Leipzig 1917, Pinhas 3.

¹²⁷ *Pesiqta d’Rav Kahana*, 25:1.

¹²⁸ *JT Ta’anit*, 2:1.

¹²⁹ *Numbers Rabbah*, 16:22; *Tanhuma*, Portion *Shelah*, chap 13.

¹³⁰ This phenomenon can be explained by the emotional commitment towards the members of his fellowship or towards his teachers.

¹³¹ More precisely, according to line 28 it is red, and according to lines 51, 83 it is both red and white, but becomes white. This last case stands, in my opinion as explained below, under the influence of the earlier version.

¹³² And Isaiah Tishby understood it this way as well (Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2, pp. 236–237) when he called the result of the process described here by the name “rose water” or “perfumed water”.

above should be corrected to "*zomqin*"?¹³³ In any event, the scent of roses, a motif originating in the previous variant, attests here, too, to what is positive in God's attributes – here it is *Rahamim* (while in the earlier variant – the scent was equivalent to *Hesed*).

Thus the demonstration of the new principle is presented three times. This principle is that of opposition between the qualities, in respect of the rose. Nevertheless, the illustration of the previous principle, that is, the principle of combination was carried over, without change, from the earlier variant. This is noticeable in line 51 where the scent is mentioned as emerging precisely from the combination of colors, red and white, which are found in the *shoshan* (the rose).

The skipping between the two principles is also noticeable when the text shifts to discussion of the worship of God according to the principle of *shoshanim*. Sometimes the sacrifice is described as red, while the smoke which rises from it after it has been burned in fire is white (lines 38–42, 85–86) and sometimes the new text preserves the words of the previous text and describes the sacrifice as a process of producing a scent from the combination between redness and whiteness (lines 49–52, 58–59). The new text describes the importance of the incense only through the words and line of thought of the previous text (lines 53–57), but on the other hand it adds a new motif which responds to its own line of thought only and not to the line of thought of its predecessor. This new motif is atonement for man's sins; the sinner and his sins are red but as a consequence of the transformation from the quality of *Din* to the quality of *Rahamim* – they turn white (lines 5–6, 33–36). However, it seems that not every example can be accepted by him – the author of the new text does not adopt at all the example of prayer, apparently since he did not succeed in accommodating it with his own opinions. In the first variant the three prayers of the day represent, respectively, *Rahamim*, *Din*, and *Hesed*, while the last one includes the two first ones. It is nearly certain that the writer of the new variant adopted the more accepted opinion in the Zohar, that is, that they represent *Hesed*, *Din*, and *Kingdom*.¹³⁴ In this order, there is no reason to supply the example of prayer in order to demonstrate the principle of the "*shoshanim*!"

133 Indeed, in the view of Rabbi David Luria, "*zomqin*", is a word which describes the process of burning the rose or the sacrifice in fire until white smoke comes out, whereas "*mozqin*" is "a word for pouring water on it, and that is a mistake since pouring water on the roses so that the water becomes white, does not need fire at all; further, when they draw water from it [the rose] then the scent of roses itself is weakened and here he said, 'And its scent does not change'" (R. David Luria, *Nefesh David*, Vilna 1882, at this place). Tishby, in contrast, chose the word "*mozqim*" and explained "*Mozqim* – melt, dissolve". He included in this any process of burning, both of producing rose water and of burning the sacrifice.

134 See Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 2, pp. 268–269.

On the subject of fasting we find an interesting combination of the ideas of his forerunner with his own ideas. On one hand, he takes from his forerunner the idea that the advantage of fasting is in its combining the colors of red and white, which represent here the blood and fat of the faster (lines 60–61, 91). On the other hand, he is apparently hinting at the paleness which spreads over the face of the faster, who has succeeded in transforming himself from red to white – "Whoever sits in his fasting and sacrifices his fat and his blood, does not broil and turn all of him white save by fire" (line 87–88). Further, he directs our attention to the process that is responsible for refining – fire. Like the rosewater, the incense and the sacrifice, the faster thus "boils" his limbs "in the warmth of the weakness of his body", until "the fire overcomes him" and transforms his body into a sacrifice (lines 88–92, 100–104).¹³⁵ And finally, the author of the reworked tale broadens the motif of scent more than his forerunner and takes up the case of R. Eliezer ben Hyrkanus and the blessing he received from Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai as a model. According to that blessing the bad odor that comes out of his mouth during his fasting becomes the aroma of the Torah that

135 As Scholem commented here in his Zohar (Gershom Scholem's *Annotated Zohar: Jozefow 1873*, Jerusalem 1992), there is also a parallel to this paragraph in *Mishkan ha'Edut* of R. Moses de Leon, that was written in 1293: "Know and understand that the secret of fasting is the altar of atonement [which is] ready to atone for one's sin as may be fitting. Because by eating and drinking little, his fat and his blood diminish and he sacrifices it in its small amount to the Lord his God. And it will be in the evening when the weakness of limbs will overcome him and the fire of natural heat will be kindled in him [and] it will not be extinguished and will not find in the body food or drink... it [the fire] will take from what it finds and will eat from the fat and the blood that are in the body instead of food... Just as the smoke of fire rises from the sacrifice... and it will rise upwards, and just as the scent of the sacrifice rises, so does the scent of a man on a day of fasting... goes forth and rises from his mouth upwards and it is a pleasant scent, a burnt offering to the Lord" (Berlin manuscript, Or. Ou. 833, previously acc. 15. 1896, film no. 1754, page 132a). The importance of "the fire of natural heat" and the stress on the scent bring this text close to the later variant of our story more than to the earlier variant. At the same time, we should point out that its context in Moses de Leon is totally different. It does not deal with the way in which God conducts the world but with the parallel between the structure of this world and of the upper world. This should be seen as part of the phenomenon of "multiple existence" of homiletic motifs (as described in the foreword to the present article and in note 111). These motifs occur time and again but their context might change. Further on – in de Leon, as in our story, the homiletic motif of red and white is connected with fasting, sacrifices, and scent, whereas in other places in the Zohar, we find that the combination of red and white is linked to other combinations. For example, in the famous Zoharic article "The Rose" which opens the Book of Zohar (Zohar, I, 1a), as well as "The Rose and the Lily of the Sharon" which is found in Zohar, I, 221a, and in Zohar, III, 107a. These are further examples for the 'multiple existence' of homiletic motifs, but this is not the place for elaboration.

risers toward heaven.¹³⁶ Thus every faster resembles a sacrifice made on the altar (lines 93, 103–108). As a rule, the author of the new variant stresses the role of scent by various means. First, through the sweeping claim that “the world does not exist save by scent” (line 20–21) and therefore we have the myrtle at our disposal on the evening after the Sabbath (line 22).¹³⁷ Secondly, through the narrative aspect which is meant to illustrate the importance of scent: he adds to the narrative aspect of the earlier tale the account of R. Abba’s sniffing the rose’s scent (line 19); and thirdly, through adding examples, as said above.

In conclusion, the addition made by the author of the new variant is in exemplifying the opposition of the quality of *Din* to the quality of *Rahamim* through the contrast of the colors red and white. This process is carried through by fire and summarized in line 110–111 by the verse: “Any article that can withstand fire – these shall you pass through fire and they shall be purified” (Num 31:22). Likewise, as in the previous variant, scent represents the favored quality, except that in the later variant, the reference is to the quality of *Rahamim*, whereas in the earlier one, the reference is to the quality of *Hesed*.

Up till now, we have treated the various conceptual contents presented in both variants. It is proper to also treat the narrative aspect in the framework of which the contents have been set. First of all, it is notable that this aspect is exhibited in both variants (which are clearly dependent on each other) in Aramaic, while the conceptual discussions are in Hebrew. I am inclined to conjecture, on the grounds of the existence of parallel phenomena in the Zohar literature, that the stylistic divergence of the narrative aspect already found in the earlier variant also attests to its stratification; I conjecture that at the beginning the Hebrew homily stood alone and only afterwards was the narrative aspect – written in Aramaic – set into the homily.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ *Pirqey d’Rabbi Eliezer*, chap. 2; *Aboth d’Rabbi Natan*, ed. S. Schechter, Vienna 1887, version A, chap. 6; *Genesis Rabbah*, 41 (42):1, p. 398; *Old Tanhuma*, ed. S. Buber, Vilna 1885, *Lekh Lekha*, sign 10; *Shimoni, Lekh Lekha*, sign 72, p. 274.

¹³⁷ In the earlier tale, *Hesed* and scent are treated as parallels whereas in the later tale *Rahamim* and scent are so treated; in both cases myrtle on the eve after the Sabbath is the particular example. The scent of the myrtle of the ceremony of *havdalah* (on the evening post-Sabbath to mark the boundary between the Sabbath and the work week) as representing a *Sefira* which belongs to the right side specifically (that is, *Hesed* in the more accepted nomenclature) rather than a *Sefira* which stand in the middle (that is, *Rahamim* or *Kingdom* in the accepted terminology) appears in Zohar, I, 17b, and this is so despite the fact that according to the time of *havdalah*, it was proper to see it as a symbol of *Kingdom* (see note 134). For that reason, I am inclined to think that this paragraph, too, is based on the remnants of the unconventional kabbalistic terminology, which Prof. Moshe Idel pointed out in his essays, Idel, *Comments*; idem, *More*.

¹³⁸ See near note 54 above. On the precedence of the texts in which the Hebrew component is dominant over the Aramaic, see Scholem, ‘A Lost Chapter’, p. 427, as well as R.

Both variants of the story are exemplary tales. Exemplary tales are meant to demonstrate a certain principle, though not through being based on a Biblical verse, but through a particular narrative event, sometimes in the life of an exemplary personage. Dozens of the Zohar’s tales, which have very varied formats, and especially many of the tales of the *Midrash ha-Ne’elam* (like the pair of tales about R. Yosei ben Pazi discussed above), belong to this genre. The exemplary tales are close in their character to the exemplum, an extremely widespread genre in the Middle Ages. However, while the exemplum uses the narrative aspect to present an exemplary pattern of behavior, only a minority of the Zohar’s exemplary stories are meant to demonstrate a principle of behavior; most of them are meant to demonstrate a theological principle as to the structure of the universe or how it functions.¹³⁹

The two variants of our story are therefore exemplary tales meant to demonstrate a certain theological principle, the ‘principle of *shoshanim*’. Despite this, we may discern a slight difference in the structures of the two variants. Rabbi Ba in the earlier tale notices roses and takes advantage of the opportunity in order to point to the governance of the universe according to that very principle. That is to say, the format is a limited narrative opening which presents the example (lines 7–15), and afterwards an conceptual discussion that clarifies in various ways the principle behind this example (the rest of the story). The narrative opening is chiefly an illustration of the principle presented as a parable: “Just as a rose is red and white ... so the Holy One blessed be He leads his universe from the quality of *Din* to the quality of *Rahamim*..” (lines 28–32). In conformity with this parable, R. Ba picks a rose and shows his friends its colors.

The later story’s structure is different in that it adds at the beginning of the text special lines for a general determination of the principle of the moral of the tale (lines 2–6). From then on its format is identical to that of the earlier tale – the narrative aspect presents the example (line 19) and the conceptual discussion details the principle and explains the example (the rest of the story). The structure of the narrative aspect is identical to the structure of the earlier tale, despite the change in its content. The basic parable here is: “Just as the *shoshan* is red while its water is white, thus does the Holy One blessed be He lead his universe from the quality of *Din* to the quality of *Rahamim*” (lines 2–5). That is to say, this parable points to the ability to transform the rose from red to white. R. Abba illustrates the parable when he picks a red rose and indicates that it can be changed to white through “*m’ziza*”, that is, by boiling it in water (line 29).

Meroz, ‘The Chariot of Ezekiel: an Unknown Zoharic Commentary’, *Te’uda* 16/17 (2001), pp. 567–616 (Hebrew).

¹³⁹ On the exemplum genre in Hebrew, see Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktales*, pp. 137–148; 310–324. For a more detailed exposition of exemplary stories in the Zohar, see Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Matza*.

The change between the two variants here thus resembles one of the changes between the two variants of the tale about R. Yosei ben Pazi. In both pairs of stories the moral of the story is embedded in the structure of the early variants but is not presented explicitly, whereas the late variants set aside a special place for explicitly stating the moral; in the tale of the rose and its scent – at the beginning of the tale (lines 2–6); in the tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi – at the end (lines 84–87).¹⁴⁰ It seems that in both cases the processor of the stories took pains to emphasize their character and importance as exemplary tales.

Finally, we should make another comment concerning our pair of variants: According to the late variant, two sages walk along a path and meet a third sage. It seems that originally this was also the situation in the earlier variant, but its text was corrupted. This matter is noticeable through two items. First, in lines 7–8 the two sages are only mentioned as walking together, but in line 12 a third sage is mentioned without explanation. Secondly, the appearance of the formulation: “Surely the *Shekhinah* is here”. This formulation is common in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*, and is conferred (as part of the greetings in an encounter between sages) on the senior sage in the encounter.¹⁴¹ And incidentally, in response to the position represented by the title “*Shekhinah*”, R. Abba responds to R. Yosei (according to the later story) with the contrasting reciprocal title – “my son” (line 18).¹⁴²

Let us conclude our remarks concerning the story “The Rose and its Scent”. Comparison of both variants shows that there are no accidental differences between them; it is not a matter of omissions or additions that were made by an absentminded proofreader. What we have found are planned changes that were deliberately made.

The format of the earlier exemplary tale which the later author had at his disposal held a certain charm in his view. Nevertheless, he joined to its beginning an additional layer which defined the central principle and the moral of the tale: the principle of opposition between the qualities of *Din* and *Rahamim*; probably also in order to stress his innovation. He did not find it essential to totally reject the central principle of his forerunner: the combination of the qualities of *Din* and *Rahamim*. Everywhere that he could he left the examples as they were, but he broadened them so that they would also fit the new principle of opposition (for instance, fasting is likened to sacrificing the fat and the blood, while the aroma rises from both, but additionally, the red flesh of the faster turns pale). He not only broadened what existed already, but he added new examples (for

¹⁴⁰ See also above, near note 57.

¹⁴¹ For instance, in the tales of the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* which were printed in Zohar, II, 5a or in the *Zohar Hadash*, 28b.

¹⁴² And this too is often found in the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*; for example: *Zohar Hadash*, 6a (and I am not including here cases which deal with relations between biological fathers and sons).

example, the whitening of sins) and even broadened the narrative platform in order to stress the importance of scent. However, he did not accept one of his forerunner's opinions. That is, that the combination of *Din* and *Rahamim* produces *Hesed*, and for that reason, he also absolutely rejected the illustration of this opinion (the link between the three daily prayers).

In short, the differences between the variants are consistent and indicate a different conceptual interest.

Determining which of the variants is earlier and which later is based on the following arguments:

The expressions of the shorter variant, which demonstrates only one principle in the relationship between *Din* and *Rahamim*, are noticeable in the longer variant which demonstrates both principles (if the shorter tale were a reworking of the longer one, would not expressions be noticeable in the short one too that originally dealt with both principles?).

The shorter variant is based on principles that are known to be more ancient or unconventional, that is, seeing *Hesed* as a combination of *Din* and *Rahamim*, and the *Minhah* (afternoon) service as corresponding to *Hesed*; the later variant, in contrast, is made up of opinions much more conventional in the various layers of the Zohar.

The shorter variant still does not “possess a developed pseudepigraphic consciousness, since the Talmudic rabbis are mentioned in it” (line 94). At most, the prayer which appears at its end is placed “In the mouth of R. Nehuniah ben Haqanah, the pre-Zoharic mystical hero” (in *BT Berakhot* 17a it is attributed to Rav Sheshet). In the longer variant, on the other hand, “It already belongs to R. Elazar, the son of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay!”¹⁴³

As in “The tale of R. Yosei ben Pazi” we find a change in the name of story's protagonist – R. Ba in the earlier text becomes R. Abba. As said above, the process of changing names of the Sages who speak, as a consequence of reduction in their number and greater focussing on Rabbi Shimon bar Yohay's fellowship, characterizes the transition from the earlier parts of the Zohar to the later parts.¹⁴⁴

The label “*Matnitin*”, which is the Aramaic name for ‘Our Mishna’ is the heading for the shorter variant! The shorter variant, and not the longer one, has acquired this label. This label attests that a status of primacy and authority was ascribed to the shorter variant as compared with other stages of lateness and commentary, like the relationship between the historic Mishnah and the Gemara which interprets it. The author of *Sitrei Torah* too often quotes short passages under the headings “*Matnitin*” or “*Tosefta*” and then interprets them.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ The present paragraph is a composite of remarks by Y. Liebes.

¹⁴⁴ See above near note 76.

¹⁴⁵ For example, in the passage which belongs to *Sitrei Torah* but beginning with the *Tosefta* in the Zohar, I, 107b. And for more detail, see Meroz, *The Pearl, the Fish and the Maiza*.

THE TEXTS

The texts themselves are reproduced below; each tale has two variants; each variant has two or more sources. While I was making comparisons between two sources of the same variant, I was generally inclined to skip over slight differences, such as initials used for phrases (i.e. אמר ליה – א"ל), the abbreviation of a word (for instance, הכא – הכ'), doubling of letters (for instance, וורדי – וורדי), but not to other differences of spelling, or omission or addition of the definite article.

In each pair of tales, the source of one of the variants is in the Cremona edition (that was printed in the years 1558–1560) and one in the modern Margoliouth edition. The Margoliouth edition is based on the Mantua edition, which was contemporary with the Cremona printing, but had versions from many other editions added to it. Many of these alternate versions originate in the Cremona edition. Nevertheless, I have copied the text of the Margoliouth edition as it is, including the texts in brackets, namely, the additional versions.

The First Text: "The Tale of Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi"

Variant A of the present pair of texts was quoted according to the Munich manuscript Heb. 203, film number 1154 (here and in the following the film is kept at the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, The Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem), pp. 114b–115a. The manuscript, which includes the Zohar on the Book of Genesis, was written in Rome in 1551 in Sefardic script by R. Hayyim Gattegno, the proofreader of the Cremona edition. It should be pointed out that Variant B is found further on, on pp. 136a–b.

The alternate versions (marked י"ו) were quoted from the Vatican manuscript 68, film number 185, pp. 14b–15a. This manuscript was written in Sefardic script. It is from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and includes only material from the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam* on the Torah or *Midrash ha-Ne'elam Ruth*.

An additional source for the tale is the Moscow manuscript, Ginzburg 262, film number 27956, an Italian manuscript from the year 1564, pp. 227b–228a. The Ginzburg manuscript includes only material from the *Midrash ha-Ne'elam*. Alternate versions from this source have been marked מ"ו.

Some fragments of Variant A are found in a few other manuscripts. Since all of these are far from being complete I did not incorporate their alternate versions.

The first part of the story (up to line 21 inclusive) is also found in the Florence Lorenziana manuscript, Plut. 48, film number 17809, p. 68b. This source, written in Italian script from the fifteenth or sixteenth century, includes various parts of the Zohar and is not complete.

146 As Y. Liebes commented to me, G. Scholem had already referred to the existence of this version in the Vatican manuscript, in his *Book of Zohar* at this place.

The second part of Variant A (form line 32 to its end) has partially survived in the Cairo Geniza. The manuscript, which is written in a semi-cursive Sefardic handwriting is from the 13th century at the earliest, and is kept at Cambridge (T-S AS 86 (198)). Those words which are readable do not present any new alternate version.

In British Museum manuscript Or. 10772 (Gaster 773), film number 8087 or 5746, p. 15a only lines 1–11 and 82–83 were copied. This is a manuscript that includes various parts of the Zohar on the Book of Genesis and is written in Sefardic script from the fourteenth or fifteenth century. The copy of the story ends with the words "as above". Hence, it seems that the copyist is referring us to the variant of this story that had already been copied by him earlier in the manuscript and for that reason, he did not copy it in full here. The problem is that the other part of the manuscript has not survived and has not come down to us. In any event, it seems that the copyist of the British Museum manuscript had in front of him the twin of the abovementioned Munich manuscript that included both texts; I conjecture that the copyist decided to forego copying the full text the second time on account of the similarity between the two texts.

Variant B was quoted here in accordance with the Margoliouth edition, I 88a–b. The alternate versions (which are marked ק"ו) were quoted according to the Cremona edition I, cols. 242–243.

The Second Text: "The Fowl and the Children"

Variant A was quoted in accordance with a New York manuscript, the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary Ms. 1614 (previously Enelow 991), film number 10712, pp. 4a–b. The manuscript includes various parts of the Zohar on the Book of Exodus and the following. It was written in Sefardic script in the sixteenth century.

Alternate versions (marked ק"ו) are according to the Cremona edition, II cols. 9–10.

Variant B was quoted in accordance with the Margoliouth edition of the Zohar, II 6b. This text too is found in the Cremona edition – in II col. 33, although it is fragmentary and only goes until line 79. Its alternate versions have been marked as above with the mark ק"ו.

The Third Text: "The Rose and its Scent"

Variant A was quoted according to the Toronto manuscript, of the University, Friedberg collection 5–015, film number 70561, p. 245b. The alternate texts (marked י"ו) were quoted in accordance with the Vatican manuscript 206, film number 264, p. 331a–b.¹⁴⁶ Both of these manuscripts are Byzantine from the fifteenth century.

Variant B was quoted according to the Margoliouth edition, II 20a–b. Alternate texts (marked ק"ו) were quoted in accordance with the Cremona edition, II cols. 34–35.

The Tale of Rabbi Yosei ben Pazi

Variant B – Zohar II, 88a–b

Variant A – Munich Ms. Heb. 203

- 1 רבי אבא, כד אתא¹ מהתם, כד סליק רב כהנא להתם¹
 סג² באוריתא סגיא³
 עד דהוו נהירין אנפוי⁴ כשמשא.
 כד אתא הוה אתיין קמיה למזכ⁵ באוריתא.
 5 כד הוה אתי בר נש קמיה אמר ליה: מאי את בעי אי או עותרא או יקרא
 אי אורכא דיומין⁷ לעלמא דאתי?
 הוה מכריז: מאן בעי עותרא
 ומאן בעי אורכא דחיי בעלמא⁸ דאתי
 ייתי וישתדל באורייתא!
 הוה מתכנשין כולי עלמא לגביה.⁹
 רווק⁴ חד הוה בשיבכותיה.
 יומא חד אתא לגביה.
 אמר ליה: רבי, בעינא למלעי באורייתא
 כדי שיהיה לי עותרא.
 אמר ליה: הא ודאי.⁵
 באורייתא דאי תבעי עותרא דליתתהוי לך

- 1 להתם – ז"מ: לירושלים.
 2 סגי – ז"ו: וכן; ז"מ: למזכ.
 3 סגיא – ז"מ: עסק בה.
 4 אנפוי – ז"ו: אנפיה.
 5 אתא...למזכ – ז"ו: אתא הוה אתיין גביה למזכיה;
 ז"מ: נחית מתמן הוה אתאן גביו בני נשא סגיאין
 למיזכ.
 6 קמיה... ליה – ז"ו: קמיה הוה אמ; ז"מ: לקמיה
 הוה אמ' ליה.
 7 מאי... דיומין – ז"ו: מה את בעי אי עותרא ויקרא
 אי אורכא יומין; ז"מ: מאן את בעי אי עותרא או
 יקרא או אורכא דיומין.
 8 אתי... נש – ז"ו: אתי לגביה ברנש חד; ז"מ: אתא
 חד ברנש לקמיה.
 9 אמר – ז"מ: ואמר.
 10 בעינא – ז"ו: ב, בעינא.
 11 בגין דלהוי – ז"ו: דאי תבעי עותרא דיהוי לך בדיל
 דיהוי; ז"מ: בגין דיהוי.
 12 עותרא – ז"מ: עותרא סיגאה.
 13 ליה...ברי – ז"ו: כך ברי; ז"מ: ליה בני.
 14 לך – ז"ו, ז"מ: בה.

Zoharic Narratives and Their Adaptations

Variant B – Zohar II, 88a–b

Variant A – Munich Ms. Heb. 203

- עד דתלי למימר¹⁵ די.
 יהיב ואוליף באורייתא.¹⁶
 אמר ליה: מה שמך?
 אמר ליה: יוסי.¹⁷
 20 אמר לו: לתלמידיו.¹⁸
 קרון ליה יוסף מארי¹⁹ דעותרא ויקרא!
 כד הוה אויל לגבי כי מדרשא²⁰
 הוה קיימין קמיה והוה מליף²¹ באורייתא.
 25 בתר יומין אמר ליה:²²
 אן הוה עותרא?²³
 אמר ליה:
 שמע מינה, דלאו לשם שמים קא²⁴ עביד!
 ועאל לאדריה. שמע חד קלא דהוה אמר:
 לא תענשיה! (תוב לגביה)²⁵
 דגברא רבא ליהוי.
 תב לגביה.
 אמר ליה: תיב, ברי, תיב,
 ואנא יהינא לך עותרא.

- 15 דליתתהוי...למימר – ז"ו: דיהוי לך עד דתלאי
 למימר; דיהוי לך עד דתלאה מלומר.
 16 יהיב...באורייתא – ז"ו: יתיב ואוליף באורייתא;
 ז"מ: יתיב ולעי באורייתא ואוליף בה.
 17 יוסי – ז"ו: אן; יוסי.
 18 להו לתלמידיו – ז"ו: ליה לתלמידיו; ז"מ: להו
 לתלמידיו.
 19 יוסף מארי – ז"ו: ר' יוסי מאריה; ז"מ: ר' יוסי
 מריה.
 20 אויל...מדרשא – ז"ו: עייל לבי כנשתא; ז"מ: עייל
 לבי מדרשא.
 21 מליף – ז"מ: אוליף.
 22 בתר...ליה – ז"מ: בתר כן אמ' ליה ההוה ר' יוסי
 לרביה.
 23 אן...עותרא – ז"ו: ר', אן הוה עותרא ויקרא; ז"מ:
 אן הוה עותרא דאכטחת לז'
 24 אמר...שמא – ז"ו: אמ' ש"מ (=שמע מינה); ז"מ:
 אמ' ליה: ש"מ.
 25 ההוה...דאמר – ז"מ: להוה קלא דהוה אמ'.
 26 שביק...רבה – ז"ו: שבוק להוה גברא, לא
 תענשיה, דגברא רבא; ז"מ: שבקיה להוה גברא
 לא תענשיה דגברא רבא.
 27 סגיא – ז"ו: רבה.

Variant B – Zohar II, 88a–b

Variant A – Munich Ms. Heb. 203

- אדהכי
אתא גברא חד ומאנא דפו בידיה.
אפקיה ונפל נהורא בביתא.
אמר ליה:²⁸
ר', בעינא למהוי לי חולקי באגר דאורייתא.³⁰
אמר ליה: מה עובדך?
אמר ליה:⁴⁰
רבי, בעינא למזכי באורייתא ואנא לא זכינא.
ובעינא מאן דישתדל באורייתא בגיני,¹¹
דהא אית לי עותרא סגי דקא שבק לי אבא –
דכד יתיב על פתוריה הוה מסדר עליה¹²
תליסר כסי מאלין.
ובעינא למזכי באורייתא
ויהא זכותי כאלו⁴² אנא לעאת⁴³ באורייתא.

11 ואנא...בגיני – ד"ק: ליתא.
12 עליה – ד"ק: על פתוריה.

- 28 בביתא – ד"מ: כההוא ביתא.
29 אמר' ליה – ד"ו: א'; ד"מ: אמ'.
30 בעינא... דאורייתא – ד"ו: בעינא למהוי לי חולקא
באגר דין באורייתא; ד"מ – בעינא מינך דלהוי עור
לי דליהוי חולקי באורייתא.
31 אבא... וכספא – ד"ו, ד"מ: שביק לי אבא דהבא
וכספא פגיא.
32 וכד יתיבנא – ד"ו: וכד יתיבנא אפתורא; ד"מ:
דכד יתיבנא אפתורא.
33 עליה תליסר – ד"ו: עליה תריסר; ד"מ: עלוי
תריסר.
34 מני יקרין – ד"ו, ד"מ: מאני יקרא.
35 ולא...לבר – ד"מ: ועדיין לא זכיתי.
36 למלעי באורייתא – בכתב יד מינכן חוזרות מילים
אלו פעמים.
37 דייתון – ד"ו: וייתון.
38 בדיליה דעלמא – ד"ו: בדיליה לעלמא; ד"מ: בגינה
לעלמ'.
39 ואתתי – ד"ו: ואתית; ד"מ: ואתינא.
40 בעי – ד"ו: דבעי.
41 כספא ודהבא – ד"מ: דהבא וכספא.
42 ויהא...כאלו – ד"מ: כגיני ואורין?
43 לעאת – ד"ו, ד"מ: לעית.

Variant B – Zohar II, 88a–b

Variant A – Munich Ms. Heb. 203

- ואנא יהיבנא עותרא.
אמר ליה לההוא רווק: תשתדל באורייתא
ודא יהיב לך עותרא.¹³
יהב ליה ההוא כסא דפו.¹⁴
קרא עליה רבי אבא:¹⁵ 'לא יערכנה זהב
וזכוכית ותמורתה כלי פו' [איוב כח:יז].
יטיב ולעא באורייתא
וההוא בר נש הוה יהיב ליה עותרא.
עד דהוה ידע ספרא וספרי ותוספות
והגדות,⁴⁸ והוה קרא⁴⁹ ליה 'ר' יוסי בן פז'.
בתר דאחכים אשגח באורייתא
וחמא עובדוי דאינון בישין
בגין⁵⁰ דהוה שביק חיי עלמא דאתי
בגין⁵¹ דהבא וכספא.⁵²
אמר ליה:⁵³
ש"מ דטלפיהו⁵⁴ דטלפין⁵⁵ כד עקרבייא
דקייקי⁵⁶ עד לאו רברבייא לאו אורח ארעא.
אתא לקמי דרב כהנא והוה בכי.⁵⁷
אמר: אי שמענא⁵⁸ שמעין וקלייא אולין מן גבי⁵⁹
אמר: מרי – ד"ו: מאריה; ד"מ: מריה.
45 יקרא דפו – ד"ו, ד"מ: דפו יקרא.
46 עליה – ד"ו: על זה.
47 יתיב...עותרא – ד"מ: יתיב ר' יוסי ולעי באורייתא.
48 ותוספות והגדות – ד"ו, ד"מ: תוספות ואגדות.
49 קראן – ד"ו: קרון.
50 בגין – ד"מ: ועריין.
51 בגין – ד"ו, ד"מ: בדיל.
52 דהבא וכספא – ד"ו: כספא ודהבא.
53 אמר ליה – ד"ו, ד"מ: אמ'.
54 ש"מ דטלפיהו – ד"ו: ש"מ דטרפיהו; ד"מ:
דטרפיהו.
55 דטלפין – ד"מ: דעלפין.
56 דקייקי – ד"מ: רקיקי.
57 בכי – ד"ו: באכי.
58 שמענא – ד"ו, ד"מ: שמעייא.
59 גבי – ד"מ: גביה.

Variant B – Zohar II, 88a-b

Variant A – Munich Ms. Heb. 203

כמיא, לא בעינא שמאלא בגיניה דימינא.

בשמאלא כתי' 'עשר וכבוד'

ובימינה – 'ארך ימים'.

75

קרא ליה לההוא גברא. אמר ליה:

טול עותרך, והב ליה ליתמי ולמסכני,

ואנא יהיבנא לך חולק יתיר באורייתא

בכל מה דאנן לעאן.

אהדר ליה רבי יוסי ההוא כסא דפז.

ועד יומא לא אעדי שמיא ומן בנוי בן פז,

והיינו רבי יוסי בן פז,

וזכה לכמה אורייתא הוא ובנוי

(בגין דלעא באורייתא),¹⁸ דלית לך אגר טבבעלמא כמאן דלעי באורייתא (ומקיימה).¹⁹

85

60 דההוא – ד"ו: בטהוא.

61 ויהי אגרין – ד"ו, ד"מ: ויהי אגרין.

62 ואחזיר – ד"מ: ואהדר.

63 ומאנא יקרא – ד"ו: ומאנא דפז יקרא; ד"מ: ומאני

דפז יקרא.

64 דיהב – ד"מ: ויהב.

65 יומא דא – ד"מ: כען יומא.

66 ומן בנוהי – ד"ו: דמן בנוהי; ד"מ: ומבנוהי.

The Fowl and the Children

Variant B – Zohar, II, 6B

Variant A – JTS Ms. 1614

רבי אלעזר

הוה יתיב יומא חד אתרעא דלוד,

והוה יתיב עמיה רבי אבא ורבי יהודה ורבי יוסי.

אמר רבי יוסי:

אימא לכו מה דחמית יומא דא בצפרא.

קמית בנהורא. חמית חד עופא דהוה טאס,

זקף לעילא תלת זמני ומאיך חד,

והוה אמר –

עלאי עלאי, ביומא דא,¹ טסי (דקיקים) רקיעין(לימינא).²תלת ממנן זקפין³ שלטנין על ארעא,

חד יתיב דלא יתיב,

אעברו ליה⁴ בנורא דדליק,

מעברין קיימיה מעברין שלטניה,

תלת סמכין שליטין עלאין קיימין על עלמא.⁵

רמינא לההוא עופא קלא.

אמינא ליה:⁶ עופא, עופא אימא לי –

תלת דקיימין ממנן

וחד דמעברין שולטניה,

מאן אינון?

רמא לי תלת גירין⁸ אלין מגדפא⁷ ימינא,ודין חד⁹ משמאלא (ומגדפא שמאלא חד)¹⁰,

ולא ידענא מאי רמיזא.

נסיב להו רבי אלעזר,

ר' אלעזר ור' חייא ור' יצחק ור' יוסי

הוו קיימי יומא חד אתרעא¹ דלוד.

א"ר יוסי:

אימא לכו מה דחמית יומא דא.

קמית בנהורא וחמית חד עופא, והוה² טאס,

והוה אמר –

עילאין עילאין, טסי רקיעי³!

לימינא

10

חד יתיב דלא יתיב,

אעברו ליה בנורא דדליק,

מעברין קיימיה מעברין שולטניה,

תלת סמכין שלטן⁴ עלאין קיימין על עלמא.

רמינא לההוא עופא קלא.

אמינא ליה: עופא, עופא אימא לי –

ההוא דמעברין קיימיה⁵

ואינון שולטנין דקיימין על עלמא,

מאן אינון?

20

רמא לי מגדפוי דימינא תלת גדפוי אילין,

ומגדפוי⁶ שמאלא חד,

ולא ידענא מאי הוא.

נטל לון ר' אלעזר,

1 אתרעא – ד"ק: אכבא.

2 והוה – ד"ק: דהוה.

3 טסי רקיעי – ד"ק: טאסי דקיקין/רקיעין.

4 שלטן – ד"ק: שלטין.

5 דמעברין קיימיה – ד"ק: דמעברין קיימיה.

6 ומגדפוי – ד"ק: מגדפי.

1 ביומא דא – ד"ק: ליתא.

2 (דקיקים) רקיעין (לימינא) – ד"ק: דקיקין לימינא.

3 ממנן זקפין – ד"ק: זקפין ממנן.

4 אעברו ליה – ד"ק: אעבר.

5 תלת...עלמא – ד"ק: ליתא.

6 ליה – ד"ק: ליתא.

7 לי – ד"ק: ליתא.

8 גירין – ד"ק: ליתא.

9 מגדפא – ד"ק: מגדפוא.

10 חד – ד"ק: ליתא.

11 ומגדפא...חד – ד"ק: ליתא.

Variant B – Zohar, II, 6B	Variant A – JTS Ms. 1614	
נחית להו לנחיריו, נפק דמא מנחיריו.	וארח בהו. ארח בההוא חד.	25
	אמ': שלטנותא דמצראי אעדינן. ⁷	
	ארח באינון אחרנין.	
אמר: ודאי, תלת שלטני עממין קיימין כרומי ¹² בארעא,	אמר: תלת שלטנין ממנן קסירן ⁸ קיימין על עלמא ואינון לסטר מצראי [ז] ⁹	30
וזמינן למעבד גורין בישין לישראל מסטרא דרומאי. ¹³	וזמינן למעבד גורין בישין לשנאיהון ¹⁰ דישראל.	
נסיב ההוא גירא דמגדפא ¹⁴ שמאלא, ארח ונפק אשתא אוכמא מניה.		
אמר: שלטנא דמצראי אעדיעו, ¹⁵ וזמין חד מלכא דרומאי ¹⁶ לאעברא בכל ארעא (דמצרים), ¹⁷ ולמנא במצרים ¹⁸ רברבי תריסין, וסתיר בנין, ובני סתירין, ¹⁹ (וזמין חד מלכא מאינון תלת דקאמרן למשלט בה, וסתיר בה בנינא ובני ביה בנינא). ²⁰		35
רמא לון רבי אלעזר לארעא.		40
נפלו אלין תלת על חד דמסטרא ²¹ שמאלא.		
	בכה ר' אלעזר.	
עד דהו יתבי	עד דהו יתבי אעברו ¹¹ תלת תינוקי. ¹²	
אעבר חד ינוקא והוה קארי: 'משא מצרים הנה יהוה' רוכב על עב קל ובא מצרים. ²²	פתח חד ואמ': 'ואבדה חכמת מצרים ובינת נבוניו תסתתר'. ¹³	45
אעבר תניינא חבריה ואמר: 'וארץ מצרים פתח אידך ואמ': 'וארץ מצרים		
7	שלטנותא דמצראי אעדין – ד'ק: שלטנ' דמצר'	
12	כרומי – ד'ק: ליתא.	
13	מסטרא דרומאי – ד'ק: ליתא.	
14	דמגדפא – ד'ק: דבגדפא.	
15	אעדיעו – ד'ק: אעדיאו.	
16	דרומאי – ד'ק: ליתא.	
17	(דמצרים) – ד'ק: ליתא.	
18	במצרים – ד'ק: ליתא.	
19	סתירין – ד'ק: בנין.	
20	(וזמין ... בנינא) – ד'ק: ליתא.	
21	דמסטרא – ד'ק: דלסטר.	
22	ישע' יט:א.	
8	קסירן – ד'ק: קסירין. ויש להבין מלשון קסירין???	
9	מצראי – ד'ק: רומאי. נוסח זה נראה עדיף בגלל הן בגלל ההשוואה לנוסח ב והן בגלל הנאמר בשורות 65-66 להלן.	
10	לשנאיהון – ד'ק: ליתא.	
11	אעברו – ד'ק: עברו.	
12	תינוקי – ד'ק: יניקי.	
13	ובינת נבוניו תסתתר – ד'ק: ליתא. הפסוק על פי ישע' כט:יד, אך שם – 'חכמת חכמי' ולא חכמת מצרים.	

Variant B – Zohar, II, 6B	Variant A – JTS Ms. 1614	
תהיה שממה ¹⁴ .	תהיה שממה ¹⁴ וגו'.	
אעבר תליתאה חבריה ואמר: 'ואבדה חכמת מצרים'. ²⁴	אעבר תליתאה ואמ': 'היתה ארץ מצרים לשמה נאם ה' וגו'. ¹⁵	50
חמו ההוא גירא דגדפא שמאלא דאתוקד, ותלת אחרנין דהו עליה לא אתוקדן.		
אמר רבי אלעזר: האי דעופא והאי דדרדקי – כלא הוא חד, וכלא ²⁵ נבואה עלאה הוא, (כלא איהו ברזא דחכמתא). ²⁶	א"ר אלעזר: האי דעופא והאי דרדקי – כלא איהו חכמתא שלימא. ¹⁶	
ובעא קב"ה לאחזאה לן סתרי עלאי דהוא עביד, הדא הוא דכתיב 'כי לא יעשה יהוה' אלהי"ם דבר כי אם גלה סודו אל עבדיו הנביאים' [עמוס ג:ו].	ובעא קב"ה לגלאה רזין סתימין לבני נשא, ¹⁷	55
חכימי עדיפי מגביאי בכל זמן, דהא ²⁷ לנביאי לזמנין שרת עליהו רוח קודשא ולזמנין לא, וחכימין לא אעדי מנהון רוח קודשא אפילו רגעא חדא (זעיר), ²⁸ דידעין מה די לעילא ותחתא, ולא בעו לגלאה. ²⁹	וודאי שלטנותא דמצרים אעדינן ¹⁸ וזמין חד מלכא מאינון תלתא דקא אמרן למשלט בה וסתיר בנין ובני בנין.	60
	א"ר יוסי: כלא איהו בחכמתא ¹⁹	65
אמר רבי יוסי (יהודה): ³⁰ כלא חכמתא, וחכמתא דרבי אלעזר יתיר מכלהו.	וחכמתא דרבי אלעזר יתיר מכלהו.	
	ובעא קב"ה לגלאה ²⁰ רזין סתימין ²¹ לבני נשא דאיהו עביד, דכתיב 'כי לא יעשה יהוה' אלהי"ם דבר כי אם גלה סודו אל עבדיו הנביאים' [עמוס ג:ו].	70
	וחכם עדיף מנביא בכלא, ²² דהא נביא שראת ²³	
23	14 וגו' – ד'ק: ליתא. למקור הדברים ראו בהערה הבאה או בהערה לשורה המקבילה שבנוסח ב.	
24	15 אולי על פי יחז' לרז' או לב:יד-טו.	
25	16 שלימא – ד'ק: שלים.	
26	17 ושוב חזר משפט זה בשורה 68.	
27	18 אעדין – ד'ק: אעדיאו.	
28	19 בחכמתא – ד'ק: חכמת'.	
29	20 לגלאה – ד'ק: לגלאה לון.	
30	21 סתימין – ד'ק: סתימן.	
	22 על פי בבא בתרא יב ע"א.	
	23 שראת – ד'ק: שאר'.	
	24 על פי אחד הפסוקים הבאים – יחז' כט:ט, יב; לב:טו; יואל ד:טו. וראו גם מראי מקום בהערה לשורה המקבילה שבנוסח א.	
	25 אולי על פי אחד הפסוקים הבאים – שמות יז, או ישע' יט:יב או יחז' ל:יג. ויתכן גם שעל פי ישע' כט:יד, וראו הערה 13 בנוסח א.	
	26 הוא חד, וכלא – ד'ק: ליתא.	
	27 (כלא ... דחכמתא) – ד'ק: ליתא.	
	28 דהא – ד'ק: ליתא.	
	29 (זעיר) – ד'ק: ליתא.	
	30 המקבילה למצוי כאן החל משורה 59, מצויה בנוסח א החל משורה 72, ושם הוא מקומה הנכון. יוסי (יהודה) – ד'ק: יהודה.	

The Rose and its Scent

Variant B – Zohar, I 88a-b

Variant A – Friedberg 5-015

מתני'.

הרועה בשושנים' [שה"ש כ:טז וכן ו:ג] –

מה שושן זה הוא אדום ומימיו לבנים,¹

כך הקדוש ברוך הוא מנהיג עולמו ממה"ד

למה"ר,² וכתוב 'אם יהיו טאכסם כשנים

כשלג ילבינו' [ישע' א:יח].

רבי אבא הוה אויל באורחא,³

והוה עמיה רבי יצחק.

אדהו אויל פגע באינון ורדי.

נטל חד רבי אבא בידוי והוה אויל.

פגע בהו רבי יוסי.

אמר: ודאי שכינתא הכא,

ואנא חמינא בידוי דרבי אבא

למילף חכמתא סגיא,

דהא ידענא דרבי אבא לא נטל האי

אלא לאחזאה חכמתא.

אמר רבי אבא: תיב, ברי, תיב.⁴

יתבו. ארח רבי אבא בהוה ורדא. אמר:

ודאי, אין העולם מתקיים אלא על הריח, דהא

חזינא דלית נפשא מתקיימא אלא על ריחא,⁵

ועל דא הדס במוצ"ש.

פתח ואמר:

'דודי לי ואני לו הרועה בשושנים'

[שה"ש ו:ג].

מי גרם לי שאני לדודי ודודי לי?

מפני שהוא מנהיג עולמו בשושנים.

פתח ר' בא פומיה ואמר:

'אני לדודי ודודי לי הרועה בשושנים'

[שה"ש ו:ג].

מי גרם שאני לדודי ודודי לי?

מפני שמנהיג עולמו בשושנים.³

מתני' – ד': מתניתין.

באורחא – ו': באורחיה.

רעיון השתוף בין המדות העומד בבסיס נוסח א

בא לידי בטוי ברור גם בשורות 24–26 שבהן הוא

מוצג כזיווג בין הזכר לנקבה. לא במקרה נשמטה

תחילתו של הפסוק בשורה 2 שכנוסח ב ובמקומו

הפסוק מישעיהו המדגיש את עקרון

ההיפוך במקום עקרון השתוף.

לבנים – ז': לבן.

כלומר, ממדת הדין למדת הרחמים.

באורחא – ז': בארחתא.

תיב – ז': ליתא.

הקשר בין הנפש לריח – על פי ברכות מג ע"ב

ומופיע שוב בזהר, ח"ב רח ע"ב. הקשר הכפול –

בין הריח הן לעולם והן לנפש נזכר גם בזהר,

ח"ג לה ע"ב.

Variant A – JTS Ms. 1614

Variant B – Zohar, II, 6B

עליה רוח קודשא לפום שעתא,

וחכם לא אעדיו²⁴ מיניה רוח קודשא לעלמין.

75

רבי אבא³¹ אמר: אלמלא לא הו³² חכימין,

לא הו ידעין בני נשא מהו אורייתא,

ומהו פקודי דמארי עלמא,

ולא אתפרשא רוחא דבני נשא

מרוחא דבעירא.³³

אמר רבי יצחק: כד אייתי קב"ה דינא על עמא,

בקדמיתא עביד דינא בהוהא ממנא דממנא

עליהו לעילא, דכתיב 'ופקדתי על צבא המרום

המרום במרום ועל מלכי האדמה באדמה'²⁵

[יש' כד:כא].

במאי דינא אתדן ההוא ממנא דלעילא?

מעברין ליה בהוהא נהר דינור דנגיד ונפיק,

וכדין אעדיו ההוא שולטנותא דיליה,

ומיד מכריזי עליה ברקיעא –

שולטנותא דממנא פלניא אעדיו מניה!

עד דמטי ההוא קלא בכל אינון רקיעין,

עד דמטי באינון דשלטין בהאי עלמא,

ונפיק קלא ואכריז בכל עלמא,

עד דמטי לעופי ולינוקי ולאינון טפשיין,

דבני נשא לא ידעין.³⁴

אמר רבי יצחק: כד אייתי קב"ה דינא על עמא,

בקדמיתא עביד דינא בהוהא ממנא דממנא

עליהו לעילא, דכתיב 'ופקדתי על צבא המרום

המרום במרום ועל מלכי האדמה באדמה'²⁵

[יש' כד:כא].

מאי דינא מיתדן²⁶ ההוא ממנא דלעילא?

אעברו ליה בהוהא נהר דינור דנגיד ונפיק,

וכדין אעדיו ההוא שולטנותא דיליה,

ומיד מכריזי עליה ברקיעא –

שולטנותא דפלוניא²⁷ אעדיו²⁸!

עד דמטי ההוא קלא בכל אינון רקיעין,

ומטי²⁹ באינון דשלטין בהאי עלמא,

ונפיק קלא ואכריז בכל עלמא,

עד דמטי לעופי ולינוקי ולאינון טפשיין,

וכני נשא לא ידעין.

24 אעדיו – ז': אעדי.

25 צריך להיות – 'ופקד' במקום 'פקדתי'; 'על

האדמה' במקום 'באדמה'.

26 מיתדן – ז': אתדן.

27 דפלוניא – ז': דפלניא.

28 אעדיו – ז': אעדיו מניה.

29 ומטי – ז': עד דמטי.

31 אבא – ז': אכהו.

32 הו – ז': ליתא.

33 עד כאן נוסח זה בדפוס קרימונה. מכאן ואילך

מצוי בקרימונה רק בסמוך לנוסח א.

34 וצריך להיות, כמו בנוסח הקדום – ובני נשא לא

ידעין! שהרי ברקע הדברים עומדים דברי הגמרא

– 'מיום שחרב בית המקדש ניטלה נבואה מן

הנביאים וניתנה לשוטט ולחינוקות' – ב"ב יב

ע"ב.

Variant B – Zohar, I 88a-b

Variant A – Friedberg 5-015

- מה שושן יש בו ריח והוא אדום,
מוצקין אותו והוא מתהפך ללבן,
ולעולם ריחו לא זז,
כך קב"ה מנהיג עולמו בדרך זה,
והריח העולה משתיהן הוא מדת החס"ד.
- 30 ויוצא ממנו הריח
כך קב"ה מנהיג עולמו ממדת דין למדת רחמים,
והריח העולה משתיהן הוא מדת החס"ד.
- 35 שאלמלא כן לא יתקיים העולם בשביל האדם
החוטא,⁶ והחוטא⁹ נקרא אדום,
כמה דאת אמר – 'אם יהיו חטאיכם כשנים
כשלג ילבינו' [ישע' א:יח].
מקריב קרבנו לאש שהוא אדום,
זורק הדם¹⁰ סביב למזבח שהוא אדום,
מדת הדין אדום;
מוצקין¹¹ אותו (הריח)¹² ועולה העשן כלו לבן,¹³
ואז האדום נהפך ללבן,
נהפך מדת הדין למדת הרחמים.¹⁴
ותא חזי, כל מדה"ד אין צריך הריח שלו
אלא מצד אדום,
והיינו דאמר רבי יהודה – מה דכתיב?
'ויתגודדו כמשפטם וגו'¹⁵ עד שפך דם עליהם'
[מל"א יח:כח] אלא היו יודעים שלא ישיגו
ממדת הדין כרצונם זולתו באודם.
אמר רבי יצחק: ועוד. אודם ולבן נקרב לעולם,
והריח עולה משתיהן.
50 מה השושן אדום ולבן,¹⁶
כך ריח הקרבן והקרבן¹⁷ מאדום ולבן.

4 שושן – ד"ו: השושן.

- 6 מתהפך – ד"ק: מהפך.
7 העולם בשביל – ד"ק: ליתא.
8 החוטא – ד"ק: חוטא.
9 והחוטא – ד"ק: ובהחטא.
10 הדם – ד"ק: דם.
11 מוצקין – ד"ק: מוציקין.
12 אותו (הריח) – ד"ק: הריח.
13 לבן – ד"ק: ללבן.
14 הרחמים – ד"ק: רחמים.
15 וגו' – ד"ק: ליתא.
16 תבנית זה נלקחה מן הנוסח הקדום (שורה 28)
ומופיעה פעם נוספת בנוסח המאוחר, להלן
בשורה 83.
17 והקרבן – ד"ק: ליתא, וכן צריך להיות.

Variant B – Zohar, I 88a-b

Variant A – Friedberg 5-015

- בא וראה מריח הקטורת,
שהשמים¹⁸ מהם אדומים ומהם לבנים,
כגון, הלבונה שהוא לבן, מר דרור – אדום,
והריח עולה מאדום ולבן,
וע"כ מנהיג עולמו בשושנים שהוא אדום ולבן,
וכתיב 'להקריב לי חלב ודם' [יחז' מד:טו].¹⁹
כנגד זה אדם מקריב חלבו ודמו ומתכפר לו,
זה אדום וזה לבן.
- 55 בא וראה מריח הקטורת,
שהסממנים מהם לבנים ומהם אדומים,⁵
והריח עולה משניהן,⁶
מר דרור – אדום, לבונה זכה – לבן,
והעשן והריח עולה משתיהן,
ועל כן צוה לנו להקריב לו חלב ודם.
- 60 החלב כולו לבן והדם כולו אדום,
והריח עולה משתיהם.⁸
ועל כן אמרו רז"ל –
הוי זהיר בתפלת המנחה שאף אליהו נענה בו,
שנ' 'ויהי כעלות המנחה ויגש אליהו הנביא
ויאמר יי' אלהי אברהם יצחק וישראל היום
יודע כי אתה אלהים לישראל ואני עבדך'
[מל"א יח:לו].
- 65 א"ר יוסי: ודאי שעת המנחה היתה,
ונביאי הבעל המתינו עד שעת המנחה,
שנ' 'ויהיה בעלות המנחה' [שם] וגו'.
וכתי' 'ויתגודדו כמשפטם בחרבות ורמחים עד
שפוך דם עליהם' [מל"א יח:כח].
אמ' ר' יהודה: כנגד מדתן.
70 ודין הוא טעם התפילה.¹⁰
תפלת שחרית כנגד המדה אחת,
ותפלת המנחה כנגד האחרת.
וכשם שמאלו המדות יוצא מדת החסד
כך כוללת תפלת ערבית שתי התפלות,
ועל כן הוא תפלת ערבית רשות.¹¹
- 80 לבנים... אדומים – ד"ו: אדומים ומהם לבנים.
משניהן – ד"ו: משתיהם.
מר – ד"ו: מור.
משתיהם – ד"ו: משתיהן.
ברכות ו ע"ב.
10 כלומר, טעם תפילת מנחה.
11 ברכות כז ע"ב; יומא פז ע"ב; י"מ אלכוגן,
התפילה בישראל בהתפתחותה ההיסטורית,
מהדורת י' היינמן בתרגום י' עמיר תל-אביב,
תשל"ב, עמ' 76-77; ג' אלון, מחקרים בתולדות

- 18 שהשמים – ד"ק: שהסמנים [וצ"ל – סממנים].
19 להקריב... ודם – ד"ק: להקריב לי כל חלב וכל דם.

