

Beholders Of Divine Secrets: Mysticism And Myth In The Hekhalot And Merkavah Literature

Descenders to the Chariot Beholders of Divine Secrets Hekhalot Literature in Translation
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Prophets and Prophecy in the Late Antique Near East Apocalyptic and Merkavah
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the hekhalot literature is a bizarre conglomeration of jewish esoteric and revelatory

texts in hebrew and aramaic produced sometime between late antiquity and the early middle ages and surviving in medieval manuscripts these texts claims to describe the self induced spiritual experiences of the descendents to the chariot and to reveal the techniques that permitted these magico religious practitioners to view for themselves ezekiel's merkavah as well as to gain control of angels and a supernatural mastery of torah drawing on epigraphic and archaeological evidence from the middle east anthropological models and a wide range of cross cultural evidence this book aims to show that the hekhalot literature preserves the teachings and rituals of real religious functionaries who flourished in late antiquity and who were quite like the functionaries anthropologists call shamans

beholders of divine secrets provides a fascinating exploration of the enigmatic hekhalot and merkavah literature the jewish mystical writings of late antiquity vita daphna arbel delves into the unique nature of the mystical teachings experiences revelations and spiritual exegesis presented in this literature while previous scholarship has demonstrated the connection between hekhalot and merkavah mysticism and parallel traditions in rabbinical writings the dead sea scrolls apocalyptic early christian and gnostic sources this work points out additional mythological traditions that resonate in this literature arbel suggests that mythological patterns of expression as well as themes and models rooted in near eastern mythological traditions are employed in a spiritualized fashion to communicate mystical content the possible cultural and social context of the hekhalot and merkavah mysticism and its composers is discussed

the hekhalot literature is a motley collection of textually fluid and often textually corrupt documents in hebrew and aramaic which deal with mystical themes pertaining especially to god's throne chariot the merkavah they were composed between late antiquity and the early middle ages with roots in earlier traditions and a long and complex subsequent history of transmission this volume presents english translations of eclectic critical texts with a full apparatus of variants of most of the major hekhalot documents hekhalot rabbati sar torah hekhalot zutarti ma aseh merkavah merkavah rabba briefer macroforms the chapter of r nehuniah ben haqanah the great seal fearsome crown sar panim the ascent of elijah ben avuyah and the youth and the hekhalot fragments from the cairo geniza

this is the first detailed study of johannine mysticism against a palestinian jewish background has been previously undertaken this book investigates whether there was a mystical practice in first century palestine and whether john can be better understood in the light of such practice if there was any in analysis two strands of jewish mysticism the early forms of ma aseh merkavah and of ma aseh bereshit

emerge as existing in first century palestine while the former narrates by means of ezek 1 the experience of seeing god in his kingly glory the latter describes the same expereince by using gen 1 this book consists of three parts part one analyses hellenistic mysticism as expressed by the hermetica and hellenistic jewish mysticism as presented by philo part two traces the important elements of merkabah mysticism from the later hekhalot literature and the jewish and christian writings belonging to 2 cent bce 1 cent ce by defining the term mysticism in terms of the fourteen aspects of jewish mysticism an exegetical study of seven themes is undertaken in part three the study shows that the conceptual parallels in john with hellenistic mysticism and hellenistic jewish mysticism are very slender but indicates john s polemical motive against the merkabah mystics of his time he calls them to believe in jesus as the christ the son of god by proclaiming that the divine glory claimed by them to be revealed in human like form on the throne is now visible in the historical person jesus particularly in his death on the cross thus jewish throne mysticism seems to have been reinterpreted by john as cross mysticism

this volume contains a series of provocative essays that explore expressions of magic and ritual power in the ancient world the strength of the present volume lies in the breadth of scholarly approaches represented the book begins with several papyrological studies presenting important new texts in greek and coptic continuing with essays focussing on taxonomy and definition the concluding essays apply contemporary theories to analyses of specific test cases in a broad variety of ancient mediterranean cultures paul mirecki th d 1986 in religious studies harvard divinity school is associate professor of religious studies at the university of kansas marvin meyer ph d 1979 in religion claremont graduate school is professor of religion at chapman university orange california and director of the coptic magical texts project of the institute for antiquity and christianity

in this volume jae han investigates how various late antique near eastern communities jews christians manichaeans and philosophers discussed prophets and revelation among themselves and against each other bringing an interdisciplinary historical approach to the topic he interrogates how these communities used discourses of prophethood and revelation to negotiate their place in the world han tracks the shifting contours of prophecy and contextualizes the emergence of orality as the privileged medium among rabbis manichaeans and jewish christian communities he also explores the contemporary interest in divinatory knowledge among neoplatonists offering a critical re reading of key manichaeian texts han shows how manichaeans used concepts of prophethood and revelation within specific rhetorical agendas to address urgent issues facing their communities his book highlights the contingent production of discourse and

shows how contemporary theories of rhetoric and textuality can be applied to the study of ancient texts

preliminary material ithamar gruenwald two essential qualities of jewish apocalyptic ithamar gruenwald the mystical elements in apocalyptic ithamar gruenwald the attitude towards the merkavah speculations in the literature of the tannaim and amoraim ithamar gruenwald the hekhalot literature ithamar gruenwald introduction ithamar gruenwald re'uyot yehezkel ithamar gruenwald hekhalot zutreti ithamar gruenwald hekhalot rabbati ithamar gruenwald merkavah rabbah ithamar gruenwald ma'aseh merkavah ithamar gruenwald hekhalot fragments ithamar gruenwald seper hekhalot 3 enoch ithamar gruenwald masekhet hekhalot ithamar gruenwald shj'ur qomah ithamar gruenwald physiognomy chiromancy and metoposcopy ithamar gruenwald seper ha razim ithamar gruenwald appendices saul lieberman indices ithamar gruenwald

andrei orlov examines early christological developments in the light of rabbinic references to the two powers in heaven tracing the impact of this concept through both canonical and non canonical material orlov begins by looking at imagery of the two powers in early jewish literature in particular the book of daniel and in pseudepigraphical writings he then traces the concept through rabbinic literature and applies this directly to understanding of christological debates orlov finally carries out a close examination of the two powers traditions in christian literature in particular accounts of the transfiguration and the baptism of jesus including a comprehensive bibliography listing texts and translations and secondary literature this volume is a key resource in researching the development of christology

critical presentation of the whole evidence concerning jewish history institutions and literature from 175 bc to ad 135 with updated bibliographies

this book describes the history of jewish mysticism introducing the wide ranging and varied mystic writings known collectively as the heikhalot and the merkavah literature with its description of mystic spiritual elevations and meetings between the mystics and superior beings and even with god explains jewish mysticism s relationships to parallel streams of thought both within and outside judaism

based on stracks classic introduction this is a comprehensive fully revised and up to date reference to rabbinic literature

piyyut is the art of hebrew or aramaic poetry composed either in place of or as adornments to jewish statutory prayers laura s lieber uses the piyyutim of a single

poet yannai ca sixth century c e to introduce readers to this important but largely unfamiliar body of writings yannai the first hebrew poet to sign his name to his works by means of an acrostic influenced hebrew sacred poetry for centuries beyond his lifespan he was the first to consistently use true end rhyme and he was among the first to have written for the weekly service and festivals rather than just particular holidays as literary works his poems are as dazzling as they are complex rich with sound and play allusion and linguistic beauty lieber presents the hebrew texts of yannai s 31 extant piyyutim which embellish the book of genesis she translates annotates and analyzes these complex poems which display the poet s transformative treatments of some of the most familiar biblical narratives she contextualizes these poems and teaches readers how to read and appreciate piyyut by studying yannai s poetic language and the formal structures of the poems his exegetical cultural and societal importance and intriguing motifs in yannai s worldview such as mysticism holiness jewish christian relations and the role of women lieber s groundbreaking study is an invitation to those with interests in areas such as liturgical studies rabbinic literature and targum studies the early synagogue and its art byzantine christian culture and society and the history of biblical interpretation to engage with these beautiful and neglected texts and include them in larger intellectual conversations

full page color illustrations capture the animals clown and acrobatic acts of the circus

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