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THE IDEAS OF HASIDISM

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY
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I. Introduction

- A. Quick review of Zohar - Ein-Sof and Sephirot. Lurianism.
Sabbatianism - Messianic urgency and antinomianism. Emden-Eibeshutz controversy.
- B. Birth of Hasidism: in Podolia and Vohlinia, site Sabbatian disaster. Ignorance. Gloom.
- C. Havura Kadisha (Circle of Pneumatics).
 - 1. Top level intelligentsia: Rabbinate. Remote.
 - 2. Sub-intelligentsia: higher level - Maggidim and Mokhichim (preachers). Personality types a continuation of ecstatic Sabbatian "prophets." Despised and poor. Resentful versus "establishment." Helped Sabbatian underground.
 - 3. Lower level - Baalei Shem. Amulets, herb healing, exorcism.
 - 4. Besht - both levels sub-intelligentsia. Both later Hasidim and rationalistic historians, also Buber - "Baal Shem Tov" indicates new status; scholars - no more "miracle" working. Scholem - wrong. Can't separate charismatic from occult functions.
 - 5. Havurah Kadisha. Concern: awareness of failure in profession because no mass repentance. R. Nahman of Kossov. Others.
- D. Messianism. B.Z. Dinur - all Hasidism is secret doctrine of Messianic redemption. Dubnow - Hasidism is individualistic, non-nationalist, non-Messianic. Scholem - Hasidism "neutralized" Messianic dimension.
- E. Hasidic Literature.
 - 1. Source of almost all Hasidic literature: the discourses, presented orally, by the Zaddik at the Seudah Shelishit.

Weiss (WJ, 208) says that the entire written product of Hasidism, its short units and repetitious style, is conditioned by this oral origin. They were usually translated into atrocious Hebrew by inexperienced translators in a haphazard fashion on Saturday night. I believe, however, that he is missing the whole monograph literature of HaBaD literature.

2. Methodology in dealing with early Hasidic Literature represents a problem for researcher, because this literature was published relatively late. Thus, works of RYY, printed 1780-82, appeared about twenty years after the death of Besht, and about 7-10 years after the death of Maggid. This was a period of great growth for the movement. (N, p.17)
3. Surprising fact in works of RYY: lacks any direct comment on condition of movement during the time his books were prepared or shortly before. All his writings reflect problematica of the very earliest group of Hasidism, before it spread into a movement. (ibid.)
4. Surprising difference between Maggid and RYY: Maggid Devarav L'yaakov, printed 1781 (both this and RYY's books published by student of Maggid, R. Shelomo^{of} Lutzk) reflect apparently different realities. Social element -- criticism, etc. -- which so evident in works of RYY, completely lacking in works of Maggid. (ibid.)
5. Fifth book to be published is N.E. (R.E. is a student of Maggid) in 1788. He seems to carry on the social criticism and conceptualism of RYY. Yet, R.E. never mentioned RYY (and in fact, hardly even mentions Maggid) (N, 118)

6. "Tzevaat Ha-rivash" (ZHR) - by student of Besht. Not totally reliable as verbatim record of B's sayings, but certainly true account of spirit, atmosphere.*

ZHR and Darkei Yesharim (R. Menahem Mendel of Peremyslyany).. Weiss (WH,19) maintains that the latter influenced the former, although the former was printed first (see Haberman in Sefer Ha-Besht, Mosad Harav Kook, Jerusalem 1960, who, however, believes that ZHR is the first source). The inner structure of ZHR seems to prove that it depends on Darkei Yesharim, except, that as Weiss had mentioned, it eliminates the more shocking statements about devekut being superior to the study of Torah. In all probability, the compiler of ZHR saw manuscript copies of Darkei Yesharim before they were printed.

PREPARATION FOR UNIT II (IMMANENTISM):

1. "A" series
2. TNY II: 1
3. NH III, end chapter 2 through chapter 4.

* מן "התורה", ספרה הקדוש כ"ב: "לפיכך יתכן שיהיה זה ספר הנקרא
 ב"מ כ"ב: זהו ספר שכתב אביו של רבינו בעל שו"ת וזהו ספר הנקרא
 "התורה" או "הספר" שלקחו לקוים מהתורה וזהו ספר הנקרא
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Probable reason for title "התורה" is opening item which reads
 "התורה" או "הספר" שלקחו לקוים מהתורה וזהו ספר הנקרא
 "התורה" או "הספר" שלקחו לקוים מהתורה וזהו ספר הנקרא
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II. IMMANENTISM

- A. Transcendence and Immanence. A necessary and vital bi-polarity in the conception of God as a Personality. Theism, Deism, Pantheism. Transcendence alone leads to a frozen deism; immanence alone -- to pantheism.
- B. Kavod and Kedushah. Interpretation of Abarbanel on Isaiah, chapter six, "the year that King Uzziah died" -- Aramaic translator: the year he became a leper. Leper = dead man. Story of Uzziah as a victor attempting to offer the incense in the Sanctuary, against the Halakhah and to the displeasure of the priests. Leprosy on his forehead. Why forehead? Abarbanel: Exaggerated transcendentalism, as if the Creator cares not about man's conduct. No place for Halakhah. His major sin was not in deed but in thought -- therefore, the forehead. Hence, the prophet: "I too recognize His transcendence, Holiness: 'and I saw the Lord sitting on a high and exalted Throne.'" Nevertheless, "the fringes of His garment fill the Sanctuary." "Holy, Holy, Holy" -- and nevertheless, "the whole earth is full of His glory." The Holy One and the Shechinah (in Talmud). Author of Beit Halevy on "Shechinah."
- C. Zohar: Sovev and Memalei (aspects of Ein-Sof). In Sephirot: Transcendence - Keter and through Yesod. Immanence - Malkhut. "There is no place that is free of Him." (אין מקום פנוי מן ה').
- D. Hasidism: *Emphasis on Immanence, without denying*
1. Emphasis on immanence, without denying transcendence.
 2. Two interpretations immanence (often used interchangeably): closeness and withinness.
 3. R. Naftali of Ropshitz as a child: will give you a penny if you tell me where God is." He answers: I will give you a hundred if you tell me where He is not." Rabbi Mendel of

Kotzk: Lo Yeyeyeh Bechah El Zar... *לוי יצחק בן צבי*

4. The great Maggid. Besht taught the languages of trees, birds, animals.

5. The "Dudelle" of R. Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev:

*אין דער וועלט איז גאנץ אים געווען
... פאר אים איז געווען אים געווען
אין אים איז געווען אים געווען
אין אים איז געווען אים געווען
אין אים איז געווען אים געווען*

6. Early students of Hasidism made much of the supposedly pantheistic leanings of the Besht. So, S.A. Horodetzky and Jacob S. Minkin. (SD, 223) Scholem claims that there is no proof whatsoever for it. At best it can be called panentheistic (Hartshorne). There is no identification of God with the universe, but only immanence, or panentheism where everything is in God. This was a teaching which was current in the Kabbalah, especially of Cordovero, and the latter's doctrine on this were summarized in Abraham Azulai's Hesed le-Avraham (SD, 223). *(אברהם אזולאי'ס חסד ליעקב)*

7. RYY often quotes in the name of the Besht the famous parable of the king who threw up the illusion of a palace and walls. This is not a pantheistic, but an acosmic one -- the world is denied real existence, and reality is seen as a sort of "veil of Maya." Those who see, in this, pantheism of Spinoza's sort have "considerably overshot the mark" (SD, 224). Moreover, Joseph G. Weiss (WZ, 97, 99) denies that the parable has anything to do with acosmism or even immanentism, but that it deals only with ABG. He said the same of the famous formula, "there is no place that is empty of Him," namely, that it refers to the lapses from devekut for evil thoughts. This formula, Weiss maintains (WZ, 100), refers not to space

and metaphysics, but MZ and ABG, that even MZ and corporeality can be impregnated with Divinity and hence have the possibilities of "elevation." (NL: But certainly this is not the idea of the Maggid, and RSZ, who expound a clear acosmic doctrine.)

8. READ TNY II, chapter 2.
9. READ - "A" Series - in whole or in part.
10. The Mitnaggedim: Vilna Gaon on Isaiah 6: "The whole earth is full of His Glory" -- ^{הכל מלא} "providence" (i.e., accepts immanence as closeness or relationship -- RH: hit'habrut -- but not inherence). Read (or: report) from Nefesh ha-Hayyim, Part III from end of chapter 2 to chapter 4 (on charge of incipient antinomianism).

III. DEVEKUT (Dev.) (Assign: "C" Series)

A. Background:

1. Scholem and Weiss agree that it is the major theme and innovative contribution of Hasidism. If immanentism is its major metaphysical construct, Dev. is its chief religious value. (מקראי קודש ופנינים, חלק א, פרק יא, ע"ב)
2. Pre-Hasidic history of the devekut concept:
 - a) Hidabek be'midotav -- the ethical-moral interpretation based on imitatio Dei.
 - b) Hidabek be'talmidei hakhamim -- the social interpretation.
 - c) Classical interpretation of devekut is that the study of Torah, as the Word and Will of God, is eo ipso communion with Him. The theory goes back to the early Middle Ages, and it is forcefully expounded by R. Hayyim of Volozhin.
 - d) Kabbalah. Since the 13th century the term devekut has been used by mystics to denote close and intimate communion with God. It is regarded as the last grade of ascent to Him. Usually it takes place through meditation, (כוונה), always in seclusion and segregation, (as a "leisure-time activity") on the Names of God.
 - e) Most important for the understanding of the idea in Hasidism

is the commentary of Nahmanides to Deut. 11:22 ("to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to cleave unto Him"). Nahmanides defines this cleaving as remembering God constantly, not to divert one's thought from Him in all one's earthly doings. "Such a man may be talking to other people, but his heart is not with them since he is in the presence of God... Those who have attained this rank do, even in their earthly life, partake of the eternal

"לפניהם ארץ
אלקדס אלבר
בזכרון ופזקת 12"

כחול: " ויתכן להבין כעצמך
אמר שמה שזכר בלש ואמר
המדי, הוא זכר מלשון מדי
בשם זכר וזכר וזכר וזכר
שניה זכר וזכר וזכר וזכר
מלשון, ואזו אולי זהם אולי
אולי. (וישן) זכר וזכר
הוא מלשון מלשון מלשון
בזכר וזכר וזכר וזכר
בזכר וזכר וזכר וזכר
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בזכר וזכר וזכר וזכר

- f) For Nahmanides, devekut has the specific meaning of communion with the last of the ten sefirot, the Shechinah. Other Kabbalists speak of devekut as communion with the Ayin, certainly the highest rank of all.
- g) Another influence on Hasidism is the SHeLaH of R. Isaiah Horovitz who speaks of practicing devekut in conjunction with profane work. (WJ, 199).
- h) Hence - two opinions: Nahmanides and SheLaH - Dev. within world and society. Kabbalists - in seclusion.

1. In the pre-Hasidic circle of Pneumatics, the leading contemplative and protagonist of continual devekut is R. Nahman Kosover (WZ, 60). (See Shivhei... Heb., P. 92; Eng., P. 228). The latter based his concept of devekut on the verse . He used to say that it was natural that if you voided your mind of all other thoughts, thoughts of God will enter.
2. The devekut of Rabbi Nahman Kosover is that of a particular kind. Weiss offers the following morphology of devekut: one, as with classical mystics, completely out of the world, in seclusion and segregation. Two, contemplation within the world and society. This latter form can now be subdivided

into: a) a dualistic notion, where there is no contact between the profane act and the spiritual contemplation; it is a kind of schizophrenia; and b) a monistic concept where there is a relationship between the contemplation and the accompanying action. According to Weiss, Nahman Kosover belongs to class 2-a. (NL: Werblowsky calls this "double consciousness"). R. Nahman does not himself use the word "devekut". The psycho-technique of constant contemplation does not mean the setting aside of a specific time for devekut, but uninterrupted devekut even while part of the mind is engaged in secular work. (WZ, 62). The content of devekut according to R. Nahman is the visualization of the written Tetragrammaton (*יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה*) (WZ, 62) (READ C-1). The sacred and the profane realm remain separate. (Therefore, this technique and theory of devekut do not lead to the later Hasidic innovation of ABG.) The Besht, as we shall see later, first accepted R. Nahman's approach, then transcended it by proposing his innovative method of Devekut (class 2-b).

R. Nahman of Kosov said that every week he paid somebody a certain amount in order that when he is amongst people he should remind him not to forget the Tetragrammaton, that he should hold it opposite him. TYY (p.20d) tells of R. Nahman of Kosov who used to reproach people who do not adequately fulfill, "I have placed the Lord before me at all times," even during the times that they are engaged in business. When he was asked, "how is that possible?", he would answer: "if it is possible that while they pray in the synagogue, they can think about merchandise and business, then it is also possible for them to do the reverse..."

C. Beshtian Devekut

1. B. agrees with R. Nahman (and of course Nahmanides, etc.) that it is a full-time activity.
2. Dev. for the Kabbalists was essentially contemplative -- a cerebral activity. While (see later) B. does not negate the element of meditative contemplation, he emphasizes the ecstatic and rhapsodic. Thus, Hasidic Dev. is marked by heightened emotionalism.
3. Dev. is no longer regarded as the privileged task of the elite, but the goal of the common man, the ethos of hoi polloi, as well (WT, 153). As an emotional experience, it now comes into the purview of the average Jew as the focal point of his religious life. (This brought with it problems - the risks of externalization and vulgarization in crude forms - as: stimulants such as liquor) - (SD, 209). This largely explains the attraction of Hasidism for the average Jew.
4. Devekut is moved by the Besht from the goal and end of the path of spiritual struggle to the very first rung on the ladder. Devekut is a starting point for Hasidism, not the end, as it is with Kabbalah. (SD, 208). Nevertheless, it is so important, that to fall away from the state of devekut is tantamount to idolatry (SD, 209).
5. Content of Beshtian devekut: during study or prayer, it means to bind yourself to the spiritual element inherent in the letters of Torah and prayer. Words and letters are merely the vessels which contain the "light of the Ein-Sof." Devekut, for the Besht, means communion with this inner light that animates the letters of Torah and everything else. It means to concentrate in study and prayer not on the external

figures of speech but on the spirit that animates them. A dialectic here becomes evident: it sounds very simple, and yet it is extremely difficult to attain such a sustained state of communion, (SD, 211-212).

6. Major Beshtian Innovations: In addition to reversing the order of devekut in the spiritual life of man, Besht departed from the system of Rabbi Nachman. At first he had to learn R. Nahman's system (See Shivhei... Heb. 160, Eng. 104 -- where it is attributed to Ahijah). Besht adds two elements to Rabbi Nahman's doctrine of devekut: first, that devekut can be achieved not only during social relationship, but in the midst of physical activity as well. Secondly, and most important, the devekut acts as a "raising of the sparks" of the profane activity. Hence, he dissolves the dualism introduced by R. Nahman's version of Dev. This monistic conception of Dev. thus leads directly to the theory of Avodah be'gashmiyut (ABG): "spiritual service" (avodah be'ruhaniut) is the "major mode" (gadlut) of Dev., and "corporeal worship" (ABG) the "minor mode" (katnut). (WZ, 64-65).

Thus, we may discern three distinct stages in the development of Beshtian Dev. a) pre-R. Nahman: Dev. completely separate from life in society. b) R. Nahman - simultaneous with social activity. c) Besht - not only simultaneous but interpenetrate: profane activity itself is sanctified; the "adiaphora" is the scene of spiritual activity, Dev. (The difference between Mishnah's *ע"פ חו"מ פ'ע"ב ס"א* and B's Dev.: former conceives profane activity as consciously pro-paedeutic; latter - it itself is converted into sanctified experience).

The following Hasidic interpretation by the first Gerer Rebbe illustrates the difference between R. Nahman's and the Besht's conceptions of Dev.

(Source: Sefat Emet, quoting Hiddushei Harim)

"And Joseph made ready his chariots, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen; and he presented himself unto him, and fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while" (Gen. 46:29). Rashi (quoting the Rabbis): "Joseph wept on the neck of Jacob, but Jacob did not weep on the neck of Joseph or kiss him because, our Rabbis said, that Jacob was occupied in reciting the shema."

In that case, why was not Joseph too reading the shema? I believe that Joseph, who was in the house of his Egyptian master (and nevertheless retained his spiritual eminence and moral integrity) represents the category of one who had achieved devekut with the blessed Lord, even when he is occupied in mundane matters, and not feel separated (from Him) at all. However, our father Jacob, of blessed memory, was beyond nature, and therefore was in devekut with the blessed Lord, but could not kiss at that time. (And the intelligent will understand).

7. Devekut and Yihud. Devekut is not "union" in the sense of mystical union of man and God ("unio mystica") -- this is almost non-existent in Judaism. But devekut does imply an action which is called yihud, which means "unification" and it is not always easy to determine its content. Sometimes, it means only a concentration of mind on the focal point; sometimes, it means simply the acknowledgement of God's unity. For the Besht, if a man binds his thought to "the root of the Torah," this is called a yihud because he concentrates on it, and because he breaks down the barriers and brings about a unification by making into an organic whole what seemed separated and isolated. He becomes bound up with the core of all being (Cf. B's advice to R. Gershon in the famous letter -- see my translation in Tradition.) The Besht's student, the Maggid, who was a radical mystic, maintained that yihud means the process of going from ani

פול, דעקוט

to ayin. (sd, 213-214). According to this ideal, devekut and yihud are not so much concerned with the concrete world as such, but rather with emptying it of its concrete content and discovering in it the hidden life which flows everywhere. (sd., 216). (When the Besht and Hasidic writers speak of devekut, they demand the focusing on God of one's "thought" and "reason". But this is used in a loose sense, and does not always imply the purely intellectual act of the mind. It rather indicates any intentional act of the soul, including will and emotion. By the practice of devekut, thought is transformed into emotion, it is de-intellectualized. The insight which is achieved by devekut has no rational content, and is usually of a most intimate and emotional character) (sd, 218). The highest ideal of yihud achieved by devekut: a homily by the Maggid, concerning אדם אחד. Word divided to two: אדם and אחד, a half of a form. Man and God are each incomplete without the other. Man (אדם) is by himself only אדם, blood. He lacks the א, which represents God (אשר עליו). Only when both are together do we have אדם א. This yihud can be achieved only by the constant striving for union with God. However, this union is not the pantheistic obliteration of the self. That would go against the Jewish personalistic conception of man. Rather, even after yihud through devekut, man is still man -- or better, he has then only started to be man (sd, 226-227).

8. Buber on Hasidism and Dev.: Buber maintains the greatest danger to man is "Religion," i.e., the fragmentation of life into separate realms of the sacred and the profane. This he calls "cultic sacramentalism" and identifies it with the

the traditional halakhic way of life. Hasidism, however, introduced "pan-sacramentalism" -- the hallowing of all life in its here-and-now concreteness. This, as opposed to rabbinic "cultic sacramentalism," is redemptive and creative. Unfortunately, by submitting to their Mitnaggedic critics, Hasidism failed to effect a great pan-sacramental renewal. Instead, it became institutionalized.

Buber, in other words, reads Hasidism as an extension of his own brand of existentialism. He attributes to Hasidism the theory that redemptive power is found in the holiness of Dev. which is "natural" in the world, implying the acceptance and fulfillment of this world in all its concreteness. But Rivkah Shatz-Uffenheim, following Scholem, holds that for Hasidism "devekut is not the realization of the material, but its voiding or emptying as matter and its joining to its ideal aspect, which is the flow of Divine life in it." NL: from the introductions to the Maggid's work by R. Shlomo Lutzker, it seems even more evident that it is a spiritual element, rather than matter as such, which is the object of devekut. Clearly Buber is all wrong on this, although there were occasional antinomian pan-sacramentalist inclinations.

(READ - C-3)

D. RABBI ELIMELECH OF LIZENSK (RE) ON DEV. (in his Noam Elimelekh - NE)

1. Wherever RE speaks of devekut in NE, he refers only to the Zaddik, not to the ordinary man (SH 368).
2. Devekut: RE recognizes that at the height of devekut, a man

~ פסוק מלכות
 ר"ל - וי' 23
 "אשר י' 23
 (GZ)

is in danger of expiring. That is why, "the Holy One cools /him/ at the height of devekut so that he should not be banished from existence." (NE to Vayishlach). At that moment

of removal from mundane fears, man almost identifies with the Creator. At this instant, above time, the Zaddik replenishes his creative powers in a singular way. (SH, 369) (NL: this is the definition of "ecstasy.")

E. DEV. AND THE STUDY OF TORAH (TT)

1. Weiss (WH) sees two parallel forms of Hasidism developing at the very beginning, with ultimately only (Beshtian) Hasidism prevailing, and the very slightest of traces remaining of its competition. In the course of time, he says, Hasidic tradition and legend converted the original competitive strain into a Beshtian type of Hasidism as well. The main stream is that of the Besht and the Great Maggid. The other strain, which he tried to reconstruct, is headed by R. Menahem Mendel (RMM) ^{of} Peremyshlyany, his student R. Meshulam Feivush of Zbarazh, R. Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov, and to some extent (earlier than the above), R. Pinhas of Korecz (WH; WT, 158 ff.) These groups were not rivals in any hostile sense, because even the second group accepted the Besht as a great spiritual leader, and attempted to interpret the Beshtian doctrine as conforming to that of RMM. The latter's ideas were expressed in a small booklet called "Darkei Yesharim," ^{or: דרכי ישעריים - Lwow: 1800} and about him in "Likkutim Yekarim (or: Likkutei Yekarim - Lwow: 1782) Later editions of these two monographs attribute them to the Besht and the Maggid! Nevertheless, careful analysis shows that they represent a more enthusiastic and radical expression of Beshtian Hasidism.

RMM and R. Pinhas are not really disciples of the Besht. They are contemporaries, who occasionally may have met the Besht, who headed their own groups, and who

are characterized more by great spirituality than scholarship. Only later, after Beshtian Hasidism prevailed, did Hasidic tradition turn them into "students" of the Besht. Hence, the views of the Besht on Torah study must be seen as a compromise between the classical scale of values, unquestionably favoring study, and the extreme views of the enthusiastic circles of RMM and R. Pinhas which diminished it (WT, 160) (see later). The influence was, however, two-directional, so that Beshtian Hasidism moderated the extreme group, but the latter also infiltrated into Beshtian Hasidism, and often caused the Hasidim to become even more so objects of Mitnaggedic scorn and criticism (WT, 160).

2. RMM and the Besht. Perhaps the most important difference between RMM of Peremyshlyany and the Besht is the interpretation of the relationship of Devekut to the study of Torah. The Besht held to the theory of "double consciousness" -- that Devekut could be experienced even during the time of study. (Apparently he applied to the time of study what he had learned from R. Nachman of Kosow about Devekut being practiced during social experience, except that he applied it to intellectual experience too.) RMM, however, kept up the classical distinction between Torah and Devekut. In this he followed the Kabbalists, except that he gave much greater emphasis and attention and time to devekut over studies. For RMM, devekut is of greater value than the study of Torah. He is thus more extreme than the Besht and is not just more radical, but opposed, even in a technical sense, to the Beshtian way. Thus, RMM requires a minimization of the time devoted to the study of Torah. He holds that the Beshtian definition of

Torah Lishmah (namely, that one studies Torah in a contemplative way, a "double consciousness" -- simultaneous contemplation and study) is not realizeable. (WH)

3. QUOTATIONS FROM RMM OF PEREMESHLYANY: (from: מכתב מפרעמישליאני - 1800)
Lemberg - 1800)

- a) *And when one studies, he should rest a bit every now and then in order to attach himself to Him, may He be blessed. (NL: compare to Tzevaat Ha-Rivash).*
- b) *Even though during the time of study it is impossible to attach oneself to the blessed Creator, nevertheless the Torah "polishes" one's soul; and it is a tree of life to them who hold it. And if one did not study, he would be distracted from his devekut. (See WH, who also points to this quote as showing that the study of Torah is here explained as propadeutic to the attainment of devekut. So, it is not a value in itself, but polishes or shines or prepares the soul for its higher function, that of devekut.)*
- c) *And one must think that, just as when one sleeps one cannot be in devekut, or when one experiences 'smallness of mind' -- so let the time of study be no worse than them... (WH, who maintains that this is not an anti-intellectual stand, but rather an extreme preference for devekut. NL: see almost identical statement in Tzevaat Ha-Rivash).*
- d) *Another great principle is not to study too much. In the earlier generations, their intellect* was strong and they studied with great, supernal sanctity, [and so] they did not have to bother themselves with fear (yirah, piety); their fear was always before them, and therefore they could study much. But we, whose intellect is weak, if we remove our thoughts from devekut in the Lord and study much, the fear of the Lord will, Heaven forbid, be forgotten by us. And fear is most important; fear of the Lord is His treasure, as it is written in the book Reshit Hokhmah. Therefore one must study less, and [instead] meditate always on the greatness of the blessed Creator, in order to love and fear Him. And one should not think many thoughts, but only one thought."** (all above p.2a; WH)*
- e) *And this is a great principle: occasionally one stands in prayer, and one attaches himself to the blessed Creator very much, and because of his great devekut he keeps silent, not speaking [words of prayer]. Afterwards, he speaks several words [of prayer]. He does this several times in the course of one prayer. (Page 4a. WH sees RMM as holding that silence is an ideal condition for the attainment of devekut, thus opposing the Beshtian idea of devekut while being involved with other people,*

NOTES: * "Intellect" (sekhel) is not intended as a cognitive term, but as volitional-existential, i.e., all-encompassing.

** i.e., the author here excludes simultaneous Dev. and TT, the Beshtian "double consciousness" theory.

even ordinary and ignorant people. If devekut is thus practiced in silence, it contradicts the whole traditional procedure of the study of Torah. Similarly, even prayer is regarded, as is Torah, as a distraction from devekut. RMM thus applies to prayer the same contemplative technique that he applied to Torah, namely, occasionally stopping in order to make devekut possible, the devekut taking place during the periods of interruption. NL: I think Weiss errs. During Torah, he advocates deliberate interruption of intellection by contemplation. With prayer, he merely is describing the phenomenon of devekut overwhelming tefillah.)

4. R. Pinhas of Korecz. R. Pinhas takes a position similar to RMM. Just as RMM favors Yirah (which he uses as a synonym for devekut) over study, so R. Pinhas of Korecz. R. Pinhas too uses the word yirah for devekut and discusses it in opposition to study. (See the article by A.J. Heschel in the Festschrift for Schocken, Jerusalem 1948-1952). R. Pinhas occasionally gives vent to a free statement about devekut, such as his remarkable statement (in Yiddish): "one must get into God." Because of the later efforts at moderation and harmonization, many of these more radical statements were expunged. This happened both to the statements of RMM and R. Pinhas. Thus, the compiler of Tzevaat Ha-Rivash omitted all statements favoring devekut over the study of Torah (Weiss maintains that the compiler was a follower of RMM). Thus, the natural development of Hasidism was such that it moderated or eliminated the extreme enthusiastic statements of the RMM school and thereby became accepted to the great majority of East European Jews.

QUOTATION FROM RABBI PINHAS OF KORECZ:

In this generation, we do not study Torah as in the days of old. For nowadays great fear (yirah, piety, which the author considers identical to devekut) has spread in the world, but in the early days there was not so much fear, and therefore they had to study Torah. There are some places where they study, but there is no fear there. (WH, quoting Heschel and see Likkutei Shoshanim, p. 14).

י"ח פ"ק סי' כ"א
"י"ח פ"ק סי' כ"א
(1) י"ח פ"ק סי' כ"א

י"ח פ"ק סי' כ"א
י"ח פ"ק סי' כ"א

5. R. Mesulam Feivush (RMF). In 1777, RMF wrote two letters which present to us this other developing Hasidic school, so different from the Beshtian Hasidism as reflected in the writings of RYY (and continued by the Maggid). Thus the letter tells of the RMM school reading or hearing of the doctrines of the Maggid with great amazement or even shock. They were especially bewildered by the doctrine of "the Elevation of MZ" of the Maggid. Apparently, therefore, they knew of Beshtian Hasidism, but not in the tradition in which it developed with the Maggid and RYY. RMF now continues the more extreme doctrine begun by RMM, who went to Palestine in 1746, four years after the death of the Besht. (WT, 158,159).

IV. AVODAH BE'GASHMIYUT (ABG); KATNUT (K) AND GADLUT (G)

A. 1. ABG is one of the most important contributions of Hasidism.

ABG expands the area of religious activity to acts which were not originally recognized as "religious." This is the area of eating, drinking, clothing, business, etc. (adiaphora) (N, 152) (Example: eating, as an intimate physical activity, embarrassed the ancients. Greeks solved the problem by imposing etiquette on ingestion -- the esthetic solution. Jewish tradition - by imposing the sacred: blessings, laws of foods, etc. Hasidism - by sanctifying the very act of eating.)

2. Thus, there are pious people who are ashamed to eat in public; their very corporeality which it makes it necessary for them to eat, endangers the continuity of their devekut. However, through ABG, they can exalt their physical activities and thus continue in their devekut. However, the Zaddik's eating carries this spiritual and religious character only so long as his eating is achieved with the intention of service of the Creator, rather than merely satisfying his natural appetite. The ABG must be achieved by the intention to redeem the holy spark in the food and reject all else in it. (N, 153)

B. TRANSITION (from Dev. to ABG)

The transition from a simultaneous but unconnected dualism (in theory and practice of Devekut) to the bridging of the gap, or ABG, can be seen in interpretations of the Beshtian parable (see C-2-A) concerning the exiled prince who received a letter of pardon from his royal father and wanted to celebrate, but the people around him were very common. He

therefore took them to a saloon and drank with them. While they were happy with their drinks, he was happy with his father's secret message (Read C-2-A).

Now, one can interpret this either as a kind of bribe given to corporeality so that the spirit can enjoy itself, in disguise; or as the use of the corporeal to be happy: the happiness of the commoners in their drinks is a spur to the happiness of the prince with his father's letter. (wz, 67) The second interpretation (and this is the implicit danger in ABG) suggests the use of stimulants such as liquor and the vulgarization of devekut amongst Hasidim (wz, 67). Weiss (wz, 67) maintains that the second interpretation, the more radical one that suggests ABG, was accepted by the Besht from R. Menahem Mendel of Bar.

Thus, the ABG doctrine uncuts the duality of sacred and profane (SD, 206). (READ C-2-B)

C. ABG: for whom?

Is ABG open to any Jew or only to the Zaddik? The answer is: to any Jew. However this kind of service is more difficult than study of Torah or prayer, because in the area of gashmiyut the evil urge is even stronger. (N, 154) (READ C-6)

D. ABG: Not Corporeality Proper; contra-Buber.

ABG does not refer to the corporeality itself, as Buber would have it (see above), but to the spiritual element (immanence) that forms the essence of corporeality. The worshipper thus aims at returning to the metaphysical source of the corporeal object on encounter, out of devekut in its spiritual essence. (SH, 367).

E. ABG and ABR (= תורה אברהם אברהם)

1. ABG is the lowest level of service of the Creator, and

is different in degree but not in kind from ABR (NL: ABG = "smallness," and ABR = "greatness.") Important as ABG is in Hasidism, one certainly cannot view it as the highest goal (which is reserved for ABR) and certainly one cannot see in it, as does Buber, "a natural devekut in the world." The relationship between ABG and ABR is like that of the derivative (ABG) to the source (ABR). ABG is an opportunity (for the service of the Lord), but not the final goal. (SH,368).

2. R.E. ON ABG - ABR:

RE sees three levels in ABR, equivalent to the three celestial Beings in the vision of Ezekiel. These visions do not depend upon the Zaddik's intellectual abilities, but on the degree of the purity of his service, his freedom from personal interest. The lowest level (corresponding to "fear" and parallel to the Ofanim) is one from which it is easy to slip and fall. The second (corresponding to "love" and parallel to the Hayyot ha-Kodesh) is one in which the worshipper struggles with the concept of "Mati Ve'lo Mati, attained-and-not-attained." Hayyot here become Hiyyut, and this "vitality" or "life's force" is envisioned in the form of Ratzo Va'shov. There is tension between the ideal and the real, the alternations of fulfillment and frustration. The third level (corresponding to Tiferet, and parallel to Serafim) is the ideal one. As in Serafim, the Zaddik who worships on this level "always burns, but does not fall from that level." This third level is generally eschatological, since RE recognizes that a constantly sustained devekut on the highest level is contingent upon the complete extirpation of evil and sin, which will not take place until the days of the Messiah. (SH,368).

F. KATNUT (K) AND GADLUT (G)

1. The concept of K-and-G, already discussed in Lurianic Kabbalah, are in Hasidism closely related to ABG. (Hasidism used the terms in its own way.)
2. The Hasidic K and G doctrine issued from the Besht's qualification of his doctrine of devekut. It played an important part in early Hasidism. K and G are the "minor and major states" of man (SD, 219). K and G are not only states of man's mind or being, but according to Besht, two basic states of being, from the artificial and natural up to the Divine spheres. (SD, 219). K is a state of imperfection and even degradation, whereas G is the full development of a thing to its highest state. The same organic law of the two states goes throughout all of existence. The description of K is not absolute, but relative to one's achievement. K, then, depends on man's struggle with his lower instincts in order to lift himself up to G. K is, relatively speaking, a state of estrangement from God. It is inevitable that man experience K, there being no exception to the law of this periodic occurrence, and it involves a melancholy sadness. Hence, the way to service in "Greatness" must pass through service in "Smallness." (SH, 359; NL: thus, ABR requires ABG. Compare: in TT, She'lo lishmah as a necessary precursor to lishmah). During K, worship contains an element of compulsion and not the high qualities of fear and love which characterize G. (SD, 220) (NL: in other words, more simply put, K is a time of no inspiration, G is a time of ecstasy and inspiration.

3. Hence, a twofold aspect to K, which is a time of trial: first, the natural relaxation after the strain of devekut, and second, intentional descent because of some hidden purpose. The second is especially important in Hasidism because it leads to the doctrine of the Descent of the Zaddik. (SD,221)

"STRANGE THOUGHTS" (machshavot zarot - MZ)

Contemporary Hasidim place almost no importance at all on one of the most powerful doctrines that emerged in the very earliest period of the movement: the doctrine of the Elevation of MZ. Yet it was historically of great importance, and the issues involved were of profound significance.

Prayer requires concentration, the absence of distractions. For the Halakhah, the determination of what constitutes adequate intention (kavvanah) and the conditions which are conducive to it, is a normative problem, dealt with by authorities from the Mishnah through the Codes. Hasidism, however, placed much greater emphasis on thought -- "a man is where his thoughts are," the Besht used to say -- and it made severe demands on "purity of thought," inclining the balance in the tension between intention and action towards the former. To entertain distractions during prayer or study was not merely to be guilty of losing an opportunity to rivet one's attention on his Maker, but was in effect an act of disrespect towards God: "it is as one who stands before the King in a sackcloth." One does not approach God with a soiled mind.

Historically, the concern with "strange thoughts" has been traced by Joseph G. Weiss (Zion, XVII - 1951 - p. 69) to the "circle of pneumatics" from which the Besht came. This group nourished extremely high demands for sustained contemplation and consequently took a very dim view of all kinds of distraction, though these wayward thoughts were not yet referred to as "MZ." They were unavoidable, yet occasioned deep guilt feelings. And so an ambivalence developed about them: the MZ are sinful, yet one had to perform tikkun for them.

↑ יאב זניח
↑ ענין זניח

devekut and successfully voids his mind of these stray thoughts. The MZ have no significance whatever, they are idle wanderers into the arena of one's consciousness, and had best be ejected without fanfare.

The Besht, however, advocated the "Elevation of MZ": tracing them back to their Divine Source and redeeming their holiness. For the Besht, this involved a subtle transformation of a theme that was prevalent in the pneumatic circle to which he belonged, namely, that the spiritual elite (the "man of form," precursor of the Hasidic Zaddik) must "descend" in order to perform the tikkun (spiritual restoration) of the common man (the "man of matter"), the sinners. An analogous activity is now prescribed not only for the Zaddik, but for every worshipper, and not aimed at sinners but at sin, i.e., the "strange thoughts" (Weiss, loc. cit., pp. 90-94).

The technique of Elevation developed by the Besht, and reported by R. Jacob Joseph and other disciples, is based on the idea that all qualities, potencies, and sensations in the mundane sphere have their origin in the Sephirotic structures. In their divine source in the Sephirot, these qualities are altogether holy and pure, but they are often corrupted in the process of their descent into the lower spheres. The method of "repairing" them, then, is to reverse the process and elevate them mentally to their supernal origins. Hence, an illicit sexual thought is considered the corruption of Hesed, the sphere of love and generation, and its "elevation" consists of mentally reattaching it to the Sephirah of Hesed and thus retransforming the illicit love to the sacred lovingkindness in the Sephirot. So for pride, anger, heresy, and other sinful thoughts.

Before proceeding further with the theoretical underpinnings

of the theory of Elevation, it is important to note that in practice this required a great deal of concentration, and the mental exertion in performing this spiritual technique often was accompanied by physical expressions, such as vocal interjections in the midst of the service and odd gesticulations. R. David of Makov, one of the most vigorous Mitnaggedic critics of the Hasidim, who was especially sarcastic about the Hasidic preoccupation with MZ, tells of the Hasidim interrupting the Amidah prayer with such sounds as bam-bam-bam, ee-ee-ee-, nu-nu-nu, geh-geh-geh, um-um-um, and other grunts, and of eccentric gestures such as knees knocking together, elbows hitting the body, clapping hands, etc. (M. Wilensky, Hasidim Unitnaggedim, vol. II, p. 159). Lest one consider the source untrustworthy because of prejudice, one can call R. Nahman of Bratzlav as witness: he reminds his Hasidim that one need not jerk his head backwards and forwards in order to expel the MZ from his head (Likkutei Moharan, No. 233, Bnei Brak: 1965 p. 115a).

What is the theory behind the doctrine of Elevation of MZ? Most Hasidic writers identify it as another form of the Lurianic "raising of the sparks" and use the two interchangeably. (They are followed in this by Louis Jacobs, Hasidic Prayer, p. 106f.) When the Light of the Ein-Sof entered the "vessels," i.e., the Sephirot, the seven lower vessels broke, and the sparks of the overspill of the divine light descended from one world to the other, until they finally imbedded themselves in the "shells" (kelipot), the "other side" or repository of evil. The task of man is to redeem these incarcerated sparks by consecrating all his mundane existence, thus elevating the sparks back to their divine origin. These sparks, which the Kabbalah holds to be 288 in number, exist in and hence vitalize all things, great and small. The Beshtian theory of "elevation of strange thoughts" is thus

seen as but another form of the Lurianic elevation of the holy sparks applied specifically to the realm of thought.

However, the Hasidic theory of MZ may be nourished by more than one source. Joseph G. Weiss maintains that the Beshtian theory can very well get along without the Lurianic doctrine, and suggests that the Besht holds that the "strange thoughts" are the kelipah which is the end result of Neo-Platonic emanations. Accordingly, the evil of this kelipah is subjective and idealistic, and open to change and transformation (J.G. Weiss, loc. cit., p. 101).

More to the point, I suggest, is the obvious grounding of the theory of Elevation of MZ in the fundamental Hasidic concept of divine immanence and, in its more radical formulation, acosmism. If the divine inheres in everything, then it indwells profane thoughts as well. If nothing exists but God, and all else is illusion or disguise, this holds true for the "strange thought" as well -- it is infused with divine vitality and, indeed, is but another form of His existence.

That this immanentism leads to the theory of the elevation of MZ is evidenced from the writings of many of the leading Hasidic masters of the second and third generation, some of whom quote the Besht himself to this effect. Thus, in several of his works, R. Jacob Joseph quotes a homily by the Besht in which both the Lurianic doctrine of the holy sparks and Hasidic immanentism are cited as sources for the concept of the Elevation, the Lurianic explanation being regarded as the more detailed and sophisticated, and the immanentistic as the more general, persuasive, and effective in this period of exile (See: TTY, Ber., 8d; KP, 27a; ZP, 46a, 49b, 86b, et passim). Thus (in BPY, 50b-d):

A man must believe that "the whole earth is full of His glory" and "there is no place that is empty of Him," and in all the thoughts of a man there inheres His blessed

existence, and every thought is a complete structure. /Thus/ when a man is engaged in prayer and there occurs to him an evil and strange thought, it comes to him in order that he repair it and elevate it. If one does not believe in this, his acceptance of the Kingdom of Heaven is deficient, for he thereby places limits on God's existence, Heaven forfeit. ...Once somebody asked my teacher /the Besht/ of blessed memory: if he recited several words of the Shema or Amidah without /proper/ intention, may he repeat them, this time with the /proper/ intention? He answered as follows: it is well known that there is nothing which does not possess the existence of God. Even an extraneous thought possesses sparks of holiness, as is well known. Therefore if one recited several words of prayer without the /proper/ intention, but with this extraneous thought /in mind/, then /we must believe that/ this thought presented itself to him that he might extract from it the sparks, as is well known. Now if he recites the words again, he demonstrates /his belief/ that the first time they did not possess the existence of God, and thus he places limits on His blessed existence. Therefore, let him not repeat the words, but rather meditate with /proper/ thought and intention the words which he /first/ recited without /proper/ intention.

Other Hasidic writers of the period have similarly blended the Lurianic doctrine of sparks and Hasidic immanentism and offered them as explanations of the theory of elevation of MZ (thus, see R. Menahem Mendel of Vitebsk, Peri Haaretz, Vayigash /Jerusalem: 1953 (?)/, page 37. R. Shelomoh of Loitzk, a student of R. Dov Ber, in his well-known introduction to the Maggid's Maggid Devarav Le'Yaakov, constructs what might be called a Hasidic metaphysics, in which the Lurianic notion of the holy sparks is combined with the immanentism of the Besht. Writing in a Platonic vein, he asserts that every quality or state of mind to which we are subject in this mundane sphere, when abstracted from its physical matrix, is the only true reality. This reality, in turn, is derived from any one of the Sephirot. In the process of this

declension from the upper worlds to this phenomenal world, it may undergo significant transformation. Hence, Hesed may appear as illicit love; Gevurah as idolatrous fear [i.e., worship]; Tiferet as self-glorification or arrogance. Of course, they may also appear in their beneficent modes. The consequences of this theory are obvious. R. Shelomoh sees devekut as a reversal of the process whereby the world comes into being. While he does not mention explicitly the doctrines of "the elevation of attributes" and "the elevation of strange thoughts," they are clearly implied by him. (See A-1)

The Beshtian doctrine of elevation of MZ was not without its dangers and risks. Historically, the Sabbatian heresy and its doctrine of the "holy sin" was too recent not to be sensitive to its reappearance in whatever form, and the flirtation with evil thoughts was not sufficiently dissimilar to the Sabbatian notion of entering the kelipah and redeeming the imprisoned holiness by means of a sanctified antinomianism. We thus find the Besht circumspect in teaching the Lurianic doctrine of sparks, and emphasizing the importance of Halakhah (READ: C-5). Psychologically, the theory is too conducive to certain personality types, what might be called spiritual gamblers, who might invite "strange thoughts" in order to test their ability to elevate them. And for the ordinary person, accosted by such thoughts during his prayer, electing to "elevate" rather than reject them might well prolong their life-span sufficiently to survive and prove victorious over their human hosts.

Thus, R. Jacob Joseph quotes his master, the Besht, on the necessity for exercising caution (BPY, 50b-d):

However, there are strange thoughts which ought to be rejected. If you will ask: how will I know which thought to reject and which to bring close and elevate? The answer is a man should consider this: if when the strange thought occurred to him he immediately thought of how to repair it and elevate it, then he should try to bring it close and elevate it. But if he does not immediately think of how to repair it, then it probably came to disturb man's prayer and confuse his mind, and then he is permitted to reject that thought.

It is perhaps because of this that the Maggid, R. Dov Ber, seems to be ambivalent when it comes to the question of the rejection or elevation of strange thoughts. The importance he places on the harnessing of the yetzer ha-ra (evil inclination) in the service of the Lord would naturally lead to espousal of elevation (J.G. Weiss, loc. cit., p. 101). Similarly, the Maggid advocates the similar theory of haalaat ha-middot (elevation of attributes) and is thus open to the possibility of elevation of MZ. (READ: C-4). Yet, the attendant risks would suggest caution. An elderly Hasid told me the following tale:

It is told that a Hasid came to the Maggid and complained that he was disturbed by MZ. The Maggid sent him to R. Velvel of Zhitomir. The Hasid came and knocked at the door of R. Velvel. Only after several hours did he let him in, without greeting him. He stayed there for about three days and did not exchange one word with the Hasid. At the end of this time the Hasid thought that the whole thing was a hoax, and there is nothing he can learn from this unfriendly person. As he was about to leave, R. Velvel turned to him and said:

*אם אתה ראש ביתך, לא תתן מקום לזרים
אם אתה ראש ביתך, לא תתן מקום לזרים*

("If you are boss in your own home, you don't let strangers in")

The story indicates that the Maggid does not advocate elevation of MZ, but rejection of MZ.

These same elements, plus the feeling that there was something presumptuous about challenging an evil thought and venturing to transform it into its opposite, aroused the ire of the Mitnaggedic polemicists. Thus, R. David of Makov, whom we mentioned earlier in this respect, considers the Hasidic doctrine an abomination, a heresy, idolatry, a pollution of sacred precincts, and provocatively eccentric.

This bold theory of the Besht did not last long even in the circles of the subsequent Hasidic masters. R. Shneur Zalman counsels rejection of MZ rather than elevation. A man who entertains such untoward ideas is already too far gone to be able to transform them; it is he himself who stands in need of improvement. Only the Zaddik may essay the act of elevation, for the strange thought that besets him is not his own, but comes to him from others, presumably pleading for restoration and repair. (READ C-7, A, B, and C). Hasidism thus seems to have turned full circle. The Besht differed from his contemporaries in his group by "democratizing" the elevation of MZ and proposing it for all Jews, and R. Shneur Zalman now restricts the technique of elevation to the Zaddik only. Tishby and Dan, in their article on Hasidism in the Hebrew Encyclopedia, maintain that HaBaD theology of R. Shneur Zalman must be read on two levels, one for the ordinary student and one an esoteric message for the initiate and elite, and that on this second level the doctrine of elevation is accepted and urged. Louis Jacob (ibid. p. 114) takes issue with Professors Tishby and Dan, yet the passage from Tanya just quoted does clearly endorse elevation for the Zaddik, even if the theory of the esoteric nature of HaBaD writing is rejected.

Even the Besht's great-grandson, R. Nachman of Bratzlav, adopted the same solution, recommending rejection of strange thoughts for the common man, and reserving elevation for the Zaddik (see the article by Tishby and Dan, and Jacobs, pp. 113f).

In later generations, the problem no longer seemed to agitate Hasidic thinkers. R. Zvi Elimelech Spira of Dinov follows R. Shneur Zalman, even if he is a bit less strict in denying elevation to the non-Zaddik (see Jacobs, p. 116f). One Hasidic thinker who fully and vigorously advocates the original Beshtian position is R. Yitzhak Isaac Yehiel Saffrin of Komarno (1800-1874), who fulminates against those who would restrict elevation to the Zaddik, and considers such people as "fools" (see Jacobs, pp. 118f). Yet even he bends somewhat, and allows that the successors to the Besht who departed from this teaching of the "elevation of strange thoughts" may have had a point (in his Zohar Hai to Vayehi, p. 373d).

V. ZADDIKISM

A. Pre-Hasidic Origins.

1. Joseph G. Weiss has written extensively on this "pre-Hasidic Circle of Pneumatics," known as the Havurah Kadisha (HK). Its members are known as Benei HK or Anshei ha-Havurah. Very little is known about them. Some members are: R. Yehudah Leb, the Mokhiah of Polonnoye; R. Yehudah Leb of Pystian; R. Menahem Mendel of Bar; R. Nahman of Horodenka; R. Nahman of Kosov; and the Besht (WZ, 49).
2. The HK, which consists to a large extent of preachers (mokhihim and maggidim) (and some baalei shem) are all co-equals. It is a loose association of spiritual personalities bound to each other by mutual agreement rather than on the authoritative basis of a leader. (WJ, 204). R. Nahman of Kosov is an important figure, but not the head, since there is no such head (WJ, 205). Besht made many concerted efforts to gain social and spiritual recognition by this group, which often met in Kutov. He seems to have had little success with R. Nahman of Kosov (WJ, 210).
3. The intelligentsia of those days was composed of two levels: the establishment, which was the rabbinate; and the sub-intelligentsia, composed of the preachers as the higher level and the miracle healers (baale shem) as the lowest level. The attitude of the establishment rabbis to the Besht was part of their general attitude to the preachers and others of the lower intellectual classes: trouble-makers, suspected heretics, and money-seekers (WZ, 55).
4. The Baalei-shem consisted of professionals who were nothing more than folk healers and magic healers, who sold their

amulets to the villagers and were largely exorcists amongst the village Jews (WZ, 53, 54). The career of the Besht included a number of vocations of this sub-intelligentsia: in the beginning, he was the watchman in the Beit Hamidrash, and then became a Baal-Shem, which was the highest he could go in the lowest level of the intellectual class. (See Shivhei..., Heb. p. 56, on a story demonstrating the low level of Baalei-Shem) (WZ, 54).

5. The Preachers (פ'חידושי פ'ג'ו)

- a) Weiss maintains (WJ, 202) that the specific personality type is a continuation of the ecstatic Sabbatian "prophet" who had as one of his functions the divulgence of the secret sins of individuals. They feverishly worked for the cause of repentance. In the Shivhei... we find that R. Nahman of Kosov belongs to a group of pneumatic figures who "prophecy," except that this particular group of HK undertook, for some reason unknown to us, but probably in reaction against Sabbatianism, no longer to prophecy.
- b) The personal lot of these preachers was unenviable. They had to be on the road all their lives, and could preach only when the local rabbi gave them permission. Their living was very meager, and if their sermon did not go over, they were not paid (WZ, 49). Thus, they were largely dependent upon handouts from individuals, very often in front of the whole congregation, something which demeaned them (WZ, 50).
- c) Weiss (WZ, 52) maintains that Sabbatians were especially to be found in this particular social group of the sub-intelligentsia which contained many rebellious elements, who objected to the establishment. The fact that they

were a wandering group, and had cells in many places, made them especially suspect to the establishment rabbis.

- d) Weiss says (WZ, 56) that just as the Sabbatians were largely based on anti-clericalism, so the early Hasidim. Each, in turn, suffered from the establishment. Nevertheless, Weiss (WZ, 58) holds that despite a number of kinds of continuity, there is more dissimilarity and discontinuity between the Sabbatians and the Hasidim.
- e) Most important is the psychological state of these preachers. They despaired of their people. They had a tremendous awareness of crisis and especially their own failure. They would meet often to discuss what they could do to be more effective in getting the people to repent. It is this crisis that led to the development of various theological principles that awaited further development in Hasidism (WZ, 59).
- f) In this group the ideal personality is transformed from the hakham, the man of intellectual distinction, to Zaddik -- the charismatic leader.
- g) The Zaddik and Talmid Hakham (from J.G. Weiss, "מקרים בחסידות ברסלב," chapter 1): There is a fundamental distinction between the structure of the biography of the Zaddik and that of the חכם נאמן.

The typical biography of the scholar is that of a straight and unimpeded intellectual growth. He usually begins as a child prodigy, whose greatness becomes obvious when he is very young and who astounds his teachers. He then outgrows his school, and goes from yeshiva to yeshiva, while his career as a genius is obvious to everyone.

This is the typical rabbinic biography of a later generation. It does not, of course, refer to those of the sages of the Talmud. The kind of biography attributed to Rabbi Akiva -- of being a complete ignoramus until the age of 40 -- is not found in the rabbinic biographies of the last century.

Contrariwise, the hagiography of many great Zaddikim contains the motive of: surprise. It is always a turning point that is astounding. The part before this turning point is considered temporary and hidden, and after it he "goes public." Thus, in the legendary biography of the Besht and other Zaddikim, they are seen to lead a double life until the time of their "revelation." This "revelation" is not seen to be a particular, stormy point, but rather a rather short process.

The period of concealment is not primarily dictated by religious humility, but is rather a "cover" for mystical preparation before going out into public life. On the contrary, there operates here a dialectic of spiritual arrogance and humility.

Note the life of the Besht: the first 36 years are one of *yon*, and after his revelation at this age, his life changes from one extreme to another: he exchanges his loneliness and anonymity for charismatic leadership.

As said, this dramatic turning point does not usually occur in a single revelatory act, but rather in a short slice of life which proves revolutionary. Thus, the "conversion" of RYY -- rather typical of many others -- who is a *ḥ"l*, of the usual cast, and also an opponent of Hasidism, who for one reason or another comes to the Zaddik and is "turned on," leaving it as a Hasid who accepts the spiritual hegemony of the Zaddik.

B. THE BESHT

1. Hasidic Zaddikism begins at the beginning - or even earlier. Tishby maintains that in effect the Besht functioned as a Zaddik. There is much to commend this assertion. Moreover, Weiss wants to show that the role and the doctrine of the Zaddik preceded the Besht (WZ, 68). According to the early Zaddikology of the pneumatic group, charismatic activity of the Zaddik took place only in the realm of the spirit, and even then they had only one spiritual concern, and that was sin

(a reflection of their own professional role as preachers). This is quite remote from the classical type of Zaddik, as developed later in Hasidism, who is concerned with changing "justice" to "mercy," with HD, with shefa, etc. (WZ, 70). In the same early group, the Zaddik was charged with working for all of Israel; the differentiation, whereby he is concerned exclusively with his own community of Hasidim, is a later development (WZ, 73).

2. THE BESHT AS BESHT. Dubnow maintains that initially he chose the profession of Baal Shem out of poverty and need, but later clung to the role of "miracle worker" when he realized that it would be effective in helping him disseminate his new doctrine. Thus, his assumption of the name Baal Shem Tov" as primarily a guide and educator. Similarly, Buber maintains that the title is something new, and the extra word implies a vast change of role. Scholem, however, disputes the whole thing by pointing out that the title "Baal Shem Tov" was already known in Kabbalistic literature, where there is absolutely no difference between Baal Shem and Baal Shem Tov. In fact, what difference there is, is that Baal Shem Tov is more often used for the magical and occult aspects of the profession! Furthermore, we have no evidence whatsoever of any change in the Besht's thinking from one period of his life to another (SD: 338).
3. THE BESHT AS AN OCCULTIST. The Besht never gave up the world of magic. He had one or two scribes who used to write not only his letters but also his amulets. This activity bothers many historians, especially such as Aaron Marcus. Yet we have a letter from R. Gershon from Jerusalem to the Besht, in the end of 1748, in which he asks him for a regular amulet rather than a new one each year! (SB:341).

Buber maintains that for the Besht, the amulets lost their magical quality and were simply a sign of personal (dialogic?) relationship. This is a modernistic interpretation which Scholem refuses to accept. This effort to reduce the professional and occult aspect of the Besht begins at the very beginning-- with R. Nahum of Czernobil. However, this is contravened by the stories in Shivhei and the two authentic letters which we possess (SB: 341).

His role as a charismatic leader and teacher cannot be separated from his professional role as a folk healer and miracle worker. ("Charisma" is used according to the definition of Rudolph Otto in his great essay on Jesus.) (SB 339).

4. THE BESHT AS A MAN OF THE PEOPLE. He is known as such both to enemies and supporters. Thus, R. David of Makov writes of him disparagingly as one who walks in the streets with his pipe in his mouth and speaks with women (SB: 342). His grandson R. Ephraim writes that he used to hear and see his grandfather tell what appeared to be irrelevant and simple stories, but that these were the greatest spiritual exercises. (SB: 342). The Besht defends his behavior with simple folk by means of K (Katnut) and G (Gadlut). K is the time to serve God even through story-telling or idle talk. By this means, man brings about the spiritual concentration during K which allows him to rise to G and attain devekut. Through devekut in K, the Hasid transforms the lowest form of activity into something of the highest order (NL: hence, K and G in effect lead to ABG). (SD, 221).
5. COLLEAGUES OF BESHT. Dubnow (DH 102-104) counts three of them, all from Galicia. The first is R. Nachman of Kossow. (See Weiss on him). He sided with R. Jonathan Eibeschutz against R. Jacob Emden, and was vigorously attacked by the latter as a Sabbatian.

The second is R. Nachman of Horodenka. He was a great optimist, considering every event as to the good (following Nachum Ish Gamzu of Talmudic fame.) Hasidim tell that when the military government installed soldiers in Jewish homes in Mezhbozh, Besht asked Rabbi Nachman to pray that the decree be nullified. When R. Nachman answered, that this too is to the good (perhaps expecting that the soldiers would protect the Jews from the Haidamaks), the Besht smiled and said, "how lucky that you did not live in the generation of Haman, for then you would have said the same thing about the anti-Semitic decrees of Haman!" R. Nachman survived the Besht in Mezhbozh. He later went to Israel and settled there. An interesting Hasidic tale (of relevance to the developing Zaddikism) relates that on his way to Palestine a storm afflicted the ship which almost came to grief. The travellers gathered a minyan, R. Nachman took a Torah in his hand, and he said, "If, Heaven forbid, it has been decreed against us by the Heavenly Court that we be destroyed, then we, the court of this Holy Congregation together with the Holy One and His Shekhinah, do not agree to this decree, and may it be His will that this decree be voided." The worshippers answered "Amen," they recited the Psalms, and the storm passed away, the ship ultimately arriving safely in Haifa.

The third of these was R. Menachem Mendel of Peremyshlyany. After the death of the Besht, he joined R. Nachman of Horodenka in the same trip to Palestine in 1764. He is as fatalistic as R. Nachman Horodenka is optimistic. Two small booklets which remain with us of his sayings may well be references to the Besht (i.e., they may represent an alternative form of Hasidism; see later). One important such statement is: "Another important principle is not to study too much... for if we distract our thoughts from devekut in the blessed Lord and study much, we will, Heaven

forbid, forget the fear of the Lord, and fear is most important."
(DH, 104).

6. An important historical issue is the transition between the wandering Zaddik, who is much like the Maggid, and the Zaddik who has settled in one place. The sociological element has ramifications for the quick and startling growth of the Hasidic movement. Weiss maintains that the transition occurred already in the days of the Besht. (WZ, 53). Certainly, a felicitous accident of history assisted in this transformation: the Maggid was a sickly man who, although he sent emissaries and missionaries throughout Europe, remained in one place - Mezeritsch. The very fact of traffic to and from the "courts" of the Zaddikim created the aura of, quite literally, a great "movement."

C. THE BESHT'S CONCEPTION OF ZADDIKISM. In TYY (Mishpatim): Besht told him, that just as we find two people where one becomes the "garment" or "chair" for the other, so one who conducts himself in a supernatural manner (NL: charismatic?), has his needs performed for him by people who conduct themselves in a natural manner; the latter therefore becomes the "chair" for the former, and when both combined with each other they become one organism. Scholem sees the whole risky doctrine of Zaddikism as implied in this passage. However, the Besht never in practice made use of this theoretical dispensation to accept gifts from others, as did later Zaddikim. The Besht left the world as poor as he was in the beginning. He never exploited and abused his own charisma (SB, 349, 350).

D. THE MAGGID certainly was a full-fledged Zaddik. Thousands came to him. The negative report of Solomon Maimon. His "Zaddikology"
J.G. Weiss (in HUCA article) maintains that the Maggid held that the Zaddik

had a magical function: change (אין), for the Maggid, is brought about by a retreat of reality to the point at which it is all but annihilated - in the sphere of Ayin, which the Maggid identifies as Hokhmah (usually: Keter), in which all contradictions vanish. This retrogression to Ayin and annihilation is brought about by pure contemplation, and is thus a "magical" feat: a reductio ad infinitum, to the ontological phase of Hokhmah from which it reemerges in a new form. M assigned this contemplative feat to the Zaddik. (Weiss calls it "magic" because, unlike prayers, results are guaranteed if rules of mental game are followed.) This is at the basis of hamtakat ha-dinnim -- a crucial function of Hasidic Zaddik, as it was already for Besht (see his letter to R. Gershon.)

E. R. JACOB JOSEPH (RYY) has a fully developed Zaddikology. The Zaddik assumes a central role in his thought. Generally uses term ish ha-tzurah (man of form) for Zaddik, and ish ha-homer (man of matter) for common Jew. (READ B-1 and B-2).

F. R. ELIMELECH OF LIZENSK (RE) - GENERAL:

1. Fifth book to be published in Hasidic Movement is N.E. (R.E. is a student of Maggid) in 1788. He seems to carry on the social criticism and conceptualism of RYY. Yet, RE never mentioned RYY (and in fact, hardly ever mentions Maggid) (N, 118).
2. RE diverges from the Maggid's Zaddikology in presenting a more "religious" conception. His students report him expressing the ideas of freedom and necessity by making the distinction which to us is the distinction between religion and magic. RE holds that the Zaddik and the magician are two contradictory types, notwithstanding their superficial similarities. The difference, according to RE, is that the magician conceives his operations as working within strict

causality, founded on physical necessity, while the Zaddik realizes the non-coercive character of his activities. Hence, the Zaddik would marvel at the success of his work which is not dependent upon the proper carrying out of a technical procedure. Hence, the Zaddik is essentially a man of prayer.

3. Scholem holds that it was Rabbi Elimelech who took the final step and demanded the realization of devekut as a social value -- but at a very high price: by binding devekut to the institution of Zaddikism, a connection completely foreign to primitive Hasidism (SB,217).
4. However - I disagree with Scholem's statement that RE turned devekut into a social value only by linking it to Zaddikism. This is not so: see my TL page 93, n.84 where I disprove it with quotes from R. Levi Yitzchak and the Komarno Rebbe (R. Yitzhak Isaac Yehiel Saffrin):

ר' עמיאל (בית המדרש), אבות ב-ה: יבנה אצל עם צ"א -
ב' קיום מצוות הגורר השכר למעשה (וה"נ "צ"א"). ההצגה היא
איבא עם המעשה ולא הסימוך - העיסוק במעשי חזק עם"י דרך
הגורר.

האצמ"ר מקומה"ל (נולד חסד, אבות, שם) - שבת
צבר יש אמונת הגורר, וכאדם מיוחד יחזיק בסיקו
צ"א, הכי - יפה ח"ל עם צ"א.

According to both - Devekut is a social value, but unconnected with Zaddikism. So they didn't "pay the price" Scholem attributes to RE.

5. Maskilim and Mitnaggedim were wont to consider RE as father of practical Zaddikism. Dubnow maintains that RE made no contribution

to the theoretical doctrine of Besht and Maggid, and all he did was to transform practical Zaddikism into the way of Hasidism. However, both were wrong. Tishbi (Zion, 32) has already demonstrated that Besht served, in a measure, as "practical Zaddik." RE's importance is in combination of various elements in Hasidism that he found before him. The Zaddik whom he places at the center of his doctrine is not an egocentric personality; rather, all his interest is to serve his flock. Neither is he completely a spiritual person. RE found the synthesis between the leader of a real, physical society, and the solitary mystic. The Zaddik in his doctrine realizes in his life both the devekut ideal of the mystic and the concern for his congregation (N, 19-20). RE's definition of Institutional Zaddik: "This shall be the sign: If people follow him, then he is a Zaddik". (NE, Bo 37c) (N, 66).

6. Of special importance is RE's typology which distinguishes between the Zaddik who is withdrawn in his devekut, and the one who is effectively a communal leader. It is characteristic of the teachings of RE that he considers both as significant and vital, while the two ideals they personify -- devekut and social action -- struggle for supremacy in his soul. (N.65).
7. At the heart of the relationships between the Zaddik and the ordinary people (called "The Olam" in RE's works) was a difficult dilemma: the exalted spiritual station of the Zaddik run counter to the levels of "the world." They seem to be unbridgable. Yet without any contact with this society and no activity in it, the Zaddik can by no means fulfill his mission on earth. Others too wrestled with this problem in the beginning of the Hasidic movement. One finds reference to

this in the works of RYY. (Np 75).

8. It appears that this demand for the Zaddik to leave his high spiritual station in order to work with his people, aroused inner debates in the early Hasidic circles. Thus, RYY asks: Is it permitted for the "man of form" to endanger himself by descending to the level of the "man of matter?" -- because the ascent of the latter is by no means as certain of the descent of the former. Hence, the awareness that social activity brings danger to the man of spirit. One of these dangers is "alien thoughts" which attach themselves to the "man of form" when he contacts the "man of matter" and, in later terminology of RE, when the Zaddik mingles with the "world". A classical metaphor, transmitted in the name of RE, and which is attributed as well to the Maggid and even the Besht: the Zaddik during the time of the social activity is compared to a street cleaner, such that it is impossible for him not to become dirty in the course of his service (N, 76).
9. Source of this tension in works of Maggid: This fundamental tension on the two types of Zaddik preceded RE. Thus the distinction between "Zaddik for himself" and "Zaddik for others" which is already found in Tzavaat Harivash (s.v. Zaddik Katamar Yifrah). The Maggid recognized the tension between the Zaddik who works in and for his community, versus the Zaddik who keeps apart, fearful lest he fall from his devekut. (N, 66)
10. It appears that RE decided in favor of the community leader as opposed to the mystic Zaddik, but could not or did not want to abandon the ideal of devekut. Apparently, he developed a schema of two steps: first the Zaddik must be in contact with the source of Shefa,

and then he can come down and bring it to his people. (N, 93). There are two consequences of the social activity according to RE: the social basis of the Zaddik is strengthened, and, his religio-spiritual station is weakened. (N, 76)

11. As said, RE recognized that full devekut does not permit activity in the social sphere. One must constantly wrestle with these two conflicting demands. The Zaddik must occasionally go down to the people in order to bring himself to them. His purpose is to raise his people to the level he had attained before his "descent." We have, prior to this, in the works of RYY, the identification of the Zaddik with the Kohen, and the activity of the Ish Hatzurah amongst the ordinary people compared with the Kohen who leaves the inner camp in order to purify the unclean of his people (N, 75-76). - Yeridah le'tzorekh aliyah. (READ - B-6).
12. RE's Zaddikology. From the above, it is understandable that in RE's typology of the Zaddik, there is a tension between two types: he who is segregated, and attends only to ABR, in "greatness", and the one who is socially involved, who must serve through "smallness", and ABG. For RE, the social element eventually overpowers the mystical one (SH, 370). RE holds that the world needs both types. He has great admiration for the mystical, spiritual Zaddik, but his whole doctrine of relationship between Zaddik and community refers only to the second, social kind. His explanation for the inability of the spiritual Zaddik to deal with the people's needs, is metaphysical, and quoted in the name of the Maggid: this spiritual Zaddik, were he involved with people, would necessarily have to fall from his spiritual station. The spiritual Zaddik has a different scale of values from the ordinary one: the least faltering in his service

is liable to lead him into sin. His inability to descend prevents the whole community from ascending. For RE, the two realms, the mystical-spiritual and the social, are an inverse relationship: an achievement in which one must be at the expense of the other (SH, 371).

13. One of RE's euphemisms for the Zaddik is, "Kelalut Israel". This is appropriate both because, as the most important spiritual personality amongst his people, all the souls of the people are, as it were, concentrated in him, and also because all the ambitions of a Zaddik are to satisfy the needs of the totality of Israel, whether these needs be spiritual or physical (N,77). RE's student, R. Kelonymos Kalman Epstien (author of Maor Va-Shemmesh) points out that the euphemism שם is applied to the Zaddik, because in Kabbalah, Yesod is called Kol -- and this is the sephirah of the Zaddik: קול שם שם שם
14. Relationship of Zaddik to his followers: How does he succeed in bringing specific individuals close to him? Historically, this is the period of the proliferation of Zaddikim, when, following the death of the Maggid, the movement is decentralized. Hence an rationale is needed to explain the Zaddik-Hasid relationship. According to RE, it is because of the proximity of their souls in the Garden of Eden before the souls descended into this world. Those whose "source of his soul" is shared with or close to the Zaddik, draw close to him. This common "source of soul" is a condition for the successful affiliation between the Zaddik and his people. When he wishes to influence them, he must bind their soul to his. This is more than a question of sympathetic identification, but rather of mystical synthesis, a synthesis which converts, even if it be only for an instant, the leader and the follower into one

personality. In this manner, the vital energies of Shefa are transmitted from the Zaddik to the one who cleaves to him, and all the evil decrees against that person are thereby nullified, for the mystic synthesis has transformed this man into another personality, and all that applied to his previous state no longer does. In the moment that the common man draws close to the Zaddik, he himself becomes a Zaddik. (N, 78-79) (READ B-5).

15. What is required of the one who comes to the Zaddik? First, a spiritual readiness to learn from the Zaddik and accept his spiritual hegemony. They may come to him because of material reasons -- lack of sustenance, poor health, or other such. But as soon as they arrive, his spiritual influence draws them close to him. He becomes a loving and educational model for them. He teaches them teshuvah. The spiritual effectiveness of this encounter is contingent upon the faith of the ordinary man in the Zaddik. Only by virtue of their faith, is a Zaddik able to achieve yihudim in the upper world. The faith of the people enhances the spiritual power of the Zaddik, and also establishes a theoretical partnership between the ordinary people and the deeds of the Zaddik. (N, 79-80). (READ B-3, B-4).

16. MITNAGGEDIM disputed the exaggerated Hasidic claims of Zaddikism, accused Zaddikim of everything from charlatanism in exploiting the naive Hasidim, to ignorance, to encouraging idolatry, i.e., the apotheosis of Zaddikim, and financial exploitation. See Maimon's Autobiography; Makov's Shever Posh'im, and other sources in Wilensky. Thus, the interpretation given by some Zaddikim to

היינו שכל מי שמתקרב אל זקן צדיק יכול לעשות נסים --
that now that צדיקים (i.e., Zaddikim) can perform supernatural
acts (thus appropriating the ^{הקדושה} previously reserved only for ^{הקדושה} - ^{הקדושה}),

it is time for a new way of serving God (ענין חדש). This is quoted by both Maimon and Makov. (NL: possible deeper meaning? - worship of God does not require supernatural interventions, etc.)

Also - idea mentioned derisively by Makov - התחנכות so that Hasid's prayer is "elevated" by Zaddik's Kavvanah. Makov correctly asserts that this smacks of "intermediary" which is anti-Jewish. But sources at our disposal do not go that far at all.

G. SHEFA (שפה) IN ZADDIKISM (especially of RE).

1. Shefa -- effluence or influx or influxus.
2. The themes of Shefa and Hashpaah are central to the theory of RE. The origin is in the Kabbalistic literature, but the terms and symbols continue to live in Hasidism, although with a change of context. In Zohar, the discussion on Shefa concerns the world of the Sephirot. However, as used in Hasidism, it has no special relationship to this area. The term for Hasidism concerns mostly the effluence from the highest realms of divinity as they descend into this world, meaning specifically the Hasidic society. (N, 84).
3. In Hasidic literature the discussions center on the sphere Malkhut (Shekhinah) which in Zohar is the last receptacle for the divine Shefa and that which empties it into the lower world. Directly above it, its mate, is the Sphere of Yesod. This latter is taken as a symbol of the Zaddik (Zaddik yesod-olam). The relation of Yesod to Malkhut symbolizes the relationship of Zaddik to congregation. In other passages, it is Binah which is seen as the source of Shefa, and this too has Kabbalistic sources. Others point to Hokhmah as a

source of Shefa and Hashpaah, and this usually because of exegetical and homiletical reasons. (N, 84).

4. RYY accepts that the Zaddik is the "intermediary" who transfers the divine Shefa from the higher world to his contemporaries. For RYY, the Shefa is a two-way process: The "man of form" draws shefa to the "man of matter," and the latter, in turn, supplies the material needs of the former. (N, 85).
5. While the theory of Shefa for RYY emphasizes the social dimension, the Maggid speaks more of the mystical connotations of Shefa. The ethical standing of the Zaddik is emphasized. The Maggid speaks often of the concept of Ayin. For him, this usually symbolizes Hokhmah. Hence, the euphemisms for the Zaddik in the writings of the Maggid as: Ayin, Hakol, Mazal (especially his comment on: ein mazal le'yisrael -- an idea which originates with the Besht but in his thinking does not yet refer to the Zaddik). This three-fold euphemism is attributed by the students of RE to the Maggid, and the Zaddik as such becomes the source of Shefa. (N, 86-87).
6. As in the Kabbalistic literature, RE accepts Binah as the supernal source of Shefa. Sometimes, it is seen as Hokhmah and Binah as one, but usually only as Hokhmah. Sometimes, too, Malkhut. (N, 88).
7. The drawing of Shefa by the Zaddik depends upon the restoration of harmony to the divine world. This requires an "initiative from below," in which the Zaddik restores wholeness to the three world of Yirah, Ahavah, and Tiferet. Hence, the Hashpaah goes in two directions: first upwards, and then, having opened up the channels of Shefa, downwards. (N, 88).

8. Content of Shefa: For RE it is usually the trinity of banei, chayei, mezonei. (See MK 28a). This effectively describes the totality of spiritual and physical needs of the congregation supplied by the Zaddik. These are drawn down to the congregation by virtue of the Zaddik's divine service on the levels of love-fear-beauty (N, 89).
9. Zaddik as intermediary. We saw above, that the Maggid and RYY specifically labeled him as such. Did RE do likewise? Infrequently, the question arises: Why does God need an intermediary? Why does He not act directly? Two answers are given. One answer serves as a solution for the certain difficulties caused by this flow of Shefa. The second is the social explanation of the Zaddik's activity. The first one goes back to the Maggid who, discussing the "intermediary," speaks about the "power of the recipient." Ordinary man is not equipped to receive and absorb the fullness of the Shefa, especially since it is essentially spiritual. It is the Zaddik who must concentrate and focus it for the ordinary man. RE occasionally resorts to this answer. But he also offers a much different solution -- not theosophical, but practical. The Zaddik must carry the Shefa to men, bringing its beneficence far and wide. This is more "Hasidic" and less mystical. (N, 90-91).
10. Relations between Shefa and Devekut. Apparently contradictory -- devekut leads to a lonely and solitary figure, whereas Shefa implies involvement. Discussed above the tension between two types of Zaddik. See there. (N, 92).
11. Summarize: Lack of faith in the Zaddik, lack of trust in the Creator, and any individual sin -- all of them can stop up the channels of Shefa. Most of the time the lack of Shefa is the fault of the common man. It may sometimes also result from the inability or unwillingness of the Zaddik to stop his higher devekut. (N, 98-99).

12. A difficult problem at the very beginning of Hasidism: Why cannot the Zaddik, who releases Shefa for others, not take care of his own

(over..)

material needs? Why should he accept money and charity from those who come to him? One of the answers was that charity is given to the Zaddik in order to serve as a key which unlocks the stream of divine Shefa. (N, 99).

13. Shefa. Weiss had already pointed out that in early Hasidism, common man prays for material blessing, and the man of the spirit benefits from this; just as the man of spirit prays for spiritual blessing and the ordinary people benefit from that. One finds this still in the writings of RYY. With RE, the Zaddik is responsible not only for the spiritual welfare of his people, but for the material as well: children, life, sustenance. Already in early Kabbalah, the talmudic (MK 28a) statement that children, life, and sustenance do not depend upon merit but upon mazal, was interpreted as coming from the word Nezilah, that is, in the pouring of effluence or influxus from the higher world. (SH, 373-374). This attracted a great deal of sarcastic criticism both by Mitnaggedim and early Haskalah writers on Hasidism including Dubnow. However, RE clearly is very far from magic or any guarantees that the Zaddik always succeeds. RE emphasizes that the Zaddik is only an instrument in the hands of the Holy One to grant Shefa. He makes no distinction between the spiritual and the material realms with regard to this affluence (SH, 374). RE emphasizes the metaphysical propinquity of the Zaddik and every individual in his community. This relationship between the two, leading to the opening up of Shefa, lacks any magical element. The Zaddik only inspires by his personal educational example, and the relationship between the Zaddik and the one who seeks his help, allows the searcher to know that the Shefa comes from the Holy One, so that in fact it is the individual man who presents his petition up above and who receives the Shefa.

At the moment of encounter between the Zaddik and the searcher, all personal barriers fall, and they are as one. The Zaddik in his descent, and the man in his ascent, are unified. This is the true social mission of the Zaddik. (SH, 375).

H. ASCENT AND DESCENT (תַּשְׁבָּח וְיִרְדָּה)

1. Historical: pre-Beshtian

a) Historically, the pre-Hasidic circle experienced a crisis in their profession, and a feeling of failure, and therefore developed the new ideas of the descent of the Zaddik from his devekut (WZ, 60). In this circle, the major concern was the role of the religious leader in regard to sin. The moderates held that one must befriend the sinner. The radicals held that one must risk entering into the sinful situation itself. For both, this was the concept of "descent" in order to elevate the sinners (WZ, 69). It is because these preachers in this circle had despaired of rational methods of persuading their people, that they developed the magical ideas involved in descent. (WZ, 71).

b) For R. Menahem Mendel of Bar, the descent was not willful, but a natural failure of constant contemplation. This was interpreted as an opportunity for the elevation of the people (NL: it might be called "spiritual opportunism"). (WZ, 73). This led to the next step, by the same Rabbi, that of the deliberate descent of the Zaddik (WZ, 76). The technique of descent was by means of identifying with the sinner (WZ, 77). It was understood that there were dangers to the Zaddik in the process of descent (WZ, 77).

c) The nature of the descent (in the same circle) is the limited

lapse of consciousness in the course of devekut, in which (willingly or not) the Zaddik confronts the sinful thought and thus identifies with all the people -- reminding him that he too is part of the organism that includes the sinners, and thus he too is soiled by sin (WZ, 78).

d) Descent for the purpose of Rising - ('הב'ר לר'ק, 58 ע'ר):

There are two approaches to rising. First, dualistic: the rising has nothing to do with the descent but is simply a swing back to the "normal" situation of uninterrupted devekut. Second, the monistic: the rising is geared to the descending, the counterbalance of the positive against the negative. As, for instance, moral love is counterposed to immoral love, etc. The monistic idea is based upon the Sephirotic concept and leads to the theory of the "elevation of MZ." Similarly, the difference between the dualistic and monistic ideas will determine whether we opt for rejection or elevation of MZ. (WZ, 80). (On this -- see above).

- e) Two views on the descent: First, a deliberate descent by the Zaddik in order to rescue and elevate the sinner. Second, the causal situation is reversed: a coerced descent, whereby the Zaddik is forced by the sins of the sinners to distract from devekut via MZ. In the first manner, where the Zaddik initiates the descent, it can also be understood that he is the cause of the descent insofar as he causes people to fall deeper into sin as a result of his carelessness, allowing himself to be distracted from devekut (WZ,82).

2. BESHT ON "DESCENT"

- a) The Besht held to both ideas, i.e., that the fault which initiates the descent is both that of the Zaddik and of the people (WZ, 84).

Thus, the Besht then takes the causal relationship of Zaddik-people one step further: not only does the sin of one affect the other, so does the mitzvah of one benefit the other. And the Besht speaks primarily of one commandment, i.e., Teshuvah (WZ, 86).

- b) The problem of the descent of the Zaddik is not a major contribution of the Besht. It was not his central concern. RYY is the one who creatively developed it, using as his sources the "pneumatic circle" instead of his teacher, the Besht. The Maggid has almost not a single word on the descent of the Zaddik. And yet his students, in developing their Zaddikology, spoke a great deal about descent and gave it a tremendous development (WZ, 88).

3. R. ELIMELECH OF LIZENSK ON DESCENT.

- a) From one point of view, the descent is the result of natural failure of contemplation - already noticed by R. Menahem Mendel of Bar. Man's communion with God cannot continue uninterrupted, because of his physical limitations and also his spiritual self. His soul, like the divine worlds, is in a constant dynamic tension of rise and fall, ebb and flow, for this is the nature of the world: reaching-and-not-reaching. Therefore, when the Zaddik wishes to reach a higher level, he has to recede and rest and then jump to a yet higher level. (Nigal attributes this to RE, but I have read the same in RYY) (N, 171). This dynamism in man's soul allows him to stay alive, for the full implementation of the ideal of communion or devekut would mean the end of man's existence (N, 171).

- b) The social mission of the Zaddik requires his "descent" from his thoughts in divinity, which cuts him off from all earthly

questions. Only the cessation of this concentration, or at least its weakening, makes it possible for him to worry about his people and induce the Shefa. Furthermore, the "descent" is necessary not only to make the Shefa possible, but to allow the spiritual cleaving of the Zaddik with his followers. (N, 94) (see N, 94, quotation from NE, Naso 70a, which shows that the association of the ordinary people with the Zaddik is also termed devekut.) RE considers that the social Zaddik who descends for his people, is bringing a personal sacrifice. He is the one who maintains the moral balance of the world, and it is for this purpose that he must mingle with the sinners. There is an echo here of the Sabbatian paradox, but the sense of moderation is far more pronounced. The Zaddik does not descend into the Kellipot in order to destroy them; he goes down to man himself, who is caught up in the act of sin, in order to save him (SH, 371).

- c) The descent of the Zaddik. Dealt with elaborately by RYY. For him, it is tied up with the required sin of the Man of Form. Occasionally this is noticed in RE too -- averah lishmah is crucial for the contact between the Zaddik and the sinner. But not every Zaddik is qualified to undertake this kind of activity. The "sin" is defined as a cessation of Devekut. This means, essentially, that the Zaddik must now concentrate on material matters instead of spiritual ones. (N, 95). Thus, the descent enables the Zaddik to perform ABG through the elevation of the sparks (N, 171). In sum, RE sees the closing of the circle: the sinner causes the Zaddik to descend by bringing the latter to sinful thoughts. The descent of the Zaddik redeems the sinner from his actual sin, but in its process it creates a new sin -- the very descent of the Zaddik being sinful. This sin is atoned for by

the sinner who does repentance. Hence, it is not only the Zaddik who provides tikkun for the sinner, but the reverse as well: the sinner assists in the enhancement of Holiness (SH, 373).

d) For RE, an additional aspect of the descent is the personal one.

Were it not for the occasional descent by the Zaddik, he might be subject to feelings of arrogance. Another reason, is the descent for the sake of the community and congregation. (N, 171-172).

I. HAMTAKAT HA-BINIM (HD)

1. The concept of HD is already found in the Zohar:

(וְעַתָּה נִשְׁמַע מִפִּי הַזֹּהַר שֶׁהָיָה לְפָנֵינוּ)

For the Besht, the question of HD is tied up with the problem of evil. With regard to evil, Besht emphasizes the immanence of God, and this very recognition negates evil completely. Hasidism denied the Lurianic conception of evil as a positive force from the "other (demonic) side," resulting from the catastrophotic idea of creation by God, for Hasidism attempts to paint a harmonistic picture of the world. This harmonism affects the Beshtian conception of HD: the attempt to find the source of din in hesed where, by "sweetening the judgment" in the source of Hesed, it truly becomes hesed...

RYY quotes Besht who says that Ahijah told him how to go about HD: through prayer, we sweeten the judgment in its source, binding malkhut with binah (Malkhut is identified by the Kabbalah as the expression of din, and binah as the source of hesed), and thus man is totally changed. HD thus takes place through prayers, a fact often mentioned by RYY. The Beshtian way of HD is a practice of silence for the purpose of concentration and, thereafter, ecstasy in loud voice. This fits the picture we have of the Besht in his form of prayer.

2. Read my translation of Letter of Besht to R. Gershon of Kutov(in TRADITION) for illustration of how Besht practice HD.
3. The Maggid too spoke of HD. Its purpose is the nullification of evil decrees. He illustrates it with the example of the father who, out of love for his son, fulfills all of his desires. This process, for the Maggid, has to do with the concept of change, which involves the regression to Ayin. Students of the Maggid saw him as a Zaddik who can nullify decrees (N, 103).
4. What are the dinnim that one must sweeten? In Lurianic mysticism, the dinnim are mentioned in one breath with the kelipot. The interchangeable use of dinnim and kelipot continued with RE. Thus, RE answers the question how Joseph was able to place himself in a position of temptation with the wife of Potipahr, by answering that he attempted to withdraw the holiness from the Kelippot. Thus, he continues, Joseph achieved HD... (N, 104).
5. The Zaddik who did not nullify or sweeten the dinnim has not fulfilled his mission, and must undergo a transmigration of his soul in order to complete it. (N, 105).
6. All this raises certain theological questions: Hasidism had emphasized that evil is only the distortion of the divine good. Thus there was laid a wide basis for various theories concerning the sublimation of evil and its "sweetening" by its return to its divine source. However, the following questions arose:
 - a) Where does the Zaddik get his great power for his sublimation of illusory evil and nullification of decrees?

b) If the Zaddik can nullify decrees, does this not impute "change" to the Creator? The problem of "change" is an old one in Jewish philosophy, and not necessarily specific to Hasidism. However it was sharpened in the problem of Hasidic Zaddikology (N, 106).

7. The question of change placed the Hasidic masters before the following difficult dilemma: medieval Jewish philosophy had postulated that God could not undergo any change of will. However, every prayer is based on the assumption that God can be influenced by the worshippers to change his decisions.

This assumption, which contains an inner paradox, was made much sharper with regard to the prayer of the Zaddik, who apparently always succeeds in the efficacy of his prayer. Many answers were forthcoming. All of them seemed to want to have their cake and eat it too. It required a tremendous intellectual-exegetical effort, which does not appeal to the rational critic. The first answer was that the nullification of decrees is merely the realization of a potential implanted in the creation itself. (NL: similar to the classical answer on the question of miracles) - (N, 107).

8. Other answers have the Zaddik become the emissary of God on earth, and his actions are in effect the actions of God. Another answer emphasizes the partnership between God and the Zaddik. This partnership theory gives the Zaddik some presupposed right to nullify decrees. Thus "the world is conducted according to the will of the Zaddik," as RE says. There are times that it seems, dangerously, that the boundary line between the Zaddik and God is being erased or weakened. However, Hasidism never really crossed the line (N, 108-109).

9. These divine powers granted to the Zaddik to nullify decrees are made evident by the fact that the Zaddik receives honorific titles taken from the names of God, especially with regard to HD. Already in the writings of RYY, the charismatic leader is referred to as supernatural and Ayin (N. 109).
10. The technique of HD. It is impossible to determine the emotional quality of what happened during HD, and we must concentrate on the theoretical analysis. The theories of the efficacy of HD concern mostly the power of the holy word of a Zaddik, performed usually during prayer, study of Torah, preaching, or any religious activity. Mostly, it concerns prayer. According to RE, the means differ in accordance with events and circumstances. RE accepts the Kabbalistic notion that the time of the prayer of Minhah is mostly that of punishment. HD is achieved through the highest form of prayer, which is that of devekut. In this state, the Zaddik arouses the Shefa to the ^(second) "H" of the Name (which is Malkhut) from the "Y" (Hokhmah) and thus achieves HD (on the substitution of Hokhmah for Binah -- see later). Through this devekut, the Zaddik achieves the binding of the worlds and the unification of divinity. Another way, other than that of intensification of the positive forces in divinity described above, is the way which emphasizes the element of sublimation or transformation. This theory assumes that only in its descent to this world does Din become a negative force, and at a time of its ascent or elevation, that is, in the binding of evil to its first source, the HD occurs, which is the negation of evil or at least its isolation. At the very beginning of the Hasidic movement we already find a number of variations such as: the existence of the source of Hesed in Din (mentioned above); the sweetening of the Gevurah in Hesed by

means of Tiferet as an intermediary, etc. Most interesting in this respect is the play on words of ani to ayin. Thus, through devekut, the Zaddik transforms ani to ayin (which is probably Hokhmah) and thus destroys all evil decrees (RYY). In the thought of the Maggid, this concept (of Hokhmah as ayin) achieved supreme importance, and this serves as a means of explaining HD. As in traditional Kabbalism, the source of dinnim is seen as Binah; however, for homiletical reasons, HD was located by the Hasidic teachers in Hokhmah (ayin) rather than binah. There is no conflict between the two, because binah is emanated from hokhmah. (N, 112-113).

11. This elevation of din to its source and its sweetening, is identified as "change." Thus, in the very source itself, is found the supernal cause for all change. According to the Maggid, every change is only a metamorphosis, in which a specific state ends and a new situation arises. This situation-which-is-not-a-situation, this instant moment of metamorphosis, is identified as Hokhmah-Ayin. RE received from his teacher, the Maggid, this identification Hokhmah-Ayin as the locus in which HD occurs. (N, 113).
12. The HD is often said to take place through a transmutation of letters and words. The Besht already dealt with this. The fundamental of letter-mysticism is that the divinity concentrated itself into the words of Torah and prayer. Therefore, as RE writes in his NE, the Zaddik can, through the study of Torah, transform tzarah to tzohar. (N, 114).
13. Another technique of HD is the breaking of passion and desire. RE holds that a Zaddik can achieve HD only if he overpowers his evil urge. In other words, it is the power of repentance. A prior condition for

HD is, according to RE, ascetic repentance. However, together with this ascetism comes the element of happiness and joy (N, 115).

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