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The Keeper of the Gate

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CHAPTER 9

THE KEEPER OF THE GATE

John Gee

The term *mystic* is currently applied to one who “seeks by contemplation and self-surrender to obtain union with or absorption into the Deity” and thereby obtains a “spiritual apprehension of truths that are inaccessible to the understanding.”¹ Originally, however, it referred to “one initiated” into the mysteries.² Several major changes have occurred in the history of this word and its usage, not the least of which is the adoption of Neoplatonic philosophy in most mystical traditions.³ The nature of some of these changes can perhaps best be seen in the examination of the possible origins of one phenomenon in one branch of mysticism, the Jewish Merkavah mystic.

Most of what we know about the Merkavah mystics derives from the *hekhalot* literature. The *hekhalot* literature⁴ is a category of Jewish literature “that deals with the *hekhalot*, the heavenly ‘palaces’ or ‘halls’ through which the mystic passes to reach the divine throne. It is no coincidence that the term *hekhal* is taken from the architecture of the temple, where it is used precisely for the entrance hall to the holiest

of holies.”⁵ The goal of the Merkavah mystic is to “descend”⁶ to the chariot (*merkavah*), which is then used to ascend to the throne of God.⁷

One of the earlier rabbinic commentaries on the Mishnah,⁸ the Tosefta, contains a story, referred to as the Pardes episode, that has important implications for the hekhalot literature. (Pardes is the Greek word *paradeisos* loaned into Aramaic; the word, also loaned into English as “paradise,” is ultimately of Persian origin: *paradayadam*, meaning “pleasant retreat.”)⁹ In the Pardes episode, Rabbi Ishmael warns the Merkavah mystic to guard his tongue in the sixth heaven,¹⁰ since “the guards of the sixth *hekhal* would ruin those who descend the *merkhavah* without authority.”¹¹

The Pardes episode runs as follows:

Four entered into Paradise, Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Aher and Rabbi Aqiva. One looked and died; one looked and was injured; one looked and cut down young shoots; one ascended in peace and descended in peace. Ben Azzai looked and died; about him scripture says: Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints [Psalm 116:15]. Ben Zoma looked and was injured; about him scripture says: Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, etc. [“lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it,” Proverbs 25:16].¹² Elishua [Aher] looked and cut down young shoots; about him scripture says: Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; etc. [“neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?” Ecclesiastes 5:6]. Rabbi Aqiva ascended in peace and descended in peace; about him scripture says: Draw me, we will run, etc. [“after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers,” Song of Solomon 1:4].¹³

The Pardes episode suggests that Ben Azzai was a saint and therefore died; Ben Zoma saw more than was sufficient

for him and so was injured; Aher spoke about things that he should not and damaged others thereby; and Aqiva was drawn into the chambers of the king. In telling this story, the Babylonian Talmud adds the following after the first sentence: “Rabbi Aqiva said to them: When you arrive at the stone of pure alabaster, say not, Water, water!”¹⁴ The *Sitz im Leben* of the hekhalot literature itself is wanting,¹⁵ and this forms a major impediment to understanding the literature. The earliest manuscripts of the hekhalot literature, however, come from Egypt,¹⁶ and there are at least superficial parallels between Egyptian texts and hekhalot literature. Each is “an outstanding example of an extremely fluid corpus of texts which has reached, very late and in a variety of ways, a stage of redaction which permits us to recognize defined works” although “the boundaries between the different texts . . . seem very unstable.”¹⁷ At least one of the major themes in hekhalot literature—getting past the gatekeeper—has a long history in Egypt, and an investigation of the context of those statements might open the door to new avenues of research.

The Pyramid Texts

The earliest large literary corpus, the Pyramid Texts,¹⁸ was first carved into the walls of the pyramid of the Fifth Dynasty King Unas (2356–2323 B.C.)¹⁹—though both royalty and commoners may have used certain of the texts at an earlier date.²⁰ These Pyramid Texts give a conception of the universe where the heavens spread out like a vault not only above but below the earth.²¹ “On each side [of the expanse of heaven] is a doorway that keeps out commoners and foreigners but through which the gods and the king can gain access to the sky.”²² Since the eternal abode of the dead was in the northern sky, “the path along which the deceased

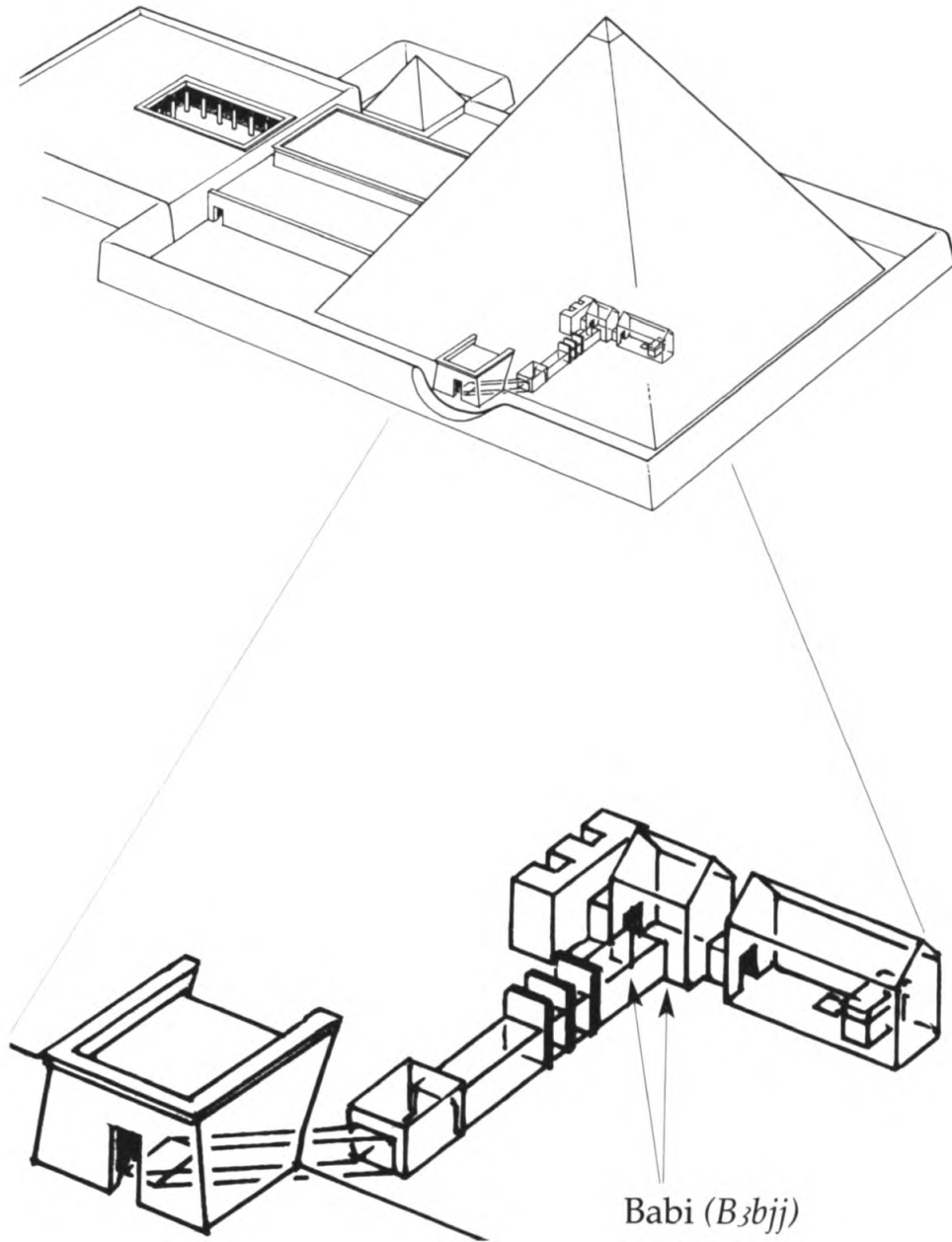


Figure 8. *Babi, the gatekeeper, appears on either side of the door leading out of the pyramid complex of Unas.*

must travel in order to reach this place is almost entirely restricted to the idea of ascending the heavens and to the manifold ways of mastering both the ascent and the crossing of the sky."²³ The universe described in the Pyramid Texts is also reflected in the architecture of the pyramid: the sarcophagus chamber is called the *d(w)ꜥt*, the underworld, while the antechamber is known as the *ꜥꜥt*, the dawn sky.²⁴ As the *bꜥ* (spirit) of the deceased king follows the texts leading out of the pyramid, "the final lines in the antechamber speak of opening 'the door of the *ꜥꜥt* for the emergence of the day-bark."²⁵ In the corridor that leads out of the antechamber, the first text encountered deals with the doorkeeper, Babi (*Bꜥbjj*)—whose name seems to be a substantivized *nisbe* adjective²⁶ from the Semitic word *bab*, "door" or "gate,"²⁷ thus meaning "he of the gate." In the text, the king is instructed: "Pull back the doorbolt of Babi. Open the doors of heaven."²⁸ After passing through the gate, "King Unas is Babi, master of the mysteries."²⁹ With one exception,³⁰ Babi appears in the pyramids only at entryways.³¹ Our purpose is not to look at all the doorway passages in the Pyramid Texts, but merely to show that the idea of having to pass the gatekeeper on the way to the sky extends back as far as we have any records of ascension to heaven.

The Coffin Texts

By the end of the Old Kingdom,³² the Pyramid Texts also appear on coffins of those who could afford them.³³ Just as no two pyramids contain the same collection of texts, the texts on the coffins also vary; they are sometimes adopted in a straightforward manner, and sometimes adapted and changed, thus producing the collection of texts we know as the Coffin Texts.³⁴

The main purpose of this new genre of funerary literature is to “equip” the dead with the necessary knowledge . . . describing . . . the 2 ways, the 7 gates, the 21 portals, . . . the door-keepers and heralds. . . . The deceased must not only know the names of all these entities and every detail concerning their nature, he must also have full command of the words needed to face each and everyone of them.³⁵

We would be mistaken, however, to think that the Coffin Texts are simply funerary texts.³⁶ Walter Federn showed that many of the Coffin Texts do not deal with anything funerary; rather, “many, if not all, of the Coffin Texts were primarily used in *this* life” and seem “to reflect a ceremony of admitting, after due initiation, a person into a ‘secret society,’ in which gods or at least superhuman beings were impersonated by humans.”³⁷ Mordechai Gilula demonstrated conclusively the use of Coffin Texts by the living.³⁸

In the Coffin Texts we also encounter the gatekeeper. Though Babi generally has moved on to other occupations,³⁹ he is still connected with the gatekeepers.⁴⁰ Of the several passages in the Coffin Texts dealing with passing the gates,⁴¹ we will concentrate here on only one selection of texts that are grouped together.⁴² The texts list the keepers of the gate from the outer gate to the fourth gate.⁴³ Rituals are performed on a specified day to cause the gatekeepers to cower and let the individual through.⁴⁴ After passage, the individual breaks into a joyful acclamation because he or she can join the sun in the solar bark in opening up the darkness.⁴⁵ Another grouping of texts concerning the three “gates of darkness” follows these texts in some coffins.⁴⁶ Here again each keeper of the gate is named, but in this case passage is granted because the individual is in the presence of the sun god whom the individual praises with anthems. At the end

we find out that these texts belong to the divine shrine.⁴⁷ Thus the gatekeeper sections of the Coffin Texts seem also to belong to the initiation portions of the Coffin Texts.

The Book of the Dead

The successor to the Coffin Texts is known as the Book of the Dead (hereafter BD).⁴⁸ Some of the chapters contain elements taken from the Litany of the Sun and the Book of Caverns as well as the Coffin Texts and the Pyramid Texts.⁴⁹ Among the Coffin Texts taken over into the Book of the Dead were many of the gatekeeper spells.⁵⁰ Here we will examine two groups of spells, BD 125 and BD 144–47.

BD 125—perhaps the most famous chapter of the Book of the Dead, known both as the “Negative Confession” and the “Judgment of the Dead”—can be outlined as follows: (1) The chapter is said to be used when one reaches the “hall of the Two Truths.”⁵¹ (2) The individual announces himself, acknowledging his situation and detailing his purity on this august occasion.⁵² (3) The individual addresses the forty-two divine judges and reviews his obedience to a different commandment with each of the judges.⁵³ (4) The individual offers a prayer summarizing his passing the test and requesting to be rescued from Babi.⁵⁴ (5) The individual answers questions about his ritual preparations.⁵⁵ (6) The individual confronts various gatekeepers in the form of parts of the door and to pass them must mention each by name.⁵⁶ (7) Ritual instructions for the use of the document are given.⁵⁷

BD 144–47 involve the passage of either seven, fourteen, eighteen, or twenty-one gates; in tombs they are often written around the tomb’s false door.⁵⁸ In BD 144 there is a list of the seven keepers of the seven gates whose names are identical to those from the Coffin Texts examined,

though the order is different; other recited material is similar but has also been adapted. At the end of the chapter, a list of instructions specifies the offerings to be made at each of the gates and even the time of day of performing the text, as well as an admonition to secrecy.⁵⁹ This text is placed adjacent to the false door in the tomb of Senenmut.⁶⁰ BD 145, also found next to the false door in the tomb of Senenmut,⁶¹ developed over the years, becoming more explicit with time. Whereas in the Eighteenth Dynasty only the words of address to the various gatekeepers were included, by the Nineteenth Dynasty the interrogation at each gate was also included, particularly a specification that the individual must identify the oil with which he or she has been anointed, the type of garment he or she wears, and the type of staff or scepter in the hand. The number of gates increased from fourteen in the Eighteenth Dynasty to eighteen in the Nineteenth Dynasty to twenty-one in the Twenty-first Dynasty. By the Twenty-first Dynasty, an epilogue detailing the individual's cultic activities is also appended.⁶² BD 146 gives the names of the keepers of the twenty-one gates followed by a long declaration of the individual's qualifications in connection with the gates just passed through; at the end the individual declares his initiation into the mysteries on the day of the festival.⁶³ This text is found not only leading to the false door in the tomb of Senenmut,⁶⁴ but astride the northern doorway of the hall of the Osireion at Abydos.⁶⁵ In BD 147, the gates number only seven, but each has a keeper of the gate (*iry ʿ3*), a guardian (*s3w*), and an announcer (*smyw*), all depicted in the accompanying vignettes.⁶⁶ Many of the names of the gatekeepers are the same as those of BD 144 and the Coffin Texts. The words the individual is to say at each gate are also entailed. Some manuscripts add that the purpose of

the chapter is to allow the individual to enter the presence of the god and be among the blessed. A recent exposition summarizes these passages:

The gate is a most pregnant symbol of transition. In the 145th and 146th chapters of the Book of the Dead, this idea finds itself systematically elaborated into a sequence of 21 gates which the deceased must pass in order to reach the "one, whom they conceal," the "weary one," i.e. Osiris. The gates are guarded by demons or better, as of late more correctly differentiated, by apotropaic gods. Their iconography, characterized by animal masks and knives, identifies them as dangerous and terrifying beings. The deceased wards off their threat by calling them by name, but also by knowing the names of the gates; he secures unhindered passage by showing proof of his purity. He knows the mythical significance of the water, in which he has bathed, and wears the appropriate clothing. The nature of the doorkeepers (and of the "apotropaic gods" in general) is ambiguous: the terror they embody is meant to ward off evil, the conceptual manifestations of which are ignorance, impurity and violence. The gates and their keepers build a 21-, 14-(15) or 7-fold (the number as such not being all that important) protective enclosure around the "weary one," namely the dead Osiris, who lives on as a deceased god within the concealment of these walls. The wish of the deceased human being is to identify his fate with that of Osiris. Only within the innermost enclosure of this most secluded and therefore holiest of all cosmic spheres will he also live as Osiris. The terrifying creatures at the gates will then be his own guards, protecting him from all evil.⁶⁷

The inaccuracy of calling this work the "Book of the Dead" is increasingly recognized. The Egyptians called it the *rꜥw nw prt m hrw*, "the chapters of *prt* (going forth, ascending) by day."⁶⁸ While many call BD 125 the "Judgment of

the Dead,"⁶⁹ insisting that the entire Book of the Dead "reflects ritual acts performed during and after the burial,"⁷⁰ evidence from the text itself argues against this interpretation, for in this chapter, unlike any other in the Book of the Dead save one,⁷¹ a specific date is mentioned—the last day of the second month of Peret (probably mid-January).⁷² Since Egyptian mummification takes place within seventy days following death⁷³ (in which case the burial dates would be spread throughout the year), the ritual described in Book of the Dead 125 cannot be a *funerary* rite. The last day of the second month of Peret, however, does have temple significance: It is the day of groundbreaking for new temples,⁷⁴ the day on which priestly associations (*snt*)⁷⁵ end their year,⁷⁶ and the day before the festival of entering the holy of holies.⁷⁷ "Siegfried Morenz expressed the view that a central aspect of Ancient Egyptian burial ceremonies lay in a sort of priestly initiation to the realm of the dead. Twenty years later, his former student R. Grieshammer was able to substantiate this general hypothesis by capitalizing on one crucial element, the 'Negative Confession' in 'The Judgement of the Dead,' thereby elevating it to the realm of fact. . . . Grieshammer's conclusions, however, lead to the inversely formulated premise that the initiation rites, and not vice versa, furnished the prototypes of Egyptian funerary religion: a view which has so far been treated with great reserve."⁷⁸ This was demonstrated convincingly by a later papyrus from Egypt, in Greek, which shows that BD 125 is part of the induction ritual of the priests.⁷⁹ The initiation texts from the Coffin Texts were only intensified in the Book of the Dead.⁸⁰ Thus "before entering the hall of judgement . . . , the deceased must again be able to transpose the individual parts of the gate onto a specific mythical plane; similarly, in the so-called spells for the 'deification of the limbs,' his body is sacramentally interpreted by equating

each part of his body with a deity. . . . It thus seems justified to consider whether a dramatic initiatory interrogation, rather than the mere philological need for commentary, underlies these spells."⁸¹ So the questions in BD 125 "refer to a mystical knowledge, and more precisely yet to knowledge from the Osiris mysteries."⁸²

The 125th chapter of the Book of the Dead is not the only chapter that has the connection with initiation:

The knowledge and the passage of the gates (Book of the Dead 144–147) undoubtedly display features recalling initiation rituals. . . . Initiation ideas do not represent an autonomous field in Egyptian religion; on the contrary, there are clear correlations between them and the temple rituals. This emerges in the clearest form in the case of the admittance liturgies which were recited by the priests at the beginning of their daily service or upon entering the temple.⁸³

Jan Assmann describes BD 144–47 in the following way:

This sequence of seven gates also seems to have been an important principle in temple architecture, especially in the Late Period. . . . The underworld is imagined as a temple, in the innermost and holiest part of which Osiris sits enthroned. The path of the deceased to Osiris corresponds to the path of the priest on his way to the innermost sanctuary of the god. The path of the priest is furthermore sacramentally explained as an ascent to the heavens. He "opens the door-wings of the sky in Karnak" and "sees the mysteries of the horizon." . . . Egyptian "funerary mythology" in no way represents an autonomous field of religious speculation, but is actually deeply interwoven with the ideas and concepts of the earthly cult of the gods.⁸⁴

The Book of the Dead had a long life. Manuscripts survive from the Eighteenth Dynasty (1550–1307 B.C.)⁸⁵ to the

Roman period (A.D. 63).⁸⁶ Sections of BD 125 were incorporated into the Books of Breathings dating to the centuries surrounding the turn of the era,⁸⁷ and, as previously mentioned, the Book of the Dead was still used in priestly initiations in the second century A.D.⁸⁸

The Anastasi Priestly Archive

With the conquest of Alexander the Great, Egypt came under Hellenic hegemony. Though the Ptolemies allowed demotic to be used in Egyptian courts, they preferred Greek to be used in business documents and royal decrees⁸⁹ and undertook the translation of documents into Greek.⁹⁰ The Romans, apparently during the reign of Tiberius, prohibited the Egyptians from using their language for any legal document, thus putting demotic on the decline.⁹¹ The Egyptians, who never had any aversion to adopting foreign cults and deities,⁹² adopted the Greek ones as well and syncretized them into their pantheon.⁹³ The Greeks also adopted Egyptian gods,⁹⁴ for “religion was the one sphere of life in which the Greeks, and especially the Greek-speaking rulers, hesitated to dismiss the local tradition.”⁹⁵ The mixture that resulted produced Greek, hieratic, and demotic texts dealing with religious themes.⁹⁶ When these multilingual texts were first discovered in the early nineteenth century, scholars thought they were bilingual translations and that the Greek would be helpful in deciphering Egyptian.⁹⁷ To some extent they were, but the elation soon turned to revulsion when it was discovered that the first three columns were “devoted to magic ceremonies” [sont consacrées à des cérémonies magiques]; in fact, the whole papyrus “consisted of formulas for superstitious practices and theurgy that almost all the gnostics and philosophers of the first centuries of our era tried to imitate” [consiste

entièrement en formules pour les pratiques superstitieuses, pour la théurgie, que presque toutes les sectes gnostiques et philosophiques des premiers siècles de notre ère pratiquaient à l'envi.⁹⁸ After that the scholars "only caught wind of the 'gnostic cheese' in the Christian era magical documents" [in allen magischen Dokumenten der nachchristlichen Zeit nur den 'fromage gnostique' rochen].⁹⁹ After acquiring the label *magic*, they remained for years a curious oddity, interesting only those scholars dealing in ancient sorceries.¹⁰⁰ They were collected by the papyrologist Karl Preisendanz¹⁰¹ under the title *Papyri Graecae Magicae* "Greek Magical Papyri," although the documents are neither Greek¹⁰² nor magical,¹⁰³ and not even necessarily papyri. Nonetheless, they have recently begun to receive significant attention.¹⁰⁴ Though the manuscripts themselves are generally dated paleographically to the late third and early fourth centuries A.D.,¹⁰⁵ some of the texts were in use by the late second century.¹⁰⁶

The Anastasi priestly archive contains texts on many topics ranging from memory spells¹⁰⁷ to instructions for constructing seal rings,¹⁰⁸ to calling down divine messengers and revelations,¹⁰⁹ to initiations,¹¹⁰ to prayers to the sun god,¹¹¹ all of which appear in the hekhalot texts. In the Egyptian documents in the Anastasi priestly archive, the gatekeepers appear within the initiation texts. We will look briefly at two: the wrongly labeled "Mithras Liturgy" and the so-called "Eighth Book of Moses,"¹¹² both of which are now viewed as reflecting Egyptian culture.¹¹³

The so-called Mithras Liturgy contains written records of the proceedings of the "mysteries . . . which the great god Helios Mithras commanded me by his archangel to pass down so that I alone, a supplicant, may enter heaven and view everything."¹¹⁴ Later the initiate addresses deity by

giving twenty-one epithets and names followed by the command, "Open to me!" accompanied by *nomina barbara*¹¹⁵ and entreaties.¹¹⁶ "Say all these things completing the first with fire and spirit; then begin the second likewise until thou hast completed the seven immortal gods of the world."¹¹⁷ Later in the ritual, "thou shalt see the doors opening and seven virgins in white linen wearing serpent masks coming out of the depths. They are called the fates of heaven and grasp golden wands. When thou seest these things, greet them thus: 'Hail, O seven fates of heaven, revered and good virgins, holy and communal of Min who is in the temple,¹¹⁸ most holy guardians of the four pillars.'"¹¹⁹ Each is then greeted by name.¹²⁰ Then "another seven gods wearing black bull masks and girt about with linen come forth grasping seven golden diadems."¹²¹ They are the "possessors of the pole star (*polokratores*)," a distinctively Egyptian touch.¹²² These seven "guardians of the pivot (*knodakophylakes*)" must also be named in order for the initiate to see the god.¹²³ Instructions for the specific time (the new moon in Leo) and other purifications are also provided.¹²⁴

In the "Eighth Book of Moses," the initiate, after performing the rite, is required by the instructions to say "the account of the hour-gods which is in the key and which compels them and those appointed over the weeks, and thou [i.e., the initiate] shalt be initiated into them. Then for the general calling down (*systasei*), have a natron square in which thou hast written the great name of the seven vowels."¹²⁵ The initiation was intended to be kept secret: "I order thee, child, and the uses of the holy book which all the sophists initiate from this holy and blessed book, as I adjured thee, child, in the temple which is in Jerusalem, after being filled with the wisdom of God, to make the book un-

findable.”¹²⁶ Again both the time (the last day of the month in Aries) and the specific purifications are detailed.¹²⁷

Egyptian Christian Texts

By the fourth century, the Egyptians had adopted some Christian beliefs and practices,¹²⁸ though it is not entirely clear if many of the Egyptians who became Christians ever entirely gave up their Egyptian practices.¹²⁹

In the *Apocalypse of Paul* from the Nag Hammadi library, Paul is taken on a trip through the heavens. The first three heavens are skipped over (probably because of a reading of 2 Corinthians 12). In the fourth heaven, Paul witnesses the judgment of a soul by the gatekeeper of the fourth heaven. Paul then proceeds through the gate to the fifth heaven where one angel had an iron rod and three others carried whips to punish evildoers. Paul proceeds through these gates following his paralemptor. In the sixth heaven a light and voice from above instruct the gatekeeper to let Paul and his paralemptor through. In the seventh heaven, Paul sees a man seated upon a throne who proceeds to question him. Paul passes to the eighth heaven by means of a sign that he carries. There he ascends with his fellow apostles through the ninth unto the tenth heaven.¹³⁰

The fragmentary *First Book of Jeu*¹³¹—a compilation where “similar or related ‘documents’ are either grouped together or placed one following another in sequence”¹³²—is relevant here. The account concerns the great and hidden mysteries: The resurrected Jesus appears to his apostles and gives them instructions in the mysteries that will let them know the will of God. After a break in the text, Jesus instructs the apostles that they will have access to the true God by going through several treasuries (*thesauros*) defended by three guards (*phylax*) accompanied by twelve

spears (*proboloue*)¹³³ at the gates (*pyle*), all of which have names. After an overview of twenty-eight of these storehouses, the text breaks off. It resumes in the midst of an ecstatic hymn praising God for his creation of at least thirteen aeons and gives the name of each; after thirteen aeons the text breaks off again. When it resumes, Jesus is leading his apostles through the fifty-fourth of sixty storehouses, explaining how to gain access. The following is an example of the procedure:

Hearken now to the layout of this treasury to which you come. Seal yourselves with this seal (*sphragis*)¹³⁴ which is [a picture is drawn here]. This is its name: *Zoxaezoz*. Say it only once while this number (or stone, *psephos*) is in your hand: 600515; and say this name three times: *ooieezamazaza* and the guards and the orders and the veils will always withdraw themselves until you enter the place of their father and he will give you the mystery until you enter the mystery. This is the layout of this treasury and all of those who pertain to it.¹³⁵

After this grand tour, Jesus, at the entreaty of his disciples, gives them one seal, number, and procedure that will unlock all the gates to all the treasuries. Inside the seventh innermost treasury Jesus forms a circle with his disciples and, standing in the middle, sings a hymn of praise to God with the disciples antiphonally chanting “amen, amen, amen.” There the book ends.

Many of these things were already found in early Christianity. Jesus had promised to give his apostles secret keys to get past the gates of Hades.¹³⁶ Early Christians also looked forward to receiving a stone (*psephos*) with a secret name engraven on it, allowing them to rule over many nations and even sit on the throne of God.¹³⁷ They also had a long tradition of secrecy,¹³⁸ including secret ceremonies¹³⁹

with antiphonal chanting,¹⁴⁰ as well as a secret knowledge of “the celestial things, the arrangement of the angels, and the calling down (*systaseis*)¹⁴¹ of the archangels (*archontes*), both seen and unseen.”¹⁴² But among the “unorthodox” Egyptian Christian documents it is difficult to separate the Egyptian elements from the Christian.

The Hekhalot Literature

At the time of the exile, some groups of Jews moved to Egypt to avoid Babylonian domination.¹⁴³ By the Persian period, a large Jewish colony flourished at Elephantine¹⁴⁴ to the extent that they even founded a Jewish temple there.¹⁴⁵ Jews also served as mercenaries in the garrisons at Migdol, Taphanes, Memphis, and Hermopolis with other Aramaic-speaking Semites.¹⁴⁶ The myriad of prisoners brought in by Ptolemy I Soter reinforced their presence.¹⁴⁷ Inscriptional remains attest Aramaic-speaking people in Egypt having adopted some of the Egyptian religious practices,¹⁴⁸ including being initiated into the Osirian mysteries.¹⁴⁹ Whether others borrowed from the Jews or the Jews borrowed from the Egyptians, Aramaic speakers were soon mixing the two religions.¹⁵⁰ Not all Jews adopted pagan practices; enough Jews resisted this syncretism that they became hated.¹⁵¹

Despite religious or ethnic tensions, the Egyptians themselves borrowed from Jewish religion. Thus the syncretistic Greco-Egyptian texts of the fourth century A.D. import several biblical figures, including Isaac¹⁵² and Solomon.¹⁵³ The name Eve was used whenever the female ancestor was unknown.¹⁵⁴ They also contain copies of an entire prayer attributed to Jacob¹⁵⁵ and more than one book attributed to Moses.¹⁵⁶ One of the few names to appear on both demotic

and Greek papyri of this sort is Abraham.¹⁵⁷ But the most common divine name in the papyri is Iao, the Greek version of the tetragrammaton.¹⁵⁸ “The influence worked both ways. Hebrew elements, taken over at some early time by the Greek syncretists, returned in their new Hellenized forms into the circles of Aramaic speaking Jewish esotericists.”¹⁵⁹ Other scholars view the matter slightly differently: “Just as a number of gnostic elements found their way into Merkavah mysticism so did also certain Merkavah elements find their way into gnosticism.”¹⁶⁰ (As we have seen above, Scholem’s magicians and Gruenwald’s gnostics are not isolated from each other.)

The degree of receptivity which some Jewish circles showed to ideas originating from pagan sources is still one of the most bewildering problems which the student of the Judaism of the Talmudic period faces. It will in no way ease the problem if we assume that some Jewish circles timidly and carelessly collected whatever they found in the international market of religions. But it seems equally true to maintain that once foreign ideas had found their way into Judaism they were not—or even could not be—easily swept under the carpet. . . . In most cases, however, the impression one gets is that those people were attracted by complex pictures even when these pictures were composed of the most heterogeneous elements. The artificial combination of various and sometimes even conflicting religious elements was the fashion of the day, and if this was believed to enrich one’s religious experience, the question of the cost was not raised.¹⁶¹

It may be significant that the earliest manuscripts of the hekhalot literature come from Egypt.¹⁶² “It is probably through the influence of these magical performances that we find in some hekhalot texts the idea that certain prac-

tices are useful only for bringing about certain experiences at specific dates.”¹⁶³ Prayers to the sun with strings of epithets, some of which are clearly Egyptian, also clearly derive from this common milieu.¹⁶⁴ Others have enumerated additional examples of materials that reflect the Egyptian background of the *PGM* borrowed into the hekhalot literature;¹⁶⁵ our interest lies in the gatekeeper passages of the hekhalot literature.

The seventeenth chapter of the *Hekhalot Rabbati*¹⁶⁶ (which appears in the manuscripts for the most part as a single unit),¹⁶⁷ like much of the hekhalot literature itself,¹⁶⁸ was concerned with heavenly ascensions. During the heavenly ascension the mystic had to pass by various gates and their keepers. Perhaps the most conspicuous feature of the text is the use of the seals to get past the keepers of the heavenly gates. The seals have special names attached to them, the one for the guard on the right side being compounded with the divine name, while the one for the guard on the left side is compounded with the *Sar ha-Panim*. It is tempting to speculate that the common element in two of these, $\text{TW}\overline{\text{T}}\text{RWSY}'\text{Y}$ - YWY and $\text{TW}\overline{\text{T}}\text{RBY}'\text{L}$ - YWY , might stand for the Egyptian God Thoth (*Dḥwty-rsy=i* “Thoth is my guard”¹⁶⁹ and *Dḥwty* $\text{RBY}'\text{L}$ “Thoth my master is god”).¹⁷⁰ Though incantations might accompany the seals, they are nowhere described.¹⁷¹ The parallels from Coptic texts mentioned above prove nothing as it may be that the Jewish sources influence the Christian. Since it is specifically the use of the seals that connects the hekhalot literature to magic,¹⁷² we have the ironic situation that whereas in the Bible what was classified as magic was that practiced by outsiders,¹⁷³ what is labeled as magic here may be originally a Jewish feature.

Table 1. Phenomena Associated with the Gatekeeper

	PT	CT	CT	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	BD	Mithras Liturgy	8th Book of Moses	Apoca- lypse of Paul	1st Jeu	Hekhalot Rabbati
no. of gates	1	4	3	1	7	14-21	145	146	21	7	1	2	10	60	7
gatekeepers per gate	1	1	1	42/12	1	1	1	1	1	3	7	7	1	15	2
interview	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no
name	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
seal	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
prayer	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
hymn	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no

Temporary Conclusions

The summary of the phenomena associated with the gatekeeper appears in table 1, from which it can be seen that the *Hekhalot Rabbati* passage belongs to the same sort of complex as the passages in Egyptian and Christian tradition. This is not the same thing as a history of the tradition. "It is almost impossible to write a history of ideas, traditions, and motifs, which in any case cannot consist of isolated quotations loosely linked" [Eine Geschichte von Ideen, von Traditionen, von Motiven zu schreiben, wird nahezu unmöglich und kann jedenfalls nicht darin bestehen, isolierte Zitate herauszupikken und aneinanderzureihen].¹⁷⁴ Yet that is all that has been done here; the preceding has merely run roughshod over several texts not normally associated, suggesting a common tradition,¹⁷⁵ though not proving it. Some historical background has been included to show that it is reasonable to suggest that the Egyptian traditions might have influenced both Jewish and Christian traditions,¹⁷⁶ though the differences are well worth noting; we are suggesting adaptation, not plagiarism. The presence of the gatekeepers, stronger in some texts than in others, indicates a temple initiation in the Egyptian texts and therefore suggests an initiation in the Jewish and Christian texts. This is all suggestion and not proof. It can "only be provisional, since a comparison of motifs presupposes in the last resort a comparison of systems."¹⁷⁷ To say that the system represented in the texts was some form of "magic" seems dubious and problematic. At this point we might finally be able to ask whether the *Sitz im Leben* of certain passages in the hekhalot literature might be connected in some way with some Jewish initiation. Such questions I leave to the experts in hekhalot literature who can subject this complex to the requisite inner analysis.¹⁷⁸

Notes

I would like to thank Robert Ritner for some insightful discussions and for reminding me of an important piece of information and Peter Schäfer for some useful comments; I exculpate them from any mistakes either in method or in fact in this chapter.

1. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. “mystic.”

2. Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 1156, s.v. “mystes” and “mystikos.” See Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 9–10.

3. See the discussions in William J. Hamblin, “‘Everything Is Everything’: Was Joseph Smith Influenced by the Kabbalah?” *FARMS Review of Books* 8/2 (1996): 262–64; William J. Hamblin, “Temple Motifs in Jewish Mysticism,” in *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism*, ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994), 461–62. The earliest Christian with tendencies toward mysticism was Origen (see Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* [Utrecht, Netherlands: Spectrum, 1950], 2:94–100), a student of Ammonius Saccas “the Socrates of Neoplatonism,” who also taught the Neoplatonist philosopher Plotinus; Erik R. Dodds, “Ammonius Saccas,” in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), 53. Origen, like other early Christian mystics—Ammonas (see Quasten, *Patrology*, 3:153–54) and Macarius (see *ibid.*, 3:162–63)—was Egyptian. Evagarius of Pontus, though not Egyptian, was a student of both Origen and Macarius and spent the last seventeen years of his life in Egypt (see *ibid.*, 3:169–76).

4. For an overview of hekhalot literature, see Peter Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism*, trans. Aubrey Pomerance (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York, 1992).

5. *Ibid.*, 2; see Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 14, 355.

6. There has always been something strange about using the verb *yārad*, “to descend,” for entering the chariot. Biblical usage is different. When Sisera descends from the chariot (*yēred mēʿal hammerkābāh*, Judges 4:15), he is getting off. The normal verb used for mounting a chariot is *ʿālāh*: *yaʿālēhū ʿal-hammerkābāh*, “they got on the chariot” (1 Kings 20:33, author’s translation). Elijah is said to ascend (*yaʿal*) with the chariot (see 2 Kings 2:11).

7. See Schäfer, *Hidden and Manifest God*, 2.

8. See Jacob Neusner, *Invitation to the Talmud*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984), 70–71; Kathleen Kuiper, ed., *Merriam-Webster’s Encyclopedia of Literature*, s.v. “Tosefta.”

9. Originally meaning “that which is beyond or behind the wall”; Roland G. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, Conn.: American Oriental Society, 1953), 195.

10. See TB *Hagigah* 14b and Peter Schäfer, ed., *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1981), 146–47, §§339, 345.

11. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, 96–97, §224.

12. Typical of rabbinic literature, the reason for using a particular passage as a proof text is often obscure. Here, the first phrase of the verse is cited and the reader is expected to know the entire verse since the crucial phrase comes in the uncited portion of the verse. Scriptures have been harmonized to the King James Version for ease of reference.

13. Tosefta *Hagigah* 2, 3–4.

14. TB *Hagigah* 14b; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, 146–47, §§339, 345.

15. For cautions about hastily “reconstructing ephemeral historical contexts,” see Peter Schäfer, “Merkavah Mysticism and Rabbinic Judaism,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104/3 (1984): 541. The most ambitious effort to supply such has been David J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel’s Vision* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988); see also David J. Halperin, “A New Edition of the Hekhalot Literature,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104/3 (1984): 551.

16. See Peter Schäfer, ed., *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur*

(Tübingen: Mohr, 1984), 10–11. These include the earliest manuscripts containing portions of *3 Enoch* and the *Hekhalot Rabbati*, though none in the same form in which they are presently generally known. To me, it makes more sense to see the Geniza fragments as based on the larger works rather than the later works as expansions and adaptations of the shorter ones. It is also worth noting that of the other books of Enoch, the manuscripts for the Greek version come from Egypt (see Campbell Bonner, *The Last Chapters of Enoch in Greek* [London: Christophers, 1937], 3–4), and the Slavonic is thought to have originated in Judea (see James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* [hereafter *OTP*] [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983], 1:95–97), as is the Ethiopic (see *OTP*, 1:7–8), which was brought to Ethiopia via a Greek version in Egypt (see R. H. Charles, trans., *The Book of Enoch* [London: Oxford University Press, 1913], xvii). This suggests a locus around Judea and the Nile Delta for the production of the Enoch literature.

17. Schäfer, “Merkavah Mysticism,” 538. Schäfer, of course, refers only to the hekhalot literature.

18. See Jan Assmann, “Death and Initiation in the Funerary Religion of Ancient Egypt,” in *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1989), 136: “These ‘Pyramid Texts’ represent the oldest substantial corpus of religious texts known to mankind” (compare *ibid.*, 143).

19. Dating for Egypt in general follows John Baines and Jaromír Málek, *Atlas of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Facts on File, 1980). Unas’s dates are found on pp. 34 and 36.

20. One of the evidences that the rituals from the Pyramid Texts were used by commoners is the presence of model kits for the opening of the mouth (see PT 37–57); examples include MFA 13.3144, 13.3252, 13.3257, 13.3263, 13.3265–66, 13.3269, and 28.1148, in Ann M. Roth, “Model Equipment with a *peshesh-kef*,” in *Mummies and Magic: The Funerary Arts of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Sue D’Auria, Peter Lacovara, and Catharine H. Roehrig (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1988), 80–81; MMA 07.228.117, in William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: A Background for the Study of the*

Egyptian Antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1953), 1:118. Other evidences include oil tablets; see MFA 24.599, in Nigel Strudwick, "Oil Tablet," in *Mummies and Magic*, 81–82; BM 6123, in Stephen Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* (London: British Museum, 1992), 149. One can also compare the offering lists from the Pyramid Texts with those from private mastabas. See Eberhard Otto, *Das ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960), 2:1–2; Hartwig Altenmüller, *Die Texte zum Begräbnisritual in den Pyramiden des Alten Reiches* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1972), 273–79.

21. See PT 215 §149, in Kurt Sethe, *Die altaegyptischen Pyramidentexte* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908), 1:85.

22. James P. Allen, "The Cosmology of the Pyramid Texts," in *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, 5; compare 5 n. 30: "All four doorways are mentioned in 1252c–f. For the doorways barring (*hsf*) commoners (*rḥwt*) and foreigners (*tḥnw*, *fnḥw*), see 876b, 1726a–b. *1916a, *1949b, N 1055+33. . . . For the king and gods passing through these doors, see 659a, 981–85, 1408–11, *1929a–b, N 1055+44 = Nt 692. Besides the ubiquitous term *ꜥꜣꜣꜣwꜣ pt*, the doors are also called *sbꜣ(w) pt* (799a, 1156, 1252c–f, 1720a) and *ꜥꜣꜣꜣwꜣ sḥdw* (727a, 1474c)."

23. Assmann, "Death and Initiation," 143.

24. See Allen, "Cosmology of the Pyramid Texts," 17–26; and Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion*, 152–55.

25. Allen, "Cosmology of the Pyramid Texts," 25, citing PT 311 §496. Because the verb *prj* means both "go forth" (see James P. Allen, *The Inflection of the Verb in the Pyramid Texts* [Malibu: Undena, 1984], 569) and "ascend" (PT 215 §149), we might translate this as "for the ascension of the day-bark."

26. For this form, see Alan H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1957), 61–63, §§ 79, 81.

27. Attested in Akkadian (*bābu*, see *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, 2:14–26), Aramaic (*bab*, *baba'*), and Arabic (*bab*). In literary Late Egyptian (all examples are Eighteenth Dynasty), *bꜣbꜣw* means "hole." See Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1962), 77; "hole" fits

the context of *bꜣbꜣ* in P. Anastasi IV.1b.12, in Alan H. Gardiner, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies* (Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1937), 35; the definition in Leonard H. Lesko and Barbara S. Lesko, eds., *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian* (Providence, R.I.: B.C. Scribe, 1982), 1:146, is in error.

28. PT 313 §502; compare Allen, "Cosmology of the Pyramid Texts," 25. I have bowdlerized the translation to make it comprehensible to the nonspecialist.

29. PT 320 §516.

30. See PT 278 §419, which is located in the southeast corner of the east wall of the antechamber to the right of the door to the *serdab* (room in a mastaba tomb where statues of the deceased were usually placed) in the pyramid of Unas; see Sethe, *Die alt-ägyptischen Pyramidentexte*, 3:119.

31. See PT 313 §502 (Pyramid of Unas, west wall entrance from antechamber 3:120), 320 §§515–16 (Pyramid of Unas, east wall entrance from antechamber 3:120), 539 §1310 (Pyramid of Pepi II south wall of the "Wartesaal" on the right of door leading toward the antechamber 3:133), 549 §1349 (Pyramid of Pepi II south wall of the "Wartesaal" on the left of the door leading to the antechamber 3:133).

32. See David P. Silverman, "Divinity and Deities in Ancient Egypt," in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 72–73, esp. n. 86.

33. For a discussion on the fallacies of the common assumption that this means that the funerary cults were a sign of democratization, see Ragnhild B. Finnestad, "The Pharaoh and the 'Democratization' of Post-Mortem Life," in *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians: Cognitive Structures and Popular Expressions*, ed. Gertie Englund (Uppsala: Academiae Ubsaliensis, 1989), 89–93; Jørgen P. Sørensen, "Divine Access: The So-Called Democratization of Egyptian Funerary Literature as a Socio-Cultural Process," in *ibid.*, 109–25.

34. See Silverman, "Divinity and Deities," 47–48; T. G. H. James, *Ancient Egypt: The Land and Its Legacy* (Austin: University

of Texas Press, 1988), 92; see also David P. Silverman, "Textual Criticism in the Coffin Texts," in *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, 30–34; the process is described in Stephen E. Thompson, "The Origin of the Pyramid Texts found on Middle Kingdom Saqqâra Coffins," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 76 (1990): 17–20.

35. Assmann, "Death and Initiation," 143.

36. "No death of Osiris is mentioned in . . . the Coffin Texts, but his resurrection is constantly referred to." Silverman, "Divinity and Deities," 29.

37. Walter Federn, "The 'Transformations' in the Coffin Texts: A New Approach," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 19/4 (1960): 250.

38. See Mordechai Gilula, "Hirtengeschichte 17–22 = CT VII 36 m-r," *Göttinger Miszellen* 29 (1978): 21–22.

39. See, for example, CT 576, in *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, ed. Adriaan de Buck (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 6:191.

40. See CT 668, in *ibid.*, 6:296; compare CT 1101, in *ibid.*, 7:420.

41. See CT 901, 1001, 1060–63, 1079, 1081, 1100–1113, 1165, 1169, 1180–81, in *ibid.*, 7:107–8, 218–19, 317–22, 348–51, 354, 415–45, 508, 511–12, 518–19.

42. See CT 1100–1106, in de Buck, *Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 7:416–35.

43. See CT 1100–1106, in *ibid.* Coffin B3C is unusual because the names of the gatekeepers are listed separately from the rest of the text at the very beginning of the section. This indicates that CT 1100–1106 are seen as a unit.

44. See CT 1100, in de Buck, *Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 7:418–19.

45. See CT 1104–6, in *ibid.*, 7:430–35.

46. CT 1107–15, in *ibid.*, 7:436–46. The break in the placement on the coffins seems to be after 1115 not 1113.

47. See CT 1115, in *ibid.*, 7:446.

48. First established in Richard Lepsius, *Älteste Texte des Totenbuchs nach Sarkophagen des altaegyptischen Reichs im Berliner Museum* (Berlin: Hertz, 1867).

49. See Thomas G. Allen, trans., *The Book of the Dead, or Going*

Forth by Day (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 3. The chapters connected with the Litany of the Sun are Book of the Dead (hereafter BD) 42, 127, 180, 181; BD 168 seems to be derived from the Book of Caverns. For the Litany of the Sun, see Edouard Naville, *La Litanie du soleil: Inscriptions recueillies dans les tombeaux des rois à Thèbes* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1875); James H. Breasted, *De hymnis in solem sub rege Amenophide IV conceptis* (Berlin: Paul, 1894).

50. See de Buck, *Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 4:xiii; 7:xii–xiii; Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 235–36. These gatekeeper spells also have affinities to the Book of Gates, for which see Erik Hornung, *Die Unterweltbücher der Ägypter* (Zürich: Artemis, 1992), 195–308. The gates of the netherworld are another common motif that will not be explored here.

51. BD 125 d P, in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 97.

52. See BD 125 a S 1–3, in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 97. Similar lists of purity can be found on Shurpu tablet II where the problem is to purify someone who has committed one of these transgressions. See tablet II in Erica Reiner, *Šurpu: A Collection of Sumerian and Akkadian Incantations* (Graz: Weidner, 1958), 13–18; compare tablet IV, in *ibid.*, 25–29; tablet VIII, lines 41–90, in *ibid.*, 41–44.

53. See BD 125 b S 1–42, in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 98–99.

54. See BD 125 c S 1–2, in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 99.

55. See BD 125 c S 3–6, in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 99–100.

56. See BD 125 c S 7–8, in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 100.

57. See BD 125 c T 1–5, in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 100–101.

58. See Peter F. Dorman, *The Tombs of Senenmut: The Architecture and Decoration of Tombs 71 and 353* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), plates 57–59, 64–79.

59. See Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 120–22.

60. See Dorman, *Tombs of Senenmut*, plates 57–59, 70–79.

61. See *ibid.*, plates 57, 59, 68–69.

62. The various versions may be found in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 123–33.

63. “She has served as an initiate before Osiris at his Beautiful

festival of assuming the White Crown." Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 137. See Richard Lepsius, *Das Todtenbuch der Ägypter nach dem hieroglyphischen Papyrus in Turin* (Leipzig: Wigand, 1842), plate LXVII, which has *iw ir.n=f šhw iqr m-bšh Wsir m ḥb=f nfrt nt ḥmn m ḥdt*.

64. See Dorman, *Tombs of Senenmut*, 119–20, plates 58–59, 66–69.

65. See Margaret A. Murray, *The Osireion at Abydos* (1903; reprint, London: Histories and Mysteries of Man, 1989), 20, and plate XI.

66. See Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 137–39.

67. Assmann, "Death and Initiation," 147–48; compare 148–49:

This idea was even adapted into a board game with the characteristic name "passage." It requires two players. The object of the game is to find oneself in a passage through 30 fields of salutary or evil nature until one arrives in the vicinity of the god, who then grants sustenance (bread and water) and justification. It was, without any doubt, also played in lifetime for the sole purpose of "enjoyment" (*šmḥ jb*, Egyptian for "enjoyment," lit.: "to cause the heart to forget"), but has almost exclusively come to us from the funerary context. Particularly informative in this matter is the evidence from the tomb of Sennedjem: here, the scene is found above a door, thus already imparting the sense of "passage" through its very location. Furthermore, near the game-board, a table covered with food offerings figuratively conveys the purpose and goal of the "passage": securing access to and availability of eternal sustenance.

68. Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 1.

69. Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 2:119, 124.

70. *Ibid.*, 2:119. This was emphatically denied in the earliest

publication of the Book of the Dead; see Lepsius, *Todtenbuch der Ägypter*, 3–4.

71. See BD 140. Significantly, the same date is mentioned in both places.

72. See Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 205.

73. See P. Setna I 4/24–25, in Wilhelm Spiegelberg, *Die demotischen Denkmäler* (Strassburg: Fischbach, 1906), 2.2: Tafel XLV; F. Ll. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests of Memphis: The Sethon of Herodotus and the Demotic Tales of Khamuas* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1900), 114–17; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3:132; Herodotus, *Historiae* 2.86.5; A. J. Spencer, *Death in Ancient Egypt* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1982), 112.

74. See CG 34012, in Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie, Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums*, vol. 4, part 3 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1907), 835–36; Paul Barguet, *Le temple d'Amon-Rê à Karnak: Essai d'exégèse* (Cairo: L'institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1962), 33, 296–97; compare Claude Traunecker, *Coptos: Hommes et dieux sur le parvis de Geb* (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 253.

75. For the reading of this word, see George R. Hughes, "The Sixth Day of the Lunar Month and the Demotic Word for 'Cult Guild,'" *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts zu Kairo* 16 (1958): 147–60.

76. See P. Lille no. 29, 4, in Françoise de Cenival, *Les associations religieuses en Égypte d'après les documents démotiques* (Cairo: L'institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1972), 3.

77. See P. Berlin 13603 4/24, in Wolja Erichsen and Siegfried Schott, *Fragmente memphitischer Theologie in demotischer Schrift (Pap. demot. Berlin 13603)* (Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1954), 21, Tafel VI: *p3 ḥb ʿyq ḥryw p.t* "the festival of entering the upper part of heaven." For the upper part of heaven as a designation for the holy of holies, see Jean-Marie Kruchten, *Les annales des prêtres de Karnak (XXI-XXIII^{mes} dynasties) et autres textes contemporains relatifs à l'initiation des prêtres d'Amon* (Leuven: Departement Oriëntalistiek, 1989), 59, 62, 67, 245–51, 286; Jaroslav Černý, "Note on ʿswy-pt 'Shrine,'" *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 34 (1948): 120; compare Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian*

Religion, trans. Ann E. Keep (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 88.

78. Assmann, "Death and Initiation," 135, 136.

79. The papyrus derives from Oxyrhynchus and dates to the second century A.D. The first recognition of the connection with BD 125 was in Reinhold Merkelbach, "Ein ägyptischer Priestereid," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 2 (1968): 7–30; compare Reinhold Merkelbach, "Nachträge zu Band 1 und 2," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 3 (1968): 136; Reinhold Merkelbach, "Ein griechisch-ägyptischer Priestereid und das Totenbuch," in *Religions en Égypte hellénistique et romaine* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), 69–73. A more popular exposition of this text noting its connection to Roman literature may be found in Reinhold Merkelbach, *Die Unschuldserklärungen und Beichten im ägyptischen Totenbuch, in der römischen Elegie und im antiken Roman* (Gießen: Universitätsbibliothek Gießen, 1987), 5–34.

80. See Federn, "'Transformations' in the Coffin Texts," 253–55.

81. Assmann, "Death and Initiation," 145.

82. *Ibid.*, 150.

83. L. Kákosy, review of *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 48/5–6 (1991): 773.

84. Assmann, "Death and Initiation," 149.

85. The manuscripts (at least 47) listed in Erik Hornung, *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter* (Zürich: Artemis, 1990), 525–28, all date from the New Kingdom (1550–1070 B.C.). Another list of manuscripts from a wider date may be found in Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 242–47. The Eighteenth Dynasty manuscripts in the Cairo Museum have now been edited in Irmtraut Munro, *Die Totenbuch-Handschriften der 18. Dynastie im Ägyptischen Museum Cairo*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994). The fullest listing of Eighteenth-Dynasty manuscripts with discussion is Irmtraut Munro, *Untersuchungen zu den Totenbuch-Papyri der 18. Dynastie* (London: Kegan Paul, 1988).

86. The latest manuscript of the Book of the Dead is Bibliothèque Nationale E 140, published in Franz Lexa, *Das demotische Totenbuch der Pariser Nationalbibliothek (Papyrus des Pamonthes)*

(Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1910). The papyrus dates to the tenth year of Nero (3/29–30) = A.D. 63.

87. See P.-J. de Hozack, "Le livre des respirations d'après les manuscrits du Musée du Louvre," *Bibliothèque Egyptologique* 17 (1907): plate vii, lines 9–14.

88. See Merkelbach, "Ein ägyptischer Priestereid," 7–30; compare Merkelbach, "Nachträge," 136; Merkelbach, "Ein griechisch-ägyptischer Priestereid," 69–73; Merkelbach, *Die Unschuldserklärungen und Beichten*, 5–34.

89. See Stephen Quirke and Carol Andrews, *The Rosetta Stone* (New York: Abrams, 1989), 6. Contra Dorothy J. Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 103, Greek was not a "prestige language" in ancient Egypt. If Greek women kept legal records in demotic because that meant they could use the Egyptian courts, where they actually had rights, how is Greek prestigious? See also Robert K. Ritner, "Implicit Models of Cross-Cultural Interaction: A Question of Noses, Soap, and Prejudice," in *Life in a Multi-Cultural Society: Egypt from Cambyses to Constantine and Beyond*, ed. Janet H. Johnson (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1992), 289.

90. See Pseudo-Aristeas, in *OTP*, 2:12–34.

91. See Naphtali Lewis, "The Demise of the Demotic Document: When and Why," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 79 (1993): 276–81.

92. See PT 280–81 §421–22, in Sethe, *Die altaegyptischen Pyramidentexte*, 1:219; Thomas Schneider, "Mag.pHarris XII, 1–5: Eine kanaanäische Beschwörung für die Löwenjagd?" *Göttinger Miszellen* 112 (1989): 53–63; François Lexa, *La magie dans l'Égypte antique* (Paris: Geuthner, 1925), 1:61 nn. 1–2; Quirke, *Ancient Egyptian Religion*, 46–47, 114, 173.

93. See Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, 90, 99, 104.

94. See the dedication of a Greek gymnasium to the Egyptian crocodile god Sobek (now in Trinity College, Dublin), in Edwyn Bevan, *A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* (London: Methuen, 1927), 332–33; Ritner, "A Question of Noses," 284.

95. Quirke and Andrews, *Rosetta Stone*, 6.

96. See Janet H. Johnson, "The Demotic Magical Spells of Leiden I 384," *Oudheidkundige mededeelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden* 56 (1975): 47–53.

97. See C. J. C. Reuvens, *Lettres à M. Letronne . . . sur les papyrus bilingues et grecs, et sur quelques autres monumens gréco-égyptiens du Musée d'antiquités de l'Université de Leide* (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1850), 4: "Together with other accounts, it could well facilitate explication of the hieratic writing and the hieroglyphs" [il pourra même peut-être, sous plusieurs autre rapports, faciliter l'explication de l'écriture hiératique et hiéroglyphique].

98. *Ibid.*, 7, 10.

99. Karl Preisendanz, ed., *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1928), 1:v.

100. They were "examples of gross superstition that did not even approach 'literature'" [Erzeugnissen krassen Aberglaubens, denen der Name "Literatur" nicht zukam]. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 1:v.

101. In Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*; this has now been supplemented by Robert W. Daniel and Franco Maltomini, eds., *Supplementum Magicum*, vol. 1 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990). "The texts included in Suppl. Mag. . . . are all of Egyptian provenance" (*ibid.*, ix.); as, we might add, are the overwhelming majority of the texts in Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*.

102. See John Gee, "Abracadabra, Isaac and Jacob," review of "The Use of Egyptian Magical Papyri to Authenticate the Book of Abraham: A Critical Review," by Edward H. Ashment, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 7/1 (1995): 35–46, 75–76; Robert K. Ritner, "Egyptian Magical Practice under the Roman Empire: The Demotic Spells and Their Religious Context," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), II.18.5:3333–79.

103. The problem is in defining *magic*; see Gee, "Abracadabra, Isaac and Jacob," 46–71; Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, "Introduction," in *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), 1–8 (although

it is not certain that the label *ritual power* has any particular meaning either).

104. Most of the attention has been misguided or seriously flawed by bad assumptions or methodology, particularly the assumption that the papyri are Greek and not Egyptian. Two prominent flawed publications are Hans D. Betz, "The Delphic Maxim 'Know Yourself' in the Greek Magical Papyri," *History of Religions* 21/2 (1981): 156–71; and Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978). Unfortunately, portions of this have also permeated some of the translations and much of the commentary in Hans D. Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

105. See Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, xxiii–xxviii. Paleography is not the firmest basis on which to date a document, especially a literary document. These dates are accepted with the caveat that they might be very wrong.

106. See Origen, *Contra Celsum* 1.22.

107. See Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (hereafter *PGM*), *PGM* I.232–47; III.410–78.

108. See *PGM* V.447–58; VII.628–42; XII.201–350; *PDM* (demotic portions of *PGM*) xii.6–20; compare *PGM* IV.2125–39.

109. See *PGM* I.1–195; II.1–183; III.165–262, 633–731; IV.1–25, 52–85, 154–285, 850–1114; V.54–69, 370–446; Va.1–3; VII.222–59, 319–69, 505–28, 540–78, 664–85, 703–55, 795–861, 1009–16; VIII.64–110; XII.1–95, 144–60, 190–92; XXIIb.27–35; XXIVa.1–25; LVII.1–37; LXII.24–51; LXXVII.1–24; *PDM* xii.21–49; xiv.1–308, 395–427, 459–553, 627–35, 695–705, 750–71, 805–85, 1078–89, 1110–29, 1141–54, 1163–79, 1199–1205; lxi.1–30, 63–78, Louvre E 3229, 5/15–22, 6/1–19, in Janet H. Johnson, "Louvre E 3229: A Demotic Magical Text," *Enchoria* 7 (1977): 63–64, 71–73.

110. See *PGM* IV.26–51, 475–829; XIII.1–734.

111. See *PGM* III.494–611; IV.88–93; VI.1–47; VII.727–39; XXXVI.211–30.

112. The Mithras Liturgy is a modern designation while the

“Eighth Book of Moses” is an ancient one (see PGM XIII.3, 343–44).

113. See Reinhold Merkelbach, *Abrasax: Ausgewählte Papyri religiösen und magischen Inhalts* (Opladen: Westdeutscher, 1992).

114. PGM IV.476, 482–85. I have tampered with the grammar here as the antecedent of “which” is not “mysteries” but I do not think I have violated the original intent.

115. These so-called *nomina barbara* or *voces magicae* are often Greek transcriptions of a foreign language; see Adolf Erman, “Die ägyptischen Beschwörungen des grossen Pariser Zauberpapyrus,” *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 21 (1883): 89–109; Jürgen Osing, *Der spätägyptische Papyrus BM 10808* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1976); Ritner, “Egyptian Magical Practice,” 3361–64; Gee, “Abracadabra, Isaac and Jacob,” 75–76; Heinz J. Thissen, “Ägyptologische Beiträge zu den griechischen Magischen Papyri,” in *Religion und Philosophie im alten Ägypten*, ed. Ursula Verhoeven and Erhart Graefe (Leuven: Peeters, 1991), 293–302; Terence DuQuesne, “The Raw and the Half-Baked: Approaches to Egyptian Religion,” *Discussions in Egyptology* 30 (1994): 34.

116. See PGM IV.587–616.

117. PGM IV.617–20.

118. Taking Μινμηροφορ as Late Egyptian *Mnw imy r3-pr*. Demotic *Mn mr rpi* “Min overseer of the temple” is also possible.

119. PGM IV.661–69.

120. See PGM IV.670–73.

121. PGM IV.673–76.

122. The Egyptian constellation of Ursa Major (*ms ḥtyw*) was represented as a bull’s leg, or even a bull; see O. Neugebauer and Richard A. Parker, *Egyptian Astronomical Texts* (London: Brown University Press, 1960, 1969), 1: plate 8, and 3: plate 24. By contrast, the Greeks thought of Ursa Major as a bear or a wagon (Homer, *Iliad* 18.487; *Odyssey* 5.273); the Romans conceived it as a Bear (*ursa*); the Mesopotamians conceived it as a long wagon (*mar-gíd-da, ereqqu*).

123. PGM IV.678.

124. See PGM IV.750–87.

125. PGM XIII.35–39.

126. PGM XIII.231–34.

127. See PGM XIII.343–60.

128. See PGM IV.1227–64, 3019–20.

129. For example, see *The Gospel of the Egyptians*, translated by Bentley Layton as *The Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit*, in *The Gnostic Scriptures* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1987), 105–20, which contains many of the same elements of the PGM. For an interesting view of the attraction of Christians to Egyptian religion, see *Clementine Recognitions* 1.5, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus . . . Series Graecae* (hereafter *PG*), ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris: Garnier, 1857), 1:1209.

130. See *Apocalypse of Paul* V 17.19–24.9, in James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988), 257–59.

131. Also called by itself *The Book of the Knowledge of the Unseen God* and *The Book of the Great Account of the Mysteries*. The most recent publication of the text is *The Books of Jeu and the Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex*, ed. Carl Schmidt, trans. Violet MacDermot (Leiden: Brill, 1978). The citations refer to the pages in Schmidt's edition (located on the top of the page). MacDermot has done a great service by making the Coptic text available again.

132. *Ibid.*, xiii.

133. The singular is *probole*. It is common to translate this term as “emanation,” as though it belonged to the Neoplatonism of Plotinus. A more literal translation seems appropriate here—“guard”; see Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1472.

134. The seal also plays a significant part in nonnormative Coptic beliefs classified as “magic.” These Coptic “magical texts present, on the whole, a coherent picture of the existing world” where four cherubim carry “the seat of God the Father, a combination of throne and chariot. Under him there are seven heavens and fourteen firmaments supported by four columns apparently placed on the earth” (Werner Vycichl, “Magic,” in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. Aziz S. Atiya [New York: Macmillan, 1991],

5:1499). These texts “show the magician as the successor of the Egyptian priest. He not only invokes the old divinities under Christian and even under Islamic rule but he must also be ‘pure’ like an Egyptian priest and wear a white linen garment” (ibid., 1500; compare Pierre du Bourguet, “Magical Objects,” in Atiya, *Coptic Encyclopedia*, 1509–10). “Coptic magical spells are full of senseless names and deformations” (Vycichl, “Magic,” 1501). Egyptian, Greek, Jewish, and Christian divine beings are all invoked with varied frequency (see ibid., 1501–3), and “elements of different creeds—Egyptian, Greek, Jewish, Christian, Gnostic—may be found together in the same text” (ibid., 1503). Sometimes the ceremonies involve the priest reciting prayers while a group of “seven boys who have not yet reached the age of puberty . . . begin to circle him seven times” (ibid., 1507; compare the circling of the priest before he recites his Sumerian incantation; “I am a pure man” [ḡe₂₆-e lú-kù-ga me-en] is also attested in Mesopotamia; see Reiner, *Šurpu*, 11; compare tablet V–VI, lines 173–86, in ibid., 35) while the client holds a “seal in his right hand during the whole ceremony” (Vycichl, “Magic,” 1508), a seal (Arabic *khatm*) “written on white unlined paper” consisting of a square around which are written “the names of the four angels” and in which is written a short prayer (ibid., 1507). Since no gatekeeper is mentioned, this example did not merit discussion in the text.

135. 1 *Jeu*, in Schmidt, *Books of Jeu*, 84.

136. See Matthew 16:18–20.

137. See Revelation 2:17, 26–28; 3:21.

138. See Matthew 13:11, 14–16; 19:11; Mark 4:2, 33; Luke 18:34; 22:67; John 1:5; 3:12; 6:60–61; 8:43; 10:27; 16:12, 18, 25; 20:9; Acts 10:41; 16:6; 1 Corinthians 3:1–2; 2 Corinthians 12:4; Ephesians 3:3–5; Colossians 1:26; Hebrews 5:11; 2 John 1:12.

139. See Pliny the Elder, *Epistulae* 10.96.7; Clement of Alexandria, *Epistle to Theodore*, in Morton Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 446–53.

140. See Pliny the Elder, *Epistulae* 10.96.7.

141. This can also mean “communication,” “introduction,” “guardianship,” “political constitution” (Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1734–35), but in the PGM, it is used as the equivalent of Egyptian *ph-ntr* “arrival of the god”; see Robert K. Ritner, “Gleanings from Magical Texts,” *Enchoria* 14 (1986): 95; Johnson, “Louvre E 3229,” 90–91.

142. Ignatius, *Epistula ad Trallianos* 5.1–2. Ignatius, the second of the Apostolic Fathers, is considered strictly orthodox, though note Joseph B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers: Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp* (1889; reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1989), 2.1:30–31, citing Socrates, *Historiae Ecclesiasticae* VI.8.

143. See Jeremiah 42–43.

144. On the community, see Herbert Donner, “Elemente ägyptischen Totenglaubens bei den Aramäern Ägyptens,” in *Religions en Égypte hellénistique et romaine*, 36–37.

145. See James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 492.

146. See Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, 85; compare 98–99.

147. See *ibid.*, 85–86.

148. See Donner, “Elemente ägyptischen Totenglaubens,” 40–42, citing Herbert Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, 4th ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979), no. 267.

149. See Donner, “Elemente ägyptischen Totenglaubens,” 43, citing Donner and Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, no. 269, and read in the light of Merkelbach, “Ein griechisch-ägyptischer Priestereid,” 69–73.

150. See the mixed oath by Yaho and Khnum, in Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 491; compare Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, 98–99.

151. See Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, 99, 104.

152. See, for example, PGM XII.817, XXIIb.1.

153. For notes on Egyptian usage of Hebrew names, see Origen, *Series Veteris Interpretationis Commentariorum Origenis in Matthaeum* 110, in PG, 13:1757.

154. See P. Köln 5514, in Robert W. Daniel, "It Started with Eve," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 74 (1988): 249–51.

155. See PGM XXIIb.1–26; see also *OTP*, 2:715–23.

156. See PGM XIII.1–734. Compare PGM XIII.734–1077; PDM xiv.131; Johnson, "Louvre E 3229," 94. There is a new edition of PGM XIII in *Two Greek Magical Papyri in the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden: A Photographic Edition of J 384 and J 395 (=PGM XII and XIII)*, ed. Robert W. Daniel (Opladen: Westdeutscher, 1991), 32–81. For a discussion of the versions of the text, see Morton Smith, "The Eighth Book of Moses and How It Grew (PLeid. J 395)," in *Atti del XVII Congresso internazionale di papirologia* (Naples: Centro Internazionale per lo studio di papiri ercolanesi, 1984), 683–93, summarized in Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 181–82.

157. See Johnson, "Louvre E 3229," 94–96. Compare A. Delatte and Philippe Derchain, *Les intailles magiques gréco-égyptiennes* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1964), nos. 26, 396, 507, 513, 516.

158. See Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 335; F. Ll. Griffith and Herbert Thompson, *The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden* (London: Grevel, 1909), 3:142 no. 253; and Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 3:223–24.

159. Gershom G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1960), 76. Some of Scholem's arguments remain unconvincing (see *ibid.*, 65–74), such as his assertion that ʿAzbogah = ogdoas; furthermore, Lilith is much more likely to go back to the Akkadian Lamaštu demon; see Walter Farber, "Lamastu," in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*, ed. Erich Ebeling et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1983), 6:439–46.

160. Ithamar Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 118; compare *OTP*, 1:236–38.

161. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 118.

162. See n. 16 above.

163. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 102. "Thus we find special practices for mystical experiences and revelations

which are to be accomplished on the Feast of Shavu'ot, on New Year[']s Day, at the beginning of every month, etc." (ibid.).

164. It is standard to compare *Sepher Ha-Razim* 4:61–72 to PGM IV.1596–715, but perhaps PDM xiv.856–75 should be considered as well.

165. Among other things, Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 231–32; Judah Goldin, "The Magic of Magic and Superstition," in *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 132–36.

166. For more on the problems associated with this text, see Peter Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988), 63–74.

167. See *ibid.*, 69.

168. For a description of the hekhalot literature in general, see Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 98–99. It is questionable whether we can even talk about individual works of hekhalot literature, but rather manuscripts reflecting various traditions, for "even a cursory comparison of the writing shows that the hekhalot literature inscriptions are in a very corrupt state" [schon ein flüchtiger Vergleich der Handschriften zeigt, daß die Textüberlieferung der Hekhalot-Literatur in einem extrem korrupten Zustand ist]; Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, p. v; compare Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien*, 8–16.

169. For parallels, see Hermann Ranke, *Die ägyptischen Personennamen* (Glückstadt: Augustin, 1935–77) 1:305.1. Other possibilities are *Dḥwty-rḥ* "Thoth knows" (*ibid.*, 1:408.11), and, less likely, *ttj-rs.w* (*ibid.*, 1:385.5). P. Alexander (see *OTP*, 1:272 n. n) sees this name as derived from Greek *tetras*; the presence of the *wāw* would militate against the last two interpretations. The names are problematic as can be seen when comparing Saul Lieberman, "Metatron, the Meaning of His Name and His Functions," in Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 235–41, with *OTP*, 1:228.

170. For other examples from the PGM of names combining both Hebrew and Egyptian elements, see Thissen, "Ägyptolo-

gische Beiträge," 297–98. See also Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 107:

Much work has still to be devoted to the deciphering of the names of the seals and of the spells scattered in the literature of the period. As a matter of fact, only the combined efforts of scholars from different branches and fields of knowledge can bring about the desired progress in the study of the magico-theurgic practices found in the magical papyri, in the amulets and bowls, in the writings of gnosticism, and in Jewish mysticism and magic. Only a comprehensive and comparative study of all this vast material will enable us to understand the technique of creating these names and spells, and this notwithstanding the fact that in several cases the names were obscured on purpose, so as to prevent people from using or misusing them. In addition, it should be noticed that errors and confusion were often introduced by careless and ignorant copyists.

171. See Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 106–7.

172. See *ibid.*, 99, 102–3.

173. See Stephen D. Ricks, "The Magician as Outsider: The Evidence of the Hebrew Bible," in *New Perspectives on Ancient Judaism*, ed. Paul V. M. Flesher (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1990), 5:125–34.

174. Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien*, 65.

175. If it seems strange to connect the Egyptian religious texts with Merkavah mysticism, it has been suggested before on a more tenuous basis; see Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 123.

176. "When we consider Merkavah mysticism in the light of these non-Jewish religious world views of late antiquity we can see how completely it fits into the religious climate of its time" (*OTP*, 1:238).

177. Schäfer, *Hekhalot-Studien*, 249.

178. See *ibid.*