

MERKABAH LITERATURE

From the

Book of Ezekiel

Book of Isaiah

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A. Book of Ezekiel

Chapter One

1. Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river Kebar that the heavens (**שָׁמַיִם**, *Shamayim*) were opened, and there appeared visions (**בְּמַרְאוֹת**, *Mara'ot*) of *Elohim*.
2. In the fifth day of the month which was the fifth year of King Jeho'achin's captivity,
3. The Word of God came expressly upon Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Kebar; and the hand of the Holy One **יְהוָה** was there upon him.¹
4. And I looked, and, behold, a stormy Spirit (**רוּחַ**, *Ruach*) came out of the north, a great cloud, with a fire flashing up, so that a brightness was round about it; and out of the midst thereof was the Eye of Hashmal (**עֵיַן**, *Ahyin*, Eye of Vast Face), out of the midst of the fire.
5. And out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four *Chayot* (**הַיּוֹת**, Holy Beings). And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man (**אָדָם**, *Adam*).
6. And every one had four faces, and every one of them had four wings.
7. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the Eye of burnished brass.
8. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and as for the faces and wings, of them four,
9. Their wings were joined one to another; they turned NOT (**לֹא**) when they went; they went everyone straightforward.
10. As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man (*Adam*); and they four had the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; and they four had also the face of an eagle.
11. Thus were their faces; and their wings were stretched upward, two wings of every one were joined to another, and two covered their bodies.
12. And they went every one straightforward; wherever the spirit went, they went.
13. As for the likeness of the *Chayot*, their appearance was like coals of fire, burning like the appearance of torches; it flashed up and down amongst the *Chayot*; and there was brightness to the fire, and out of the fire went forth lightning.
14. And the *Chayot* ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.
15. Now as I beheld the *Chayot*, behold one *Ofan* (**אוֹפָן**, Wheel),² at the earth close by the *Chayot*, at the four faces thereof.
16. The appearance of the *Ofanim* and their action was like unto the Eye of Beryl; and they four had one likeness; and their appearance and their action was, as it were, an *Ofan* within an *Ofan*.
17. When they went, they went toward their four sides; they turned NOT (**לֹא**) when they went.
18. As for their wings, they were high and full of fear (**אֲרָא**, *Erah*),² and they four had their wings full of eyes round about.
19. And when the *Chayot* went, the *Ofanim* went hard by them; and when the *Chayot* were lifted up from the earth, the *Ofanim* were lifted up, too.
20. Wherever the Spirit (*Ruach*) went, so they went; and the *Ofanim* were lifted up beside them. For the spirit of the *Chayah* was in the *Ofanim*.

21. When those went, these went, and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the *Ofanim* were lifted up beside them. For the spirit of the *Chayah* was in the *Ofanim*.

22. And over the heads of the *Chayot* there was the likeness of a Firmament (רַקִּיָּא, *Raqia*),³ like the cold Eye of Awe, stretched forth over their heads above.

23. From Abyss (תַּחַת, *Tahat*)⁴ to Firmament were their wings conformable, the one to the other. This one of them had two, and that one of them had two, which covered their bodies.

24. And they went, I heard the voice (קוֹל, *Qol*) of their wings like the voice of great waters, like the voice of *Shadhai* (שָׁדַי)⁵ a voice of tumult like the voice of a host; when they stood, they let down their wings.

25. As they went, I heard the voice from *AL* (עֵל)⁶... within the Firmament that was over their heads, as they stood, they let down their wings.

26. And there was the likeness of a throne as if of sapphire, supporting and from *AL* within the Firmament, and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man (*Adam*) upon it above.

27. And I saw the Eye of Hashmal (Vast Face), as the appearance of fire round about enclosing it. From the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about Him.

28. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the glory of the Lord יְהוָה. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of One that spoke.

Chapter Two

1. And He said unto me: “Son of man (*Adam*), stand upon your feet, and I will speak with you.”

2. And my spirit (רוּחִי, *Roochi*) entered into me when He spoke unto me, and set me upon my feet; and I heard Him that spoke unto me.

Chapter Three

12. Then the spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great rushing: “Blessed be the glory of the Lord יְהוָה from His Place;”

13. Also the noise of the wings of the *Chayot* as they touched one another, and the noise of the *Ofanim* besides them, even the noise of a great rushing.

14. So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away; and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit, and the hand of the Lord יְהוָה was strong upon me.

Chapter Eight

1. And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord יְהוָה *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי) fell there upon me.

2. Then I beheld, and lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire, from the appearance of His loins and downward, and from His loins and upward, as the appearance of splendor (זֹהַר, *Zohar*), as the Eye of Hashmal.

Chapter Ten

1. And I looked, and behold, *EL* (אל) of the Firmament (Small Face), that was *AL-Head* (ראשׁ על, Vast Face), the *Kerubim* (כרובים),⁷ as a stone of sapphire was the appearance of the likeness of a throne.
2. And *EL* (אל) spoke to the man (אישׁ, *Ish*) clothed in linen, and said: “Go in between the wheel (גלגל, *Galgol*), even under the *Kerub*, and fill both your hands with coals of fire from between the *Kerubim*, and dash them against the city.” And he went in, in my sight.
3. Now the *Kerubim* stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.
4. And the glory of the Lord יהוה mounted up from the *Kerub* to the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord יהוה’s glory.
5. And the sound of the wings of the *Kerubim* was heard even to the outer court as the voice of *EL Shadhai* (אל שׁדאי) when He speaks.
6. And it came to pass, when he commanded the man clothed in linen, saying: “Take fire from between the wheel, from between the *Kerubim*,” that he went in, and stood beside an *Ofan*.
7. And the *Kerub* stretched forth his hand from between the *Kerubim* unto the fire that was between the *Kerubim*, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed in linen, who took it and went out.
8. And there appeared in the *Kerubim* the form of a hand of a man (*Adam*) under their wings.
9. And I looked, and behold four *Ofanim* beside the *Kerubim*, one *Ofan* beside one *Kerub*, and another *Ofan* beside another *Kerub*; and the appearance of the *Ofanim* was as the Eye of Beryl.
10. And as for their appearance, they four had one likeness, as if an *Ofan* had been within an *Ofan*.
11. When they went, they went toward their four sides; they turned NOT (לא) as they went, but to the place wherever the Head (ראשׁ, *Rosh*, Vast Face) looked, they followed IT.
12. And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the *Ofanim* were full of eyes round about, even the *Ofanim* that they four had.
13. As for the *Ofanim*, they were called in my hearing the wheel (cycle).
14. And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of a *Kerub*, and the second face was the face of a man (*Adam*), and the third the face of a lion (ארה, *Areh*), and the fourth the face of an eagle (נשר, *Nesher*).
15. And the *Kerubim* mounted up -- this is the *Chayah* that I saw by the river Kebar.
16. And when the *Kerubim* went, the *Ofanim* went beside them; and when the *Kerubim* lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same *Ofanim* also turned not from beside them.
17. When they stood, these stood, and when they mounted up, these mounted up with them; for the Spirit of the *Chayot* was in them.
18. And the glory of the Lord יהוה went forth from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the *Kerubim*.
19. And the *Kerubim* lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight when they went forth, with the *Ofanim* beside them. And they stood at the door of the east gate of the house of the Lord יהוה; and the glory (כבוד, *Kavod*) of *Elohy* (אלהי) of Israel was above over them.

20. This is the *Chayah* that I saw under *Elohy Yisroel* (אלהי ישראל) by the river Kebar; and I knew that they were *Kerubim*.

21. Every one had four faces, and every one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man (*Adam*) was under their wings.

22. And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the faces that I saw by the river Kebar, their appearance and themselves; they went every one straightforward.

B. Book of Isaiah

Chapter Six

1. In the year that King Uzziah died I saw *Adonai* (אדוני) sitting upon a throne, *AL* (על), and lifted up, and His train filled the Temple (הכֹּל, *Hekal*).

2. Above Him stood the *Serafim*; each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly.

3. And one called unto the other, and said: “Holy, holy, holy is יהוה *Tzabaoth* (צבאות, Hosts); the whole earth is full of His glory (כבוד, *Kavod*).

4. And the Mothers (Alef א, Mem מ, Shin ש) of the Gatekeepers (rest of the twenty-two letters) were moved at the voice of them that called, and the house was filled with cloud.

¹ This verse alludes to Ezekiel going into ecstatic absorption with the vision of Small Face as the Lord יהוה, and to the level of psychic mediation called “One-Twentieth Cloudy Mirror” in the *Zohar*.

² *Erah* is usually used for “Fear of יהוה”.

³ The Firmament (*Raqia*) is the Sefirah Crown/Above.

⁴ The Abyss (*Tahat*) in this context is the Sefirah Foundation/Below.

⁵ See *Torah B’reshith* 17:1.

⁶ *AL* is a Name of Vast Face, the negatively existent Vast Face substratum upon which the Throne is “supported.”

⁷ The *Kerubim* are high level angels said to wield swords of fire, and stand as gatekeepers in the gates of the Column of the Left. Notice the pervasive images relating to fire, which is the Inner Court Sefirah that moves into the Column of the Left in the flat Tree.