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Full text of paper at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/media/revelation_hekhalot_paper_SBL08.pdf*(Hekhalot Rabbati §81)* R. Ishmael said:

What are these songs that he who seeks to gaze on the vision of the chariot recites, so as to descend safely and ascend safely? Greatest of all is to bind oneself to Him so that he makes one enter and brings one into the chambers of the palace of the Aravot firmament so as to make one stand on the right side of His throne of glory, and the times that one stands opposite $\text{ⲓ} \text{Ⲛ} \text{Ⲥ} \text{Ⲛ}$ YHWH, God of Israel, to see whatever is done before His throne of glory and to know whatever shall happen in the future in the world.

(HR §169) The decree of heaven is against you, descenders to the chariot, unless you say what you have heard and unless you testify to what you have seen concerning the Presence, the Presence of exaltation and might, majesty and grandeur, which is lifted up, borne, stirred up, and magnified. ...

(HR §216) And all the descenders to the chariot ascend and are not harmed; rather they see all this violence and descend safely and they come and stand and testify to the fearsome and confounding sight, the like of which is not in all the palaces of kings of flesh and blood. ...

(HR §218) $\text{ⲓ} \text{Ⲛ} \text{Ⲥ} \text{Ⲛ}$ RWSY' Y YHWH God of Israel covets and waits in the same way that He waits for the redemption and for the time of salvation that is kept for Israel after the destruction of the former Temple. When will the descender descend to the chariot? When will he feast his eyes on the majesties on high? When will he hear the end of salvation? When will he see *what eye has not seen* (Isa 64:4) and ascend and report to the seed of Abraham His beloved?

(Hekhalot Zutarti §349//361//G7) And what mortal is it who is able
to ascend on high,
to ride on wheels,
to descend below,
to search out the inhabited world,
to walk on the dry land,
to gaze at His splendor,
to dwell with His crown,
to be transformed by His glory,
to recite praise,
to combine letters,
to recite their names,
to have a vision of what is above,
to have a vision of what is below,
to know the explanation of the living,
and to see the vision of the dead,
to walk in rivers of fire,
and to know the lightning?

(HZ §366//496) R. Akiva said:

I had a vision of and I observed the whole inhabited world, and I saw it as it is. I ascended in a wagon of fire and I gazed on the palaces of hail and I found GRWSQ' GRWSQ' that sits on the burning sea. ...

(G8 2b.13b-17) And see the Youth, who goes forth to meet you from behind the throne of glory. Do not worship him, for his crown is like the crown of his King, the sandals on his feet are like the sandals of his King, his shirt is like the shirt of his King, and a garment of stone is girded on his loins. The sun is poured from the belt in front of him and the moon from the knots behind him. His eyes kindle like torches, and his eyeballs kindle like lamps. His splendor is like the splendor of his King, and his adornment is like the adornment of his Creator. ZHWBDYH is his name. And behold he takes [you] by your hand and seats you on his lap. It is not just that you entered with his permission; but he has seated others on the seat that is prepared before [the throne of] glory. This is the praxis of the sign of the seventh palace.

(Siddur Rabba, Shi'ur Qomah text)²³ Every single day the Youth praises three times, every day, and he dispenses some of his splendor and his adornment²⁴ upon the princes of the peoples of the world.

(HR §101) As soon as all those on high see that He is coming on the firmament that is over the heads of the cherubim and over the heads of the ophanim and over the heads of the holy living creatures, they shake and are confounded and overcome, and they fall backward. For no creature is able to approach within a hundred eighty-five thousand myriad parasangs of that place because of the tendrils of fire that flow and go forth from the mouths of the cherubim and from the mouths of the ophanim and from the mouths of the holy living creatures who open their mouths, saying, "Holy" before Him, in the hour that Israel says before Him "Holy," according to the word that is said, Holy, holy, holy (Isa 6:3).

(HR §190) Abolishers of decree, annullers of oath, removers of wrath, ones who turn back jealousy, invokers of love, the love of Abraham, before their King, when they should see him angry concerning His sons over what they do, they put down their crowns and unbind their loins and smite upon their heads and fall on their faces and say: Unbind, unbind, O Former of primeval creation! Forgive, forgive, O Noble One of Jacob! Pardon, pardon, O Holy One of Israel, for You are most magnificent of kings!

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(*HR* §213) And at the gate of the seventh palace all the mighty ones stand raging; (they are) frightening, powerful, hard, fearsome, and confounding, higher than mountains and sharper than hills. Their bows are drawn, and in their hands are sharp swords. In their faces lightningbolts drip and go forth from their eyeballs, globes of fire from their nostrils, and torches of glowing coals from their mouths. They are wreathed (with) helmets and coats of mail and lances, and spears are hung on their arms for them.

(§214) Their horses are horses of darkness, horses of deep darkness, horses of gloom, horses of fire, horses of blood, horses of hail, horses of iron, horses of the misty cloud. The horses on which they ride stand over mangers of fire filled with glowing juniper coals, and they eat glowing coals out of their mangers, a measure of about forty seahs in one mouthful. And the measure of the mouth of every single horse is three times as much as the measure of the gate of the manger of Caesarea.

(§215) There are rivers of fire beside their mangers, and all their horses drink about the measure of the full canal of water that there is in the brook Kidron, which brings out and joins all the rainwater of Jerusalem. A cloud is there above their heads, dripping blood above their heads and the heads of their horses. So this is the nature and character of the guardians of the gate of the seventh palace, and such is the gate of every single palace.

(*HR* §107) R. Ishmael said:

It was on this day, the fifth in the week, when a harsh proclamation came from Rome, from the great capital of Rome, saying:

Take four of the eminent men of Israel, R. Shimon ben Gamaliel, R. Ishmael ben Elisha, R. Elazar ben Dama, and R. Yehudah ben Baba or seven thousand disciples of the wise from Jerusalem as their ransom.

(§108) When R. Nehuniah ben HaQanah saw this edict, he stood and he made me descend to the chariot. I made a request of Suriah, the Prince of the Presence, and he said to me:

The heavenly court wrote ten (people) and gave (them) to Sammael, the prince of Rome, saying:

Go and destroy *every good piece, thigh and shoulder* (Ezek 24:4) to complete the decree and *whoever steals a man, whether he sells him or is found in possession of him, shall be put to death* (Exod 21:16), and keep it for him as vengeance so as to take vengeance on him, until it reaches (him). *YHWH will deal with the host of the height on high* (Isa 24:21) so that he is slaughtered and hurled down along with all of the princes of the kingdoms on high, like the young cattle and sheep of the Day of Atonement.

(§109) R. Ishmael said:

All these legal warnings and all the stipulations of conditions legally forewarned him and made an agreement with Sammael the wicked and he said:

I accept (this) upon myself. Now let them destroy these ten eminent men.

(§110) R. Ishmael said:

What did ZHRRY' L YHWH God of Israel do in that hour? He did not allow (him) the opportunity, saying to a scribe:

Write decrees and great, powerful, harsh, and fearsome smittings, heavy confoundings, and disgraces against wicked Rome, because of the wrath that is fulfilled against Sammael, which he received against himself - all these stipulations of conditions.

But at once he took a blank parchment and he wrote. And thus he wrote for the day of future vengeance and the keeping for Rome the wicked:

A single cloud shall ascend and shall stand above Rome and shall send down raw boils for six months on human beings, cattle, the silver, the gold, the fruit, and on all the vessels of cast metal. And afterward another cloud shall ascend and shall thrust aside its fellow (cloud) and shall stand in its place for six months and shall send down plague, leprosy, sores, blemishes, and all kinds of plagues, all of them, upon wicked Rome, until a time comes when a man shall say to his friend:

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Look, wicked Rome - she and all that is in her - is yours for a single peturah.

But he shall say:

It is not sought by me.

^(§111)R. Ishmael said:

When I came and made know this testimony from before the throne of glory, all the companions rejoiced and made that day before R. Nehuniah ben HaQanah a day of feasting and merriment. Moreover, the president said in his happiness:

Let all kinds of musical instruments be gathered before us and let us drink wine with them, because in the future ZHRRY ' L YHWH, God of Israel, will carry out vengeance, wonders, and wonders of wonders against her - against wicked Rome - so let us rejoice with the merriment of the lute and reed pipe.

^(§112)R. Ishmael said:

What did the heavenly court do in that hour? They commanded the angels of destruction and they descended and wrought the decreed annihilation against Lupinus Caesar and in his whole palace he had no survivor or fugitive. And Ripa, the wife of his youth, and all his ladies and all his maidservants and all his concubines were thrown down and torn apart, and all his sons and all the sons of his household, and everyone beloved in his sight were thrown down before him.

^(§113)R. Ishmael said:

What did they do to that wicked man? They disgraced him and ruined him with his dead, because they were thrown down before him. When any creature extended his hand to take away one of the dead of Lupinus Caesar in order to place it on the bier so as to take it out to bury it, the Abyss would swallow it. But when he withdrew his hand from it, the Abyss would expel it and it would be thrown down before him. Moreover, they decomposed and stank in every palace of his kingdom and he was put to shame before the officials of the kingdoms who were coming in and going out.

^(§117)R. Ishmael said:

Suriah, cherished Prince of the Presence, said to me:

I say to you, all this shame and all this disgrace (came) to this wicked man. Why? Because he made an edict against R. Hanniah ben Tardion, since the day upon which it was written to kill him had arrived. They said to him:

My lord Caesar, relent concerning this wise man so that he not be executed.

He said:

He and all the sons of his household shall die, even though all Rome be cut off with him. I will not relent!

^(§118)R. Ishmael said:

Suriah, cherished Prince of the Presence, uttered to me:

I say to you, why was the vigor of this wicked man strong? Because he is from the genealogical line of Esau the wicked, therefore his heart is powerful, strong, and harsh.

^(§119)R. Ishmael said:

Suriah, cherished Prince of the Presence, uttered to me:

I say to you, do not be grieved by this situation, by which you are departing to your grave, since ZHRRY ' L YHWH, God of Israel, has already filled His mouth with peals of laughter over this wicked man. He said:

(I swear by) the adornment, majesty, and fearsome Temple in which I dwell, and the throne of My glory on which is my dignity, that I am not leaving alone one who is called uncircumcised until I cause this wicked man to taste the taste of flame and fire and the glowing coals of the cherubim, the ophanim, and the holy living creatures in the midst of Gehenna by the hands of R. Hanniah ben Tardion.

^(§120)R. Ishmael said:

Suriah, beloved Prince of the Presence, uttered to me:

I say to you, what did the pure adornment, splendor, adornment, ' WRYHM YHWH, God of Israel, do in that hour? He commanded me and I descended and banished and thrust out Lupinus Caesar from his palace where he was asleep at night and I carried him into a house of a herd of swine and dogs. And I brought R. Hananiah ben Tardion in and I carried him into the palace of Lupinus Caesar. The next day the executioners came who had received orders concerning R. Hananiah ben Tardion, saying:

He sits and performs wonders in the school and sits and teaches Torah to the eminent men of Israel. Chop off his head!

Lupinus Caesar appeared to them as R. Nehuniah ben HaQanah and they cut off his head. But R. Nehuniah ben HaQanah was within his house. And R. Hananiah ben Tardion bound on the crown of kingship and he was king over wicked Rome with the facial appearance of Lupinus Caesar for six months. And he killed in (that time) six thousand generals - a thousand generals each month. Then He restored him in the form of R. Hanniah ben Tardion to the sons of Rome the wicked. They took him and threw him into the fire. But whom did they throw into the fire instead of R. Hananiah ben Tardion? Lupinus! After they killed him, they restored and brought him back to life in the heavenly law court, and they took him and threw him into the fire and he was in the asphyxiation within the burning. It happened in this way for all ten of the sages of Israel.