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# From Here to the Hereafter: The Ashkenazi Concept of the Afterlife in a Crusading Milieu

A comparison of early rabbinic views on the afterlife with those presented in the three Hebrew narratives that pertain to the Crusader massacres of Ashkenazi Jews during the First Crusade reveals several significant changes in the views of the latter. The purpose of this article is to identify and explain these shifts in Ashkenazi thinking.<sup>1</sup>

Basing itself on several biblical verses and their elaborated commentary, rabbinic Judaism canonized the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, or, in its own terminology, as *teḥiyyat ha-metim*. *Teḥiyyat ha-metim* is a stage in the eschatological drama that will usher in the new post-historical age of '*olam ha-ba*' ('the world to come'). '*Olam ha-ba*' has both spatial and temporal meanings. At the end of the messianic era, God will raise the physical bodies of the dead from the grave so that they can receive their punishment or reward in a restored physical world.

The Mishna in *Sanhedrin* 10.1 makes this point in an explicit fashion. Except for those who do not believe in resurrection, and that resurrection is from the Torah, and those who are 'Epicureans', all Israel have a share in the age to come, and 'they shall inherit the *land* (*areṣ*) forever' (emphasis mine).<sup>2</sup> Also telling is the association made (*yBer.* 5.2; *Genesis Rabba* 13.6) between rain or dew and resurrection. The dead will rise from the grave as the rain revives nature. The dead will break through the soil and rise up in their own clothes in Jerusalem 'like grass of the earth' (*bKetub.* 111b). The physical nature of resurrection in a terrestrial world is further demonstrated by the claim that those who die outside the Land of Israel will not live again, or by the counter claim (*Pesikta Rabbati* 1.6, *bKetub.* 111a–b) that God will create tunnels for the righteous, so that their bodies can roll all the way up to the Land of Israel from

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1 The Hebrew narratives are in Eva Haverkamp, *Hebräische Berichte über die Judenverfolgungen während des Ersten Kreuzzugs*. Monumenta Germaniae Historica 1 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2005).

2 Attempts to support the rabbinic claim that resurrection is from the Torah can be found in *bSanh.* 90b–92a. See also Lieberman's article, 'Some Aspects of After Life in Rabbinic Literature', in Harry Austryn Wolfson and Saul Lieberman, *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume: On the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday: English Section* (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1965), 2:495–532.

wherever their graves are found, in order to be resurrected. These are recurrent motifs in numerous discussions, some of which will be discussed below.

Of course, rabbinic views must be approached with great caution. Contradicting opinions and concepts are common. But even when the neoplatonic concept of an existing dichotomy between the transitory body and the eternal soul does emerge in rabbinic texts, the physical resurrection of the dead in a terrestrial world stands its ground. Indeed, similarly to the neoplatonic notion of the ‘world-soul’ (ψυχὴ κόσμου; *anima mundi*) that is reunited with the *vouç* or the ‘One’,<sup>3</sup> rabbinic texts maintain that the soul returns to the treasury of all souls after death.<sup>4</sup> But this is a temporary location for the soul.<sup>5</sup> In the time to come, God will restore the soul to the body because the two are not mutually exclusive. The body will rise from the earth, while the soul will descend from heaven in order to face divine judgement. Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Nasi is said to have explained this principle to Antoninus in the parable of the king and the watchman over his orchard: the body and soul are to face judgement before the King as one entity (*bSanh.* 91a–b).

Another attempt to explain this synthesis may be found in the teachings of R. Yehoshu‘a b. Levi:

At every word which went forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, the souls of Israel departed, for it is said, My soul went forth when he spake [Cant 5:6]. But since **their souls** departed at the first word, how could they receive the second word? – He brought down the dew with which He will **resurrect the dead and revived them**, as it is said, ‘Thou, **O God, didst send a plentiful rain**, Thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary’ [Ps 68:10]’ [*bŠabb.* 88b, according to the Soncino translation].

A conflation of the two views, with the emphasis on bodily resurrection, has lasted to this day in Orthodox and traditional texts. The early morning benediction praises God ‘who restores souls to the dead’. The *gevurot*, the second blessing of the ‘*amida*, reads ‘O Lord, You revive the dead’ ..., ‘cause salvation to sprout’ ... and ‘restore life to the dead’, thus mentioning God’s ability to restore life three times. These prayers further demonstrate the centrality in rabbinic teaching of physical resurrection taking place in a terrestrial environment.

This, however, does not seem to be the case in the Hebrew accounts of the First Crusade. Employing the language of the Bible, Talmud, and various

<sup>3</sup> *Enneads*, III.4.2; IV.1.21; IV.7.2; IV.8.6 in the Loeb edition of Plotinus translated by A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge, Harvard University Press; London, Heinemann, 1966–1988).

<sup>4</sup> On other signs of pagan influence see again Lieberman, ‘Some Aspects of After Life in Rabbinic Literature’, especially pp. 509, 512–13.

<sup>5</sup> For example *bHag.* 12b; further discussion below.

*midrashim*, these narratives present a unique and rather systematic theology of a celestial afterlife. The characteristics of this system are: 1) a clear shift of the afterlife from a terrestrial to a heavenly location; 2) the transportation of the dead from here to the hereafter in an instant, not in the distance future with the ‘world-to-come’ referring to a heavenly realm rather than a temporal event; 3) a clear depiction of the nature and structure of heaven; 4) all the dead forming a living community in heaven; and 5) the activities of the dwellers in heaven, both as individuals and as a group, being made transparent.<sup>6</sup>

The references to heaven are numerous and the imagery is rich. Heaven is where the martyrs who sanctified God’s Name receive their rewards. The transition from the terrestrial to the celestial world takes place ‘in a brief moment’. In such a moment, a world of darkness is exchanged for a world of light, a world of sorrow for one of joy, a transitory world for an eternal one. The enemy’s sword may strike at anytime. But it cannot kill because the indissoluble soul continues to exist eternally in the luminous speculum of the Garden of Eden.<sup>7</sup>

When reading medieval Hebrew texts, one must pay attention to the etymological use of words and how the authors play on these words. In a brief moment, the ‘Supreme God’ (*El ‘Elyon*) turned those victims on earth into ‘the pious on high’ (*hasidei ‘elyon*). The phrase *hasidei ‘elyon* functions on two levels. It describes the members of the Ashkenazi communities as most pious. At the same time, the phrase shows that the entire community ascended to heaven. *El ‘Elyon* and *hasidei ‘elyon* are taken literally to mean the dwellers in heaven. Calling the martyrs ‘burnt offerings’, *qorban ‘ola*, is another indication of the belief that they ascended to heaven. Those who sanctified the ‘Name of *El ‘Elyon*’ are in *‘olam ha-ba*; their souls are in *Gan ‘Eden*, bound up in the ‘bond of life’.<sup>8</sup>

An explicit desire to ascend to God is ascribed to Asher ben Yosef, the *gabbai*. Asher declared: ‘Let anyone among you of the people of the Lord – may God be with him – go up [*we-ya‘al*] (2 Chr 36:23; Ezra 1:3). Let anyone who wishes to receive the countenance of the Divine Presence [go up]. Behold, a world full of bounty in a brief moment.’ Upon hearing this, R. Meir ben Shemuel responded: ‘Wait for me! I wish to come with you, into a world that is entirely light.’<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> On the concept of the afterlife in these accounts see Shmuel Shepkaru, ‘From After Death to Afterlife: Martyrdom and Its Recompense’, *Association for Jewish Studies Review*, 24/1 (1999), pp. 1–44; ‘To Die for God: Martyrs’ Heaven in the Hebrew and Latin Crusade Narratives’, *Speculum*, 77 (2002), pp. 311–41.

<sup>7</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische Berichte*, pp. 325–27, 363, 431, 477.

<sup>8</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische Berichte*, pp. 289, 317, 389.

<sup>9</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische Berichte*, p. 477.

R. Eli'ezer bar Nathan concluded his account of the events in the Rhineland with the view that 'it was all at one time, from the month of Sivan till the month of Tammuz, that they [all the Jewish communities] *ascended to God* (*la'alot el ha-Elohim*) in sanctity and purity ... Their souls are bound in the bond of life in the King's sanctuary.'<sup>10</sup>

An emphasis on the existence and survival of the eternal soul did not prevent the narratives from ascribing to the heavenly dwellers material rewards. These material rewards imply that the dwellers of heaven have assumed a physical form. The devastation in the Rhineland, lamented the sources, turned the Jews naked, dressed only in horror. Their great golden crowns, a metaphor for their greatness, had fallen from their heads. Heaven represented a reversal of this troubled reality. In heaven, the dead entered the divine palace and ran to enjoy individual rewards. Each head was adorned by a golden crown, or even by two. Everyone received precious stones, golden necklaces, and golden thrones. Upon their entrance into the palace, they were dressed in the eight vestments from the clouds of glory.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the bestowal on them of individual rewards, they are described as a community in heaven. Such descriptions revolve around the 'meeting-again' motif. The entire community of Mainz, for instance, is said to have ascended to God (*la'alot el ha-Elohim*), all the members together, young and old, the learned and the lay folk, men and women, children, converts and slaves. The community of Speyer, lamented R. Eli'ezer bar Nathan, became beautiful on high (*ba'elyonim*), as it had been on earth.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the martyrs of 1096 and the relatives who will join them in the future, the community of heaven consists of past heroes. Abraham, Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael represent the biblical heroes in heaven. Talmudic and midrashic heroes are represented by R. Akiva and his companion, namely, the ten martyrs of the midrashic tradition, and more specifically R. Teradyon. The martyrs of 1096 could now join the martyrs of old in the heavenly palaces.<sup>13</sup>

Yet, the greatest reward in heaven was to be with God and have a vision of Him. A speech attributed to a certain Moshe in the town of Xanten contains the celestial motifs I have mentioned. Moshe urged the assembly to 'rise up and ascend to the house of the Lord' (Gen 35:3), a reference to both martyrdom

<sup>10</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische Berichte*, pp. 467–69 (emphasis mine).

<sup>11</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, p. 469. This description evokes several *midrashim* (see Haverkamp's notes there). The description opens with the ascension of all the Jewish martyrs to God.

<sup>12</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, in Mainz, p. 313; in Speyer, p. 265.

<sup>13</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, p. 325 and pp. 387–89, for example.

and reward. In return for their martyrdoms, Moshe promised his group, they would reside in the heavenly *Gan 'Eden*. There they would 'see him [God] eye to eye (*we-nirehu 'ayin be-'ayin*), in his actual glory and greatness ... Each one will point at God with his finger and say: Behold this is our God Whom we hoped for. Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.' [Isa 25:9; *bTa'an*. 31a].<sup>14</sup> The account then confirms that the martyrs' wish has been granted. They come before God. And what do they do in the innermost heavenly chamber? They gaze at God. Pertaining to these martyrs, continues the account, the prophet prophesied: 'No eye has seen God except you who act for him who wait for him' (Isa 64:3).<sup>15</sup>

This medieval account draws on a discussion in *bBer*. 34b about the nature of the messianic era, and what will take place in the Garden of Eden.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, it reveals an essential departure from the Talmud. The text in *bBer*. 34b, as several other talmudic discussions, employs Isa 64:3 to stress that the world to come is known only to God. Second, the medieval passage ascribes *heavenly rewards specifically to martyrs*. Finally, 'We shall see Him eye to eye' is another alteration by the twelfth-century Jewish author.<sup>17</sup> The biblical verse intended to show that no human being, but only God, has seen God's terrifying wonders that humans dare not hope for. In the medieval syntax this verse is read as, 'No eye has seen God, except you ...', i.e., the martyrs.

What this reading suggests is that heaven is a hierarchical structure. Personal merit determines one's position in this hierarchy. Martyrs who stood the test like Abraham

shall be of that *section* (*kat*), preferred by Him more than any other. They are destined to *stand and sit in the shadow of the Holy One, standing on His right*. Regarding them, the verse states: In Your presence is bounteous (*sova'*) joy, delights are ever in *Your right [hand]* (Ps 16:11). Read not 'bounteous' (*sova'*) but 'seven' (*sheva'*). These are the *seven sections of the saintly ones*, each [section] ranking above the other ...<sup>18</sup>

High in the hierarchy of heaven are the martyrs. But as the last two quotations suggest, not all martyrs receive equal recompense. Only the martyrs that stood

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<sup>14</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, p. 437. On the events on Xanten see Eva Haverkamp, 'Martyrs in Rivalry: the 1096 Jewish martyrs and the Theban Legion', *Jewish History*, 23.4 (2009), pp. 323–27.

<sup>15</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, pp. 439–41.

<sup>16</sup> *bTa'an*. 31a does not refer to the dead; it is a description of the end of days.

<sup>17</sup> In contrast, *bBer*. 10a: 'As the Holy One, blessed be He, sees but cannot be seen'. Also *Midrash Tehillim* to Ps 103:1; p. 217a: 'The Holy One, blessed be He, sees the works of His hands but they cannot see Him'. This is, of course, one of the talmudic opinions.

<sup>18</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, p. 459. See *Leviticus Rabba*, 30.2. See also *Numbers Rabba* 15.11 for 'seven' and *sova'* in the context of the messianic era.

the test, like Abraham, enter God's preferred section. In our texts, Abraham's test, the *'aqeda*, is the one that applies to those who have sacrificed loved ones. In this section dwell those who chose active martyrdom for themselves and those who agreed to be sacrificed. Unlike in the other active sections, existence in the preferred section is marked by inactivity. In contrast to the situation in other sections, these dwellers do not appear to be aware of each other. The interaction here appears to be mainly between the individuals and God.

Missing in these medieval accounts is the older rabbinic views of physical resurrection. The phrase *teḥiyyat ha-metim* and its variants are missing. Nor are there attempts to conflate the two rabbinic visions of the terrestrial resurrection and the celestial afterlife. Moreover, the medieval accounts make use of rabbinic texts, which do mention resurrection, but omit the rabbinic references to *teḥiyyat ha-metim*.

Take, for example, the aforementioned martyrs of Xanten. Before undergoing martyrdom, they are reported to have recited the Grace after Meals. The Grace after Meals mentions the *'olam ha-ba* of the messianic era and alludes to resurrection, based on a talmudic exposition of the patriarchs' blessing 'with everything in everything'. In *bB. Bat.* 16b–17a, the phrase indicates that even the patriarchs were granted only an inkling of the world to come, and that the denial of bodily resurrection is a cardinal transgression. As everyone else, the patriarchs had to wait for their resurrection in the world to come. The speech of the medieval rabbi ignores such references and speaks only of the heavenly realms.

Let us now deal with other celestial images in our texts, such as the seven heavens, the seven sects, God's treasure, and the treasures of life. Several talmudic and midrashic discussions could have inspired our medieval texts. In several places (as on Lev 30:2 and Num 15:11) *Midrash Rabba* refers to God's creating the groups (כתות) of the those who sing before Him in heaven. Equally important in these discussions is the promise that God will resurrect the dead.

According to R. Yehuda, 'There are two firmaments, for it is said: Behold, unto the Lord thy God belongeth heaven, and the heaven of heavens' (*bḤag.* 12b–13a). Resh Laqish added that there are seven heavens. God did not create these heavens for humans. In the heaven called *ma'on* ('a dwelling place'), dwell the sections (כתות) of the ministering angels who praise God night and day. Additionally, the discussion distinguishes between celestial and terrestrial treasures. The first are reserved entirely for God, the second 'are to be found on earth'. Those who study Torah in this world will receive in the next world *ḥesed* ('loving-kindness'), a term associated with resurrection or life in the

*gevurot* prayer. God's resurrection of the dead is His greatest act of *hesed*. The tractate affirms the biblical view that Heaven is God's exclusive dwelling place. The treasury of life in heaven (*'aravot*) is where 'the souls of the righteous and the spirits and the souls that are yet to be born' are located. The treasury of life is designated as 'the fountain of life'. More significant is the promise that God 'will hereafter revive the dead', like the dew revives the earth, because the souls of the righteous originate in Him (*bHag*. 12b). The medieval texts have left out such references to resurrection.

Tractate *bŠab*. 152b also states in the name of R. Eli'ezer, 'The souls of the righteous are hidden under the Throne of Glory ... they shall be bound up in the bond of life' (1 Sam 25:29). The discussion, however, concludes with R. Mari's view that [even] the righteous are fated to be dust and return to the earth from which they originated. But eventually God will 'open your graves' and one hour before the resurrection of the dead the body will reappear intact to be resurrected. That passage in *bŠab*. gave the medieval authors another possible reason to link the notion of 'the bond of life' with bodily resurrection. They chose not to do so.

Two questions now occur: 1. How can this sudden and unique booming of heavenly imagery be explained? 2. Why did the medieval accounts disregard resurrection, even though the rabbinic texts they appear to have incorporated do mention resurrection?

A comparison between the Hebrew accounts of the First Crusade and the Latin Crusade narratives reveal a great deal of resemblance.<sup>19</sup> As in the Hebrew accounts, the Christian accounts promised the Crusaders personal rewards should they die in their holy war against the Muslims. It was believed that, upon death, Crusaders would ascend to heaven, also called 'the celestial paradise', or the luminous speculum, immediately to obtain everlasting life. Regardless of how or why they died, all were considered martyrs and holy living sacrifices for God. In his call for the First Crusade, Pope Urban the Second labeled potential casualties the proper sacrifice (*recta quidem oblatio*).<sup>20</sup> And, therefore, those who 'gave up their souls to God with joy and gladness' deserved celestial recompense.<sup>21</sup>

The Latin accounts note the same kind of material rewards as found in the Hebrew accounts. The bodies of the Christian martyrs were preserved in

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<sup>19</sup> See again, Shepkaru, 'To Die for God'.

<sup>20</sup> In his letter to the Monks of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. Robert Somerville, *The Councils of Urban II, i: Decreta Claromontensia* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1972), p. 74.

<sup>21</sup> *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*, ed. and trans. by Rosalind Hill (London: Nelson, 1962), p. 17.

heaven. In body, they are reported to have descended to help their comrades fight the Muslims. The 'meeting-again' motif is at play. Crusaders were believed to re-unite in heaven with their fallen comrades and with their heroes of the past. Biblical heroes, such as the patriarchs, especially Abraham, as well as Daniel, are among the shared icons. As in the Hebrew accounts, fallen Crusaders could find their bliss in the 'companion of the saintly'. The supreme heavenly reward took place in the presence of God. As with the Jewish martyrs, the Christian martyrs received their seats at the right hand of God. They could see him face to face and enjoy the *Viso Dei*.<sup>22</sup>

Such celestial rewards were received according to merit. This meant that the Jewish and Christian heavens shared a similar hierarchy. Those who died together on earth sat together in heaven; those who sacrificed the most, sitting with God. The highest level in heaven, thus, is marked by contemplation and inactivity.

To be sure, the correspondence between the Jewish and the Christian images was not accidental. Already the gospel of Luke (Luke 16:22) made it clear that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was the God of the living patriarchs. They are alive with God. When the poor man Lazarus died, he was carried by the angels into the bosom of Abraham. Medieval Christian accounts applied similar stories to Crusaders and placed the martyrs in the bosom of Abraham (*in sinu Abrahe*).<sup>23</sup> The Hebrew accounts also placed Jewish martyrs in the bosom of Abraham (*be-ḥeqo shel Avraham avinu*).<sup>24</sup> This is in contrast to some talmudic sayings, and especially to the saying of the Palestinian *amora*, R. Pinḥas ben Ḥama. According to R. Pinḥas, 'If the patriarchs had wished that their resting place should be in the above realm, they could have had it there: but it was here below, when they died and the rock closed on their tombs, that they deserved to be called saints' (*Midrash Tehillim* 16.2). While R. Pinḥas wished to refute a contemporaneous Christian view of the patriarchs in heaven, the medieval Jewish author recognized the value of this view for his own purposes.

Another parallel is the presentation of martyrdom as weddings or celebrations. Martyrdom was not a tragedy. After the battle of Antioch in June 1098, Emperor Alexius wrote to the Abbot of Monte Cassino that the dead continued living in their celestial 'Eternal Tabernacle' and, therefore, 'we ought not at all to consider them as dead, but as living and transported to eternal and

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<sup>22</sup> Shepkaru, 'To Die for God', pp. 315, 320, 322.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, publié par John Hugh Hill et Laurita Hill (Paris: Geuthner, 1977), pp. 79–81. Shepkaru, 'To Die for God', p. 321.

<sup>24</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, pp. 285, 431.



incorruptible life' (*sed ut uiuos et in uitam aeternam atque incorruptibilem transmigratos*).<sup>25</sup> A contemporary Hebrew liturgical poem by a certain R. Avraham admonished: 'We ought not question [the destiny of] the dead (*redumim*, literally, 'the sleeping'), for they have been set [placed?] and bonded in everlasting life.'<sup>26</sup> Avraham's designation of the dead as *redumim* appears to coincide with Peter Tudebode's use of the term. In his account of the First Crusade, Peter reported that Adhemar, Bishop of Le Puy,

by God's will fell mortally ill and by God's nod, resting in peace, fell asleep in the Lord (*obdormiuit in Domino*), namely, in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, on the Feast of Saint Peter in Chains (*in Abrahe uidelicet sinu et Isaac et Jacob, in sancti Petri a Vinculis Sollemnitate*). His most happy soul rejoiced with the angels.<sup>27</sup>

These illustrations, among others, reveal the influence that the crusading milieu had on the writing style and theological thinking in Ashkenaz. The notion of celestial recompense helped both Jews and Christians rationalize their many losses. They had to reassure their co-religionists that friends and loved ones did not die in vain. Better yet, Jews and Christians reassured their co-religionists that their heroes did not die at all. Heavenly recompense would vindicate both God and the dead.

Polemical exchanges between Jews and Christians made this question of theodicy even more acute. The issues of salvation and damnation stood at the core of such theological conflict. Christian doctrine offered postmortem salvation only to Christians. A Crusader slogan maintained that those who died in Christ's service never died.<sup>28</sup> Damnation was the fate of those who died unbaptized. The bodies of Christians might have been destroyed, but not their souls. Non-believers, however, died in body and soul. When the Crusaders, therefore, gave Jews the ultimatum of death or conversion, they did not offer them just life, but also eternal life. From the Christians' point of view, Jewish martyrdom, not to mention self-inflicted martyrdom and the taking of others' lives, resulted in damnation rather than salvation.

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<sup>25</sup> 'Epistula II Alexii I Komneni ad Oderisim I de Marsis abbatem Casinensem', in Heinrich Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae et Chartae ad Historiam Primi Belli Sacri Spectantes. Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1901, repr. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1973), p. 153.

<sup>26</sup> Abraham Meir Habermann and Yitzhak Baer, *Sefer Gezerot Ashkenaz We-Şarefat: divre zikhronot mi-benei ha-dorot shebi-tequmat masa'e ha-şelav u-mivhar piyyutehem* (Jerusalem: Sifre Tarshish and Mossad Harav Kook, 1945), p. 62.

<sup>27</sup> Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, p. 116.

<sup>28</sup> 'Equidem non moriuntur illi, qui in Christi servicio vitam finiunt.' Raymond of Aguilers, *Historia Francorum Qui Ceperunt Iherusalem in Le Liber De Raymond D'Aguilers*, published by John Hugh Hill et Laurita Hill (Paris: Geuthner, 1969), p. 109.

Bishop Egilbert urged the Jews of Trier to convert, but: 'if you persist in this faithlessness, you will lose your body as well as your soul.'<sup>29</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, who laboured to protect the Jews during the Second Crusade, restated this point. Those who died for the Lord are joined to the Lord. In contrast, 'he who dies without sacrificing his life to God, remains in death (*manet in morte*)'. Bernard believed that Israel would be saved when the time was ripe, because they would then acknowledge Christ. Those who die unbaptized before that time will remain in death.<sup>30</sup> Ashkenazi Jews were familiar with such Christian arguments and obviously could not accept them. Paradoxically, then, Jews adopted and adapted the very same Christian imagery of heaven to dispute the Christian anti-Jewish message that intended to keep them out of heaven.

The urgency to vindicate God and the dead, as well as the need to refute Christian arguments, made resurrection an unattractive proposition. The suffering and the potential doubts, triggered by the massacres, required an immediate solution for the Jewish victims, not a reward that might take place in an uncertain future and be determined by a tentative judgement.

Additionally, the Hebrew narratives often mention the attackers' systematic practice of mutilating Jewish bodies, and leaving them unburied. The Latin documents confirm this claim.<sup>31</sup> Such mutilation and lack of burial might have complicated the mechanics of resurrection in the minds of the Jews. Early Christian martyrologies struggled with similar questions.<sup>32</sup> Some suggested Abraham's bosom as an interim place for the martyrs. Others preferred heaven as the best alternative solution to resurrection.<sup>33</sup>

Moreover, many of the Jewish replies to the offers of conversion emphasize, in unflattering terms, Jesus's mortality and the destruction of his body.

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<sup>29</sup> *Gesta Treverorum*, MGH S. 8:190–91 and *Patrologiae Cursus Completus Latina*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne and Georg Heinrich (Paris: Garnier, 1881), p. 154: 1207a–b.

<sup>30</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, 'De Laude Novae Militiae Templi Liber', *Sancti Bernardi Opera* (Rome: Ed. Cisterciensis, 1963), 3:215 and Letter 363, 8:316.

<sup>31</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, pp. 275–77, 283–85, 361, 369, 389, 433. Regarding the Jewish martyrs in Xanten, Eva Haverkamp has suggested that the same burial motif is followed in Sigebert's *Passio* about the Christian martyrs there. 'Martyrs in Rivalry: the 1096 Jewish martyrs and the Theban Legion', *Jewish History* 23.4 (2009), 323–7. A poem by R. Abraham depicts similar episodes of men and women being dragged naked in Mainz, Habermann, *Sefer Gezerot*, p. 62. This is also confirmed by the *Annalista Saxo*, MGH S. 37:491. '... eratque miseria spectare multos et magnos occisorum acervos efferri in plaustris de civitate Mogontia.'

<sup>32</sup> See for example, the story of the Christian martyrs of Lyon by Eusebius, *History of the Church*, 5:1.

<sup>33</sup> Jerome Baschet, 'Medieval Abraham: Between Fleshly Patriarch and Divine Father', *Modern Language Notes*, 108 (1993), pp. 738–58.

David, the *gabbai*, for instance, rejected his attackers' proposal to believe in the 'crucified one' and proclaimed his belief in a God who lives forever and resides in the highest heavens.<sup>34</sup> Such replies conveyed not only a refusal to convert, but also a refutation of the attackers' belief in Jesus's sacrifice and resurrection. Apparently, the Crusaders demanded of the potential converts that they proclaim their belief in the living Jesus. At al-Barah, for example, the Crusaders offered captured Muslims their lives, if they would agree to be baptized and acknowledge the living Christ as the saviour.<sup>35</sup> Another reason for the absence of resurrection in the Hebrew accounts may be found in its theological function in Christianity, during the Crusade in particular. Pope Urban II compared the First Crusade to Jesus's passion and resurrection.<sup>36</sup> The Holy Land in the hands of Muslims was in a state of death. The recapture of Jerusalem equalled Jesus's resurrection. One Crusader joined the campaign to 'seek that sepulchre from which our redemption, having overcome death, wished to arise'.<sup>37</sup> A sermon on Christ's ascension and resurrection motivated the Crusaders during their march to the Mount of Olives.<sup>38</sup> When Jesus, in a vision, asked the priest Stephen 'What do these Christians believe?', the latter replied: 'They believe that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary and endured agony on the Cross, died, was buried, rose from the grave on the third day (*et resurrexissetercia die*) and ascended to heaven'.<sup>39</sup> Even when Jesus himself reportedly promised the Crusaders a seat with him on God's right, the Latin text still maintained that Jesus's resurrection occurred first (*post resurrectionem*).<sup>40</sup>

A Latin account describes the capture of Jerusalem in the following terms: 'A new day, new gladness, new and everlasting happiness ... This day ... changed our grief and struggles into gladness and rejoicing ... This is the day which the Lord has made; we shall rejoice and be glad in it (Isa 25:9; Ps 118:24) ... because on this day God shone upon us and blessed us (Ex. 32:29). At this time we also chanted the Office of the Resurrection (*officium de resur-*

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34 Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, p. 371.

35 Robert the Monk, 'Historia Iherosolimitana', *RHC Oc.* 3:840.

36 Guibert of Nogent, *RHC Oc.*, 4:137–39. In a letter, Urban complained about the Muslims' control of those Christian sites that were glorified by Jesus's passion and resurrection. Urban urged the Crusaders to re-establish Christianity in the Holy City. Hagenmeyer, *Epistulae*, p. 136.

37 Abbaye de Saint-Vincent du Mans, Robert Charles, and Samuel Georges Jean Maurice Menjot d'Elbenne. *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Vincent du Mans (ordre de Saint Benoît)* (Mamers: Imprimerie Fleury, 1886), 1:69.

38 'in locum unde Dominus post resurrectionem ascendit in celum ...'. Raymond D'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, p. 145.

39 Raymond D'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, p. 73.

40 Raymond D'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, p. 114.

rectione), since on this day he, who by his might, arose from the dead (*mortuis resurrexit*), restored us through his kindness.<sup>41</sup> The restoration of Jerusalem was believed to have been made possible because of Jesus's resurrection. Through the Crusades, God's kingdom in Jerusalem was resurrected.

The Hebrew accounts also used the very same verses from Ps 118: 'This is the day ...' and from Ex. 32:29: 'the Lord this day ... bestow a blessing upon us this day' (*we-latet 'alenu ha-yom berakha*).<sup>42</sup> Unlike the function of these verses in the Latin account, their use in the Hebrew account demonstrated the martyrs' jubilation with their sacrificial act and their transportation to the new heavenly Jerusalem. The centrality of resurrection in proving Jesus's divinity, the Christian theological fusion of martyrdom and resurrection, and the association of resurrection with the revival of Christianity in the Holy Land, I suspect, gave the Hebrew accounts additional reasons to omit the topic of resurrection.

The choice of the Jewish author to use the same verses to shift the location and nature of victory was probably not accidental. In the war of words, it was crucial for each side not only to ratify its own beliefs, but also to refute those of others. On several occasions, the Jewish martyrs are said to have ridiculed the ideas of Jesus's immaculate conception, his death, the destruction of his body, his resurrection and his ascension.<sup>43</sup> They proclaimed that Jesus had descended to hell and scorned the absurdity of the belief in a doomed dead man. The Jewish texts made these assertions without actually mentioning the word resurrection, in a Christian or a Jewish context. For the same reason, the Hebrew texts refused to acknowledge the Crusaders' victory in Jerusalem, or the 'resurrection' of Christianity in the Holy City, as the Christians saw it. The Jewish denial was a response to the Christian theological argument that compared the Crusaders' victory to Christ's resurrection in order to prove that God was on their side. The need to reward the Ashkenazi victims instantly on the one hand, and to deprive the Crusaders' victory of any theological meaning on the other, prompted the Hebrew chronicles to favour the ethereal, but instant, heaven over the corporeal, but distant, resurrection as the place of bliss for their martyrs.

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<sup>41</sup> Raymond D'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, p. 151.

<sup>42</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, 437.

<sup>43</sup> Haverkamp, *Hebräische*, pp. 253, 333, 353. See also Anna Sapir Abulafia, 'Invectives against Christianity in the Hebrew Chronicles of the First Crusade', in *Crusade and Settlement: Papers Read at the First Conference of the Society for the Study of Crusades and the Latin East and Presented to R. C. Smail*, ed. by R. C. Smail and P. W. Edbury (Cardiff: University College Cardiff Press, 1985), pp. 66–72.