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The Attitude Toward Sickness, Dying and Death
As Expressed in the Liturgical Works
Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayim

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Chapter I

The purpose of this thesis is to compare and contrast the two liturgical works Sefer Hahayiim and Maavor Yabok as to their attitudes toward the sick and dying, and toward sickness and death.

My interest in such liturgical works arose out of my chaplaincy work with the sick and dying. I was curious to know how the Jewish tradition viewed sickness and death during different eras and in different places. I first studied the card catalogue of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, in both New York and Cincinnati, attempting to discover what liturgical texts and handbooks on customs were available in this area. I found that these two texts had more published editions than any other works in this area of manuals for the sick and dying. In the library at Cincinnati, there were about twenty editions of Sefer Hahayiim and about fifteen printed editions of Maavor Yabok. Such acceptance, as shown by their numerous editions, demonstrates the importance and influence of these works. This, then, was the first reason for a study of these texts, over others in this field. A second reason came from a quick survey of the other handbooks for the sick and dying. A reading of the title pages and introductions to these works demonstrates that many of them borrowed freely from these works. They were seen, therefore, as basic and primary hand-

books. (See bibliography for the titles of these other texts.)

The most complete and detailed study of these hand-books and the communal groups from which they arose, is the work Communal Sick-Care in the German Ghetto by Jacob P. Marcus. He determines that these and other liturgical collections for the sick and dying were the products of Holy Brotherhoods. These brotherhoods developed amid the historical and sociological turmoil of the middle ages, beginning primarily in the late 16th century. They moved from Spain, after the Inquisition, first to Italy and Palestine, where cabbalistic influence increased, and then to Northern Europe. These brotherhoods did not become fully developed structures until their appearance in Italy. The early years in Spain and Palestine might therefore be considered the formative years. As Marcus describes the early developments of this movement:

The Spanish expulsions brought about another trend which undoubtedly played a part in stimulating the creations of Brotherhoods in Italy. During the same century, the sixteenth, that Spanish Jews brought the confraternity idea to Italy, others were developing a cabbalistic school of thought in Palestine, a school of thought which laid great emphasis on the spiritual meaning of death, and on the protection of the soul before and after departure from the body. This concentration on the spiritual care of the dying and of the dead expressed itself in special liturgies for the death-bed which were developed in classical form during the period 1615-1710. (1)

The earliest of these manuals was Maaneh Lashon which was printed in 1615. By 1800 it had gone through some forty

editions.² It was not included for discussion in this thesis as it concentrated primarily on the prayers for the dead, and less on the prayers for the sick and dying. Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayiim, however, discuss all of these areas.

On the popularity of Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayiim Marcus writes:

Only two editions of this work appeared before 1800, but at least eighteen editions in abbreviated form - Kizzur Maabar Yabbok - appeared from 1682 to 1800.... The Kizzur Maabar Yabbok was the standard liturgical work of its type, and was widely used, not only in Italy, but throughout the German lands where it appeared under a variety of Hebrew names.... It was not until the turn of the 18th century that there appeared the Sefer Hahayiim which was to become one of the most popular works of this type. (3)

Of the two texts under consideration, Maavor Yabok is the earlier. It was published in 1626 in Mantua, Italy. Its author was Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena who died in 1639. Marcus mentions that its date and Italian origin suggest that it was under the early influence of the Holy Brotherhoods, and their cabbalistic rituals and liturgies for the sick and dying.

From the prefatory remarks to the book and Berechiah's own introduction, there seems to have been a group of Mantuans who cared for the sick and dying. This group appears under the name of מַעֲרִי הַשָּׁחַר.⁴ Berechiah first published a book for this group entitled מַשְׁמַרֵת הַבּוֹקֵר in 1624. The book is composed of various prayers and biblical readings to be read each day by this group of "early risers". Less than ten pages of this book are devoted to prayers for the sick and

dying. In Maavor Yabok, both in the liturgical and explanatory sections, Berechiah makes reference to this earlier work.

Of the situation in Mantua, with which Berechiah came into contact, and as to why he wrote this work, he writes:

Oh, how happy I am but to be these few days in glorious Mantua, in the midst of this holy community, and with the congregations of Italy.... I have seen there, in particular, how many of the people correct their past deeds, and how many make their crooked paths straight by taking care of the dead and participating as members in groups of Gemilut Hasadim. But also there are many of them who are not involved in Mishnah, Gemara, and Halacha, and who are not engaged in every aspect of the great commandment of taking care of the dead. I recently overheard that the community desired that one of its members undertake the task of arranging for them a prayerbook, so that they could join in song and prayer at the time of the going out of the soul. (5)

As to his ultimate goal for this book, he writes:

I composed new ideas and different explanations... to offer them as an offering and as incense in love and in reverence before the holy congregations, in order that it will make a way in the midst of the shaking worlds,... a bridge from the world of change and destruction with its sinful heavenly condition to be joined with the pleasures of Unity, Blessing, and Holiness... and will pass the fjord of Yabok to wrestle with the Lord, a man of war, until the dawn, that is resurrection /within the context of this work the word מְחִיָּה should actually be translated as 'immortality' rather than 'resurrection' / for then our soul and body will no longer be called Jacob, but rather Israel, in that we will be a kingdom of priests and we will be worthy of seeing God face to face. (6)

These remarks and others in the introduction imply that the community as a whole, and the charitable groups in particular, were in need of direction which an authoritative manual would supply. Berechiah saw his work as fulfilling this

purpose.

In his introduction, Berechiah does not mention any previous tradition in which a special significance was attached to the phrase "maavor yabok". This phrase comes from parasha ויסלח , Genesis 33:22. It was the fjord over which Jacob brought his family to safety, before going to meet Essau. As to the significance of this title in the thematic development of the book, Berechiah writes:

in the first section a man will learn to awaken his creator by confession, prayer, and repentance as demonstrated by the yod of Yabok, that refers to the word יחוד . The second section is to bring a blessing to the soul and body... as demonstrated by the bet of Yabok, that refers to the word ברכה . And by the third section a man will sanctify himself ... the kof of Yabok refers to the word קדושה . (7)

The word "section" refers to more than just a "part" of the book, it refers to a "theme", as there are five parts to the book, and not just three. In a most general way, these themes could be seen as a part of the book.

Sefer Hahayiim was written by Simon Frankfurter of Amsterdam, who was born in Schwerin, Poland, and who died in 1712 in Amsterdam. The first edition of the book was printed in 1703, in two volumes, under the titles of Dine Semahot and Alle Dinim von Freuden. The second edition was printed in 1716, in one volume, by Simon's son Moses. The third edition, which was printed in 1717, is the edition used for this thesis.

From Frankfurter's history, as presented in his

introduction, he left Poland in 1656 due to a decree of death issued by the government. Whether this was issued against him, or against his community, is not stated. He fled to Amsterdam where he remained with the writer R. Benjamin Jedid from Frankfort. He married Benjamin's daughter, and was brought into the former's group of Gemilut Hasadim. After thirty-eight years in this group, according to the introduction in Andachts-Buch by C. Rehfuss, Simon began to study the works of the Geonim, of the various groups of Gemilut Hasadim, the statements of the "sages", the midrashim, and the Zohar.⁸ He then collected these studies into his work, which was later called Sefer Hahayiim. The source of Rehfuss' information is not given, and Marcus makes no mention of these facts in Frankfurter's life.

The comparatively late date of Frankfurter's work, and the fact that he lived most of his life in Northern Europe, in opposition to Berechiah's Southern European background, seem to point to a different social background for the sources of Sefer Hahayiim and Maavor Yabok. The sources might be different in that they would be affected by the various customs pertaining to the sick and dying in their areas.

As Berechiah, Frankfurter, in stating why he felt the need to write this book, describes the community in the following manner:

And my children, my people, are scattered in farms and town, and they do not study in the way of 'kindness and truth'. And there is no one to teach them. (9)

He also describes how they were lacking in the knowledge and customs of dealing with the dying and the dead. His function, as he saw it, was to teach the people how to perform these duties. As his son wrote:

My father and teacher was aroused, and composed Sefer Hahayyim for the use of the dead and the living. (10)

As to Frankfurter's purpose in choosing the title Sefer Hahayyim, it is written in the introduction to Andachts-Buch:

And he called it Sefer Hahayyim, in order that each man who desired life will be made worthy of it; as he wrote in the introduction to his book: 'And therefore I called the book of the law of kindness and truth, Sefer Hahayyim, that by it he will be worthy of being written in the book of life and will have the fear of heaven.' (11)

Maavor Yabok is divided into five sections. The sections are entitled: (1) שפתי צדק; (2) שפתי אמת; (3) שפתי רננות; (4) עתר ענן הקטרת, קרבן תענית, מנחת אהרון; and (5) אמרי נועם. The majority of the book deals with discussions of customs and rituals pertaining to the sick, dying, and dead, in the light of various cabbalistic texts. Because of interest, and the limitations of time and length, this thesis focuses on the liturgy for the sick and dying, thereby omitting discussion of the other materials included in this text. This discussion and analysis in this thesis

will not include the prayers said after a person has died. The relevant texts are found primarily in section one, which is approximately eighty pages in length. The part of section four, entitled עֵתֶר עֲנֵן הַקָּטָרֶת, contains a short prayer that will be discussed, and there are approximately forty pages of relevant liturgical material in the fifth section.

Sefer Hahayiim is almost entirely a liturgical work with some explanatory notes concerning customs and prayers interspersed throughout the book. Unlike Maavor Yabok, Sefer Hahayiim is not divided into various sections and chapters, but is presented as a unified liturgical handbook, divided only by subtitles. As with the treatment of Maavor Yabok, the discussion and analysis of the prayers in Sefer Hahayiim will not go beyond those which are useful until the moment of death.

The major liturgical section in Maavor Yabok, will be compared with its counterpart in Sefer Hahayiim. These are the two major liturgical sections dealing with the sick and the dying in these books. The prayers under discussion will be taken in the order in which they appear. The chapters of this thesis will divide the two books and their prayers, as much as possible, along a time-line from sickness to death. The order of the prayers in the texts basically follows such a time-line.

The order of the chapters is the following:

Chapter 2: review of rabbinic themes in sickness and death

Chapter 3: introductory verses and reflections in the liturgies

Chapter 4: what should be said upon entering the room of a sick person

Chapter 5: prayers of confession by and for the gravely ill

Chapter 6: miscellaneous prayers; prayers said as sickness worsens, but still prior to the time of goses

Chapter 7: prayers said at the time of goses, and at the departure of the soul

Chapter 8: conclusion

Footnotes to Chapter I

- ¹Jacob R. Marcus, Communal Sick-Care in the German Ghetto (Cinn.: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1947), p. 66.
- ²Ibid., p. 228.
- ³Ibid., pp. 228-230.
- ⁴Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena, Maavor Yabok (1626; rpt. Bnai Berak: Yashfeh, 1927), p. 6.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 19.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 14.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 16
- ⁸C. Rehfuss, Andachts-Buch (Frankfurt am Main: Druct und Verlag Undreaeifchen Buchhandlung, 1834), p. xviii.
- ⁹Simon Frankfurter, Sefer Hahayim (Amsterdam: Israel ben Avraham, 1717), introduction.
- ¹⁰Ibid., introduction.
- ¹¹Rehfuss, p. xviii.

Chapter II

Before entering into a discussion of the two works, Sefer Hahayiim and Maavor Yabok, it would prove useful to outline how sickness and death, and their related themes, are treated in the rabbinic literature. This would then give the following discussion a basis for comparison, as to how the themes in the two books are similar to or depart from the rabbinic treatment.

To the rabbis, there was a direct relationship between sin, sickness, and death and the justice of God. The relationship between sin and death is described by S. Schechter when he writes:

The identification of the Evil Yezer with the Angel of Death is sometimes modified in the sense of the former being the cause of death consequent upon sin rather than of his performing the office of the executioner.... But it must be noted that in other places it is sin itself that causes death. 'See, my children,' said the saint R. Chaninah b. Dosa to his disciples, 'it is not the ferocious ass that kills, it is sin that kills.' (1)

Rabbi Akiba was known to have believed that one should not fight against sufferings (sickness and loss), but rather, should accept them, as no one is free from sin.² This statement implies a relationship between sin and sickness and God's justice.

This knowledge of God's justice, in His dealings with man, was essential to the rabbinic system. The phrase צידוק הדין taken from Deuteronomy 32:4 was utilized by the

rabbis in aggadic, liturgical and halachic statements.

Schechter quotes the rabbis when he writes:

'He sits in judgment against every one and gives one what is due to him.' It is with reference to the same verse (Deut. 32:4) that a later Rabbi makes the remark to the effect: He who says the Holy One, blessed be He (or the Merciful One), is loose (or lax) in his dealing out justice, let his life become loose. He is long-suffering but collects his (debt) in the end. (3)

It is first through a system of justice that God rules the world. As it is said: "For God is not suspected to execute judgment without justice."⁴ There is, among the rabbis, emphasis upon **מדת הדין**. They did, however, formulate, as part of their system, the concept of **מידת הרחמים**. Schechter writes:

Death and suffering may be viewed either as a punishment satisfying the claims of justice, or as an atonement, bringing pardon and forgiveness and reconciling man with God. (5)

Schechter seems to imply that sufferings as punishments and those sufferings as atonements are just two sides of the same coin. This paradox can be seen in the following rabbinic remark:

'They asked Wisdom (Hagiographia), 'What is the punishment of the sinner?' Wisdom answered, 'Evil pursues sinners' (Prov. 13:2). They asked Prophecy,... Prophecy answered, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die' (Ezek. 18:4). They asked the Torah... Torah answered, 'Let him bring a guilt-offering and it shall be forgiven unto him, as it is said, 'And it shall be accepted for him to make an atonement for him.' (6)

In one sense, God's mercy can be seen, in the rabbinic system, as a function of God's justice. God acts mercifully when man's deeds warrant this mercy. But the rabbis also

had a conception of unmerited mercy, which goes under the name of **יִסְוּרִין שֶׁל אֱהוּבָה**. But whether mercy is a function of merited or unmerited deeds, repentance and confession do influence God's mercy, and can thereby offset sin, sickness and death. G. Moore writes:

In accordance with this, later authorities teach that even those sins which ipso facto exclude the sinner from a share in the World to Come, do so only in case he dies without repentance. If he turns from wickedness and dies in a state of repentance, he is one of the children of the World to Come, for there is nothing that can stand before repentance. (7)

The rabbis saw suffering and death as means in themselves for atonement. Suffering, if accepted by the sufferer, leads to confession of sins, and therefore is as a sacrificial offering before God. The acceptance of suffering becomes a positive move towards overcoming the suffering, be that suffering sickness or death. This is possible as the acceptance of suffering, and thereby repentance, changes the divine decree. As it is written:

'Beloved is suffering, for as sacrifices are atoning, so is suffering atoning.' Nay, suffering has even a greater atoning effect than sacrifice, in as much as sacrifice affects only man's property, whilst suffering touches his very self.... This suffering has to be a sacrifice accompanied by repentance. The sufferer has to accept the suffering prayerfully and in a spirit of submission, and has to recognize that the visitation of God was merited by him. Man knows well in his heart when weighing his deeds with the suffering which came upon him that he was dealt with mercifully. (8)

Not only is repentance a means of annulling God's decrees, but so too are good deeds, prayer, and study. All these come under the heading of atonement. As it is

written:

Prayer, charity, and repentance, these three together avert the impending doom. (9)

Atoning powers are ascribed also to the study of the Law, which is more effective than sacrifice, especially when combined with good works. (10)

The goal of this process from sickness to atonement, according to the rabbinical view, can be seen as a "... regeneration-restoration of the original state of man in his relation to God, called 'tekanah'." ¹¹

As confession is so potent in influencing God's decree, the Day of Atonement becomes a paradigm for this act of confession, that is, atonement. As it is written:

All the various elements affecting atonement are in a marked degree combined in the Day of Atonement, to make it the occasion of the great annual re-integration of man. (12)

Not only is the Day of Atonement seen as influencing atonement, and thereby God's decree and mercy, but so too is the day of death seen in this manner. This connection between the two days is stressed in the Mishnah, Yoma 8:8: "The Sin-offering and the unconditional Guilt-offering affect atonement; death and the Day of Atonement affect atonement if there is repentance." This statement from the Mishnah could influence a similarity between the liturgies for the death-bed and the Day of Atonement, as both have similar goals.

From these various rabbinic statements, it can be seen how the rabbis viewed the situation of the sick and

dying. Sickness and death are seen as judgments of God. They represent breaks in one's relationship with God. These are judgments against sin, but are also instrumental in moving man to atonement. Acceptance of judgment, repentance, study, prayer, and good deeds then become strategies for atonement which can change God's decrees, by moving Him to mercy. While justice has been seen as the overriding principle, mercy is a part of the system by which man can move back into a favorable relationship with God.

Changing the decree of God can bring about healing as well as an escape from death. On the other hand, if death must come, it is part of the atonement strategy to overcome death by the reward of an eternal life in the "World to Come". If these changes are achieved by these strategies, strategies based upon acceptance of one's sickness and death (one's suffering), then acceptance is not a passive, but rather, a very active move on the part of the invalid.

Footnotes to Chapter II

- ¹Solomon Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), pp. 245-247.
- ²Ephraim E. Urbach, The Sages (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1971), p. 392.
- ³Schechter, p. 306.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 307.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 304.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 293.
- ⁷George Foot Moore, Judaism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), I, 521.
- ⁸Schechter, p. 309.
- ⁹Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1912), II, 279.
- ¹⁰Ibid., II, 279.
- ¹¹Ibid., II, 280.
- ¹²Ibid., II, 280.

Chapter III

Sefer Hahayiim has an introductory section of five sedarim, sections. Each section is to be read on a different day of a person's illness or during the period of mourning. The sections are composed of quotations mostly from the Torah, Talmud, and Midrash. The main thrust of these readings is given in the following introductory remark:

'The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul'; the soul of the living and the dying. The wise will study with the sick, after their prayers, each seder, as this is part of the basis of Sefer Hahayiim. He also needs to study, with the mourner, one chapter from the five chapters each one of the seven days of mourning. And the sick will pay attention to their prayers and their study. (1)

This remark points out that study with the sick is of utmost importance. Study is placed on an equal degree of importance with prayer. The word מת is translated as "dying" and not as "dead", as the wise cannot go and study with the dead, but only with the dying. In context, therefore, the word "dying" makes better sense than does the word "dead".

This opening remark immediately presents a method of how one should visit the sick that is radically different from a modern approach to this task. The emphasis today is on counselling, which generally entails either a "listening" or a "directive" approach. Regardless, however, of which approach is used, conversation is the basis of the visit. If a clergyman is making the visit, a prayer might be said in the sick person's behalf or said together with him. But

in modern counselling literature it is not suggested that the study of either religious or secular texts would have a beneficial effect upon the patient.

The word beneficial, in this context, means psychological and physical. And in the above remark, from Sefer Hahayiim, the beneficial effect of the study of religious texts would be psychological, if not physical, as it involves a restoration of the soul of the living and the dying. This also is not seen today as a tool of the modern counsellor.

Various texts are then given to reinforce this function of the visitor and of study itself, in regards to the visiting procedure.

The introductory remark to the second part of the first sefer is:

I am convinced that upon mercy is the Universe established. That mercy is one of the things by which a man will eat of the fruits in this world; and the capital is to be established in the world to come. (2)

The texts in this part tell of the importance of dealing with mercy in relationships between man and man. Such relationships are termed גמילות חסדים, which is translated in one of the English editions as "disinterested benevolence."³ They are benevolent deeds as they are for the good of another, and they are done with disinterest, meaning that they are not done for the sake of reward.

This sense of mercy is learned from God's dealings

with men, as described in the Biblical text (see first paragraph of this part). These deeds of מ"א also include visiting the sick and those in mourning. It is learned, therefore, in these passages that a sense of mercy is a prerequisite for visiting the unfortunate and the sick and those in mourning. In the various counselling courses and textbooks today, while mercy as a religious term is not necessarily taught as an essential quality for the visitor of the sick, qualities essential for the counsellor such as compassion, understanding, and open-mindedness are taught. In this way, there is a similarity between modern visiting practices and those described here from Sefer Hahayyim. As one such counselling textbook states:

Now the religious leader shares with the psychiatrist and the caseworker an attitude of sympathy and respect for individual - and for his family - but his relationship to him differs from theirs as it is based upon ambiguous faith and a spiritual interpretation of man and society. (4)

The text in this part on page 17 which begins, "We find concerning the deed of Rabbi Perachyah in Midrash Hanne'lan Ruth...", is from a mystical source. R. Perachyah is shown the Garden of Eden with its 365 palaces because he led his life with mercy. This is one of the few quotations from a mystical source in this introductory section and should therefore be noted.

The final part of the first seder is introduced by the following exclamation: "The mercy of God endureth

continually."⁵ This part repeats the idea of the second part, by stating that man practices mercy as he senses God's mercy upon him. As it is stated in the first paragraph of this part:

that man ought to be mindful of the mercies of God.... Man is, therefore, in duty bound to walk in the ways of God, and continually practise [sic] virtue and mercy to mankind, without distinction. (6)

The second seder begins with the following verses from the psalms, "the prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Eternal."⁷ This part of the second seder speaks of the value of prayer, at all times, but especially during sickness and danger. God, here, is called the "heavenly physician".⁸ Prayer, therefore, can call for His protection from sickness, which is seen as a chastisement from God, as well as being able to bring about an easy death. Such a death is seen as a tranquil sleep, and is described by the term "the kiss of death". Prayer, according to these passages, silences the judgments against the man. As he prays and turns to God, protection follows.

This part is interesting in the light of the modern question of "to tell or not to tell?" A man should know of the reality of his death so that he can turn to God by prayer, and thus perhaps, be saved. The direction of this part, which unlike the first seder is directed more to the sick one than to the visitor, is that preparing for the

reality of sickness and death by prayer and confession can aid one in being saved from sickness and death.

The second part of this seder begins with the biblical verse: "Surely the bitterness of death is gone."⁹ This part adds repentance, study of Torah, and deeds of גמילות חסדים to prayer, as ways by which man can influence God in order to be saved from death. These various strategies, by which one can be saved from sickness and death, find their biblical basis in the story of King Hezekiah. They enable one to avert the decrees of God, as it is written:

Our sages also teach that by four means man may avert the pending punishment; viz. charity, devout prayer, amending his past conduct, and by acquiring an exemplary name. (10)

Again the reality of death is stressed in a quotation from Talmud Avodah Zarah¹¹ which depicts the awesome images of death. The purpose of this presentation is to get the reader to turn to God and receive the "kiss of death", an easy death. The strategies present the sick and dying with an active and not a passive role in the face of these calamities.

The first part of the third seder begins: "'Good and upright is the Eternal; therefore He will teach sinners in the way.'"¹²

This section underscores God's exactness in dealing with man, as He teaches man to do the good and to shun the

bad. The goal of sickness and death is to get man to turn again to God.

The rabbis quoted here answer the question of theodicy by saying that what is an apparent evil, sickness and death, is actually a good. "Whilst He corrects by lenient chastisement, He exalts at the same time, by making man mindful of his sins, and causing him to repent."¹³

God's justice becomes the overriding principle. One way this is reconciled with His mercy is seen in the following:

Rabbi Eliezer calls our attention to the apparent contradiction in the above verse, the former part of which says, 'And unto Thee, O Eternal, belongeth mercy'; whilst the latter part says, 'For Thou renderest to every man according to his work'; which the Rabbi thus reconciles: - The reward according to our deeds preceeds, and the mercy of the Eternal follows. (14)

It is hoped that man awakens himself to repentance, but if he does not, God uses dreams and then chastisements to teach His ways. ¹⁵

This part gives the sick or dying person the religious answers as to God's relationship to his sickness and/or approaching death. Such answers may have the goal of moving the sick or dying to utilize one of the above mentioned strategies. Such chastisements of God, sickness and death, have the above described goal. If the sick or dying, therefore, utilizes the above strategies, he will be in line with God's goals and thereby receive the benefits of His justice and mercy. Described in this part, we find mention of the tools available for use by the sick or dying in the

face of such events.

The second part of this third section begins with the verse: "Woe unto the wicked sinner; for the reward of his hands shall be given him."¹⁶ This section describes the man who fails to heed God's warnings and consequently what will happen to him. This person will fall prey to sickness and death. But, it is stressed, that repentance is always possible, even at the last minute before death.¹⁷

The first part of the fourth seder begins: "For whom the Eternal loveth, He correcteth."¹⁸ This section attempts to demonstrate, that as God's chastisements are out of His love to correct man, showing him the right way, he must accept them as such and turn from sin. On this idea it is written:

Ravah observes: 'Whoever submits to Divine punishment with pious resignation, will behold his offspring enjoying long life.... The Holy One (blessed be He) visits at times with the greatest rigour the most immaterial trespasses of His pious men, in order to cleanse their souls from all iniquity, so that they may enter in perfect purity the gates of everlasting felicity.' (19)

This acceptance of God's chastisements must be understood in an active, and not a passive sense. Acceptance does not mean resignation in a negative sense. The acceptance of God's chastisements is a positive efficacious act. This act can change God's decrees as it is an act of repentance. This is just another of the strategies available for the sick

or dying..

The second part of this fourth seder begins: "There is a time to be born and a time to die."²⁰ This part stresses an awareness of the fact that death does come and that therefore all people need to live a good life and be repentant. It is stated that one should return to God before death. Consolation at the time of death comes with the knowledge of a future life for those who have turned to God. As it is written:

Yet be not terrified, son of man, at that awful hour. Be rather consoled, for the Eternal is good to all, and His compassion extends to all His creatures; yea all His doings are mercy and truth; all that the Holy One (blessed be He) hath created is merely for the sake of the righteous man, in order to do good unto him at his latter end, and that his soul may reach its destination in eternal bliss. Thus we see how man ought to purify his thoughts, and even at his dying hour praise and acknowledge the justice of God; so that his soul may quit its earthly abode in purity and innocence... (21)

The fifth seder begins with the following directive:

"Visit the sick, and endeavor to alleviate their distress."²² This last seder, as the first seder, is written for the visitor. It tells of both the details and the rewards of visiting the sick. The latter part of this seder is devoted to the details and the rewards of taking care of the dead and visiting the mourners. As this and the first seder seem to be trying to tell the visitor of his rewards for visiting, we learn that one visits for the sake of the other

and also for himself.

In conclusion of these introductory sedarim, it should be noted that these readings from rabbinic sources are read and studied in a fixed sequence as a fixed liturgy. They are studied by both visitor and visited for both their benefits. There are passages which compare study to prayer, implying that not only is study a guide to correct behavior and a source of comfort to the distressed, but that study is as efficacious as prayer.

While the concept of God's mercy is discussed in the second sedar, the third and fourth sedarim point out that God's justice and judgment precede His mercy. The relationship between God and man in the presence of sickness and death, in this introductory section, is marked by a sense of His overriding justice, which includes His mercy. A final comment is that out of seventy-eight paragraphs in these sedarim only two of them, that is the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth paragraphs, contain quotations from the mystical literature. Such a small number of quotations from the mystical literature, implies a reliance upon rabbinic material. The implications of this will be drawn later on in this thesis.

The introductory section of Maavor Yabok is divided into eight sedarim. One of the eight sedarim is to be read

in a fixed order, each day during the time of sickness.

As in the introductory section in Sefer Hahayiim, the section here is composed of readings. These readings, however, are from the Tanach and not rabbinic sources.

Each seder in this section is introduced by five verses from the Tanach, and is concluded with three paragraphs composed of various biblical verses.

The introductory paragraph to these sedarim is:

We beseech Thee O Lord, save now. (said three times)
Hear my prayer O Lord, and my salvation, listen to my cry; do not be silent because I am a stranger with you, a sojourner as all my fathers. Like a swallow or a crane, so do I chatter, I do moan as a dove; mine eyes fail with looking upward; O Lord, I am oppressed, be Thou my surety. For the nether-world cannot praise Thee, death cannot praise Thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The Lord is ready to save me; therefore we will sing songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord. Do not forsake me O Lord my God, do not be far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation. (23)

These verses ask for God's salvation and His answer to prayer. The worshipper speaks of himself as a sojourner, a wanderer, searching for God. The verse from Is. 38:18 is used almost as an argument against God. The reader wants to know if God would let him die, death being a state in which he cannot praise God. It ends with the petition for God's closeness and salvation. These verses depict the sick one as a lost man searching for a relationship with God, who is his salvation. The goal here is that death should not come at all, for it, as well as sickness, represents this breach between man and God.

It is then stated that each seder is to be concluded with the following three paragraphs. Here is the first one:

That thy beloved may be delivered, save with Thy right hand, and answer me. Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. I will not die but I will live and I will tell the deeds of God. Chastise me, O Lord, but do not give me over to death. That in death there is no remembrance of Thee, in the nether-world who will praise Thee? In the grave can Thy kindness be told, Thy faithfulness in the place of destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? And Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? Wilt Thou work wonders for the dead? Or shall the shades arise and give Thee thanks? Selah. The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into the silence. But we bless the Lord from this time forth and forever. Hallelujah. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise Thee? Shall it declare Thy truth? For the nether-world cannot praise Thee, and they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known Thy truth. (24)

As with the above introductory passage, this first paragraph of the concluding part presents verses demonstrating how in death a man cannot praise God. These verses would give consolation to the sick as he realizes that God wants man to praise Him, and therefore would want man to live, as the last verse declares. For the dying, these verses might also hint at a life eternal, as well as a recovery from illness for the sick. If death, destruction, is overcome by eternal life, praises can still be sung in God's presence as they were sung in life.

The second paragraph reads:

Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed, save me, O Lord, and I will be saved, because Thou art my praise. Bring me forth out of the net that they have hidden for

me; for Thou art my stronghold. In Thy hand I will place my spirit, Thou wilt redeem me O Lord God of truth. May the Lord bless thee and keep thee. May the Lord shine His face upon thee and be gracious unto thee. May he lift up His face unto thee and grant thee peace. For Thy salvation I hope O Lord. I hope O Lord for Thy salvation. O Lord for Thy salvation I hope. (repeat) Thou art my hiding-place; Thou wilt preserve me from the adversary; with the songs of deliverance Thou wilt compass me about. Selah. On my right Michael. My left has Gabriel. Before me is Raphael. Behind me is Nuriel. Above me is the Divine Presence of the Lord. Blessed is the Lord by day. Blessed is the Lord by night. Blessed is the Lord in our lying down. Blessed is the Lord in our getting up. (25)

Most of these verses are taken from the liturgical readings "upon going to sleep". The verses ask for God's healing, salvation, blessing, and protection. These verses also emphasize a relationship with God as being the ideal state.

The final paragraph of this concluding section continues the already expressed idea of the sick one's hope in the Lord that God will release him from pain and tears. Notice should be taken of the use of the words כָּאֲבִי, וְדַמְעָתִי, and בְּכִי.

. The verse "The Lord of hosts, happy is the man who trusts in Him" would certainly be a comfort to its reader. It says in essence, that God is with those who turn toward Him in relationship. This final paragraph says:

Bind my broken spirit, my stronghold and my light. My thought is with Thee to swathe my pain. My Only One, by Thy name will there be hope. And thus to Thee O Lord will my heart look with hope. Take from me all workers of iniquity, as the Lord hath heard my cry. Thou hast counted my tears into Thy bottle, are they not in Thy book? The Lord of hosts is with us, a fortress for us, God of Jacob, selah. The Lord of hosts, happy is the man who trusts in Thee.

O Lord save, the king, answer us on the day we call. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable unto Thee, my Rock and my Redeemer. (26)

Just as these verses from the Tanach make up the content of the introduction and conclusion to the eight sedarim, verses from Tanach also make up the content of the sedarim themselves. Each seder has six verses from Torah, twelve verses from Prophets, and eighteen verses from the Writings.

While Sefer Hahayiim states that it is efficacious for the sick person to study, it puts special emphasis on rabbinic literature, as it was this literature which was in the above introductory reflections to the the book. Maavor Yabok also sees the efficaciousness of study, as it too places study into a liturgical framework. But study is seen here as the study of the Tanach, and in particular as the study of the Psalms. Maavor Yabok, just as Sefer Hahayiim did, suggests that the one who visits should study with the sick one. As it is written:

The one who visits the sick, his sage, will make him understand man's latter end, and he will give thanks, praises of the Living One, and he will petition his King. And the father will inform the children, and he will teach them to petition God by words of Tanach because behold the Lord stands upon the wall of the Tanach, as a fortress in times of trouble. (27)

As to the function and purpose of the study of Tanach, while both works see them as efficacious, their descriptions of the process of "influencing the Divine" are different. Sefer Hahayiim, in quoting from rabbinic texts, describes

the study of Tanach, during the time of sickness, in terms of rewards which are viewed as health, length of days, peace, and eternal life. As it is written:

Rabbi Simon, son of Yochai, says... But even the patient himself must not neglect to embrace the moment, whilst it is yet in his power, to pour forth his heart in supplication before the Holy One (blessed be He), and to render himself worthy of God's mercy by meditation on the divine law; limited as his meditation may be, it only requires to flow from a devout heart. And we read in the Talmud Berachoth, fol. v.p.1: 'Meditation on the divine law affords relief from the severest afflictions...' (28)

Hence it follows, that they who themselves study, and the supporters of those who exclusively devote their time to study, are equally meritorious, and both may expect great reward... (29)

And thus says King Solomon: 'My son, forget not my law... then shalt thou walk in thy way safely... For length of days, and a happy and peaceful life shall it add unto thee. It shall be health to thy flesh, and marrow to thy bones. Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of thy life shall be many. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.... And God himself said: 'For this (the law) is thy life, and the length of thy days.' (30)

The study of the law is also accompanied with another blessing - that of peace, as we read: 'All thy children shall be taught of the Eternal, and great shall be the peace of thy children...' (31)

For Scripture says: 'They (the moral doctrines) shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and a diadem about thy neck.' (32)

Rabbi Issac says: He who studies the biblical portions which treat of the laws and ceremonies of the sin-offerings and the guilt-offerings, will be deemed by the Eternal as if he actually brought those sacrifices; for Scripture says: 'This is the law (תורה) of the sin-offering.' (33)

These rabbinic statements describe, in precise terms,

the effect of study; that is, its rewards. They do not go into a discussion as to the precise process of study's effect upon sickness; that is how man influences the Divine by such study, which then brings on healing. They only imply that the process is based upon the idea of Divine reward and punishment, based upon man's actions. As to how the study of the law can bring relief from afflictions, the lack of such study will cause one to "more sorely feel the heavy pangs with which he will be visited." ³⁴

Maavor Yabok, on the other hand, writes of the effect and process of study upon the Divine in the following manner:

And by these verses the gates of mercy open, all of them together, they bring the number thirty-six, each one equivalent to the three sources of the attributes of mercy suspended in the summits of the revolutions of the heart and soul. They draw the source of life from the hidden knowledge sealed above and from hidden knowledge below. Therefore they are two times eighteen that is 'Life Life' ('ח, 'ח). He will praise and bless you, and from there He will inspire health and healing by the exalted will which pours forth from the Possessor of the exalted will upon each blessing and praise. My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord and He will bless all flesh, the name of His holiness is forever and forever. (35)

It is evident that study is seen by the author of Maavor Yabok as more than just a correct deed within the halachic system, that is followed by a respective reward or punishment from God. Rather, it is seen as a correct deed affecting the divine flow of mercy through the sephiroth, in particular, from the sphere Knowledge.

The cabbalistic language is evident here. In addition, there is present theosophical knowledge of how study influences the Godhead. Such knowledge is absent from Sefer Hahayiim's rabbinic quotations. Also in contrast to Sefer Hahayiim, the majority of references in Maavor Yabok come from the Zohar and Tekunai Ha-Zohar.

Each of the eight sedarim in this introductory section is composed of thirty-six verses. That is, six verses from the Torah, twelve verses from the Prophets, and eighteen verses from the Writings. The number thirty-six is significant as it is double eighteen, which is equivalent to double 'n or life. Most probably the number of verses was chosen for this reason.

As shown above, the eight sedarim from Maavor Yabok serve a similar function as the reflections in Sefer Hahayiim. It would, therefore, be of interest to analyze the general contents of these sedarim and compare their thematic thrust to the reflections in Sefer Hahayiim.

The first seder begins with a listing of psalms 13, 15, 16, and 17. The reader can choose one of these. Psalm 13 "opens on a note of despondency, passes on to prayer, hope, and a promise of thanksgiving."³⁶ The subject of psalm 15 deals with the conduct required of the true Israelite and his consequent reward.³⁷ In psalm 16, the psalmist "rejoices in his faith, for he is confident that Yahweh

will shield him from disaster and give him a life of happiness."³⁸ Also in psalm 16 the

speaker prays from relief, from suffering and from persecution by enemies who gloat over his mastery... He claims God's protection on two grounds: a) he is free from sin in thought, word and deed; and b) he is a zealous follower of God's law, one of those who have confidence in the goodness and justice of God. (39)

And psalm 17 is "David's hymn of thanksgiving to God for his deliverance from all the perils which beset him during his life...."⁴⁰

As these psalms speak of God's salvation for one who hopes in Him and follows His ways, they establish the theme for the following verses from the Tanach, in this seder. These themes of God's blessings and protection for those who trust in Him, are carried over into the verses from the Torah:

Who is like unto Thee O Lord, who is like unto Thee, awesome in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders. Thine right hand O Lord is my glory, by the strength of Thine right hand O Lord Thou wilt crush the enemy. (41)

From the Prophets, it is quoted:

Behold the Lord is my salvation, I will be secure. I will not fear because my strength and song is Jah the Lord, and He will be for me my salvation. (42)

And from the Writings it is said: "O Lord my God, in Thee I trust, save me from all those who pursue me, and save me."⁴³

The second seder begins with psalms 19, 20, 22, and 23. The subject of psalm 19 is "the glory of Yahweh as manifested

in the heavens and in the law." ⁴⁴ Psalm 20 asks for the success of the king and his kingdom in the day of their trouble. ⁴⁵ Of psalm 22, it is written:

It is a prayer of one who is enduring intense suffering which has worn down his physical strength and brought him to the point of death. His weakness has left him an easy victim to his powerful foes, and he can look for no aid or comfort from his fellow-men. These merely look on and gloat over his misery, and calculate how they may profit by his death. Accustomed to regard suffering as the penalty of sin, he is perplexed by God's apparent abandonment of one who has always been a devoted servant and now has to bear the taunts of the unbeliever because of his piety. Yet in God is his only hope and he makes a fervent appeal for His aid before it is too late. He ends with a promise of solemn and public thanksgiving service in the Temple. (46)

It appears that the psalmist is appealing to God's mercy alone. The ways of justice and judgment do not seem to be operative, since he is asking not to be judged according to his past deeds.

And psalm 23 describes the blessings enjoyed by the believer that will be received from God, who acts as a shepherd and a host.

After this opening section of psalms, there is a section of verses from the Tanach. First, a verse is quoted from the Hagar story which relates the protective quality of God over the unfortunate and over one's progeny:

And God heard the voice of the child, and an angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her: 'What is with you Hagar, do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the child as he is there.' (47)

God's sworn protection over the children of Abraham, Jacob, and the people of Israel is also related in verses

from the Torah.

Continuing the theme of the above psalms, verses are quoted from the Prophets which recall how God helps those in dire trouble:

Be strong weak hands, strong weak knees.... But they that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not be afraid. (48)

The verses from the Writings continue this theme of Divine protection, as it is written: "Thou hast given me Thy shield of salvation; and Thy condescension hath made me great." ⁴⁹

All of these verses have a psychologically positive influence; they comfort the sick or dying. This comfort comes from the promises verbalized by these words. There is also the knowledge that such verses bring one back into relationship with God, a relationship whose benefits will be described below.

The third seder begins with psalms 24, 25, 28, and 30. Psalm 24 is composed of three parts. They are: (1) an introductory hymn on the majesty of God; (2) a psalm on the character of the true Israelite; and (3) a decalogue between the priest and the people as the procession arrives at the Temple. ⁵⁰

Psalm 25 contains "prayers for guidance and protection, for pardon from sin, for deliverance from trouble and from the attacks of enemies." ⁵¹ Verses 6 and 7, which are the

verses in which pardon from sin is asked, appeal to God's mercy, and not His justice. As it is written:

Remember Thy compassion and Thy mercy, Yahweh,
for they have been from olden time; the sins and
transgressions of my youth remember not. According
to Thy mercy do Thou remember me, for Thy goodness
sake, Yahweh. (52)

In psalm 28, the psalmist begs "Yahweh for aid, lest he die."⁵³ He asks for the judgment of the wicked, and he has confidence in this. as he knows that "Yahweh is the protector of His people and of His king."⁵⁴

Psalm 30 is a

psalm of thanksgiving for recovery from sickness. After a brief introduction in which the psalmist announces his theme, he recalls his former happiness, his sudden affliction, his appeal to God for relief, and his recovery for which he now makes thanksgiving. (55)

The method of each seder is that the opening psalms set the theme for the following verses from the Tanach. This was proven in the first two sedarim, and it is also true for the remaining six sedarim. This being the case, only the introductory psalms in the remaining sedarim will be summarized in the name of interest and length.

The fourth seder includes psalms 31, 38, 40, and 41 in its introduction.

The psalmist of psalm 31

reveals himself as one who is worn out by suffering... as little regarded as a dead man or a broken vessel. He is sustained by his belief in the goodness and justice of God, who has revealed Himself as the

protector of the faithful, and whose favours he himself has experienced in the past. (56)

Psalm 31 is somewhat different than those psalms discussed thus far. The writer begins with the declaration that his sufferings are due to God's chastisements and rebukes. God is then pictured in His aspect of stern judge. But the psalm concludes by an appeal to God's mercy as with the above psalms. "The psalmist acknowledges his guilt, but prays for mercy and deliverance from his suffering."⁵⁷

In psalm 40, the psalmist, who has many troubles, recalls his faithfulness to God and "is confident that in return God will not leave him without help in his present troubles."⁵⁸

The writer of psalm 41 "appeals to God to pardon his sins and restore him to health."⁵⁹

The fifth seder contains psalms 42, 43, 51, and 61.

Psalms 42 and 43 tell of the psalmist's exile from Jerusalem, the home of God. As it is written in a commentary to these psalms: "Now he is in deepest misery, and prays for deliverance and a return to the happiness which was his in the past."⁶⁰

In psalm 51, the psalmist "humbly confesses his sins, begs for pardon and for restoration to God's favour, and promises thanksgiving."⁶¹

In psalm 61, the king "mindful of God's protection in the past, appeals to Him for aid, and promises thanks-

giving when the crisis is past..."⁶²

The sixth seder contains psalms 63, 67, 71, and 74.

Psalm 63 expresses a yearning for God, as the psalmist is confident that He will deliver him from his enemies and from his troubles.⁶³

The background to psalm 67 is that

God has given a fruitful harvest, and the psalmist takes occasion to pray that through His goodness thus shown towards His people, the gentiles may be brought to honour Him as the true God. (64)

Psalm 71 is a hope for deliverance from trouble, with a promise of thanksgiving upon salvation.⁶⁵ Psalm 74 is a psalm describing a disaster that has befallen Israel. The psalmist prays for deliverance from the enemy.⁶⁶

The seventh seder contains psalms 85, 86, 91, and 102.

In psalm 85, the writer

puts his message of hope in the form of a divine revelation; better times are at hand; the fidelity of Israel will be rewarded, and God will grant prosperity and happiness. (67)

In psalm 86, as God is forgiving and merciful, it is said here that He will save the faithful from trouble.⁶⁸

In psalm 91, the just one knows he will be saved as

the sinner will meet with trouble and sorrow during his life and will die prematurely. The just man will be saved from peril of premature death, and in the normal troubles of life he will be under God's care. (69)

In psalm 102 there is expressed a lamentation by

an exile stricken with a fatal disease, who feels that he will not survive to see the restoration of Sion. His only consoling thought is that God, being eternal, will in due time bring about the fulfillment of His promise... (70)

The final and eighth seder is composed of psalms 103, 104, 115, and 118.

Psalm 103 is a hymn of thanksgiving to God for His dealings with mercy and goodness towards Israel. ⁷¹.

God is the creator of the universe and of all living things, and all His creatures both on land and in the sea depend upon him for their continued existence. (72)

Psalm 115 is a

prayer for deliverance and at the same time a message of hope to the people Israel in a time of national humiliation. (73)

Psalm 118 is also a song of rejoicing in God's deeds. ⁷⁴

These psalms set the tone for their respective sedarim. It has been shown that these psalms and the verses from Tanach, that are quoted with them, are appeals to God's mercy and goodness to save one from trouble and from death. The psalmist asks God to forgive his sins, and he promises that praise and thanksgiving will be forthcoming upon salvation.

The appeal to God's mercy in these sedarim is referred to in the rubric before the thirteen psalms, which conclude this section of sedarim. As it is written:

More so psalms 128, 130, 134, 139, 140, 141, 142, 148, 149, and 150 are worthy to petition mercy in accordance with the intention of these eight sedarim. (75)

This rubric also mentions that the reader does not have to say all of these thirteen psalms, as there is no

fixed halacha for this ritual. This points to the non-halachic, unfixed, nature of many of these rituals for the sick. An analysis of these thirteen psalms would reveal that they continue the above themes.

While it was suggested in the text of Maavor Yabok⁷⁶ that these sedarim, comprised of verses from the Tanach, be said by the sick person in conjunction with the visitor, it is stated in the rubric after the sedarim that "it is good for the sick one to accustom himself to saying the chapters of Our Teacher Saadia Gaon's prayer which is written in our work 'Awakeners of the Dawn' in the seder of the fourth, fifth, and sixth day."⁷⁷ It is also said that this prayer is based upon the sick one's desires to request mercy from before his creator.⁷⁸ Again it is this appeal to God's mercy which is emphasized.

The prayer begins in an unusual way. Rather than basing its appeal to God's mercy upon man's humble and sinful nature (as will be seen below, this is one of the characteristics of the confession and petitionary prayers) the prayer commences with a declaration of the petitioner's righteousness. As it is written: "I in righteousness will behold Thy face and will be satisfied in the awakening of Thy vision."⁷⁹ The petitioner also says to God that he does not want to die, as his work, his life, is not yet completed. As he says: "That I know myself that I have not had sufficient time to complete my work that Thou

hast sent me to do."⁸⁰

These statements in Saadia's prayer are interesting as they question the inopportune moment in which death is coming. They go against the religious ideal of the "acceptance of sufferings", in which death is also viewed as a "suffering". It runs counter to R. Akiba's famous dictum: "Receive sufferings from love". The acceptance of sufferings, as was seen above, does not mean resignation. It rather becomes a strategy on the road to repentance, which can be used to overcome sickness as well as death.

Beginning with the second paragraph of this prayer, its author admits of his sins and prays that his repentance will be an atonement for his sins. This atonement he hopes will bring on a healing of his disease. As it is written: "And receive me in perfect repentance and help me to do good in Thy eyes."⁸¹

As this prayer calls for a recital of a confession in its middle section, it can be seen as an act of repentance to bring the repentant one back into relationship with God. The similarity of this theme of a "renewed relationship" with God reechoes the themes stressed in the psalms quoted in the above eight sedarim. As it is written:

Place in my kidneys proper advice in order that all my deeds, and all my statements, and all my thoughts will be directed toward service of Thee, and Thou wilt forgive all I have transgressed. (82)

Increase Thy strength and power to destroy and

restrain all that rises against me and to destroy the troubles of my soul. (83)

It is then suggested, in the rubric on page 88 in Maavor Yabok, after three prayers (as to which three prayers these are it is not said) a confession is said, as the confession is said on Yom Kippor. The prayer of confession is an act of repentance and therefore is also an act of "renewed relationship" with God. As such, it too reechoes the above mentioned psalms. And as was discovered above, the act of repentance, which follows an acceptance of the reality of one's sickness and/or death, is one of the strategies to fight sickness and death. It is a strategy used both on the day of death and on Yom Kippor, as was shown above.

As a final part to this opening section, it is suggested that the prayer found in the fourth section of Maavor Yabok, entitled "Entreaty of the Cloud of Incense", is to be read. It is stated that this prayer was arranged by Berechiah's teacher from Mantoba.

This prayer is based upon the idea that as offerings of incense were once offered as an atonement for sins, with the destruction of the Temple, the praying of the biblical verses which make mention of such offerings was substituted for the actual offerings. The prayer begins with a quotation of the story concerning the cakes which Abraham asked Sarah to prepare for the three angels at Sodom. There is

also the story of Israel's command to his sons as to what incense and spice they should take to Joseph in Egypt. These two references set the tone here as one of propitiatory effect. The worshipper wants to propitiate God by his offerings of incense which he cannot perform any more. Therefore he substitutes a reading for the act of offering the incense.

Propitiation thereby becomes another strategy for influencing the Divine decree. This is done by reading the appropriate verses which mention offerings. Propitiation is also affected by considering one's sickness or death as an atonement offering (this will be explained below).

The second paragraph makes mention of the incense offerings offered by the priest Aaron as atonement for sins.

The third paragraph mentions the proper proportions of ingredients that composed the incense offerings.

The fourth paragraph contains a prayer for health. As it is written:

as we have no priest, no fire-pan, no coals, no altar, no incense, and naught remains for us but the conversation of our lips as it is said: 'so we will render as bullocks the words of our lips.' May it be Thy will O Lord our God and God of our Fathers that our words be received before the seat of Thy glory, as if we brought before Thee incense and Thou wilt hold back the plague. (84)

The mystical intent of this prayer can be seen in the rubric on page 333 which asks for special concentration

on the specific words describing the kinds of incense. While Sefer Hahayiim quotes R. Isaac as saying that the study of biblical portions, which discuss the laws and ceremonies of sin and guilt offerings, accomplishes the same effect as if those sacrifices had actually been brought, Sefer Hahayiim does not have one specific group of prayers devoted to the offerings. It, therefore, does not put into working process the efficaciousness of the sacrifice passages. And it also does not stress, as does Maavor Yabok, the importance of concentration upon specific words, which is a necessary part of the mystical process of prayer.

Footnotes to Chapter III

- ¹Simon Frankfurter, Sefer Hahayyim (Amsterdam: Israel ben Avraham, 1717), p. 1:a.
- ²Ibid., p. 12:b.
- ³B. H. Ascher, tran., The Book of Life and Expression of the Tongue (London: B.H. Ascher, 1863), p. 7.
- ⁴Louis Linn and Leo W. Schwarz, Psychiatry and Religious Experience (New York: Random House, 1958), p. 104.
- ⁵Frankfurter, p. 3:b.
- ⁶Ascher, p. 19.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 21.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 21.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 27.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 29.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 27.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 33.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 33.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 35.
- ¹⁵Ibid., p. 36.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 41.
- ¹⁷Ibid., pp. 44-45.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 45.
- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 47.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 59.
- ²¹Ibid., pp. 60-61.
- ²²Ibid., p. 65.
- ²³Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena, Maavor Yabok (1626; rpt. Bnai Berak: Yashfeh, 1927), pp. 56-57.
- ²⁴Ibid., pp. 59-60.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 60.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 60.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 54.
- ²⁸Ascher, p. 1.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 2.
- ³⁰Ibid., p. 3.

- 31 Ascher, pp. 3-4.
- 32 Ibid., p. 4.
- 33 Ibid., p. 5.
- 34 Ibid., pp. 1-2.
- 35 Berechiah, p. 55.
- 36 Edward J. Kissane, The Book of Psalms (Dublin: The Richview Press, 1953), I, 52.
- 37 Ibid., I, 59.
- 38 Ibid., I, 61.
- 39 Ibid., I, 66.
- 40 Ibid., I, 72.
- 41 Berechiah, p. 58.
- 42 Ibid., p. 58.
- 43 Ibid., p. 59.
- 44 Kissane, I, 83.
- 45 Ibid., I, 88-89.
- 46 Ibid., I, 94.
- 47 Berechiah, p. 62.
- 48 Ibid., p. 63.
- 49 Ibid., p. 63.
- 50 Kissane, I, 106.
- 51 Ibid., I, 110.
- 52 Berechiah, p. 64.
- 53 Kissane, I, 122.
- 54 Ibid., I, 122.
- 55 Ibid., I, 129.
- 56 Ibid., I, 133.
- 57 Ibid., I, 168.
- 58 Ibid., I, 176.
- 59 Ibid., I, 181.
- 60 Ibid., I 185.
- 61 Ibid., I, 224.
- 62 Ibid., I, 261.
- 63 Ibid., I, 267.
- 64 Ibid., I, 285.

- ⁶⁵Kissane, I, 308.
⁶⁶Ibid., II, 9.
⁶⁷Ibid., II, 73.
⁶⁸Ibid., II, 76.
⁶⁹Ibid., II, 106.
⁷⁰Ibid., II, 141.
⁷¹Ibid., II, 147.
⁷²Ibid., II, 151.
⁷³Ibid., II, 206.
⁷⁴Ibid., II, 216.
⁷⁵Berechiah, p. 84.
⁷⁶Ibid., p. 55.
⁷⁷Ibid., p. 88.
⁷⁸Ibid., p. 88.
⁷⁹Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena, Maavor Yabok (Mantua, 1626), p. 23:b.
⁸⁰Ibid., p. 23:b.
⁸¹Ibid., p. 24:a.
⁸²Ibid., p. 24:b.
⁸³Ibid., p. 24:b.
⁸⁴Berechiah, rpt. 1927, p. 334.

Chapter IV

After these initial introductory readings and prayers, both Sefer Hahayiim and Maavor Yabok begin with the prayers said upon entering a sick person's room. From this point on, in the handbooks, the prayers in both works basically follow the chronological order of the process from sickness to death.

Sefer Hahayiim says that upon entering the room of the sick, these verses should be said:

'And the Eternal will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee, but will lay them upon all those who hate thee.' And he said: 'If thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the Eternal thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all of His statutes, then I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Eternal who healeth thee.' 'I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Eternal, and I will heal him.' (1)

In the introduction to these verses, the author reveals why these three verses are chosen. Utilizing the method of gematria, he points out that the fifty-four words of these verses is equivalent to the numerical value of the letters in the Hebrew phrase "That I will live". It is implied that the efficacious influence of these verses arises from the numerical connection between the number of words and the phrase "That I will live", which verbalizes the hopes of the sick one.

It must be noted that the cabbalistic plays on numbers, phrases, and words are within parentheses in this edition of Sefer Hahayiim. It should also be noted that what is in parentheses contains a different style and mode of interpretation, as well as a different style of writing, than what is outside the parentheses. With these differences, it would seem that the material in parentheses, which is of a "mystical" nature, is not original to the text. Unfortunately, at the time of writing of this thesis, the earlier editions of 1716 and 1703 are unavailable for comparison. But that there are two styles and modes of interpretation and writing in one text is evident.

As to the prayer's thematic content; it speaks of God's justice more than His mercy. It emphasizes God's justice, as the first two verses point out the one-to-one quality of man's actions in relation to God's actions. If man follows God's ways, God will not place upon him the diseases of the Egyptians. The third verse also affirms this relationship.

It should also be noted that this prayer, which is said upon entering the sick one's room, later became halacha, as it can be found in the Rabbi's Manual Hamadrikh, p. 97. Its exact sources seem to be unknown. Although the revelation of its gematrial meaning points to a cabbalistic source, it was utilized by the author of Sefer Hahayiim but not by the author of Maavor Yabok, as the latter does

not include this prayer. This same prayer is also found in Tozeoth Chaiim which is a liturgical handbook which was published in Roedelheim in 1871.

Maavor Yabok has the visitor reciting a different prayer. The instructions included with this prayer ask the visitor to say these words in order to petition mercy upon the sick one. This goal of the visit, that is, a petition for mercy upon the sick person, has since become halacha. The halachic statement found in the Shulhan Aruch is:

As he requests mercy upon him, he will petition in any language he wishes... he will be included among the sick of Israel and he will say: 'May God have mercy upon you among the sick of Israel.' (2)

The prayer in Maavor Yabok is:

May no evil approach you, nor any plague come near your tent. That His angels He will cause to watch over you in all your ways. Heal us O Lord and we shall be healed, save us O Lord and we shall be saved, as Thou art our praise. (3)

Berechiah explains this prayer quite fully. The evil is illness, and it is God's angels who watch over man's ways. In describing the influence of this prayer upon the sephirot he writes, quoting from the Zohar:

As they are with the man, the Shechinah is found there to watch you in all your ways, that the ways are from malchut to tipheret, from tipheret to malchut by way of yisod... as is mentioned above. And he will concentrate on the powers which pour forth from the King on High to heal all the flesh which are deposited in the palaces above. And also He will have in mind, by His saying, 'that His angels He will command unto you', channels of lights that are appointed over the departing soul so that the soul will not be troubled in its departure, that

God-forbid, death be decreed upon it. And it is written in סבא אליהו p. 98:b that the Holy One Praised be He walks on wings of wind to bring healing to the world. It is Raphael who is influenced by malchut, who receives from tipheret, that places healing by strength by the crown on high. (4) (see appendix I)

The cabbalistic system is seen at work in this quotation. This prayer sets into the motion the spheres and the angel Raphael. It describes the strategy of prayer, but also analyzes and specifies the process. Such an analysis is not to be found in either Sefer Hahayiim or in the rabbinic texts. The prayer also gives some psychological insight by saying that by the presence of angels "the soul will not be troubled in its departure...." Knowledge of the presence of these angels would give great comfort to the sick. By the theosophical knowledge of the process of how this prayer influences the Divine, the dying derives psychological and spiritual comfort by knowing of God's protection.

The word רפאנו is analyzed in the same way, that is in reference to the sephirot. The first three letters resh, pay, and aleph are drawn to the sphere Kindness. As it is written:

And the crown does not influence the sephirot but by hesed. And ne-ra-phay is below by tipheret and malchut. The nun and vav are the foundation of the souls of Israel, which grasp tipheret, foundation of vav and malchut, foundation of nun, which are necessary for healing... (5) (see appendix II)

At this point in the liturgy of Maavor Yabok, it is suggested that one concentrate on the intention of visiting the sick. Berechiah first quotes from the gemara the idea ..

that he who visits the sick takes on 1/60th of the sick one's illness.⁶ He then, in the language and idea system of the cabbala, writes:

And thus the man who is to be engaged in this mitzvah causes to pour forth from above power and strength, as he strengthens the sick one by his visit, and lightens the strength of the evil of the sick one as mentioned... and he who visits the sick is from the side of the attribute of Kindness. And with his engagement with his healing, he ascends until the three sephirot that from there he draws strength and healing... (7)

It is interesting to note how Maavor Yabok, as both a liturgical handbook as well as a handbook on customs, interweaves theosophy with the already established Jewish customs. This gives a theological knowledge to the practical.

Sefer Mahayyim discusses the visiting of the sick from another viewpoint. While it is acknowledged that prayer by the visitor is an important part of his visiting:

Rabbi Simon, son of Yochai, says: What is the actual duty of those who visit the sick? Are they only to be solicitous for the restoration of the bodily health of the sick? No, their chief object must be to provide the sufferers with spiritual remedy.... awaken in the heart of the sick thoughts of piety... (8)

more than the efficacy of prayer is not stated:

The efficacy of prayer performed by the righteous and those who devote their life to the study of the Divine Law, is practically borne out by numerous instances... (9)

The visitor, it is stated, helps the sick one, if necessary, both physically and monetarily. He speaks words

of "comfort and consolation".¹⁰ The result of visiting, therefore, is described in terms of the visited. In Maavor Yabok, it was described in terms of the visited, but also the Divine world. Sefer Hahayiim sees visiting in terms of a religious duty, while Maavor Yabok sees it also in terms of theosophical knowledge. Sefer Hahayiim, in describing the rewards of the visited, also describes the rewards of visiting as reaped by the visitor. As it is said: "Rabbi Judah teacheth in the name of Samuel, he who visits the sick will escape the judgment of Gehinom..."¹¹

It is this reward and punishment system which again seems to be uppermost in the mind of Sefer Hahayiim's author, as it is written:

Rabbi Hannah Saba teaches, in the name of Rava: He who is able to pray for his fellow-men, i.e., who understands the nature of prayer, and neglects to perform it, is called a sinner... God is greatly pleased with the prayer offered to him on behalf of the sick. The Ramban terms these prayers, 'seeking of God'... (12)

Maavor Yabok also has a special prayer which is to be said only upon visiting a "Master of Torah". As it is written:

May it be His will, that he will be blessed from the mouth of the Holy One Praised be He and His Shechinah with each of His attributes, and His ten sephirot, with all His names, and from the four supports, and the six steps of the throne and from all the heads of the Yeshive above, and from all of the angels and from all the family above and the family below in a short and quick time. And may a healing be accounted to you, and may He heal you from your stripes, and from the light of God, the

'ancient one, may He quickly bring unto you salvation. And may He, by His great and merciful name, be merciful to you with all the sick of Israel who are in need of mercy, Amen. Selah. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable unto Thee, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (13) (see appendix III)

It is evident how this prayer calls upon all the sources of power available to the mystic, that is the Divine Presence, God's attributes of mercy and healing, the sephirot, God's names, His throne, the angels, and His family. The goal of all of this is to bring on healing through God's mercy. It is not just for a mere cessation of pain or an easy death which is asked for, but rather a real cure.

Footnotes to Chapter IV

- ¹B.H. Ascher, tran., The Book of Life and Expression of the Tongue (London: B.H. Ascher, 1863), p. 105.
- ²Joseph Caro, Shulhan Aruch (1565; rpt. New York: Shulsinger Bros., 1953), Yoreh Deah, vol 3, p. 167:a.
- ³Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena, Maavor Yabok (1626; rpt. Bnai Berak: Yashfeh, 1927), p. 88.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 48.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 48.
- ⁶Talmud Baba Metzia, perek 6, end of page 30.
- ⁷Berechiah, pp. 214-215.
- ⁸Ascher, p. 1.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 77.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 71.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 65.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 69.
- ¹³Berechiah, pp. 88-89.

Chapter V

After these prayers, which are to be said upon entering the room of the sick person, Maavor Yabok moves into the confession of sins, while Sefer Hahayiim first has a number of prayers said as an introduction to the prayers of confession. Such a difference between the two texts could be attributed more to the available liturgies circulated in their respective areas, than to the stress the texts placed upon the confessional liturgy.

The first prayer in Sefer Hahayiim in the introduction to the confessions, which can be called "A Prayer of the Afflicted" from the first verse of the prayer, is read when one feels ill, or his wife or children feel ill, or when he suffers from a pecuniary loss. Notice should be taken that this prayer, which is included in a book of prayers and customs for the sick and dying, is read at the time of any loss, and not just at the loss of health. The one who suffers a loss should pray this prayer immediately as the judgment of heaven is upon him. He is to analyze his deeds, and to say to the angel: "Your hand be weakened." ¹ It is also said:

Nothing happens by accident, but rather by the providence of the Holy One Praised be He who is exacting with His righteous as a hairsbreadth, as it is written: 'it shall be very tempestuous round about him', to bring upon him 'the disease which I placed upon the Egyptians I will not place upon you', that 'I am the Lord your healer.' (2)

This comment certainly shows God to be an executor of exacting justice with His righteous people. The sick one must look through his deeds to find out why he is being punished, as there is believed to be a direct relationship between sin and sickness. This relationship between sin and sickness begins to point toward the confessional prayer. This relationship also echoes the relationship between sickness and sin as seen by the rabbis, which is described in Chapter II above.

It is interesting that the part of this comment in parentheses is written in a different style than what is written outside the parentheses, as was seen above. This inner comment again uses the vocabulary and mode of interpretation of the mystic.

The tone of the material within the parentheses is immediately recognized as different from what surrounds it, as mercy is now stressed over judgment. As it is written:

The 54 verses of the petition of mercy reverse the attribute of judgment to mercy. To fix the breach in the name **ה"י וי"ו יו"ה** that is mercy, as **ה"י וי"ו יו"ה** which is equivalent to **חסד**, and by his sins judgment comes upon him by the name **אדונו**. (3)
(see appendix IV)

It happens that the numerical equivalent of the name **אדונו**, and thereby **ד**, judge, is 54 which is equivalent to the numerical value of God's name **ה"י וי"ו יו"ה**.⁴ The judgment, punishment for sin, functions then as an incentive to do repentance which returns the letters **ה"י וי"ו יו"ה** and thereby

brings on mercy which accompanies the letters and names that appear at the end. Punishment, therefore, functions as a means to awaken man to overcome his evil inclination in order to do repentance. This repentance influences the divine harmony in the spheres.

The end result of both explanations, the explanations inside and outside the parentheses, is to bring the sick one to the act of repentance. The means and the knowledge of the means of this prayer differ, however, between the two explanations. The explanation outside the parentheses describes God's judgment and exacting justice. Healing is brought on as a reward for the sick one's repentance, which then depends upon God's mercy. This explanation describes what happens between man and God, but it contains no theosophical knowledge as to how this process of healing comes about. This explanation, which can be viewed as reflecting a rabbinic attitude towards man's relationship with God, seems to see justice as God's overriding mechanism in dealing with man. Mercy comes into play after justice has been exacted.

The explanation within the parentheses, however, does have a theosophical knowledge of this healing process. It differs in that it sees mercy, not justice, as God's overriding mechanism in dealing with man. It, therefore, seems to reflect the cabbala's system of the hierarchy and mechanism of the sephirot. The explanation states

that sin has disturbed the harmony of the spheres and God's attribute of mercy. And by repentance, the harmony is returned as the letters of God's name are changed. It is at this time that His attribute of judgment moves back to mercy.

These differences between the two explanations is more a difference in terminology than anything else. While one has a knowledge of the process and the other can only describe it, while one sees a different overriding mechanism than the other, the underlying process of both explanations is the same. This process is the rabbinic idea, as described above, that God reacts to man's needs. Regardless as to why God does this, it is this underlying process which seems to make repentance, and thereby healing, possible.

In the prayer itself, the sick person pours out his heart to God, asking God not to turn from him. He sees God as his shield and glory, who will answer him when he calls. After this introduction, he appeals to God's mercy by praying, "O Eternal, rebuke me not in Thine anger, nor chastise me in Thy wrath. Have mercy upon me, O Eternal!"⁵ He asks God to blot out his transgressions. He recognizes that he has sinned from his youthful years and on, and so he asks God to take this into consideration. There is the recognition that God is the ruling power over all. There is the hope that by turning unto the Lord again, that there

will be healing.

Trust ye in the Eternal forever; for in the eternal God is everlasting strength. The Eternal will give strength unto His people, the Eternal will bless His people with peace. O God of Hosts, blessed is the man who trusteth in Thee. Save us, Eternal. May the King hear us when we call. (6)

The second part of this prayer appeals to God's exacting justice. This sense of God's justice and thereby an acceptance of His judgments seems to be an essential part of the sick person's relationship with God.

Sovereign of the universe, I know that just is Thy judgment; Thou hast tried me, but, alas! I was not found pure and guiltless. There was nothing to shield me against Thy sentence. (7)

But then, as the invalid recognizes his sins, he gains a sense of humility, an embarrassment over his sins, and then he petitions:

And Thou, merciful God, look down upon my trouble, and count it to me as an atonement. I beseech Thee to spare me, and all the members of my household. Omnipotent ruler! Terminate my trouble and sufferings and change the evil decree for my good. (8)

The third section of this prayer (**רחם**) appeals to God's mercy and kindness. As God will have compassion, the sick one, when he is healed, will praise God and tell of His wonders.

The fourth section (**אתה הראת**) begins with an acknowledgement of God's justice which the sick one hopes will be tempered with mercy.

O mayest Thou, in Thine infinite mercy, support me, and grant pardon for all my transgressions

against Thee, for which Thou hast visited me
with Thy chastisements. I know that Thy judgments
are right, but merciful and gracious art Thou... (9)

Notice should be taken that this prayer expresses
the rabbinic idea that God's strict justice must be
tempered with mercy. The paragraphs of this prayer,
therefore, alternate between judgment and mercy.

An original moral is then told, whose purpose is to
exalt God's justice. Even God's chastisements are for
man's good. As has been seen above, the strategy of
acceptance of God's deeds is made a part of the liturgical
texts. This ability to change the decree of God through
repentance, that is acceptance, is also a part of the
Yom Kippor liturgy.

Lo! all these things worketh God oftentimes for-
bearingly with man, to withdraw his soul from
the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the
living. For He (God) will not impose upon man more
than right; to cite him before His mighty throne
of judgment.... touching the Almighty, we cannot
find Him out; He is excellent in power, and in
judgment, and in plenty of justice.... Behold!
happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore
despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:
For He maketh sore and bindeth up: He woundeth
and His hands heal... (10)

The fifth and sixth sections appeal to God's
mercy to bring on this healing. There is a recognition
of God's power over life. In quite realistic terms,
original phrases and biblical phrases are interwoven
to express this hope:

Deign that my pain and suffering may abate, like
the visible decrease of the lunar light, whilst
the health and vigour of my bodily frame may be

renewed like unto the moon in her renewal; grant that my youthful strength may again be like that of the eagle. (11)

In this prayer from Sefer Hahayiim no allusions are made to mystical doctrines or modes of interpretation. The underlying idea is rabbinic in focus, that is, that mercy is a check on God's judgment, which is God's means for ruling the universe. Mercy is, in a sense, a reward for accepting God's judgment. There are less whole verses quoted here from the Bible than whole verses quoted in Maavor Yabok. The latter seems to depend more heavily on biblical verses than the former, for the content of many of its prayers.

The next group of prayers in both Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayiim comprise the ״ו״ו״, the confession. That this section is the central section of these liturgies for the sick and dying is demonstrated first of all by its overall length. The confession in Maavor Yabok is composed of three main parts with an introduction and a conclusion. Sefer Hahayiim contains a general confession of sin, and a confession for those on their death-bed.

The importance of the confession is underscored in Maavor Yabok by its announcement:

From all which has been said, we saw that every man needs to meditate and to articulate his sins before his king and in particular by the confession on the death-bed. (12)

And in Sefer Hahayiim the importance of the confession

is stressed in the following comment: "But if he repents even at the last moment of his life he will be saved..."¹³

The centrality and importance of the confession also has an historical basis. The Talmud, tractate Semachot, specifies two types of prayer; those said by or for the sick person. And as mentioned above, the first prayer is a prayer for mercy; it is quite short and very general in content, as it is handed down in the Talmud and in the codes. The second prayer is the confession. The prayer of the death-bed confession, as it appears in Talmud Semachot and in the Shulhan Aruch, Yoreh Deah, is:

I confess before Thou, O Lord, my God and God of my Fathers, that my healing and my death are in Thy hand. May it be Thy will that Thou wilt heal me with a perfect healing, and that if I will die, may my death be an atonement for all my sins, iniquities, and transgressions which I have committed perversely before Thee.. And grant me a portion in the Garden of Eden, and cause me to merit the life in the world to come, which is reserved for the righteous. (14)

Realizing the brevity of this confession, the Shulhan Aruch, quoting from Col Bo, says that the invalid can also say the Yom Kippor liturgical confession.¹⁵ Again, a connection is made between the Yom Kippor liturgy and the liturgy for the day of death.

The centrality and importance of the prayer of confession is also demonstrated by its appearance in Isaiah Horowitz's work Shene Luchot Ha-Brit. This work was one of the major cabbalistic works pertaining to customs and practices in the 17th century. It was published after

Horowitz's death in 1649 in Jerusalem.

In tractate Pesachim, of the first part of this work, there is quite an extensive section composed of laws for visiting the sick and dying, and prayers to be said by the visitor and the invalid. It is noteworthy to point out that almost the entire section is devoted to a lengthy confession. The remaining prayers are mostly directed toward the goses, one in the throes of death.

The reason why Horowitz devoted so much of this section to the confession, both its laws and prayers, is presented in many cabbalistic and rabbinic texts that he quotes. One text, which is from the Zohar, puts great weight upon the confession and its relation to the future health of the individual, in this world and in the next. It should be noted that even in this comment to the prayer of confession, emphasis is not only placed on the visited, but also upon the visitor. It goes so far as to call the visitor an "angel of goodness". As it is written:

In the Zohar, parashat Pekudai, 'he who watches the sick and attempts to get him to return in repentance, behold he is as the advocate of goodness, that he causes him to be saved from the attribute of stern judgment, and save him from death, and redeem him from destruction, and cause him revival of life...' (16)

As has been seen above, Maavor Yabok describes, within its explanation on the confessional prayers, the cabbalistic theosophical system, the process of the various prayers and customs and the means by which they are efficacious. As to why Berechiah includes three confessions

in his liturgy, he writes:

and the sick one will concentrate on uniting in his confession three confessions corresponding to sin, transgression, and iniquity, and to include the major and minor alphabets. And he will mend first by binah, and second tipheret, and third malchut, and to mend tipheret, malchut, and yisod which are breached by sin, transgression, and iniquity. (17)

This comment displays that cabbalistic linkage between man and the Divine, as the specific words of the confession and the confession itself have a direct influence upon God, in this case keter. The act of the confessional prayer, with its specific words and their order, has the ability to bring together the members of the middle pillar of Mercy, that is tipheret (the King), yisod (the Foundation), and malchut (the Queen), thereby bringing about harmony through the sephirot, the heavenly heights.

Certainly this process is in no way explicit or implicit in Sefer Hahayiim's comment on repentance:

But if he repents even at the last moment of his life, he will be saved, as Scripture says: If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand to show unto man his uprightness, then He is gracious unto Him, and says: 'Deliver him from going down into the grave: I have found a ransom' (Job XXXII. 24,25). Yea, he will then escape death, the pangs of Gehinom, and attain future bliss. This happy change may be wrought by repentance.... And not only does repentance mend the sinner, but even ranks him amongst the righteous... (18)

Again, Sefer Hahayiim uses texts which speak in rabbinic and therefore biblical terms of reward and punishment. These texts do not display the theosophical know-

ledge of Divine process that the cabbalistic texts do, as quoted in Maavor Yabok, it describes practice and not theosophy.

The text of Maavor Yabok suggests that before the full text of the confession is read, the invalid should read the confession written by Nachmanides. The text of this confession is found later in the work, not in the liturgical section under consideration. Before the confession, it is mentioned that it was written by Nachmanides and received from the hasadim and the "men of Deed" (אַנְשֵׁי הַמַּעֲשֵׂה). This is a confession for those on their death-bed.

The Nachmanides confession begins with an expansion of the confessional formula found in Semachot. There is first a recognition of God's power. He deals with kindness and justice. The sick one prays for healing, but if he must die, he knows that his death will be an atonement for all his sins, so that he may receive the rewards of the world to come.

After this first part, there is a listing of an obvious adaptation of Maimonides' "thirteen principles". While it does not come under the purview of this thesis, many other liturgical compendiums for the sick and dying do include a reading of Maimonides' "thirteen principles" after the death-bed confession. The reason for the presence of these

thirteen principles is to give the common Jew enough philosophy to activate his Active Intellect. This in turn would give him eternal life. The possibility of eternal life for the philosopher is the result of activating the Active Intellect which then becomes a part of God, who is immortal. As Maimonides wrote in the Moreh, "The works of God being most perfect, admitting no addition or deduction, must remain the same forever." ¹⁹

This inclusion of the "thirteen principles" shows the influence of Maimonides upon even the ~~cabbalistic~~ movement and the various traditions revolving around the sick and dying, which circulated among the people. While Nachmanides changes the wording slightly, and does not number his thirteen principles, the direct correlation of these principles with those of Maimonides can be ascertained by a quick comparison of these works of Nachmanides and Maimonides.

It would also be interesting to conjecture why this confession was not included in the main liturgical section. Whether this was because the confession's author was not Berechiah, or because it included an adaptation of the "thirteen principles" of Maimonides, or for some other reason, it is impossible to determine the answer, beyond mere conjecture.

In the rubric after the one which suggests a reading

of Nachmanides' confession, Berechiah makes the following remark which follows a cabbalistic line of speculation on number and word plays.

Before the confession, he will wash his hands, he will wrap himself in a tallit, and the sick one will distribute by hand or word of mouth at least 26 perutot, 91, or 112, the intention behind this act has to do with the three names of God **הו"ה אה"ה אדנ"ה** . (20)

The relationship between the monetary value and the three names of God is that the three names have thirteen letters and the numbers 26 and 91 are multiples of 13. The number 112 is the numerical equivalent of the letters **יב** which is the title of the work, that is Yabok **יב** .

The rubric also points out that the confession should be said in the morning, as that is the time when the sphere Kindness rules. This underscores the idea that the confession in Maavor Yabok is appealing to mercy.

In addition to the above mentioned prayer said upon entering the room of someone who is sick, if that person is a "student of wisdom" then a special prayer is said for him. The same is suggested before the confession. The following is that special prayer. Its emphasis upon a knowledge of the hidden secrets of the Torah needs to be noted.

Master of the world, Thou, the light of counsels, the revealer of secrets: May the logical argument of the words of my mouth be pleasing to Thee: that it may establish for me the scriptural phrase

'And I will be with your mouth', for were it not so I would ascend before Thee in disgrace, and before the heads of the Yeshiva above. But may I be worthy to hear the words and secrets of the Torah from the heads of the Yeshiva above. (21) (see appendix V)

The emphasis here is on the learning of philosophy and theosophy in the world to come. As this is a prayer said by a "student of wisdom", this learning must be his goal in death, as it was his goal in life. It is interesting to note that not only is the word "secrets" (סֵדֶר) used, but also a purely philosophical term such as "logical argument" (סִבְרָא) is used here too. There is a blending here of cabbalistic and philosophical vocabularies.

The confession begins with a reading of psalm four, which can be said to be a declaration by David to have faith and security in the Lord even in the face of his enemies. The two usages here of the verb "to lie down" make this psalm particularly applicable to the reader who too is lying down on his sick bed. These two usages of this verb are: "Tremble and sin not, speak in your heart upon your bed and be silent, selah...." and "I will both lie down and sleep in peace because Thou O Lord makest me dwell alone in safety." ²²

The first confession opens with a humbling of the self. The worshipper asks God not to deny his petitions, because he admits he is stiff-necked and a sinner. There

is then a list of sins. As each sin is enumerated in a few words, it echoes the confession of sins in the Yom Kippor liturgy. But more than just being a random listing of sins, it is an alphabetical list, as each letter of the alphabet starts two sins. The sins are not only ethical, but also ritualistic and ceremonial in nature. The first confession ends with a knowledge that while man has turned aside from God's commandments, God is just and truthful. God has not turned aside from him, as emet (אמת) can be translated as "faithful"²³ and tzadek (צדק) as "one who is true".²⁴ As God knows all the hidden and revealed thoughts, the sick one appeals to God's mercy to forgive him from his sins.

This might be the original work of this alphabetical listing of sins, as no prior source could be found. The emphasis of this confession is upon man's lack of faithfulness, and God's faithfulness in their relationship with one another. This puts man in the active role, in that he, by his actions, can correct this broken relationship with God. He asks God in His mercy to know, both by the revealed and hidden thoughts, man's turning, that is, his repentance.

The second confession on page 91 is little more than an expansion of the confession found in Talmud Semachot. The invalid asks that if he can be healed, then let it be so. But if he must die, may his death be an atonement

for all his sins, so that he can be worthy of entering the Garden of Eden with the other righteous. This acceptance of death is partially a resignation to God's decree..But it is also an active acceptance. Active, in that by accepting it, the death becomes an atonement which then makes this man worthy of various future rewards. Acceptance of death, as part of this confession, is a strategy for overcoming death.

This confession expands the talmudic confession by asking that healing come due to the merit of King Hezekiah. As it is written: "May Thou aid me as Thou aided Hezekiah, King of Judah, during his illness..." ²⁵ The story of King Hezekiah thereby becomes a paradigm for this strategy of overcoming the decrees of God.

The confession then asks God to deal with the sick one out of faithfulness and justice. "With an even hand Thou wilt weigh me, and Thou wilt judge me, and by Thy great light Thou wilt emblazon me." ²⁶

The third confession opens with an al chayt formula, reminiscent of the Yom Kippor liturgy. It first mentions those sins done intentionally and those carried out unintentionally, those made in secret and those performed in the open. It then lists the various parts of the body, showing their part in committing these sins. This al chayt formula is general in content. This list of sins is concluded by the following prayer for forgiveness, from

the Yom Kippor liturgy: "And thus for what I caused to others, Thou wilt pardon, and forgive all..."²⁷ From this last statement in the confession, it would seem that these admitted sins are ethical in nature, that is, those sins perpetrated between man and man.

There is then an appeal to God's mercy based upon His thirteen attributes. It is as if this biblical section of God's attributes is taken to stand as a witness to God's acts of mercy with man. As it is written:

And by Thy great mercies and by their strength which shine upon the earth and its inhabitants; by Thy thirteen attributes which Thou hast appointed over the gates of prayer, that they not return empty... (28)

This appeal to God's mercy for forgiveness, is continued by a calling upon God's name אֱהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֱהִיָּה from which all mercy comes. And it is hoped that God's mercy will forgive all of the invalid's sins, for which he would be deserving of the punishments from heaven and those of the human court below.

The prayer enumerates the various types of punishments possible, and concludes this section of the confession by stating:

May it be Thy will, Lord, my God and God of my Fathers, that by the merit of Abraham, Issac, and Israel Thy servants, that this confession will be acceptable before Thee. If I were stoned, I were burned, I were murdered, I were strangled according to Torah law in Thy great court in Jerusalem because of the honor of Thy great name that I injured by the meditation or thought, word or deed, the first, second, third, or fourth letter

of Thy great, powerful, and awesome name or by other such letters, or by other letters which are connected with them, then I have been deserving of these four deaths before Thy throne of glory... (29) (see appendix VI)

These and all sins are thereby destructions of God's names, and thereby His mercy, and the harmony of the spheres. The strategy of fixing this disharmony of the spheres, caused by sin, is to vicariously accept the various punishments of the heavenly and human courts. With this vicarious acceptance of punishment, harmony and mercy are returned. It is with this strategy in mind, that concerning one's possible death it is written:

and may my soul depart in holiness and in purity upon the holiness of Thy great name which revives all, and to appease each of its four letters. And may Thou by Thine abundant mercy return and unite upon me each of the four letters from Thy three essential names הויה אהיה אונות, and may all of them emblazon together in the worlds of Atzilut, the Briatic world, the Jetziratic world, and the Assiatic world.... May desire go out from the Crown of Mercy the way of the paths of thought, and prepare for me Thy greatness and Thy might, and I will be proud in the eternity (nezach) of Thy majesty and I will be established in Thy kingdom (malchut). (30) (see appendix VII)

Repentance, as described in the paragraph above, brings about a harmony and unity of the letters of God's names, the various worlds, and throughout the ten spheres. The last sentence is composed of plays on the names of the spheres.

It is then described in this confession that with this established harmony in the spheres, waters of life

will flow down the middle pillar, purifying all impurities. These are probably waters of God's mercy.

The invalid then prays for strength to do away with the impurities of the Evil Inclination. He hopes that death should not come until the purification of the soul comes about. This purification of the soul is accomplished by confession and repentance. Such purification, according to at least this confession, is also carried out by God's appointed angels who will enlighten him in the secrets of the Torah. The influence of theosophy is again evident. The goal of such preparations (strategies) in reference to death is that:

My neshamah will unite with Thee, and my nephesh will praise Thee, and also my ruach inside of me will early seek Thy name and I will walk in the light of a pure soul before the menorah... and bring me up with endearment to the Good Place that it has no limit, and I will depart in great love, and the neshamah that Thou gave pure unto me will be bound up in the bonds of life. (31)
(see appendix VIII)

By a wealth of cabbalistic imagery, this third confession, in Maavor Yabok, gives a description of what might be defined as a state of purity of soul, that is, a "good death". Such a "good death" is accomplished by repentance, by which such a soul will find eternal peace and rest in a unity with God and the spheres.

The prayer at the bottom of page 94, Ana Norah, begins the concluding section to the confessional prayers in Maavor Yabok. This prayer continues the petition of

God's mercy. Once again allusions are made to the worthiness of the Fathers, and an appeal is made to God's thirteen attributes. As it is written:

May Thou givest truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham which Thou swore to our Fathers since days gone by. And He will concentrate on the thirteen attributes of the macroprosopon as expounded in Sefer Pardes. (32)

This prayer does not mention death or ~~its~~ possibility, but rather, it mentions sufferings and terrible sickness. It is hoped that through God's mercy, that his sins would be dashed into the depths, and that no punishment would come by suffering or illness.

It is then suggested that the invalid read psalm 121, which as it begins "I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains from whence my help comes" ³³ speaks of God's ever-present help and protection. The last verse of this psalm would be especially comforting at the time after such extensive confessions. It speaks of God's protection at birth and at death.. As it is stated: "The Lord will watch your going out and coming in from this time forth and forever." ³⁴

This section of prayers of confession in Maavor Yabok concludes with a basic recapitulation of the above prayer Ana Morah. The prayer Mi El Camocha asks God to constrain His anger, and deal with the sick one in mercy and faithfulness. It states that if there must be sufferings they should come out of God's justice (restrained power) and not

out of His wrath (unrestrained power). The traditional prayer for health is said, and the prayer concludes with a number of verses from the evening service "before going to bed" which call upon God's salvation and protection.

This prayer, however, is not only a reiteration of the previous prayer, but rather the order of its first three verses has a cabbalistic meaning referring to the thirteen attributes of God. As it is written:

And afterward he will say thirteen attributes which will increase their usage; length of days and healing will be brought up before him from these three verses. 1. 'Who is as Thee' 2. 'forgives iniquity' 3. 'pardons transgressions' 4. 'for the remainder of His inheritance' 5. 'He will not increase His anger always' 6. 'but He desires mercy' 7. 'He will turn, He will be merciful to us' 8. 'He will conquer our sins' 9. 'He will throw all our sins into the depths of the sea' 10. 'He will give truth to Jacob' 11. 'mercy to Abraham' 12. 'As Thou swore to our Fathers' 13. 'from days of old' (35)

It is then suggested that the sick one pray the prayer El Melech, and if a "student of wisdom" the prayer Otanu al Shemecha. These prayers are not printed in the text. The Odam Olam and Yigdal are recited. These are both medieval poems based on the model of the "thirteen principles" of Maimonides, of whose importance it is said here:

and they will explain to him each of the thirteen principles if it is necessary. (36)

The importance of the "thirteen principles" is connected with the cabbalists' stress upon wisdom and metaphysical knowledge as means of purifying the soul and achieving eternal life.

Sefer Hahayiim has two confessions. The first is a general confession, not to be said by one on a death-bed.

The first paragraph of this first confession is quite similar in form to the first confessional section in Maavor Yabok, although shorter in length. They both begin with the same phrase: "My God, and God of my Fathers! May my prayers come before Thee, and hide not Thyself from my supplications." ³⁷ As in Maavor Yabok, there is a confession of man's sinful nature when it is written:

I have sinned against Thee all my life long unto this day, for I have acted foolishly; I am ashamed and confused; my evil inclinations enticed me to rebellion. (38)

There is also written here a listing of sins, similar to the list in the Yom Kippor liturgy. As in Maavor Yabok, the sins are listed alphabetically. But whereas Maavor Yabok lists two or more sins for each letter, Sefer Hahayiim lists only one sin under each letter. The type of sin which Sefer Hahayiim seems to be lacking might be called sins that are ritualistic in nature. Two examples would be sufficient here in demonstrating these differences. While for the first letter of the alphabet both works list the sin ashamti, "I have sinned", Maavor Yabok adds, "I ate (achalti) things which were forbidden and abominable."³⁹ And while for the eighth letter both books list the sin hamasti, "I destroyed", Maavor Yabok adds, "I profaned (helalti) the name of the Lord in secret and in open; I profaned the sabbaths and holidays."⁴⁰ While Maavor Yabok lists

these ritualistic sins in many cases, Sefer Hahayiim does not seem to mention them at all.

It should also be mentioned that unlike much of the confession in Maavor Yabok, Sefer Hahayiim in this opening first part of the confession does not mention the word mercy or its synonyms, in relation to God. It speaks, rather, of the acceptance of God's justice, as it is written:

but Thou art just concerning all that is come upon us, for Thou hast dealt most truly, and I have done most wickedly. (41)

The actual body of this first confession begins with the prayer Ma Omar (מה אומר). The confession begins with a declaration that God has knowledge of both revealed and hidden thoughts of man. From a purview of confessional prayers, this type of declaration appears to be essential to such a prayer. By such a declaration, the confessor protects himself, in that even if he does not utter a certain sin, he knows that God is aware of it and therefore, can forgive it. This opening paragraph is concluded with an appeal to God's mercy.

There are then three paragraphs in which sins are enumerated in the form of the al chayt liturgical formula. While it is difficult to discern a difference in content between the first two paragraphs, there does appear to be a structural difference. The first paragraph does not list ethical sins between man and man, such as "stubbornness of heart", "incestuous lewdness", "deceiving my neighbor", and

"despising my parents and teachers", ⁴² as does the second paragraph. The first paragraph, however, makes a point of stating that these sins were conducted "voluntarily and involuntarily", "publicly or secretly, deliberately or deceitfully", "presumptuously or accidentally". ⁴³ By stating both types of motivation in this way, the first paragraph also covers all possible aspects of the sinful deed, that is both voluntary and involuntary motivations.

The third paragraph is similar to the third confession in Maavor Yabok. The confessor asks God to pardon him for all sins which he would need to bring trespass offerings or would be liable to incur the punishments by stripes, barrenness, or death.

Each paragraph is followed by the liturgical formula from Yom Kippor: "And for all of these, Thou God of Pardon! O pardon me! O forgive me! O grant me remission!" ⁴⁴ This appeal to God's mercy is followed through in the closing paragraphs of this first confession prayer in Sefer Hahayiim.

There is then an interim prayer between the general confession and the one said by a person on his death-bed. This interim prayer describes the efficaciousness of prayer. Once again, Sefer Hahayiim presents a description of the end result of prayer, not theosophically, but practically. It is written:

A truly religious and godly man will never suffer

himself to be overtaken by death: he will always prepare for it by ardent prayer, and humble submission to the Will of God. Confession, my brother, and pious sister, has never accelerated death. On the contrary, prayer and confession very often cause our days to be prolonged, and our sins to be forgiven. (45)

This prayer begins by an extolling of God's holiness, knowledge, and healing powers. In His hands is the power to strengthen and to heal. In very real terms, the prayer describes one's illness and its vicissitudes:

for all my limbs are as heavy on me as lead,
crushed and dislocated. My days are consumed
like smoke, and my bones are burnt as a hearth;
my heart is smitten and withered like grass. (46)

This situation is due to God's anger. As it says:

For Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand
presseth me sore, there is no soundness in my
flesh because of Thine anger... (47)

which is brought on by the sick person's sins "because of my sin! for mine iniquities are gone over my head." ⁴⁸

The prayer now turns to an appeal, first to God's presence, and then to His mercy.

Mine eyes are ever towards God; for He shall
pluck my feet out of the tent. Turn Thou unto
me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and
afflicted.... Have mercy upon me, O Eternal God;
consider my trouble, which I suffer by those
who hate me; O lift me up from the gates of
death. (49)

In giving a reason why God should save him from death, the prayer then quotes the words of the psalmist, which were mentioned earlier in Sefer Hahayiim:

For in death there is no remembrance of Thee, in
the grave who shall give Thee thanks?... I will

praise Thee, that Thou hast afflicted me, and art become my salvation. The dead praise not the Eternal, neither any that go down in silence. (50)

It should be noted that death is described here in Sefer Hahayiim in terms of one being unable to praise God. This idea of death is biblical in nature. Various verses from the psalms are quoted to present this idea. As has been seen above, Maavor Yabok sees death in terms of cosmic disharmony, and a cessation of Divine Light pouring forth from the brighter spheres in reaction to sin. While the terminologies differ, both books see man's ability to repent through word and deeds as a strategy to overcome death.

The confession on the death-bed begins with a slight expansion of the confession which is found in the Shulhan Aruch, and in the second confession in Maavor Yabok.

The dying person acknowledges God's power over life and death, illness and recovery. As such, he prays to God for recovery. If this is impossible, then his death should be an atonement for all sins, so that he may receive the rewards in the life to come.

The second paragraph of this confession is a petition for more years of life. It recognizes that God does not want the death of a sinner, but rather, his repentance, so that "he may live" ⁵¹. He therefore says:

I therefore do return unto Thee with all my heart, I

sincerely repent all my sins, and deign to have mercy upon me according to Thy sacred promise: 'And he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin, shall have mercy.' (52)

He then hopes that, based upon the merit of Hezekiah and David, he should be given a cure from his illness and thereby long life.

This paragraph concludes this death-bed confession. It is of interest that it is so much shorter than the confessional section in Maavor Yabok. And it is also certainly devoid of the cabbalistic allusions which were found in the confessions of Maavor Yabok.

Footnotes to Chapter V

- ¹B. H. Ascher, tran., The Book of Life and Expression of the Tongue (London: B. H. Asher, 1863), p. 106.
- ²Ibid., p. 106.
- ³Ibid., p. 106.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 106.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 109.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 111.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 111.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 111.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 113.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 115.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 117.
- ¹²Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena, Maavor Yabok (1626; rpt. Bnai Berak: Yashfeh, 1927), p. 140.
- ¹³Ascher, p. 44.
- ¹⁴Joseph Karo, Shulhan Aruch (1565; rpt. New York: Shulsinger Bros., 1953), Yoreh Deah, p. 168:a.
- ¹⁵Ibid., p. 167:a.
- ¹⁶Isaiah Horowitz, Shene Luhot Ha-Brit (Jerusalem, 1923), Part II, p. 4:a.
- ¹⁷Berechiah, pp. 147-148.
- ¹⁸Ascher, pp. 44-45.
- ¹⁹M. Friedlander, tran., The Guide for the Perplexed (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956), p. 204.
- ²⁰Berechiah, p. 89.
- ²¹Ibid., p. 89.
- ²²Ibid., pp. 89-90.
- ²³Marcus Jastrow, A Dictionary (New York: Pardes Publ. House, Inc., 1950), vol. I, p. 793.
- ²⁴Ibid., II, p. 1263.
- ²⁵Berechiah, p. 91.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 91.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 92.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 92.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 93.
- ³⁰Ibid., pp. 93-94.

- ³¹Berechiah, p. 94.
³²Ibid., p. 95.
³³Ibid., p. 95.
³⁴Ibid., p. 95.
³⁵Ibid., p. 154.
³⁶Ibid., p. 96.
³⁷Ascher, p. 118.
³⁸Ibid., p. 119.
³⁹Berechiah, p. 90.
⁴⁰Ibid., p. 90.
⁴¹Ascher, p. 121.
⁴²Ibid., p. 121.
⁴³Ibid., p. 121.
⁴⁴Ibid., p. 123.
⁴⁵Ibid., p. 125.
⁴⁶Ibid., p. 125.
⁴⁷Ibid., p. 125.
⁴⁸Ibid., p. 127.
⁴⁹Ibid., p. 127.
⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 129-131.
⁵¹Ibid., p. 131.
⁵²Ibid., p. 133.

Chapter VI

The section which follows the confessions in Sefer Hahayiim contains prayers said by visitors for the very ill person. This section is preceded by a comment which is divided into two parts.

The first part describes the need for the sick one, as he goes through the process of confession, to ask forgiveness from any person he might have offended or hurt by word or deed. He is both a sinner before God and before man. This very social act of repentance has been discussed above, as it also appears in the confessional section of Maavor Yabok. It should be remembered that in Maavor Yabok the act of repentance toward one's fellowmen was carried out by an act of charity (תְּשׁוּבָה) whose sum was interpreted by **its** mystical numerical value.

The second comment is in parentheses. As with the above comments from Sefer Hahayiim, which appeared in parentheses, this comment's content is cabbalistic. It gives an example of the mystic's doctrine of transmigration of the soul. It describes what happens to the person who fails to make monetary amends to those with whom he is in debt. This person puts himself under the pain of transmigration.

This comment not only seems to be cabbalistic in content, and therefore possibly a later addition to the text, but for the first time the comment is preceded by the words:

"And the wise men of Cabbalah wrote..." ¹ which would verify its source.

As this discussion preceeds the prayers by the visitors, Sefer Hahayiim quotes Rabbi Eleazar's statement on the prayer of the righteous and its influence. He states: "... the prayer of the righteous turns the Holy One Praised be He's attribute of anger to mercy." ² The use of the term "attribute of anger" (אֲתֵרַת אֵרָה) is noteworthy. Is Rabbi Eleazar equating God's attribute of anger with the more commonly used term God's "attribute of judgment"?

This section of prayers for the very ill is supposed to be said by a minimum of ten visitors. It begins with a petition for permission from the Holy One Praised be He and His Divine Presence. The first paragraph is an Aramaic prayer which entreats God's mercy by quoting the thirteen attributes of God from Exodus 24:6. This prayer is also found in the Ari's siddur of the 18th century, and also in the Southern French work of the late 14th century Orchoth Chajim by R. Aharon Hakohen Lunel. The latter work would certainly be the earliest mention of this prayer. Its bastardized Aramaic, which implies that it is not of zoharistic origin, and its appearance in this early sephardic work, might reflect an unfixed oral liturgy used by some of the early sephardic cabbalistic groups. That it is part of an unfixed oral liturgy is attested to by the

following comment in Orchoth Chajim: "And there are places that begin 'We pray and entreat' etc., and all follow after the custom: 'The Lord, Lord God is merciful and gracious,' etc." ³

This first paragraph is followed by paragraphs in Hebrew which leave space to insert the sick person's name. The rest of the prayer continues this appeal to God's mercy. His justice and His judgment are not mentioned. Psalm 93 is then inserted. This is a psalm appealing to God's protection, but this protection actually comes out of His justice rather than His mercy. It arises out of His overriding justice, as it is contingent upon man's deeds. As it is written: "Because he delighteth in Me will I deliver him; I will exalt him because he hath known My name. When he calleth upon Me I will answer him..." ⁴ God's unmerited mercy is also mentioned. As it says: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Eternal pitieth them that fear Him." ⁵

This unmerited mercy is then colored by justice, that is, merited mercy, in the paragraph which begins:

And He said, if thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord Eternal Thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight,... I will put none of those diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians... (6)

The idea that God's mercy is contingent upon man's repentance, and thereby tempered with justice, continues through the rest of the prayer. As it is written: "The Eternal is good unto them that wait for Him; to the soul

that seeketh Him." 7

This intermingling of mercy and justice possibly arises from the fact that these paragraphs are composed of biblical verses. As is the case with many of the psalms, they often do balance off the attributes of mercy and justice.

There is also a second group of prayers included, which are also said for the very ill person by his visitors. In the first paragraph of this section, the visitors are depicted as officers bringing the prisoner to the scaffold. The image of God as stern judge is very strong here. As it is written:

O Lord, God of Israel, hearken to the prayer and petition which Thy servants pray before Thee, forgive the sick one who is stretched on his bed as if they brought him up to the gallows to be judged... (8)

The reality of one's illness and suffering is vividly depicted when it says:

He _____ the bittered soul; that all his couch is turned by his illness, he does not stand from it, his taste and smell are bittered, his soul will despise all food and the warmth of his inner heart touches the gates of death... (9)

After this description of the invalid's sickness, he prays for a healing from God, by appealing to His mercy. What has been termed merited and unmerited mercy both appear here. An example of an appeal to unmerited mercy would be:

O Lord, be gracious unto him, heal his soul and forgive him because he has sinned against Thee. (10)

This is an unmerited act on God's part, as it is because man is sinful in nature, and not because of any specific act, thereby showing man's quality of weakness and finitude, that God should be merciful to him and heal him.

An example of an appeal to merited mercy in this section would be:

The eye of the Lord is to those who fear Him,
to those who wait for His kindness. (11)

Here God's mercy is predicated upon man's turning toward Him.

While this prayer over and over again appeals to both mercy and justice, it seems to recognize a hierarchy between the two. This hierarchy is pointed out in the verse:

And because of them He will remember, He will
requite, be merciful, be forgiving, will save,
will help, will protect, will save and will heal
_____ from all his illness. (12)

The verb "to requite" (**תָּפַח**) implies the exacting of judgment, and it is this act which preceeds the act of mercy, in the above quotation. It has been demonstrated above, and will be seen below in the section from Maavor Yabok, which is equivalent to this section under discussion from Sefer Hahayiim (that is, prayers said for the very ill), that the former does see God's requiting of sin as prior to His act of mercy more pervasively than the latter work. Maavor Yabok tends to see mercy, and not justice, as the overriding principle.

The concluding paragraphs of this section, then,

emphasize an appeal to God's mercy. That these prayers were from a cabbalistic tradition there can be little doubt. The prayer printed here ¹³ which asks that the 21 gates of mercy be opened is also found in Maavor Yabok. The verse "And He will cause him to dream, He will heal him, He will watch him and He will revive him" ¹⁴ is also quoted in Maavor Yabok and becomes the biblical basis for the belief that dreams can awaken one to repentance. The appeal, in this prayer from Sefer Hahayiim, for a perfect healing from the fourth palace in which the angel Raphael appears, is certainly a usage of cabbalistic imagery. And finally, there is an appeal to God's name . אהיה אשר אהיה , which has frequently been appealed to in Maavor Yabok.

I do not mean to infer that Sefer Hahayiim borrowed these verses and imagery from Maavor Yabok. Thus far, there is no evidence that the two works crossed paths early in their developmental stages. I do infer, however, that while the basic emphases of the works diverge, they were borrowing many prayers from a common circulating oral tradition, both from the cabbalistic as well as from the more "rationalistic" rabbinic traditions. The latter seems to have been utilized more by Sefer Hahayiim, while the former seems to have been utilized more by Maavor Yabok.

The final part in this section of prayers for the very ill, from Sefer Hahayiim, are prayers said for the sage, that is, the "student of wisdom". Two items should be mentioned

here. The first is that the worthiness of the Torah, as well as Torah study and deeds of kindness, is used for this appeal for long years and good health. The second item is that the very straight-forward biblical-rabbinic language of these prayers stands in marked contrast to the above mentioned prayers said for and by the sage in Maavor Yabok. The florid mystical imagery of the latter is missing here in Sefer Hahayim. There is a direct appeal here to forgiveness of sins, and thereby God's healing through His mercy.

In the section in Maavor Yabok which follows the confessional section described above, a variety of prayers and customs are mentioned. It is, in a sense, a miscellaneous section, which includes prayers for the very ill and those approaching goses.

There is a prayer of one verse in length which one says if he feels that death is near (השעה דחוקה). He spreads his ten fingers toward heaven, concentrates on a unity with the Holy One Praised be He and His Presence and says:

In the light of the cause of causes, the first cause, who revives all by the foundation of the rising of his soul he will say: 'Master of the universe, may it be Thy will that my rest will be peace.' And he will concentrate on the name of the Holy One, and His unity, in the presence of the great and awesome Mt. Sinai. (15) (see appendix IX)

Notice should be taken here of the description of

ritual, the reference to philosophical terms such as "first cause", the emphasis on the concentration on God's name, His unity, and the revelation at Mount Sinai and the ensuing covenant. All of these elements are not mentioned or included in Sefer Mahayim. It also is interesting to note that this one-verse prayer asks only for peace, not for healing or for the rewards in the world to come. While these other concepts might be implied, they are not explicitly stated. At the time of death, with all one's concomitant fears, it is only peace that is requested.

The next prayer collected in this section is a prayer which is said before the soul leaves the body. It is obviously out of chronological order, as the prayers for the one nearing death (the one in goses) do not enter the liturgy until later. The prayer is from the book of Isaiah and it reads:

In the death of King Uzziah, I saw the Lord sitting on His high and exalted throne, and its limits filled the palace. Seraphim were standing over it, six wings for each one, by two its face was covered, by two its feet were covered, and by two it flew. And they called one to another, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is filled with His glory.' (16)

The commentary to this prayer explains that at death the soul of the righteous returns to the World of Emanations (Aztilut), as the soul of the righteous is made from the intercourse of tipheret and malchut.¹⁷ As this prayer has forty-two letters from the word " nx " through the word

" כבודו ", it is hoped that he who concentrates on these letters will receive worthiness from heaven "by the name ת"א which collects all the emanations from the keter on high which is ' א ' until malchut, which is ' ה ' that is ' אדונ' "18 (see appendix X)

This comment is then followed by a long commentary on each of the phrases of the above verses from Isaiah. It shows how they bring together the ten spheres. Not only is it specified that these forty-two letters must be concentrated upon, but that each vowel must be stressed.

It is then pointed out that he who concentrates:

on the first kadosh concentrates on the first three spheres keter, chohmah, and binah; the second kadosh concentrates on the second three spheres hesed, gevurah, and tipheret; and the third kadosh concentrates on the last three spheres nezach, hod, and yesod. And 'The whole earth is filled with His glory' concentrates on the tenth sphere. (19) (see appendix XI)

Berechiah concludes his commentary on this prayer by commenting not only on its theurgic function, but also on its end result in reference to one's soul and to one's death.

And surely all this will be a preparation to purify him and sanctify him, that he will be worthy to be a sweet smelling offering to the Lord and a pure meal offering on the day of his departure to the courts of the Lord. And the Seraphim, of six wings, by their wings will cover him and will lift him up on high. May it be His will that he be worthy, be revived, and see length of days. And with all Israel he will praise God forever in this world and in the world to come, Amen. May it be His will. (20) (see appendix XII)

This section of prayers in Maavor Yabok then tells where, in the book, customs and laws pertaining to the period of goses are found. It then suggests that upon the conclusion of the visit to the sick person, the visitor should say:

The Holy One Praised be He, may He take pity to receive you and bring you up by fullness of mercy. Master of the Universe, do so because of Thy mercy and Thy kindness, because of Thy great name. Do not put the sick one to shame because of his thought, and may all the sick of Israel be included in mercy. (21)

Sefer Hahayyim, in an earlier section, suggests that the following prayer be said upon leaving a sick person. This prayer is being discussed now as it is more appropriate to see it in comparison to its counterpart in Maavor Yabok, which does appear now. The prayer reads:

On leaving the patient, say - 'O may God send thee a speedy and a perfect cure, and unto all the sick of Israel!' On Sabbath or Festival the following should be said - 'This day of Sabbath (or festival) is a day of rest from grief and heart-rending prayer, yet recovery will speedily be granted unto thee, and unto all the sick of Israel, and thus celebrate the Sabbath in peace. (22)

The use of both of these prayers from Sefer Hahayyim became halachic, as they are mentioned in the Shulhan Aruch, Yoreh Deah, 335:6, which of course preceeded Sefer Hahayyim, and it is also found in the Hamadrikh. In comparing these prayers with the one mentioned above from Maavor Yabok, notice should be taken that neither the Holy One Praised be He, His Divine Presence, or His mercy is referred to in these prayers from Sefer Hahayyim, which

became part of the halacha, while they appear in Maavor Yabok's prayer.

Before another section of psalms, the rubric on page 97 in Maavor Yabok says that the sick person must see the sufferings that have come upon him as an atonement for the sins of his soul. It is important for one to accept them in love, before he is on his death-bed. They are to be accepted from love, knowing that they are sent out of God's mercy and love for man, in order to bring man back into harmony with the spheres, and thereby God. One again, this strategy against death, that is, acceptance, is presented.

Berechiah then numerically lists twenty-eight psalms, and suggests that one who is on his death-bed should read these psalms, as they unify the twenty-eight camps of the Divine Presence. One can, however, read as many or as few of these psalms as he wants. While Berechiah does not say this, it is evident that the psalms to be recited and the number said, were dictated by local customs, as the number to be read is not fixed. He does, however, have three psalms written out. These are psalms 84, 120 and 123. These psalms can be summarized as follows. Psalm 84 tells of the yearnings by the hasid for the courts of the Lord where he will find safety and protection. Psalm 120 is a plea for salvation from one's enemies. And psalm 123 is a petition for the Lord's mercy. These three psalms, at least, continue in the tradition of the psalms quoted above, in that they

express a yearning for a relationship with God and His mercy.

As part of this miscellaneous section, Berechiah includes 112 verses from Tanach that are to be said by the sick one, or for him by his visitors. The intention of these verses is to pass maavor yabok (מעבור יבק) from below to above. He does this in that 112 (קיב) is of course a reversal of the letters יבק (Yabok). Also it is pointed out in the text that the three names of God

הו"ה אה"ה אדנ"ה are numerically equivalent to the number 112, and therefore these verses have a theurgic influence upon these names of God. And finally, this explanation of the process behind the saying of 112 verses, states that the spark from the soul of the one saying these verses attaches its strength to the other souls of Israel, and therein it derives its strength.²³

The introduction to these verses sets this section's tone, which is one of hope in God's protection and presence, as it says:

Harken heavens and I will speak, listen earth to the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb. The Lord of Hosts is with us, our rock, the God of Jacob, selah. Lord of Hosts, happy is the man who trusts in Thee. Lord, save, the King will answer on the day we call. Thou art my hiding-place, Thou wilt preserve me from the adversary, with songs of deliverance Thou wilt compass me about. Selah. Trust in the Lord always, because in Jah, the Lord, is the eternal rock. The Lord will give strength to His people, He will bless

His people with peace. At his right is Michael, his left Gabriel, before him Raphael, behind him Nuriel, and above his head the Divine spirit of God. (24)

All of these 112 verses quoted from the Tanach continue the theme of this introduction. These 112 verses are divided into four section. The first, which is not included in the total count because it is only an introduction and is not a name of God, is composed of twenty-one verses, equivalent to the word " אָךְ ". The second section is composed of twenty-one verses equivalent to the word " אֱהיָהּ ". The third section is composed of twenty-six verses equivalent to God's name " הוֹיָהּ ", and the final section contains sixty-five verses which is equivalent to the word " אֲדֹנָיִתּוֹת

It is of interest to note that two of the sections of verses from the Tanach include descriptions of the priestly functions of atonement. As these verses have a theurgic function, it could be said that by just reading such verses the sick person benefits, just as if he were a priest performing such functions of atonement. As has been seen above, this is another example of the propitiatory strategy.

The twenty-six verses which are equivalent numerically to the word " הוֹיָהּ ", contain not only the verses from Isaiah which were quoted above, but were later made a part of the kedushah. This prayer is also to be found in the Kabbalat Shabbat service, and its translation in the siddur edited by David de Sola Pool is:

We pray Thee, God, free captive Israel

Through Thy right hand's mighty power.
 God of awe, receive Thy people's prayer;
 Uplift us, make us pure.
 Almighty God, we pray Thee,
 Guard as the apple of the eye those who seek Thy unity.
 Bless us, cleanse us,
 And ever temper for us Thy justice with Thy mercy.
 Almighty and Holy,
 Lead on Thy flock in Thy bountiful goodness.
 Supreme and only God,
 Turn to Thy people who are mindful of Thy holiness.
 Accept our prayer, give ear to our cry,
 Thou who knowest our inward thoughts.

Blessed be His glorious and sovereign name forever
 and ever. (25)

This prayer **אנא בכח** is also found in Isaiah
 Horowitz's work Shene Luhot HaBrit which was printed in
 1649. Concerning the importance and function of this
 prayer as the sick person nears goses, Horowitz writes:

This ancient prayer is based on the Name of forty-two letters, and Rabbi Simon ben Yohai, may his memory be for a blessing, wrote in the work HaPardes in the gate 'specifics of the names' at the end of parasha 13, that every name has six letters equivalent to the six wings of the Seraphim, and based on this it is said 'six wings, six wings for each' (in Isaiah). And he said that it is good to mention this name before one goes to sleep, and thus too for one close to his demise, that upon these six wings it is written in Isaiah, 'with two he will cover his feet, and with two he will fly' the soul above, and will be worthy to be saved from the Destructive Angels and from all demons and will be worthy of the life of the world to come, this ends the quotation. And I received from the watchers of the dead who sit around him, from the moment of death until he will be covered with earth in the grave, they will sit in successive watches around him, diligently, that profane air will not enter among them. And they mention this prayer continually without a moment's stop, and they will not say if less than one thousand times. (26)
 (see appendix XIII)

Dr, Jacob Marcus states that this prayer was attributed

to the first century tanna Nehunya ben Ha-Kannah,²⁷ and of the prayer he writes:

One of the most frequently recurring prayer formulas in the extended ritual for the sick is the ana ba-koah prayer.... As one recited this brief forty-two word cabbalistic prayer - or its variations - one was asked to think of the initial letters of each word. All told there are forty-two initial letters, which is also the total number of letters in God's four merciful Names when spelt out fully: Aleph, dalet, nun, yod; he waw yod he; aleph he yod he; yod he waw he. It is this forty-two letter Name of God that has the power to save the soul from the evil spirits. Each line of this seven-line prayer of Nehunya has six initial letters for its six words. These letters form a word on which one must mentally concentrate. The initial letters of the second line, for instance, spell out the magical words kera satan ('Rend Satan'), and serve as an invocation against Satan when the soul leaves the body. Each mystical word, formed from the initial letters of each one of the six words on each line, corresponds to the six wings of the divine creatures described in Isaiah 6. By means of these wings the soul flies upward to God and merits being saved from the angels of destruction and becoming worthy of the life of the world to come. (28)

Footnotes to Chapter VI

- ¹B. H. Ascher, tran., The Book of Life and Expression of the Tongue (London: B. H. Ascher, 1863), p. 132.
- ²Ibid., p. 133.
- ³Aaron Ha-Cohen from Lunel, Orchot Chajim (Frienze, 1750), p. 559.
- ⁴Ascher, p. 133.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 135.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 139.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 141.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 142.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 142.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 142.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 143.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 143.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 145.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 145.
- ¹⁵Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena, Maavor Yabok (1626; rpt. Bnai Berak: Yashfeh, 1927), p. 96..
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 96.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 186.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 187.
- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 188.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 188.
- ²¹Ibid., p. 97.
- ²²Ibid., p. 105.
- ²³Ibid., p. 98.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 98.
- ²⁵David de Sola Pool, ed. and tran., The Traditional Prayer Book for Sabbath and Festivals (New Hyde Park: University Books, Inc., 1960), p. 40.
- ²⁶Isaiah Horowitz, Shene Luhot Ha-Brit (Jerusalem, 1923), Part II, p. 4:c.
- ²⁷Jacob R. Marcus, Communal Sick-Care in the German Ghetto (Cinn.: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1947), p. 267.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 268

Chapter VII

As the time of the departure of the soul from the body approaches, there is a prayer in Maavor Yabok said by those standing over a "great man".¹ If it is at night, the "thirteen attributes" may be added. The prayer is composed of twenty-six verses which are equivalent numerically to God's name "הו"ה", thereby adding another theurgic device to the liturgy. It should be noted that Maavor Yabok contains more prayers written specifically for the "student of wisdom" and the "great man" than does Sefer Hahayiim.

This prayer is composed of verses from the Tanach. The first verse is a play on the words "Jacob went his way" from Genesis 32:2. This biblical section speaks of Jacob's taking leave of Laban, and it tells how God's angels met him and protected him. The verse thereby sets this theme of God's protection, which carries over into the next quoted verse which is Exodus 23:20.

This prayer then quotes the sacrificial service for the consecration of the priests, which comes from the Torah. By reading these verses, an invalid vicariously puts himself into the position of the High Priest Aaron, who is serving before God. But this is followed by the verses which tell of the improper service of Aaron's sons and their deaths. The verse, "And Moses said, 'Arise Lord and scatter Thine enemies, and Thine enemies shall flee before Thee'"² then

follows. These verses imply that improper service before God will bring on punishment and death. This warning becomes an incentive to do proper atonement, which is done by reading these propitiatory and confessional prayers.

This prayer concludes with verses from the Writings in which God establishes His protection with Israel, and thereby with the sick one. The kedushah verses from Isaiah are once again quoted.

This petition for God's protection becomes now one of the major themes of the concluding section of prayers, which begins with the prayer תפלה לעני of page 105.

This prayer begins with an appeal to God, whose name is " אֱהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֱהִיָּה ". This name of God appears to be synonymous with His mercy, as this prayer and the previous prayers which mention this name invariably appeal to God's mercy. God is the "God of all spirits" (רוחות) and He gives a pure soul to His people, revives the living, brings up the fallen, revives the sick, and causes death by mercy. It is interesting to note how this prayer addresses itself to all of the attributes which would be pertinent to the one in goses, the one for whom the prayer is said. The term "causes death by mercy"³ is also interesting. It, first of all, is not biblical. It must also be stated that such an outlook would help one to accept death, as it is seen as a merciful action on God's part. Such knowledge could have as much, if not more, value and comfort than the knowledge

that God "causes death by justice".

The prayer then appeals directly to God's mercy by mentioning the sick one's name. In very realistic terms it describes his condition to God. As it is written:

who wails from his groaning heart and not from the purity of his flesh. His heart flutters and his strength fails him. (4)

The prayer hopes that this one's soul be precious in God's sight, and that it be released from its prison, so that it can praise God. Such a praise can only be said if death is overcome and/or an immortal life with God is achieved.

As has been seen with the above prayers, first a healing is prayed for, that is, before the imminence of death is accepted. As in the above prayer from Sefer Hahayiim, in chapter VI, an appeal is made to the angel Raphael in the fourth palace. Unlike the prayer in Sefer Hahayiim, however, Maavor Yabok embellishes this prayer with more cabbalistic imagery. As it is written:

And from the light which lights from the east, from the fourth palace, his name is Raphael. It is he whom Thou hast commanded, by the strength of Thy name ה'אאא, for the good of Israel, and to shine upon them to revive the sick from their sickness and to save them from their evil. (5)
(see appendix XIV)

As was also seen above, if death must come, it is hoped that his soul be saved. It is petitioned that a spirit of purity and holiness be added to the sick one's soul, and that he be able to receive God's chastisements in love.

Then, the "good death" is described. The prayer hopes that the dying one will be worthy of seeing the residence of God's dwelling. It is implied, from the above materials and from what follows this, that this state and relationship with God comes about from a purity of soul, which has been achieved before death through earnest repentance. It is also hoped that one's nephesh, ruach, and neshamah join in the light of the Divine Presence, and also join with the four angels appointed from the sixth palace. The soul should go out by a kiss, and it should be protected from all evil spirits, especially those that rule the Dark Side (מטרא אחרא). It is hoped that God will prepare an altar from the cedars of Lebanon for the offering of this soul, that it will enter the gates of mercy and the Garden of Eden. As it is written:

And he will sing His glory unto Thee in the Garden of Eden, not to be silent, with the souls of Thy righteous who sit before Thee, the crown of their light upon their head, to be given benefit from the light of Thy face. And may length of days, years, and peace be added unto us with great strength and might with all Israel, comrades, amen. Thus may it be Thy will, (6) (see appendix XV)

While Sefer Hahayiim also describes this idea that if death must come, it should be a "good death" ("the kiss of death") in which the soul enters the Garden of Eden, Sefer Hahayiim nowhere contains such an involved description of the "good death", as is here described in Maavor Yabok.

That such a prayer is said before one in goses, who might not even be able to hear these words, speaks of its assumed physical and spiritual efficacy. These visitors do

more than just counselling, not as many of today's visitors of the sick. But it also needs to be mentioned that the prayer is not only for the benefit of the one who is dying, but is also for the benefit of the visitors, as the last two sentences of the prayer imply.

After this prayer, Berechiah, in typical cabbalistic fashion, explains the effect of the last phrase upon the Godhead. As he states:

And he will stress by the word **כֵּן** the unity of Wisdom and Understanding. **רַצוֹן** of the exalted Crown pours upon them from the goodness of **חַסֵּד** by hidden knowledge. (7) (see appendix XVI)

Sefer Hahayiim does not and really could not understand the liturgical texts in such a theosophical manner.

The text of Maavor Yabok then attributes to Moses the following statement before his death: "Blessed is His name who lives and exists forever."⁸ The text then gives the directive: "And from this every man will learn."⁹ First of all, such a statement is not made by Moses in the biblical text. Secondly, Berechiah's note is directing this acceptance of the eternality of God to every man by stating that every man should learn from this statement by Moses. This directive has great force, as it is read by or for the one in goses. The statement implies that man must recognize his finiteness and God's infiniteness, and that therefore he needs to place himself, at the time of death,

into His hands. It is this hope in God's protective power which is emphasized in the remaining prayers before death.

The prayer Ha-Melech Ha-Goel (p. 107-108) is comprised of biblical verses. It begins with the well-known prayer of Jacob:

The angel who redeems me, from all evil, may he bless the boys, and may they be called by my name and the name of my fathers Abraham and Jacob, and may they increase greatly over the earth. (10)

It is suggested in the rubric to this prayer, that this prayer, if possible, be read by the one in goses.

These verses suggest the biblical idea of the eternality of one's name through one's progeny. In this sense, one achieves what can be called social immortality.

But this hope in social immortality is extended to a hope in personal immortality, as one places himself into God's hands. As it is written:

Save my soul from the sword, and my uniqueness from the dog... into the hand of the Lord may I fall, for His mercies are great, but not into the hand of man... Into Thy hand will I commend my spirit, Thou wilt redeem me O Lord, God of Truth. In goodness you will sleep and you will awake in good mercy, amen.... I will walk before the Lord in the Lands of the Living.... And in righteousness will behold Thy face, and I will be satisfied in the awakening of Thy visage. Every soul will praise, Jah, they will praise Jah. God of our salvation help us by the glory of Thy name, save us and forgive our sins because of Thy name. He is merciful, forgiving iniquity, and He will not destroy. Frequently He turns His anger away, and does not stir up all His wrath. Hear O Israel,

the Lord our God, the Lord is One. Blessed be His name whose glorious kingdom is forever and forever... (11)

The emphasis of this prayer is on God's mercy and on His protective power. The prayer directs itself toward immortality. This is especially evident in the verse, "In goodness you will sleep and you will awake in good mercy, amen."¹² The phrase "in the Lands of the Living" could refer to the social immortality of the people implied in the opening quotation. The concluding verses imply a life, after the event of death, with God. As it says:

The Lord is King, the Lord reigneth, the Lord will reign forever. Lord, He is God, the Lord He is God. Specifically אֱלֹהֵי אֲשֶׁר אֱלֹהֵי He was, He is, and He will be. He causes death and causes life. No God was created before Him and there will be none after Him. Do this for Thy name. Do this for Thy right hand. Do this for Thy Torah. Do this for Thy holiness. That now I lie down and I will awaken, I sleep but then there will be peace for me. (13)

The next prayer (לך כי עליך) is said by those standing around the dying person. The beginning of this prayer appears in Hamadrikh.¹⁴ This prayer also begins with verses calling for God's mercies. It includes the Priestly Benediction, and the prayer from the "service before going to sleep" in which God's angels and protective spirit is called upon. The verse "Be strong and of good courage, do not be frightened or afraid for the Lord is with you wherever you go"¹⁵ would be psychologically comforting for the dying, as he knows he is not alone. It

is important to note, however, that this prayer is said even if the one in goses is incontinent and cannot hear the prayers. The prayer then has an effect on the soul and also on those who are reading it.

The verse:

why art Thou cast down my soul? And why moanest
within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet
praise Him, the salvation of my countenance
and my God (16)

also expresses the hope, by the sick person, for God's protection.

Then, the section from the Torah, which describes the service of priestly offerings for atonement, is mentioned. As was seen earlier, this is a case where one reads the verses concerning offerings in order to vicariously propitiate God.

The remainder of this prayer is composed of verses which continue to express the desire for God's mercy and protection. Included in this section are the biblical verses of the "thirteen attributes" and the section from Isaiah describing the wings of the seraphim, which appeared in the previous prayers.

Following this prayer is a piyyut. It reads:

I will be in Eden / the garden of Thy uniqueness /
Thou wilt receive His righteousness / listen, accept /
entreat, watch / purity of his soul / emblazon be
a mighty one / emblazoned be Thy banners / glory of
His Sabbath / in the greatness of Thy goodness /
righteous Shepherd / His greatness will be exalted /
bring near protection / by will of goodness /
sustaining his pilgrimage / Thy redemption will be
known / to perceive Thy glory / of the splendour

of His holiness / dwelling near / doing good,
commanding / salvation of His praise.

And He will ride upon a cherub, and He will fly, fly
upon the wings of the wind. Kiss me from the kisses
of His mouth that Thy love making is better than wine.
O God, Lord speak and call the earth from the east
of the sun until its going down. Thy perfection of
the beauty of God appeared from Zion. Hear O Israel,
the Lord Our God, the Lord is One. The Lord, He is
God. The Lord, He is God. The Lord is King. The
Lord reigned. The Lord will reign forever. (17)
(see appendix XVIII)

The first paragraph of this prayer expresses the desire
of the dying person for the Garden of Eden, in which one's
relationship with God is brought closer. Notice should be
taken of the phrase "I will be in Eden" because it becomes
a desired state.

This piyyut, as the previously discussed prayer אֵלֵּהּ
בָּנָה , is based upon the forty-two letters of God's
name. The first letter of each group of three words spells
out the abbreviation of a demonic spirit, as in אֵלֵּהּ בָּנָה.
This prayer, however, is not found in Sheloh and Davidson's
Thesaurus of Medieval Poetry makes no earlier mention of it,
that is, no earlier mention than its appearance in Maavor Yabok.

The usage, in the second paragraph, of verses from
Song of Songs places an emphasis upon one's relationship with
God and upon the "kiss of death". Moderns might call this
an "easy death", a going out of the soul. For the works under
consideration, this can be seen as the hope that God will
take one's soul into the Garden of Eden.

The usage of sexual imagery at the time of death, is

also quite intriguing. Here, in the midst of solemnity, love is expressed, that is, love between the dying person and God. This love between the two partners, which if the analogy may be extended, is consummated in death, concludes with the verses from the Shema. The section of prayer from here until the moment of death is appropriately called the "verses of unity, consummation".

Concerning these "verses of unification or consummation" it can be said that they resemble the concluding verses of the Neilah service on Yom Kippor. The cabbalistic dynamics of these important verses are described in the following quotation from Maavor Yabok. Again, emphasis is placed upon the effect of the verses upon the harmony of the spheres, thereby influencing the Godhead.

The creator made the harmony in the higher worlds dependent upon the lower worlds, and therefore the higher worlds are not separated from the lower as it is written 'And he will ride upon the cherub and he will fly'. First the spheres ride on malchut to harmonize it, and after, 'and he will fly upon wings of the wind', and with the verse 'and He will kiss me from the kisses of His mouth that His love making is better than wine', and thus 'and Jacob kissed Rachel and he raised his voice and cried'; here there are seven worlds hinting at the seven kisses, seven breaths, that masculine clings to feminine, feminine with masculine, spirit with spirit, love with Foundation, and they are the foundation of seven and the seven which are spread out. 'And he will ride upon the cherubs and he will fly' 'kiss me from the kisses of His mouth' 'God O God Lord' 'from Zion perfection of beauty' 'Hear O Israel' 'The Lord He is God, the Lord is One and His name is One.' The Unity needs to join two hundred and forty-eight holy groups that they are by themselves from themselves to themselves and therefore 'the Lord is One' is connected with the Foundation letters יהוה ... the Foundation of Unity

of 'Hear O Israel' is the connection of Ayn Sof with the spheres and afterward is joined with them by Yesod. (18) (see appendix XVIII)

Aside from the description of theosophical activity of each word of this prayer, the opening sentence shows the cabbalistic system's stress upon the ability of man to directly influence the upper spheres.

After this piyyut and these "verses of unification", various psalms are said. The Shema, which contains the customary and important words that are to be said at the time of death, does not stand by itself, as it does in Sefer Mahayim. Instead, it is part of other biblical verses ("verses of unification") and psalms. This arrangement does not necessarily detract from the Shema, if anything, it expands its basic idea of the unity of God.

Psalm 3 is written out in the text of Maavor Yabok.¹⁹ There are quite a few aspects of this psalm which would be appropriate to the last moments of one's life. In the first stanza:

Lord, how many are mine adversaries become!
Many are they that rise up against me.
Many there are that say of my soul:
'There is no salvation for him in God.' Selah. (20)

the "adversaries" can be seen as sickness and death, as it is sickness and death which seem to say, "there is no God". But yet, the dying person knows, "Thou, O Lord, art a shield about me ... I lay me down, and I sleep; I awake, for the Lord sustaineth me... Arise O Lord; save me, O my God."²¹ The

phrase "I awake for the Lord sustaineth me" might point towards the concept and hope of immortality, which, in the context of Maavor Yabok, is a continued existence in the Garden of Eden.

The text then suggests that psalm 116 be read. This psalm also is a supplication for God's salvation in the face of death.

I love that the Lord should hear
My voice and my supplications...
The cords of death compassed me,
And the straits of the nether-world
got hold upon me;
I found trouble and sorrow
But I called upon the name of the Lord. (22)

Again, it must be mentioned that the realities of death are never evaded, but are visualized in order to be overcome.

It is then suggested that the previously mentioned prayer be read. The next statement then implies that the prayers over the person in goses, who in so many cases is incontinent, are to move the visitors to repentance, which will be for the good of the dying. As it says:

One can add 'the dwellers in clay' to hasten those standing there to repentance, that by this there will be worthiness for the departing one, if they will be awakened to return from their way. (23)

Surely this active and efficacious concept of the visitor's function is not utilized today.

This piyyut, "The Dwellers in Clay", by Solomon ibn Gabriol is an exhortation for the Day of Atonement. It contains the strongest language of man's sinful nature of any of the prayers analyzed thus far. As mentioned, its hope is

to frighten man into repentance. It frightens him because it reveals to him his actual nature.

O habitants of homes of clay,
Why lift ye such a swelling eye,
What do ye boast of more than they?...
To be unborn were better worth
Than thus to reap distress and pain,
For how easy great things to gain
When struggling in this snare of earth? (24)

And it implores him to repent, so that God can hide His wrath and reveal to him His mercy. As it is written:

O let the wicked turn aside,
And take, O King, the path to Thee.
Perchance the Rock will heed the plea,
And from His wrath the sinner hide. (25)

The piyyut, as it is quoted in Maavor Yabok, then stops two stanzas short. These last two stanzas are placed in the next section which is preceeded by the statement: "If his intention will be to request only mercy upon him, he will begin and say." This statement is followed by the end of the poem.

Draw up Thy people from the pit,
Thou Ruler of the depth and height
Stiff-necked were we in Thy despite,
Yet of Thy mercies bate no wit
But shed Thy sweet compassion o'er
The people knocking at Thy gate,
Thou art the Master of our fate,
And unto Thee our eyes upsoar. (26)

By this division of the piyyut, Berechiah shows a real sense of the text and its psychological function. He then combines these verses of Gabriol's, appealing to God's mercies, with the beautiful verses of Abraham ibn Ezra which follow through the previously established image of the Garden

of Eden, and appeal to God's forgiveness. As it is written:

Send out Angels of kindness
 and may they go out close by him,
 And peace to you who comes they will say
 with one voice to he who comes,
 And they will bring him to Thy Garden of Eden
 and there His throne will be.
 And he will be refined in Thy light
 and find the glory of his rest,
 And the light hidden before Thee
 will be his secret and his protection,
 And under the Shadow of Thy wings
 his protective screen will be given him,
 With the help of God who shows mercy and forgiveness
 to answer His people and congregation. (27)

Berechiah concludes this section of "verses at the time of the going out of the soul" with various comments on the moment of death. He states that one whose soul is ordained to depart should have the intention of a slaughterer of sacrifices, as it is explained in Maimonides' Yad, chapter 2, hilchot Maaseh Ha Carbanot.²⁸ One sees his confession and death as an atonement (sacrifice) for sins. The view here is toward the world to come, and not toward this one.

Berechiah then writes that it is wonderful when one can die in the midst of verses of mercy and thoughts of Torah. These thoughts will help bring on help from heaven and secure one's departure as described above.

It is said that the dying should try to fulfill any commandments that he can, and should seek forgiveness from anyone he has wronged. One should accept his death willingly. Berechiah then suggests various petitions to be said morning, afternoon, and evening. These include verses of "mercy"²⁹ from the Tanach. As their thematic content is no different

than those verses from Tanach analyzed above, they will not be discussed here.

This concludes the discussion of the text of Maavor Yabok. It is interesting to note that one's religious life remains active up until the very last moment, that is, one's relationship between man and God, and man and man. There is no concept of the modern idea of disengagement at the time of dying and death.

Before the prayers for the one in goes in Sefer Hahayim, there are sections which contain blessings of thanksgiving for recovery from illness, the changing of one's name, and paternal blessings before death. The first prayer does not come under the purview of this thesis which is interested in the prayers of the sick and the dying. Suffice it to be written of the second prayer that the "ritual for changing one's name" is unlike the other prayers studied thus far. It represents a strategy to avoid death by a deception of the soul. This strategy seems to be closed to the modern person as he does not have such a concept of the soul and its relationship to the person's name, as well as a concept of the angel of death who recognizes one's soul by its name. The "paternal blessing before death" is composed of the blessing of Jacob over his grandsons, with the priestly benediction and the following verses added:

Place upon him the spirit of the Lord, the spirit

of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of advice and strength, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord. (30)

Such ritual would be a comfort to the dying, as he could feel the continuity of his heritage by bestowing these blessings upon his children.

Following these miscellaneous prayers, it is written:

Rabbi Simon, son of Yochai, says, As soon as those who attend the sick person perceive that he draws near to the end of all flesh, it becomes their imperative duty to make him aware of it, and to inform him that the hour is at hand when he will be called to appear before the throne of the Most High Judge, and that the time has arrived to reconcile himself with his Heavenly Father. Man may, in one moment, by one pious deed, acquire eternal life.... We must, therefore, as soon as we perceive that the illness of the sufferer increases, much more when cure becomes hopeless, call his attention to his serious condition... we terminate our earthly career in the spirit and words of Holy Writ, 'Till I give up my ghost, I will not remove my integrity from me.' (31)

The modern idea of protecting one from the ugly reality of death is absent in the above passage. One's integrity is not lost as a strategy is presented for meeting and overcoming death. There is real direction here as to how one can prepare for imminent death. Concerning this way to die, the text states further on:

When the patient perceived that his time to die draws near, he should with a pious spirit and a humble heart accept the heavenly decree... and offer thanks to the name of God, for having granted him to die undisturbedly on his bed... and thus breathe his last in the firm belief in the Unity of the only God of Israel. (32)

And in defining what might be termed the "good" death, Sefer Mahayyim, in agreement with Maavor Yabok, states,

That the gates of heaven may be opened to receive his devotion, and that his soul may undisturbedly soar to the heavenly abode in the garden of Eden, there to enjoy, beneath the tree of eternal life, the plenitude of bliss treasured up for the righteous. Of such a death King Solomon says, 'That the day of death is better than the day of birth.' Indeed, such a departure from life may justly be termed good; as the sages (of blessed memory) comment on the verse: - 'And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good'. The words 'very good', they say, allude to death; when the truly pious and virtuous receive their full reward in the higher regions, and enjoy the celestial and undisturbed tranquility of the soul, figuratively termed by our sages, the day which is completely Sabbath. (33)

The prayers said either by the person in goses or by others for him, are found in the section "And this is the Gate of Heaven." ³⁴ While the explanatory section preceeding this prayer appears to be of a cabbalistic nature, as it is based on number-plays, it must be mentioned that no references are given and it is not in parentheses, as were the above cabbalistic statements found in Sefer Hahayiim.

It is said that the eighteen worlds through which the soul descends at birth and the eighteen worlds through which the soul ascends at death are referred to in the eighteen verses of the first prayer **לִי פִתְחוּ**, in order that

the soul cleaves to the living God and is worthy of the resurrection to be, that 'you that cleave to the Lord your God, all of you are living this day', that the righteous even in their death are called living. (35)

Notice should be taken of the very interesting phrase "that the righteous even in their death are called living". It should also be mentioned that this is one of the very few places

in both Sefer Hahayiim and Maavor Yabok that the term resurrection is mentioned.

This prayer פתחו לי is a beautiful collection of verses which contain the word "gate" in them, or that express the relationship between God and the one for whom He opens His gates.

Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will enter there, and I will thank the Eternal.... I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death.... Thou wilt show me the path of life; in Thy presence is fulness of joy, in Thy right hand there is beautitude for evermore. (36)

The Psalm for the Sabbath Day is then recited. In the preceeding explanatory remarks, it is pointed out that the verse "the righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like the cedar in Lebanon" ³⁷ refers to the growth, ascension, of the soul up through the eighteen worlds to God. This also points to the conception of resurrection.

The next paragraph ³⁸ contains the verse which in Maavor Yabok was included in the "verses of unification", "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth for Thy love is better than wine." ³⁹ This paragraph continues the hope for immortality in relationship with God. But first, there is a recognition of the closeness and reality of death. As it is stated:

For I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all the living. Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, - I will fear no evil... As for me I will behold Thy face in righteousness; awaking I shall feast on Thy glory. For this God is our God for ever and ever; He will be our guide even beyond death. For Thy salvation I have waited O Eternal. (40)

The next prayer, 'נִיָּקָה אֵלֶיךָ , continues this theme when it states:

the moment has now arrived at which I have to return to Thee the soul which Thou hast deposited within me. Take it back from me by the kiss of Thy mouth, and not by the angel of death... send Thy angels of mercy and truth to attend to the last moment of my existence, to receive my soul, and to restore her to her heavenly source - the garden of Eden. (41)

Notice should be taken of the differentiation between the kiss of death and the visitation of the Angel of Death. One seems to represent an "easy" death, while the other a "difficult" death.

The second part of this prayer is a confession, in which it is stated that as there is a confession of sins, then God will not doom his

soul to perdition, but grant me a portion in the garden of Eden, in the assembly of the saints and pious ones. Deign that I may be worthy of participating in the resurrection of the dead, and in the tranquil bliss of a future world, which is a one and everlasting Sabbath. (42)

Again Sefer Hahayiim makes mention of the resurrection. Why it does make use of this term and Maavor Yabok does not, is beyond conjecture. Except, it can be said, that the rabbinic eschatology, as demonstrated in Sefer Hahayiim, sees

the Day of Judgment as of great importance, and thereby resurrection, while the cabbalistic system, as demonstrated in Maavor Yabok, sees a harmony of the soul with the spheres as the desired goal after death.

A reading of the two works reveals that they both discuss the transmigration of the soul, Sefer Hahayim in its cabbalistic and not rabbinic sections, and both discuss the image of the Garden of Eden. Both works infrequently and sparsely mention and discuss gehinom. Only Sefer Hahayim mentions the term "resurrection" to any degree of frequency. One reason for the infrequent appearance of the latter concepts might be that the works assume that one is aware of these latter concepts when reading the term "Garden of Eden". Another possible reason is that the terms such as "gehinom", "transmigration", and "resurrection" conjure an image of stern judgment and therefore "fear and trembling" in the reader. He fears this judgment of his actions and how they will be weighed in reference to his future rewards. On the other hand, the term "Garden of Eden" is more tranquil in its depicted mood. While judgment would certainly precede one's entry into the Garden, it conjures a picture of life after death which is soothing, unaccompanied by the constant judging by God which accompanies the images of "resurrection", "transmigration", and "gehinom". A third possible reason for the frequency of the image of the Garden over the other images, is that the Garden image is really the only positive one, as it is equivalent to the concept of "heaven".

There is then included quotations of Rabbi Jochanan and Rabbi Simeon, son of Jochai, which stress the importance of a good life and a good reputation, even until the very moment of death.

But happy that man... who, to the last hour of his existence, maintained the good reputation acquired from early youth. To him may be applied the maxim of the wisest of kings: 'A good name is better than a precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth'. (43)

The next prayer, **אל אדוני אדוני**, whose importance is emphasized above, is quite similar to the prayer in Maavor Yabok **תפלה לעני**, also discussed above. There is first an appeal to God's mercy for a healing from sickness. And it is prayed that if death must come, that it is a death of peace, which is accompanied by an entrance into the Garden of Eden.

The same themes as those that have been mentioned in this section concerning the prayers of the one in goses, continue through the three final prayers on pages 178-191.

The first prayer, **אלוהים יסעדך**, is a piyyut. Each line contains five words equivalent in number to the five words **נפש רוח נשמה חיה יחידה** and the five books of the Torah. The alphabet is gone through twice, with each letter beginning a line. First the alphabet is gone through in its normal order, and then it is gone through in reverse. This repetition of the alphabet is done so that it represents the written and the oral Torah, as this is explained in the explanatory note that preceeds the prayer in the text.

This piyyut praises the rewards of the righteous in the world to come. It functions as a means of giving solace to the dying person by informing him of what lies ahead.

Exclaim aloud, Eternal God, who is like unto Thee? and surely He will reward thee with abundance of delight and celestial bliss.

Great and heavenly reward awaits thee; in full age thou shalt come to the repose of thine ancestors.

The law which thou didst practice, the faith in which thou didst live, will be thy guardians; watched by them thou wilt sweetly and undisturbedly sleep.

....

The Omnipotent God has formed thee, and appointed thy lot: surely the day of thy death is better than that of thy birth.

In that higher region of blissfulness thou wilt continue to live an everlasting life; this will be the reward for thine earthly labour.

Now thine immortal soul will live - live for eternity; such will be thy life, and the length of thy days. (44)

The next prayer, ה'י כבוד, uses verses from the Tanach in order to declare God's righteousness, mercy, and power over life. It is this knowledge which gives the dying person hope. It is His consistent righteousness (faithfulness) which gives the dying person the knowledge that he will not be forsaken. As it is written:

I will sing of mercy and judgement; unto Thee, O Eternal, will I sing. For the righteous God loveth righteousness; His countenance doth graciously behold the upright. But Thou art the same, and

Thy years shall have no end. Why art Thou cast down,
 O my soul? and why art Thou disquieted in me?
 Hope, Thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for
 the salvation of His countenance. After two days
 /of affliction/ will He revive us: on the third
 day He will establish, that we shall live in His
 presence. (45)

The final prayer, **תפלת סוף**, hopes for life eternal,
 based first on God's righteousness, and then on His mercy.
 As it is written:

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
 and Thy law the everlasting truth. For this is
 God our God, for ever and ever: He will be our
 guide even beyond death. As for God, His way is
 immutable, the word of the Eternal is tried: He is
 a buckler to all those who trust in Him.... the
 days of our years are seventy; and if in strength
 they be eighty years, yet is their pride labour
 and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away.
 But they that wait upon the Eternal shall renew
 their strength... who redeeneth thy life from
 destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness
 and tender mercies... All flesh shall perish
 together, and man shall return unto dust.... The
 Eternal killeth and maketh alive: He bringeth down
 to the grave, and bringeth up. Wilt Thou, not return
 and revive us? that Thy people may rejoice in Thee.
 Let Israel, therefore, trust in the Eternal: for
 the Eternal there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous
 redemption. (46)

Even in these final prayers, the difference between
 the two works under discussion can be seen. While Sefer
Hahayyim speaks of God's mercy, its emphasis on God's
 judgment, that is basically lacking in the closing section
 of Maavor Yabok, is stressed here. In Sefer Hahayyim the
 life in the world to come and resurrection are viewed as
 rewards. Maavor Yabok, explicitly and implicitly, speaks
 of the world to come, not in terms of rewards, which might
 be why it speaks only of the Garden of Eden and not resurrection,

but in terms of harmony with God, bathing in His light. Based upon these considerations, I do not believe that Maavor Yabok could contain the piyyut , while Sefer Mahayim could not contain Gabriels's or ibn Ezra's piyyutin.

Each work, during their last sections, views the "kiss of God" as the "good" death. But each work has its own language and imagery for describing that kiss. The difference, I contend, lies in the difference between the knowledge the rabbinic and the cabbalistic systems had of God and His relationship to man.

Sefer Mahayim concludes with **יגל** and **אדון קולם** and the verses of "unification". As to these verses, they are presented alone and not with surrounding verses, as is the case in Maavor Yabok. Again, the mystical imagination is not present in Sefer Mahayim.

Footnotes to Chapter VII

- ¹Aaron Berechiah b. Moses of Modena, Maavor Yabok, (1626; rpt. Bnai Berak: Yashfeh, 1927), p. 104.
- ²Ibid., p. 104.
- ³Ibid., p. 105.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 105.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 105.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 106.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 106.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 106.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 106.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 107.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 107.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 107.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 108.
- ¹⁴Hyman E. Goldin, Hamadrikh (New York: Hebrew Publ. Co., 1956), p. 109.
- ¹⁵Berechiah, p. 108.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 108.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 109.
- ¹⁸Ibid., pp. 418-419.
- ¹⁹Ibid., pp. 109-110.
- ²⁰Ibid., pp. 109-110.
- ²¹Ibid., pp. 109-110.
- ²²Ibid., p. 110.
- ²³Ibid., p. 110.
- ²⁴Israel Zangwill, tran., Selected Religious Poems of Solomon Ibn Gabriol (Phil.: JPS, 1923), pp. 61-62.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 62.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 63.
- ²⁷Berechiah, p. 111.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 111.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 111.
- ³⁰B. H. Ascher, tran., The Book of Life and Expression of the Tongue (London: B. H. Ascher, 1863), p. 163.
- ³¹Ibid., pp. 162-162.
- ³²Ibid., p. 167.

- ³³Ascher, p. 168.
³⁴Ibid., p. 169.
³⁵Ibid., p. 169.
³⁶Ibid., pp. 169-179.
³⁷Ibid., p. 171.
³⁸Ibid., p. 172.
³⁹Ibid., p. 173.
⁴⁰Ibid., p. 173.
⁴¹Ibid., pp. 173-175.
⁴²Ibid., p. 175.
⁴³Ibid., p. 175.
⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 179-181.
⁴⁵Ibid., p. 187.
⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 187-191.

Chapter VIII

So much material is being written today on the subject of death and dying. The field of thanatology has grown to immense proportions. While this subject has been treated from different angles, little attention has been given to the Jewish attitudes toward death and dying, aside from their halachic discussion.

Leigh David Lerner, in his recent article "On Death and Dying - Jewishly", also sees this paucity of Jewish material in this field when he writes:

Finding Jewish material by which comparison crystallizes proves to be more difficult than first guess might have it. A surfeit of prescription and legalism surrounds the sick and the dying, but it does not deal with a long transition from when the patient learns he must die to the time of actual death. (1)

He, however, does find such Jewish material in the midrash on Moses' death. And at the end of his article, he suggests that such Jewish attitudes toward sickness, dying and death might not only be found in the Midrash, "but in the very nature of our liturgy, which the faithful recite often."²

This thesis has been devoted toward such an analysis of the liturgy as to the Jewish attitudes toward sickness, dying and death by a discussion of the works Maavor Yabok and Sefer Mahayiim. It is now possible to draw a number of conclusions as to these attitudes, and to suggest questions for future research.

It is now evident, in light of the above thesis, that these two works, for the most part, rely upon different

aspects of the Jewish tradition which affect their respective attitudes toward sickness and dying. The two handbooks were separated by almost one hundred years, and their authors, at least, were separated geographically and thereby culturally. Berechiah was from southern Europe, while Frankfurter was from northern Europe. And as no handbook, on the same scale as these, was written or published prior to Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayim, it becomes evident that they were working from various oral and written traditions circulating during their times and in their geographical places. This is substantiated by the differences in the texts themselves, as well as in their introductions, and also in Marcus' definitive analysis of the subject. They reflected their cultural milieus as well. The quotations from their introductions, found in chapter I of this thesis, demonstrate how they were reacting to their surroundings and their communal needs. There are therefore these differences between the works.

Their similarities, however, must not be minimized. Many of their oral and written traditions were similar. Surely both authors were aware of the major works which preceded them, such as Nachmanides' Torat Ha-Adam and the Shulhan Aruch. And it was demonstrated in a few places above where Frankfurter might have been aware of Berechiah's work.

As to the thematic differences between the two works, Berechiah's cabbalistic theosophical sources, which he relied upon more heavily than the rabbinic sources, allowed

him to describe and analyze in detail the processes of sin and repentance in relationship to sickness, health, and death. This cabbalistic system surely was concerned with the practical aspects of what man must do in the face of these circumstances. But it was also very much concerned with a knowledge, and an exact one at that, as to how and why man can take these actions, as well as how the Godhead reacts to them. It is this emphasis upon knowledge (notice should be taken that the first two spheres are called Wisdom and Understanding) in the cabbalistic citations in Maavor Yabok that allow Berechiah's work to detail the processes of sin and repentance on man's health and sickness, and thereby on man's relationship with the spheres and the Godhead, and vice a versa.

This knowledge adds depth to one's thinking as well as to one's deeds. Knowledge thereby becomes the desired goal, and is joined with deed in the act of intention (kavanah) which plays an important part in the cabbalistic system, and was seen at work in a number of the above prayers.

Frankfurter's rabbinical sources, which except for those comments in parentheses were the sources he relied upon most of all, allowed him to describe only the end result of these processes of sin and repentance. The rabbinic system's emphasis and goal was more upon "deed" than upon "knowledge". Sefer Hahayiim's explanatory sections tell what actions man must take before sickness and death in terms of rewards and

punishments. It is not as concerned with the intermediary steps of these processes as is Maavor Yabok, than with the initial steps, sickness and repentance, and the final steps, repentance and reward or no repentance which is followed by death with no eternal life with God. This emphasis upon deed rather than metaphysical knowledge would explain the lack of directions for kavanah and the use of gematria in the rabbinic sections of Sefer Hahayiim.

In this thesis I had tried to discover if these different sources of the two 'works were reflected not only in their explanatory sections, but also in the various prayers they utilized. While it did not prove to be true in every case that was studied, I came away from this review of these works with the sense that the prayers in Maavor Yabok appeal basically to God's attribute of mercy. I have therefore suggested in the thesis that the liturgies reflect the works' respective sources as it seemed that the prayers in Sefer Hahayiim appeal to God's justice. But again, in certain sections of the liturgies, especially in the sections close to the time of death, in both works their appeals to mercy and justice become combined and confused. I cannot account for the phenomenon that at the beginnings of the works the demarcation between prayers appealing to mercy and those to justice is clear, while toward the end of the liturgies this demarcation is not clear.

As to these works' reliance upon their respective

rabbinic and cabbalistic traditions, future research might be devoted to ascertaining whether those cabbalistic references and explanations in parentheses in Sefer Hayiim are original to the text. At the time of the writing of this thesis, the earlier editions of Sefer Mahayiim are unavailable for comparison with the third edition used for this thesis. If Sefer Mahayiim really relied more heavily upon the rabbinic than on the cabbalistic sources at its inception, these parentheses, as conjectured above, should not be found in the earlier editions of 1703 and 1716.

Another area for future research deals with the historical and cultural stream in which these works stood. Surely Maavor Yabok was within the mystical tradition. The question must be raised as to the theurgical function of these prayers, and thereby the basic underlying gnostic influence. The heavy reliance upon the usage of God's names in the cabbalistic sections in both works suggests this gnostic tradition. And if there is a theurgic function here, it would be interesting to discover the relationship between the above prayers and the theurgic incantations to be found upon amulets and talismen. That such incantations are an ancient part of Judaism has been attested to by scholarship. And if such a relationship does exist between these prayers and the tradition of incantations, the question needs to be raised as to whether or not these prayers for the sick and dying come under the heading of magical formulae and customs.

And if this proves to be so, does the sudden appearance of these major liturgical works concur with a deepened interest in magical incantations for the sick and dying in other religious traditions in Europe?

There is then the relationship between the Jewish traditions before sickness, dying and death, and between the Christian traditions which needs to be analyzed. That there was a relationship is attested to by Marcus' statement:

A detailed study of the Christian guilds, primarily the religious guilds, proves, as we have a right to expect, a strong similarity to the average Holy Brotherhood, not only in broad outline, but also in detail. (3)

Marcus sees the similarities between the Guilds and the Brotherhoods in terms of institutional structures. But what of theological similarities and influences? What were the rituals and prayers in the Church at this time? It was mentioned above that both works utilize the concept "Garden of Eden" (heaven!) more often than "resurrection", "transmigration", or the "Day of Judgment". Was this usage of the "Garden of Eden" paralleled by a similar emphasis upon the concept "heaven" in the Christian liturgies at this time? After all, both traditions contained the other concepts as well. The answers to these questions must await future research.

The final suggestion for future research might deal with Lerner's question of how much the daily and yearly liturgies of the Jewish calendar tell us of the Jewish

attitudes toward sickness and death. The relationship between the liturgies for the Day of Atonement and the day of death has been stressed over and over again in this thesis. Further detailed investigation into this relationship between these two days must be left for future study.

With, however, all of the above differences between the two works Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayyim in their attitudes toward sickness and death, their terminologies, and analyses, it has been demonstrated that they both share the basic rabbinic understanding of the process of sickness, dying and death. This has been demonstrated by the above references between the body of the liturgies and the rabbinic understanding, in these areas, as presented primarily in chapter II.

For whether the liturgy's vocabulary is in terms of metaphysical concepts, and harmony and disharmony between the spheres, or in terms of concrete rewards and punishments, both liturgies define sickness in terms of sin. Sickness is the result of one's actions in relation to God and to man. While it is implied that deterioration of man's physical structure is a fact of life, in no place is it said that man will live forever in this body; sickness is the result of one's broken relationship with God and man. It must be pointed out, however, that sickness might not be the result of a particular sin or act which breaks these relationships, but rather can be the result of a general relationship with God or man. For this reason sufferings (sicknesses) are

given by God to wicked men, average men, as well as the righteous, not because of a specific act they committed but as a warning, as a sort of shock of negative reinforcement, to make one realize the necessity to turn toward God, or in the case of the righteous, to remain in relationship with God.

In light of this definition of sickness, these liturgies, their customs and rituals, serve the function of returning the sick one back into relationship with God and with man. In relationship to man, charity and good deeds are suggested. And in relationship to God, prayer and study are suggested. These acts come under the heading of "deeds of repentance". And it is these acts of repentance which, by restoring these relationships, cure man of his sufferings, sicknesses, assuming that it is not God's intention to bring on death despite the deeds of repentance.

Death is then defined in a similar way. The rabbis saw the existence of death as the result of man's fall in the Garden of Eden. Death is therefore a natural part of life. One's type of death, however, is not a natural part of life. One's death can be prolonged and filled with pain and suffering. It can occur at an early age. And it will not be followed by an eternal existence in relationship with God in the Garden of Eden. This is the death of the one who does not repent, does not try to renew his relationship with God even when death must come.

On the otherhand, one's death can come at the end of a long and fulfilled life. It can be an easy death, filled with no pain or suffering. And it is a death followed by an eternal existence in relationship with God in the Garden. Whether this is a disembodied or an embodied existence is not stated in the liturgies, although the emphasis in the above liturgies on the neshamah, the soul, does imply that it will be a disembodied existence. In the Garden one will continue to sing God's praises, the psalms, with the angels and the worthies of the past. There is this concept here of immortality. This death is the result of a proper life, and this immortal life a result of these deeds and prayers of repentance and confession which clear the path for a continued relationship with God for eternity.

These are the basic attitudes of the two works toward sickness, dying and death. Once again, in particulars the works differ as to how one overcomes sickness and/or death by repentance. Maavor Yabok sees the attainment of knowledge as the utmost goal on the path of achieving an eternal relationship with God. This is emphasized, at least, by its inclusion of Nachmanides' thirteen principles toward the end of the death-bed liturgies. As with Maimonides' thirteen principles, it is assumed that even this minimum amount of philosophy will help one to achieve immortality. Sefer Hahayiim, on the otherhand, sees deed, the act, as the utmost goal on the path toward achieving an eternal rela-

tionship with God. Regardless of the differences in terminologies, both works see an eternal disembodied relationship with God as the goal of one's life.

These deeds and prayers of repentance thereby become strategies for attaining this goal of life. It is interesting, that as Lerner had done with the Moses' midrash, it is possible to compare these strategies to the five stages of dying now made famous by Dr. Kuebler-Ross in her book On Death and Dying. Lerner describes these five stages in the following way:

1. Denial and isolation. Initially, the dying patient cannot believe it is true. 'No, not me,' is the reaction. Then comes a partial acceptance of the facts, followed by a desire to be alone, yet not without the option of re-opening ties or links with humanity outside the self.
2. Anger. The patient focuses haphazardly on nurses, doctors, chaplains, visitors, even things, venting a rather undirected anger.
3. Bargaining. This attempt to postpone offers good and 'nice' acts in the hope of averting the final decree for at least a short while.
4. Depression. Two types of depression manifest themselves: reactive, stemming from the sureness of death, the disfigurement of the body, the impossible burden of debts incurred in a hospital, etc.; and preparatory, the patient's own grief for his death, paving the way for acceptance.
5. Acceptance. Void of feelings, a quiet expectation overtakes the individual. He sleeps relievedly and has some measure of peace. (4)

Lerner concludes after the study of this midrash that "Denial could be a minor factor; anger, directed instead of diffuse; bargaining, far more extensive."⁵ The present question is how do the strategies of repentance in Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayiim compare with these five stages?

As Lerner had discovered in the midrash on Moses' death, it can be seen in the above liturgies that the element of denial is kept at a minimum and acceptance at a maximum. Acceptance seems to be the first strategy to be taken by the sick or dying. Over and over again in this thesis, it has been emphasized how the prayers stress the reality of one's sickness and death, and the reality that they stem from one's specific acts or one's general improper relationship with God. The language in both the original prayers, as well as in the psalms chosen by Berechiah and Frankfurter, are extremely vivid and graphic in their imagery, depicting the situation of the sick and dying. Acceptance must be the first strategy, as repentance cannot begin until one accepts his own role and God's role in his present predicament. As stated repeatedly above, acceptance is a positive step as it is the first step of repentance.

The other strategies mentioned in this thesis can be seen as attempts to bargain with God. It must be stressed, if I am going to attempt to use Dr. Kuebler-Ross' terminology, that this is surely not bargaining in its marketplace sense. It is bargaining in that one is offering his prayers and deeds or repentance in hopes that God will present His changed decree in return, and that health or an easy death, as described above, will be forthcoming. These strategies of "bargaining" include study, prayer, and deeds of "kindness".

Study in the rabbinic sense is a mitzvah, which as an act in itself brings one into relationship with God. Study in the cabbalistic sense is a development of one's soul (active intellect), which then places one higher within the spheres and thereby brings one closer to the Godhead. But regardless of how study is detailed, it is seen as a strategy, a first step toward acceptance, renewing one's relationship with God.

Prayer, as an outpouring of oneself toward God, is, of course, also such a strategy. Intention is important in prayer, whether within the cabbalistic or rabbinic systems. The difference between the intention of prayer as described between the two systems seems to be a difference of degree and understanding of such a concept. Prayer is of course efficacious in both systems. The theurgical usage of certain of God's names has a special effect upon the Godhead. Prayers of propitiation, that is those prayers in which one sees himself as priest making offerings of prayers, or of his own sickness or death, as atonement offerings before God, also have a way of influencing God as did the ancient offerings, by their "pleasing smell". And the prayers of confession also influence God by demonstrating that one is ready to cleanse himself of all the dross that had kept him at a distance from God.

And the deeds of "kindness" show physically that one is ready to make physical amends to man and thereby to God. This and all these strategies of repentance, bargaining

moves, are steps based on acceptance of one's situation, toward showing God that as he is now renewing his relationship with God, so too should God show mercy to him and renew His relationship with man. And this renewal with him, it is prayed, should be in the most appropriate way. The appropriate way may be by recovery, an easy death and/or an eternal life with God.

Unlike the midrash on Moses' death, little anger is expressed toward God over what has happened. Only Nachmanides' confession, mentioned above, and some of the psalms ask the question, "why me?" and "why now?" But basically I concur with Lerner that the Jewish tradition has three stages rather than Kuebler-Ross' five stages, although since anger in these liturgies is at such a minimum, there are really only two stages with a repetition of the first stage. These stages present in these liturgies are: (1) acceptance, (2) strategies of bargaining, and (3) acceptance again.

The practical and realistic difficulty with these strategies is that they are based upon the traditional concepts of man's relationship with God. It is this point which makes the difficulty since I am not sure how many moderns, aside from the traditionally orthodox, still accept these traditional beliefs in the man-God relationship.

The question which Lerner raises and I too wish to raise, in light of this modern difficulty, is how can these traditional

strategies be translated into modern philosophies and liturgical structures to be of use to moderns today.

First of all, the strategy of acceptance is vital to the sick one's getting better or worse in the modern medical situation. It is only by acceptance that the patient can do anything about his illness. The woman, for example, who denies that she has a lump on her breast will most probably die of metastatic breast cancer. On the otherhand, the woman who discovers the lump, goes to the doctor, and gets the lump removed or treated has an excellent chance of licking the entire situation. Especially in the fight against cancer, where patients must go through various and vigorous courses of treatment and/or surgery, I believe that it can safely be said that the doctors need the cooperation of the patient as much as the patient needs the cooperation of the doctors.

It has also been said that an acceptance of one's illness, course of treatment, and hospital routine make for a quicker recovery. As it is written:

An ailing person who does not accept the sick role when necessary, who does not remain within its protecting confines for an appropriate time, and who fails to relinquish it in a fitting manner when allowed to do so, may endanger his life so that trivial disease becomes fatal.(5)

And even in reference to dying and death, if one accepts the reality of death, and its proximity, and therefore prepares physically, psychologically, materially, and spiritually for its coming, can one have an easier

death? Is this not why it is said that the death of an eighteen year old is harder than the death of a seventy year old? The former faces incompleteness of life, while the latter, if his or her life has been full, is ready and prepared for death.

Of course the strategy of acceptance and the bargaining strategies in their modern sense change the basic theological thrust of the strategies in the above works. Modern man's strategies are definitely man-centered, while the older strategies are God-man centered. It might be possible, however, to take the modern acceptance strategy and say that while God might not be the cause of one's illness or dying, in that these are neither rewards or punishments but are accidents of life, it might be said that God can give man, as well as the doctors, the strength to meet the illness, possibly overcome it, and if not, make for an easy death. While of course God becomes limited in this sense, He is the hope when all fails, bringing strength to what lies ahead. God becomes the undefinable strength which stand for health, and/or peace. He becomes man's inner motivational strength, for even at the end of life man must look inward to achieve what he wants. He is the strength which is described in the following prayer which is a paraphrase of the prayer of Alcoholic's Anonymous: "Give me the strength to change that which I can change, and the strength to accept that which I cannot change."

It might, even in the modern world, be possible to suggest that God is related to one's suffering, sickness, and dying, as He is the cause of these calamities. But I would believe that with all good conscience it would be very difficult to say that such and such is the sin which one committed and this one's punishment, as our forefathers, the rabbis, could many times say with surety. Especially in the case of cancer where many times the suffering is so great, it would be difficult to make such a correlation. But might we still say God is related to the start of one's illness without specifying how? This would at least give to the modern, as it did to our forefathers, such as those who used Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayiim, a sense of meaning to their lives.

Our sufferings, and of course our joys, are a part of a greater plan of which we have no specific knowledge, but can only sense in our lives. This sense of meaning is very comforting, and might in some cases give people the hope to go on in the face of physical calamities. This would also be true for the sense of guilt in relationship to our past actions, God, and society. As one counsellor wrote:

Guilt implies that life has meaning - that there is a standard which is larger than the individual. When the individual transgresses this standard, he experiences the justifiable consequences... To protect ourselves from the threat of the unknown - the perils of meaninglessness - we may hold tenaciously to the security of the known - the discomfiture of guilt. (6)

How to relate this sense of guilt, that is the meaningfulness of life, to a modern patient without having

him consider the counsellor and "old-time religionist", might be difficult in a practical sense. But surely this is an area worthy for future exploration.

These three stages of acceptance, bargaining, and acceptance give man an active role as well as an accepting role of the realities of life and their inherent meanings. It is by this translation of the liturgies Maavor Yabok and Sefer Hahayyim that they hold an interest beyond a mere historical and theological one. Further research and creative work must be done in this area of translating traditional concepts and values into modern ones, in order to make such translations a working reality. We are living in an era when the sick and dying are living and dying in sterile lonely existences. If once again modern man can be taught in the ways of חַסְדִּים וְאֱמֶת, "kindness and truth", possibly the sick and dying will not live and die amidst sterility and loneliness, but rather amidst a shared community of caring and strength in the face of the ultimate of life, that is, death.

Footnotes to Chapter VIII

- ¹Leigh David Lerner, "On Death and Dignity - Jewishly",
Reconstructionist, XL, No. 1 (1974), p. 11.
- ²Ibid., p. 15.
- ³Jacob R. Marcus, Communal Sick-Care in the German Ghetto
(Cinn.: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1947), p. 75.
- ⁴Lerner, p. 12.
- ⁵Miriam Siegler and Humphry Osmond, "The 'Sick Role'
Revisited", The Hastings Center Studies, I, No. 3
(1973), p. 57.
- ⁶William Hulme, Dialogue in Despair (Nashville: Abingdon
Press, 1968), pp. 53-54.

Appendix I

"וכשם עם האדם שכינה אשתכחה בהדיא לשטרך בכל דרכיך שהורכבים הם ממלכות ולה"ת ומהת"ת למלכות ע"י היסטור הנקרא כ"ל. ויכנין עוד בכחות המושפעות מהמלך העליון לרפואת כל בשר המופקדים בהיכלות עליונות וגם, יעלה במחבתו באמר כי מלאכיו יצוה לך צנור, אורות המסורים על שמירת יציאת הנשמה לכל תצטרך ביציאתה אם ח"ו נגזר עליו מיתה בר מ"נ, וכת"ב בסבא דף צ"ח ע"ב כי הקב"ה מהלך על כנפי רוח למיכה אסותה לעלמא, ודא אי הו רפא"ל המושפע ממלכות המקבלת מה"ת ששם אורכה ומרפא בכח כ"ע."

(מצבור יג, שפתי צדק, פרק ב)

Appendix II

"והכתר אינו משפיע לספירות אלא בבחינת החסדן
ונרפא למטה בת"ת המלכות. ונו"ן וא"ו הם סוד
בשמות ישראל האחוזים בת"ת סוד וא"ו ובמלכות
סוד נו"ן הצריכים לרפואה..."
(מעבור יבק, שפתי צדק, פרק ב)

Appendix III

"יהא רעוא דתתא מבורך מפומא דקודשא בריך הוא
 ושכינתיה בכל מדה ומדה ובעשר ספירן דיליה ובכל
 שמהן דיליה ומארבע סמכין ושית דהגין דכורסיא
 ומכל מארי מתיבתן ומכל מלאכיה ומכל פמליאי עילאי
 ומכל פמיליאי תתאי בעגלא ובזטן קריב ויעלה ארוכה
 לך ומטכותיך ירפאך ומנהורא ועתיקא קדישא יצמיח
 לך ישועה בקרוב וברחמיו הרבים ירחם עליך עם כל
 חולי עמו ישראל הצריכים לרחמים אמן סלה ועד.
 יהיו רצון אמרי פי והגיון לבי לפניך יהוה צורי
 וגואלי."
 (מעבנר יבק, שפתי צדק, פרק ז)

Appendix IV

"נ"ד פסוקים של בקשת רחמים שמהפכין מדת הדין
לרחמים: לתקן אם פגם בשם של הוי"ה שהוא רחמים
כזה ה"י ה"ו יו"ד ה"א כמנין חסד, והוא עורר
עליו בחטאיו דין של שם אדונות..."
(ספר התיים, דף 106)

Appendix V

"רבוֹן עֶלְמִין דַּאֲנַת הוּא מַאֲרִי מַלְכִין וְגַלִּי רוֹזִין:
 יֵהָא רַעוּא דִּילָךְ לִסְבְּרָא מַלִּין בְּפֹמַאִי: לְקִימָא בִּי
 הָאִי קְרָא וְאַנּוּכִי אַהִיָּה עִם פִּיךָ דְּלֹא אִיעוּל בְּכִיסוּפָא.
 קְדִמָּךְ נִקְדַּם רִישִׁי מְתִיבְתָּא דְרַקִּיעָא: וְאַזְכָּה לְמַשְׁמַע
 מַלִּין וְרוֹזִין דְּאַוְרִיתָא מְרִישִׁי מְתִיבְתִּי עִילָאִי:
 (מַעְבְּרָא יֵבֶק, שְׁפַתִּי צִדִּיק, פֶּרֶק ז')

Appendix VI

"יהי רצון מלפניך יהוה אלוהי האלוהים אבותי
 בזכות אברהם ויצחק וישראל עבדיך שיהיה נרצה
 וידוויי זה לפניך כאילו נסקלתי הנשרפתי הנהרגתי
 ונחנקתי וכתורה וכהלכה בבית דינך הגדול שביהוה
 שלים דבר כבוד שמך ואם פגמתי בהרהור או במחשבה
 או בדיבור או במעשה באות ראשונה או שנייה או
 שלישית או רביעית משמך הגדול הגבור והנורא
 או בהויות אחרות או באהות אחרות התלויות
 בהם ונתחייבתי לפני כסא כבודך ארבע מיתות
 אלו..."

(מעבד יב, שפתי צדק, פרק ג)

Appendix VII

"נפשי בקדושה ובטהרה על קדושת שם הגדול
 המחיה את הכל ולפיוס כל אחד מארבע אלהותיו:
 ואתה ברהמין הרבים תשוב ותייחד עלי כל אחד
 מארבעה אלהות של אחד משלשה שמותיך היקרים
 הויה אהיה אדנות ויאירו כולם יחד בעולמות
 אצילות בריאה יצירה עשיה: ... ויצא נא חפץ
 מכתר הרחמים דרך נתיבות המחשבה והכינני
 גדולתך וגבורתך ואתפאר בנצח הודך ואתיסד
 במלכותך..."
 (מעבד יבק, שפתי צדק, פרק ז)

Appendix VIII

"ונשמת תיחדך ונפשי תפאר אותך אף רוחי בקרבי
 ישחר לשמך ואלך באור הנשמה הטהורה אל מול פני
 המנורה... והעלני בחיבה אל מעון הסוב שאין
 לו קצבה ואפטר באהבה הבה ותהיה שמה בצרור
 החיים צרורה נשמה שנתת בי טהורה:"
 (מעבור יבק, שפתי צדק, פרק ז)

Appendix IX

"באור סיבת הסיבות ועלת העלות המחיה את הכל
בסוד עליון נשמתו ויאמר: היבוננו של עולם יהי
רצון מלפניך שיהיה שלום מנוחתו: ויכוין בשם
יתברך ובמעמד הר סיני הגדול והנורא:
(מעבד יבס, שפתי צדק, פרק ז)

Appendix XI

"ויכהין בקדוש ראשון אל השלשה ספירות הראשונות
כתר חכמה בינה ובקדוש שני יכוין אל השלשה ספירות
שניות חסד גבורה ת"ת ובקדוש שלישי יכוין אל
השלש ספירות שלישיות נצח הוד סוד' ובמלא כל הארץ
כבודו יכוין אל הספירה העשירית"
(מעבור יבק, שפתי צדק, פהק, לו)

Appendix XII

"נדאי שכל זה תהיה הכנה לטהרו ולקדשו ויזכה
 להיות קרבן ריח ניחח ליהוה ומנחה טהורה ביום
 סלוקו לחצרות אל' והשרפים בעלי שש כנפים באבותם
 יסוכו עליו על במתי ע"ב' יהי רצון שנזכה
 ונחיה ונראה לאורך ימים ומינן עם כל ישראל
 יתקלם עילאה בעולם הבא אביר:"
 (מעבד יבק, שפתי צדק, פרק לו)

Appendix XIII

*תפלת קדמונית מיוסדת על שם של מ"ב הו"ל הפרדס
 בשער פרטי השמים סוף פי"ג כתיב הרשב"י ע"ה שכל
 שם שיש בו ששה אותיות נגד שש כנפים שבשופים
 וע"ז נאמר שש כנפים שש כנפים לאחד (בישעיה)
 ואמר ששם זה טוב להזכירו בלילה קודם שנתו וכן
 האדם סמוך לפטירתו כי על כנפים אלה כתוב בישעיה
 בשמים יכסה פניו ובשמים יכסה רגליו ובשמים יעופף
 הנשמה למעלה ותזכה להנצל ממלאכי חבלה ומכל מזיקין
 ותזכה לחיי עולם הבא עכ"ל. וקבלתי שהמשטרים
 את המת ויושבים סביבו מרגע המיתה עד שיכוסה
 בעפר בתוך הקבר ישבו בתכיפות סביבו בחוזק שלא
 יכנס אור חיצוני ביניהם והם יזכירו תמיד זו
 התפילה בלי הנחת רגע ולא ימעיטו אפילו אלף
 פעמים:
 (שני לנחות הבהית, מסכת פסחים ד"ג)

Appendix XIV

"המאור המאיה לצד מזרח מהיכל הרביעי רפאל שמו
אשר הפקדת אותם בכח שמך אהיה אך טוב לישראל
ומאיר עליהם להחיות חולים מתליים ולהצילם
מרעתם:"
(מעבור יבק, שפתי צדק, פרק יב"ק פסוקים)

Appendix XV

"היזמרהך כבודו בגן עדן ולא ידום עם נפשות
 חסידך היושבים לפניך ועשרות אורם על האשם
 ליהנות מאור פניך ואורך ימים ושנות חיים
 ושלום יוסיפו לנו ברב עוז ותעצמות עם כל
 ישראל חברים אמן כן יהי רצון:"
 (מעבור יבק, שפתי צדק, תפלת לעת יציאת נשמה)

Appendix XVI

"ויכוין במלת כ"ן יחוד שבעה ספירות במלת יה"י
יחוד חכמה ובינה רצו"ן כתר עליון השופע עליהם
משוב א"ס ע"י הדעת הנועלם:
(מעבור יבק, שפתי צדק, דף 106)

Appendix XVII

"אהיה בעדן | תקבל צדקתו | קשוב רצה | עתירה שמור |
 טהרת נשמתו | גאור גבור | דגליך יאירו | כבוד שבתו |
 ברוב טובך | רועם צדקה | תרומם גדולתו | חסין קריב |
 ברצון טוב | נופש עלייתו | יודע גאולתך | לחזות פאר |
 זיו קדושתו | שוכן קרוב | ומיטיב צוה | ישועת תהילתו |
 וירכב על כרוב ויעף וידא על כנפי רוח: ישקני פיהו
 כי שובים דודיך מיין: אל אלוהים יהוה דיבר ויקרא
 ארץ ממזרח שמש עד מבואו: מיציון מכלל יופי אלוהים
 הופיע: שמע ישראל יהוה אלוהינו יהוה אחד: יהוה הוא
 האלוהים: יהוה הוא האלוהים יהוה מלך יהוה מלך
 יהוה ימלוך לעולם ועד:"
 (מעבור יבק, שפתי צדק, פסוקים לעת יציאת נשמה)

Appendix XVIII

"הטביע הבורא שתקון העליונים תלוי בתחתונים
 ובזה אין מתפרדים העליונים מן התחתונים כדכתיב
 וירכב על כרוב ויעף תחלה רוכבות הספירות על
 המלכות לתקנה ואחר כך וידא על כנפי רוח ובפסוק
 ישקני מנשיקות פיהו כי טובים הודיך מיין הכן
 וישק יעקוב לרחל וישא את קולו ויבך בהם שבעה
 תיבות לרמוז אל שבעה נשיקות שבעה הבליים שמתדבק
 דכורא בנבוקא ונוקבא בדכורא רוחא ברוחא בסוד
 אהבה והם סוד שבעה ושבעה מוצעקות וירכב על
 כרוב ויעף וגומר ישקני מנשיקות פיהו וגומר
 אל אלוהים יהוה וגומר מיציון מכלל יופי וגומר
 שמע ישראל וגומר יהוה הוא האלוהים יהוה אחד ושמו
 אחד... היחוד צריך קשור המ"ח כתות קדושים
 שהם בעצמן מעצמן אל עצמן והיינו יהוה אחד
 שיקשרה סוד אמתיות יהו"ה... סוד יחוד שמע
 ישראל יש לקשור א"ס בספירות ואחר כך לכוללם
 על ידי היסוד..."

(מעבור יבש, אמרי נועם, פרק ח.)

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