

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE -
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FAITH IN CRISIS:

THE PIYYUTIM OF

R. ELIEZER BAR NATHAN

A Thesis submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts
in
Judaic Studies

by

Robin J. Roberts

June, 1973

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I. THE PIYYUT AS LITERATURE AND LITURGY

When R. Eliezer bar Nathan of Mayence (c. 1090 - 1170) wrote his piyyutim, he intended them to be both fine literature and liturgy. This was a great task, for the poet had to overcome the apparent differences between prayer and poetry. Jewish prayer is communal expression, yet poetry is the conception of an individual. Keva, the order of prayer fixed by rabbinic tradition, conflicts with the innovations and spontaneity of poetry. However, in that both prayer and poetry derive from a human experience that is directed toward the deity, they are one and their characteristics complement each other. Here we will examine both the liturgical and literary aspects of piyyutim to provide a basis for this study.

There are two definitions of the piyyut. Both definitions are derived from the Greek word poetria (poetry). First, piyyut may be used as a general term for the totality of Hebrew religious poetry from the first century of the common era until the beginning of the Haskalah in the eighteenth century. Second, in a more restricted sense, piyyut is the term for poems for the Sabbath and festival liturgy.

Piyyutim are divided according to the occasion of their use and function in the liturgy. There are piyyutim for the Sabbath and major festivals, selihot for Rosh haShannah and Yom Kippur, and kinoth for Tisha b'Av.¹

Piyyutim for the Sabbath liturgy derive their names from the prayers set by the Talmudic tradition. There are three separate groups of Sabbath morning piyyutim: those preceding the yotzer prayer, the yotz-

rot, and the kerovot. Of those preceding the yotzer, the first is the reshut in which the leader of the service requests permission to pray. The reshut may be included before many different prayers in the morning service, and therefore one may find a reshut to the nishmat, kerovah, and avodah. There are also reshuyot to the kaddish, which concludes the peske dezinra in the morning service, and the barechu, which opens the yotzer blessings, and for the yotzer itself.

The nishmat, the prayer before the barechu, provided three opportunities for the creativity of the paetan. The nishmat piyyut, based on the prayer, "The soul of every living thing blesses You," opens the service with praise of God. The piyyut called illu finu precedes the prayer, "If our mouths were as full of song as the sea." It describes the humanly unattainable majesty of the Creator. Finally, following the prayer, "All my bones declare, Oh Lord, 'Who is like You,'" the piyyut kol azmotai describes the unique characteristics of God.

Piyyutim before and after the shema in the morning service are called yotzrot. These are paralleled by the ma'arivot of the evening service which were less popular with the paetanin. The yotzer is based on the prayer, "He who forms light and creates darkness." Its contents declare the creation of the world and praise God the creator.

The yotzer piyyut is followed by the ofan, a piyyut based on the prayer, "The angels and all holy creatures rise in great tumult." It contrasts the sanctity of angels with the world of earthly creatures.

The meorah piyyut follows the next prayer, "He who creates the luminaries." The meorah announces that God's covenant with Israel gives reason for hope; redemption is soon to come. The ahavah piyyut, based on the prayer, "He who chooses His people Israel," also reassures

Israel of God's love. It uses images from the Song of Songs. The next piyyut, the zulah, further elaborates God's deeds and righteous acts for Israel, especially redemption from exile. This piyyut is based on the prayer, "There is no God besides You." The mi camocha piyyut, following the zulah, is similar to it. It declares, "Who is like You, Oh Lord?" Using images and language from the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15), this piyyut emphasizes God's acts of salvation. This leads to the geulah, a piyyut for redemption. It is based on the benediction, "Blessed are You, Oh Lord, Savior of Israel." Overall we see that the order of piyyutim emphasizes the thematic structure of the service.

Kerovot are piyyutim for the first three benedictions of the Sabbath amidah. The kerovah, along with the yotzer, is the earliest type of piyyut.² The reshut, requesting permission to pray, is the introductory kerovah. The kerovah for the first benediction is the magen (shield). This benediction is called avot (fathers). The magen describes God as the protector of the fathers. The worshipper requests that the righteous acts of the ancestors intercede for him in heaven. The kerovah for the second benediction is the mehayeh. This piyyut is inserted in the benediction known as the gevurot (great deeds), which praises God's mighty acts, especially His ability to grant life and revive the dead. The third kerovah is the meshaleh based on the benediction meshaleh kidushah. The concluding kerovah is called the silug. On special Sabbaths and holidays kerovot may be added to the other benedictions of the amidah.

Seliot are a third category of piyyutim because of their well developed and highly individualized form. A seliha is a prayer of pardon

based on the phrase from Psalm 130:4, "For with You there is forgiveness (seliha)."

Common themes in selihot are the akeda (Binding of Isaac), hatanu (martyrology), tochaha (reproof), and widdui (Confession). These piyyutim are especially popular for the High Holidays.

Kinot originate from the book of Lamentations. They are similar in style to selihot for both closely imitate biblical models. They differ in content, however, for the kinah expresses sorrow for the losses of the Jewish people. It was especially popular in times of Jewish persecutions, such as the Crusades.

Although there are many types of piyyutim in the liturgy they all share the literary characteristics of Hebrew poetry, such as language, acrostic, rhyme, and meter. While the language and style of piyyutim vary with different paetanim (liturgical poets) and periods, they all originate from biblical Hebrew. In the earliest period they closely resemble the style of the liturgy into which they were incorporated. Later paetanim also used the language of the Midrash and Mishnah. They expanded the vocabulary of their works to include new Hebrew forms and loan words from Aramaic, Greek, Persian, and Arabic. Eventually their language contained errors in syntax and grammar. Consequently the intention of the paetan often was vague and cryptic. Only students well trained in rabbinic literature could penetrate their meanings. Indeed, the popularity of the piyyut would have waned seriously if this trend had not been checked by the needs of the worshippers.

Acrostics are an early feature of Hebrew poetry. Beginning in the Psalms we find the arrangement of words and lines according to initial letters. At first the lines were ordered alphabetically, either forwards, backwards (tashrak), or other variations. Later paetanim

embellished their works with their own names, names of their relatives, locales, blessings, and biblical verses. Acrostics have aided scholars in repairing corrupt manuscripts and arranging lines in proper order. Signature acrostics have been useful in ascertaining the authors of piyyutim.

The practice of rhyming poetry has biblical precedents as well. Some credit Jannai as the first paetan to use rhyme. Later poets developed elaborate rhyme schemes, and Saadiah Gaon wrote a rhyming dictionary to facilitate their work. Through contact with Arabic poetry in Spain both rhyme and meter became regarded as the highest form of Hebrew poetry.

Meter is a late characteristic of piyyutim. Dunash ben Labrat (tenth century) was the first paetan to imitate Arabic meter, thus beginning a trend of later Spanish and Italian paetanim. Despite the claims of some that meter was a vestige of biblical poetry, it clearly was a foreign influence in Hebrew poetry. Biblical meter stresses the tonality and the rhythmic scansion of words, whereas the Arabic meter stresses the syllabic rhythm.³ The fact that this was an alien element introduced through contact with distant Arabic culture meant that Ashkenazi paetanim did not utilize this feature in their poetry. Eventually meter was maintained only in the secular Hebrew poetry of Spain.

Their literary qualities and liturgical themes combined to make piyyutim a very popular element in the synagogue services. There the piyyutim served the worshippers in three ways. First they embellished the service by offering a variety of prayers. Their spontaneity offset the rigidity of standard liturgy, providing new expressions of

piety. Second, they replaced censored sections of the service. Under the religious persecutions of Rome and later of Byzantium, the recitation of some parts of the liturgy was forbidden. Piyyutim, which could be used for any liturgical purpose, replaced the censored prayers and sermons.⁴ Third, the piyyutim made the liturgy relevant to the contemporary situation of the Jewish community. Their timely and often local composition made them more meaningful to the worshippers. In fact, according to Zunz, piyyutim may be regarded as a companion to the history of Jews and Judaism.

Yet despite their fine literary qualities and function, there were those who strongly objected to including piyyutim in the service. Nahshon Gaon (fl. 871-79) thought that poetry was frivolous and claimed that those who even heard piyyutim were not students.⁵ Maimonides (1135-1204) objected to the dangerous and obscure ideas of these poems.⁶ The most frequent objection came from those who opposed foreign influence in the prayer service. Abraham ibn Ezra (1092-1167) summarizes these objections.

Why should we not follow the example of King Solomon, the wisest man, whose prayer was explicitly clear? Everyone who knows Hebrew understands it, for it does not contain enigmas or allegories...Why should we rather not follow the example of the prescribed Hebrew prayers, all of which are in pure Hebrew, instead of employing the dialects of the Hedes, Persians, Greeks, and Arabs?

However, the piyyut was not without its advocates. As early as the Siddur of R. Anram Gaon (fl. 870-88) piyyutim were accepted as integral elements in the liturgy. R. Gershom b. Judah (d. 1028), Meor haGolah, believed that piyyutim were divinely inspired.⁸ Mahzor Vitry (eleventh century) cites several contemporary rabbinic authorities as claiming it is meritorious to insert piyyutim into the first three benedictions

of the Anidah.⁹ The piyyut was so highly regarded that rabbis felt obligated to write poetry in honor of God.

Halakhic authority did not prohibit innovation in the service. Local communities were free to develop their own customs. Thus piyyutim spread from place to place and were incorporated into the liturgy according to the preferences of each community. Eventually no occasion on the Jewish religious calendar lacked piyyutim.

Just as the service was influenced by local custom and tradition, so were piyyutim. The genre of paetanut is not static. Rather it spread through various communities. Eventually it reached the Ashkenazi community which maintained paetanut in the Middle Ages. The extension of this genre to Germany is the subject of the next chapter.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ASHKENAZI PAETANUT

The history and character of the Ashkenazi school of religious poetry originated in the Jewish community of Palestine in the first century. The Palestinian traditions traversed Babylonia to Italy, finally reaching the Rhine Valley. The Ashkenazi school had its unique development and was not influenced by its great contemporary school in Spain. Therefore our discussion here will focus only on the schools of Palestine, Babylonia, and Italy as they are the foundation of Ashkenazi paetanut.

Sometime during the first century of the common era the genre of religious poetry arose in Palestine. This center of Jewish activity contained the factors giving rise to the piyyut. The Temple just destroyed, the synagogue became the gathering place of worshippers. The worship service came into being. Prayer replaced the sacrifices of the Temple cult, and piyyutim replaced the Psalms of the Levites. Some piyyutim were absorbed into the liturgy as it crystallized.

The history of the early school of paetanim extends until the conquest of Palestine by the Arabs in 663. The early school is characterized by intense development of paetanut. While this is generally called the period of the anonymous piyyut, it eventually established a trend in signature acrostics. At first there is little rhyme in the poetry, yet by the end of the period rhyme has been established as its hallmark. The early paetanim used pure biblical Hebrew, yet later writers used agadah and foreign loan words as well.

Few paetanim of this period are known, and biographical data is

scarce. Jose ben Jose (c. 600-640) is the earliest known paetan.¹ His signature acrostics sometimes contain the epithet "haYathom," indicating that he was an orphan. He wrote piyyutim in pure biblical Hebrew, usually without rhyme.

Even less known is Jannai, another outstanding Palestinian paetan. Scholars presume that he lived in Palestine during the sixth or seventh century before the Arab conquest. Evidence for these dates comes from his poems which are written according to the Palestinian triennial lectionary cycle and mention only Christians rather than Arabs. Jannai popularized the kerovah. He was also the first paetan to use rhyme extensively.

Eliezer ben Kallir represents the last and best of these early Palestinian paetanim. According to the testimony of the twelfth century liturgical poet Ephraim of Bonn, Kallir received his education from Jannai.² However, there is no corroborating evidence to establish the truth of this testimony.

Kallir had a great influence on later paetanim, especially in the Ashkenazi school. He introduced neologisms to his piyyutim that often violated the rules of biblical grammar. The Sephardi school berated these barbarisms of style and language. Kallir was also the first to use agadic references from rabbinic literature in his poems. These references tended to obscure his poetic allusions.

Kallir wrote piyyutim for several occasions in the Palestinian rite. These piyyutim survive in contemporary traditional liturgies of the Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities. The well known Tefillat Leshem and Tefillat Tal were written by Kallir.

With the conquest of Islam the center of Jewish scholarship shifted from Palestine to Babylonia. Although the Babylonian school often surpassed the Palestinian school in quantity of literary production, this was not the case with paetanut. Babylonia served as a mere stepping stone for paetanut on its journey to Germany, little changing its character. This is noteworthy since the study of Hebrew and contact with Arabic culture, two factors which motivated the development of paetanut in Spain, were also present in Babylonia.

Saadia Gaon (882-942), head of the academy at Sura, was the outstanding paetan of the Babylonian school. Saadia was a writer of polemics, didactics, liturgy, and philosophy, and a student of the Palestinian piyyut. Born in Pithom, Egypt, Saadia studied in Tiberias before settling in Babylonia. Saadia developed earlier characteristics of the Palestinian school, particularly rhyme and acrostics. He created some new rhyme schemes and wrote a rhyming dictionary for paetanim. Instead of signing his own name to his poems he signed the names of the cantors who recited them.

The Italian school of paetanut served as a bridge between the east and west. These poets brought the traditions of Palestine and Babylonia to Italy and later to the Rhine Valley. Paetanut was introduced first in southern Italy, then moved northward to Rome and Lucca. This pattern of movement carried it into Germany and France.

Though paetanut arrived in Italy from Babylonia, the former school left few impressions. Italian paetanut is called the direct descendant of the Palestinian school.³ Similarly the Italian school introduced no striking innovations in linguistic usage or content.

In Italy for the first time we find families of paetanim. The Shefatiah family of paetanim flourished in southern Italy. R. Shefatiah ben Amittai (d. 886) wrote piyyutim in pure Hebrew with monorhymes and signature acrostics. He was a significant leader of the Italian community and wrote his piyyutim for the liturgy arranged according to the Italian rite. Several of his piyyutim later were included in the German rite.

Amittai ben Shefatiah (c. ninth century), his son, was the head of the Oriah academy. He worked to furnish hymns and poems for special occasions on the religious calendar. Amittai lived during the persecutions of the Byzantine Emperor Basil I (fl. 867-886). The themes he chose, persecution, exile, and penitence, foreshadowed the themes developed by the Ashkenazi school.

Another family of Italian paetanim was the Ahima'atz family. In Sefer Ahima'atz, his family chronicle written in rhymed prose, Ahima'atz ben Paltiel (fl. 1054) recounted the history of his family from the ninth to eleventh century. Ahima'atz tells his reader that his family members are "makers of verse" coming from Palestine and Babylonia. The concluding chapter of his chronicle is a long poem of many strophes.

Little over a century since its introduction into southern Italy, the writing of piyyutim spread to Rome. The few paetanim known to us establish direct links between the Italian and Babylonian schools.

Solomon the Babylonian arrived in Rome from Babylonia sometime during the tenth century. A man of high status, he appears to have been in contact with major religious poets in Italy and the incipient center of the Rhine Valley. He taught R. Meshullam ben Kalonymus of

Lucca, and R. Gershom and R. Simeon ben Isaac of Mayence. Solomon wrote piyyutim marked by idioms in the vernacular and rare words. These characteristics made the syntax of his poetry very difficult. Solomon is best known for the large number of selihot he composed. They were so prolific that they were called Shalmoniyot after the poet who popularized them.

Other paetanim of Rome were David b. Huna (11c.), Shabbetai b. Moses and his son Kalonymus b. Shabbetai (c. 1030-1096). The latter moved northward to Worms and was killed in the first Crusade. Another Roman paetan, Jehiel b. Abraham (d.1070), included anti-Christian themes in his poetry which was so acerbic that it was later censored.

The third Italian center of paetanut, Lucca, was dominated by the Kalonymus family. In his thirteenth century work Sefer haRokeah, R. Eliezar of Worms, a descendant of this family, traces the origins of its literary traditions back to Babylonia.

The Hasidim received the order of the Tiqqun of prayers and other esoteric lore as a tradition transmitted from rabbi to rabbi, back to Abu Aharon, son of R. Samuel ha-Nasi, who immigrated from Babylonia because of a certain incident. Compelled to wander through the land, he came to Lombardy, to a city called Lucca, and there found R. Moses (b. Kalonymus) who composed the hymn, "Elmat nore^e oteka", and to whom he communicated all his esoteric lore.

Kalonymus b. Moses (9c.), like his father R. Moses, was a paetan. R. Gershom of Mayence (d. 1028) mentioned that Kalonymus "was a great scholar and composer of religious compositions for all the festivals."⁶ His poems, containing references to Byzantine persecutions, were often censored.

The Kalonymus family links the Ashkenazi school of paetanut with all that preceded it. Charles the Bald (9 c.) invited the family to

move from Lucca to Mayence. According to R. Eliezer of Worms in Sefer haRokeah, the same R. Moses who received the mystic tradition in Lombardy transmitted it to Germany.

He (R. Moses) was the first who left Lombardy, he and his sons, R. Kalonymus, and other important men. King Charles brought them with him from Lombardy and settled them in Mayence.

The family was later joined by R. Meshullam b. Kalonymus who moved to Mayence in the tenth century. A disciple of Solomon the Babylonian, R. Meshullam is noted for his selihot and avodot for Yom Kippur. He is the only Italian paetan to have written an avodah, a piyyut which recounts the service of the High Priest in the Temple on Yom Kippur. However, it is not known if he wrote these particular poems in Italy or Germany.

The themes of the early Ashkenzi paetanim were derived from the experience of major disruptions in the life of the community. In various forms - Crusades, forced conversions, libel, or expulsion - the theme of persecution shaped the message of the poets. They composed a large number of selihot and kinoth, prayers of pardon and prayers of mourning, which attempted to reconcile the themes of God's love and guarantee of the covenant found in the liturgy with the experience of reality indicating God's abandonment of Israel.

The Ashkenzai paetan used two literary techniques to express these themes. The first is the polemical piyyut which either quotes Christian statements for refutation or presents a dialogue between Christian and Jew. Simeon b. Isaac (b. 950) is noted for this technique. Second is the dialogue piyyut in which the paetan sees himself as the mediator between God and the people Israel, trying to reunite onewith the other.

Ashkenazi paetanim rarely deal with personal problems or issues, rather focusing on the concerns of the entire people Israel.

Aside from the turmoil of the times, the Ashkenazi paetanim had another impetus for composing religious poetry. Since the Diaspora communities celebrated a second day of the holidays and festivals, religious poetry was needed to augment the liturgy of the second day. Whenever appropriate these holiday piyyutim were based on the historical situations which relate the holiday theme with the contemporary experience. For instance, on Passover the theme of liberation had a unique meaning for the Jews of the Crusade period. Similarly, on Tisha b'Av these Jews mourned not only for the destruction of Jerusalem but for the destruction of their communities as well.

The piyyutim of the Ashkenazi school often are compared with the contemporary Sephardi school in a derogatory manner. The Ashkenazi school is characterized by a stylized and narrow use of the genre while the Sephardi school is seen as innovative with more sophisticated use of language and meter. Ashkenazi paetanut essentially bears the tradition of the Palestinian school for whom the use of acrostic and rhyme provided a framework for treatment of theme, but which did not employ meter.

It is unsound to praise the Spanish school since this comparison ignores its unique themes and techniques. Furthermore, the comparison blurs the distinct literary and historical background which shaped each school. The Spanish school arose during the tenth to twelfth century renaissance of Arabic culture, while the Ashkenazi school arose during periods of persecution. Spanish society was open and competitive

whereas German society was a feudal order with strict social controls. The secularization of Spanish and Arab culture, especially among the patrons of the court Jews, led to new poetic themes such as love and friendship poems. Intense piety continued to motivate Ashkenazi poets who did not compose poetry on secular themes. These *pactanim* focused their attention on the central institution of Ashkenazi society, the synagogue, where they expounded the religious values which they considered most important for their community.⁸

The development of the *piyyut* in Ashkenaz coincides with the arrival of the Kalonymus family in Mayence. This city then became the center of Ashkenazi religious and cultural development. Other scholars of Mayence, such as Gershom b. Judah (d. 1028) and Simeon b. Isaac (fl. 1020), also composed *piyyutim*.⁹ R. Gershom, also known as Meor haGolah (Light of the Exile), was the head of the Mayence academy. He was a great rabbinic authority who wrote commentaries on various tracts of the Babylonian Talmud. Important community reforms, Takkanot, have been attributed to him.¹⁰ These legal works were augmented by a significant number of *piyyutim*.

It was to the academy of Mayence that scholars from the Seine and Loire Valleys of France were drawn. R. Simeon b. Isaac, an uncle of R. Solomon b. Isaac (Rashi), lived in Mayence. He was a disciple of R. Gershom and a religious poet. R. Solomon b. Isaac himself studied at Mayence. The most prolific author of early Ashkenazi Jewry, Rashi wrote many *piyyutim* in the style of the Ashkenazi school.

Later, during the Crusade period (1096-1176), more than a dozen *pactanim* arose in the Kalonymus family of Mayence, including Kalonymus

b. Judah. R. Eliezer bar Nathan of Mayence, author of a Crusade chronicle containing four kinoth, was acquainted with him..

The city of Mayence, with its thriving Jewish community and flourishing academy, provided the background for R. Eliezer bar Nathan's intellectual activity. His writings indicate that he was in direct contact with the Kalonymus family. The composition of legal commentaries as well as religious poetry sets him in the tradition of the "sages of Mayence." In the next chapter we shall demonstrate how he advanced the traditions available to him.

III. R. ELIEZER BAR NATHAN: A BIOGRAPHY

Mayence, the center of Eliezer bar Nathan's intellectual activity, was the most outstanding community of early medieval Ashkenazi Jewry. By the time of the Raban's birth it had already been established as the major Jewish academic center in Germany. The Raban's predecessors, known as the "sages of Mayence,"¹ were such rabbis as Gershom ben Judah, Meor haGolah (d. 1028), Eliezer ben Isaac the Great (fl. 1028-1075), and R. Jacob ben Yaquar (d. 1064). Each of these scholars distinguished themselves in Talmudic studies, responsa literature, and liturgical poetry.

R. Eliezer bar Nathan continued the tradition of the sages of Mayence. Like most medieval rabbinic scholars, there is little archival documentation about the Raban's life. Everything must be deduced from his own writings, the testimonies of contemporaries and those of succeeding generations.

Scholars have established that the Raban was born ca. 1090. Aptowitzer, Urbach, and Landshuth assume that the Quntress Gezerot Tatnu, the Raban's Crusade chronicle, provides evidence that the Raban actually witnessed the First Crusade in 1096.² Salo Baron, however, cautions that the composition of a chronicle is not sufficient proof that the author saw the event itself.³ The 1090 birthdate may be derived from other works by the Raban. According to Even haEzer, the Raban's responsa, the Raban was approximately 40 years old when his eldest daughter married in 1133. This would make his birthdate close to 1090.⁴

From his report of a certain incident in Even haEzer, we know that the Raban still was alive in 1162.⁵ On the basis of a statement by

Jacob ben Meir of Ramerupt, the famous Rabbenu Tam and younger contemporary of the Raban, Albeck and Aptowitzer assert that he died ca. 1170.⁶ In Sefer haYashar, R. Tam's responsa, he concludes a passage with the statement, "thus commented Rabbi Eliezer bar Nathan of Mayence who rests in Eden."⁷ This would indicate that the Raban predeceased R. Tam who died in 1174. However, it is also possible that later editors added the epithet, "who rests in Eden," to R. Tam's work. In this case it is possible that the Raban died after 1174.

Although the sources tell us nothing explicit about the Raban's birth place, the city of Mayence is the best possibility. First, there is evidence to suggest the German was the Raban's native language, for he uses many German words in Even haEzer.⁸ The Raban also uses several French and Slavic words in his responsa, though with less frequency,⁹ and makes references to the customs of the Jews in Russia and Greece.¹⁰ These foreign terms and references need not indicate a birth place other than Mayence, however. For instance Rashi, although born in France, includes German words in his works as well as French words. The Raban's knowledge of foreign languages and customs probably indicates that, like many other students of his time, he travelled to Yeshivot in other countries to augment his studies, or he heard of these things from other travellers.

Second, tradition associates the Raban with Mayence. In responsa with his colleagues the Raban is called "Rabbi Eliezer of Mayence."¹¹ This appellation certainly indicates that he studied and wrote in Mayence, and it may indicate that he was born there as well. Furthermore, the Raban's name is never associated with towns other than Mayence

The prosopography of the Raban could provide more information on the issues of his dates and birth place. However, the study of the Raban's family reflects that of other medieval Jewish families; the necessary archival documents are missing. Therefore, the Raban's family is reconstructed chiefly from his own statements in Even haEzer.

The name of the Raban's father, Rabbi Nathan, is known from the Raban's signatures in his piyyutim.¹² Rabbi Nathan's title indicates that he was a man of learning, but the Raban never quotes an opinion of his father in his responsa.

The Raban's brother was Rabbi Hezekiah. The Raban mentions him only once in Even haEzer.¹³ He also had a sister who married a Rabbi Yitzhak.¹⁴

According to statements in Even HaEzer the Raban's father-in-law was R. Eliakim bar Joseph (c. 1070 - c. 1152).¹⁵ He may have engaged in some aspect of the wine business.¹⁶ He was also a scholar and taught at the academy in Mayence with Kalonymus bar Judah. There he probably taught his future son-in-law, the Raban.¹⁷ R. Eliakim was the head of a rabbinical court in Mayence, and by the year 1146 the Raban was appointed to his place.¹⁸ Evidence from Even haEzer indicates that R. Eliakim died by the year 1152.¹⁹

The names of the Raban's children are not known. Responsa literature indicates that he had four daughters who married scholars. The eldest daughter married Rabbenu Samuel bar Natronai, the Rashbat, in 1133.²⁰ The second daughter married Joel ben Isaac haLevi (c. 1115 - 1200), father of R. Eliezer ben Joel haLevi, the Ravyah (1140 - 1225).²¹ The third daughter married R. Uri.²² The fourth daughter married

R. Eliakim.²³

There is an oblique reference in the Tosafot to the possibility that the Raban had a son, R. Jacob bar R. Avin. Urbach asserts that he may have been the Raban's son.²⁴ He bases his assertion on the fact that the Raban was often called R. Even haEzer or simply R. Even after his responsa work Even haEzer.²⁵ He thus reads this signature as R. Jacob bar R. Even. However, the name Avin, with a yod as it appears, is common. The Raban probably had no sons.

Statements in responsa literature indicate that the Raban had at least three grandsons. R. Shlomo Luria states that Rabbenu Mordecai of Cologne, son of R. Samuel bar Natronai, was a grandson of the Raban.²⁶ Another grandson was Rabbenu Eliezer bar Joel haLevi,²⁷ the Raviah (1140 - 1225). He is known for his responsa and Talmud commentary Sefer Raviah.

There is much controversy over the third grandson, who was either the father or the grandfather of R. Asher b. Yehiel, the Rosh (1250 - 1327), an important Talmudist of the thirteenth century. The issue is unresolved because we do not know the full names of two of the Raban's sons-in-law, R. Uri and R. Eliakim. According to the tomb inscription of the Rosh's son, Judah, the family line is:²⁸

Eliakim b. Judah

Uri b. Eliakim

Yehiel b. Uri

Asher b. Yehiel

If the Raban's son-in-law was R. Uri bar Eliakim, then his grandson was Yehiel bar Uri and the Raban is the great grandfather of the Rosh.

If, however, the Raban's son-in-law was R. Eliakim bar Judah, then his grandson was R. Uri and the Raban is the great great grandfather of the Rosh.

Neither the R. Uri nor the R. Eliakim listed on the tomb inscription necessarily are related to the Raban. However, both Albeck and Aptowitzer assert that the Raban and the Rosh were linked by familial descent.²⁹ In several citations the Rosh calls the Raban zekani.³⁰ The term zaken is ambiguous in these cases. It may be a term of veneration in the sense of elder or scholar, for the Rosh read Even ha-Ezer. However, it may also mean kinsman. None of the evidence explains the precise relationship between these two scholars who lived more than a century apart.

Teachers, Colleagues, and Students

It has already been mentioned that R. Eliakim, the Raban's father-in-law, taught at the Mayence academy. In several passages of Even ha-Ezer, the Raban calls R. Eliakim "my teacher."³¹ Although Aptowitzer claims that this is only an honorific title,³² it is reasonable to assume that the Raban actually received instruction from his father-in-law on the basis of the evidence.

R. Kalonymus bar Judah (c. eleventh century) was a colleague of R. Eliakim at the Mayence academy. For this reason Albeck asserts that R. Kalonymus was also a teacher of the Raban.³³ Although the Raban never calls R. Kalonymus his teacher, he does mention him in Even ha-Ezer, thus establishing the presence of the Kalonymus family in Mayence during the Raban's lifetime.

R. Yitzhak bar Asher haLevi (c. eleventh century) was another teacher of the Raban. The Raban calls him thusly in two passages of Even haEzer. He also requested responsa from R. Yitzhak and included them in this work.³⁴ R. Yitzhak taught at the academy in Speyer and was a colleague of Rashi.

There is some evidence to indicate that the Raban studied with Rashi as well. In dealing with a question in Even haEzer the Raban cites two opinions, those of R. Meir Gaon and R. Alfasi (1013 - 1103). He then says, "both of these explanations are by R. Shlomo, and he only spoke about the beginning of the subject, but I explained them properly."³⁵ The Raban states that both of these explanations came from "the mouth of R. Shlomo," indicating that he received these statements directly from Rashi. However, three factors indicate that the contrary is true. First, the term mipi, "from the mouth of," is sometimes used in the sense of b'shem, "in the name of."³⁶ It was common practice for rabbis to quote their predecessors through a chain of reliable sources without having met them. These sources were so authoritative that it was as if the statement had come directly from the original speaker. Thus, although the Raban says he received these explanations from Rashi, he may not have met him personally. Second, Rashi never quotes Alfasi. The Raban probably realized that Rashi's explanations were similar to those of R. Meir and Alfasi, and applied these himself in resolving the matter. Third, if the Raban had studied with Rashi, we would expect to find more than five citations of this great scholar in Even haEzer.³⁷

While the Raban did not know Rashi, his descendants were among

the Raban's colleagues and correspondents. These were some of the leading rabbis of twelfth century Ashkenaz. The Raban corresponded with R. Meir b. Samuel of Ramerupt (c. 1060 - c. 1135), Rashi's son-in-law, and the rabbinical court of R. Meir's four sons.³⁸ Among these sons were R. Samuel b. Meir (c. 1080 - c. 1170), the Rashbam, and R. Jacob b. Meir (c. 1100 - 1174), Rabbenu Tam. After R. Meir died, the Rashbam succeeded him as the head of the rabbinical court, and later R. Tam succeeded the Rashbam. The Rashbam, R. Tam, and the Raban all signed the Takkanot Troyes at the Troyes Synod in 1150.³⁹

In their responsa, the Rashbam and R. Tam address the Raban with great respect.⁴⁰ In medieval correspondence it was common practice to introduce letters with laudatory salutation. The Rashbam began one of his inquiries of the Raban in the poetic style of pure biblical Hebrew

Who is like you in greatness,
 Fair in situation
 And joy of the whole earth
 Forever and ever.⁴¹
 The righteous are the foundation of the world,⁴²
 Hammer of all the earth,⁴³
 The right pillar,⁴⁴
 Are you not my teacher and sage?
 My master and our rabbi?⁴⁵

In his responsa the Raban was in contact with other rabbis throughout Germany and France.⁴⁶ Among the best known were R. Eliahu bar Judah (twelfth century), a colleague of R. Tam in Paris,⁴⁷ and R. Yitzhak bar Mordecai (twelfth century), chief of the sages of Regensburg.⁴⁸ The Raban corresponded frequently with the other sages of Regensburg, including R. Ephraim bar Yitzhak (1110 - 11175)⁴⁹ and R. Moshe bar Joel (twelfth century),⁵⁰ the third member of this rabbinical court.

The Raban did not leave outstanding students after him. Albeck and Aptowitzer believe that his sons-in-law studied with him.⁵¹ R. Eliezer bar Samson of Cologne (twelfth century), a younger contemporary and relative of the Raban, studied for some time in Mayence. It is likely that he received instruction from the Raban.⁵²

Works

Although the Raban neither established a school succeeding him, nor left outstanding students following him, his seminal writings stand as his legacy. Eliezer bar Nathan contributed to three genres of medieval Hebrew literature: legal, historical, and poetic. His compositions in each genre are among the earliest surviving writings from the scholars of the Ashkenazi community.

The Raban is primarily known for his work in halakha. His major work, Even haEzer, is the earliest extant responsa of German Jewry. It is a miscellaneous compendium in three parts. First, it contains tosafot (commentaries) to three orders of the Talmud: Moed, Nezikin, and Nashim. Second, it presents pesakim (judgements) of the earlier rabbis and their argumentation. Third, it includes the teshuvot (responsa) between the Raban and his colleagues. The present contents of Even haEzer appear to be only part of a larger work, for the Raviah refers to items in Even haEzer that are not contained in manuscripts available to later editors.⁵³

The title Even haEzer or "Rock of Salvation" serves two purposes. First, the title contains the Raban's signature in the acrostic 'vn. Second, the title is also a literary device to explain the purpose

of the work. We read in I Samuel 7:12 that after a successful battle with the Philistines, "Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpa and Shen, and called the name of it 'Even haEzer' saying, 'hitherto the Lord has helped us.'" Accordingly, in his introduction the Raban explains, "My Rock has helped me to reveal the reasoning and customs of the early rabbis."⁵⁴ Thus, as surely as the work was to serve the contemporary community, the Raban also intended it to preserve the opinions of the rabbis before him.

The Raban's halakhic writings are cited by succeeding generations. His tosafot are included in the Talmud commentary of R. Mordecai b. Hillel (c. 1240 - 1298), a student of Meir of Rottenberg.

The second genre of the Raban's works, his historical writings, includes his crusade chronicle Quntres Gezerot Tatro or the Pamphlet of the Persecutions of 1096.⁵⁵ This chronicle, along with two other extant chronicles of the First Crusade, one by Solomon bar Samson of Mayence (twelfth century) and the Mayence Anonymous, represents the first historiographic works by Ashkenazi Jews.⁵⁶ It is most probable that all three chronicles were written independently of one another, but that each author used a common source.⁵⁷

The Raban's chronicle features a combination of prose and poetry. The narrative portions describe the Crusader attacks on the Jewish communities of the Rhine Valley in the spring and summer of 1096. The poetic portions consist of four kinoth which are eulogies for the communities of Speyer, Worms, Mayence, and Cologne. This format is very practical for the prose and poetry are complimentary. The prose narrative recounts the events of the Crusader march, while the poetic

eulogies exalt the martyrs and evoke the readers' sympathy.⁵⁸

The third genre of the Raban's works is liturgical poetry. Davidson lists 28 extant piyyutim by the Raban in his Thesaurus of Medieval Hebrew Poetry.⁵⁹ There are several difficulties in establishing the authenticity of the Raban's piyyutim. First it is certain that some of his piyyutim have been lost in the transmission of manuscripts or changes in the service. Second, the nature of acrostic signatures causes some confusion. For instance, the name Eliezer, with a yod, is very similar to Eleazar or Elazar, both without a yod. Often a line is omitted from a manuscript thus changing the signature of the poet. The difference can be crucial in identifying the author. A good example of this is the case between Eleazar b. Kallir or Eliezer bar Nathan. Like other paetanim of the Ashkenazi school, the Raban emulated Kallir's style. Without a complete acrostic it is difficult to distinguish between these two paetanim.⁶⁰

The sample of the Raban's remaining piyyutim displays a variety of types. The Raban wrote zulatot, yotzrot, ophanim, and selihot included in Ashkenazi prayerbooks. Most of his piyyutim are kinot written for Shavuoth, the occasion of the Crusader attacks, and Tisha b'Av. The Raban also wrote piyyutim for the Brit Milah and wedding ceremonies.

The Raban's interest in paetanut involved him in writing commentaries to piyyutim. He was the first commentator of piyyutim in Germany. Most of his commentaries are included in Sefer Arugat haBosem leRav Abraham bar Azariel edited by Urbach.⁶¹

The study of the Raban's commentaries is especially difficult. These commentaries are not included together in any one work by the

Raban. Rather they are found in unpublished manuscripts or compendiums edited by other scholars.⁶² These editors felt free to add the comments of later rabbis to those of the Raban. Thus it is difficult to separate the Raban's text from the editor's augmentations. Furthermore, Urbach contends that the Raban's statements are sometimes reported as an anonymous tradition.⁶³

IV. SELECTED PIYYUTIM BY ELIEZER BAR NATHAN

This chapter presents a selection of the Raban's piyyutim for analysis on the basis of prosody, biblical and aggadic references, and theme in relation to type and occasion of use. This analysis will focus on the unique characteristics of the Ashkenazi school reflected in the Raban's piyyutim. Therefore we will examine the characteristics of poetry in a prose setting, a technique which has precedents in the tenth century Italian chronicle, Sefer Ahima'atz. The study of this poetry also will provide insight into the response of twelfth-century Jews to their position in society as it is expressed in a consciousness of the Crusades and a heightened awareness of the Exile.

These piyyutim are selected from the 25 extant piyyutim of the Raban listed by Davidson.¹ Two factors have governed my selection. First, the four kinoth from Quntress Gezerot Tatnu are presented for a detailed analysis of one type of piyyut. These texts are found in Habermann's Gezerot Ashkenaz ve-Zarefat. Habermann used the Neubauer Oxford manuscripts as the base text for his edition.² These manuscripts date no later than 1325. Jellineck first published these kinoth in 1854. However, his manuscripts were inferior to the Oxford manuscripts used by Habermann.³

Second, four other piyyutim are presented to represent the variety of piyyutim the Raban composed. These are found in Ashkenazi or Italian siddurim dating no later than 1904.⁴

The following order of presentation will obtain throughout this chapter. First the text in Hebrew is provided. It is set according

to the rhyme scheme and signature of the Raban. Therefore caezuras indicate the midline rhyme characteristic of his poetry. The text in English follows. This includes source notes to Bible, Midrash, and Mishnah. Finally, a brief commentary discusses the theme and imagery of each piyyut. An overview of these piyyutim with comments and conclusions is in the final chapter.

1. Lament, O chosen community,

that declared the unity of its Rock, like the Ten Martyrs!¹

2. With one purpose, and one consent,²

You appointed her Your sentinel, and she stretched forth her neck.

3. The finest of celestial and terrestrial beings,

O land of Speyer, pleasant of heritage.³

4. Community of exultation, ever-pleasing,

chosen for expiation, guardian of the vineyards.⁴

5. Holy Couple, in the month of Ziv,

joined in her glory, to be cited in the Book of Life.

6. A decree signed and sealed,

a crown kept with the King.

As it is said, "...occupied in the work of the King."⁵

1. אלה עדה המיוחדת אשר יחדה צורה כהרוגי עלכות עשרה
 לב אחד ושכם אחד תפקידנה בוטרה ופשטה צוארה
 יפיפית בעליונים ותחתונים אגודת שפירה נחלה שפרה
 עדת עלצון תמיד לרצון מעותדה לכפרה לכרמים בוטרה
 5. זוג קודש בזיו חדש בכבודה בתחברה בספר החיים להתאמרה
 רשומה וגם חתומה עטרה צרורה עם המלך גזרה
 כאמור עם המלך במלאכתו וגו'

Source Notes to Eleh 'Edah

1. cfr. BB10b.
Midrash Eleh Ezcerah
2. cfr. Zephaniah 3:9.
3. cfr. Psalms 16:6.
4. cfr. Song of Songs 1:6.
5. I Chronicles 4:23.
Genesis Rabbah ch. 8.

This kinah, the first of four kinoth in Quntress Gezerot Tatnu, laments the Crusader attack on the Jews of Speyer. The Raban sets the historical background of the event both in his chronicle and kinah.

In his chronicle he states:

On the eighth day of Iyyar, on the Sabbath, the foe attacked the community of Speyer and murdered ten holy souls who sanctified their creator on the holy Sabbath and refused to defile themselves by adopting the faith of their foe.

In the first line of the kinah the Raban again mentions these ten martyrs, comparing them with the ten rabbis martyred under the Romans in Palestine. In line three he mentions the community of Speyer by name, calling it "pleasant of heritage." This is a play on the Aramaic root spr, meaning "pleasant." Finally, the Raban refers to the month of Ziv (line five). This month on the biblical calendar corresponds to Iyyar.

The theme of this kinah is the deeds of the ten martyrs of Speyer. The Raban uses the motif of the covenant in describing their martyrdom. He calls Speyer the "chosen community" (lines one and four). This terminology reminds the reader of the chosen people Israel. In the covenant established between God and Abraham, and reaffirmed at Mt. Sinai, the Jews were obligated to follow God's laws and fulfill His will. We read in the kinah that Speyer was appointed as God's sentinel (lines two and four). Thus the Speyer martyrs guarded God's holy name and laws (line one). They performed their covenantal duty by sacrificing their lives rather than forsaking their religion.

The goal of the covenant is to bring Israel and God closer in a partnership. Thus we read that the Holy Couple, God and Israel, were

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joined in the glory of the Speyer martyrs (lines two through five). He concludes with references to their reward of eternal life (line six).

Finally, the Raban adds a line from Scripture to describe the martyrs' souls still fulfilling God's will. This verse serves two purposes. First, it completes the image of line six by telling the reader more about the souls. Second, it is a transition between the poetry and prose of the chronicle since the Raban quotes Scripture throughout this work.

1. I keen, mourn, and lament over the exalted community.¹

In my heart there is wailing, for my wound is severe.²

2. Dressed in horror³ is the escaped remnant.

From their heads the great golden crown⁴ has fallen.

3. Friends and loved ones - the wicked have consumed,

my evil neighbors who struck at the inheritance.⁵

4. For these I wail, for I have become horrified.

My eyes are a fountain of tears, and I weep day and night.⁶

5. I raise a shattering cry, for the children have come to sorrow,⁷

calamity upon calamity, utter extermination.

6. (You said to them) "Cleanse and purify yourselves,"⁸ (that they might be) before You like they who received Your word at Mt. Sinai.

Those who call Your name, O Lord, at the sound of the tumult-⁹

7. In great numbers, in every district, they sanctified God the King -
placed in the palace of the King, in happiness and joy.

8. May the strength of their merit, and also their righteousness,

abide well for their survivors forever, Selah.

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. אקובן ואספרה ואלילה | עלי כנסת המהוללה |
| עלי לבי יללה | כי מכתי נחלה |
| 2. לבשה חרדה | פליטה שרודה |
| מראשותיהם כי ירדה | עטרת זהב גדולה |
| 3. ירידים ורעים | אכלו מרעים |
| שכני הרעים | הנוגעים בנחלה |
| 4. על אלה גועה | כי הייתי זועה |
| ועיני מקור דמעה | ואבכה יומם ולילה |
| 5. זעקת שבר אגבר | כי באו בנים עד משבר |
| שבר על שבר | נחרדה וכלה |
| 6. רחצו והזכו לעמר | כמקבלי סיני באמר |
| קוראי יי שמך | לקול המלה |
| 7. ברבים בכל פלך | קדשו אלהים המלך |
| בתנים בהיכל מלך | בשמחה וגילה |
| 8. חוזק זכותם | וגם צדקותם |
| יעמוד לשאריהם | עד עולם סלה |

Text based on:
 A.M. Habermann, Gezerot Ashkenaz v-Zarefat (Jerusalem, Sifre Tarshish,
 1945) pp. 74.

Source Notes to Akonen v. Enslah

1. Micah 1:8.
2. cfr. Jeremiah 14:17, 10:19.
3. cfr. Ezekiel 26:16.
4. cfr. Esther 8:15.
5. Jeremiah 12:14.
6. Jeremiah 8:23.
7. II Kings 19:3.
8. Isaiah 1:16.
9. Jeremiah 11:16.

This kinah laments the attack on the community of Worms on Shavu-oth of 1096. According to both Solomon bar Simson and the Raban, approximately 800 Jews perished in the attack.⁶ The Raban uses two motifs, the destruction of Israel and Samaria, and the theology of martyrdom, in his eulogy to Worms.

The first motif compares the attack on the Jewish community of Worms with the destruction of Samaria (c. 715 BCE) and Jerusalem (c. 586 BCE). The experience of exile establishes the connection between the past and present catastrophies. Thus the Raban eulogizes the attack on Worms in the language of prophetic lament over Israel.

The Raban opens his kinah with the mourning of Micah for Samaria and Jeremiah's wailing for Jerusalem (line one). The "evil neighbors who strike at the inheritance" (line three) were the Babylonians attacking Jerusalem (Ezekiel 26:16). The Raban, however, refers to his Christian neighbors, the Crusaders, who attacked the Jews of Worms. Thus does he again cry like the prophet Jeremiah (line four) and King Hezekiah (line five).

In his second motif the Raban describes the martyrdom of the Worms Jews. The martyr was a sacrifice to God, called upon to offer life, his most precious possession. Just as a sacrificial animal had to be without blemish, the martyrs were pure and innocent souls.

The Raban compares the martyrs to the revered ancestors who stood at Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah. Thus they also cleansed and purified themselves to meet God (line six). Through their death they sanctified God's name (Kiddush haShem) and entered His heavenly palace. (line seven). Furthermore, the deeds of the martyrs equal those of the

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fathers. Their merit will intercede for the survivors of Worms (line eight).

The comparison between the Worms martyrs and biblical events and figures serves several purposes. First, the biblical events are a paradigm for later disasters. The Raban uses an image already familiar to the reader to describe the Crusader attacks. The images of the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem renew horror and sympathy for the persecution of Jews. Finally, the comparison with the fathers exalts the martyrs and comforts the reader.

1. Woe is me for my pain; my wound is severe, I say.

My tent is pillaged, and all my cords are broken. My children have left me.

2. My heart goes out to the slain of Mayence, those valued as fine gold² and scarlet.

My heart³ pines for them, though I would take comfort from my sorrow.

3. Those who dwell at Jabez: the Terathites, Shimatites, Sucatim⁴ - they have passed on for my sin.⁵

Those who have understanding of the times,⁶ knowledge and wisdom to teach me.

4. For these I cry, my eyes flow with water.⁷

For the pain of the daughter⁸ of my people, I am anguished, dismay has seized me.

5. The elders have ceased from the gate⁹ - those who sounded the voice to teach me.

This (is the) Torah - who will extol you? Have not those who pronounced your word to my ear passed on?

6. Who will explain and teach me the secrets of your reason and your esoteric knowledge?¹⁰

At the head of the night vigils rise and pray before your Maker.¹¹

7. For the life of those who utter Your word, do not give Yourself rest.

8. Strive, my soul! Strive, O Lord! Judge my cause and my case!¹²

9. Avenge me and avenge the blood of Your saints, O lord, my Master.

10. There is none to take their place. You promised me and told me -

11. "I will hold as innocent their blood I have not held as innocent, And the Lord lives in Zion."¹³

As it is said, "I will hold as innocent their blood I have not held as innocent, and the Lord lives in Zion."

And it is said, "(I have set)¹⁴ their blood on a bare rock, that it should not be covered."

1. אורי לי על שברי בחלה אמרתי אני
אהלי שדר וכל מיתרי בתקו בני יצאוני
 2. לבי לחללי מגנצייא המסלאים בפז ושני
לבי עליהם דוי מבליגיתי עלי יגוני
 3. יושבי יעבץ תרעתים שמעוים סוכתים פסו בעווי
יודעי בינה לעתים דעת ובינה להבינני
 4. על אלה אני בוכיה ירדו מים עיני
על שבר בת עמי השברתי קדרתי שמה החזיקתני
 5. זקנים משער שבתו מקשיבים קול להשמיעני
זאת התורה מי יסלסלך הלא פסו הוגיך באזני
 6. רזי טעמן וקוצות תלתליך מי יבאר לשנני
ראש אשמורות לילה פני קונך קומי רני
 7. בבפש הוגי אמריך פונת לך אל תתני
 8. ריבה בפשי ריבה יי שפטה משפטי ודיני
 9. נקם בקמני ובקמת דם חסידיך יי אדני
 10. תמורתם אין חליפין הבטחתני והודעתני
 11. נקיתי דמם לא נקיתי ובציון מטכני
- כאמור ובקיתי דמם לא נקיתי ויי שוכן בציון
ובאמר דמם על צחיח הסלע לבלתי הכסות

Source Notes to Oy Li 'al Shibri

1. Jeremiah 10:19f.
2. Lamentations 4:2.
3. Jeremiah 8:18.
4. I Chronicles 2:55.
5. cfr. Psalms 12:2.
6. I Chronicles 12:33.
7. Lamentations 1:16.
8. Jeremiah 8:21.
9. Lamentations 5:14.
10. Song of Songs 5:11.
Midrash Song of Songs 5:11.
11. Lamentations 2:19.
12. Lamentations 3:59.
13. Joel 4:21.
14. Ezekiel 24:8.
cfr. Leviticus 17:13.
cfr. Genesis 4:10.

The Crusader attack on the community of Mayence on May 27, 1096 was the most destructive of the attacks in the Rhine Valley. Although the community parnass Kalonymus ben Meshullam obtained an order from Emperor Henry IV protecting the Jews, approximately 1,000 perished under Count Emicho's army. This eclipsed the status of Mayence in the Ashkenazi community. Both as a member and scholar of the Mayence Jewish community, the Raban felt this loss.

The central theme of this kinah is the loss of the Mayence scholars. The Raban expresses his personal grief for these men in two ways. First, in this kinah more than the previous ones the Raban writes in the first person. He uses this voice to express his own relationship to these men who were his teachers (lines three, five, and six), and to express his sorrow (lines one, two, four, and nine).

Second, the image of the sage is repeated throughout the kinah. Beginning in line three the Raban focuses on these slain of Mayence. Thus, "those who dwell at Jabez" (I Chronicles 2:55) were the families of scribes, men educated in the Torah. The Raban used these biblical figures because he understood that later scholars continued the scribal tradition of the Bible. He similarly used the image of biblical elders (line five), men educated in the law and judges of disputes. Later the rabbis performed these duties. Thus the loss of the Mayence sages threatened the tradition of study established in biblical times. According to the Raban, "there is none to take their place" (line ten). He emphasizes that these were his teachers (lines five and six) without whom the secrets of the Torah would be lost.

The Raban concludes his eulogy for the Mayence sages with a call for revenge, an emotion he suppressed in his first two kinoth. He appeals to God by noting that his personal loss is a loss for God as well, for these sages taught His word to the people (line seven). Then the Raban uses biblical language to recall God's promise of vengeance for the exiles (line eleven). As God's word through the prophets is true, the sages of Mayence will be avenged.

1. I will raise lamentation and wailing for the calamity that has fallen!¹
2. How dear they were to me. My entrails burn² for Your dear ones, God.³
3. The gold and polished sapphire is dimmed;⁴ her visage blackened.
4. Warriors with high hand entered her gates, the patrons of wisdom -
5. Wolves tore them, devoured them, drove them out, and put them to waste.
6. They trampled her flesh with wounds and bruises and festering sores.⁵
7. My eyes are depleted, flowing,⁶ crying, and weeping.
8. My spirit is weary; I am distraught in my complaint and will moan in lament.⁷
9. For the lives of my blossoms, babes of my mourning, openly bound as an offering to God.⁸
10. The hands of compassionate women bound them in tears as at the Akeda of Moriah.⁹
11. Innocent souls,¹⁰ departed for eternal life to the place on high.
12. Cast down their triumph and pour out the life blood of the enemy! May it be dashed against a purple garment!
13. Make victorious Your people! Crush the winepress with Your outstretched arm!

As it is said, "And I trod down the peoples with My anger," etc.

And it is said, "I have trodden the winepress," etc.

1. אסא נהי בכי והי על שבר שהיה
 לי מה יקרו מעי חמרטרו על רעיך יה
 יועם זהב ספיר מצהב שנה וחשך מראה
 עורכי מלחמה שעה ביד רמה מגדלי תושיה
 5. זאבים סרפוס אכלום הדפוס בתנום לשאיה
 רפסו שארה בפצע וחבורה ומכה טריה
 בדמעות כלו עיני בזלו דמע ובכיה
 רפעה רוחי ואריד בשיחי ואהמה בנהיה
 בפשות פרחי עוללי טפוחי הבעקדו לראיה
 10. ידי נשים רחמניות עקדון בבכיות כעקדו מוריה
 נפשות בקיים פרשו לחיים אל מקומם בעליה
 תוריד נצחם ויז נצחם על מלבוש פורפיריא
 נצחם ערך פורה דרך בזרועך הנטויה
 כאמור ואכום עמים באפי' וגו'
 ואומר פורה דרכתי' וגו'

Text based on:

A.M. Habermann, Gezerot Ashkenaz v-Zarefat (Jerusalem, Sifre Tarshish, 1945) pp. 81.

Source Notes to Esa Nehi

1. Jeremiah 9:9.
2. Lamentations 2:4.
3. Psalms 139:7.
Literally, "How weighty are Your thoughts to me, O God!"
4. Lamentations 4:1.
5. Isaiah 1:6.
6. Lamentations 2:11.
7. Psalms 55:3.
8. Jeremiah 2:34.
9. cfr. Genesis 16:13.
10. Genesis 22.
11. lines 12ff - Isaiah 63:1-6.

This final kinah in the chronicle laments the attack on the community of Cologne on May 30, 1096. Although the bishop dispersed the Jews to outlying areas, they were pursued there and killed.

This kinah has the most highly developed plot of the four kinoth in the chronicle. Based on the martyrdom at Cologne, the Raban creates a story designed to evoke sympathy and revenge in his readers. The Raban begins the story by setting a mournful tone (line one). Then he introduces the characters. With phrases like, "How dear they were to me," (line two) he lets the reader know that these characters have already vanished from the scene. Furthermore, a catastrophe occurred at their departure. The characters are compared to precious gems whose beauty and sparkle have been besmeared (line three). This arouses the reader's interest to know more.

The Raban describes the catastrophe in images of war. Warriors entered the gates of Cologne to attack the Jews, the patrons of wisdom (line four). They were as vicious as wolves dragging their prey to feast in the fields (line five). The contrasting images between the civilized and the wild is striking. The story climaxes in line six with the infliction of wounds.

After recounting the battle the Raban is exhausted with mourning (lines seven and eight). Yet once again he reflects on the image of the martyrs, women who sacrificed their children as Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac (lines nine and ten). The image of their innocently shed blood evokes new emotions in the Raban, those of revenge. In the final lines of the kinah he calls out for God's vengeance upon the nations who have persecuted Israel (lines twelve and thirteen).

He supports his demand with concluding quotations from the prophet
Isaiah, chapter 63.

1. Scripture calls Him, "Eternal Light."¹
 Follow after Him in reverence.
 Seek the Lord where He may be found.²

In these days of pledge
 He draws nigh for repentance,
 Call Him while He is near.

He is great; there is none like His measure.
 He decreed to His creature to prolong him.⁴
 Let the wicked forsake his way.

His thoughts are forever with us.
 This is inscribed as witness:⁵
 "Return, Israel, to the Holy One."⁶

5. A man should make humble his repentance.⁷
 It is sufficient for him to return
 And the man of iniquity forsake his thoughts.⁸

Before He laid foundations of the world⁹
 He set aside repentance for the backslider.
 Therefore let him return to the Lord and He will have mercy on him.¹⁰

Even unto the Throne of Glory penitence succeeds.
 And from under the throne - a hand reaches out.
 And to our God (he reaches) for He will abundantly pardon.¹¹

In the multitude of people is the king's glory.¹²
 In their counsel they say to our God,
 Return, O Lord, our Captivity.¹³ O Holy One

9. Happy are you that sow beside all waters.¹⁴
 Make pure and better your ways,¹⁵
 For My thoughts are not your thoughts.¹⁶

My desire and will is that you follow My way.
 My longing is to purify My blessed ones.¹⁷
 But your ways are not My ways.

My nature is to be served by Israel.
 The pure of heart¹⁸ will stand before Me,
 Says the Lord.

Forever I will wait for God.
 Grant salvation to the beseeching nation.
 Return, O Lord, to the tens of thousands of Israel,¹⁹ O Holy One

1. אור עולם קראו אחריו תלכו למוראו
דרשו יי בהמצאו
באלו ימים לערוב בתשובה בא לקרוב
קראהו בהיותו קרוב
גדול ואין כערכו גזר ליציר להאריכו
יעזב רשע דרכו
אלינו מחשבותיו לעד על זאת רשום להעד
שובה ישראל עד קדוש:
5. זכא אנוש תשובותיו דיו לעטות מסובותיו
ואין און מחשבותיו
העולם עד לא שותתהו הקדים תשובה לשוכנהו
וישב אל יי וירחמהו
ועד כסא כבוד מגעת צלוח ומתחתיו יד לשלוח
ואל אלהינו כי ירבה לסלוח
ברב עם הדרת מלכנו בועדס יאמרו לאלהינו
שובה יי את שביתנו קדוש:
9. זורעי על כל מים אשריכם זכו והטיבו דרכיכם
כי לא מחשבותי מחשבותיכם
חפצי ורצוני תלכו בדרכי חשקי לטהר שברכי
ולא דרכיכם דרכי
טבי להשתמש בכלי גני טהורי לב יעמדו לפני
באם יי
בצח אקוה לאל תנה ישועה לעם שואל
שובה יי רבבות אלפי ישראל קדוש:

13. His hand is stretched out to receive eagerly.
 He who knows will return and regret sincerely.²⁰
 For as the heavens are higher than the earth -
- So I will heap My kindness upon you.
 As I will far remove your transgressions from you²¹ -
 Thus are My ways higher than yours.²²
- Before Me return and I will return you.²³
 I will mark you for eternal life.²⁴
 For My thoughts are far from your thoughts.²⁵
- Remember for good and pity²⁶
 Your people, carried since birth.²⁷
 Return, O Lord, how long? Have pity. O Holy One.
17. God awaits the one who puts his soul to shame.
 He expects to inscribe him for resurrection.²⁸
 For as the rain falls -
- He will forever give thanks to God
 All the days of the rainfall,²⁹
 And snow from the heavens.
- He rejoices in the victory of the one who successfully returns.
 It is important to confess to the Living Rock,³⁰
 And do not return there.³¹
- Strengthen the days of our life.
 And from the deep You will return, and raise us up.³²
 Return, O Lord. Save our souls. O Holy One
21. He is mighty in the high heavens.
 He does righteousness on earth.³³
 Would that He water the earth!³⁴
- The lot of sacrifice and meal offering,
 Entreaty, divisions, and petition -
 Bring them forth to fruition.³⁵
- Splitting the rock of His throne,
 The affliction of those who call to Him reaches out,
 And He gives seed to the sower.³⁶
- Take strength - for I made you pure
 To return to Me, for I supported you.
 Return to Me for I redeemed you.³⁷ O Holy One

13. ידו פסוטה לקבל במרץ יודע ישוב ונחם בחרץ

כי גבהו שמים מארץ

כן אגביר חסדי עליכם כרחוקם ארחיק פשעיכם

כן גבהו דרכי מדרכיכם

לפני תשובו ואשיבכם לחיי עולם אתו יכם

ומחשבתי ממחשבותיכם

זכר לטובה ורחם עמך עמוסי מרחם

שובה יי עד מתי והנחם קדוש:

17. מחכה למסים בפשו אשם מצפה לתחיה לרשם

כי כאשר ירד הגשם

נצח לאל יודה לעולמים כל ימי ירידת המים

והשלג מן השמים

שמח בנצוח לנצח בשוב סלה חי חי להודות חשוב

ושמה לא ישוב

חזקנו מימים חיינו ומתהום תשוב תעלנו

שובה יי חלצה בפשנו קדוש:

21. עזוז בשמי ערץ עושה צדקה בארץ

כי אם הרוה את הארץ

פור זבח ומנחה פגע מעמד ושיחה

והולידה והצמיחה

צור כסאו קורע צקון קוראיו משתרע

ונתב זרע לזרע

אמץ תוסיף כי טהרתיך לשוב אלי כי סיעתיך

שובה אלי כי גאלתיך קדוש:

25. Near and far without deceit,
I peddle peace like a merchant's spice box,
And bread to the hungry.³⁸

I crushed galbanum with balsam.
Your pleasant scent as I passed -
Thus will be My word.³⁹

Look, between Me and you, return.
Footsteps of men will not return.
That which comes from My mouth will not return.⁴⁰

My faith is firm, O backsliding daughter!
You will be saved in comfort, and return.⁴¹
I will heal their backsliding and love them freely.⁴² O Holy One

25. קרוב ורחוק בלי בכל קדמתי שלום כאבקת רוכל

ולחם לאכל

רצפתי חלבנה עם צרי ריחך רע בהעבירי

כן יהיה דברי

שור ביני לבינך שוב שורת אנשים כל תשוב

אשר יצא מפי לא ישוב

תכון אמונתי בת השוכנה תושעי בנחת ושובה

ארפא משובתם אהבם בדבה קדוש:

Text based on:

S. Baer, Die Piutim für alle Sabbathe des Jahres (Rodelheim, M. Lehrberger and Co., 1896) pp. 248-251.

Source Notes to Or 'Olam

1. Isaiah 60:19f.
2. Isaiah 55:6.
3. Isaiah 55:6.
4. Isaiah 55:7.
5. cfr. Ezekiel 9:4.
6. Hosea 14:2.
7. Psalms 90:3.
8. Isaiah 55:7.
9. cfr. Psalms 11:3.
cfr. Genesis Rabah 1:1.
10. Isaiah 55:7.
11. Isaiah 55:7.
12. Proverbs 14:28.
13. Psalms 126:4.
14. Isaiah 32:20.
15. cfr. Jeremiah 7:3, 18:11, and 26:13.
16. Isaiah 55:8.
17. Isaiah 55:8.
18. Isaiah 55:8.
19. Numbers 10:36.
20. Isaiah 55:9.
21. Psalms 103:11f.
22. Isaiah 55:9.
23. cfr. Jeremiah 15:19.
24. cfr. Ezekiel 9:4-6.

25. Isaiah 55:9.
26. Isaiah 46:3.
27. Psalms 90:13.
28. Isaiah 55:10.
29. Isaiah 55:10.
30. cfr. Isaiah 38:19.
31. Isaiah 55:10.
32. Psalms 6:5.
33. Jeremiah 9:23.
34. Isaiah 55:10.
35. Isaiah 55:10.
36. Isaiah 55:10.
37. Isaiah 44:22.
38. Isaiah 55:10.
39. Isaiah 55:11.
40. Isaiah 55:11.
41. Isaiah 30:15.
42. Hosea 14:5.

This piyyut is a yotzer for Shabbat Shuva, the Sabbath of Repentance between Rosh haShannah and Yom Kippur. The yotzer follows the benediction, "He who forms light." Therefore this piyyut derives its classification from the light imagery in line one, wherein the Raban calls God the "Eternal Light." Appropriate to the Sabbath of Repentance this yotzer is an exhortation to repent in preparation for Yom Kippur. The Raban accomplishes this theme in three ways.

The first method is in the format of the piyyut. Like other Ashkenazi poetanim, the Raban saw himself as the mediator between God and the people Israel. This piyyut has the form of a conversation between God and the Raban, both exhorting Israel to repent. Most often the Raban speaks to Israel describing God's compassion and the way to repent (lines 1-8, 13, 17-19, 21, and 23). Thus he opens his yotzer with praises of God, the source of pardon (lines three and four). God created repentance before He created the world, ordaining that this should be the way of mankind (line five). However, when the Raban realizes that Israel is reluctant to repent, he also speaks to God, pleading for mercy (lines 12, 16, 20, and 22). Thus after telling Israel the importance of penitence (line 19), he turns to God asking for assistance (line 20).

God also speaks to Israel, urging them to return (lines 9f, 14f, 24-28). He says that the penitent are happy (line nine) and their reward is great (lines 14f). Furthermore, He is also working on Israel's behalf to make penitence easier (lines 10, 24-28).

Second, the Raban interweaves verses from Isaiah chapter 55 in his piyyut to establish his theme. He concludes the first three lines

of each stanza with a verse from this passage on penitence. From these verses we learn of the great distance between God and Israel that penitence must bridge (lines 2, 9f, 13-15).

Third, the Pagan creates a refrain of the theme in his piyyut. He concludes each stanza with a biblical verse containing some form of the root shuv, "return." Teshuva, repentance, derives from this root. Israel's evil ways (lines three and five) are a sign of desertion, and the poetan exhorts Israel to return (lines 4, 8, and 24). The people return (shuv) through penitence (teshuva). The Exile is a sign of God's rejection, so the poetan pleads with Him to return as well (lines 12, 16, and 20). God returns by accepting the penitence of Israel. Eventually the state of exile will be dissolved through the return of Israel to Zion.

1. Let us return to our God, in the sorrow of our Exile.¹
 For You are righteous concerning all that befalls us.²
 For the sin of our avarice we have been sent from before You.
 Return us and let us return, for You are the Lord our God.³
5. "Exiles the sons of Exiles!" they title us in enmity.
 "Filthy lucre!" they call us in condemnation.⁴
 Your law is upright. Your judgement is a great deep.⁵
 "Return! Return!" You said to us, but we will not hearken.⁶
9. Is it not for this that Your Presence is not among us -
 That we have found the evil in the land of our captivity?⁷
 As our strength diminishes we bemoan our end.⁸
 Let us go and return to the Lord, for He has wounded and He will
 heal us.⁹
13. This He has preserved for us: our backsliding souls.
 Just as You promised us to increase and prosper,¹⁰
 The strength of Your hand and word will stand forever.¹¹
 Return us to You, O Lord, and let us return.¹²
17. I have been buffeted by the Exile and yet until now I tarry.
 When my soul is faint I remember the Lord.¹³
 I have tired in my grief; I have not found rest.¹⁴
 For after my return I will repent; I will be ashamed and even
 confounded.¹⁵
21. The propriety of Your words is heard in my ears and I covet them.
 They are sealed in my heart like a lid fitted on a pot.
 You may walk before Me if you study well.¹⁶
 If you return and I return you, you will stand before Me.¹⁷

1. אל אלהינו בשוב בצר לנו בגלותנו
כי אתה צדיק על כל הבא עלינו
בעון בצענו מעל פניך שלחנו
השיבנו ונשובה כי אתה יי אלהינו:
5. גולים בני גולים מונים אתנו באיבה
כסף נמאס קוראים אותנו בחובה
דינך ישר משפטיך תהום רבה
שובו שובו אמרת לנו ולא נקשיבה:
9. הלא על כי אין שכינתך בקרבנו
מצאונו הרעות בארץ שבינו
וככלות כחנו נהמנו באחריתנו
לכו ונשובה אל יי כי הוא טרף נירפאנו:
13. זה קים לנו נפשנו לשונכה
כאשר הבטחתנו להרבות ולהיטיבה
חזק ידך ודברך לעולם נצבה
השיבנו יי אליך ונשובה:
17. טרפתי בגולה ועד עתה אחרתי
בהתעסף עלי בפשי את יי זכרתי
יגעתי באנחותי מנוחה לא מצאתי
כי אחרי טובי נחמתי בשתי וגם בכלמתי:
21. כשר דבריך נשמעו באזני ואחמוד
חומות על לבי כצמיד פתיל לצמוד
ללכת לפני אם למוד תלמוד
אם משוב ואשובך לפני תעמד:

25. It is not for your stature, greater than every nation, that I elected you,
 But out of my love for you and your fathers.
 My everlasting kindness and covenant I will not remove from you.¹⁸
 Return to Me and I will return to you.¹⁹
29. Take shelter in My shadow, my beloved children.
 Those who plundered you will be disgraced and I will honor them that honor Me.²⁰
 I performed wonders for your fathers, My servants.²¹
 Yet even now, says the Lord, return to Me.²²
33. I will trample the winepress just as the law penetrates,²³
 Your mockers and enemies, for they have devoured Jacob.²⁴
 Make righteous your acts and remove your crooked hearts.²⁵
 The Redeemer will come to Zion and to those who repent in Jacob.²⁶
37. I will surely gather you in from the nations just as I thrust you out.²⁷
 I will make you prosper and flourish, for I have chosen you.²⁸
 I will surely have mercy upon you, for unto Me I will return you.²⁹
 I will blot out your sins like a cloud. Return to Me for I redeemed you.³⁰
41. Look! For I the Lord will have compassion at the appointed time.³¹
 I have kindled a fire in Zion and I will rebuild her.³²
 I will always be for glory in her midst and dwell there.³³
 The redeemed of the Lord will return and come to Zion in song.³⁴
45. Forever I will declare Your praise, our Rock.³⁵
 For You redeemed us from our oppressors.
 With a wreath of blessing we will crown You our King.
 Hasten to our aid, my Lord, our salvation.³⁶

25. מרבכם מכל עם לא חשקתי בכם
 כי אם מאהבתי אתכם ואת אבותיכם
 נצח חסדי ובריתי לא אסיר מכם
 שובו אלי ואשובה אליכם:
29. סכו בצלי בני חמודי
 ובזיכם יקלו ואכבודכם מכבדי
 עשיתי פלא בגד אבותיכם עבדי
 וגם עתה באם יי שבו עדי:
33. פורה אדרוך כאשר הדיון יקב
 במסתולליכם ואויביכם כי אכלו את יעקב
 צדקו מעשיכם והסירו לב העקב
 ובא לציון גואל ולטבי פסע ביעקב:
37. קבל אקבצך מן הגוים אשר הדחתך
 ואיטיבך וארבה אותך כי בחרתיך
 רחם ארחמך כי אלי השיבותיך
 מחיתי כעב פטעך שובה אלי כי גאלתיך:
41. שור כי אני יי בעתה אחישנה
 הצתי אש בציון ואני אבונה
 תמיד לכבוד אהיה בתוכה ואשכנה
 ופדויי יי ישבון ובאו ציון ברנה:
45. אני לעולם נספר תהלתך צורנו
 יען כי גאלתנו מיד מעבינו
 זר ברכה נכתירך מלכנו
 חושה לעזרתנו אדני תשועתנו:

Text based on:

S. Baer, Die Psalmen für alle Sabbathe des Jahres, (Rodelheim, M. Lehr-
 berger and Co., 1896) pp. 254-256.

Source Notes to El Eloheanu

1. cfr. II Chronicles 15:4.
2. cfr. Psalms 119:137.
3. Lamentations 5:21.
4. Jeremiah 6:30.
5. Psalms 36:7.
6. Ezekiel 33:11.
7. lines 9f - Deuteronomy 31:17.
8. cfr. Proverbs 5:11.
9. Hosea 6:1.
10. cfr. Genesis 17:2
cfr. Exodus 32:13.
cfr. Deuteronomy 28:63.
11. Psalms 119:89.
12. Lamentations 5:21.
13. Jonah 2:8.
14. Jeremiah 45:3.
15. Jeremiah 31:19.
16. cfr. Jeremiah 12:14f.
17. Jeremiah 15:19.
18. lines 25ff - Deuteronomy 7:7.
19. Zachariah 1:3.
20. I Samuel 2:30.
21. Psalms 78:12.
22. Joel 2:12.
23. cfr. Isaiah 63:3.
Sanhedrin 6b.

24. Jeremiah 10:25.
25. cfr. Jeremiah 17:9.
26. Isaiah 59:20.
27. cfr. Micah 4:6.
28. cfr. Genesis 17:2.
cfr. Exodus 32:13.
cfr. Deuteronomy 28:63.
29. cfr. Deuteronomy 30:3.
30. Isaiah 44:22.
31. Isaiah 60:22.
32. Lamentations 4:11.
33. Zachariah 2:9.
34. Isaiah 35:10, 51:11.
35. Psalms 79:13.
36. Psalms 38:23.

This piyyut is a zulath for the Sabbath of Repentance. The images of the piyyut are related to the purpose of the zulath in liturgy and the themes of the holiday season. Thus the image of God the Redeemer before an unrepentant Israel is prominent in this piyyut. Israel is in exile because of her sins. She must first repent of her sins in order for God to return her to Zion.

The Raban acts both as paetan and preacher when he mentions the specific sins of Israel. His reproofs are intended to persuade the congregation to repent at this time. Israel has been exiled because of her avarice (line three). She does evil in the land of her captivity (lines nine and ten). The gentiles call her "filthy lucre" in hatred (line six).

The Raban was aware of the gentile attitude toward Jewish usury, and his expression of this attitude is an interesting feature of this piyyut. As a chronicler, the Raban knew that one motivation for joining the Crusades was the cancellation of crusader debts to Jews. As a Jew he felt this bitterness to his people and believed that it was an expression of God's anger as well. In writing this prayer of repentance it was incumbent upon him to mention this sin of Israel.

In order for the punishment of Exile to end, Israel must repent of her sins (lines 23 and 35). The Raban develops the idea of Israel's repentance in two ways. First, as in the preceeding yotzer, he uses different speakers urging Israel to repent. The paetan speaks to Israel asking her to return to God (lines 1 - 22). God also urges Israel with promises and comfort (lines 23 - 44). Second, the Raban again uses some form of the root shuv, "return," in the last line of

each stanza. He thus creates a refrain reminding the sinner of the purpose of the prayer.

According to the covenant, if Israel upholds God's laws and repents, then God will redeem her for His own sake. The image of the covenant is important because it assures the congregation of God's acceptance and aid. It ensures the efficacy of the prayer. Thus, when the Raban reminds God of His covenantal promises (lines 14f), He responds that He will never revoke them (line 27). Similarly the Raban describes God's future redemption of Israel. God will have mercy and compassion on Israel, and her sins will be forgiven (lines 39ff). Israel's enemies who tormented her so long will themselves be punished (lines 30, 33f). Most important, God will rebuild Zion and return Israel there (lines 37, 42, 44).

In the final stanza of the piyyut the Raban again unites the theme of the zulath and the holiday season. He praises God who redeemed Israel in the past (lines 45f). For this he will crown God king, an allusion to the kingship imagery of Rosh haShannah (line 47). A final request for salvation concludes the zulath, which, supported by the themes of the holiday season, is assured an affirmative answer.

1. O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers told us

The work You performed in their days, in the days of old.¹

In every generation You have made wonders for our sake.

Many things You have done, O Lord, my God - even Your miracles and thoughts toward us.²

5. You saved us with a strong arm from serpent and adversaries,

From the lion, bear, tiger, and other enemies.

They crush us now - the feet of wild boars.³

Our feet were almost gone, (our) steps had almost slipped.⁴

9. Have not You, O God, cast us off to be forgotten?⁵

(We have spent) more than a thousand years in pain and grief.

You have removed our soul far from peace, in calamity and cries.⁶

For but for Your sake we are killed all day, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter.⁷

13. Time after time our soul has waited,⁸

But the end tarries, and reparation does not arise.⁹

According to the cycle Panu of Jacob we have awaited salvation in its time.¹⁰

We look for peace, but no good came; for a time of healing, and behold terror.¹¹

17. We hoped for good, and behold, darkness and graves.¹²

According to the cycle Panu, in the eleventh year,

A fierce nation counseled together¹³

And then proud waters passed over our souls.¹⁴

21. When their anger was kindled against us they swallowed us alive.¹⁵

Children and women - like sheep for slaughter they prepared us,¹⁶

To cut off children from the street and young men from public places.¹⁷

They did not respect the priests nor were they gracious to the elders.¹⁸

1. אלהים באזנינו שמענו אבותינו ספרו לנו
פעל פעלת בימי קדם למעננו
בכל דור ודור נוראות שמת עבורנו
רבות עשית אתה יי אלהי נפליך ומחשבתך אלינו:
5. גאלתנו בחזק יד מנחש וצרים
מארי ודב ובמר ושאר צוררים
דכאונו עתה רגלי חזירי יערים
כמעט נטיו רגלינו ושפכו אשורים:
9. הלא אתה אלהים זנחתנו לשכחה
יותר מאלף שנים ניגון ואנחה
ותזנה משלום נפשנו בפרץ וצוחה
כי עליך הרגנו כל היום נחשבנו כצאן טבחה:
13. זמן אחר זמן נפשנו חכתה
וארך הקץ וארוכה לא עלתה
חשבון רנו ליעקב חכינו ישע בעתה
קוה לחלום ואין טוב לעת מרפה והנה בעתה:
17. טוב קוינו והנה אפל ואשמנים
במחזור רנו אחת עשרה שנים
יחדו נועצו גוי עז פנים
אזי עבר על נפשנו המים הזידונים:
21. כחרות אפס בנו חיים בלעונו
טף ונשים כצאן לטבחה התיקונו
להכרית עולל מחוץ בחורים מרחבותינו
פני כהנים לא נשאו וזקנים לא חבנו:

25. By the voice of the blasphemer and reviler, because of the enemy and revengeful,¹⁹

We have been separated from You to twist the fence of Your path.
Our soul greatly trembles from the anger of the torturer.²⁰

Shall You not punish them for these things, and take revenge?²¹

29. A great death on the day of slaughter; in 1096 a decree was made.

The communities of the Holy One were killed in anger, anguish, and distress.²²

Old men, youths, and maidens were dragged to the grave naked.

Pits were full of boys, girls, and students of the Torah.

33. Abraham had just bound his only one

When they told him from the heavens, "Don't set your hand to do violence!"²³

Now how many boys and girls are slaughtered in Judah!

Do not delay to save the slaughtered and burned upon the pyre.

37. Gift of tutor of all delight, known Books of Teaching²⁴ -

Planted at the tent of the enemies, on pegs stretched out.

Finally they made them into boot tops to cover the feet of the enemy.

For these I cry, and my eyes flow like water.²⁵

41. O Sefer Torah! The enemies abuse you.

They also consumed those who seek you, who were more dear than rubies.²⁶

Summon the one who insults you and who humiliates the soul of the mighty ones.

Mourn like a maiden girded in sackcloth for the husband of youth!²⁷

45. Pour out your heart in their counsel before the face of the Lord.²⁸

To seek vengeance His arrows are drunk with blood.²⁹

His enemies will eat His sword with the red shield.³⁰

Give help against the enemy for vain is the help of man.³¹

25. מקול מרחף ומגדף מפני אויב ותתנכם
ממך להפרישנו סוג ארחתיך לעקם
נפשנו בנהלה מאד מפני חמת המעקם
העל אלה לא תפקד בם ולא תתנכם:
29. הרג רב ויום טבוח בתתנו בגזרה גזרה
ונהרגו קהלות הקדש בזעם ועברה וצרה
זקן ובחור ובתולה ערומים במשכו לקבורה
חפורות מלאות ילדים וילדות ותלמידי התורה:
33. טרם היה אזרחי כזרז יחידו לעקדה
ישמיעוהו מן השמים אל תשלח ידך להשמדה
כמה עתה בשחטים בנים ובנות ביהודה
לא חש להוסיע טבוחים ושרופים על מוקדה:
37. מתן אמון שעשועים ספרי תורות ידועים
בטועים לאהל פרוצים עלי מוטות רקועים
סוף עשאום בתי שוקים למבעל רגלי מצרעים
על אלה אני בוכיה ועיני כמים בובעים:
41. ספר התורה התעוללו בך צרים
וגם שכלו דורשיך מפניבים יקרים
עלבונך תבעי ועלבון נפש אדירים
אלי כבתולה חגורת שק על בעל בעורים:
45. פני יי שפכי לבך בסודם
לנקום נקמתו ישכיר חדיו טרם
צורריו תאכל חרבנו במגן מאדם
עזר מצר הבה ושוא תשועת אדם:

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49. Rise, O Lord, in Your anger to judge the adversaries.³²

Let not the men of blood live out even half their days.³³

Those who pursue You, whose souls are turned to You, surrender to death.

Among the great ones divide his portion, the spoil of the mighty.³⁴

53. Place Your fear, O Lord, in those who dispute You,³⁵

So that they no longer will humiliate the seed of Your loved ones

Establish for us that which You promised in Your Scripture:

"He will have mercy on you, and compassion for you, and multiply you..."³⁶

57. Bare Your holy arm - take us back again!³⁷

As from Egypt You saved our fathers.³⁸

Strengthen our seed like You passed us through the sea.³⁹

Hasten to our aid, O Lord, our salvation.⁴⁰

49. קומה יי באפך לשפוט קמים

ולא יחצו ימיהם אנשי דמים

רצים אחריך ונפשם עליך למות משלימים

ברבים וחלק למו שלל עצומים:

53. שיתה יי מורה לאנשי ריבך

לבל יענו עוד זרע אוהבך

ותקים לבו אשר הבטחת במכתבך

ונתן לך רחמים ורחמן והרבך

57. חשוף זרוע קדשך שנית קבורתו

כאשר מנף גאלת את אבתינו

ואמץ זרוענו כאז בים בעברנו

חושא לעזרתנו אדני תשועתנו:

Text based on:

S. Baer, Die Piutim fur alle Sabbathe des Jahres (Rodelheim, M. Lehrberger and Co., 1896) pp. 224-229.

Source Notes to Elohim b-Oznenu

1. lines 1f - Psalms 44:2.
2. Psalms 40:6.
3. cfr. Leviticus Rabah 5:13.
4. Psalms 73:2.
5. Psalms 60:12.
6. Lamentations 3:17.
7. Psalms 44:23.
8. Psalms 33:20.
9. cfr. Jeremiah 30:17.
10. Jeremiah 31:6f.
11. Jeremiah 8:15, 14:19.
12. cfr. Isaiah 59:10.
13. cfr. Psalms 83:6.
14. Psalms 124:5.
15. Psalms 124:3.
16. cfr. Jeremiah 12:3.
17. Jeremiah 9:20.
18. Lamentations 4:16.
19. Psalms 44:17.
20. Psalms 6:4.
21. Jeremiah 5:9,29; 9:8.
22. cfr. Psalms 78:49.
23. Genesis 22:1-19.
24. cfr. Proverbs 8:30.
cfr. Genesis Rabah ch. 1.

25. Lamentations 1:16.
26. cfr. Lamentations 4:7.
cfr. Psalms 3:15.
27. Joel 1:8.
28. Lamentations 2:19.
29. Deuteronomy 32:42.
30. cfr. Nahum 2:4.
31. Psalms 60:13, 108:13.
32. Psalms 7:7.
33. Psalms 55:24.
34. Isaiah 53:12.
35. cfr. Isaiah 41:11.
36. Deuteronomy 13:18.
37. Isaiah 52:10.
38. Exodus 12:51.
39. Exodus 14.
40. Psalms 38:23.

In this zulath for the Sabbaths before Tisha b'Av and Shavuoth, the Raban seeks to reconcile the images of God as Redeemer and Judge. In the first two stanzas of the poem the Raban refers to God's redemption of the fathers. He was ever mindful of them (lines three and four), saving them from many vicious enemies (lines five through eight).

However, in the year 1096 the Crusaders attacked the Jewish communities of the Rhineland, reducing the image of God the Redeemer to a mere whisper from the fathers (lines one and nine). God became the judge of Israel. This calamity was all the greater since in this year the Jews expected salvation from the Exile. Based on Jeremiah 31:6f, "...Sing with gladness for Jacob" (who is returning to Zion), the numerical value of the verb ranu (sing), 256, indicates the time of Israel's return. The embolic 19 year cycle adjusts the lunar calendar to the solar calendar. The 255th cycle of the 19 year period ended in the year 1085. In 1096, eleven years into the 256th cycle, the crusaders attacked (line eight).

The schism between expectation and reality is clear. The Raban uses a series of contrasting images to emphasize the feeling of deception. The Jews felt that their hope was about to be rewarded (line 13) but the end of the Exile kept them waiting (line 14). They sought peace and found evil; healing and found terror (line six). They thought their new lives were about to begin, but death cut them short (lines 17 and 29).

The Raban's conflict is reflected also in the fact that the majority of the zulath deals with the attack of the crusaders (lines 9-44), precisely a time when God did not save Israel. He uses the theme of

the Akeda, a common image in the poetry of the Crusade period, to accentuate this betrayed trust. Unlike Abraham, whom God prevented from sacrificing his only son, the martyrs of 1096 completed the sacrifices of their children (lines 33-36).

The Raban further emphasizes the magnitude of the attack by comparing it with the destruction of Jerusalem, the theme of Tisha b'Av. Biblical allusions are from Lamentations, uniting the destruction of the communities of Torah scholars to the destruction of the Temple. In line six the calamity and cries are those for Jerusalem (Lamentations 3:17). The Raban uses the images of the priests and elders in line 24 not in the biblical sense (Lamentations 4:16), but rather to refer to the priestly class and scholars of his time. When he cries for the Temple (Lamentations 1:16) he cries for the martyrs as well (line 40).

In his anger for the deception and humiliation of Israel, the Raban cries out for revenge (lines 45-60). Thus he reconciles the images of God as redeemer and judge by turning His judgement upon the gentiles (line 49). He then joins these images in the conclusion of his piyyut by recalling an earlier time when God redeemed Israel by passing judgement upon the enemy in Egypt, an idea also reminiscent of the Shavuoth experience (lines 58f).

1. I beseech the great King, "Behold my quest!"

I would complete my speech on the sacrifices offered on the mountain of God.

On every Day of Atonement, when God was still with us,

When the cock crowed the court filled with Israelites.¹

5. The High Priest - all the service of the day was upon him.

He rose early for the regular immersion. He dressed and cleaned his hands and feet.²

"Day is breaking!" the watchman announced.³

He pierced and slaughtered the daily sacrifice, and collected the blood.⁴

9. He trimmed (the lamps), scattered (the blood), burned (the fat), offered and sanctified (the sacrifice), and then he undressed.⁵

He descended to immerse himself, bathed, and dressed in Pelusian linen.⁶

Then he came to his own bullock and performed the required acts.

He atoned for himself and his house, in prayer and beseechment.⁷

13. He hastens to the Goats of the People for the casting of lots.

If it comes up on the right, the adjutant says to his assistant, "Raise up!"

"(This is a) sin offering to God!" he cried, as it is written and explained.⁸

He returned to his bullock and atoned for the sons of Aaron, His holy one.⁹

17. He turned and slaughtered it, and only he received its blood.

He appoints another to stir it so that the blood would not congeal.

He ran with the gold fire pan, swiftly to the top of the altar.

He put the cinders in its place, and descended with it.¹⁰

21. With a light ladle and a long arm they brought it out to him.

Crushed in the pan, the finest of the finest, they offered it.¹¹

He dipped into it and scooped a handful; according to its measure they took it out.

1. אכפרה פני מלך רב הנה בא אאל
אטלמה שפה בעד קרבנות קרבים ההראל
בכל יוט כפור בעוד עמנו אל
בקרונ הגבר בתמלאט עזרה מישראל:
5. גדול כהנה כל עבדת היות עליו
לטבילת חול מסכים ולבש וקדש ידיו ורגליו
די קרבי אילת כהפציל גם הצופה מליו
דף וקרץ התמיד ולקח הדם אליו:
9. הטיב וזרק והקטיר והעלה וקדש ופשט פסים
ירד בקדש וטבל וקדש ועט פלוסים
ובא אצל פרו ופרט עליו מעשים
וכפר בעדו ובעד ביתו באבא ובפיוסים:
13. זרו אצל שעירי עם בפור חלשו
עלה בימין הגבה אמר סגן לאישו
חטאת לשם צרח בכתבו ופרשו
חזר לפרו וכפר על בני אהרן קדושו:
17. טש ושחטו וקבל הדם הוא בעצמו
זמנו לממרס בו שלא יקרש דמו
ירוץ במחתת פרוים קלה למזבח לטרומו
יחתה לוחשות במעזבו והוריד עמו:
21. כף קלה וארכת יד אליו הוציאו
רצוף לה מחתה דקה מן הדקה המציאו
לתוכה קדר וחפן וכמדתה הביאו
לכף בתן והשמאיל והימין האש והביאו:

He put it in the ladle in his left hand, and he put the fire in his right hand, and they brought it out.

25. Walking between the curtains until his arrival at the Holy of Holies

He placed the pan of fire between the curtains.

He added frankincense and heaped it up around it.

He prayed briefly as he left the Holy of Holies.¹²

29. He turned to the stirring and picked up the blood of the bullock.

He shook it and repeated it in the Holy of Holies; like a whip (he sprinkled it) eight times,¹³

Until the he-goat arrived. Then he slaughtered it and received its blood in expiation.

He stood by himself and like the first time he cleaned it and atoned

33. He sprinkled the curtain according to the law of atonement and its requirements.¹⁴

Until he came to the inner altar and cleaned it, including its horns.¹⁵

He burned the fat and flesh, the error of the people and its transgressions.

He commended the one delegated to perform all of its laws.

37. He read the portion in Scripture, "On the Tenth Day" aloud.¹⁶

He sanctified, undressed, immersed, and dressed in eight robes for the additional sacrifice.¹⁷

He bathed, immersed, and sanctified. He dressed in Indian linen to appear lovely.

He ran to the guarded place and brought out dishes of incense to an open place.¹⁹

41. He removed his holy garments and hid them forever.²⁰

He wrapped, immersed, and sanctified, and then he put the front-plate on his forehead.²¹

He slaughtered the daily sacrifice and burned its limbs, and made a pure offering.²²

His service finished, he sanctified, undressed, and dressed in daily clothing.²³

25. מהלך בין הפרכות עד בואו לדביר
בין בדיר מחמת האש החביר
נתן את הקטרת וחוצה לו הצביר
התפלל קצרה בצאתו מן הדביר:
29. טר אל הממרס ובטל דם הפר
רגש ושנה בדביר וכמצליף שמנה ספר
עד השעיר בא ושחטו וקבל דם בכפר
על עצמו עמד וחטאו כראשון וכפר:
33. פרכת יז כמשפט כפרת ועשיותיו
בא למזבח סגור וטהרו וכלל קרבותיו
צת חלבים והחי הטעין שגגת עם ועונותיו
צוה לעתי לעשות לו כל חקותיו:
37. קרא פרסה בכתב ובעשור בעל פה
וקדש ופשט וטבל ושמנה לבש למוספי
רחץ וטבל וקדש בהנדויין עם להתיפה
רץ למצנע וכלי קטרת הוציא לתרפה:
41. שלח מדיו בקדש והגביזם בצח
נחץ וטבל וקדש וציץ בזהב על המצח
שחט התמיד ואבריו הקטיר והעלה לצח
שלם עבודתו וקדש ופשט ובגי חול צחצח:
45. ומתי לפרש בפה עבדת יום כפרה
והי אזכרתם כהקרבנות בבית הבחירה
תשא חטאינו וכשלג נוצמר תצהירה
כאז על גב שלוח ביד איש המדברה:

45. I have completed the exposition of the service of the Day of Atonement.

May their mention be as their sacrifices in the Temple.

Bear our sins! Make them as pure as snow and wool!

As if they were on the back of the messenger led by a man into the desert.²⁵

49. We seek to find atonement but there is nothing with which to make atonement.

The sacrifices have ceased; the means of preparation and atonement have passed away.

Find atonement for us! Cleanse us according to all that is written in Torah:

For on this day He will make atonement.²⁶

49. תרנו למצוא כפרה ואין בטה להתכפר

נתבטלו קרבנות ופסו מכשיר ומכפר

ומציאנו כפר וטהרנו ככל הכתוב בספר

כי ביום הזה יכפר:

Text based on:

S. Baer, Ha-Selihat le-kol ha-Shannah lefi Minhag ha-Ashkenaz (Rodelheim, F. Lehrberger and Co., 1865) pp. 229-231.

Source Notes to Akanrah P'ne Melekh Rav

1. Yoma 1:8.
2. Yoma 3:3f.
3. Yoma 3:1, 29a.
4. Yoma 3:4.
Numbers 28:3.
5. Yoma 3:6.
6. Yoma 3:7.
7. Yoma 3:8.
Leviticus 16:30.
8. Yoma 3:9, 4:1.
9. Yoma 4:2.
10. lines 17-20 - Yoma 4:3.
11. lines 21f - Yoma 4:4.
12. Yoma 5:1.
13. lines 29f - Yoma 5:3.
14. lines 31-33 - Yoma 5:4.
15. Yoma 5:5.
16. Yoma 7:1.
Numbers 29:7-11.
17. Yoma 7:4f.
18. Yoma 3:7.
19. Terumoth 8:8.
20. Yoma 6:7.
21. Yoma 7:5.
22. Yoma 7:3.

23. Yoma 7:4.
24. Yoma 6:8.
Isaiah 1:18.
25. Yoma 6:3,8.
26. Leviticus 16:30.

Both Davidson and Baer classify this piyyut as a seliha for Musaf on Yom Kippur.⁷ The seliha is a prayer of pardon noted for its close imitation of biblical language, meter, and form. Although this piyyut does request pardon for the sins of Israel, it makes very little use of biblical elements. The Raban uses halakhic imagery instead. Since the use of biblical precedents is a major characteristic of the seliha, the absence of it in this piyyut gives reason to question its classification.

Idelsohn's division of piyyutin suggests another classification for this piyyut, the avodah.⁸ The avodah derives its name from avad, "to serve." It recounts the service of the High Priest on Yom Kippur as described in Mishnah Yoma. Our piyyut is more suited to this classification in two ways. First, both this piyyut and the avodah are recited on Yom Kippur. Second, both rely on the language and imagery of the halakha to recount the service of the High Priest.

The theme of this avodah is penitence on Yom Kippur. The imagery derives from the service for Yom Kippur as described in Mishnah Yoma. The Raban opens his avodah with a reshut requesting permission to recite the order of the sacrifices on this day. Throughout the piyyut he seldom deviates from the order of the Mishnaic text, and the result is a somewhat disjointed but concise presentation of priestly activities.

The activity begins at dawn. The people gather in the court of the Israelites (line four) and the High Priest prepares himself for his duties (lines five and six). He first makes the daily sacrifice (lines eight and nine), and then prepares for the additional sacrifices

of Yom Kippur (line ten). The major portion of the avodah describes these musaf (additional) sacrifices. The High Priest makes atonement for himself (lines 11f, 16-18) and for the people (lines 13-15, 31, 35f). He enters and purifies the Holy of Holies (lines 19-30, and 32-34), and then reads aloud from Scripture in the Women's Court so 'that all may hear. He cleans up after the musaf sacrifices and prepares for the regular afternoon offerings (lines 38-42). He makes these offerings (line 43) and then cleans up for the day (line 44).

In this avodah the Raban deals with the problem of atonement in Exile. The Temple destroyed, the means of atonement are lost (lines 49f). The Raban therefore seeks other means. In his exposition of the Temple services for Yom Kippur, the Raban has replaced the deed of sacrifice with prayer. Like the rabbis who composed the liturgy, he believed that the written and recited word may have the efficacy of the act (lines 46ff).⁹

The Raban strives to convince the reader that penitence is still effective. The Raban's faith is unshaken because he relies on a promise God made even before the Temple was built to accept atonement for sin (lines 51f). Therefore, though the ancient means are lost, penitence is assured.

V. THE ROLE OF THE PARTAN

The confrontation between Medieval Jew and Christian was one of conflicting claimants of the revealed truth of Scripture. Jews believed in the continued efficacy of the covenant established between God and Israel. Christians, however, had developed a tradition which believed that this covenant with Israel had been abrogated by Jesus, and that biblical prophecies could be understood only within the context of his church. The controversy focused on who maintained the legitimate heritage of the Bible: Christian or Jew. During the early Middle Ages the controversy took place largely in theological treatises or occasional public debates. However, it erupted into intermittent periods of physical violence against Jewish communities during the period of the Crusades (1096 - 1176).¹

The defense of Judaism devolved upon Medieval Jewish scholars for whom the "strengthening of faith" (hizuk emunah) was an important duty. Their polemical works, whether sermons, books, or piyyutim, fulfill this purpose. In these works they reinterpreted the traditions of Bible and Midrash to address themselves to the issues of their time. Thus Rashi, the leading scholar of the eleventh century, interpreted Deuteronomy 30:3, "then the Lord, your God, will turn your captivity, and have compassion on you....," to mean that though Israel was in Exile the Shekhinah (Divine Presence) had not forsaken her. Furthermore, the Shekhinah would return with Israel to Zion. In this commentary Rashi emboldens the faith of the Jew by renewing its purpose. The Jew was obligated to maintain his faith and uphold the covenant for the

realization of the biblical promise.

As a member and scholar of the troubled Ashkenazi community, the Raban encouraged his fellow Jews through his piyyutim. In these works he strives to integrate the cataclysmic experience of the Crusades into a viable Jewish tradition. The Raban's message is the God has not forsaken His people. Rather, He still calls upon them to uphold the covenant established with Abraham. The Raban comforts the worshipper with the thought that the martyrs of the Crusades performed their covenantal duty, and they intercede on behalf of the survivors. As a pious Jew the Raban believed in an omnipotent and just God. Therefore he saw the crusaders as a tool of God punishing the Jews for their sins. Thus the Raban also attempts to make the worshipper aware of the need for repentance and return to the covenant.

The piyyut is a perfect medium for the Raban's message precisely because it combines the characteristics of literature and liturgy. The Raban uses traditional literary images, especially biblical promises of revenge and redemption, as the basis of Jewish faith and the efficacy of his prayers. By using one image to stand for two events, such as the destruction of the Temple and the Crusades, the past and present coincide in the piyyut. The faith of Israel is revitalized in the Medieval worshipper.

This use of traditional imagery is based on the Raban's theology as revealed in his piyyutim. The Raban saw the Exile as the paradigm for Jewish existence among gentiles. The Exile was the pattern of affliction and servitude begun with God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:13) and continuing to the Raban's time. The Exile links present disasters

with biblical events. Therefore the causes of the persecution of Israel are the same throughout history. Israel's sins have brought about her own ruin. According to the prophet Jeremiah:

Can the Ethiopian change his skin
or the leopard his spots?
And you, can you so what is right,
you so accustomed to wrong?
I will scatter you like chaff
driven by the desert wind.²

The liturgy refrains, "But on account of our sins we were exiled from our land and removed far from our country..."³ The Raban then adds to this theme the sins of his own time.

For the sins of our avarice we have been sent from before You.
Return us and let us return, for You are the Lord our God.
"Exiles the sons of Exiles!" they title us in enmity.
"Filthy lucre!" they call us in condemnation.⁴

The Exile then is the basis for comparing the various disasters that befell Jews. Thus in the kinah "Akonen v-Ezfdah," the "evil neighbors who strike at the inheritance" (Ezekiel 26:16) are at once the Babylonians and the Crusaders (line three). The attack induces mourning for the Jews of Worms like that of Jeremiah for Jerusalem (line one).⁵ Similarly, the slain scholars of Mayence described in the kinah "Oy Li 'al Shibri," are also the teachers of old lost in the destruction of Jerusalem (lines 3, 5, 6, and 7).⁶ In the kinah "Esa Nehi," the wounds of the Jews of Cologne are those inflicted by Assyria on Samaria (line six).⁷ In his piyyutim intended for use in the liturgy the Raban continues this comparison. Thus in the zulath "Elohim b-Oznenu," the "children cut off from the street" are also from Jerusalem (line 23).⁸

While the Exile links the past and present persecutions of Jews, one must understand that the Crusades came at the time when Jews expect-

ed the Exile to end. The turn of the millenium was a time of messianic expectations for both Christians and Jews. Christianity sought to establish universal rule by conquering the Holy Land and converting Muslims and Jews. Jews understood the Crusade of Christianity against Islam as the war of Gog and Magog heralding the Messianic era.⁹ Furthermore, according to calendrical calculations this was the time for redemption.¹⁰ The Crusades, however, darkened Jewish messianic hopes. The Raban opens his chronicle with expressions of these disappointed expectations:

...in the eleventh year of the cycle Ranu, the year in which we anticipated salvation and comfort, in accordance with the prophecy of Jeremiah, "Sing with gladness for Jacob....," this year instead turned to sorrow and groaning, weeping and outcry.¹¹

The Raban repeats this disappointment in his piyyut, "Elohim b-Oznenu:"

We look for peace, but no good came;
For a time of healing, and behold terror.
We hoped for good, and behold darkness and graves.¹²

The twisted horror of the Crusades was also emphasized by the martyrs. Like other Ashkenazi poetanim, the Raban compares the martyrs with the binding of Isaac.¹³ Isaac, the innocent child and guarantor of the Jewish nation, was nearly sacrificed by his father Abraham when the angel of God stopped him. However, no angel staid the hands of Medieval Jews. They completed their sacrifices.¹⁴

In describing the martyrdom of the Jews during this period, the Raban deals with yet another paradox of the Crusades in Jewish theology. While the sins of the Jews caused the attacks at a time when they expected peace, the attacks also offered an opportunity to sanctify God's name. The Raban cries, "for but for Your sake we are killed all the

day and accounted as sheep for the slaughter."¹⁵ The deaths of the innocent martyrs atone for these sins and intercede for their survivors.¹⁶

Thus the Raban understood the disasters and sorrows of his people and established their reality in his piyyutim. This reality would have been unbearable if he did not also provide hope. The Raban uses the prophetic promises of revenge to comfort his readers. In the apparent coincidence of biblical and contemporary events in one image, the promises then true are still true. The Raban reminds both God and the reader of these promises in his piyyutim.

You promised me and told me -
 "I will hold as innocent their blood I have not held as innocent,
 and the Lord lives in Zion."¹⁷

The cry for revenge is heard throughout his piyyutim, climaxing in "Elohim b-Cznenu:"

Summon the one who insults You,
 and the one who humiliates the soul of the mighty ones.

...

To seek vengeance His arrows are drunk with blood.
 His enemies will eat His sword with the red shield.
 Give help against the enemy, for vain is the help of man.¹⁸

The Raban's choice of literary imagery complements the liturgical themes of penitence and redemption in his piyyutim. He reminds the worshipper that according to the Bible and Midrash repentance for sins is the preordained way of man.

Before He laid the foundations of the world
 He set aside repentance for the backslider.
 Therefore let him return to the Lord
 and He will have compassion upon him.¹⁹

The Raban assumes the role of preacher in exhorting the worshipper to heed the words of Scripture still effective. In several of his piyyutim he uses the root shuv (return) as a refrain to re-enforce the

course of penitence in the worshipper's mind.²⁰

Repentance, of course, is the basis of redemption, the sole hope and comfort of the Jew of the Raban's day. Thus he concentrated his literary efforts on the creation of piyyutim for special occasions of penitence. For his readers, however, penitence was restrained by shaken faith. The Raban recreated the faith and means for repentance through the poems which he composed as prayers.

APPENDIX I

Several works not mentioned in chapter three have been attributed to the Raban, a writer with great versatility. However, there is insufficient evidence to conclusively support these attributions. These disputed works are discussed here in order to provide a more complete picture of the Raban as seen by modern scholars.

The Tsafnat Peneach, or "Revealer of Secrets," is the subject of much scholarly controversy. It is an anonymous twelfth century halakhic compendium resembling Even haEzer, and for this reason it is often attributed to the Raban. The similarities bear examination. First, the two works are arranged in the same order.¹ Second, while each work includes responsa not contained in the other, they also contain identical responsa.² Finally, the Even haEzer is sometimes Tsafnat Peneach in later responsa literature.³

The controversy arises over the relationship between Tsafnat Peneach and Even haEzer. Albeck asserts that the Even haEzer and Tsafnat Peneach are the same book. He suggests that Tsafnat Peneach is another name for Even haEzer given to it by later sages after the death of the Raban. The name "Revealer of Secrets" praises the utility of the work and honors the Raban.⁴ Aptowitzer points out that no where else in rabbinic literature have sages called a work other than the name given by its author.⁵

Urbach asserts that Tsafnat Peneach and Even haEzer are two separate works written by the Raban. He suggests that the Raban made corrections, additions, and omissions in Even haEzer in his later work

Tsafnat Peneach.⁶ If this is so, then one would expect the corrected edition to have been the more popular and therefore passed on to this day. However, Even haEzer is the available edition.

Aptowitzer asserts that Tsafnat Peneach is an abridgement of Even haEzer. He suggests that an anonymous twelfth century sage wrote Tsafnat Peneach as a reference work for Even haEzer. He called the work "Revealer of Secrets" because it was shorter and easier to use than Even haEzer.⁷ Aptowitzer supports his hypothesis with evidence from the two works. Even haEzer is longer, containing details and argumentation missing in Tsafnat Peneach. Additional notes in Tsafnat Peneach may be those of the compiler. Urbach responds that if Tsafnat Peneach was easier to use than Even haEzer then it should have been more widely circulated.⁸

The Even haRoshah or "Key Stone" is another halakhic work of contested authorship.⁹ Albeck and Urbach believe that the Raban wrote this work. The first 63 paragraphs of the Even haRoshah are misplaced and found at the end of the manuscript. This misplaced portion begins with the statement, "Decisions from the Rabbi R. Eliezer bar Nathan of blessed memory."¹⁰ Albeck asserts that these paragraphs are an abridgement of the Raban's commentary to Baba Metziah and Baba Bathra.

Urbach asserts that although these decisions belong to the Raban, Even haRoshah is the work of a later compiler. He cites another opening statement, "A collection from the Book of Decisions of R. Eliezer bar Nathan," of blessed memory, and he called it 'Even haRoshah.'"¹¹ Urbach suggests that the later compiler gathered these decisions, titled the new work, and attributed it to the Raban.

The final contested work of the Raban is Ma'amar Haskel, a commentary to the piyyut, "El Elohim Adonai Debbar." The Raban wrote this piyyut for the second night of Shavuoth, using the Ten Commandments as a central motif.¹² However, scholars debate whether or not the Raban wrote the commentary as well.

Wolf Heidenheim published the poem and commentary together in 1815, attributing the entire work to the Raban.¹³ Zunz initially agreed with Heidenheim but later changed his mind, saying that the work originated ca. 1500.¹⁴

Albeck agrees with Zunz that the Raban did not write the commentary but he asserts that it was written at the beginning of the fourteenth century. First, Albeck perceives the influence of Jewish Spanish philosophy in Ma'amar Haskel and notes that the Raban was far removed from Sephardi culture. Second, several times the author of Ma'amar Haskel mentions works written after the Raban died, such as Sefer Mitzvot by haRam. Albeck suggests that a R. Samuel ben Judah wrote Ma'amar Haskel, but there is insufficient evidence to substantiate this.¹⁵ The evidence does indicate, however, that the author was someone other than the Raban.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

- ¹For a more complete list of piyyutim see:
Hayyim Schirmann, HaShirah ha'Ivri b-Sepharad ub-Provence (Jerusalem, Musad Bialik, 1960) II, pp. 701-718.
- ²Ezra Fleisher, "Piyyut" in Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971) XIII, pp. 598.
- ³A.Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy and its Development (New York, Sacred Music Press, 1932) pp. 38f.
- ⁴Jacob Mann, "Changes in the Divine Service of the Synagogue due to Religious Persecutions," HUCA, IV. (1927) pp. 279.
- ⁵Idelsohn, pp. 45.
- ⁶Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed, I, chapter 59.
- ⁷Philip Birnbaum, ed., Mahzor haShalem l-Rosh ha-Shannah v-Yom Kippur (New York, Hebrew Publishing Co., 1951) pp. xiii.
- ⁸Idelsohn, pp. 45.
- ⁹Mahzor Vitry, pp. 325f.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

¹Meyer Waxman, A History of Jewish Literature (New York, Bloch Publishing Co., 1930) I, pp. 214.

Shalom Spiegel, "On Medieval Hebrew Poetry" in The Jews: Their Religion and Culture, ed. Louis Finkelstein (New York, Schocken Books, 1971) pp. 547.

²Jefim Hayyim Schirmann, "Yannai" in Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House, Ltd., 1971) XVI, pp. 712.

³Waxman, pp. 240.

⁴Jefim Hayyim Schirmann, "The Beginning of Hebrew Poetry in Italy and Northern Europe" in The World History of the Jewish People, ed. Cecil Roth (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1964-66) vol. 2, pp. 250.

⁵Joseph Dan, "Kalonymus" in Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971) pp. 720.

⁶Ibid., pp. 720.

Steinschneider disagrees with this theory. See:

Moritz Steinschneider, Jewish Literature from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Century. with an Introduction on Talmud and Midrash (New York, Herman Press, 1965) 2nd ed., pp. 167.

⁷Waxman, pp. 212 and 240.

Salo Baron, A Social and Religious of the Jews (New York, Columbia University Press, 1957) VII, pp. 175.

⁸For a more complete list of these poetanim see:

Ezra Fleisher, "Piyyut" in Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971) XIII, pp. 573-602.

A.M. Habermann, "The Beginning of Hebrew Poetry in Italy and Northern Europe: Northern Europe and France" in The World History of the Jewish People (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1964-66) vol. 2, pp. 267-273.

Waxman, pp. 247-250.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

- ¹For references to the "sages of Mayence" see the following:
 Buber, ed., Sefer ha-Orah (Lemberg, 1905) pp. 226, no. 149.
Ma'asey ha-Gaonim pp. 9, 44, 50, 85.
Sefer ha-Pardes no. 199 & 241.
Sefer ha-Yashar pp. 40c, no. 409.
- ²Shalom Albeck, Sefer Ratan hu Sefer Even ha-'Ezer (Warsaw, Ephraim Boimritter, 1905) pp. V.
 Avigdor Aptowitzer, Mavo le-Sefer Raviah (Jerusalem, Mekitze Nirdamin, 1938) pp. 49.
 Eliezer Landshuth, 'Amude ha-'Avodah, 2nd ed. (New York, Herman Press, 1975) pp. 20.
 Ephraim Urbach, Ba'ale ha-Tosafot (Jerusalem, Mosad Bialik, 1968) pp. 148.
- ³Salo Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, vol. 4 (New York, Columbia University Press, 1957) pp. 288.
- ⁴Even ha-'Ezer, section 48A.
- ⁵Ibid., section 26, "In the year 1162 a case arose..."
- ⁶Albeck, pp. XIV.
 Aptowitzer, pp. 49.
- ⁷Sefer ha-Yashar, (Jerusalem, Etz Hayyim, 1968) 393.
- ⁸Even ha-'Ezer, sections 108, 267f, 299, 321, 350, 358f, 419, 446, 458, 494, 509, etc.
- ⁹Ibid., sections 36, 116, 190, 209, 348, and section 271.
- ¹⁰Aptowitzer, pp. 49f.
Even ha-'Ezer, sections 5, 8, 114, 327.
- ¹¹Tos. Shabbat 61a.
 "הקשה הר' אליעזר ממיץ לרשב"ה; תקשה הר' אליעזר ממ"נ לרשב"ם;
 וכל העניין נמצא בספר הרבא"ן קמ"ד ע"א."
 Tos. Shavuoth 26b.
 "והקשה הרב ר' אליעזר ממגינצא... והשיב לו רשב"ם."
- ¹²See the following two piyyutim:
 "Akaphrah Pne Melekh Rav" in S. Baer, Ha-Selihat le-kol ha-Shannah lefi Minhag ha-Ashkenaz (Rodelheim, F. Lehrberger and Co., 1865) pp. 229-231.
 "El Elohenu Adonai Debar" in Sha'ar ha-Shamayim (Amsterdam, 1717) pp. 329.

Landshuth, p. 21, notes that R. Ephraim Zalman Margulioth claims that the Raban's father was R. Axelrod, based on the following statement from a commentary on piyyutin assumed to be the Raban's:

"ואני אלעזר ברבי אכשלוד מצאתי בעיה..."
 "And I, Eleazar bar R. Axelrod, found a problem..."

Two factors mitigate against this view. First, R. Eleazar's name here is spelled without a 'yod, unlike the Raban's name. Second, many scholars agree that the commentaries of the Raban were augmented by later rabbis. R. Eleazar bar R. Axelrod is probably one of these later commentators.

¹³Even ha-'Ezer, section 73.

"My brother, R. Hezekiah, asked me..." "שאלני אחי ר' חזקיה..."
 For further information on this question see Albeck, p. VI.

¹⁴Ibid., section 1.

"הזיקני גיסי ר' יצחק לחלוק בדברי ר' יוסי..."
 "My brother-in-law, R. Yitzhak, compelled me to differ with the words of R. Jose..."

¹⁵Ibid., sections 26, 65, 108, and 1215.

In section 1240 of this work, R. Solomon ben Meir addressed the Raban as 'Rabenu Eliezer bar Nathan, son-in-law of Rabenu Leontin." Aptowitz, pp. 48f, reasons that Leontin was another name for Eliakim, but these two names are never associated in the literature. Urbach, p. 149, suggests that Leontin was the father of the Raban's second wife. There is, however, no other evidence to suggest that the Raban married a second time.

¹⁶Ibid., section 26.

"בטבת תתקין"ב אירע מעשה, שהוציא חתני אליקים יין לחתנית לכלי קטן..."

¹⁷Ibid., sections 19, 26, 65, and 1215.

The Raban refers to his father-in-law as "my teacher." According to Aptowitz, p. 52, this is encomium and not based on fact. The evidence, however, weighs against Aptowitz's view.

¹⁸Ibid., section 19.

¹⁹Ibid., section 26.

²⁰Ibid., sections 17, 27, 42, 48a, 50, 53, 58, and 69.

²¹ ש"ת, p. 163:73.

²²Even ha-'Ezer, section 40.

²³Landshuth, p. 21, confuses this R. Eliakim with the Raban's father-in-law in Even ha-'Ezer, section 26.

Zunz in Literargeschichte der Synagogalen Poesie, p. 259, claims that R. Eliakim was actually the Raban's son instead of his son-in-law. There is no evidence to support this.

- ²⁴Tos. Hul. 46b. "ורבי יעקב בר רבי אבין היה מודה..."
Urtach, pp. 158.
- ²⁵Sefer Paviyah, section 990, and vol. 2, pp. 236, 437, 545, 681.
- ²⁶תשר' רש"ל סי' כ"ט
 "וחתביו של רבינו היו רבינו יואל ורבי שמואל בר נתרונאי
 ורבי מהר"ר מרדכי מקולוניא."
- ²⁷או"ח"א סי' תרצ"ז, וח"ג מס' ב"מסי' ס"ט
- ²⁸אבני זכרון סי' ה' והקדמת ס' שו"ת זכרון יהודה
 "ואני הנצבת לאות ולמזכרת שתחתי בקברת גרית איש יהודה בן
 הנאמן בן אשכנז, הניאל בן ה"ר אורי בן ה"ר אליקים בן ה"ר יהודה
 הנאמן בן אשכנז."
- Albeck, pp. XII.
- ²⁹Ibid., pp. VI, XII f.
Aptowitzer, pp. 50f.
- ³⁰Rosh's commentary on Hul. 83, sections 4, 11, etc.
 Rosh's responsa, ch. 4, section 3, states the following:
 "בחוור זקני ראב"ן הנקרא צפנת פענח."
- ³¹Even ha-'Ezer, sections 19, 26, 65, 108, and 1215.
- ³²Aptowitzer, p. 52.
- ³³Even ha-'Ezer, section 19.
- ³⁴Ibid., sections 48, 101, 107, and 265.
Albeck, p. VIII, also claims that R. Jacob bar Yitzhak haLevi
 was a teacher of the Raban, but there is no evidence to support this.
- ³⁵Ibid., section 681.
 "ושניהם מפי ר' שלמה והוא לא אמר אלא תחילת הדברים ואני
 פירשתי על מכונם."
- ³⁶Albeck, pp. V.
 E. ben Jehuda, Milon haLashon haIvrit haYeshenah vahaHadashah,
 vol. 10. (Jerusalem, Ben-Jehuda Hotsa'ah laOr,) pp. 4836.
- ³⁷Even ha-'Ezer, sections 107, 242, 401, 507.
- ³⁸Ibid., section 1247.
Sefer ha-Yashar, section 615.
- ³⁹L. Finkelstein, Jewish Self Government in the Middle Ages (New
 York, Philipp Feldheim, 1964) pp. 41-45.
- ⁴⁰Even ha-'Ezer, section 1248.
Sefer ha-Yashar, sections 616, 617, and 572.

⁴¹Psalms 48:3.

⁴²Proverbs 10:25.

⁴³Jeremiah 50:23.

⁴⁴I Kings 17:15.

⁴⁵Even ha-'Ezer, section 1240.

Even ha-'Ezer, Prague edition, sections 143, 145f.

⁴⁶Albeck, pp. X-XIII contains a list of these rabbis.

⁴⁷Tos. Avodah Zarah 32b, s.v.

Even ha-'Ezer, section 1260.

⁴⁸Ibid., sections 602, 680, 917, 1249, 1256, and 1258.

⁴⁹Ibid., sections 917, 1146, 1190, 1249, and 1256f.

⁵⁰Ibid., sections 960-965, 1249, 1256, and 1262.

⁵¹Albeck, pp. XII-XIII.

Aptowitzer, pp. 52.

⁵²Even ha-'Ezer, sections 13, 34, 48, and 98.

⁵³Aptowitzer, pp. 55.

The work is presently available in four editions. It was first published in Prague in 1620. Albeck was the first to fo a critical edition of the work, published in Warsaw in 1905. Parts of it were published by R. Leib Roshkam in Jerusalem in 1915. R. Samuel Ehrnreich published a critical edition in 1927.

⁵⁴Even ha-'Ezer, Prague edition, introduction.

⁵⁵Albeck, pp. XXV, claims that this chronicle was written by R. Eleazar bar Nathan halevi, even though he has never examined the manuscript. Antowitzer, pp. 56, remarks that Albeck confuses two separate works, one by each author. The kinoth in this chronicle clearly are signed "Eliezer bar Rabbi Nathan."

This chronicle was first published in 1854.

Adolph Jellineck, ed., Quntress Gezerot Tatnu le-Rabbi Eliezer bar Nathan (Leipzig, G. W. Wollrath, 1854).

Other editions include:

Quntress Gezerot Tatnu le-Rabbenu Eliezer bar Nathan (Wein, Adalbert della Torre, 1857).

The editions based on the earliest and most reliable manuscripts, that is, #2792, fol. 232 of Neubauer's Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, are:

A.M. Habermann, Sefer Gezerot Ashkenaz v-Tsarfat (Jerusalem, Hotsa'at Sefre Tarshish, 1946) pp. 72-88.

cfr. also - Shlomo Eidelberg, The Jews and the Crusaders: The Hebrew Chronicles of the First and Second Crusades (Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1977) pp. 73-94.

⁵⁶The two chronicles have been translated in Eidelberg's work, pp. 15-72 and 95-116 respectively.

⁵⁷Saló W. Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, vol. 4 (New York, Columbia University Press, 1957) pp. 288.

Meyer Waxman, A History of Jewish Literature, vol. 1. (New York, Bloch Publishing Co., 1930) pp. 431f.

⁵⁸Baron, vol. 4, pp. 288.

Baron claims that the Raban's real purpose was to write elegaic poems about the martyrs of the Rhenish communities, using the chronicle format to introduce his poems with background events. However, while it is true that the Raban wanted to pay tribute to the martyrs it does not appear that the kinoth are the focus. The chronicle is largely narrative and the kinoth supplement the story.

⁵⁹Israel Davidson, Otsar ha-Shirah veba-Piyyut (New York, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1924).

Albeck, pp. XXIV, lists five piyyutim.

Landshuth, pp. 22 and 45, lists ten piyyutim.

Leopold Zunz, Literaturgeschichte der Synagogalen Poesie (Berlin, 1865) pp. 246, 259-61, and 394, lists fourteen piyyutim.

⁶⁰For these contested piyyutim see Landshuth, pp. 45.

⁶¹Ephraim Urbach, Sefer 'Arugat ha-Bosem le-Rav Abraham bar Azariel, vol. 4 (Jerusalem, Mekitze Nirdamim, 1968) pp. 24, note 26.

⁶²Hamburg Manuscript #153.

Upsalla Manuscript #22.

Ephraim Zalman Margulioth, ed., Mahzor Korban Aaron, published in 1810, 1823, and 1836.

⁶³One commentator whose explanations are sometimes included with those of the Raban is R. Eliczer bar Axelrod.

Urbach, Ba'ale ha-Tosaphot, p. 156.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

¹Israel Davidson, Otsar ha-Shirah veha-Piyyut (New York, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1924)

²A.M. Habermann, Gezerot Ashkenaz ve-Zarefat (Jerusalem, Sefre Tarshish, 1945) pp. 72-82.

A. Neubauer, Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1906) No. 2797, fol. 232.

³Adolph Jellineck, ed., Quntress le-Gezerot Tatnu le-Pabbi Eliezer bar Nathan (Leipzig, C.W. Wollrath, 1854) pp. 4, 5, 7, and 12.

Compare Habermann, pp. 74, line 5, with Jellineck, pp. 5, line 5.

⁴Habermann, pp. 73.

⁵Ibid., pp. 74.

⁶Davidson, pp.

S. Baer, Ha-Selihat le-kol ha-Shannah lefi Minhag ha-Ashkenaz (Rodelheim, F. Lehrberger and Co., 1865) pp. 229-231.

⁷A.Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy and its Development (New York, Schocken Books, 1960) pp. 41f.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

¹Robert Chazan, Medieval Jewry in Northern France: A Social and Political History (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) chapter one.

²Jermiah 13:23.

³Joseph Hertz, ed., The Authorized Daily Prayer Book (New York, Bloch Publishing Co., 1948) pp. 867.

⁴see pp. 60f, lines 3-6.

⁵see pp. 35f.

⁶see pp. 40f.

⁷see pp. 45f.

⁸see pp. 68f.

⁹Ezekiel ch. 38 and 39.
B. Sanhedrin 97b.

¹⁰see pp. 68f, line 15.

¹¹A. Habermann, Gezerot Ashkenaz ve-Zarefat (Jerusalem, Sifre Tarshish, 1945) pp. 72.

¹²see pp. 68f, lines 16f.

¹³see pp. 45f, line 9.

¹⁴see pp. 70f, lines 33-36.

¹⁵see pp. 68f, line 12.

¹⁶see pp. 35f, line 8.

¹⁷see pp. 40f, lines 10f.
cfr. Joel 4:21.

¹⁸see pp. 70f, lines 43 and 46.
see also pp. 45f, lines 11f, and pp. 62f, lines 33f.

¹⁹see pp. 50f, line 6.
cfr. Psalms 11:3, Isaiah 55:7, Genesis Rabbah 1:1.

²⁰see pp. 50-55, lines 4, 8, 12, etc., and pp. 60-63, lines 4, 8, 12, etc.

FOOTNOTES TO APPENDIX I

¹Ephraim Urbach, Ba'ale ha-Tosafot (Jerusalem, Mosad Bialik, 1968) pp. 152.

²Ibid., pp. 152.

³Avigdor Aptowitzer, Mavo le-Sefer Paviah (Jerusalem, Mekitze Nirdamim, 1938) pp. 53.

⁴Shalom Albeck, Sefer Raban hu Sefer Even ha-'Ezer (Warsaw, Ephraim Boimritter, 1905) pp. VI.

⁵Aptowitzer, pp. 54.

⁶Urbach, pp. 153f.

⁷Aptowitzer, pp. 54.

⁸Urbach, pp. 153.

Landshuth alone asserts that Tsafnat Peneach is the central work, later called Even ha-'Ezer after its author. However, it has already been pointed out that the Raban himself chose this title. See the introduction of Even ha-'Ezer.

⁹It is an unpublished and undated manuscript in two parts. The work is in the Library of the London Beit haMidrash.

Albeck, pp. XIII.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. XIII.

"דינין מהר"ר אליעזר בר נתן ז"ל."

¹¹Urbach, pp. 155.

"לקורות מספר הדינין שחיבר הר' אליעזר בר' נתן ז"ל וקראו און הראשה."

¹²The poem is found in R. Isaiah b. Abraham haLevi Horowitz's work, Sha'ar ha-Shamayim (Amsterdam, 1717) pp. 329. It is clearly signed:

"אליעזר ברבי נתן יגדל ואמן בתורה אמן ואמן חזק ואמן."

¹³Wolf Heidenheim, ed., Ma'amar Haskel (Wein, Anton Schmidt, 1815).

¹⁴Leopold Zunz, Literaturgeschichte der Synagogalen Poesie (Berlin, 1865) pp. 259.

¹⁵Albeck, pp. XXIV-XXV.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. XXV.

Albeck suggests this on the basis of an acrostic signature in the introduction of Ma'amar Haskel which may read, "Samuel."

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