

Typologies of Leadership and the Hasidic Zaddiq

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The Question of Leadership

NO ISSUE WAS MORE CENTRAL to the emerging Hasidic communities of the late eighteenth century than that of leadership.¹ Conceived in the midst of both a Jewish community and a larger Polish society beset by crises of public office, the phenomenon that was to be called Hasidism bore at its very heart an image of master and disciples, bound together by bonds at once esoteric and personal, an image that stood out in relief against those corruptions of leadership that many had come to revile. It was in fact participation in such a relationship that defined one's sense of belonging to the Hasidic movement, at least in its heyday. For that movement the term *hasid* (unlike all of its many previous usages) implies the question: "*Hasid* of whom?" The term here functionally means "disciple" in addition to the usual and literal "pious one" or "lover of God." The disciple stood in relation to the *rebbe*, or master, a relationship that is the subject of much discussion in both the early theoretical literature of Hasidism and the later tales.²

The complex of ideas, distinctive religious practices, and patterns of life-style that were to make up the nascent movement was first taught by a generation of rabbis and preachers in the Ukraine, a group much influenced by earlier mystical (including messianic) teachings and marked by a strong sense of alienation from the contemporary leadership of the Jewish communities. That leadership is frequently caricatured in the preaching of the age, Hasidic and non-Hasidic alike. Both rabbis and lay leaders were held up to derision, the former for the twin sins of pride and self-distancing from the community, the latter for their high-handedness in the conduct of community affairs. These same homilists, especially those outside the

Hasidic camp, also viewed the common folk of their times as extraordinarily sinful, a generation appropriate to, if not responsible for, its woeful leadership. Accurate or not, it was the perception of many thinking Jews in mid-eighteenth century Poland that they lived in the most awfully sin-ridden of times, a time when extremes of purgation were required to return Israel to the pious norms of old.³

The first published work of Hasidism, the *Toledot Ya'aqov Yosef*, is much concerned with these questions.⁴ Alternatively blaming flock and shepherds for leading one another down the path toward sin, it is Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye who first crystallizes the question of leadership as a central preoccupation of Hasidic thought. Though himself a rabbi serving in various distinguished communities,⁵ he viewed himself as a disciple of one who had no rabbinic title or ordination, a rather unusual situation in so authority-centered a tradition as premodern Judaism. His "teacher," as he generally calls him, Israel Ba'al Shem Tov, was a sage of a rather different sort from the normative rabbinic figure.⁶ Though sharing most of the values of the latter, including dedication to both Torah study and life within the tradition, the Ba'al Shem saw himself generally as a teacher of "the fear of heaven" and spiritual wakefulness rather than of the tradition itself. The numerous quips and epigrams that the *Toledot* quotes from him uniformly point in this direction; he is the teacher who can *use* the language of tradition to point to a religious consciousness of a depth beyond that which the ordinary talmudist is called upon to see.⁷ Accompanying this, he has the power to look into human souls and call forth their healing in a way that goes beyond the stock-in-trade of the usual Ba'al Shem, purveyor of both amulets and herbs, folk doctor, and expert on the names of God and angels. The BeSHT as depicted in the sources is a charismatic holy man; it was this figure (rather than the *Toledot* himself, a rather retiring scholarly type) who was to provide the model for leadership in the new movement. While

- operating wholly within the context of tradition, Hasidism was to call for a major transformation of values: simple devotion was to be placed over abstruse learning, the joy of service over penitential brooding, and the rediscovery of God's all-pervasive presence over the sense of longing and exile. The transformation was to be effected by a new sort of leader, himself the personal embodiment of the movement's teachings. The image of this leader is already found in the descriptions of the Ba'al Shem Tov himself as recorded in the popular hagiographic work *Shivhey ha-BeSHT*.⁸

Hasidism must be viewed as both a religious and a social movement.⁹ Innovations in spiritual teaching or devotional practice offered by its teachers functioned also as guideposts toward the establishment of a new community, an alternative form of social organization that stood over against the

much-troubled traditional *kahal*. Rather than owing primary loyalty to the geographically defined corporate body of Jewry, Hasidism in practice suggested that truly pious Jews might constitute themselves in disciple-groups around a particular master, these translocal loyalties to be represented in each town by a conventicle of *hasidism* who espoused a particular path.¹⁰ These *kloizlekh* or *minyanim*, first of *hasidim* in general and later of particular Hasidic groups, would, by the very nature of things, be more closely related to one another than they would to the community at large, an institution that early Hasidism did not deem much worthy of support. Unlike earlier pietistic conventicles, these Hasidic groups saw the expansion of their own circles as an essential part of their mission. The Hasidic *minyán* in a town could not simply be left alone to worship God and glory in its master. It strove—and in the long run often successfully—to dominate the entire Jewish community, at least in matters of the spirit.

Whence the authority for such innovation? Here was, in the circles around both the BeSHT and his successor the Maggid of Miedzyrzec, a group of ready leaders with a message that was soon to show itself of tremendous power to attract a following. But in what terms might the role claimed by such figures, termed by their opponents “newcomers from nearby”¹¹ be legitimated? Authority to lead the community has, by all the canons of Jewish tradition, only one legitimate source: the word of God. That source, in turn, might be invoked in either of two ways, either through a claim of direct revelation of God’s will or by means of the normative chain of tradition, the legitimacy of rabbinic interpretation. Neither of these, however, could the early leaders of Hasidism invoke with full force.

The Ba’al Shem Tov and others in the early circles were surely motivated, in fact, by some sense of divine call. The religion of spiritual revival that they taught is by its very nature one in which the devotee is likely to have a deep sense of personally appointed mission. The BeSHT spoke rather openly about experiences of transcendence and messages from heavenly sources: we need only refer to his well-known letter to R. Gershon of Kutny to see that this is the case. But to claim legitimacy on the basis of heavenly journeys alone was a highly dubious business. Formally speaking, prophecy had ended with the destruction of the Temple; prophetic voice had been “taken from the prophets and given” either to the sages or to “fools and children”—depending on which version of the ancient saying one chooses. Since then, again in a formal sense, we “pay no attention to heavenly voices.”¹² Of course, we know that such pronouncements were often observed in the breach and that especially in the sorts of popular mystical circles from which Hasidism sprang there was always much attention paid to dreams, “ascents of the soul,” and various other personal illuminations.

The real reason why authority could not be based on such claims lay much closer to home. Such dreams and “prophecies” were the stuff of which the recent and well-remembered Sabbatian claims had been made; they had a dangerous association with the very sort of mystical heresy from which Hasidism was at pains to dissociate itself.¹³ While the early leadership of Hasidism fully believed in the reality of heavenly voices and angelic messengers (as did its most trenchant opponent!), it saw good reason not to locate the source of its authority in these. There were those who claimed, as we shall see later, a degree of prophetic mantle for the new movement, but this was done in a cautious and somewhat secondary way.

The normative claim to authority already belonged to the rabbinate, the very sort of rabbinate against whom Hasidism was set in opposition. No one could claim; on purely talmudic/halakhic grounds, that the rabbis loyal to Hasidism in the early days were the leading luminaries of their time. Though Hasidism was far from being the movement of the unlettered masses that later romantics made it out to be, its leadership surely was not prepared to battle the rabbinate on the latter’s own turf. Those with the finest pedigrees of learning—and family—from Elijah Gaon in Vilna to Rabbi Ezekiel Landau in Prague, were known to be unsympathetic to the new movement and its leaders.

The *Zaddiq*

Hasidism found its way out of this dilemma by proposing another sort of claim for its leaders, one that was highly innovative in its usage here though having the needed venerable associations in the earlier history of Judaism. It was not as bearer of either revelation or tradition, but rather as *zaddiq*, that the Hasidic leader was to claim his mantle. His authority was of a different order, one that bypassed the controversial matter of the *word* of God and went directly to another cosmological line, one that had ever existed in Judaism side by side with the centrality of Torah, though

- previously always in a somewhat secondary way. The *zaddiq*, “righteous one” or holy man, was known to the talmudic sources as one who stood at the very center of the cosmos¹⁴ and could, by virtue of his meritorious deeds, intervene to reverse the decrees of heaven. For such figures (often called both *hasid* and *zaddiq* in the early sources) it had always been the virtue of meritorious action rather than learning or traditional authority that had lain at the core of their powers to attract a following. The *zaddiq*’s merit sustains the universe: what greater claim than this need be made for the leadership of a religious community? The authority of the *zaddiq* was not opposed to that of Torah either in earlier or in Hasidic times, but rather

stood side by side with it, exemplifying another aspect of Jewish religious ideology. While not in conflict with the values of Torah, the *zaddiq's* authority was of a different order and of different historic lineage as well. Since the Middle Ages, this ancient figure of piety and power (for the *zaddiq's* power was said to be able to annul a divine decree) was associated with the aspect of divinity called *yesod* by the adherents of Kabbalah. *Yesod* (lit.: "foundation") is the ninth of the ten *sefirot* or aspects of the divine self, the one that gathers together all the forces from above and causes them to flow into the feminine *Shekhinah* or "Community of Israel." As such, *yesod* is identified with the male procreative organ, with the "covenant" of sexual purity, and with Joseph, the original *zaddiq* who became such by resisting Madame Potiphar's wiles. The deeds of the earthly *zaddiqim*, or kabbalists, are essential in aiding the *zaddiq* above to continue that flow of life that sustains the universe. This kabbalistic association tended to highlight the term *zaddiq* among the various appellations of the pious and probably indirectly affected the use of this term to designate the Hasidic master.

Well known and almost archetypically Hasidic is the interpretation offered in several of the movement's early sources of a talmudic passage in praise of Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa, a famous wonder-worker and *hasid* of the first century:

The Talmud says that "a heavenly voice came forth and said: The whole earth is sustained for the sake of (*bi-shevil*) Hanina My son, but Hanina My son has to do with only a ration of carob from one Sabbath eve to the next." See the second chapter of Berakhot. A famous question is asked on this text: Why is the latter part of it needed? [Why bother to mention what Hanina ate?] I have seen an answer in the book *Yad Yosef* which says that this latter phrase offers a reason for the former: the whole world is sustained for the sake of Hanina *because* he makes do with but a ration of carob. It is because of this that his merit suffices to sustain the entire world.

But in the name of my teacher: Hanina My son forged a path (*shevil*) or a pipeline to draw divine bounty into the world. This is the meaning of "the world is sustained by the *shevil* of Hanina My son." The words of the wise are gracious. To me it appears that he not only made such a pathway or pipeline, but that he himself was called *shevil* or channel, since the bounty flowed through him. This would be an esoteric reading for "Blessings to the head of the *zaddiq*" (Prov 10:6). (*Ben Porat Yosef* 80b; ed. Warsaw 1883; based on *Berakhot* 17b)¹⁵

The *Toledot* first quotes a non-Hasidic reading of the talmudic passage, one that suggests the ascetic feat as the reason for Hanina's world-sustaining merit.¹⁶ He then offers the BeSHT's reading of the passage as a contrast, one that emphasizes the charismatic side of Hanina's deed. The question as to the latter phrase has not really been answered by the new interpretation,

but the focus has been shifted: Hanina is the path by which the cosmos is sustained. It turns out that the BeSHT's reading too is not original; recent scholarship has shown that it is already to be found in the *Two Tablets of the Covenant*, an early seventeenth century work by Isaiah Horowitz that enjoyed immense popularity in later pietistic circles.¹⁷ But no matter: our interest is in the *use* made of such a reading in Hasidism, not in its originality. In the Hasidic context the reading is no longer abstract: its frequent repetition serves to underscore a claim made by a known and specific group of people to be the successors of Hanina, the *zaddiqim* who will sustain the world in this time. In the following text R. Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl makes a similar claim, here referring to a talmudic parallel in which Hanina is not mentioned:

The fact is that "zaddiq is the foundation of the world" (Prov 10:25). He is the foundation and the channel through which divine bounty and life flow down into the world and to all creatures. It is all by his *shevil*, for he sets out the pathway and road which this life-flow will follow. By means of his constant attachment to the Creator he becomes a dwelling for the letter Aleph, the cosmic Aleph that lives within him. Thus Scripture says: "I shall dwell in their midst" (Exod 25:8). Thus he is truly a part of God, and has a place, as it were, with Him. This is the portion of his soul; a part of the Aleph. He also has a place among created beings, however, since he shares with them the letters *Dalet Mem* (=DaM, blood); the animal soul is contained in his blood just as it is in all creatures. How right and proper, then, that he be the intermediary between the blessed Creator and the full world, binding all to Him so that bounty flow to His creatures along the path that he, the *zaddiq*, has set out by his devotion and attachment. Thus did the rabbis say of the verse "for this is the whole of man ('aDaM—Eccl 12:13)—the entire world is created by the *shevil* of this one." They said it in the present tense . . . for Creation is constant. "He renews each day the work of Creation." By the constant flow of His life into His creatures the act of Creation is ever taking place. This is the meaning of "this is the whole of 'aDaM—it refers to the *zaddiq*, who unites in himself Aleph with DaM. Constant Creation happens only through his path. . . . Thus Onkelos translated "He holds fast to heaven and earth" he binds the whole world to its Creator. . . . (*Me'or 'Eynayim, yitro*; ed. Jerusalem 1966; p. 109; quoting *Yoma* 38b)

The figure described in these texts is one familiar to the students of "holy man" traditions in the most diverse religious contexts. He is a figure at once human and mythic, a spiritualized Hercules, if you will, holding the world aloft by his own inner strength and ever renewing creation's bond to its source. Such a being, in some traditions identified with God more fully as Avatar or Incarnation, elsewhere as the prophet reborn or the first man *redivivus*, is indeed hinted at from the very earliest sources of Jewish esotericism. Elements of it are found in aggadic discussions of Abraham, Jacob,

David, Elijah, and especially Moses. He is given prominence in the medieval Kabbalah, particularly through the protomessianic figure of Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai as described in the *Zohar*.¹⁸ In the popular religious culture of the later Middle Ages, these ancient holy-man traditions developed in two directions at once. One of these emphasizes the hidden and therefore potentially ubiquitous presence of such figures. A folk tradition reaching back to talmudic times speaks of a certain number of *hidden zaddiqim* (usually thirty-six) for whose sake the world is sustained. But here their anonymity is essential to the legend: not only does it protect the virtue of humility, but its very point seems to be that you never know if the stranger before you might not be such a one, and you are to treat him accordingly. The *zaddiq* tradition in this sense is parallel to that of Elijah, the mysterious and virtuous stranger ever in your midst.¹⁹ Another offshoot of this tradition points to well-known individuals of the present or the recent past as possessors of the holy spirit or of some special "influence" in the upper realms. Such tales were told of many great rabbis; the veneration of holy men's graves, widely attested in Jewish popular religion at least from the later Middle Ages, is an outgrowth of belief in the dead *zaddiq's* power to intervene on high for the faithful he has left behind. The *Zohar*, which is to be seen in its narrative portions as an artful usage of these popular traditions, spurs their development further. Here the two lines meet, as such well-known figures as Rabbi Simeon and his friends encounter anonymous elders, children, and donkey-drivers who turn out to be hidden saints and revealers of secrets. In the later Kabbalah as well, especially after the Safed revival, legends about the *zaddiqim* and their powers were widespread, some of these entering that genre of hagiography (*shevahim*) that so influenced Hasidism.²⁰ In the esoteric literature of the Sabbatian movement, the term is used as a cipher for the Messiah, but again in veiled ways. Other Sabbatian charismatics are referred to rather openly and daringly as prophets (*navi*) and are frequently designated by the term *hasid*, but it appears that there *zaddiq* was generally reserved for the Messiah himself.²¹

The figure of the Hasidic *zaddiq* emerged most specifically out of the homiletical and moralistic literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a body of writings often influenced by Sabbatianism but not wholly dependent on it. Much scholarly attention has been focused on this literature in recent times, and there is no need here to repeat, other than in brief summary, what has been said elsewhere. The homiletic literature of the age, obsessed as it was with sin and its corrosive effect on both soul and cosmos, was concerned largely with the question of penitence. The moralizing preacher, himself a penitent, to be sure, saw himself as extending a helping, even saving, hand to those who heard his sermons or read his books. The

very nature of this position made him an intermediary between the sin-ridden public and the will of heaven contained in the message that he bore. This image of self held great fascination for the preachers of the age, especially insofar as they saw themselves as not living utterly beyond the temptation toward sin in their own lives. (Think of the fascination with self-image in the psychotherapeutic community of our own day and of the problematic of the therapist's own healing and its relationship to his or her abilities as a professional.) In the course of such discussions, older images were evoked of the *zaddiq* descending into hell to redeem the souls of those who suffered there: thus were the preachers depicted as rescuing their hearers from the pit of damnation that was sure to await them upon their deaths. Such a preacher was frequently a tormented figure, seeing himself as his community's last or best hope for reconciliation with God and yet at the same time ever aware of his own inadequacy to the task.²² Though such preachers were not called *zaddiqim* and no miracles were ascribed to them, they saw themselves as linking heaven and earth, moral intermediaries between God and his people.

Speaking out of this tradition, the early teachers of Hasidism forged some essential final links. Charged with a new sense of religious optimism, they spoke against excessive brooding over one's sins and largely set aside the penitential/ascetic rigors of the earlier preachers' world view. This lessened the sense of inadequacy inherent in the leader's self-identification as *zaddiq*, or in his claim to provide the link between his people and the God whom they sought to serve. The preacher linking the sinner to God, identified already earlier with the *zaddiq* saving the souls of the wicked, could now be identified as well with another aspect of the *zaddiq*, the pillar on whom the earth is set or the forger of that *shevil* by which God's grace comes down to save the world.

The term *zaddiq*, as found in Hasidic writings of the movement's first three generations (until about 1800), by no means uniformly designates the leader of a Hasidic community. On the contrary, the term is generally used in its earlier sense—one that combines a normative notion of moral righteousness (*zaddiq* as opposed to *rasha'*) with an overtone of that mythic/mystic figure to whom we have alluded. As such, "*zaddiq*" may remain that hidden one of the folk tradition and also be a normal model toward which all should aspire. The *Toledot* belongs essentially to the earlier homiletic tradition in the ways it speaks of *zaddiq*. *Rebbe* as well as *rabbi* is generally designated by R. Jacob Joseph by the normative *talmid ḥakham*. In the writings of the Maggid's school, even in the very *zaddiq*-centered *No'am Eli melekh*, the term still usually has a general, or at least ambiguous, sense; the reader frequently is given the impression that he too, with the proper

awareness and behavior, might reach that state. It is in that school, however, that a new dimension is added to the term *zaddiq*. In a sense, it is the preacher who now comes back to haunt the Hasidic *zaddiq*. It is somehow wrong, or at least inadequate, for the righteous one to live alone in his righteousness, even if that righteousness bears the merit that sustains the world. A new typology is developed in these writings (though it too has earlier precedents),²³ one that pits the *zaddiq* "who is only for himself" against the one who serves as "*zaddiq* for himself and for others."

"The *zaddiq* blossoms like a palm tree, tall as a cedar in Lebanon" (Ps 92:1). There are two types of *zaddiqim*, both of them completely righteous. The difference between them is as follows: One is ever attached to God, blessed be He, doing the task that has been placed upon him. He is the *zaddiq* only for himself, but for no other. He does not cause his righteousness to flow forth to others. Thus he is compared to the cedar which, as our sages noted, does not bear fruit. He is a *zaddiq* only within himself, not bearing the fruit of bringing others back to the good, so that *zaddiqim* might multiply in the world. This one does only for himself, reaching high and adding to his reward. The second *zaddiq* is rather likened to the palm tree, one that bears fruit or "blossoms." He brings forth the precious from the cheap, causing good to blossom and increase in the world. Of this our sages spoke when they said: "In the place where penitents (*ba'aley teshuvah*, lit., 'masters of penitence') stand, absolute *zaddiqim* cannot stand." They meant to speak of the second *zaddiq*, the one who is called 'master of penitence,' for he is master and lord over repentance as he brings others back to the good. "He brings many back from sin" (Mal 2:6) as he makes for penitence in the world. Surely his reward is greatly redoubled over that of the first *zaddiq*, even though he too is completely righteous. (Dov Baer, *Or Torah*, Psalms; ed. Jerusalem 1968, p. 119)²⁴

"But My servant Caleb, because he was of another spirit, and he followed Me wholly" (Num 14:24). There are two kinds of *zaddiqim*. There are some who need to be set aside and separated from people, for when they are among people [or: in public situations] they might fall from their proper rung. Then there are *zaddiqim* who mingle pleasantly among people and converse with them, not falling from their own rung and in fact bringing others back to the good. Thus have I heard from my master and teacher . . . Dov Baer . . . "Holy flesh has never turned rotten" (Avot 5:5)—he interpreted as "whoever is holy flesh"—a complete *zaddiq*—"never rots, even when he is among people and speaks with them." This is "My servant Caleb, because he was of another spirit"—even when speaking with them, but did not fall from his rung, "he followed Me wholly." (*No'am Elimelech, shelah*; ed. Nig'al, pp. 403f.)²⁵

Many elements of the tradition have converged in the making of these statements. The ancient belief that the *zaddiq* sustains the "world" is now given a social context; it is the very particular "*oilem*," in the Yiddish usage, of his community that he sustains and justifies before God; as well as the

cosmos as a whole. As heir to the *mokhiah* of the immediately preceding generations he is teacher and spiritual healer, binding himself to God and humanity and holding them together. But as heir to the talmudic *zaddiq* he is also supernatural intercessor: his merit bears within it the power to negate the divine decree. The responsibility of bearing such power calls forth in him a quality antithetical to that usually found in the psyche of moralizing preachers: like the prophets of old, he becomes *defender* of Israel as they are judged by God. The intense devotion of the *hasid* to his master stems in part from the confidence that this master, who has high standing in the heavenly realms because of his own righteousness or that of his ancestors, stands ready to sacrifice all for the sake of his disciples. In psychological terms it may be said that the *rebbe* is thus a true father figure, both in embodying the values of tradition and in his willingness without limit to defend his "children" either from divine judgment or demonic threat.

So much for the hidden *zaddiq*. If he is to help others along the path, it becomes fully legitimate for him to reveal himself to them. True, it is theoretically possible to combine both virtues: to keep one's own constant attachment to God a secret and, posing as a poor sinner among others, to preach the word of God to them. But if the preacher/*zaddiq's* work is to be done effectively, better that he discard his mask and set himself to the social and religious task in earnest. For *zaddiq* to serve a social function, as leader and rallying point for a spiritual community, he must also be identified. There thus emerges in Hasidism a remarkable group of religious teachers and charismatic figures who are identified by their followers and (though only obliquely) by themselves as *zaddiqim*. The meaning attributed to this term here and in later common speech—*zaddiq* as leader of a community of *hasidim*—is entirely original to Hasidism.

The Search for Paradigms

The preoccupation with leadership brought about in Hasidism a new reading of the earlier tradition, one in which diverse sources were combed for the light they could shed on the question of *zaddiq* and his relationship to community. Precisely because the term did not have a tradition of public leadership associated with it, models of leadership that would serve as paradigms for his proper role were to be sought elsewhere. It is not surprising that, for a community in which preaching took so central a role, it was to Scripture that Hasidic authors most frequently turned for guidance in the ways of proper leadership. In fact, the writings of more immediately past generations had rather little to offer on this question that had now become so crucial. It is hard to find postbiblical, or at least post-talmudic, sources

in which the nature of proper leadership is a central topic of Jewish intellectual concern. In the medieval and later communities, proper leaders for the Jewish community were judged by standards essentially extrinsic to the question of leadership itself. The most defined leader role was that of rabbi. The rabbi, however, was trained and evaluated primarily in relationship to Torah; his "pastoral" skills were quite secondary to his learning and mastery of talmudic law. The *hasid* of medieval Germany and later Safed was such by virtue of his extraordinary acts of piety. While these frequently had to do with the realm of the interpersonal, they did not necessarily show the skills and responsibilities appropriate to leadership. On the contrary, the humility appropriate to such an ideal type might well keep him from seeking out such a role. Communal lay leaders were judged for honesty, in accord with the rigorous standards of the talmudic civil code. It was taken for granted, apparently, that such virtues as learning, piety, and integrity would make for fitting leadership. These were, after all, the values that the community was to hold in high regard, and they could best be supported if exemplified in its leaders. Such barely self-conscious notions of leadership seem to have generally sufficed, despite periodic complaints and reports of abuses.

If later Jewish history was lacking in treatments of this leader theme, however, the pages of Scripture itself were a virtual textbook on the question. From Moses and Aaron in the wilderness to David in battle and the prophets of calamity and consolation in Jerusalem and in exile, the Bible is filled with concern over the issue of proper and responsible leadership and the relationship between God's people and those He has appointed to minister to them. The three figures of prophet, priest, and king immediately come to mind; the proper role of each of these three and the not infrequent clashes between them bespeak the very essence of ancient Israel's unique religious situation.

The same is true, though to a lesser extent, of late Second Temple and early rabbinic times. There too were new religious leader-ideals in the making, not least because all three of the biblical models had run their course. Once prophecy was deemed at an end, it was only the interpretive authority of scribe or sage that could claim access to the divine word. Kingship and priesthood were identified wholly with the houses of David and Aaron, respectively, the one consigned to the messianic future and the other, much discredited after Hasmonean times, about to become vestigial with the Temple's destruction. The new types that emerged in their stead, the scholar/sage and the wonderworking *hasid*, were both reflections of types to be found elsewhere in the Hellenistic world. The unceasing attempts of the Midrash to convert Moses into rabbi and David into leader

of the Sanhedrin reflect a pseudohistory that seeks to legitimate the rabbi by proclaiming him a biblical type.²⁶ The *hasid* had a greater chance of identifying with such a model of Elijah or Elisha, but he too was essentially a creation of the new era, searching the tradition for ancestors of his spirit.

A similar process now took place in Hasidism, an age of renewed creativity in leadership types, again born of the collapse of previously available models. And again the earlier tradition is combed in search of precedent or archetype with whom the present leader might identify. All of the biblical models—priest, king, prophet, as well as the rabbinic *hasid* and sage—are to be found in early BeSH'Tian Hasidism's descriptions of its *zaddiq*. The wide range of earlier models accessible to Hasidic preachers gives to their discussions of *zaddiq* a rich and varied texture. The interplay between the literary figures of these texts and the actual social institution is a complex one: the theoretical literature of Hasidism (almost all of it, we must remember, originally delivered as oral sermons)²⁷ both reflected and created the *zaddiq* as a living figure. Here as in other areas we see a dialectical relationship between Hasidic theory and social form. In examining the various models to which the literature appeals, we seek to cast our net wide and examine such paradigms of leadership as they are found throughout the writings of early Hasidism, not limited to any single author or school. We should at the same time note, however, that here as in most things it is the *Toledot* and the Maggid who appear as "original" sources, upon whom most other Hasidic preachers draw.

The *Zaddiq* as Priest

The figure of priest is very widespread in Hasidic discussions of the *zaddiq*. It is hard to find a collection of Hasidic homilies arranged according to the weekly Torah-reading cycle that does not, somewhere in Exodus or Leviticus, apply biblical mention of the *kohen* to the leader of its own day. In one place the *zaddiq*/priest may be offering the inward sacrifice on the altar of the heart; elsewhere he may be robed in the spiritual equivalent of the priestly garments, purifying the defiled of soul, or calling forth the divine bounty by the power of his blessing. All of these are priestly functions which go to the very heart of the *zaddiq*'s function in the Hasidic community. The following source, an unusually extended treatment of this subject, takes the form of a running comment on the opening Mishnah of *Berakhot* and a portion of the Gemara's discussion of it. We shall be well advised (unlike the original) to begin by quoting those talmudic texts in full:

Mishnah: From what time does one recite the *Shema* in the evening? From the hour the priests come in to eat of their heave-offering, until the end of

the first watch. These are the words of Rabbi Eliezer. But the sages say: until midnight.

Gemara: From when do the priests eat of the heave-offering? From the time when the stars come out. Then teach [that *Shema* be recited] from when the stars come out! We are being taught something by the way [in the present formulation, namely] that the priests eat of the heave-offering from the time the stars come out.

Comment: This is the meaning of "From when does one recite the *Shema* in the evening": When will we be able to call out to God so that He will hear all our prayers; "in the evening," in this bitter exile which is the dark of night? "From the hour when the priests come in to eat of their *TeRuMaH* (heave-offering)." The priests are the *zaddiqim*; they draw forth holiness and *devequt*. "Their *TeRuMaH* refers to the raising up of the shekhinah, *TaRuM He*" [Uplift the letter *He*, =shekhinah]. This is their "eating," as is said of Abraham "He stood over them beneath the tree and they ate" (Gen 18:8). Torah was not given to the angels: when they came to Abraham they heard words of Torah, the Tree of Life, from his mouth. The holiness they drew forth in this manner was their "eating." The Gemara asks on this: "From what time do the priests eat of the heave-offering? From the time when the stars come out." When will this level be attained, that from which such holiness and *devequt* can be drawn forth? "When the stars come out" —when our righteous messiah arrives, as in "a star courses forth from Jacob" (Num 24:17). . . . "Then teach: From when the stars come out," for the "priests" will "eat" at the same time that the "stars" appear! The Gemara answers that the text "taught us something by the way": the Tanna teaches us that in walking "by the way" of God's path and His holy Torah, by following in the paths of the *zaddiqim*, one can attain to great holiness, even to the holy spirit, now too, in the exile. (*No'am Elimelech, wa-yiggash*; ed. Nig'al, pp. 139f.)

The *zaddiqim* are today's priests, "eating" of holiness as the Temple priests ate of the heave offering. It is interesting that the spiritualization of the sacrifice suggested in this comment brings together *zaddiqim* and angels, both of them (though for different reasons) unable to partake of the offering in its corporeal form. At the same time, here even the supposedly most *zaddiq*-centered *No'am Elimelech* insists that such a path is open to anyone who follows it and that its rewards may even include attainment of the holy spirit, a degree of prophetic revelation. This is typical of the early literature of Hasidism, where the identification of *zaddiq* with a specified elite has not yet become clear. In the following passage, his identity as leader is clearer, though it has to be reinforced by joining the "new" term to a more conventional one (*ha-zaddiqim ha-hakhamim*).

"The Lord spoke to Moses saying: 'Command Aaron and his sons thus. This is the teaching concerning the burnt offering ("*olah*"): it is that which ascends on its firewood all the night until morning . . .' (Lev 6:1-2)."

RaSHI comments that “command” implies urgency, both immediate and for later generations. . . . Now surely the Torah is eternal and applies in each generation. These holy Scriptures (in my humble opinion) show the way of God to the wise righteous ones (*ha-zaddiqim ha-hakhamim*), the way to draw the souls of oppressed Israel (God save us!) to the blessed and exalted God. This was the deed of Aaron and his sons as well, as they offered the sacrifices of Israel, sin and guilt offerings or wholly burnt sacrifices, each as appropriate to him and in accord with his own needs. In doing so they would uplift and draw near the souls of Israel, each according to his needs and character. In this way is the passage one of “urgency, both immediate and for later generations”—even though there are no sacrifices in these times, the *zaddiqim* of each generation draw near [to God] the souls of Israel by means of their pure worship and the teachings (*torah*) they offer in truth and wholeness, with inner direction of the heart and in fear and love [of God]. Thus Scripture afterwards says: *zot torat ha-‘olah* (lit., this is the teaching concerning the burnt offering) *hi ha-‘olah* [i.e., it is the teaching that ascends as an offering]. (*Degel Mahaneh Ephraim, zav;* ed., Jerusalem 1963, p. 152a)²⁸

Such passages from the homiletic sources are reminiscent of the tale later told of Abraham Joshua Heschel of Apt, who so clearly “recalled” his prior incarnation as high priest in the Temple that he was drawn to reciting the Yom Kippur account of that service in the first person: “Thus did I count . . .” and so forth.

The image of prayer or inward devotion as a spiritual sacrifice is an ancient one, originating in the earliest Jewish sources²⁹ and a favorite of Jewish moralists throughout the ages. But the notion that there is an *officiant* at such sacrifice, be he called *zaddiq*, *hakham*, or any other name, is new in Hasidism. He is the one through whom, in some readings, such devotion must be directed to reach its source; for others he is the instructor in this cult of the inner temple or the model of its ideal fulfillment. All these have to do with the essential model we have already seen, that of *zaddiq* as source of blessing or as channel for the flow of divine life into the world. He draws Israel near to God as he draws divine blessing down to his people. Although such descriptions do not accompany the delineations of priestly function in the biblical text itself, which are deliberately this-worldly, there is, in a broader sense, something priestly about them—a sense that the Hasidic authors (greatly aided by the *Zohar*’s freely mythic depictions of the cult)³⁰ have no difficulty in perceiving.

Another area in which priesthood is important in the *zaddiq*’s image has to do with healing, again relating to his position as the arouser of God’s mercies and the bearer of His life-flow into the world. In functional terms, a major part of the *zaddiq*’s role in Hasidic society was that of healer; it was particularly in times of illness or medically dangerous situations such as

childbirth that disciples—and other ordinary folk—came to seek out the *zaddiq's* blessing. Here he was acting as a priestly holy man, in a way that probably would have been quite familiar to the Orthodox clergy just across the town square. Quite naturally, it is in homilies on the Torah portions *tazri'a* and *mezora'*, ever the bane of Jewish preachers' lives, that one is likely to find comments on the *zaddiq* in the role of priestly healer.

"The priest will go outside the camp and see that the leprous sore has healed from the leper" (Lev 14:3). "From the leper" appears to be redundant. It seems, however, that the *zaddiq* has to come to the lower rungs in order to raise up souls from there. Those souls who desire to cleave to him he will be able to raise up with him, but not so with those that do not want to attach themselves to him. . . . "The priest will go outside the camp"—coming to the lower rungs, to raise up the "leper." The priest "sees"—he draws forth wisdom, which is identical to "sight" and allows for transformation. "And the leprous sore has healed"—but Scripture adds "from the leper" for the will to cleave to the priest must come from the leper himself. Only then can the priest raise him up to wisdom, effecting that transformation which cures his sore. (*Orah le-Hayyim, mezora'*; ed. Jerusalem 1960, p. 238)

"When a man has in his skin . . . a leprous sore, he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests, and the priest shall look at the sore . . . and if the hair in the sore be turned white or the sore appears to be deeper than the skin, it is leprosy. The priest shall look at it and proclaim him unclean" (Lev 13:2-3). The letters of *NeGa'* ("sore") are the same as those of *'oNeG* ("joy"); if one does not take care, however, this sore becomes "leprous." Scripture then speaks of what one should do to set one's deeds aright. *He shall be brought to the priest*—the perfect *zaddiq* is called a *priest*; he should attach himself to the *zaddiqim*. *The priest shall look . . . and if the hair in the sore be turned white*—the *zaddiq* must see the condition of the sore. He must determine whether the white divine fluid [of compassion] has been turned "by a hair," by one of those minor sins which are like "mountains hanging by a hair" or whether the *sore appears to be deeper than the skin*, the affliction, heaven forbid, be more than skin-deep. In either case, it is a *leprous sore*; *the priest shall look at it and proclaim him unclean*; he must show him to understand the great damage he has wrought in all this, teaching him the ways of return and true penitence so that he make good all those bad and shameful qualities that he bears. (*No'am Elimelech, tazri'a*; ed. Nig'al, p. 309)³¹

The powers of priesthood, including the ability to bless, to heal by the conferral of divine blessing, and to discern—intuitively or by secret sign—the "clean" from the "unclean" in the moral domain, have now all been "naturally" assumed by the *zaddiq*. The use of exegesis as an instrument of social change is particularly striking in these passages. This identification with the ancient priest allows the *rebbe* to assert the sort of claim that had been defined as outside the purview of the "normative" rabbinate for many

centuries. The charismatic leader has now found a locus of authority more venerable, certainly more mysterious, than that of the rabbi himself. Priesthood (a religious institution in full vigor among the surrounding Eastern Orthodox population), with all its mysterious power to bless and transform, was a notion that called forth memories of ancient grandeur but was now represented, in the persons of *kobanim*, by only a pitiable vestige. The *zaddiq* as priest—even a priest who could arouse a degree of awe among non-Jews—was for the *hasid* a living religious symbol that combined grandeur, the warmth of pastoral care, and true magic.

The *Zaddiq* as King

Although the priesthood continued to exist in Israel, if only in vestigial form, the figure of king was one that had long been relegated to historical memory. Royal imagery continued to exist in postexilic Judaism only with regard to the kingship of God, expressed mostly in a liturgical context. The figure of king remained alive, however, partly through this sacred usage and partly because of the influence of the surrounding culture: Hasidism was created in a period when the doings of kings and their courts were very much present in the public mind, from the failure and dissolution of the Polish kingdom to the awesome pomp of the Romanovs and, if one includes the opening decades of the nineteenth century, through the period of Napoleonic adventure and the restoration of royal legitimacy. No wonder that a tradition in search of authority would seek to partake of the symbols of royalty, indicating power and legitimacy at once.

There were various aids in the sources of tradition that made this usage, audacious on the face of things, somewhat more accessible. While the widely quoted "*Man malkbey? Rabbanan*" ("Who are kings? The rabbis") does not seem to be an authentic quotation from the Talmud, the gist of the idea that rabbis have quasi-royal authority is to be found.³² In recounting the power of true *zaddiqim* to affect the will of heaven, God himself is quoted by one well-known rabbinic source as saying: "Who rules over Me? The *zaddiq*, for I issue a decree and he nullifies it" (*Mo'ed Qatan* 16b). It was also considered perfectly proper, in the formal Hebrew of the Middle Ages and later, to speak of a rabbi in terms echoing those of royalty. Thus, a chronicler telling of a rabbi's tenure in a particular town might readily say, "His reign began in year so-and-so, and he occupied the rabbinic throne, judging the people in equity. . . ."

The Hasidic sources use this metaphor in their own way, again rather casually allowing the homiletic mode to carry over "naturally" the earlier image into their own circumstances.

"Set a king over yourself, as the Lord your God chooses. From among your brethren take a king. . . . As he sits upon his throne he shall write out this second Torah in a book, before the Levitical priests" (Deut 17:15, 18). RaSHI comments on "this second Torah" that the king is to write two Torah scrolls, one to remain in his treasury and the other to be carried with him to and fro. This comment, the original source of which is in the Talmud (*Sanhedrin* 21b), makes no sense. Of what value to him is the scroll that just lies in his treasury? "

We know, however, the statement "Who are kings? The rabbis." The sages are truly kings, as Scripture says: "Through me [wisdom or Torah] do kings rule" (Prov 8:15). But the fact is that even if a person learn the whole Torah and all the holy volumes and teachings of the sages, this still will not bring him to repentance or remove the curtain that separates him from God, not until he cleaves to God's holy ones, the *zaddiqim* of the generation. Thus have I heard from my master and teacher, the man of God Elimelech, of blessed and sainted memory; a person must choose one *zaddiq* in his generation to be his master. And who is the one he should choose as master, teacher, and intimate? When he sees a *zaddiq* all of whose comings and goings are conducted in accord with the holy Torah, who is lax neither in the Torah's own commands nor in matters ordained by the rabbis, while in his heart there burns a pillar of fire as he performs the unifications, this thought being visible in his deeds—such a one should he choose as master.

This is the meaning of "set a king over yourself"; "king" here refers to rabbis. "As the Lord your God chooses"—whom should you choose? Scripture goes on to answer this by the words "he shall write this second Torah," according to RaSHI's interpretation. He should have two scrolls, the one that is "carried with him to and fro" refers to the justice of his deeds and the way he conducts himself. The "treasury" in which the other scroll remains refers to his heart, burning with the fire of Torah, proclaiming God's unity in love and fear. Such a "king" whose thought is to be seen also in his deeds, is the one whom you should choose. All this belongs to that *zaddiq* as tradition received from those sublime holy men who were his own masters; these are the "levitical priests" of whom the verse speaks. (*Ma' or wa-Shemesh, shofetim*; ed. Tel. Aviv 1964, pp. 219d-220a)³³

To this rather typical set of criteria for choosing a *rebbe*, we may add a Hasidic insistence on the *need* for a relationship that bears this kingship within it; the *hasid* cannot exist in purely egalitarian circumstances.

"From among your brethren take a king" (Deut 17:15). The sages add that his fear should be upon you. Now it sometimes happens that you meet a man who treats you as his friend and equal, acting as though you were two brothers, with no difference of rank. In fact, however, this person stands on a higher rung [of spiritual attainment] than you, and it would be fitting for him to hold the ruler's sceptre over you. It is because he is so humble that he sees himself as being just like you, relating to you as brother and equal. Of this situation I warn you: "From among your *brothers* take a king." Even if he acts as though he were just your brother, you must make him king, until

his fear is upon you like the fear of the kingdom. Now this can be a terrific struggle, that of taking one who is acting as brother and making him into awesome king. That is why Scripture chose the word *mi-qerev* ("from among") for use in this verse; Q-R-V also refers to battle. Enough said. (*Ahavat Shalom, shofetim*; ed. Lvov 1850, p. 76a)³⁴

There are other places in the literature where the specific language of royalty is avoided but where something of the king-subject relationship is bespoken nonetheless. In HāBaD circles the term *nasi'*, or prince, was chosen to refer to the *rebbe*, and these sources will speak of a particular event as having taken place during the *nesi'ut* of one occupant or another of that dynastic throne. Approbations and introductions to books, hotbeds of hyperbole in any case, will commonly contain some element of regal language. Appropriation of a degree of royal style happened rather early in the history of Hasidism and was quite widespread. It was Baruch of Miedzybozh (ca. 1750–1812), the BeSHT's grandson, and Mordecai of Chernobyl (1770–1837), who first established "courts" in which it was expected that the *rebbe* live in grand manner. Already in 1798 the bitter anti-Hasidic polemicist David of Makarov described the Hasidic masters as "seated each upon his throne, with royal crowns on their heads."³⁵ This and other anti-Hasidic descriptions, including those of Abraham Baer Gottlob, while poisoned with a hatred of their subject, surely have some basis on which to build their mockeries, or else their claims would have been of little power. The very notion of inherited dynasty, the right to authority in the Hasidic community by virtue of birth, smacked of royalism. This claim, loudly proffered by Baruch of Miedzybozh in justifying his prerogative over against those of all his rivals, became normative early on in Hasidism's history. By the second decade of the nineteenth century most Hasidic communities were led by sons or grandsons of the original group around the BeSHT and the Maggid.

Chief heir to the royal lifestyle of the earlier Ukrainian courts was Israel of Ruzhyn (1796–1850), great-grandson of the Maggid. The luxury in which he and his household lived was legendary and aroused opposition both within and without the Hasidic community. Accompanying the life of pomp and great wealth in the Ruzhyner's "court" was a trumpeting of the claim of Davidic descent that had been a tradition in the Maggid's family. Here the style and traditional symbols of kingship came together, and the evocation of royal language in description of the Hasidic master would forever afterward call forth the image of this most controversial figure. Of course Ruzhyn and its defenders had a series of responses to all the charges laid against them, including the assertion that the *rebbe* derived no pleasure from the great wealth and power that were amassed in his hands, or that his

grand manner of living was but a ruse to keep the accuser from discovering his true humility.

"He is the trustee over all My household" (Num 12:7). The *zaddiq* is a channel of flow. A pipeline, through which water is to be carried, must be kept clean, no mud or refuse from within the water being allowed to stick to it. If mud does accumulate within the pipe, the water will cease its flow. So it is with the *zaddiq*: he has to keep himself from enjoying any benefit from that which flows through his pipeline. He concerns himself with all these worldly matters but profits from them not at all. Thus he becomes "the trustee over all My household." All of the rich man's fortune passes through the hands of the trustee, but he takes not a cent of his master's hoard. That is why he is so trusted. The *zaddiq* is like Moses [of whom Scripture here speaks] in his own generation: all matters of this world pass through his hands, but he derives no benefit from them.³⁶

Such a defense is, to say the least, difficult to document, and Rabbi Hayyim of Sanz spoke for many, both *hasidim* and *maskilim*, when he declared "war" on the Ruzhyn-Sadegora dynasty and its way of life.

But the utility and positive value of the royal claim should not be dismissed too quickly. One still can sense even in those groups that stood far from Ruzhyn and its abuses a measure of royalty in the way *rebbe*s of contemporary Hasidic courts conduct themselves and in the manner of the *hasidim* when in their presence. If description in royal terms had served to strengthen the claims made for Hasidic leadership, it also supplied to that leadership the texture of pastoral concern and deeply personal *noblesse oblige* that it sought. Jewish images of sacred kingship, we should recall, had long been colored with the sort of compassionate and warm hues that typify the aggadic descriptions of God's loving relationship with His children, the house of Israel. The sense of Israel as "children of the King" was underscored in Hasidism, where the disciple could also feel himself belonging to the "palace" of a beloved earthly father figure who was revered in the royal manner. "The greatest evil," according to an old Hasidic saying attributed to R. Aaron of Karlin, "is when the King's son forgets who he is." The sharp contrasts between the loving descriptions of God's kingship that filled Jewish literature and the harsh and frightening earthly kingship of the nations as it related to its Jewish subjects were mitigated for the *hasid* by the presence of holy royalty, or at least a representative of God's kingship on earth—a psychological factor that should by no means be dismissed. The *rebbe's tisch* or Sabbath meal table, usually the setting where Hasidic teachings were offered, typifies a peculiar combination of priestly and royal elements. That table was, for the *hasid*, a true altar; *shulhan domeh lamizbeah* ("the table is like an altar") in Hasidism came to bear particular

reference to this holy table. Here was the earthly priest performing the mysterious sacraments of which all would take part. This table is at the same time that of a great Polish lord, one at which he and his men joined in feasting and singing. In that "palace," as it is frequently described by visitors and later writers, the *hasid* could forget for a while his Jewish disenfranchisement from the world of royalty and pomp. He was indeed seated at the earthly embodiment of the *shulhan shel ma'alab*, at once the heavenly table, at which the divine king partook of spiritual repast with the souls of the righteous, and the sacred altar of the ideal temple.

The *Zaddiq* as Prophet

We have already indicated that the third type of biblical leader, the prophet, could be invoked by Hasidism only with some difficulty. It would seem at first glance that this should be the most accessible of the models for post-biblical Jews: one need claim neither Davidic nor Aaronic lineage to be a prophet. But the discrediting of prophecy in the age of apocalypse, the association of further claims to revelation with faiths that established themselves as being other than Judaism, and the defined and closed canon of scriptural authority all led Judaism, at least formally, to declare that it was done with prophecy. "Better sage than prophet" counsels one rabbinic saying (*Baba Batra* 12a)³⁷, and another, in a legal context: "We pay no attention to heavenly voices." This rather rigid and monolithic view of the Jewish tradition, although important in establishing the rule of law in the post-biblical Jewish community, has been shown to be lacking as a complete description of Jewish spiritual activity for almost every period of Jewish history. Something like the religion of apocalypse continued to thrive among the early rabbis despite their formal rejection of "prophecy" in their time. A historical line may be traced from near-prophetic apocalypse into the heavenly "voyaging" that took the form preserved in the sources of *merkavah* literature.³⁸ These later journeys lack prophetic message, to be sure, but they contain elements that clearly link them to prophetic vision on the one hand and rabbinic aggadah and liturgy on the other. Medieval Jewry, even before the emergence of Kabbalah, was dotted occasionally with various figures who claimed one degree or another of direct access to heavenly truth. The term "prophet" was mostly (though not universally) taboo, but there were "lesser" and more legitimate sources of revelation that could be claimed: the "holy spirit," the "revelation of Elijah," prophetic dreams, and so forth.³⁹ From the thirteenth century, these were very much in vogue among writers of the kabbalistic tradition, including some who provided actual instructions for the attainment of the holy spirit. This is especially

true of that school within medieval and later Jewish mysticism known as "prophetic kabbalah." Recent historical research has shown that this strand of mystical praxis, long intentionally hidden by the self-censorship of the mystics and the reluctance of printers, played a major role in the new growth of Kabbalah in the sixteenth century and had not a little influence on certain aspects of Hasidism. In these sources, most of which are preserved only in manuscript, the prophetic claim is made quite openly.⁴⁰

The revival of prophecy that both heralded and characterized the Sabbatian movement, highly reminiscent of that which accompanied the early church, was both culmination and negation of all the above. Here the would-be prophets violated the tradition's univocal definition of prophetic legitimacy: they spoke against the law, favoring abrogation of the commandments, at first selectively and later *en masse*. The radical wing of the Sabbatian movement, that which represented conversion to Islam in the Ottoman lands and gave birth to the well-remembered and much-hated Frankist sect in Poland, had made ample use of the charismatic vehicle, a use that could not but bring such phenomena into disrepute for the much more conservative Hasidic circles. For all their brashness in tone, even the most outspoken of the Hasidic leaders sought to maintain a position within the general Jewish community, and to answer their critics and persecutors within the theological language that both held in common.

Nevertheless, there is talk of prophetic revelation in some Hasidic circles; certainly the possibility of attaining prophetic states in our day is not denied. Well known is the claim of the Maggid that prophecy might in fact be *more* easily attainable to us than it was in the days of the Temple, a claim that stands in direct, if gentle, contradiction to the rabbinic sources quoted earlier. When the king is on the road, says the Maggid, he is more easily approachable for a commoner than when he is protected by all the royal claptrap of his life in the capital. So is it easier to attain to the "holy spirit" in our own day than it was in the times of the prophets, who required "baths and periods of aloneness" before the spirit would come upon them (*No'am Elimélech, wa-yeshuv*; ed. Nig'al, pp. 109f.)⁴¹ Such a distinction makes it clear that the Maggid lives in a world where possession by the holy spirit is a not-uncommon occurrence and one that does not require a great deal of rigorous preparation.

Of the Maggid's circle, it was particularly the well-known preacher Wolf of Zhitomir who nurtured this openness to prophetic experience. In his *Or ha-Me'ir*, one of the longer and more profound collections of Hasidic homilies, the distinction between mystical religion and prophecy seems to break down altogether. The true *hasid* in the intensity of his prayers as well

as the *zaddiq* while preaching can reach a state in which “the *shekhinah* speaks from within his mouth.”⁴² In these discussions, it is the act of prophetic inspiration that interests the Hasidic authors rather than the figure of the prophet himself. There are passages, however, in which it is precisely on prophetic authority that the Hasidic leader draws, despite all the difficulties inherent in such a usage. In the homilies this claim will typically take the form of identification with Moses, sometimes also making for the association of those who oppose the *zaddiq* with the classic enemies of prophetic authority. In the following passage R. Benjamin of Zalozhtsy proceeds from a discussion of Korah’s rebellion against the seemingly arbitrary character of purification through the ritual of the red heifer:

In our generation as well we may see one who serves God in great love, pure of body and whole of mind, worshipping by means of some form that no one else can understand. . . . The *zaddiq* is like Moses; he is “mind” [*da’at*] as Moses was the mind of all Israel. Whoever opposes him is like Korah. This is why the rabbi asked “What did Korah see . . .” meaning “What does the one who is like Korah see in the *zaddiq* who is like Moses [that leads him to rebel]?” They answered: “He saw the red heifer,” meaning that he saw some practice he could not comprehend. But just as in the case of the red heifer, the one who is “mind” understands its meaning, and only to others is it [an incomprehensible] statute. (*Torey Zahav, qorah* 83d-84a)

This identification of the *zaddiq* with Moses as the collective mind of Israel also places him in a kabbalistic realm significantly beyond that which is ordinarily claimed. Here the *zaddiq* has “risen” from association with *yesod*, the ninth in the sefirotic decade, to *da’at*, third by the usual Hasidic count. The authority of such a figure is indeed absolute, for he “knows” by a connection to the inward roots of knowledge that which others may never hope to comprehend. No wonder then that the enemies of such a figure can be identified with the classic rebel of the Mosaic tale, long seen by rabbinic tradition as one who had refused to accept Moses’ divinely authorized interpretation of the law.

There was yet another aspect of the prophetic role, specifically that of Moses, that was assigned to the *zaddiq*: the role of intercessor or defender of Israel before the divine throne. Although the term “prophet” is not used in the Hasidic sources that discuss this function, the model is clearly that of Moses standing before God following the incident of the golden calf, pleading with, cajoling, and demanding of God that He not destroy His people. This ability to argue with God and to demand of Him a standard of justice or loyalty to His covenant higher than that which appears to rule in His world is a central part of the prophetic legacy. Abraham at Sodom and Moses on Sinai serve as models for a rule assumed both by biblical

prophet and by later *zaddiq* or *hasid*. This sense of the ability to speak frankly and harshly to God (*le-batiah devarim kelapey ma'alah*)⁴³ and to achieve the desired end of course again depends on the righteousness, courage, and utter unselfishness of the one who does so. In this it is not entirely separable in the mind of the tradition from the power of *zaddiqim* to nullify the divine decree, though here the distance from magic is even greater.

We shall not deal further here with the influence of the rabbinic/medieval figures of *hasid* and *zaddiq* on the *zaddiq* of BeSHTian Hasidism. These, along with their development through the twin channels of Safed and ongoing Ashkenazic folk pietism, formed the basis for the newly emerging leader, to which all the biblical imagery of which we have spoken was added. The collections of Hasidic tales frequently contain accounts of miracles wrought by such early *zaddiq* types, bearing testimony to the fact that their intended readers saw a continuity between the *zaddiqim* or *hasidim* of prior ages and those who followed the path of the Ba'al Shem Tov.

The *Zaddiq* as Rabbi

Perhaps the strangest employment of an earlier leadership model among the *hasidim* was that of conventional rabbi: *zaddiq* in the garb of *talmid hakham*. Here the very form that had been seen as abused and debased in the times of Hasidism's origin, and the office of those who in so many cases led the opposition to the new movement, is itself claimed as the mantle of the Hasidic leaders. We must be particularly cautious here, because of the misleading possibilities of terminological confusion. In the writings of the *Toledot* and some others, as we have noted, the emerging Hasidic leader is in fact regularly referred to as *talmid hakham*, the true scholar/sage as distinct from those who had let this mantle become soiled. Such passages cannot really be used to claim the use of rabbinic justification for the *zaddiq*. But there are others where the matter goes beyond that of terms.

It is known that the written Torah and the oral Torah are all one, not to be separated from one another at all. Neither can in fact exist without the other; the secrets of the written Torah are revealed only through the oral, without which it would be but half a book. In interpreting the Torah and revealing its secrets, the sages at times even uprooted something from the text, as in the case of the prescribed forty lashes for punishment, of which they permitted only thirty-nine. All this they did by the power of the Holy Spirit that appeared in their midst, so that the very wholeness of the written Torah depends upon the oral tradition. That is why "he who says that a certain inference [as derived by the rabbis] is not from the Torah" or that "a single statement of the rabbis" is not Torah, is as one who denied the Torah of Moses our Teacher. Everything depends upon the interpretation of the rabbis. . . .

Until they had interpreted it, the Torah was not considered complete, but only half-finished; it was the rabbis, through their interpretations, who made the Torah whole. *Such is the case for each generation and its leaders; they complete the Torah. The Torah is interpreted in each generation according to that generation's needs, and according to the soul-root of those who live at that time. God thus enlightens the sages of the generation in [the interpretation of] His holy Torah. He who denies this is as-one who denies the Torah itself, God forbid. (Degel Mahaneh Ephraim, bereshit; ed. Jerusalem 1963, 6a)*

Here the Hasidic reading has done precisely that which it would seem is most difficult for it: the new leadership has usurped the rabbinic role precisely in the place where it originated and where its power most critically lies—in the interpretive function. The lineage of rabbinic authority has been wordlessly transferred to the Hasidic master; it is entirely clear to the reader of this passage that R. Ephraim, the grandson of the Ba'al Shem Tov, refers to the Hasidic master/leader rather than to the duly appointed local rabbi (*mara de-atra*, in the traditional parlance) when he speaks of “the sages of the generation.” Of course we should recall that R. Ephraim, like a number of other Hasidic leaders, served as both *rav* and *rebbe* in Sudilkov, so that for him the distinction may not have been a live issue. The same may be said of Levi Yizhak, author of this very striking parallel to the passage we have just read.

A basic principle in the service of God: We Israelites are obliged to believe in two Torahs, one written and the other oral, both given by a single shepherd. The meaning is as follows: the written Torah was given us by Moses, God's faithful servant, in writing etched on the tablets, black fire on white fire. The oral Torah given to Moses is its interpretation, including “everything a faithful student was ever to discover.” This means that the oral Torah as it was given to us essentially follows the interpretation offered by the *zaddiqim* of the generation. *As they interpret the Torah, so it is.* This great power has been given us by the Creator out of love for Israel, His chosen people. All the worlds follow their will [as manifest] in Torah. Thus did the sages say: “The blessed Holy One issues a decree, but the *zaddiq* may nullify it.” (*Qedushat Levi, yitro*; ed. Jerusalem 1958, p. 134 [emphasis added])

Here *rav* and *zaddiq* are a single figure, the interpretive function and the righteous power to negate a heavenly decree fully identified with each other! The interpretation *becomes* that which the sage says because of his power to effect change in the uppermost realms, which is where the true Torah dwells. The hermeneutical function reveals itself to be a magical one, as the text changes itself to conform with the interpretation offered by the true *zaddiq*. Here we have something that goes beyond the ongoing presence of the heavenly voice in the deliberations of the rabbis, as documented in the teachings of kabbalists in an earlier age.⁴⁴ It is neither the learning of the

rabbi nor his role as an authorized interpreter in the chain of tradition that makes him a spokesman for the word of God. It is rather his power, the power of his righteousness, if you will, as *zaddiq*, that makes him the vehicle for revelation in his day. Here the secondary tradition within Judaism, as we have described it above, has indeed become dominant, as the *zaddiq* becomes master over Torah itself.

Thus far the claims for *zaddiq* as the true interpreter of Torah remain within the aggadic realm. There, it may be argued, the claim is a relatively safe one. Medieval kabbalists had already called for complete freedom of interpretation so long as no matter of law is to be affected. This claim is found echoed in Hasidism, explicitly so in the literature of Bratslav.⁴⁵ We see in Hasidism a sort of compromise: homiletic license has indeed been given to the *rebbe*, while legal authority is to remain in the hands of the *rav*. In fact, this is the way Hasidism has functioned through much of its history, careful traditionalism in legal matters providing a safe context for theological radicalism and spiritual boldness. The final text we record here is not intended to show the breakdown of traditional legal authority among the *hasidim*—not even in the unique sect called Bratslav. It does, however, demonstrate in theory the final handing over of authority, *halakhic* authority, to the *zaddiq*, and for that reason it is worthy of note. The speaker is R. Nathan of Nemirov, the famous disciple of R. Nahman. His *Liqqutey Halakhot* is an extension of R. Nahman's teachings to cover the institutions of Jewish life, through the form of a series of homilies following the order of the *Shulhan 'Arukh*. Here he deals with the laws of clean and unclean birds, which, it will be recalled, are listed in the Torah but not given any defining characteristics:

"The signs of permitted fowl are not made explicit in the Torah, and the sages say that permitted fowl is eaten only by tradition. . . ."

The "fowl" or "bird" here is Metatron, who is of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which is also the permitted and the forbidden, the pure and the defiled. Scripture says: "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat" (Gen 2:17). It is forbidden to us to partake of anything in which good and evil are combined, as in the tree. Our eating is uplifted essentially through the oral Torah, the six orders of the Mishnah. These are given over to the *zaddiqim*, those who separate the good from the evil, the permitted from the forbidden. That is why we are told to follow all that the true *zaddiqim* and sages of each generation teach us, as Scripture says: "You shall not turn aside from them, right or left" (Deut 17:8.2), and the sages add "even if they tell you that right is left or that left is right." Purifications are required in each generation, to uplift good from that evil with which it was mingled through Adam's sin of eating of that tree. Not everyone can perform such purifications, however, but only the true *zaddiq* of each generation. Ordinary

people, those who have not fully and wholly repented, are not yet at rest. They themselves are like the tree of knowledge of good and evil, sometimes doing what is proper, and sometimes otherwise. Surely then they do not have the power to separate the evil from the good. The true *zaddiq* of each generation is one who has already pushed evil aside altogether; he is like a Sabbath, and he has the strength to effect those purifications, uplifting the sparks that dwell within each thing. He can distinguish good from evil, permitted from forbidden.

The oral Torah was given only to the *zaddiqim*, who are the sages of the generation; since they have set evil aside so fully, the power of purification lies in their hands alone. The rabbis chose this commandment of the pure fowl to indicate this fact: permitted fowl is eaten only by tradition. The fowl is Metatron, the one who represents the tree. Since good and evil are combined in him, it cannot be eaten. Were it not for the *zaddiqim* and sages of the generation, to whom the oral Torah has been given, we would not be able to eat of it at all; it is "eaten only by tradition." The same is true of other eating; it too is possible only through the generation's sages. It is only that the rabbis revealed this more clearly here, since the bird itself is a symbol of that tree. We have only the wise men of our time on whom we can rely; the Torah chose not to offer signs for the pure fowl in order to teach us that we must depend on them, for they alone have the power to transform that tree of knowledge. (*Liqqutey Halakhot, yoreh de'ah, simmaney 'of tabor 1*; ed. Jerusalem 1950, p. 68)

The *zaddiq* has come full circle: the new leader who stands in the place of the normative rabbinic figure has now become the voice of tradition itself. In this final claim we see Hasidism at its boldest and most audacious stage. That most essentially halakhic area, the realm of *issur we-hetter* (the forbidden and the permitted), has now been transformed and removed from the hands of the *rav* to those of the *rebbe*. No wonder that the rabbinic establishment fought so hard to squelch such a movement! At the same time, however, we see here the conservative streak in Hasidism that was to determine its later character. For as tradition is given over into the hands of the *zaddiq*, he himself takes on the mantle of spokesman for that tradition and becomes its greatest defender. The history of Hasidism bears witness to the fact that in this wedding of normative authority to the charismatic spokesman, it is chiefly the charismatic who is transformed as he feels the mantle of tradition and the responsibility for its maintenance bear down weightily upon him.

Notes

1. There has not yet been a full treatment of the leadership motif in the literature on Hasidism. The matter has been touched on, however, in the writings of many scholars. See especially B. Z.

Dinur, *Be-Mifneh ha-Dorot* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1955) 83-227; J. Weiss, "Reshit Zemihatah shel ha-Derekh ha-Hasidit," *Zion* 16.(1951) passim; idem, *Studies in Eastern European Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) 183-93; M. Buber, *The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960) 128-49; S. Dresner, *The Zaddik* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1960) 75-141; M. Piekarcz, *Bi-Yemey Zemihat ha-Hasidut* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1978) 280-302; S. Ettinger, "The Hasidic Movement: Reality and Ideals," in *Social Life and Social Values of the Jewish People* (= *Journal of World History* 11/1-2 [1968]) 251-66.

2. The ancient term *hasidim* was used to describe the BeSHT and his followers from the very beginning of the movement. In this usage they were seen as part of a broader phenomenon of pietists who had been on the increase since the end of the sixteenth century, when the term was given new life by the Safed Revival. In the early anti-Hasidic polemics (1772) the term is widely used and is the object of wordplays (*hasidim/hashudim*, "suspect ones") in such a way as to make it clear that this is the regular designation of the group. See M. Wilensky, *Hasidim u-Mitnaggedim* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1970) 1:59 (*kat hashudim*, the suspect sect); 62 (*u-mekhanim shemam hasidim*, self-proclaimed pietists), and frequently. It seems that the Polish documents from 1740 on Miedzybosz recently found by M. Rosman (the publication of which is at this writing still awaited) also use a term that translates *hasid*. None of this, however, implies the specific meaning of *hasid* as "disciple," coming in place of the expected *talmid*, as in the phrase *hasid shel mi*. This usage is documented only much later and seems to originate in common speech rather than in the literary sources. *Shivohy ha-BeSHT* (published 1815; ed. Jerusalem: B. Mintz, 1969) does not yet know this usage, referring to the BeSHT's disciples as *anashav* (p. 143), *anshey segulah de-BeSHT* (p. 75), *anshey havuria qadishta* (p. 144), *ha-sarim le-mishma' ato* (p. 147), or simply *talmidim* (p. 53), but not *hasidim*. The same is true in the Yiddish version of this text, first published in 1816: *zayne layt* (p. 12b), *zayne hekhste' layt* (p. 23a), *mekurovim* (p. 25a), etc. The usage is found only in the later (post-1864) tale literature.

The master of this *hasid* is referred to by a number of terms in the literature, a matter that sometimes leads to misunderstandings or imprecision. His main title in the homiletical literature is *zaddiq* (lit., "righteous one") but most usages of this term in the early Hasidic sources do not refer exclusively to the leader of a Hasidic disciple group. He is also called *rav* (rabbi), *talmid hakham* (scholar); *mokhiah* (preacher), etc., but none of these is a specific term restricted only to this usage. The Hasidic master was a new institution, for which a precise term did not exist in the vocabularies of those who wrought it. The term *rebbe* in the specifically Hasidic sense does seem to occur, in the Yiddish version of *Shivohy ha-BeSHT*: "... un zol im on nemen far eyn rebbe" (21c).

3. The homiletical literature of the period has been extensively studied, especially for questions of class attitude, social protest, and in an attempt to distinguish both Sabbatian and Hasidic preaching from that of others. See especially the works by Dinur, Weiss, and Piekarcz cited in n. 1.

4. See Dresner, *The Zaddik*; and G. Nig'al, *Torat Ba'al ha-Toledot* (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1974).

5. Jacob Joseph was rabbi in Shargorod, Rashkov, Nemirov, and Polonnoye. See Dresner, *The Zaddik*, 256 n. 4, based on S. Dubnov, *Toledot ha-Hasidut* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1930-31) 94.

6. See G. Scholem, "Demuto ha-Historit shel Rabbi Yisra'el Ba'al Shem Tov," *Molad* 18 (1961) 335-56.

7. Determining the teachings of the BeSHT is one of the great difficulties in research on Hasidism, since R. Israel left no book of his own and all the later Hasidic masters, despite their highly divergent views, sought to claim the original master as their own. Of first rank in any attempt to characterize the BeSHT's teachings are those few writings which he did leave. To date there are only two short texts that are regarded by most scholars as unimpeachably his: the letter he sent to his brother-in-law Gershon of Kutny, first published by Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye in 1781 (translation in L. Jacobs, *Jewish Mystical Testimonies* [New York: Schocken, 1977] 148-55),

and a commentary on Psalm 107, printed in several Hasidic prayer books and edited critically by R. Schatz in *Tarbiz* 42 (1973) 154–84. Second in importance are the many quotations in the name of “my teacher” in the works of Rabbi Jacob Joseph himself. These were later combined with some other materials to form the *Keter Shem Tov* (Zolkeiv, 1794–95); they are yet to be the subject of thorough scholarly examination in their own right. Attention should also be paid, though with greater caution, to the direct heirs of the BeSHT in the Ukraine, and especially to his two grandsons, Moses Hayyim Ephraim of Sudilkov (*Degel Mahaneh Ephraim* [n.p., 1808?]) and Baruch of Miedzybozh (*Buzina di-Nehora* [Lvov, 1880]). Still further caution is needed with regard to quotations from the BeSHT in the writings of Dov Baer of Miedzyrzec and his disciples, who clearly used the authority of the BeSHT for teachings that took a somewhat different direction. An uncritical but most important collection of materials attributed to the BeSHT is *Sefer Ba'al Shem Tov*, ed. Simeon Mendel of Gavartchov (Lodz, 1938). That work is somewhat marred by excessive dependency on writings from the Zydachov/Komarna dynasty.

It is clear from all the above that the BeSHT was not a “kabbalist” as the term was generally used in the eighteenth century (this despite the reported designation as such in the Polish document mentioned in n. 2); he refers only seldom to the symbolic language of contemporary kabbalists. He does, however, frequently quote and comment on passages from the *Zohar*. It is also hard to characterize him as a “preacher”; his teachings as reported are short and aphoristic rather than homiletical in the typical lengthy style of the day. He seems to have been especially fond of the pungent play on words, as frequently reported by Jacob Joseph.

8. There is an extensive scholarly literature on *Shivhey ha-BeSHT* and its various recensions. See especially the treatments by C. Shmeruk in *Zion* 28 (1963) 86–105; A. Ya'ari in *Kirjath Sefer* 39 (1964) 249–72, 394–407, 552–61; A. Rubenstein in *Tarbiz* 35 (1966) 174–91, in *'Aley Sefer* 6/7 (1979) 157–86, and in *Sinai* 86 (1980) 62–71, 89 (1981) 59–68, 90 (1982) 269–79. Y. Mondschein has published a full introduction to his facsimile edition of a *Shivhey ha-BeSHT* manuscript (Jerusalem, 1982) containing important material of a textual nature. Mondschein has also replied to one of Rubenstein's articles in *Tarbiz* 51 (1982) 673–80. A literary-structuralist approach to the *Shivhey ha-BeSHT* has been developed by Y. Elstein in his article in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Folklore* 2 (1982) 66–79 and in his book *Pa'amey Bet Melekh* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1984).

Shivhey ha-BeSHT unquestionably contains materials that faithfully reflect the period of the BeSHT's lifetime and information about him and his circle. The historian who makes use of this work has to learn to distinguish the purely legendary material that has been included within it from those portions that contain a grain of historical fact. These distinctions are not made easily and do not depend on the question of the various separate strands from which the work was woven and their editing, to which so much scholarly attention has been devoted. The specific content of each individual tale must be weighed carefully, compared to what is known from non-legendary sources, held up against historical realia, etc.

9. See the sources cited in n. 1 and add to them the work of Jacob Katz in *Tradition and Crisis* (New York: Schocken, 1971) 231–44.

10. On the separatist self-perception of medieval German-Jewish *hasidim*, see I. Marcus, *Piety and Society* (Leiden: Brill, 1981) *passim*.

11. The phrase is found in the epistle sent by the Vilna community to that of Brest-Litovsk, based on Deut 32:17. The document was part of *Zemir 'Arizim we-Harvot Zurim* (Aleksnits, 1772). It was republished in Wilensky, *Hasidim*, 1:59. The accusation that the *hasidim* are spiritual “new-comers” or innovators is widespread in the bans.

12. *Baba Batra* 12a; ‘*Erwin* 7a. See N. N. Glatzer, “A Study of the Talmudic-Midrashic Interpretation of Prophecy” (1946), reprinted in his *Essays in Jewish Thought* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1978) 16–35, as well as E. Urbach, “When did Prophecy Cease?” *Tarbiz* 17 (1946) 1–11; idem, “Halachah and Prophecy,” *Tarbiz* 18 (1947) 1–27.

13. References, mostly in the form of veiled hints, that the accusation of Sabbatianism was made

against the early *hasidim*, are widely found in the anti-Hasidic polemical literature. See Wilensky, *Hasidim*, index s.v. "Shabbatai Zevi," "Shabta' ut," "Shabta'im."

14. See *Hagigah* 12b. "Zaddiq is the foundation of the world," quoting Prov 10:25. I have discussed this matter in "The Zaddiq as Axis Mundi in Later Judaism," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 45 (1977):327-47. See also the various treatments of the zaddiq by G. Schölem: the chapter "Zaddik" in his *Von der mystischen Gestalt der Gottheit* (Zurich: Rhein-Verlag, 1962) [Hebrew version in *Pirkey Yesod be-Havanat ha-Qabbalah u-Semaleha* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1976)]; "Three Types of Jewish Piety," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 38 (1969) 323-40; "The thirty-six Hidden Tsadikim in Jewish Legends" in *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York: Schocken, 1971). On zaddiq in the rabbinic sources, see R. Mach, *Der Zaddik in Talmud und Midrasch* (Leiden: Brill, 1957).

15. For other references to Hanina in the writings of Rabbi Jacob Joseph, see Dresner, *The Zaddik*, 277 n. 33. This teaching of the BeSHT is also quoted at the beginning of *Keter Shem Tov*, #3. See also *No'am Elimelech*, ed. G. Nig'al (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1978) 11a (56).

16. *Yad Yosef* by Joseph Zarfati, printed in Venice in 1616, and in Amsterdam in 1700. The passage quoted is found at the beginning of *Iekh lekha* (ed. Amsterdam 12b): "They mean that because he made do with the bare necessities, a high moral rung, the whole world was sustained 'for the sake of Hanina my son'; the reason for this was that Hanina was satisfied with a measure of carobs from one Sabbath to the next."

17. M. Piekarz, *Bi-Yemey Zemihat ha-Hasidut*, 16ff. It is noteworthy that this statement is one of the very few rabbinic-type *divrey Torah* that the *Shivvey ha-BeSHT* (ed. Jerusalem 1969, p. 149) also attributes to the Ba'al Shem Tov.

18. See Y. Liebes, "The Messiah of the Zohar," in *Ha-Ra'ayon ha-Meshihi be-Yisra'el* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences, 1982) 87-236.

19. On Elijah the prophet, see the psychological study by Aharon Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978) and the works quoted in Wiener's bibliography (pp. 225ff.).

20. See J. Dan, "On the History of the Hagiographic Literature," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Folklore* 1 (1981) 82-100.

21. Zaddiq as a designation for Sabbatai Sevi is found in a source included in A. Freimann's *Inyenei Shabbatai Zevi* (Berlin: Mekizzei Nirdamim, 1912) 54. This passage is discussed by Y. Liebes in the important treatment of the zaddiq theme in his "Zaddiq the Foundation of the World: A Sabbatian Mythos," *Da'at* 1 (1978) 37ff.; see esp. nn. 29-31; cf. Liebes's comments also in "The Messiah of the Zohar," 114 n. 118.

22. See J. Weiss, "Reshit Zemihatah." Despite a certain tendency on Weiss's part to exaggerate in the psychological analysis of these materials, I agree with his claim that evidence can be found in the sources of guilt over the (perhaps inevitable) failure of the preachers' mission.

23. Cf. Piekarz, *Bi-Yemey Zemihat ha-Hasidut*, 107ff.

24. Parallels to this text, connecting the distinction made here to that between Noah and Abraham as leaders of their respective generations are found in the writings of Rabbi Jacob Joseph. See Dresner, *The Zaddik*, 152ff., 284 n. 23.

25. In the previous passage, the Maggid had referred to both types as "complete zaddiqim," though this is promptly undercut by the ensuing discussion. The sharp language in which the dichotomy is expressed by Elimelech leaves no doubt that only one of the two is worthy of respect.

26. This is the essential insight of I. Heinemann's *Darkevey ha-Aggadah* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1954). On the Hellenistic background of the rabbi as wisdom teacher, see H. Fischel, *Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 1973). On the rabbi in the broader religious context of late antiquity, especially Babylonia, see J. Neusner, "The Phenomenon of the Rabbi in Late Antiquity," *Numen* 16 (1969) 1-20, 11 (1970) 1-18. See also Neusner's "Rabbis and Community in Third Century Babylonia," in *Religions in Antiquity*, ed. J. Neusner (Leiden: Brill, 1970).

27. See my "On Translating Hasidic Homilies," *Prooftexts* 3 (1983) 63-72.
28. In the continuation of the same passage, however, it turns out that the individual worshiper is to see himself as *kohen*. This shift is a good example of the ambivalent relationship between the democratization of Jewish spiritual life and the promulgation of a new charismatic elite, both of which are typical of early Hasidism. The passage quoted here contains plays on both the words *qorban* (QRV, "draw near") and 'olah ('LH, "raise up").
29. The idea of prayer as spiritual sacrifice is quite ancient. It may be traced to Scripture itself (Hos 14:3) and is found in the Qumran literature (1QS 9:4; 10:6). A more radical expression of this idea, in which the worshiper places himself on the metaphoric altar, is found in Romans 12:1. See M. Newton, *The Concept of Purity at Qumran and in the Letters of Paul* (Cambridge: University Press, 1985). Compare with Philo *On the Special Laws* 1.270 and *Who Is the Heir* 184. Rabbinic sources also see prayer as spiritual sacrifice, 'avodah sheba-lev (Ta' anit 2a). *Numbers Rabbah* 18:21 attributes to Rabbi Simon the view that the worshiper at prayer sacrifices his own fat, blood, and soul. This motif becomes a favorite of later Jewish moralists; see I. Tishby, *Mishnat ha-Zohar* (Jerusalem: Bialik, 1982) 2:183-246.
30. For the *Zohar's* treatment of the Temple cult, see Tishby's *Mishnat ha-Zohar*, 2:183-246. The *Zohar's* views on this topic are the subject of a doctoral dissertation currently in progress by Rabbi Seth Brody at the University of Pennsylvania.
31. Cf. the discussion of *zaddiqim* and preachers as healers in Piekarz, *Bi-Yemey Zemihat ha-Hasidut*, 120ff.
32. *Gittin* 62a, *rabbanan iqeru melakhim* ("rabbis are called kings"), apparently often confused in later quotation with *Nedarim* 20b, *man mal' akhey ha-sharet, rabbanan* ("Who are the angels? Rabbis?").
33. Kalonymos Kalman Epstein of Cracow (d. 1823), author of this work, was a leading disciple of Elimelech of Lezajsk.
34. *Abavat Shalom* contains the sermons of Menahem Mendel of Kossov (1768-1826), progenitor of the Kossov/Vyznitsa dynasty.
35. Wilensky, *Hasidim*, 2:210.
36. Quoted in *Orot Yisra'el* (Jerusalem: n.p., n.d.), a collection of Ruzhyn teachings, p. 152.
37. See n. 12 above.
38. See M. Himmelfarb, "From Prophecy to Apocalypse: The Book of the Watchers and Tours of Heaven," in *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible through the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Green (World Spirituality 13; New York: Crossroad, 1986) 145-65. On the prophetic links of the early Enoch literature, see G. W. E. Nickelsburg, "Enoch, Levi, and Peter: Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100 (1981) 575-600. M. E. Stone has a very interesting note on prophetic models for Enoch in his "Lists of Revealed Things," in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright*, ed. F. M. Cross et al. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976). [My thanks to M. Himmelfarb for her help with this note.]
39. See A. J. Heschel, "Inspiration in the Middle Ages," in *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume*, Hebrew Section (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1950).
40. See the discussion by M. Idel in his forthcoming *Religious Experience in the Thought of Abraham Abulafia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).
41. Cf. the parallel sources quoted by R. Schatz-Uffenheimer in *Quietistic Elements in Eighteenth Century Hasidic Thought* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1968) 175ff.
42. See the discussion in the forthcoming work by M. Idel (*Religious Experience*), which serves to update the treatment in Schatz-Uffenheimer, *Quietistic Elements*.
43. M. W. Levinsohn-Loewy, *Sefer Hashbanah, The American Hebrew Yearbook*, (1938) 113-27.
44. See Scholem, *Messianic Idea in Judaism*, 300ff., quoting the kabbalists R. Meir Ibn Gabbai and R. Isaiah Horowitz.
45. See the sources quoted in my *Tormented Master* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1978) 330 n. 5.

JEWISH SPIRITUALITY

FROM THE
SIXTEENTH-CENTURY REVIVAL
TO THE PRESENT

Edited by
Arthur Green

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