

ABSTRACT

ON APOTHEOSIS IN THE KABBALAH OF RABBI BAHYA BEN ASHER

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The article discusses the ideal of mystical transformation in the writings of one of the most prolific Kabbalists active in the late thirteenth century: R. Bahya ben Asher ibn Halawa from Saragossa. The study offers a detailed analysis of Bahya's doctrine of the mystical-apophatic path of perfection by analyzing key concepts that arrange the hierarchy of perfection in his system: innocence (*temimut*), walking with God (*hithalchut*), reversal (*hithapchut*), and translation (*leqiha*). These attributes appear in the Hebrew Bible in connection with apophatic figures who embody and exemplify various stages in the hierarchy of perfection: Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Elijah. Bahya offers an extensive discussion of the various stages of perfection connected with these figures' intellectual, ethical, and mystical achievements. The attributes and the biblical figures who embody them represent a rich and complex mystical path that the mystics follow towards eschatological perfection. The study presents and analyzes the original path of perfection introduced by Bahya, through a careful analysis of his many discussions in his writings, both in print and manuscripts.