
The Four Rabbinim

ONE NIGHT four rabbinim were visited by an angel who awakened them and carried them to the Seventh Vault of the Seventh Heaven. There they beheld the sacred Wheel of Ezekiel.

Somewhere in the descent from *Pardes*, Paradise, to Earth, one Rabbi, having seen such splendor, lost his mind and wandered frothing and foaming until the end of his days. The second Rabbi was extremely cynical: "Oh I just dreamed Ezekiel's Wheel, that was all. Nothing *really* happened." The third Rabbi carried on and on about what he had seen, for he was totally obsessed. He lectured and would not stop with how it was all constructed and what it all meant . . . and in this way he went astray and betrayed his faith. The fourth Rabbi, who was a poet, took a paper in hand and a reed and sat near the window writing song after song praising the evening dove, his daughter in her cradle, and all the stars in the sky. And he lived his life better than before.⁵