

Bath-kol (Hebreeuws: bat qol, letterlijk vertaald: „de dochter der stem”, wellicht op te vatten als een „bepaalde stem”, d.w.z. een „bovenaardse stem”) wordt in de Rabbijnse literatuur (Talmud en Midrasj) gebruikt voor een hemelse stem, waaruit de goddelijke wil of het goddelijke oordeel werd vernomen. In het oude testament wordt ze gesymboliseerd door een duif. Volgens de oude traditie was het de Bath Kol die Kain vroeg waar zijn broer was. Van zulke hemelse stemmen is ook sprake in het Nieuwe Testament: Matth. 3 : 17; Mark. 1 : n; Luk. 3 :22; Joh. 12 : 28; Openb. 10 : 4.

Deze hemelse stem werd opgevat als de vorm van de goddelijke openbaring in een tijd, dat de profetische openbaring had opgehouden en de eigenlijke profeten niet meer optraden.

BATH KOL bāth kōl (בַּת קוֹל, the daughter of a voice=sound, tone, call). The term denotes an audible divine voice apart from any visible divine manifestation. It is distinguishable from such phenomena as God speaking to Moses, where there was a divine manifestation in the earthquake, and from God speaking to the prophets, which was usually apart from an audible voice, by the Holy Spirit resting upon them. It was noted for its remarkable quality of tone, and sometimes likened to whispering or chirping. It proclaimed God’s will or judgment to individuals, groups, rulers, localities and whole nations.

The Gr. NT equivalent is φωνή, G5889, not ἤχώ, G2493, (cf. Lightfoot on Matt 3:17, also cf. Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; John 12:28). The usual formula in Aram. VSS, Midrash and Talmud is “a voice fell from heaven,” or “was heard,” or “proceeded from heaven.” This is reproduced in the Gr. ἤλθεν οὖν φωνή ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (John 12:28; cf. Rev 10:4, 8; 18:4, etc.).

Examples of bath kol are—

1. God’s message given to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 4:31), “a voice fell from heaven.” However, Leupold (Exposition of Daniel, p. 200) denies this is bath kol.
2. According to Jos. Ant. XIII. x. 3, John Hyrcanus (134-104 b.c.) heard the voice (Gr. φωνή, G5889) of God in the temple as he offered a sacrifice. In the Talmud (Babylonian Šotah, 33a, Jerusalem Sotah, ix. 24b) this voice is called bath kol.
3. At Jesus’ baptism a voice from heaven was heard (Matt 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22).
4. When Jesus was transfigured a voice came from heaven (Matt 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35).
5. Just before Christ entered into His passion a voice was heard from heaven saying “I have glorified it (thy name) and will glorify it again” (John 12:28).
6. When Paul was stricken on the Damascus road he heard a voice from heaven (Acts 9:4; 22:7, 9; 26:14).
7. Peter’s vision at Joppa of the clean and unclean animals was accompanied by a voice saying “Rise, Peter; kill and eat” (Acts 10:13, 15).
8. In the Tannaitic period (100 b.c.-a.d. 200) bath kol was thought to be an echo of God’s voice, perhaps due to the movement toward extreme anti-anthropomorphism in post-exilic Judaism. Some rabbis of the period yearned for such a divine voice to resolve perplexities. Rabbi Joshua (c. a.d. 100) opposed this tendency, stressing the finality of written revelation (cf. Isa 9:8; Text XII Pat [Levi] 18:6; 2 Baruch 13:1).
9. The Talmud contains many references to bath kol (cf. Blau).

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