

THE NOTION OF THE WILL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT  
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF TALMUDIC THOUGHT

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by  
Isaac Cohen  
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## PREFACE

In early Hebrew literature the teachings of theology are expressed in the language of metaphor and allegory. The great theological teachers who in Halachic literature demonstrated extraordinarily powers of analysis and the strictest logical reasoning found themselves unable to be systematic and explicit in their exposition of the profound conceptions of their religious thought. In Bible and Talmud we find no orderly presentation of creeds and dogmas, but a profusion of parables and figures.

In each of the many metaphors of Scripture and Rabbinic literature certain basic concepts of belief are assumed by the writers. In each poem and parable some facet of a profound truth is presented with particular brilliance by means of the freest metaphorical expression.

One of the most characteristic concepts of Jewish thought, underlying innumerable teachings of religion and morality, is the concept of Man as the acme of Divine creation. The sanctity of human personality, created by God in the image of the Divine, possessing a soul which is uniquely personal and originating from the Spirit of God, is one of the transcending dogmas of Judaism characteristic of the entire system of Jewish thought.

In this study an attempt has been made to investigate the Old Testament view of the nature of man and his soul by examining various Hebrew expressions in which reference is made to some part of the psychology of man. By analysing the various descriptions of the nature of man, his character, mind, ideals and personality I have sought to reconstruct the central element of all personality,

namely, the Will. As the investigation has proceeded, however, it has become apparent that the power which is generally described as the Will may also in each case be described as the personality of man as a whole. Despite the concretistic style of the Old Testament there is no justification to attribute the Will to any particular organ or agency whether physical or psychical. The Will cannot be identified with the Spirit, soul, heart or life-energy in particular. The Will is the man as a whole, or, as we may describe him by that which characterises his individuality, it is the person or personality.

The first part of this study traces the Will as the personality in the literary usage of the Old Testament. In the second part the same concept of the Will is found to characterise the religious, ethical and philosophical thought of Rabbinic and mediaeval Jewish literature. In the Rabbinical interpretation of Old Testament texts it is seen that the concept of the Will in post-Biblical literature coincides with the Hebrew notion of the Will as portrayed in the Old Testament. In this study I have been concerned particularly with Jewish interpretation of the Old Testament thereby elucidating some aspects of Rabbinic thought.

In the course of my reading I have also traced the notion of the Will in certain aspects of Rabbinic law such as the element of the Will in Contract, Testament and Evidence, and in the concept of Responsibility in Civil and Criminal law. These subjects, however, are omitted from this study as they represent a more advanced investigation into Rabbinic thought than may be required here. The examination of the theological problem of the Freedom of the Will is confined to a presentation of the views of Maimonides as

representing an advanced exposition of Jewish philosophy.

Old Testament quotations are from the Revised Version unless otherwise stated. References to tractates of the Talmud normally refer to the Babylonian Talmud. References to the Jerusalem Talmud are indicated by the abbreviation Jer. The transliteration of Hebrew words follows the rules adopted by the Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol. I, p. xxv. Where the texts of other writers are quoted, however, their own form of transliteration is preserved. In view of the multiplicity of subjects dealt with in relation to the Will, the Bibliography has been confined to books quoted or referred to in the text.

I wish to express my indebtedness to the Rev. Prof. N.W. Porteous for his unflinching encouragement and guidance in the development of this investigation. I wish also to express my gratitude to my teachers at Jews' College, London, who instructed me in the paths of Biblical and Rabbinic studies. My thanks are likewise due to the librarians of the Edinburgh University Library, the Scottish National Library, New College and the Edinburgh Central Public Library for their courteous assistance.

In conclusion I would like to pay tribute to the memory of the late Rev. Prof. O.S. Rankin under whose kindly supervision I commenced this work. His deep scholarship in a wide range of Rabbinic literature coupled with his gentle human sympathy have left a lasting impression of a beloved scholar and teacher.

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Name of Candidate Isaac Cohen  
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 Title of Thesis THE NOTION OF THE WILL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.  
A CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF TALMUDIC THOUGHT.

On examining the psychological usages of the Old Testament, and taking into consideration the style of Hebrew thought and expression, it is found that all the elements of man which are generally thought of as associated with, or originating in the Will, such as the principle of life, consciousness, mind, feeling, volition, and character are considered as activities of the Soul. These psychical activities are described by various Hebrew terms which are so often interchangeable that the activities of the Soul appear to be shared by both Spirit and Body, and the place of the Soul may be traced almost to any part of the entity of man. The functioning of the Soul, the exercise of Reason and the Senses and the initiation and prosecution of movement are all considered as the activities of man as a whole, as a single dynamic personality.

The unique creativeness and independence of human personality is one of the great conceptions of Jewish religious thought and is in no way diminished, but rather enhanced, by the worship of God and by obedience to God's law.

The principle of the freedom of the Will is universally assumed in the Old Testament, Jewish Apocryphal literature and Rabbinic literature as the basis of Jewish ethics and theology. It is possible for man to perfect his own personality by training his character through the proper exercise of thought, emotion and habit. The religious system of the Torah is effective in engendering the best attitudes of thought and feeling, in deterring man from evil, and in inspiring him to do good.

In mediaeval Jewish philosophy where Free Will is unequivocally expounded the freedom of the Will is generally associated with the power of acting in accordance with Reason. Philosophical and



exegetical problems raised by this notion of the Will in ethics and theology are discussed and explained by, among others, Saadia and Maimonides.

In Rabbinic usage, as in the Old Testament, Mind, Soul and Will almost coincide with each other except that in the concept of Daath it is seen that the Will transcends both Mind and Soul and is the basic agent of Personality.

Whatever faculties man possesses, both physical and psychical, are faculties of the Will. The attributes of the Will coincide, in Hebrew thought, with the powers of the central force of human personality. The Will may therefore be stated to correspond with the entire Self, Ego or Personality of man.

That which is generally identified with the Will is spoken of in the Old Testament and in Rabbinic literature as the choice, mood or energy of the man. The totality of the power of the Will is far more than just a capacity of the individual; it is rather the power of the individual as a whole.

The power of the Will is nothing more nor less than the entire power of the man.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- A.J.V. American Jewish Version
- A.V. Authorised Version
- B.D.B. Brown, Driver and Briggs: A Hebrew and English  
Lexicon of the Old Testament (1906)
- I.C.C. International Critical Commentary
- J.E. Jewish Encyclopaedia
- Jer. Jerusalem Talmud
- J.Q.R. Jewish Quarterly Review
- J.T.S. Journal of Theological Studies
- O.E.D. Oxford English Dictionary
- R.S.V. Revised Standard Version
- R.V. Revised Version

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## P A R T T W O

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## INTRODUCTION

### The Problem of the Will.

The philosophical problem of the Will is one of those questions that run through philosophy from early times to our own day taking different forms at different times.<sup>1</sup> It is a question which is at the root of all morality and religion and belongs to every people and every age. The popular attitude to this question reflects the Intuitionist view as has been expressed by Samuel Johnson, "Sir, we know the will is free, and there's an end on it."

Whereas however discussion on the problem of the Will in religion and moral philosophy has been abundant, we find but scant description of the Will itself. In early and mediaeval times the Will is generally accepted as some part of man's individuality which somehow exists independently of his body. It is one of the wonders of human existence associated with the spirit of God, the divine part of man which is too wonderful for man's understanding:

"Of all the many wonders, none is more wonderful than Man...who has learnt the arts of Speech, of wind-swift Thought, and of living in Neighbourliness..."

(Sophocles: Antigone.)<sup>2</sup>

Most of the questions put to themselves by those who study human beings remain without answer. We know that we are a compound of tissues, organs, fluids and consciousness, but the

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1. B. Russell: A History of Western Philosophy, p. 287.

2. S.E. Toulmin: The Place of Reason in Ethics, (1950) - frontispiece. Cf. Fulton J. Sheen: The Philosophy of Religion.



nature of consciousness and the relation between consciousness and cerebrum still remain a mystery. Even today we still lack almost entirely a knowledge of the physiology of nervous cells. We do not know how the mind is influenced by the state of the organs, nor how the organism itself is modified by the mind. We are unable to define what relations exist between skeleton muscles and organs and mental and spiritual activities. We do not know how certain physiological and mental factors determine happiness or misery, success or failure. We attempt to analyse the different factors of human motivation and speak of autonomic processes and tissue needs, external stimulus, postural tensions and the action of the nerve centres. Some psychologists have attempted to locate the root of motivation and will-power in the cells of the cerebral cortex, particularly the frontal lobe, but further investigations provide little physiological support for confining the Will particularly to these sources.<sup>1</sup>

As far as the origin and destiny of the psychical powers in man all that can be said by psychology is little more than what was said by Sir Thomas Browne long ago: "There is a something in us that can be without us and will be after us; though indeed it hath no history what it was before us and cannot tell how it entered into us."<sup>2</sup>

In discussing the researches of Sigmund Freud in his revolutionary work of modern psycho-analysis and self-analysis, his biographer writes: "In the long history of humanity the task

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1. Cole: General Psychology, (New York, 1939), pp. 377-380.  
A. Carrel: Man the Unknown, pp. 17-18.
  2. F.R. Tennant: The Soul and its Faculties, p. 104.

had often been attempted...but all had succumbed to the effort. Inner resistance had barred advance. There had from time to time been flashes of intuition to point the way, but they had always flickered out. The realm of the unconscious, whose existence was so often postulated, remained dark, and the words of Heraclitus still stood: 'The soul of man is a far country which cannot be approached or explored'.<sup>1</sup>

What is the Will and what is its place within the human being? Is it an organ of the body or is it an abstract conception; is it a power or a faculty or a process; is it a feeling or an intellectual act; or is it a mysterious system of complicated but harmonious powers? Our consciousness informs us that it is a power associated with the human mind. Is it possible to classify it among the powers known in the human mind?

Modern descriptions of the Will cover a wide range of possibilities and vary greatly in usefulness. At one extreme we find an account by Hughes which is just a confused accumulation of every possible usage of the term, speaking of the Will at the same time as not any particular organ of psychical activity and yet as both a function of the Mind and a process of Mind as well as the master and organ of mind and soul.<sup>2</sup> At the other extreme is the account of Mind by Ryle in which the existence of such an entity as the Will is repudiated altogether, except as a manner of speech.<sup>3</sup>

In the discussions of Western Philosophy on the freedom of the

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1. Ernest Jones: Sigmund Freud, Life and Work, Vol. 1 (Hogarth Press, 1953).
  2. T. Hughes: The Human Will: Its Functions and Freedom, (London, 1867), pp. 26 f., 40 f.
  3. G. Ryle: The Concept of Mind, (London, 1951), p. 64 et passim.

Will we may perceive three different concepts. In Locke's definition of Freedom the Will is thought of as the power of human energy so that Liberty of Will '...is the power a man has to do or forbear doing any particular action' (Essay II, xxi, 15) - so Hobbes (Leviathan 21, 1) and H. Cohen (Logic s. 259). The Will is the power of choice or determination for Hume, for Liberty for him is the power of acting according to the determination of the Will (Enquiry VIII, 1, 73). According to Bonnet the Will is a faculty of the Mind and the unrestricted exercise of that faculty is called Freedom; 'Freedom is the faculty by which the mind executes its will' (Essai, XII, 149).

According to another school of thought Freedom of Will is described as government by Reason. It is recognised that the Will is the agent of self-government. The mere absence of restraint in the exercise of this self-government is, they maintain, not adequate to the dignity of a human being. Man is subject to the solicitations of impulses and desires which are not rational; therefore the more dignified attribute of man is his freedom to govern himself by the dictates of Reason. This view is held by Spinoza, Butler, Kant, Rousseau, Hegel, Bosanquet and Bradley. It is expressed by Kant thus: Freedom is 'independence of anything other than the moral law alone'. (Critique of Pure Reason - Akademie ed., p. 93.) The Will here is 'a mode of causality in living beings in so far as they are rational'.<sup>1</sup> Kant however sometimes speaks of Reason as determining the Will and at other times he identifies practical reason with the Will, as when he

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1. M. Cranston: Freedom, p. 134.

defines the Will as the power of the rational being of acting according to the idea of a law. (Metaphysics of Morals.)<sup>1</sup> Here it appears that Reason is itself the power that wills an action in accordance with its own maxims. The will is a quality of rational causation - thus a free action of the Will is always a rational action. Kant propounds two types of Reason, the subjective and objective, in order to explain those free actions of man which are contrary to Reason. Kant's description appears to be too closely related to moral judgment than is required of a scientific description. His doctrine may be of value in moral philosophy but does not help us in defining the nature of the Will other than suggesting that it is a combination of both the power of human energy and the faculty of Mind or Reason.

According to the first school of thought the Will may be described as the faculty, power, control or determination whereby a man exercises any function. It may be the common-stock of Power that man uses in the exercise of any faculty, and the strength or weakness of Will being related to the amount of Power that man uses in energising any faculty.

Psychologists speak of the Will as an element of Personality whereby the individual exercises Volition. In analysing Volition they discover the determining factors of sensory perception, feeling, connotation, concentration of attention as well as the element of ideation which supposes an ideal 'representation' before actualisation. These factors are the 'springs of action' which prompt volition. By willing we choose which of various promptings or motives we shall adopt. Here Will is the power of choice, the

1. H.J. Paton: The Categorical Imperative, p. 80.

agent of which is sometimes spoken of as the Soul.<sup>1</sup>

Bergson does not speak of the Will as a faculty of man nor as the particular agent of mental or bodily activities. A human being is not made up of an aggregate of conscious states, including the Will. The Person is a unitary whole and that unity is Human Personality. Human Personality is spoken of as being free because the freely willed actions of this whole Personality originate entirely from the Person and are not bound by any determining laws. The acts of the Will are the acts of the Person as a whole. The Will therefore is the Person, the inner unitary self. A free act of the Will is an outward manifestation of this inner self, being an expression of the whole of the self. The individuality of man is ever changing and expanding. In choosing between two alternatives the individual may pass through a series of states perhaps tending now one way and now the other; finally the free action of the Will emerges and thus the self finds its own expression.<sup>2</sup>

While rationalism thus applies its intellect and imagination in its attempts to solve the ultimate problems of existence, the religious thinker does not hesitate to take account of the fact of the presence of Soul in his being and in his self-expression. The possession of Soul by man links him with the unity of the whole of creation and endows him with the character of the Divine. The Soul to him is the first principle of human action.<sup>3</sup>

To the mystic the world that is seen is transcended by yet

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1. F.R. Tennant: The Soul and its Faculties, p. 131.

2. M. Cranston: Freedom, p. 139 f. Cf. H.W. Carr: The Free Will Problem; Henri Bergson: The Philosophy of Change.

3. I. Broyde: 'Soul', J.E., XI, p. 475.

another world invisible and incomprehensible to the pure intellect of man, but both visible and comprehensible to the craving of the human Soul for communion with God. No ratiocination, no syllogism of logic, can strip off the veil from this elusive world. The pathway to it lies through something quite other than intellectuality or sense-experience. It can be grasped only by those inward indefinable movements of feeling or emotion which in their totality constitute the Soul. In the Old Testament we do not find any highly elaborated mystical doctrines, as were developed in subsequent ages, but we find the records of the immediate and first-hand experience of God by the people of Israel. Communion with God in its most intense and living state is the nature of the religious expression of the people of the Bible. The power of such expression of religious love and devotion is in Jewish thought the noblest activity of the free human Will. The exercise of Inwardness in religious devotion manifested the immanence of God in the Will of man.<sup>1</sup>

The Cartesian use of the term 'psychology' referred to the study of mind and mental phenomena as unextended substance in distinction from matter as extended substance. The modern scope of psychology, however, includes all the integrated action of the total individual. Modern psychology includes within itself the science of human behaviour, where behaviour is taken to mean the action or conduct of the whole person. Physiology is closely related to psychology because the former deals with the action of separate organs and bodily systems which are not always to be distinguished from the

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1. J. Abelson: Jewish Mysticism, pp. 9, 10, 12, 15.

study of human behaviour. In the science of human psychology it is necessary to study the whole person, his thoughts, his conduct and also those properties of him<sup>s</sup> which make him think and act as he does. Both consciousness and behaviour, as well as language as an expression of consciousness must be the subjects of investigation in studying the psychology of man.<sup>1</sup>

The study of the Will in the Old Testament will lead us to a study of human psychology in its widest aspects as expressed in the Old Testament and as it is referred to in Rabbinic literature. In our study of Old Testament Psychology the works of Delitzsch, Briggs, Wh. Robinson, W.R. Smith, Pederson<sup>e</sup>, Eichrodt, Johnson and others have been examined, compared and developed in various aspects. Likewise in the study of Rabbinic Psychology the findings of W. Hirsch, R.V. Feldman, Moore, Malter, S. Horovitz and W.D. Davies have been extended. The works of many authors have been consulted in Rabbinic Ethics, Theology and Philosophy and their thoughts have been compared with other modern and mediaeval writers.

#### The Problem of Rabbinic Thought.

The study of the psychical nature of man is termed by the Rabbis the knowledge of the secrets of life, Maaseh Bereshith. This subject included the origin, essence and nature of the soul, its relationship with God and with man, and its existence after the death of the human being. These secrets God did not reveal openly in His Torah. The Rabbis of the Talmud were masters of

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1. E.G. Boring: 'Psychology', Encyclopaedia Britannica (1954), XVIII, p. 675.

this knowledge. The Talmud declares the praise of those scholars who uncover the secrets of God. (Pesachim 119a.) But it was generally accepted among the Rabbis that it was forbidden to expound this knowledge in public. (Hagiga 11b.) Whereas, however, the metaphysical study of the Cosmogony, Maaseh Merkabah, was not permitted to be taught even to a single pupil, the secrets of creation, Maaseh Bereshith, could be taught individually but not publicly. The public utterances of the Rabbis on this subject as reported in the Talmud and Midrashim supply only a bare outline of their knowledge. This outline was collected by Maimonides and presented to his readers at the beginning of the first part of his Code (Deoth, I, 4) as well as in his Mishna Commentary.

It is clear that the Bible teaches the existence of God as the Creator of the Universe and of man as endowed with a soul. This is illustrated by such statements of Scripture as Zach. 12:1. It is however difficult without the knowledge of the secrets of the Torah to extract from the Bible a rigid and detailed theory as to the nature of God, the manner in which the world was created, the nature of the soul and its relation to man and God.<sup>1</sup>

Saadia Gaon of Sura, the first important Jewish philosopher, prefaced his investigation into the nature of the soul with the warning that this is a profound and abstract and subtle subject regarding which there exists a bewildering variety of opinions.<sup>2</sup>

We have in the Talmudic literature quite a good deal of speculation concerning God and man. But it can scarcely lay claim to being rationalistic or philosophic, much less to being consistent.

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1. I. Husik: A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy, p. xv.  
 2. Saadia: Emmunoth Vedeoth, VI, 1.



The teachings of the Bible and Talmud are not altogether clear on a great many questions. Passages could be cited from the religious documents of Judaism in reference to a given problem both pro and con.

Thus in the matter of the freedom of the Will one could quote in favour of freedom the direct statement in Deut. 30:19: "I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life or death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed." On the other hand it is just as possible to find Biblical statements indicating clearly that man's behaviour can be preordained by God as in Exodus 7:3: "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt." Similarly Deut. 2:30: "But Sihon King of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand as at this day." The fact of the matter is the Bible is not a systematic book, and principles and problems are not clearly and strictly formulated.

The Jewish scholars of the period of the Talmud and Midrashim made no attempt to work their theology into a formal system. They did not feel the need to formulate their dogmas into a Creed. With them God was a reality, Revelation a fact, the hope of redemption a most vivid expectation. A formulated Creed was not needed to help them in their belief. Rather than being a theology in the accepted sense Rabbinic teaching was a net-work of Concepts inextricably intertwined with each other.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Max Kadushin: Organic Thinking, (New York, 1938), p. 206 et passim.

Expressions of their theological beliefs were enumerated spasmodically or by impulses. These impulses do not provide us with a coherent or reliable account of their theology since the special circumstances of their utterances necessitated a changing accentuation on different principles of Jewish belief. In many cases opinions differed. Sometimes the prevailing opinion was stated authoritatively. In other cases both opinions were allowed to stand, neither opinion containing the whole truth, and <sup>each</sup> being in need of qualification by the opposite opinion.

The few fixities that may be found in Rabbinic theology partake more of the nature of subjectively experienced realities than of logically demonstrated dogmas. To the Jew, firstly, God was at one and the same time above, beyond and within the world, its soul and its life.<sup>1</sup> The Torah was the expression of God's wisdom and contained everything that was good and wise. The Torah was like a heavenly bride adorned with all the virtues which only heaven would bestow on her. The Torah was an expression of God's will revealed to man for his education and perfection. To the Rabbis the nature of the soul of man was a greater mystery than the nature of God. The Greek philosophers used their knowledge of man to describe God. But to the Rabbis the knowledge of God was no difficulty since they obtained that from the Torah. The nature of man, however, was not revealed to them. This they learned through comparing man with God. 'As the Almighty fills the world so the soul fills the body.' (Berachoth 10a.)

Among the mediaeval Jewish philosophers, however, different

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1. S. Schechter: Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 25.

accounts of the nature of man are presented according to the influence of the varying Greek and Arab philosophies through which Jewish scholars attempted to interpret the Scriptures and the Talmud. Jewish writers adopted Kalamistic, Neo-platonic or Aristotelian points of view. In their metaphysics and natural science they were the products not only of the Bible and the Talmud but also of a combination of Hebraism, Hellenism, and Islam.

But Jewish philosophy differed essentially from that of the Greeks. Monotheism to the Greeks was a scientific theory arising from their contemplation of the unitary character of natural phenomena. To the Jews the unitary character of natural phenomena was a deduction from the primary intuition of religion.<sup>1</sup> Greek metaphysics never threw off the polytheistic taint. Both Philo and Aristotle believed in the existence of a real contingency in Nature. Such a doctrine was inconceivable to Hebrew monotheism. To the religious mind there could be no 'errant causes', 'chance' or 'fortuitousness'. Even in scientific investigation the Jewish philosopher is always conscious of the spirit of God that moves upon the face of the waters.<sup>2</sup>

Although there was no school of thought to which Jewish scholars were not exposed, and which were <sup>not</sup> often reflected in their development, whenever any influence, no matter by whom advanced or by whatever power maintained, developed a tendency that was contrary to a strict monotheism or divided their loyalty to the binding character of the Torah, or aimed to destroy the unity and character

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1. L. Roth: 'Jewish Thought in the Modern World', The Legacy of Israel - ed. Bevan and Singer, p. 439.  
 2. L. Roth: Ibid.

and calling of Israel, although it may have gained currency for a time, the Synagogue finally succeeded in eliminating it as noxious to its very existence.<sup>1</sup>

The division which arose between various Jewish theologians depended upon the attitude which they took up towards the Biblical text. It is usually almost impossible to decide with certainty whether the exegetical method produced the theological divergence, or whether, vice versa, theology influenced exegesis. Cosmology and anthropology, the relation between God and the World, the relation of God to Man, the conception of the goodness of God and other problems took a characteristic shape in one school and an opposite form in another. One took the affirmative, the other a negative stand to this question according to the light in which they thought of God and His Word as embodied in the Bible. This diversity of opinion and teaching, however, did not affect the unity of Judaism nor endanger the purity of doctrine, for the foundation of Israel's religion was safeguarded by the unshakeable belief in the existence and unity of God which permeated all sections of the Jewish community.<sup>2</sup>

Above all disputation certain basic beliefs were common to all traditional philosophers of Judaism. Also reduced them to a minimum of three, viz: the existence of God, reward and punishment, including the personal providential nature of God, and Torah as traditional wisdom. As far as the nature of man is concerned it was generally accepted that man was the highest form of creation

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1. S. Schechter: Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, Preface, p. 17.
  2. A. Marmorstein: The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God, (London, 1937), Vol. II, Introd.

and that he alone possessed intellect. His exact relationship with God was described differently by various philosophers, but of the nature of man one notion which enjoyed practically universal belief was the principle of the possession of will by man in the exercise of which he was free and unrestricted always.

In comparing the Arab and Jewish philosophies on this subject one characteristic point may be noticed. The Arabs used the Koranic teachings about Free Will as the foundation of their investigations into the subject, even though in some matters, as in this one, they grafted their philosophy on to their theology. The Jewish philosophers quoted texts of the Bible as the religious contribution to their philosophic discussions.

The Jewish philosophers follow some the rationalist Mutazila and some the peripatetic school. They all, however, philosophise with continual reference to the Bible. Although they may quote the same texts each one interprets the text to coincide with his view. Yet because of this continual reference to the same source we are entitled to state that the Jewish philosophers are all closely related to each other.

The Jewish philosophers, Saadia, Bahya, Judah Halevi, Ibn Zaddik, Abraham Ibn Daud, and Maimonides - all of them alike decide in favour of Free Will, and to them Determinism and Fatalism appear contrary both to Reason and Religion.

PART ONE

HEBREW PSYCHOLOGY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The approach to Old Testament Psychology.

It is now generally accepted that in ancient Hebrew Psychology as evidenced in the Old Testament there was no distinction of the psychical and ethical from the physical.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the 'breath' of a person is thought of as his soul, and even the reek of hot blood is identified with the 'breath-soul'.

Likewise psychical and ethical functions - as well as physiological - are applied to bodily organs.

Wheeler Robinson goes so far as to say there is really no dichotomy of body and soul in any strict sense. Physical organs of the body are conceived psychically, just as much as soul and spirit are conceived (in breath and blood) quasi physically. The psychical powers now associated with the brain were all attributed to the heart. This bodily organ possessed psychical and ethical functions in addition to its physiological functions. Likewise the soul, Nefesh, was regarded as the seat of both will and consciousness as well as the force of physical life.<sup>2</sup>

Robinson assumes that among the ancient Hebrews there was a complete ignorance of the nervous system,<sup>3</sup> although Delitzsch asserts that some compact nervous system is assumed in Scripture.<sup>4</sup> The nearest approach to such a recognition was their awareness that man's consciousness appeared to be diffused through the whole body so that

1. See A.R. Johnson: The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel (Cardiff, 1949), p. 39, n.3.

2. H. Wheeler Robinson: 'Hebrew Psychology', The People and the Book - editor, A.S. Peake (1925), p. 353, f.

3. H. Wheeler Robinson: ibid., p. 365.

4. Franz Delitzsch, A System of Biblical Psychology, p. 318.

flesh, bones, etc., seemed to possess a quasi consciousness of their own. Robinson, however, probably exceeds his evidence when he includes in this diffused consciousness also "its ethical qualities". The psychological terms used in the Old Testament throw light on the Hebrew conception of the 'modus operandi' of personality but they may be misleading if they are regarded as outlining the Hebrew conception of personality. Although we find many examples of psychological functions attributed to bodily organs it would be wrong to conclude that each animated organ of the body functioned in quasi independence of each other and possessed psychological and ethical attributes of its own.<sup>1</sup>

Robinson is certainly far off the mark when he speaks of invasive influences, which may be good or bad, taking possession of any one of the organs so that a man may become agent and instrument of such influences in word or deed.

Although it may be true to say that the Hebrew idea of personality is an animated body and not an incarnated soul, it would be contrary to Jewish thought to identify the soul with the body or to attribute to the body itself any of the powers of the soul.

The soul is the life force or consciousness of the body. The fact that the soul was thought of as dwelling in the breath or in the blood is of interest to us, as students of anthropology. But in the conception of Hebrew thought as expressed in the Old Testament the source of personality is neither in the body nor in the soul. Above both there is a transcending unit of personality which is called Man. Body and Soul function in various manners, but both are

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1. Cf. A.R. Johnson: The Vitality of the Individual, p. 51.



directed by Man. Man is the Ego. Body and Soul are his agents. Man functions through an animated body but the "master mind" is not Mind or Soul but Man.

The anthropological approach is helpful in rescuing us from Delitzsch's error in assuming that it is possible to construct an ordered and scientific account of Hebrew consciousness by analysing and tabulating the various psychological usages found in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> Wheeler Robinson rightly warns us that our anthropological approach can only interpret some of the ideas held by the ancient Hebrews about human personality. It can explain the use of certain expressions originating in earlier or even primitive conceptions. We learn, for example, that one of the most widely spread ideas of general anthropology is to identify the life principle and ultimately all the phenomena of consciousness with the breath; for while there is breath there is life. So in Hebrew the underlying usage of Nefesh, soul, is the thought of 'breath' as the life principle. A similarly wide-spread though independent idea of primitive thought is the idea of the principle of life in-dwelling in the blood, since life goes out with the blood. The prohibition of eating blood and the ritual of blood sacrifices are no doubt associated with this conception (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11).

But through our anthropological approach we cannot claim more than an explanation of how these expressions came into popular use. We can understand how, from different origins, the Hebrews came to speak of 'blood-soul' and 'breath-soul' and why they attributed so

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1. Franz Delitzsch, A System of Biblical Psychology, transl. from German by R.E. Wallis - 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1867) Part IV, pp. 179-380.

much vitality to the 'heart'. These terms however may not necessarily be used with any distinct sense forming a definite pattern of psychological values.

Robinson reminds us that the use of psychological terms in the Old Testament is not systematic but syncretistic. Thus the various representations of psychical functions are used in the Old Testament with many varied and often overlapping meanings. Sometimes we can perceive a distinct meaning in the use of a particular expression, but generally we find that the main terms are used with great variety of meaning covering many aspects of human will or consciousness. Although originating from different expressions regarding the nature of man they eventually denote the same thing, viz: the conscious life of man.

Primitive peoples commonly thought of man as a psychical whole, one single unit of vital power - i.e. 'soul stuff' or 'soul substance'. Man's individuality was not only perceived in the various members of his body but also extended to whatever bore traces of contact with him. Similar ideas are often latent and sometimes clearly expressed in the literature of the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup>

Pederson clearly identifies the Will with the whole of the tendency of the Soul, but he is confusing when he endeavours to distinguish between its nature, character and capacity.<sup>2</sup>

In the ensuing examination it will be made clear that living Man, in Hebrew thought, is not only an amalgamation of body and soul - a complex of bodily parts drawing their life and activity from a breath soul. Body and soul are the component parts which form man

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1. Johnson: Vitality, pp. 8f., 9.n.3.

2. Pederson: Israel, I, p. 103 f.

as a human entity, a human personality - just as Hydrogen and Oxygen form water as a separate physical entity. The elimination of breath or blood would destroy the entity - just as the entity of water would be destroyed by a change in its component parts - but so long as the components are present in a certain degree, the resulting entity, namely man, as an independent personality, continues to exist.

The totality-conception of Hebrew psychology must be examined by studying the psychological terms of Old Testament usage in their own content. For the purpose of the following analysis, the meanings of the various terms in the Old Testament which may be regarded as illustrating the early Hebrew conception of psychology have been closely examined so as to determine their significance in each case.

These psychological terms fall into two main classes according to whether reference is made to individual agents of psychological behaviour, or to the all embracing master of all human behaviour, i.e. Man himself as a whole. The ancient Hebrew psychological terms may therefore be classified thus:-

I. Individual agents of psychical behaviour:

1. Governing the whole body: breath-soul, blood-soul, heart.
2. Peripheral organs: tongue, eye, ear, hand, feet.
3. Central organs: liver, kidneys, bowels.

II. Man as a whole.

## CHAPTER I

### NEFESH, SOUL

#### Classification of Usages.

The Hebrew term Nefesh occurs 754 times in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> It is usually translated by the word 'soul'. But this translation itself is hardly capable of clear definition. Thus the indeterminate nature of the English word 'soul' reflects the fluidity of meaning contained in the Hebrew Nefesh. Furthermore it may be possible to gain a clearer insight into the nature of the soul by examining the varied usages in which the term Nefesh is employed.

H. Wheeler Robinson finds three more or less distinct meanings in the term and divides the total number of references strictly into these three groups. Thus, 282 instances belong to the meaning of the term which relates to 'the principle of life', without an emphasis on what we should call its psychological side. In 223 instances the term denotes 'self', or the personal pronoun. And, thirdly, in 249 instances the term Nefesh denotes 'the human consciousness' in its full psychological extent.<sup>2</sup> A.R. Johnson, after an independent examination of all the 754 examples of the use of the term in the Old Testament doubts the possibility of such an exact classification of all the references as attempted by Robinson, as well as by both Briggs and Becker.<sup>3</sup>

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1. H. Wheeler Robinson: 'Hebrew Psychology', p. 355.

2. H. Wheeler Robinson: ibid.

3. Aubrey R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, p. 12, n. 5.  
H. Wheeler Robinson: 'Hebrew Psychology', The People and the Book, pp. 355 ff.

C.A. Briggs: 'The Use of Nefesh in the Old Testament', J.B.L. XVI (1897) pp. 17-30.

J.H. Becker: Het Begrip Nefesj in het Oude Testament (1942).

Each author sometimes imparts a different meaning to a particular text and then uses it in support of a particular usage.

It is not intended here to identify the exact usage in every case where the term Nefesh is found, but rather by demonstrating the varied usages of the term, to exemplify our thesis that in this one term Nefesh the Old Testament gave expression to all the phenomena of life and consciousness. It is important to note for our purpose that a similar all-embracing conception of life and personality will be found also in the ensuing accounts of RUAH and LEV.

#### Original Meaning.

The etymology of Nefesh in all cognate Semitic languages appears to indicate that the basic meaning of the word was 'breath'.<sup>1</sup> Thus we have the Arabic NAPHASUN = breath, and NAPHSUN = soul, life, person, blood, desire. Similarly the Assyrian NAPĀSŪ = to get breath, and NAPISTU = life. In all Semitic languages Nefesh bears the meaning of 'soul', anima, psyche, person.

We find however only one instance in the Old Testament where this primary meaning of 'breath' may be the most natural rendering.

"Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or cauldron.

His breath, וְנַפְשׁוֹ, kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth." (Job. 41:19,20.)

Even in this context, however, B.D.B. favours a reference to 'passion' or 'fury'.<sup>2</sup>

Johnson finds support for his view that the original meaning

1. See B.D.B., s.v. Nefesh.

2. B.D.B., s.v. Nefesh. 10.b.

of Nefesh was 'throat' or 'neck'. He refers to the cognate Accadian term NAPIŠTU and the Ugaritic NPS which had that meaning.<sup>1</sup> He considers the Arabic NAPHASUN = breath as possibly a transition in meaning from the primary meaning 'throat' or 'neck'.<sup>2</sup>

Delitzsch claims that the predominant meaning of Nefesh is "desire" and that by metonymy it signifies also the bodily organs of desire as "mouth" and "throat".<sup>3</sup>

The following context quoted by Johnson as an example of the original meaning of Nefesh as 'throat' illustrates the diversity of interpretation of the Hebrew text and therefore the uncertainty of exact definition.

הַחֵיבָה שְׂאוֹל נַפְשָׁהּ  
וּפְעָרָה פִּיהָ לְבַלִּי חֶק

(Isaiah 5:14.)

R.V. "Therefore hell hath enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth without measure: (and their glory and their multitude descend into it)."

A.V. "Therefore hell hath enlarged herself...."

R.S.V. "Therefore Sheol has enlarged its appetite...."

Johnson and Delitzsch. "Sheol hath widened its throat...."

### Old Testament Usages.

#### 1. The Physical Principle of Life.

##### Description and examples of usages.

In more than a third of all the instances where Nefesh is used in the Old Testament the word bears the meaning simply of the

1. See Johnson, ibid. - p. 9.f. n.4.

2. Johnson, ibid. - p. 11.

3. Franz Delitzsch, A System of Biblical Psychology, (Edinburgh, 1867) pp. 241-7.

physical principle of Life, without any reference to its psychical qualities.<sup>1</sup>

The idea that the physical principle of life is closely associated with the blood is no doubt based on the natural human experience of life leaving the body together with the blood. While life and blood may not be quite identical, the blood appears to be the principal carrier of life. Blood is therefore withdrawn from ordinary use and reserved for sacred purposes only. Thus the Biblical prohibition of eating flesh from a living animal (Gen. 9:4) is extended to the prohibition of eating blood even from an animal that had already been killed, 'for the blood is the life'. (Deut. 12:23; Lev. 17:14.) The Jewish method of slaughter (Shechita) causes the maximum effusion of blood in the animal; and the remaining blood is extracted by means of the washing and salting of the meat. Furthermore the blood shed from a slaughtered beast or fowl was to be covered with dust in a reverent manner equivalent to the burial of a dead human body. (Lev. 17:13.) This conception of life being identified with the blood is found already in the seven Noachide laws regarded by Judaism as the basic laws of civilisation. (Gen. 9:4.)

Note. The seven Noachide commandments which the Rabbis deduced from Gen. 9:1-7 are regarded by them as the seven fundamental laws of Natural Religion, viz:

1. The establishment of courts of justice.
2. The prohibition of blasphemy.
3. of idolatry.
4. of incest.
5. of bloodshed.
6. of robbery.
7. of eating flesh cut from a living

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1. Robinson gives a total of 282 instances in this sense out of a total of 754 instances. - The People and the Book, p. 355.

animal. Whereas an Israelite was to carry out all the precepts of the Torah, obedience to these Seven Commandments alone was in ancient times ~~was~~ required of non-Jews living among Israelites, or attaching themselves to the Jewish community.<sup>1</sup>

The crime of murder demanding retribution is described as 'the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground'. (Gen. 4:10.) In primitive society a duty of honour lay upon the nearest representative of the family of the slain man to avenge the blood of the victim. By the institution of six cities of Refuge the early system of blood-feuds was brought under legal control and eventually eliminated. (Num. 35:12.)

The theory of the sacrificial system is likewise explained in that the life of the animal atones for the life of the man. Thus the blood of the animal is offered to God in place of the blood of the human being. The Old Testament expresses this conception in the following manner:- "For the life, (Nefesh), of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls,  $\square \text{ד} \text{ו} \text{נ} \text{פ} \text{ש}$ ; for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life ( $\text{ש} \text{נ} \text{פ} \text{ש}$ )."

The usage of Nefesh as indicating the physical principle of life is clearly seen in such contexts which refer to the departure of life or the dividing line between life and death. Thus God authorised Satan to afflict Job's body with any suffering; there being, however, one reservation "only spare his life".  $\text{נ} \text{פ} \text{ש} \text{ו} \text{ל} \text{ו} \text{ל} \text{א} \text{י} \text{נ} \text{ס}$  (lit. = preserve his Nefesh). (Job. 2:6.) (R.S.V.)

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1. J.H. Hertz, Pentateuch, on Gen. 9:1-7. Cf. Sanhedrin 56a. ff.



Here Nefesh is his physical life, without any reference to his spiritual being. Nefesh is used in this way also without distinct reference as to whether the life of man had its seat in the blood or in the breath.

Similarly when Reuben wished to deliver Joseph from being slain by his brothers, he said: "Let us not kill him." (Gen. 37:21.) In Hebrew the expression used is that of  $\text{וַיִּשְׁׁוֹטֵן}$  which implies 'smiting to the soul' or 'smite mortally'.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of Rachel, in hard labour, the departure of the Nefesh is synonymous with the departure of life, 'for she died'. (Gen. 35:18.)

The death of King Saul is described with heightened tragedy when he appealed to the Amalekite to slay him. Saul had leaned upon his spear in an unsuccessful attempt to kill himself. 'For anguish is come upon me, because my life  $\text{וַיִּשְׁׁוֹטֵן}$  is yet whole in me.' (2 Sam. 1:6-9.)

The heroism of Zebulun and Naphtali in battle, in that they risked their lives in the high places of the field, is expressed in the Hebrew 'they scorned their Nefesh', or "jeopardised their lives unto death". (Judg. 5:18.)

It is thus the presence of Nefesh that differentiates between life and death. "Turn, O Lord, save my life,  $\text{וַיִּשְׁׁוֹטֵן}$  for in death there is no remembrance of Thee." (R.S.V.) (Ps. 6:4-5.)

The 'breath of all mankind' is a parallel expression with the  $\text{וַיִּשְׁׁוֹטֵן}$  or 'life of every living thing'. Job declares that both are in the hand of God. (R.S.V.) (Job. 12:10.)

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1. B.D.B., s.v. Nefesh.

When Zedekiah vows to Jeremiah "As the Lord liveth who made our souls" (Jer. 38:15-16) (R.S.V.) (Lit. as R.V. 'that made us this soul') he does not refer to the spiritual soul of man but simply to the fact that it was God who gave him life. Thus, he continues his oath, by the name of God, the Creator of life, "I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee unto the hand of these men that seek thy life אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁׁקְוּ".

That Nefesh is used without any psychical association is furthermore abundantly clear when the third messenger of Ahaziah begs Elijah that he send not fire from heaven to consume him, "O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, נַפְשִׁי and the life of, נַפְשֵׁי these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight". (2 Kings. 1:13.)

Finally when Abraham said to the attractive Sarah, "Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister...and my soul shall live נַפְשִׁי חַיָּה because of thee," it was not so much in concern for his spiritual life, as "that my life may be spared on your account". (R.S.V.) (Gen. 12:13.)

## 2. The Person as a Whole.

### Description of usages.

In a large group of contexts the term Nefesh denotes simply 'the self' or the personal pronoun. In these cases there is no reference to the 'inner life' or what is commonly called 'the soul'. The term refers generally to the person as a whole.<sup>1</sup>

In the first place the term may be used to refer merely to individuals, persons, people, as human entities. Then it may refer

1. Robinson finds 223 instances of the use of Nefesh in this meaning. - The People and the Book, p. 355.

to a particular person, as taking the place of a personal pronoun. Thirdly, the term conveys the meaning of the intimate entity of a distinct personality. And finally it may even refer to a deceased person, which is, after all, a personality reduced to a body.

The following examples will illustrate the use of Nefesh in these different aspects of the Individual as a whole.

### 1) Persons as Individuals.

The expression שְׁנַיִם וְעָלֵי is merely an enumeration of people in the passage "All the souls of the House of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten". (Gen. 46:27.)

In the following account of Esau's settlement in the mountains of Seir the term Nefesh refers to the "members of his household" (R.S.V.) as distinct from his goods and cattle. "And Esau took his wives and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons שְׁנַיִם וְעָלֵי of his house, and his cattle and all his beasts, and all his substance..." (Gen. 36:6.)

### 2) As personal pronoun.

David uses the word Nefesh merely as referring to himself, and not to his spiritual life, when, in fleeing from his son Absalom, he declares: "O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me עָלַי; many are saying of me, לֹא שָׁמַר, there is no help for him, לֹא, in God." (R.S.V.) (Ps. 3:1-2.)

When Jacob does not wish to be associated with the violence of Simeon and Levi he says, "O my soul שְׁמִי, come not into their council; O my spirit (or, glory) be not joined to their company." (Gen. 49:6.) The use of 'my soul' here may be rendered simply 'let me not enter'. (B.D.B.)

The following usage may be regarded as a further example of the use of Nefesh simply as the personal pronoun. It could of course also be associated with the next group where Nefesh refers to the particular character or personality of the individual. Job, in rejecting his 'miserable comforters', says: "I also could speak as you do, if you were in my place." לִּי וְלָשׁוֹן נִפְשֵׁיכֶם תִּחַת נַפְשִׁי (i.e. if our conditions of life were reversed; if you were I, and I were you.) (R.S.V.) (Job. 16:4.)

### 3) Personality, Ego.

The close sympathy of two personalities devoted in affection to each other is described in the words, 'The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul, כִּנְפֹשׁוֹ . (1 Sam. 18:1.)

The inseparable bond of love between Jacob and his youngest son Benjamin is expressed thus by Judah in his plea to Joseph: "Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; וְנִפְשׁוֹ קִשְׁרָה בְּנַפְשׁוֹ , it shall come to pass when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die... (Gen. 44:30-31.)

A similar expression of the intimacy of like or related personalities is found in the law of religious seduction in which even the closest ties of family or friendship are not to protect the would-be idolator from punishment. "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul קִרְבָּן אֲשֶׁר כִּנְפֹשְׁךָ entice thee secretly saying...neither shall thine eye pity him... But thou shalt surely kill him." (Deut. 13:6,8,9.)

4) Deceased person.

The ancient Eastern custom of self-mutilation as a mark of bereavement is clearly referred to in the following prohibition: "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead" לֹנְפֵשׁ (Lev. 19:28.) Likewise the dead body of a human being as distinct from that of an animal causing defilement and requiring purification is expressed thus:- "Whosoever toucheth the dead, even the body of any man that is dead..." בְּיַמֵּי בְנֵי אָדָם אֲשֶׁר יָמוּת (Numb. 19:13.) Here it is quite clear that Nefesh does not refer to some ghostly phenomenon but to something with which one can come into physical contact, viz. a human corpse.<sup>1</sup>

Compare this use of Nefesh as a human personality reduced through the removal of life to a dead body to the expression used in the Creation account of where a clay body is transformed into a living person, and thus raised to a personality. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul,

נִפְשׁ חַיָּה. (Gen. 2:7.) This expression does not refer to the spiritual 'soul' of man. It applies equally to 'cattle, creeping thing and beast of the earth'. (Gen. 1:24.) Here it signifies 'a living being', just as in Lev. 18:28 the word Nefesh alone means the body of a person which no longer has life (i.e. as though they were both one indivisible personality).

1. Cf. G.B. Gray, I.C.C. (1903) on Numb. 19: 11,13.

In post-Biblical Hebrew, like the Aramaic נִפְשׁ and the Syriac נִפְשׁ the conception of human personality is extended even to the 'sepulchral monument' erected over a grave (Shekalim II;5)

אין עושין נפשות לצדיקים

### 3. The Seat of the Conscious Life.

#### (a) Description of usages.

In addition to the two usages of Nefesh in the more-or-less physical sense already described, we find the term used frequently as that part of the human being to which is ascribed all the psychical ~~functions~~ functions of the human consciousness.<sup>1</sup> In this group Nefesh clearly denotes the seat of the conscious life. It is important to note immediately that this is not the only term used in the Old Testament to express the conscious life. Compare RUAH and LEV described below. But we are concerned here to investigate the extent to which Nefesh is used in referring to the emotional, mental and connational activities of the human being, as well as to his consciousness generally, and to his physical senses and appetites.

It will be seen from the following analysis that the term 'soul' is used to denote that part of the person which is engaged in all aspects of conscious life. If the peculiar characteristic of the humanity of man, as distinct from any other living thing or being, lies in his conscious activity and awareness, then by the term Nefesh the Old Testament refers to that particular essence of man which, apart from his chemical qualities, is in fact nothing other than 'Man'; not as a thing, but as a person. It is 'Man' who possesses consciousness, senses and appetites. It is 'Man' who gives expression to emotions and who engages in mental and connational activities. When one speaks of Man generally one is mainly impressed by the <sup>psychical?</sup> physical aspect of man as a human being.

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1. Robinson finds 249 instances of the use of Nefesh in this meaning. - The People and the Book, p. 355.

Thus these psychological activities are described as the activities of the 'soul', but in fact they originate from the same being, viz. 'man'.

In the varying psychological usages of Nefesh in the Old Testament it is not intended to imply any particular activity that is predominantly associated with the term. Our analysis shows that all these psychological functions have their origin in what is termed the 'soul' of man.

The term Nefesh is employed to describe the full extent of this conscious life of man, beginning with the baser, or animal type of general consciousness and the physical senses of pleasure, appetite, and desire, and then rising to the exercise of the affections generally including the general disposition of a man's feelings. From this we advance to the use of man's various mental capacities, and then to his conational faculties of choice, will, purpose and determination.

(b) Examples of Old Testament usages.

1) Consciousness.

"And the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."  
(1 Kings 17:22.)

וַתָּשׁוּב נַפְשׁוֹ הַיֶּלֶד עַל קִרְבוֹ וַיְחַי

2) The physical senses.

"There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and find enjoyment in his toil." וְהִרְאָה אֶת נַפְשׁוֹ טוֹב בְּעִמְלוֹ  
(R.S.V.) (Eccles. 2:24) A.V. 'That he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour'; A.V. Margin - or, "delight his senses".

3) The Seat of the Affections generally.

- (a) "Thy soul desireth to eat flesh." (Deut. 12:20.)
- (b) "Our soul loatheth this light bread." (Numb. 21:5.)
- (c) 1. "For these things I weep...because the comforter that should refresh my soul is far from me." (Lam. 1:16.)  
2. "Was not my soul grieved for the needy?" (Job 30:25.)
- (d) "My soul shall be joyful in the Lord." (Ps. 35:9.)
- (e) "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth..." (Cant. 1:7.)
- (f) "His soul hates him that loves violence." (R.S.V.) (Ps. 11:5.)
- (g) "And the soul of the people was impatient because of the way." (R.V. Margin.) (Num. 21:4.)
- (h) "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."  
וְאָהַבְתָּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשֶׁךָ (Deut. 6:5.)
- (i) "Lest angry fellows fall upon you." (Judg. 18:25.) אַנְשֵׁי מְרִי נִפְטָן  
(Lit. having bitter feelings,) and thou lose thy life, נִפְטָן  
(B.D.B. s.v. מַר "Men fierce (G.F.M. acrid) of temper.")

4) The general Disposition of a man's feelings.

- (a) "For ye know the heart of a stranger." נִפְטָן הַגֵּר  
(Exod. 23:9.) (B.D.B. "Ye know the feeling of the stranger.") Cf. "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." (Prov. 12:10.) = feelings.
- (b) "And Hannah answered and said, No my Lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I poured out my soul before the Lord."  
וְאֵשֶׁפֶךְ אֶת נַפְשִׁי (1 Sam. 1:15.)



5) Appetite or desire.

- (a) "Do not men despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite למלא נפשו when he is hungry?" (R.S.V.)  
(Prov. 6:30.)
- (b) "Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." בעל נפש (Prov. 23:2.)
- (c) "The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be abundantly gratified."  
(A.J.V.) (Prov. 13:4.)

6) The Seat of Mental Capacities.

- (a) "My soul heareth the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war." (R.V. Margin.) (Jer. 4:19.)
- (b) "Whatever you say, מה תאמר נפטיך, I will do for you."  
(R.S.V.) (Cf. A.V. Margin, 'say' or 'think'.)  
(1 Sam. 20:4.)
- (c) "And that my soul knoweth right well." (Ps. 139:14.)
- (d) "Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire." מהלך נפש (= imagination) (Eccles. 6:9.)
- (e) "Keep thy soul diligently lest thou forget..." (Deut. 4:9.)
- (f) "And ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that..." וידעתם ויבכל נפשכם (Josh. 23:14.)
- (g) "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape..."  
אל תדמי בנפטיך (Esther 4:13.)

7) Connational Functions.

- (a) "If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight." אם יש את נפשכם (= willing) (Gen. 23:8.)  
(B.D.B. = "if it is your purpose".)

- (b) "So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than these my bones." וּתְבַחַר מִחֵנוֹק גַּפְטִי  
(Job 7:15.)
- (c) "The things that my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat." (A.V.) מֵאֲנָה לְנוּגֹעַ גַּפְטִי  
(Job 6:7.)
- (d) "...Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations." גַּפְטָם הִפְצִיחַ  
(parallel to 'chosen') (Isa. 66:3.)
- (e) "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." (A.V.) רָצִיתָה גַּפְטִי (Isa. 42:1.)  
(B.D.B. - Dubious; all above perhaps emotional.)
- (f) "If thou search after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." כִּי תִדְרֹשֶׁנּוּ וּבְכָל גַּפְטֶךָ (Deut. 4:29.)
- (g) "...and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul." וּלְעַבְדוֹ וּבְכָל גַּפְטֶךָ (Deut. 10:12.)
- (h) "...If thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul." (Deut. 30:10.)  
וּבְכָל גַּפְטֶךָ (B.D.B. - Perhaps in (f) and (g) and (h) **לבב** is used of intellect, while **נפש** is used of the feelings.)
- (i) 1. "Thou mayest eat grapes thy full at thine own pleasure." כִּן גַּפְטֶךָ (Deut. 23:4.) (Cf. perhaps, Appetite in section 5) above.)
2. "To bind his princes at his pleasure," לְאַסֹּר שָׂרָיו בְּנִפְטָו  
(Ps. 105:22.)
3. "And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will." לְנִפְשָׁהּ  
(Deut. 21:14.)

Summary: The Totality of Man.

From the above analysis of the usages of Nefesh in the Old Testament we find that the term which we commonly translate 'soul' is used to describe the totality of the human being and his personality. It appears to refer in particular to the manifestation of the 'élan vital', or Life Force, in man which makes him a living and a sentient human being. This is not entirely a psychological force for its vitality 'doth drain away' through lack of physical nourishment (Lam. 2:12) and people in time of famine 'give their treasures for food to bring back the Nefesh'. (Lam. 1:11.) But the vitality of man does not depend on bread alone. The grief and despair of overwhelming tragedy causes the bereaved mother of seven to 'breathe out her Nefesh' (A.V. - 'hath given up the ghost') (Jer. 15:9); whereas Jerusalem wept <sup>for</sup> a comforter who would 'bring it back'. (Lam. 1:16.) Sadness causes the Psalmist to 'pour out' his soul in him, as he longingly remembers the old days of happy throngs crowding into the House of God. (Ps. 42:5.)

But although the emotional condition of man is described as reflecting the state of the Nefesh, it is nevertheless the Psalmist himself who controls that state of the Nefesh and, therefore, his emotional condition. Thus he concludes with an adjuration to himself: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." (Ps. 42:12.)

In using the term Nefesh the Old Testament is in fact describing man himself. He lives and plans and determines. He chooses or refuses; he imagines; he grieves, and he laughs. Physical weakness and emotional despondancy reduce his vitality,

while recreation and happiness refresh it. (Ex. 23:2.)

Thus we may conclude that the active living vitality of the human being which is the Personality (in its general sense) of man is referred in the Old Testament by the word Nefesh. In most cases it could be translated simply by 'man' or the personal pronoun.

## CHAPTER II

### RUAH, SPIRIT

#### The Meaning of the Term.

We have seen how the vitality and conscious life of man is described by the term Nefesh, which because of its other connotations has about it the earthy smell of blood as the carrier of life and consciousness. Nefesh conveys the wonder of life and existence, yet there is something human and mortal about it.

The expression RUAH is another term for this vitality of the human being, but this term, also by reason of its other connotations, conveys more the mystery and immortality of the Divine Power with whom human life is so closely associated.

The extensive use of Ruah throughout the Old Testament encompasses the widest range of the conception and manifestation of vitality and personality exercised by man.

The significance of human vitality is heightened by the use of the same term to describe not only the principle of human life and the power and varieties of human personality but also the Spirit of God and the vital power created by him as His instrument.<sup>1</sup>

Thus although Ruah may be used to describe simply 'the breath of life' as the common characteristic which man shares with the whole of the animal world, it is used also to describe a variable human mood, a capacity or character or emotion, or even an extraordinary manifestation of character attributed directly to God.

The varying levels of intensity in which man, at different

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1. Both Robinson and Briggs give a total of 378 instances of the use of Ruah in the Old Testament. B.D.B. s.v. Ruah.  
H. Wh. Robinson. The People and the Book, p. 358.

times, and in different circumstances, lives, is described in terms of the absence or presence of Ruah.

The variation in the condition of man's vitality, may be described as the 'ebb and flow' of the tide, corresponding with the rising or sinking of the power of vitality; but the term Ruah, with its original connotation of 'wind' in all its variability in intensity and direction, gives a truer picture of the changeableness of human personality in the varying conditions of excitement, determination, zeal, listlessness or apathy. It was possible to resort to the picture of Ruah as 'wind' in order to describe the whole range of man's physical energy, emotions, mental alertness and wilful determination. All this conscious activity of man was described as the work or condition of the Ruah, 'the spirit' in the human being.

In order fully to understand the application of Ruah to the conception of the 'Spirit' of man it is necessary to follow the meaning of the term in all its usages in the Old Testament. The basic meaning of the word in Hebrew and the cognate Semitic languages points to the meaning particularly of 'wind' or the movement of air, either as the breath of God or as the breath of man. From this basic meaning the term is used to describe the Spirit of God and then the Principle of Life bestowed by God upon man and animal. Finally, from the entirely human point of view, it describes the nature of the vitality and personality of man.

The following compilation of Old Testament texts is arranged under the headings of the four main usages of the word and

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1. C.A. Briggs, 'The Use of Ruah in the Old Testament', and summary of usages in O.T. in B.D.B. s.v. Ruah.

exemplifies the wide extent of meaning which the term contains.

Classification of Old Testament usages.

I. Wind

1. Breath of God, air, wind.
2. Human breath.

II. The Spirit of God

1. Divine Instrument or Presence.
2. Divine source of all life.
3. Initiating in man an unaccountable impulse.
4. Endowing man with exceptional skill.
5. Endowing an abnormal disposition.
6. Endowing an ideal disposition.
7. Imparting unusual energy.
8. Divine inspiration of prophecy.
9. Inspiring ecstatic state of prophecy.

III. The Principle of Life

1. Created by God.
2. Preserved by God.
3. Belongs to God.
4. Departs at death.
5. Has separate existence.

IV. Human Personality

1. Energy, vitality.
2. Spiritedness, vehemence, impetuosity.
3. Temperament, constitution, nature.
4. Emotion.
5. Disposition, inclination.

Old Testament Usages.1. Wind.Examples of usages.1) Breath of God, air, wind.<sup>1</sup>

1. "And with the blast of thy nostrils, **וּבְרוּחַ אֶפְיָי**, the waters were piled up, the floods stood upright as an heap; the deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea." (Ex. 15:8.)

2. "Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an east wind shall come, the breath of the Lord coming up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up." (Hos. 13:15.) (East wind **קָדִים** is parallel to **רוּחַ ה'**, the breath of the Lord.)

3. "By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger are they consumed." (Job 4:9.) (The destroying breath of God - **נְשֻׁמַת** is parallel to **רוּחַ אַפּוֹ**, the blast of his anger.)

4. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." (Gen. 3:8.) **לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם** (i.e. a refreshing breeze that springs up in the east towards sundown.)

5. "And the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons." (A.V.) (Jer. 14:6.) **שָׁאֲפוּ רוּחַ כַּתַּנִּים**

6. "Behold, all of them, their works are vanity and nought: their molten images are wind and confusion." (Isa. 41:29.) **רוּחַ וְתִהְיוּ**

7. "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold all is vanity and a striving after wind." (Ecc. 1:14.) **עֲוֹת רוּחַ**

(R.V. Margin: Or, a feeding on wind; Or, vexation of spirit (A.V.).)

1. According to Briggs: 'Use of Ruah in the Old Testament', pp. 133-135, there are 117 examples of this usage.



8. "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: Yea, he was seen upon the wings of the wind." (2 Sam. 22:11.) על כנפי רוּחַ

9. "Shall vain words have an end?" (Job 16:3.) דְּבַר רוּחַ

(B.D.B. - "Windy words".) (Or, "Will your own windy speeches never end?" (Moffat) - i.e. mere barren words.) (Cf. Job 15:2

רוּחַ דַּעַת "vain knowledge", or, "knowledge of wind".)

## 2) Human Breath. (Usually נְשָׁמָה )

"He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." (Isa. 12:4.)

רוּחַ שְׁפָתָיו. But רוּחַ here may be a strong impelling spirit.

Breath is usually נְשָׁמָה as Gen. 7:22. ~~B.D.B. s.v. רוּחַ~~

נְשָׁמָה רוּחַ חַיִּים בְּאֵפוֹ . A.R. Johnson is too definite in limiting רוּחַ חַיִּים

to 'breath of life', though he is supported in many references by

B.D.B. (s.v. רוּחַ ).<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Spirit of God.

The expression Spirit of God referred to here is the Vital Power created by God as His instrument. Briggs finds 94 instances of this usage. It is also used in reference to an unusual energy in human conduct which phenomenon can only be explained as arising out of the 'Spirit of God'. Robinson states that the term is used 134 times in this sense.<sup>2</sup>

### Examples of usages.

#### 1) Divine Instrument or Presence.

(a) "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people,

1. A.R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, p. 32.

2. C.A. Briggs, B.D.B., s.v.

H. Wh. Robinson, The People and the Book, p. 358f.

saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he that put his holy spirit in the midst of them? That caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses? That divided the water...that led them through the depths..." (Isa. 61:11,12,13.) (Parallel to מלאך פניו angel of his presence.)

(b) "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Ps. 139:7.) (רוחך // פניך)

(c) "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel saying: not by might nor by power, but by my spirit..." (Zach. 4:6.)

## 2) Divine Source of all Life.

(a) "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life." (Job 33:4.) רוח אל עשתי

(b) "Thou takest away their breath רוחם, they die, And return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, רוחך, they are created..." (Ps. 104:29,30.)

(c) The valley of dry bones. "Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live." (Ezek. 37:9.)

## 3) Initiating in man an unaccountable impulse.

Isaiah assures Hezekiah that he need not fear the threat of Rabshakeh - "Thus saith the Lord...Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. So Rabshakeh returned..." (2 Kings 19:6,7,8.)

4) Endowing man with exceptional skill.

"And I have filled him (Bezalel) with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship. To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of workmanship." (Numb. 31: 3,4,5.)

5) Endowing an abnormal disposition like madness.

"Now the spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." (1 Sam. 16:14.)

6) Endowing His chosen one with the ideal disposition of character.

"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding...and his delight shall be in the Fear of the Lord." (Isaiah 11:2,3.)

7) Imparting unusual energy.

When Samson was opposed by a lion, "And the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand." (Judg. 14:6.)

8) The Divine Inspiration of Prophecy.

(a) "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted..." (Isaiah 61:1.)

(b) "Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets?...Yea they made their hearts, as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of Hosts had sent by His Spirit, by the hand of the former prophets..."

(Zach. 7:7,12.)

(c) "And the Lord came down in a cloud and spoke unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him (Moses) and put it upon the seventy elders, and it came to pass that, when the spirit rested upon them they prophesied..." (Numb. 11:25.)

### 9) Inspiring ecstatic state of prophesy.

Samuel tells Saul that he will meet a company of prophets prophesying to the accompaniment of music.

"And the Spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and thou shalt be turned into another man." (1 Sam. 10:6.)

### 3. The Principle of Life.

The term Ruah in the Old Testament frequently has the meaning of the Vital Power in man which was bestowed upon him by God as the source of his vitality.

#### Examples of usages.

#### 1) Created by God.

"Thus saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." (Zach. 12:1.)

#### 2) Preserved by God.

(a) "In whose hand is the soul נַפְשׁוֹ, of every living thing and the breath, רוּחַ, of all mankind." (Job 12:10.)

(b) "In thee O Lord do I put my trust... Into thine hand I commend my spirit." (Ps. 31:1,5.)

בְּיָדְךָ אֶפְקֹד רוּחִי

3) Belongs to God.

"And the Lord said: "My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for that he also is flesh; therefore shall his days be a hundred and twenty years." (A.J.V.) (Gen. 6:3.) (A.V. and R.V. - "strive with", but see B.D.B. s.v. י'ט)

4) Departs at death.

"And the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. 12:7.)

5) Has separate existence.

"Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still but I could not discern the appearance thereof; a form was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice saying..." (Job 4:15,16.) רוּחַ עַל פְּנֵי יְהוָה  
(B.D.B. s.v. רוּחַ - 4, e. - "disembodied being" - but dubious, Di. Du. "breath of wind".)

4. Human Personality.

The term Ruah is used in the Old Testament to express a rich diversity of the various facets of human personality. Here the Old Testament appears to regard the Ruah as the seat of Emotion, Vigour, Disposition, Connation and Character.

Examples of usages.1) Energy, enthusiasm, vitality.

(a) "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them... And the Lord said unto Moses: Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is spirit, and lay thy hand upon him." (A.J.V.) (Numb. 27:16,17,18.)

אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ (But A.V., R.V. "in whom is the spirit"  
(scil. of God) - i.e. prophecy.)

(b) "But they hearkened not unto Moses, for anguish of spirit  
and for cruel bondage." (Ex. 6:9.) לִקְצֵר רוּחַ (Lit. 'lack of spirit'  
- probably due to bondage. B.D.B. - 'impatience'.)

(c) "And when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry  
him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived." (Gen. 45:27.)

וַתְּחַי רוּחַ יַעֲקֹב אַבְיָהֶם

(d) "And when the Queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of  
Solomon, and the house that he had built...there was no more spirit  
in her." (1 Kings 1:4,5.)

וְלֹא הָיָה בָּהּ עוֹד רוּחַ

(e) "And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites...  
heard how that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from  
before the children of Israel, until we passed over, that their  
heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because  
of the children of Israel." (Joshua 5:1.)

וְלֹא הָיָה בָּם עוֹד רוּחַ

(f) "With my soul נַפְשִׁי have I desired thee in the night;  
yea with my spirit within me will I seek thee early." (Is. 26:9.)

אֵף רוּחִי בִקְרָבִי = vitality.

(g) "The spirit of man will sustain his infirmity; but a  
broken spirit who can bear?" (Prov. 18:14.) רוּחַ אִישׁ

(h) "...to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the  
heart of the contrite ones." (Is. 57:15.) לְהַחְיֹת רוּחַ שְׁפָלִים

(i) "Every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble,  
and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water..."  
(Ezek. 21:7.)

וְכָהֲתָה כָּל רוּחַ

(j) "Make sharp the arrows; hold firm the shields; the Lord  
hath stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; because his

device is against Babylon to destroy it." (Jer. 51:11.) (= ambition)

(k) "And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel...and they came and did the work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God." (Hagai 1:14.) (= enthusiasm)

## 2) Spiritedness, vehemence, impetuosity.

(a) The men of Ephraim complained that Gideon had not called them at the outset to fight with Midian. Gideon replies: "...and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger was abated toward him when he had said that." (Judg. 8:3.) אִי רָפְתָה רוּחַם

(b) "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry..." (Eccles. 7:9.)  
(= impetuous, quick tempered) אֵל תִּבְהַל בְּרוּחְךָ

(c) "He that is slow to anger is of great understanding: But he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." (Prov. 14:29.)

( קָצֵר רוּחַ = short, i.e. quick in anger, = impetuous - opposed to אָרֶךְ אַפַּיִם = long, i.e. delayed in anger.)

(d) "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32.)  
(= self control) חָשַׁל בְּרוּחוֹ

(e) "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." (Ps. 51:19.)

רוּחַ נִשְׁבְּרָה

## 3) Temperament, constitution, nature.

(As in mediaeval physiology.)

(a) "He that is of a cool spirit is a man of understanding." (Prov. 17:27.) (See B.D.B. s.v. קָר ) קָר רוּחַ

(b) "And it came to pass in the morning that his (Pharoah's) spirit was troubled." (Gen. 41:8.) אַג וְתַפְעָם רוּחוֹ (= upset)

(c) "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right

spirit within me." (Ps. 51:12.) נְכוּן רֹחַ (= rightly adjusted // לֵב טָהוֹר

(d) "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you." (Ezek. 11:19.) (Parallel to - a heart of flesh instead of a stony heart.)

(e) "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully." (Numb. 14:24.) רֹחַ אַחֵרֶת

#### 4) Emotion.

(a) "And it came to pass in the morning that his (Pharaoh's) spirit was troubled." (Gen. 41:8.) וַתִּפְעֶם רוּחוֹ (= agitated)

(b) "I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul." (Job 7:11.) צַר רוּחִי (Parallel to - מַר נַפְשִׁי)

(c) "And they were a bitterness of spirit unto Isaac and unto Rebekkah." (Gen. 26:35.) (A.J.V.) מַרְתַּת רוּחַ (See B.D.B., A.V., R.V. = grief of mind.)

(d) "...as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even a wife of youth when she is cast off..." (Is. 54:6.) עֲצוּבַת רוּחַ

#### 5) Disposition, inclination.

(a) "And the spirit of jealousy come upon him and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled; or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled." (Numb. 5:14.) רוּחַ קִנְאָה

(b) "For the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God." (Hos. 4:12.) רוּחַ זְנוּנִים

(c) (The Lord shall be) "for a spirit of judgement to him that sitteth in judgement." (Is. 28:6.) רוּחַ מִשְׁפָּט



(d) "...I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land." (Zach. 13:2.)

רוח הטומאה (Personification of the inclination to impurity, i.e. idolatry.)

(e) "And thou shall speak unto all that are wise-hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom." (Ex. 28:3.) רוח חכמה

(f) "And they came every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing..." (Ex. 35:21.) נדבה רוחו אותו (= impelled by a natural impulse)

(g) "...the spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord; and his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord." (Is. 11:2,3.)

רוח דעת ויראת ה'

(h) "They also that err in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmur shall learn doctrine." (Is. 29:24.) תעי רוח

(i) "That which cometh into your mind shall not be at all; in that ye say, we will be as the nations, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone." (Ezek. 20:32.) העלה על רוחכם

##### 5. Summary: The Conscious Life of Man.

Although the word Ruah retains throughout the Old Testament its original meaning of 'wind' and is thus commonly used, both in its natural sense, and as a figure of speech in describing the 'breath' of God, it is also frequently used to describe, in a supernatural sense, the Divine Presence itself, or the Vital Power created by God and used as his Instrument. Robinson finds 134 instances of this usage.<sup>1</sup>

1. H. Wh. Robinson, The People and the Book, p. 358.

With this Instrument God endows man with vitality. This vitality is a measure of the Divine Ruah which has been imbued in man by God. It is the principle of life without which man could not live. The Ruah in man continues to belong to God, but it is given to man to be used by him as the Instrument of his physical and mental activity.

Human beings use this divinely given Vitality in different ways. The manner in which man uses his physical and mental capacities, and the extent to which he applies to them his vital energies, are reflected in what we might call his personality. The expression of his emotions, temperament, inclination and connotation give outward manifestation of the condition of and the use made of his Ruah by man.

In view of the repeated exhortations to man by God, by prophet and also by man to himself, there can be no doubt that in the Old Testament conception it is man himself who is always the determining factor deciding the use to which he puts his Ruah. The basic commandment of "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy might" exemplifies the understood capacity of man to direct his Ruah in this manner.

It is recognised however that there are occasions when God intervenes directly to change or strengthen the existing character of a man.

At times God implants in man an additional Ruah of a particular character. Through the influence of this particular type of energy He intervenes in the normal course and character of a man's life. This intervention may be the cause of some unaccountable impulse in a man by which he acts in a manner contrary to his usual character.

It may heighten to an extraordinary degree his capacity in wisdom, skill, strength or piety. It may overpower his reason so that he acts with obstinacy or even with madness. Or it may fill him with ecstasy and the inspiration of prophecy.

It is understandable that man in his weakness and imperfection recognising the supreme value of perfect communion with God, yet unable to direct himself completely to that achievement, should ask the Almighty to help him to direct his Ruah aright and to strengthen within him the power that would lead to piety.

When the Ruah is in its most active and what we might call its most healthy condition, the vitality of man is always demonstrated in a vigorous, spirited and enthusiastic manner. The vitality, courage and piety of Joshua, as the successor of Moses, was described as his being a man 'in whom is spirit'.

It is remarkable that nowhere in the Old Testament is Ruah constructed in any usage to describe the feeling of happiness, which is normally described by using the terms Nefesh and Lev.

It may be assumed that the Ruah in its normal condition as a healthy well-adjusted temperament is naturally happy. When however the balance of the true constitution is upset in any way there results a feeling of grief and anguish.

Descriptions of such troubling of the spirit always denote unhappiness. The untroubled spirit is always happy.

Although the two terms Nefesh and Ruah have been seen to originate from two different descriptions of the vitality of man, they both eventually denote the same thing, viz: the conscious life of man. As far as the nature of man is concerned there is no justification to assume any distinction in the meaning or conception

of human consciousness implied by either Nefesh or Ruah. Both terms are used interchangeably when describing some aspect or other of the conscious life of man. It is misleading to assume, as Delitzsch does, that there are two separate ghost-like existences within man, viz: a soul and a spirit each having certain functions and capacities of its own. The two terms differ only in the fact that they originate from two different approaches by man in his endeavour to describe the same thing, namely, the vitality and consciousness of man.<sup>1</sup>

If any distinction at all may be discerned, it is not in what the terms refer to, but perhaps in their usage in describing some aspects of the human consciousness. Both Nefesh and Ruah refer to man's 'breath-soul' as the principle of life, but Ruah may be more closely related in the Hebrew mind to the Biblical conception that all man's energies arise out of God's 'in-breathing' of His vitality into the body of man. Thus while Nefesh merely describes the phenomenon of breath as the vital principle in man, the term Ruah may connote a higher conception that this vital principle is in fact a divine energy received by man from God himself.

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1. Franz Delitzsch, A System of Biblical Psychology, 2nd ed. (1867) p. 205.

## CHAPTER III

### LEV, HEART

#### The Meaning of the Term.

In the whole of Biblical psychology reference is made to LEV or LEVAV, meaning 'heart', with greater frequency than to any other element in the physical or psychical composition of man. Johnson gives a total of 350 instances of the use of this term in the Old Testament as compared with 754 occurrences of Nefesh as given by H.W. Robinson.<sup>1</sup>

It is remarkable that more than any other term, including Nefesh and Ruah, 'the heart' is the most all-embracing expression which 'comprises the whole world of psychic phenomena'.<sup>2</sup>

It is particularly in the use of this term that we see most clearly that in the Hebrew mind no distinction was made between the physical and psychical functions of the human being. The heart, which, after all, is a definite, tangible, physical organ, is regarded not only as the centre of man's body and the power-house of his vitality, but also psychically as the centre of man's conscious reason and resolution.

Even if the Israelites in common with other peoples of the ancient world, knew nothing of the circulation of the blood, as no

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1. A.R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, p. 77, n. 1.  
See pp. 79-82.  
H.W. Robinson, The Christian Doctrine of Man, pp. 16f.; 'Hebrew Psychology', The People and the Book, pp. 355ff.  
See the exhaustive analysis of all usages of this term in C.A. Briggs, 'Study of the Use of Lev and Levav in the Old Testament', Semitic Studies in memory of Dr Kohut, (Berlin, 1897) pp. 44-105  
- summarised in B.D.B. s.v. levav, lev.
  2. M. Lazarus, Ethics of Judaism II, 60. n.

doubt they were unaware of the nervous system, they were nevertheless well aware of the central importance of the heart as the focal point in the whole range of physical and psychical activity. Its psychical functions cover every aspect of the emotional, intellectual, and volitional life of man. Physically, the presence of life may well have been associated with the movement of the heart. Friedrich Delitzsch finds the original meaning of the root LAVAV in the Assyrian LABABU, 'in unruhiger Bewegung sein' (F. Delitzsch, Prolegomena, 88ff). Thus the word Lev itself expresses the condition of the heart as the organ of unrest, agitation or palpitation, with which activity must have been associated the presence of life.<sup>1</sup>

The general meaning of the word conveys that which is within, in contrast to that which is without. It may refer to 'the midst of the seas' (Jon. 2:3) (R.V. - 'the heart of') or 'the midst of heaven' (Deut. 4:11); but most commonly it refers either to the central organ of man, viz: the heart, or to the inner man, the soul, the inner self, in contrast to the outward bodily appearance of man. Thus 'my heart and my flesh' לִבִּי וְבָשָׂרִי (Ps. 84:2) means my entire self, body and soul. When I thank God 'with my whole heart' (Ps. 9:1) I thank Him with every capacity of my consciousness.

The most prominent usage of Lev, however, is to describe in particular, the seat or instrument of man's intellectual and volitional activity. Generally when the Old Testament speaks of the 'heart' of man its meaning approximates most closely to what we call Mind or Intellect. By metonymy the term is employed to

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1. B.D.B. s.v. Levav, p. 523, a.)

denote also one's 'thought', 'wish', 'purpose' and 'resolve'.

In considering the word Lev we come closest to the study of ancient Hebrew psychology. In its predominant usage throughout the Old Testament the various activities with which Lev is associated coincide with the Hebrew conception of the activities and power of the Mind. At times the Lev is used by man as his Instrument in his exercise of Intelligence, Thought, Attention and Memory. When God gives Israel 'an heart to know me' (Jer. 24:7) He endows His people with the Intelligence to understand the conception of God. Moses in his address to the people of Israel at Mount Nebo appeals to them never to forget the things which they had seen and heard at Horeb, 'lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life' (Deut. 4:9). It is through the activity of 'the heart' that man retains the memory of things. But the heart is not autonomous, remembering or forgetting at will. It is man who is exhorted to keep things that require to be remembered in the heart. Likewise the heart is capable of many types of thoughts; and when Israel produces from their hearts such thoughts that lead them 'to offer willingly unto Thee' for the building of the Temple, David commends them to God on this account for His blessing. (1 Chron. 29:18.)

The uniqueness of man, Rabbi Akiba said, is not only in that he possesses Mind and Intelligence 'in the likeness of God', but in that 'it was made known to him that he was created in the image of God'.<sup>1</sup> Thus throughout the Old Testament it is clear in Hebrew thought that just as one cannot imagine Reason to be the master of

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1. Mishna, Aboth III, 18.

God, so Mind is not the master of Man but his instrument. The Hebrew is aware of this unique gift of God which should be used truly and well.

Just as man is conscious of the possession of Mind, so Mind supplies man with a consciousness of his entire self. The Mind informs man of his Emotions, Appetites, Passions and the presence or lack of Courage. These feelings of man are usually his personal reactions to circumstance, environment and experience. The Mind therefore acts as man's self-consciousness revealing the states and conditions of the Self as experienced in various circumstances. The Old Testament describes all these conditions as the state or action of 'the heart'. This is the second group of the usages of the term Lev in the sense of the Mind.

The third group of usages of the term Lev reveals that in the ancient Hebrew conception the power of volition, or conscious resolution, was also used by man through the exercise of his Mind. The Mind is not the motive power of Will but man's instrument of Will. When Samuel called to Israel to resolve to serve God he spoke of their act of resolution not as an act of the heart, but as an act of the people in respect of their heart. Just as they were told to 'put away the foreign gods', as a positive action on their part, so they were told, 'direct your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only'. (1 Sam. 7:3.)

The determination of Will, the strength or weakness of Resolution, does not depend on the strength or weakness of 'the heart', but on the amount of energy which man directs to 'the heart' in the prosecution of his Resolve. The expression 'the will is weak' is misleading if it conveys the meaning that the instrument of



resolution possessed by man is defective. The Hebrew conception in this expression is that the overall decision of man in this case is not to pursue that particular Resolve with more than a fragment of energy that is in fact in his power. The same person could very well the next moment exercise a most powerful Will in pursuit of a different Resolution.

The exercise of the Will is the use by man of the same power of his consciousness through which he reasons and experiences emotions. In the action of willing he uses a measure of this energy to direct and pursue the decisions and determinations of his choice.

Man's activity of Will in this manner as in other psychical activities, is characteristically associated in the Old Testament with the term Lev; and descriptions of his Will are expressed by descriptions of the condition or use of his 'heart'.

In Hebrew thought a man's action is never divorced from its moral character and moral value. Even the action of willing, quite apart from the performance of the act, is the result of a decision or choice by man, and, therefore, is subject to moral judgement. Conscience and moral character are recognised as essential elements of the psychology of Mind. Thus the term Lev is used on the Old Testament, fourthly, as the seat of Moral Character or the place of Moral Judgement.

The activity of the heart, covering the wide range of man's emotional, intellectual and volitional life, is regarded as the expression of the nature of the Ego, Character, or personality of the Individual. Thus a description of the condition of the heart describes the moral character of the Individual.

When the Lord 'searches the heart' (Jer. 17:10) He discovers the true moral value, instead of the simulated appearance, of man's behaviour. The obtaining of 'a new heart' (Ezek. 18:31) implies a change in the pattern of one's moral character. When David realised that he had acted in a manner below his normal moral standard, his 'heart smote him', i.e. he was troubled when he became aware through his conscience, or his moral judgement, that he had acted basely. (1 Sam. 24:5,6.)

A good character is described as a man having a pure, sincere, perfect or upright heart. Where the character is evil, the heart is described as wicked, double, haughty, stony or uncircumcised.

In describing the heart the following are examples of moral attributes and their Hebrew roots:-

'Purity' - בָּרָר (Ps. 24:4), זָכָה (Ps. 73:13), טָהוּר (Ps. 51:12).

'Integrity' - תָּמֵם (Gen. 20:5,6), נָאֵמָן (Neh. 9:8), נָכוֹן (Ps. 57:8).

'Uprightness' - יָשָׁר (Deut. 9:5).

'Perfection' (complete conformity with the Will of God) - שָׁלֵם  
(1 Kings 8:61).

'Immorality' (perverted, bent on evil) עִקָּט (Prov. 11:20),  
עוֹה (Prov. 12:8), רָעַע (Gen. 8:21; cf. 1 Sam. 17:28).

#### Phrases containing Special Usages of 'Heart'.

In the light of the above account of the meaning of 'heart' the sense of a number of phrases in which the term is used can now be clarified.

##### a) 'Hard hearted'.

When the heart is taken as the picture of the moral character, it represents the general pattern of man's Inclinations, Judgements,

and Resolves. Since the heart, however, is, in fact, a physical object, physical attributes of the heart are used to describe the state of the moral character.

The normal or natural condition of the heart is when it is soft as flesh. Thus a 'heart of flesh' is a true and good heart. When however it is insensitive to sympathy or argument it is described as being hardened. A 'stony heart' (Ezek. 11:19) describes a cruel insensitive character. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 7:14) represents his determination to persist in following the course of his own mind, refusing to be moved by any appeal to moral virtue. The following Hebrew roots are interchangeable in this sense:-

טבב 'heavy' (Ex. 7:14); חטק 'hard' (Ex. 7:3); חזק 'strong' (Ex. 4:21).

b) 'Uncircumcised in heart'.

Another expression for the shutting out of all extraneous influence, connoting 'stubbornness', and 'insensitivity', is by describing the heart as being fatty, clogged or closed. When Israel's sins have surpassed the possibility of forgiveness, the Almighty tells the prophet, "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again and be healed." (Is. 6:9.) This clogged and closed up condition of the heart is sometimes compared with the 'uncut' condition of the man who is not circumcised. "For all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart." ערלי לב (Jer. 9:26).

Circumcision of the foreskin marks the submission of man to the covenant with God. In referring to Character, as represented by the heart, it means 'uncut, unopened, unsubmitive, adamant'. Only when this adamant heart of the people is humbled, will they confess their iniquity. (Cf. Lev. 26:40,41.)

c) 'Broken-hearted'.

Submissiveness to God's will is also expressed by referring to the breaking of the 'hardness' of the heart.

Thus the expression 'broken-hearted' in Old Testament usage means that the individual is no longer self-willed, but subordinates his own perverted thoughts and desires completely to the Will of God. Just as modern usage speaks of the 'breaking-in', or taming, of a horse, so in Hebrew the 'breaking of the heart' means the subduing of its wilfulness.

Scripture admits that more often than not the natural bent of man's mind, or the shape or frame of his thought, does not coincide with the Will of God, but is rather inclined towards evil. In Gen. 8:21 כִּי יֵצֵר לֵב הָאָדָם רָע מִנְעוּרָיו the R.V. translation "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" refers to the 'devices' and 'purposes' of the mind, almost in the Rabbinic sense of 'impulse' or 'inclination'.

The Psalmist tells us that when Israel walk in their own counsels instead of in the ways of God, they hearken not to God's voice and 'go after the stubbornness of their heart'. (Ps. 81:12.)

It is in the sense of subordinating one's own will, or 'wilfulness', to the Will of God that the Psalmist requires from man 'a broken spirit' and a 'broken and contrite heart'. These

expressions do not refer to overwhelming grief which crushes the spirit of man and produces despair. The 'breaking' of the spirit is a self-denying discipline in subordination to the law of God. This submission of self to the Will of God is a sacrifice which God will surely not despise. (Ps. 51:17.) The Lord, furthermore, will give immediate salvation to all those who overpower their evil inclinations, and 'break' their own 'heart'.

(Ps. 34:19.) קָרַב ה' לְנוֹשְׁבֵי לֵב וְאֶת דַּכְּאֵי רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ

d) 'Whole-hearted'.

This expression which now generally means 'thoroughly earnest and sincere' (Shorter O.E.D.) is used in the American Jewish Version of the Bible in translation of the Hebrew תָּמִים in Deut. 18:13 תָּמִים תְּהִיָה עִם ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ "Thou shalt be whole-hearted with the Lord thy God" (R.V. Thou shalt be perfect with...). Similarly, Ps. 119:80 יְהִי לִבִּי תָּמִים בְּחֻקֶיךָ R.V. 'Let my heart be perfect in thy statutes'. A.V. 'Let my heart be sound...' . A.J.V. 'Let my heart be undivided...' . In these contexts 'whole-hearted' conveys the meaning of the Hebrew better than 'sound' or 'perfect'. The translation 'undivided' is closer to the Hebrew sense. When we consider the all-embracing nature of Lev as Mind and Personality, in addition to being the Physical reservoir and distributor of the blood, we must recognise that it is the focal point in man of all his Will, Strength, Thought, and Emotion. Delitzsch quotes Beck ('Seelenlehre') as follows: The heart is 'the very hearth of life's impulses - the supporter of the personal consciousness, combined with the self-determination and activity of the reason - the training place of all independent actions and conditions; it is

the agent of all relations and conducts, as well on the spiritual as on the bodily side, so far as they ensue with self-consciousness and free agency. It is the heart that characterises the moral condition of man: in the heart are found the postulates of speech; in the heart is affirmed the natural law; and by means of regeneration, the new law of God as a living power.' "All that Hellenically and Hellenistically is called *νοῦς* (mind), *λόγος* (speech), *συνείδησις* (conscience), *θυμός* (fierceness), is involved in *καρδία* (heart); and all by which *רֹחַ* and *שֵׁנָה* is affected, comes in *לֵב* into the light of consciousness."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the term 'whole-hearted' expresses the conscious unity and harmonisation of the complete spiritual-psychical life in all its aspects. It is the perfect conscious agreement, with all one's power, of Will, Thought and Feeling, focussed in one particular direction. Thus the meaning of Deut. 10:10 becomes perfectly clear, viz: "Thou shalt be whole-hearted with the Lord thy God" (A.J.V.). Similarly, Ps 119:80 "Let my heart be undivided in thy statutes" (A.J.V.). Likewise the faulty heart in the service of God is replaced in the ethical sense by 'a new spirit' and 'one heart' *רֹחַ לֵב* (Ezek. 11:19).

It is this undivided directing by man of all his conscious activities in seeking perfect communion with God, which is required in the call of Moses to Israel: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:5).

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1. Oehler: Article 'Herz' in Herzog's R.E. - quoted by F. Delitzsch, A System of Biblical Psychology, p. 297.

e) 'Lacking in Heart'.

The heart, being the seat of Reason, is recognised as a governing factor in man's behaviour. Through the instrumentality of the heart a man decides upon one particular course of action as against another. It is the heart which devises and decides a man's actions. Thus man observes God's commandments by deciding in his heart to do so. An example of this usage is the exhortation "My son, forget not my teaching, But let thy heart keep my commandments" (Prov. 3:1). But if the heart is to be the true instrument of Reason, leading man to the proper determinations, it is necessary that it should be complete and in perfect condition. Thus a man who is 'lacking in heart' לב חסר לב is one who is lacking in intelligence. The expression has no romantic implication but is a reflection on his good sense. The young man keeping a clandestine rendezvous with a harlot is called 'lacking in heart' לב חסר לב in the sense of being a parallel expression to 'simpleton' פתי, or as A.V. and R.V. 'void of understanding' (Prov. 7:7). Similarly we find the straightforward statement, 'Fools die for want of wisdom' (A.V.) (Prov. 10:21), the Hebrew being אוילים בחסר לב ימותו.

f) 'From one's heart'.

In Old Testament usage, to do a thing 'from one's heart' does not bear reference to the sincerity or spontaneity of the doer. It refers to the action originating from the doer's own initiative in the sense that the conception of the act, and the decision to do it, originated from his own mind.

Thus in Numb. 16:28 the words כי לא מלבי (lit. 'for not from my heart') are spoken by Moses in reply to the challenge of Korah

against the leadership of Moses and Aaron. Moses protests that he has acted on the instruction of God, and not on his own initiative. He insists that Korah has rebelled not against his (Moses') decision, but against the decision of God. Accordingly, R.V. 'for I have not done them of my own mind'.

Similarly, in Numb. 24:13, when Balaam declares his inability to do either good or evil מִלְּבִי ('from my heart'), he is explaining to Balak that in the matter of cursing Israel he cannot act according to his own design. The words he will utter will be dictated by God, and will not originate in his (Balaam's) own mind.

In 1 King 12:33, Jeroboam instituted the celebration of a Festival which had no sanction in the Torah. It was a Festival אֲשֶׁר בָּרַךְ מִלְּבוֹ, which Jeroboam had devised out of his own mind.

Similarly, Ezek. 13:2 refers to prophets who prophesy מִלְּבָבָם - out of their own heart, i.e. not the word of God.

g) 'To steal the heart'.

To prevent a person from knowing something which normally he would wish to know, or be aware of, is described as 'stealing his heart'. Thus the Hebrew sentence in Gen. 31:20 וַיִּגְנוֹב יַעֲקֹב אֶת לֵב לָבָן הָאַרְמֵי may be translated as follows:

Lit: 'And Jacob stole the heart of Laban the Aramean.'

R.V.: 'And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, (in that he told him not that he fled).'

A.J.V.: And Jacob outwitted Laban the Aramean.



Old Testament Usages.1. Soul, Inner self, consciousness.Examples of usages.

a) "My soul, נַפְשִׁי longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out unto the living God." (Ps. 84:2.)

לְגַבִּי וּבְשָׁרִי (= my entire self, body and soul.)

b) "Forasmuch as this people draw near and with their mouth and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by rote."

(A.J.V.) (Is. 29:13.) וּלְבָבוֹ רָחֵק מֵאֵינִי (= mechanical, instead of conscious.)

c) "I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart." (Ps. 9:1.)

בְּכָל לִבִּי (= with every capacity of my consciousness.)

d) "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him (Nebuchadnezzar)." (Dan. 4:16.)

לִבֵּי חַיָּוָיָא

(= brute nature, deprived of conscious reason.)

e) "The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek after him: let your heart live forever." (Ps. 22:26.)

יְחִי לְבַבְכֶּם (= soul, you.)

2. Mind.a) Mind as an Instrument.

The meaning of Mind as the Seat of Wisdom, Intelligence, Memory, Thought and Attention, is a particularly characteristic usage of Lev.

Examples of usages.1) Intelligence.

a) "And Moses said hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me



to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind."  
(Numb. 16:28.) מַלְבִּי ("These works did not originate in my

mind" - although they were obviously according to his wish.)

b) "And Jeroboam said in his heart וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלִבּוֹ (= thought),  
Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David...And Jeroboam  
ordained a feast in the eighth month...And he went up unto the  
altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day of the  
eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own  
heart..." (1 Kings 12:26,32,33.) (Hebrew Massoretic Reading, K'ri.)

אֲשֶׁר בָּדָא מִלְבוֹ (B.D.B. s.v. בָּדָא = devise, invent; Ar. = begin.)  
= originate.

c) "The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and with blindness and  
with astonishment of heart." (Deut. 28:28.) תַּמְהוֹן לֵבָב

(= mental confusion. B.D.B. = 'bewilderment'.)

d) "Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding;  
which have eyes and see not; which have ears and hear not."

(Jer. 5:21.) עִם סָבֵל וְאֵין לֵב (= intelligence.) Followed by

v. 23 - "But this people have a revolting, and rebellious heart."

לֵב סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרָה (= character;) and v. 24 - "Neither say they in  
their heart." וְלֹא אָמְרוּ בְּלִבָּבָם (= thought, considered.)

e) "And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord:  
and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they  
shall return unto me with their whole heart." (Jer. 24:7.)

(= undivided resolve.) לֵב לְדַעַת אֹתִי (= the intelligence to  
know and understand.)

f) "And in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom."  
(Ex. 31:6.) וּבְלֵב כָּל חָכָם לֵב

2) Thought, Attention, Memory.

a) "O Lord the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever, even the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and direct their heart (= inclination) unto thee." (A.J.V.) (1 Chron. 29:18.) לִיצֹר מִחֲשָׁבוֹת לֵבָב עַמְּךָ

= Remember always this product of the thoughts of their mind, viz: that they "offer willingly unto thee" for the building of the Temple. I.e. This determination to serve God was the conception of their own free will. They have thus proved worthy of God's further assistance in directing their heart (i.e. will, inclination) towards Him. (B.D.B. s.v. רָצוּן, 'form of what is framed in the mind'. Cf. N.H. רָצוּן = impulse, tendency.) (The short passage, 1 Chron. 29:17-19, contains also a number of examples of the use of 'heart' meaning 'moral character', as outlined below in section d).)

b) "Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, and all the laws thereof, and mark well the entering in of the house..." (Ezek. 44:5.) שִׁים לֵבְךָ  
(= apply thy mind, pay attention.)

c) "Remember this, and shew yourselves men; bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old..." (Is. 46:8-9.) הִשִּׁיבוּ עָלַי לֵב

d) "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, (= take great care - (רָפְטָהְךָ = thyself)) lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life." (Deut. 4:9.) פֶּן תִּשְׁכַּח מִלֵּבְךָ  
(= forget פֶּן תִּשְׁכַּח)

b) Mind as Self-consciousness.

The term Lev is used as the Seat of the Emotions, Appetites, Passions and Courage. This particular aspect of Self-consciousness, however, is more usually expressed by the term Nefesh.

Examples of usages.1) Emotions.

a) Of the Philistines celebrating their pagan festivity - "And it came to pass when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport." (Judg. 16:25.) (Massor. Text.)

כִּי טוֹב לָבָם (= merriment; obviously no moral description.)

b) "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance; but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken." (Prov. 15:13.) ( רֵיחַ נִכְאָה )

עֲצִבַת לֵב - opp. to לֵב שְׂמֵחַ

c) "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." (Zeph. 3:14.)

בְּכָל לֵב

d) "Behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit."

( שֹׁגֵר רֵיחַ ) (Isai. 65:14.) כְּאֵב לֵב - opp. to טוֹב לֵב

e) "Heaviness (i.e. sorrow) in the heart of a man maketh it stoop; but a good word maketh it glad." (Prov. 12:25.) דְּאָגָה בְּלֵב אִישׁ

(= worry depresses.)

f) "Thou shalt surely give him (i.e. the poor), and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him." (Deut. 15:10.)

טוֹב לֵב (opp. to וְלֹא יִרַע לִבְבְּךָ)

2) Appetites.

a) Abraham offering refreshment to the three strangers at Mamre:

"And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your heart; after that ye shall pass on." (Gen. 18:5.) סַעֲדוּ לְבַבְכֶם (A.J.V. - 'stay ye your heart' = satisfy your hunger. Cf. Judg. 19:5.)

b) "And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread that strengtheneth man's heart." (Ps. 104:15.)

וְלֶחֶם לְבַב אֲנוֹשׁ יִסְעֵד

c) "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips." (Ps. 21:2.) תַּאֲוֹת לְבָבוֹ (viz: long life, honour, majesty.)

### 3) Passions.

a) "Lest the avenger of blood pursue the manslayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and smite him mortally." (Deut. 19:6.) כִּי יַחַם לְבָבוֹ (= anger.)

b) "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids." (Prov. 6:25.) אַל תִּתְחַמַּד יַפְיָהּ בְּלִבְךָ

c) "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: (רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה) a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

(Ps. 51:17.) לֵב נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְבָה (= passions brought under restraint.)

### 4) Courage. (Usually רוּחַ)

a) Describing the miraculous defeat of the powerful enemy: "The stout-hearted are bereft of sense, they sleep their sleep; and none of the men of might have found their hands." (A.J.V.) (Ps. 76:6.)

אֲבִירֵי לֵב - Parallel to אֲנָשֵׁי חֵיל

b) "Wait on the Lord; be strong, and let thine heart take courage..." (Ps. 27:14.) וַיֵּאמֶץ לְבָבוֹ

c) "And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army." (Dan. 11:25.) וַיַּעַר כֹּחַ וְלִבּוֹ

d) "What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return unto his house lest his brethren's heart melt as his heart." (Deut. 20:8.) יֵרָא וְיָרֵךְ הַלֵּבב... וְלֹא יִמַּס אֶת לֵבב אֶחָיו כְּלֵבבו  
(softness or melting of heart - opp. to strong heart = weakening of courage = grow fearful.)

c) Mind as the Power of Volition.

A characteristic usage of Lev is in the meaning of Mind as the Seat of Conscious Resolve, Inclination, Resolution and Direction and Determination of Will.

Examples of Usages.

1) Determination of Will.

a) "If ye do return unto the Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you, and direct your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only." (A.J.V.) (1 Sam. 7:3.)

הִכִּינוּ לִבְבְּכֶם (Better than A.V., R.V. - 'prepare'.)

b) "Now set your heart and your soul to seek after the Lord your God." (1 Chron. 22:19.) הִתְנוּ לִבְבְּכֶם וְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם (Heart = volition of mind; Soul = desire.)

c) "And it was told the King of Egypt that the people were fled; and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was changed towards the people, and they said, What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" (Ex. 14:5.) (B.D.B. - Pharaoh's mind was changed.)

וַיִּקְפֹּץ לֵבב פַּרְעֹה

2) Inclination.

a) "And they came every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing..." (Ex. 35:21.)

(= was so inclined.)

נְשָׂאוּ לֵבבו

b) "And their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech; for they said, He is our brother." (Judg. 9:3.) וַיִּטּוּ לָבָם אַחֲרָי

### 3) Resolve.

a) "By the watercourses of Reuben there were great resolves of heart." (Judg. 5:15.) חִקְי לֵב (B.D.B. s.v. חִק - 3, action prescribed for oneself, resolve.)

b) "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises." (Ps. 57:7.) וַיִּבְּרֹן לִבִּי (= resolved.)

### d) Mind as the Source of Moral Judgement.

The particular aspect of Mind as the Source of Moral Judgement and therefore the Seat of Moral Character is a characteristic use of the term Ley in the Old Testament.

#### Examples of usages.

#### 1) Moral character in general.

a) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly weak - who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." (A.J.V.) (Jer. 17:9,10.) צִקַּב הַלֵּב

= one can be easily misled in assessing a man's true character.

חִקֵּר לֵב = search out and assess the moral value of man's behaviour.

בִּחַן כִּלְיֹת = uncover and judge his drives, desires and affections.

(Cf. Jer. 12:2 - kidneys as seat of emotion and affection.)

שָׁנָה - B.D.B. - שָׁנָה = be weak, sick.

b) "And it came to pass afterward that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my lord, the Lord's anointed." (1 Sam. 24:5,6.) וַיִּדְּרֹךְ לֵב דָּוִד אֶתֹו (= conscience.)

c) "Speak not thou in thine heart, ... saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: ... Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go in to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations..." (Deut. 9:4,5.) (Cf. 1 Chron. 29:17.) יֵשׁוּר לִבְבְּךָ

(= high moral character, straight-forward, true, honest.)

d) "Cast away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit." (Ezek. 18:31.) שִׁבֵּט לֵב (= change the pattern of your moral character.)

e) "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the hearts." (Prov. 21:2.) תִּכְנֵן לְבוֹת

## 2) Attributes of Moral Character.

### (1) Good.

a) Abimelech protests to God concerning Sarah. "In the integrity of my heart and the innocency of my hands have I done this." (Gen. 20:5.) בְּתָם לִבִּי (= without dissimulation, honest.)

b) "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? ... He that hath clean hands and a pure heart..." (Ps. 24:3,4.) בָּר לֵב (= free from any base intention, sincere.)

c) "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (רוּחַ נְכוֹן) (Ps. 51:10.) לֵב טָהוֹר (pure, instinctive morality.)

d) "Remember now O Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight." (Is. 38:3.) לֵב טָהוֹר (The natural heart unspoiled is good.)



(2) Evil.

- a) "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly, Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross." (A.V.) (Prov. 26:22,23.) (= evil mind.) לב רע  
( שִׁפְתַיִם דֹּלְקִים - play on 'fervent' as R.V. and 'burning arrows' (Ps. 7:14) (R.V.).)
- b) "They speak falsehood everyone with his neighbour, with flattering lip, and with a double heart, do they speak." (A.J.V.) (Ps. 12:3.) (= double faced;) לב וְלֵב  
(apparently good but really evil.)
- c) "We have heard of the pride of Moab, that he is very proud; his loftiness and his pride and his arrogancy, and the haughtiness of his heart." (Jer. 48:29.) רם לבו
- d) "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh." (Ezek. 11:19.) (= hard, cruel, insensitive לב קָאֵבֶן opp. to לב בָּשָׂר  
- warm, soft, sensitive.)
- e) "For all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart." (Jer. 9:26.) עֲרֵלֵי לֵב  
(= uncut, unopened, unsubmitive, adamant.) (When the uncircumcised heart is opened man becomes 'humbled' before God. (Lev. 26:41.))
- f) "Circumcise therefore, the foreskin of your hearts, and be no more stiffnecked." (Deut. 10:16.) עֲרֵלֵת לִבְבְּכֶם  
(I.e. Cease from your obstinacy which acts as a barrier, preventing you from receiving counsel and moral influence.)

Summary: The Whole Personality of Man.

The varying usages of LEV in the Old Testament reveal what, in the Hebrew mind, was meant by the Inner Self, or Soul. The fact that many of its usages are shared with those of Nefesh and Ruah confirm the impression that all three terms are actually referring to the same Inner Self or Soul of man; each particular term probably having some characteristic emphasis, physically or psychically, of its own, according to the thought or outlook of the speaker. The particular characteristic in the conception of LEV is that it is what is now called Mind, or the Seat of Consciousness and Reason.

The Mind is used as the Instrument of man in the exercise of Wisdom, Intelligence, Memory, Thought and Attention. Through this same Instrument man is conscious also of his emotional experiences and the reactions of his own Self to his surroundings. Through his Mind, furthermore, man creates conscious Resolves, and directs his energy in their pursuit. When man is consistent in repeatedly producing the same Resolves, or in choosing on the same standard of values, the pattern of action and determination which results is regarded as the natural inclination or character of his Mind.

In short, almost the entire psychology of man is spoken of in terms of the nature and activity of his heart, and the dominant part of that Personality is clearly the power of Intellect and Volition.

Since the heart is the principal vessel of the blood life, and the 'centre' of man, it is regarded as the reservoir of the Soul.

The earliest existence of the various elements of human life

is first found in the embryo while yet in the dark laboratory of the womb: 'I was made in secret' **בְּסֵתֶר** says the Psalmist (Ps. 137:15). While all the members of the body were thus being 'fashioned', man as yet did not possess any self-consciousness. On the birth of the child, when the current of the blood becomes independent and the child breathes for itself, the processes of breathing and independent blood circulation coincide with the first manifestation of psychological elements in the life of the body.

Thus through the function of the heart the undeveloped embryo, hitherto dependent on the life of the mother, begins to live its own self-life.

Perhaps in the physical sense, as well as in the ethical, the Bible tells us: 'For out of it are the issues of life'

- (Prov. 4:23). **מִמֶּנּוּ תוֹצֵאוֹת חַיִּים**

From now on we find the life of experience, sensation and spirit linked through the heart with the body, and every manifestation of weakening or excitement of feeling and vivacity is accompanied by the stronger or fainter pulsation of the heart.

It is therefore not surprising that in the realistic manner of Hebrew description, the heart should be spoken of as being in fact the Soul. Furthermore, the interest of Hebrew thought was not so much in psychological terminology as in the ethical approach to man. Thus the heart presented itself as the ideal representation of the entire psycho-physical unity of man which could be described by ethical and religious standards, as being hard, swollen or fat, or else firm, pure and whole.

According to Delitzsch, Heart, Soul and Flesh are the Old Testament trichotomy of man. He maintains that the heart is not

identical with the Spirit, Ruah, as 'personal power' nor with the Soul, Nefesh, as 'personal link of Spirit with Body'. The heart is the personal organ of the Soul, and Man becomes conscious of both Soul and Body by means of the heart as their organ.<sup>1</sup> In the present study, however, it is maintained that the term 'heart' is one of the expressions used in the Old Testament to describe the entire Personality of Man.

The Scriptural designation of the heart as the central organ of the Soul is common with classical and oriental antiquity. According to the Indian view the sum of knowledge rises in the aether of the heart. The Persians likewise regarded the heart as the source and ground whence the thoughts branch forth like a wood. In Homer, also, the καρδία serves as the central living hearth of man. According to Aristotle, the heart, from which the formation of the embryo takes its beginning, is the centre whence proceed all the organs of sense and whence therefore the soul as the 'entelechia' of the body, develops its reality. Among the Stoics, Posidonius taught that the one soul, with its three fundamental powers ( λογίζεσθαι, θυμοῦσθαι, ἐπιθυμῆν ) (- to think, be enthusiastic, desire) has its one proper dwelling place in the heart.<sup>2</sup>

Although since Pythagoras, philosophers and physiologists consider the brain as the organ of the νοῦς, thought, and αἴσθησις, perception, it is not till Rabbinic times (with the exception only of a few places in Daniel 2: 28, 4:2,7,10, 7:1,15) that Hebrew

1. Franz Delitzsch, A System of Biblical Psychology, p. 303, note 3.  
2. Ibid., pp. 298-9. Sources are quoted for each of the above statements.

thought speaks of the psycho-spiritual powers of man as being in the head. The Babylonian Talmud, Menachoth 80b., for example, refers to a man devoid of good judgement as 'having no brain in his head' - שׂוֹן לֹא אֵין בְּרִיָּה . Nevertheless, Maimonides confirms the above view of Old Testament usage when he states that Lev in the Bible is a homonymous word which primarily denotes the principal organ of life, but also thought, sentiment, will and intellect.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed, I, 39.

## CHAPTER IV

### PSYCHICAL FUNCTIONS OF BODILY LIMBS

#### The Organs of the Senses.

##### 1. The Senses as vehicles of the Soul.

In the Old Testament conception the Soul, which is carried by the blood, with the heart as its centre, pervades the whole body. Just as in the modern conception, the Nervous System extends through the entire corporeity, even to its most delicate and extreme subdivision of tissue, continually restoring itself from the blood, so in the Old Testament the Soul, by means of the most delicate physical material as its vehicle, pervades the whole of the body, and on occasion manifests itself in some particular locality of the body. Because of the pervading presence of the Soul in the bodily limbs the human being is able through these limbs to engage in such purely psychical activities as entering into intercourse with a world of spirit with which physically one can have no contact, and in the reverse procedure, of producing extraordinary effects on the souls or bodies of both animate or inanimate existences. The activities of the seer and the prophet, the use of the eyes for good or evil, and of the hands for prayer and healing and blessing are examples of such psychical activities.

But these bodily activities of the soul are exceptional. This 'nervous system' provides a far more important function in its everyday activity. Through the activity of the eyes, ears, nose, mouth and hands the outer world is brought into intimate relationship with the inner Soul of the body. The five senses,

the functions of which the soul performs through particular organs of the body, are the means whereby the existence in the world outside itself is presented to the Soul and is thus perceived and recognised by man. These normal activities of the Senses are described in the Old Testament by the Hebrew roots **ראה** 'see'; **שמע** 'hear'; **הריח** 'smell'; **טעם** 'taste'; **גישט**, **חישט** 'feel'.

## 2. The Eye as Seat of Mental and Spiritual Faculties.

The deeper psychical activities of the sense organs are particularly illustrated in the use of the term **ראה** 'to see' which also serves as a comprehensive expression for perception, psycho-corporeal feeling, and experience. Isaiah scoffs at the idolator who carves an image out of one part of a tree, and, warming himself at the flames of the remainder, declares 'Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire' **וְרָאִיתִי אֹר**, meaning he has felt the heat of it. (Is. 44:16.)

When Jeremiah rebuked those who in their disillusion cried that the Divine covenant of sovereignty with David and priesthood with the House of Levi were at an end, he quoted the word of the Lord to him saying: 'Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, the two families which the Lord did choose, he hath cast them off?' **הֲלוֹא רָאִיתָ מָה הָעַם הַזֶּה דָּבַר לְאָמֹר**

(Lit: 'Hast thou not seen what this people have spoken?') (Jer. 33:24.) The activity of 'seeing' is here used to describe the function of perception in its intellectual sense of considering, understanding or knowing. For the expression 'enjoy life' or 'experience life to the full', Eccles. 9:9 uses the term **רָאֵה חַיִּים** (Lit. see life). Similarly, the suffering or experiencing of the

pangs of death is expressed by **יָרָא מוֹת** (Lit. see death).

The term **יָרָא** is thus used to describe mental observation, reflection and perception as well as experience. In consideration of the very wide meaning of spiritual apprehension associated with the word **יָרָא** one may understand the wish of Moses to 'see' God and the Divine reply: 'Thou canst not see my face; for man shall not see me and live.' (Ex. 33:20.) The power of perception possessed by mortal man is not sufficient to know God completely but only to perceive the effect of God's presence.

Since the entire multiplicity of sensual perceptions are associated with **יָרָא**, 'to see', it follows that the bodily organ of sight, the eye, is spoken of as being the seat of the Inner Sense, or 'sensus communis'.

The eye is referred to as the seat of mental and spiritual faculties (Gen. 3:5,7; Numb. 24:4,16). It may be the avenue of favour (Ps. 33:18), satisfaction (Ec. 1:8), generosity (Prov. 22:9), niggardliness (Prov. 23:6), design (Ps. 17:11) or temptation (Job 31:1,7).

The expression is frequently used to refer to the seat of opinion, desire, wish or fancy. Thus when Lot warned his sons-in-law of the impending doom of Sodom he appeared in their eyes 'as one that mocked'. (Gen. 19:14.) Sarah lost esteem in the eyes of her maid-servant when Hagar became Abraham's concubine. Abraham then authorises Sarah to deal with Hagar 'as it pleaseth thee' (Lit. 'do with her that which is good in thy eyes'.) (Gen. 16:4,6.)

The Israelites are commanded to look upon the fringes in the borders of their garments that they may remember the commandments of the Lord, 'and that ye go not about after your own heart and



your own eyes, after which ye use to go awhoring'. (Numb. 16:39.)

In the eating of animals for food the Israelite is commanded not merely to follow to his own desire or fancy, 'every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes', (Deut. 12:8) אִישׁ כֵּל הַיָּטָר בְּעֵינָיו but in abiding by the dietary laws, to do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord. (Deut. 12:8,25.) הַיָּטָר בְּעֵינֵי ה'

Moral attributes likewise are attributed to a person by describing his eyes as being 'haughty' (Ps. 101:5), 'humble' (Job 22:29), 'grudging' (Deut. 15:9), 'pitiful' (Deut. 7:16), 'good' = generous (Prov. 22:9), or 'bad' = niggardly (Prov. 23:6).

#### The Organs of Speech and Action.

In addition to the presentation of the outer world to the Inner Soul through the Senses, man also has the power of projecting his own Inner Soul to the outer world. The Will of man's Soul is particularly expressed through the use of the breath and the exercise of the muscles of the body. Here once again breath and Soul are intimately connected. A child's first act of breathing, which is primarily a rhythmical dilation and contraction of the thorax, sets to work in his body some interaction of his nervous system with the respiratory muscles.<sup>1</sup> Every movement of the body by means of the voluntary muscles is an exertion of the human Will. The most elementary mark of human existence is the power of conscious self-expression through articular speech. By the flow of the inspiratory and expiratory stream of air and by exercising the ligaments of the speech organs, man expresses in words the Will of his inner Soul. Human speech is an outstanding manifestation

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. XIX, p. 218a, s.v. Respiration.

of the closest co-operation of psychological and corporeal powers. Breath, Soul, muscular action, Will and understanding - all take their part in the articulation of speech and the representation to the outer world of the thoughts and feelings of the Soul of man.

Whenever the voluntary muscles in any part of man are activated by the human Will the consequent action of the body is a manifestation of the otherwise invisible Will of the human being. The action of the involuntary muscles may also reflect the feelings of the Soul, as well as being the uncontrollable reaction of normal physiological processes; but the clearest manifestation of the human Will is in the articulation of speech and the performance of purposive action.

#### 1. The Organs of Speech.

In keeping with other Old Testament usages, as see above, the Hebrew term  $\text{לשׁוֹן}$  is used not only to refer to 'the tongue' as an organ of speech, but this organ itself is endowed with moral attributes which are judgements on the character of the man as expressed by his tongue.

The tongue is described as the instrument of angry hostility (Hos. 7:16), seductive flattery (Prov. 6:24), falsehood (Ps. 78:36), slander (Ps. 15:3), deceit and boastfulness (Ps. 12:5). The tongue itself is called 'lying' (Ps. 109:2), deceitful (Ps. 52:6), false (Prov. 6:17) and froward (Prov. 10:31). But, also 'the tongue of the righteous is as choice silver' (Prov. 10:20) and 'the tongue of the wise is health' (Prov. 12:18).

Similarly of the 'lips'  $\text{שׂפתי}$  we find the same range of moral attributes. Isaiah speaks of himself as 'a man of unclean lips'

(Is. 6:5), and both Psalms and Proverbs refer frequently to 'lying' and 'flattering' lips as well as to the 'lips of truth' and 'righteous lips'.

Likewise even the 'mouth' itself  $\text{פִּי}$  can be described as 'froward' (Prov. 6:12) and 'flattering' (Prov. 26:28).

## 2. The Organs of Action.

Of all the parts of the body commonly associated with the power of action, the 'hand'  $\text{יָד}$  (interchanging with 'arm'  $\text{זְרוֹעַ}$  and 'palm of the hand'  $\text{קַדְמוֹנֵי}$ , or even 'finger'  $\text{אֶבְטָלָם}$ ) represents most clearly the thought of strength and action. The strength or weakness of the arm provides a measure of man's vitality, purpose and mood. The actions of the arm when judged as being right or wrong, represent the individual's moral character.<sup>1</sup>

The varied types of actions performed by the hands likewise demonstrate a wide range of a person's feelings, such as grief and shame (2 Sam. 13:19), the supplication of prayer (Ex. 9:29), the clapping of hands in protest or annoyance (Numb. 24:10), or, clapping the hands in cheering the king (2 Kings 11:12).

The term  $\text{יָד}$  is occasionally used simply as a synonym for 'power' both of God and of man, and it may be 'strong', 'great' (Ex. 14:31) or 'strengthless' (Job 26:2).

The strength of resolution or weakness of Will are described by the strengthening of a man's hands (Judg. 9:24) or by the drooping of the hands (2 Sam. 4:1). The withdrawal of one's hand

<sup>1</sup> ARJohnson: The Vitality of the Individual, pp. 52-66, gives an extensive examination of the Old Testament usages of 'hand': see also L.H. Brockington, 'The Hand of Man and the Hand of God', B.Q. X (1940) pp. 191-7.

*Baptist Quarterly (not among aboves. at beginning of thesis)*

may also imply the forsaking of one's purpose (Josh. 8:26). The opening or closing of the hand also represent generosity or hard-heartedness towards the poor (Deut. 15:7,8). The hand is spoken of as refusing to act in a given situation (Prov. 21:25), as capable of being taught (2 Sam. 22:35) or as becoming weary (2 Sam. 23:10).

The laying on of hands and the raising of hands are closely linked with the act of prayer, or with the bestowal of blessing or curse. It likewise represents the symbolic <sup>transfer</sup> of one's power or personality, in a psychical manner as in the consecration of Joshua by Moses or in the laying of the hands upon the head of the animal intended for certain sacrifices. The practice of ratifying an agreement or endorsing a pledge by striking or clasping hands may represent the harmony of Wills showed by both parties to the agreement. (Prov. 6:1; 2 Kings 10:15.)

It is a common feature of Old Testament usage that the hand itself is represented as actively engaged in some form of personal behaviour and is likewise characterised by some personal quality or attribute. One may speak generally of the 'work of my hands' or even refer to particular operations such as 'holding' (Gen. 25:26), 'releasing' (Deut. 15:3), building (Zach. 4:9), ruling (Prov. 12:24), delivering (Judg. 7:2), or shedding blood (Deut. 21:7).

The moral condition of a man, also, is described by speaking of the hand as filled with a bribe (Ps. 26:10), or both hands filled with blood (Is. 1:15); whereas 'he that hath clean hands and a pure heart' 'shall ascend into the hill of the Lord'. (Ps. 24:4.)

In a similar manner of speech, although to a far less degree,

the action of the 'foot'  $\text{לָגַל}$  can represent the mood of malicious exultation (Ezek. 6:11) or the symbol of triumph (Josh. 10:24). The Psalmist prays that the 'foot of pride' should not come against him (Ps. 36:11), and Solomon exhorts his son, 'Remove thy foot from evil' (Prov. 4:27).

### The Inner Organs.

According to Old Testament usage different affections have particular actions on various inner organs of the body. Modern psychology would undoubtedly claim that such experiences of the affections would leave its mark on the entire body as one interconnected psychical organism, but as the result of certain traditions of thought, language and probably common experience, particular passions and spiritual activities are associated in the Old Testament with special organs of the body.

#### 1. The Inward Part.

In the first place, the interior of the body as a whole,  $\text{בְּקִרְבּוֹ}$ , 'the inward part of man', is regarded as the locale where psychico-spiritual experiences take place.

It is natural that one should say that the  $\text{בְּקִרְבּוֹ}$  was the seat of life as when Elijah revived the widow's son, 'and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived'. (1 Kings 17:22.)

But, the 'inward part' is also a term which describes the entire spiritual condition of man. Speaking of the unfaithful and the flatterers the Psalmist says: 'Their inward part is very wickedness'. (Ps. 5:9.) The secret inner thought of man is called

$\text{עֲמֻקּוֹת}$  (Ps. 49:11.) The 'inward thought' of the wicked is deep and diligent in searching out iniquities. (Ps. 64:6.) But

the use of the term  $\text{לֵב}$  here is usually as the place of unreasonable or foolish thought - not worthy of resulting from the 'heart' and therefore just generally from somewhere within. This distinction is expressly made in the contrast of wisdom resting quietly in the heart of him that hath understanding, but that which is in the inward part of fools is made known. (Prov. 14:33.)

The faculty of emotion likewise finds its place in 'mine inward parts' where my 'bowels shall sound like a harp'. (Is. 16:11.) And here is the locale of the 'spirit' (Zach, 12:1) and the 'spiritual life' (Ps. 51:12; Is. 26:9).

## 2. The Stomach.

In conformity with common human experience the stomach or belly  $\text{בֶּטֶן}$ , is referred to as the place of emotional disturbance. When Habakkuk heard the whirlwind of the Lord marching across land and sea 'my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice'. (Hab. 3:16.)

The belly is regarded as the seat of 'vain knowledge' for fools and mischievous thought for the godless (Job 15:2,35) in the same way as the 'inward part' was the place of foolish thought. But the 'words of the wise' also have a place in the  $\text{בֶּטֶן}$  (Prov. 22:18).

The belly is the innermost part of man's feelings. (Prov. 18:8.) It is the seat of passion and avarice (Job 20:22,23) and, of course, the seat of hunger. (Prov. 13:25.)

## 3. The Liver.

The Hebrew conception of blood as being identical with the soul explains why the liver,  $\text{כִּבְד}$ , which was regarded as a

conglomeration of blood became to be synonymous with the life of a person and represented in particular the state of the emotions. In Babylonian, liver divination, since the soul of the sacrifice became identified with that of the god to whom the sacrifice was offered, it was considered that by examining the liver of the animal one could read the mind of the god. (Cf. Ezek. 21:26.)<sup>1</sup> Thus the liver could reflect the 'mind' of the person. It was also the seat of his emotions.

The deepest anguish, far beyond tears, is expressed by saying 'My liver is poured upon the earth'. (Lam. 2:11.)

When Abner smote Asahel 'under the fifth rib' (2 Sam. 2:23), Rabbi Johanan explained that he smote him in the fifth partition, where liver and gall are connected. (Sanhedrin 49a.)

Likewise, the arrow that struck the king between the ribs refers to the fifth partition. (Sanhedrin 63b.) In the Rabbinic view the liver was the seat of life. 'Neither man nor beast can live without a liver.' (Arachin 20a.)

The young man who is enticed by the harlot, yields to her fair speech and follows after her, 'as a bird hasteth to the snare, and, knoweth not that it is for his life'. So as 'an arrow strike through his liver' he also shall thereby lose his life. (Prov. 7:23.) It may be noted that in anthropology the liver is sometimes considered as the seat of sensual desire and the metaphor here is of the liver being struck by the dart of love, as elsewhere Cupid's arrow pierces the heart.<sup>2</sup>

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1. M.H. Farbridge: Studies in Biblical and Semitic Symbolism, (London, 1923) p. 229.

2. F. Delitzsch, A System of Biblical Psychology, p. 319.

4. The Bowels.

In addition to the general use of the word 'bowels' or 'intestines' **בְּעֵי**, in the normal physical sense we find that the term also expresses the inward part or soul of man. The expression **וְתוֹרַתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מֵעֵי** is translated 'thy law is within my heart' (Lit: - 'within my bowels'). (Ps. 40:8.)

In particular the 'bowels' are the seat of the emotions. The stirring of the bowels expresses pity (Is. 16:11), compassion (even of God (Jer. 31:20), vehement sorrow (Jer. 4:19), agonising pain (Job 30:37), and also the pangs of love (Cant. 5:4).

5. The Kidneys.

The 'kidneys' or 'reins' **כְּלָיֹת** are the seat of the affections and of moral character; and, therefore, just like the heart, they are the object of God's examination, either in the form of 'testing' (Jer. 11:20) or 'searching' (Jer. 17:10). As the reins are embedded deep within the body and hidden from sight so the inner thoughts and feelings of man are concealed from his neighbour but the Lord sees the reins and the heart (Jer. 20:12); to Him all secret thoughts are revealed.

Although Israel talks frequently of God as Jeremiah says: 'thou art near in their mouth' but, in truth, God is far from their innermost thoughts, 'far from their reins'. (Jer. 12:2.)

The 'reins' are also associated with deep inner experience, and express in strong terms the fullness of the emotions. The 'reins' are troubled by deep suffering (Ps. 73:21); they are weakened by earnest longing (Job 19:27); and they are excited with exultation (Prov. 23:16).



Thus, it is the kidneys that contain the real sentiments of man, and their condition is continually affected by the emotions that he feels. We find here a vital centre of the true Will and Personality of man. In a Rabbinic account of the bodily organs, the kidneys are described as the elemental will of man urging him to some action which is accepted or rejected by man after examination by the heart. (Berachoth 61a.)

Summary: The Unity of Body and Soul.

Apart from the normal activities of the bodily organs in serving as the tools of man they also provide the link between man, his neighbour and the universe. The particular activity of each organ must not be considered as a distinct function of the organ possessing also the faculty of soul as a separate entity. The soul pervades the whole body. The inner organs in particular reflect a man's emotional experience and reaction; but all the organs of the body serve as vehicles for man's psychical faculties just as much as they are vehicles for his physical faculties. Every purposeful action of the body represents the Will of man and is a manifestation of his soul. Body and Soul are inseparable elements in every activity of man. Every movement and every thought are expressions of human personality. The excellence of the human being is made most manifest where there is the closest co-operation and identification of his psychical and corporeal powers.

## CHAPTER V

### BODY AND SOUL

#### Relationship and reciprocal action.

Since it is the intention of Scripture to present man with a religious and ethical way of life, and in view of the directness and imagery, rather than any abstract theorisation of its style, we cannot expect to find in its pages any systematic account of either a physiology or a natural philosophy of the soul of man.

Nevertheless much is said in Scripture about both Body and Soul and about the relation between them. It is to be expected that from the manner of presentation of its statements on these subjects it may reveal some of its fundamental <sup>princ?</sup> suppositions, which would, of course, be consistent with the fundamental doctrines of early Hebrew thought.

#### 1. Evidence of Biblical metaphors.

The relation of Body and Soul is vividly symbolised in richly diversified metaphor in Ecclesiastes' picture of the ending of man's life. "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth," he warns the young man... "Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain or the wheel broken at the cistern; and the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God who gave it." (Eccles. 12:1,6,7.)

We find here in four different figures of speech that at the death of man there is a dissolution of the relation between Soul and Body. The Soul in each case is described as the maintainer or

vivifier of the Body by provisioning it with the life-giving power of the Spirit.

In the first picture the Personality of man is described as a golden lamp glowing in the midst of the tent. (Cf. Job 29:3.) The lamp is pictured as suspended by a silver cord - a delicate metaphor for the soul which maintains it. The golden lamp is the beautiful body from which the brilliance of man's Personality shines.

The pitcher on the other hand is the clay body which holds the living water, and the wheel is the agent which maintains the supply of water in the pitcher. The Personality of man is dependant on the continued effective service of both these elements. At the breakdown of either the relationship is dissolved. The dust returns to the earth, the spirit to God, and the personality of man disappears.

The physical organs of man are elsewhere compared to the mass of skins and poles and contents which when held into position by the tent-cord have the character and individuality of a tent, a home but when the tent-cord is cut the tent collapses. So the Soul is the life-cord which maintains the life of man intact. (Job 4:21.)

Another picture which expresses the fineness and frailty of this life-cord is when the Soul is described as the delicate web-line whereby the spider hangs in animated suspension. (Cf. Job 8:14 and 6:9.) Here the cutting off of life may appear to be casual. A more deliberate though still simple and final action is associated with the cutting off of the thread from the loom. (Is. 38:12.)

Four further metaphors are used to describe the Body as

container of the Soul. The description of the Body as a 'house of clay' (Job 33:6, 4:19) is an obvious reference to the clay origin of the body as described in Gen. 2:7. That the body is not the permanent home of the Soul is implied in its description as 'a shepherd's tent' (Is. 38:12.) The easy separability of Soul from Body is expressed by describing the body as the 'sheath' of the Soul. (Dan. 7:15.) Death is likewise described as the drawing forth of the sword from its sheath. (Job 20:25, 27:8.) Finally the body is the 'vesture' or 'garment' of the Soul. (Job 30:18, 10:11.)

In all these figures we find the conception of the temporality of the association of Body and Soul and also their separability, with the ensuing loss of personality, but not the destruction of Body or Soul themselves. Death in other words is a separation or dissolution of Body and Soul.

## 2. Origin and association.

The problems of how two such completely different entities as Soul and Body can have any relationship with each other at all, and what exactly is their reciprocal action, are questions which have puzzled scholars throughout the ages.<sup>1</sup> According to the Biblical account of the creation of man in Gen. 2:7 the skilful structure of the body preceded its endowment with a soul. Thus one cannot say that the Soul was regarded as the organising principle of bodily development. Both Body and Soul are described as distinct and independent creations of God. Even apart from the Soul the Body itself possesses an elementary germinating substance.

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1. Cf. F. Delitzsch: A System of Biblical Psychology, pp. 252-266.

In post-creation human life this embryo, Golem, (Ps. 139:16) is rooted in the mother's life, and although fructified from the father's life, it is already pervaded by powers from which its vegetative development may be comprehended even without the addition of a Soul. In the birth of a child the origination of the Body and the origination of the Soul coincide. Thus at the first moment of beginning there is a unity of the two distinct creations of Body and Soul - the Body bearing in itself preformatively the idea of its development and the soul possessing the power of vitalisation and individualisation.<sup>1</sup> Because of the particular endowment of man with the Spirit of Personality Hebrew thought considered each human birth as a new miracle of creation and a specific act of Divine Providence. There was no modern thought of the continuation of life simply by the human act of regeneration, with creation depending only on the man's and woman's own inherent energies. God was thought of as operating directly in the conception and birth of each child. This view is expressed at the first description of the birth of a human child. When Cain was born to Adam and Eve, Eve said, 'I have gotten a man from the Lord'. (Gen. 4:1.) Job similarly attributes his conception to God (Job 10:10,11), and the Psalmist marvels at the wonders of his creation by God. (Ps. 139:13-16) The births of Isaac, Samson and Samuel are represented as particular interventions by God.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. The animated body.

Delitzsch discusses a number of philosophical and psychological

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1. Cf. Is. 49:5, 48:8; Ps. 22:10; Jer. 1:5; Gen. 25:22.

2. H.Wh. Robinson: 'Hebrew Psychology', The People and the Book, p. 369 f.

views regarding the nature of the interaction of Body and Soul in man. He quotes some scholars who explain it as an idealising of Matter, or a materialising of the Spirit. Others regard the Spirit as the final link in the advancing process of the centralisation of Matter, and as such, its arbitrary choosing counterpart. Some regard Spirit and Body as two several modes of manifestation of one power, or one life, as space and time, form and law, perceptibility and perception. And others explain their relation by stating in some way or other that the ultimate element, ( τὸ ὑποκείμενον ) in Spirit and Matter are essentially one and the same.

Delitzsch himself regards the Soul as the spiritual factor through which the homogenisation of Spirit and Body is effected. Man, in his view, is a manifestation of the interaction of three parts - Spirit, Soul and Body. The unification of these parts in man results in the manifestation of an Individuality. Spirit and Matter can not be absolute opposites since both possess the affinity of originating equally in the power of God. Because of the homogeneity of the origin of all things there must exist the possibility of their substantive reciprocal action. Precisely the same creative principle which orders and controls the whole fabric of the world wherein relative contrasts stand everywhere in the closest reciprocity, that Divine Spirit likewise creates and vitalises the organic cell and arranges the intercourse between Soul and Body.

The early Hebrew mind, however, did not delve into such problems of philosophy and psychology. To the Hebrew the human being is the living creature endowed with the  $\text{דָּבָר הַחַי}$ , 'the

spirit of life'. Only the creature so endowed becomes a human being. (Cf. Ps. 94:8, 104:21; Gen. 6:2.) Through the gradual unfolding and development and interaction of this double potentiality in the human being there evolves by degrees the fullness of man and the manifestation of his personality. Despite the dualism of his origin there is no dualism in man as a human being. He is one complex but single individual. He is not thought of as an amalgamation of Body and Soul but as a human personality as a whole. There is no antithesis between Body and Soul. In Hebrew thought "Man is a unity, and that unity is the body as a complex of parts, drawing their life and activity from a breath soul which has no existence apart from the body. Hebrew has no proper word for that body; it never needed one so long as the body was the man; definition and nomenclature come in only when there is some conscious antithesis. That antithesis is not reached in the Old Testament, nor could it be reached along native lines of Hebrew thought. The ghosts or 'shades' of Sheol are no part of man's personality; they are no more than much fainter replicas of what it was as a whole."<sup>1</sup>

The Hebrew did not conceive of a disembodied soul, just as the body could have no life without a soul. Thus the concept of 'resurrection' was understood only in the bringing back to life of the body, and not merely in a re-emergence of the 'ghost'.<sup>2</sup>

The Hebrew idea of Personality was not the Greek idea of an incarnated soul, but rather the personal individuality of the animated body.<sup>3</sup>

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1. H.Wh. Robinson, Ibid., p. 366.

2. Ibid., p. 380.

3. Ibid., p. 362.

## CHAPTER VI

### LITERARY EXPRESSION OF THE EXERCISE OF WILL BY MAN

#### Hebrew Imagery.

"Truth," it has been said, "is one aspect of experience."<sup>1</sup> Because it is recognised as only one aspect, Truth is therefore limited and imperfect. The universe cannot be known in all its details. Absolute Truth is error if we expect from it more than general knowledge. It is one-sided and cannot give bodily all sides of the whole.

The Imaginative language of the Hebrews endeavours to express as many aspects of the Truth as will combine to present an all-round picture of what is being described. A single absolute attribute cannot be complete; it cannot be more than a general description; it must fail to supply its own subordinate details.

Although it is the duty of man to strive after the complete Truth, it is recognised that in fact only the Omnipresent and Omniscient is able to encompass the Truth in its entirety. Only God can put his seal to the Truth. (Sanhedrin 24a.)

It is however characteristic of Hebrew style to view its subject from many angles, both in space and time, in order to present a clearer picture of that which it describes.

S.R. Driver's characterisation of the Hebrew poetical and prophetic style illustrates this basic conception of Hebrew thought:-

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1. Bradley - quoted by William Temple: 'Mens Creatrix', (London, 1917) p. 66.



"One such peculiarity is the ease and rapidity with which a writer changes his stand-point, at one moment speaking of a scene as though still in the remote future, at another moment describing it as though present to his gaze. Another characteristic is a love for variety and vividness in expression: as soon as the pure prose style is deserted, the writer no longer contenting himself with a series, for instance, of perfects, diversifies his language in a manner which mocks any effort to reproduce it in a Western tongue; seizing each individual detail he invests it with a character of its own - you see it perhaps emerging into the light, perhaps standing there with clearly-cut outline before you - and presents his readers with a picture of surpassing brilliancy and life."<sup>1</sup>

But the Hebrew search for truth in the Bible, does not speak the language of philosophy. The philosopher endeavours to think in abstractions, to achieve the height in expression of rarefied purity of thought and definition, severely setting aside the secondary and accidental from the primary. But in the mental life of ordinary people it is the colourfulness and concreteness of visual imagery that plays the greater part in their common thought and speech. In the imaginative type of mind man clothes his thought with concrete particulars rather than concentrate it into bare abstraction.

'Absolute poetry' has been described as 'the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language.' Such poetic language is characteristic of the Hebrew

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1. S.R. Driver: 'The Use of the Tenses in Hebrew', (Oxford, 1892)  
- 3rd ed. Introd. Chap. 1, pp. 5-6.

Bible.

On account of the exact and vivid delineation of the objects which it described, the poetic style was found to be excellently adapted to the exciting of every internal emotion and making a more forcible impression upon the mind than abstract reasoning could possibly effect. Among all peoples of the East, as well as among the ancient Greeks and Romans every species of knowledge was first expressed in poetry, long before prose composition flourished. Religion, morals, history, as well as politics, were commonly expressed in verse, calculated to captivate the ear and the passions and impress its instruction upon heart, mind and memory. Thus Eccles. xliv. 4 - 'Wise and eloquent in their instructions,... such as found out musical tunes,...and recited written verses.' Bishop Lowth characterised the sententious style as pervasive of the whole of Biblical poetry. "The Hebrew poets," he said, "frequently express a sentiment with the utmost brevity and simplicity, illustrated by no circumstances, adorned with no epithets, (which in truth they seldom use); they afterwards call in the aid of ornament; they repeat, they vary, they amplify the same sentiment; and adding one or more sentences which run parallel to each other, they express the same, or a similar, and often a contrary sentiment, in nearly the same form of words." (This sententious style) "produces several great and remarkable beauties of composition. For, as the sacred poems derive from this source a great part of their elegance and splendour, so they are not unfrequently indebted to it for their sublimity and strength. Frequent and laconic sentences render the composition remarkably concise, harmonious, and animated; the brevity itself imparts to

it additional strength, and being contracted within a narrower space, it has a more energetic and pointed effect."<sup>1</sup>

Another characteristic of Biblical poetry, no doubt like all poetic language, is its origination in the vehement affections of the mind. In order to produce poetry the soul must, for the time being, have reached a state of energetic exaltation.

The enthusiastic ecstasy of the poet was originally described as the supernatural inspiration or possession by a god; and the style of expression by the poet exhibited the image of a mind brilliantly illuminated and self-conscious.

In poetic language the secret avenues of the soul are thrown open, and the inmost conceptions of the mind are realistically and concretely displayed. The energetic description of Hebrew poetry does not linger to systematise its descriptions. In the Hebrew sentence, as Wheeler Robinson reminds us, 'its parts are vividly and picturesquely set before us, but they are co-ordinated rather than subordinated to one central idea, and the nature of the co-ordination is often implicit rather than explicit'.<sup>2</sup>

#### Literary Expression of Hebrew Thought.

##### 1. Concretisation of psychical activity.

It is wholly in line with the poetic manner of speech that bodily organs, particularly those associated with speech and action should be referred to as themselves engaged in some form of personal behaviour and therefore as subject in some cases to moral judgement.

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1. Robert Lowth: Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, (London, 1835) - Lecture IV, p. 48 ff. See also p. 204 for a description of parallelism in Biblical Poetry.
  2. H. Wh. Robinson: 'Hebrew Psychology', The People and the Book, p. 380.

"The forcefulness of the idiom," says Johnson, "makes the author's language extraordinarily picturesque, but, of course, it is merely another example of the common linguistic device known as synecdoche; i.e. as the context shows (Job 24:15), such a use of the term under discussion should not be taken literally as pointing to anything like a supposed 'diffusion of consciousness' in the Israelite conception of man."<sup>1</sup>

The belief in what Robinson calls 'a diffusion of consciousness' leads to the theory that the various organs and limbs of the body are to be regarded as functioning independently or as being 'self-operative' and, likewise, as possessing psychical powers of their own.<sup>2</sup>

Johnson criticises this view as being based unjustifiedly upon too literal a reading of the text. "After all," he argues, "we should not dream of taking the Israelite literally when he speaks of his heart as melting with fear, and especially when the psalmist describes his heart as melted in the midst of his bowels (Ps. 22:14)! This being the case, it is difficult to see why one should be forced to accept his words at their face value, when he speaks of the flesh as longing, the palate as discerning, the eye as bearing witness, and so on."<sup>3</sup>

Dryden has defined a poet as 'a maker, as the name signifies; and he who cannot make (that is, invent) has his name for nothing'. The imagination of the poet provides a creative atmosphere through

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1. A.R. Johnson: The Vitality of the Individual, p. 51.
  2. H.Wh. Robinson: The Christian Doctrine of Man, pp. 22 ff;  
'Hebrew Psychology', The People and the Book, pp. 362 ff;  
Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament, pp. 71 ff.  
Cf. L.H. Brockington, J.T.S., xlvii (1946) pp. 1 ff.
  3. A.R. Johnson: The Vitality of the Individual, p. 83, n. 2.

which the poet sees everything and he graphically described what he sees. Imagination is of its very nature a concretisation of thought and thus always materialistic. It imposes on thought a continual demand for substances which may support attributes and activities. This demand in psychology led to a belief in 'faculties' as actually constitutive parts of a substantial soul.<sup>1</sup> It is in this sense that the Bible speaks of the various psychical and independent activities of the limbs of the body. Delitzsch, and Robinson after him, overlooks the nature of poetic language, when he compiles these descriptions into a system of Hebrew Psychology. When the character of Hebrew thought is examined it will be seen that Man himself - not his limbs, nor his heart nor even his mind or his soul, is the performer of all the actions attributable to him.

## 2. Man the master of Will.

Although Hebrew imagination provides material agents for all acts, thoughts, desires, passions, etc., it will be found that for the generating power underlying all these acts and desires, i.e. the Will which, as Locke has demonstrated, is 'the power to choose', no specific organ of the body is represented as the prime factor. This power of choice expressed in the Old Testament by the Hebrew **וְיָצַח** (Deut. 30:19) is always the exclusive prerogative of man as a whole, as an Individual. The Hebrew verb **אָבַח** 'be willing', implying consent and judgement, is likewise applied only to the Individual; the root forms in Assyrian being

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1. W. Temple, Mens Creatrix, p. 167.

ABŪ = decide, and ABĪTU = command. (B.D.B. s.v. אבה)<sup>1</sup> In the speech of one man to another it is <sup>to</sup> the man as a Person that the cohortative and Jussive forms of the Hebrew language are addressed. And the manifold activities of man are normally attributed, apart from the proper nouns, to the personal pronoun in the rich variety of their independent, prefixed, affixed and suffixed forms.

This centralisation of all the activities of man in the conception of Personality as a whole may be compared with Aristotle's account of Choice as the union of Appetition and Intellect; and Plato's statement of the ideal of Choice - *ἕνα γενεσθαι ἐκ πολλῶν* - 'out of many to become one'.<sup>2</sup>

A most common usage of the Old Testament is to refer to man *הַאָדָם* or *אָדָם* as the subject of all types of activity. In Ezekiel he is called *אָדָם בֶּן* - Son of man. In the Psalms and Proverbs *אָדָם* - man, is the personality who initiates and is responsible for the moral character and judgements of his life. In Deut. 8:3 the same term 'Man' is used for the physical nature of man who lives by bread and the spiritual nature that lives by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. Throughout all the manifold exhortations to morality and wisdom, in thought and action, it is always Man as the Person, the Individual, who is addressed. Man is the master of all his thoughts and affections and it is he who is exhorted to direct his mind and his desires in the ways of wisdom. Even in the most spiritual activity of 'seeing God' the faculty is attributed to Man *אָדָם* and not to any psychological

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1. Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Book II, Ch. 21.
  2. Cf. W. Temple: Mens Creatrix, (London, 1917) p. 167 - also The Nature of Personality, Lecture III.

organ. (Ex. 33:20.) A comparable usage is found in Prov. 3:1 where 'heart' is used in synonymous parallelism with the faculty of memory, the director of which is 'thou'. In Ezek. 44:5 the 'heart' is directed by 'Man'. Likewise in the offering of a sacrifice the votary may be described equally as  $\text{D}\text{T}\text{X}$ , Man (Lev. 1:2) or  $\text{W}\text{S}$  Soul (Lev. 2:1).

### 3. Personality and Face.

The idiomatic use of parts of the body to express a person's mood, feeling or intention is perhaps most clearly seen in the many ways in which the term  $\text{D}\text{I}\text{S}$  'face' is used; no doubt, because the face was in fact revealing of the various dispositions in the mind of man. Laban's 'unfriendliness' to Jacob was shown in his face (Gen. 31:2). The face demonstrates 'defiance' (Jer. 5:3) or 'impudence' (Prov. 7:13). The face reveals a 'cheerful' (Job 29:24) or 'kindly' mood (Prov. 16:15), as well as 'humiliation' (2 Sam. 19:5), 'fear' (Is. 13:8) and 'anguish' (Jer. 30:6). The act of approval, pleasure or favour is spoken of by means of the graphic picture of 'raising' the bowed face of the suppliant (Gen. 32:20); whereas displeasure is shown by 'hiding' one's face (Deut. 31:17).

When we read of Sennacherib that 'his face was for war against Jerusalem (2 Chron. 32:2 (Lit.)) we are obviously dealing with a figure of speech which is properly translated 'that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem'. (R.V.) The turning of the face in a particular direction serves as a clear indication of a man's purpose or intention. When Jehoshaphat was faced with the hostile multitudes of Moab and Ammon he 'set his face' to seek the Lord, which (he) means he 'set himself' (R.V.) or purposed or set out to

beseech the help of God. (2 Chron. 20:3.)

The above examples make it clear that whereas in the previously mentioned usages the 'face' merely reflects the disposition of the man, here, where intention is indicated, it is not the face that determines man's purpose, but the intention which is determined by man, is indicated by the object to which man turns his face.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Will and Pleasure.

Apart from the use of expressions involving the activities of Lev and Nefesh, the 'heart' and the 'soul', and the clear function of choice בחר, and 'consent' אבה, three other verb roots are used to express the Will of the person, viz: רצה, נדב, הפץ. These verbs indicate that in the Hebrew conception the nature of willing is associated with desire and pleasure and thus refers to a thought or an activity which is chosen by man because it appears to him to be desirable. God thinks, wills and does that which he desires (הפצי). (Is. 46:10.) That in which God takes pleasure and delights is his 'Will' or his 'good pleasure'. Cyrus performs the 'pleasure' of God when he does His will (הפצי). (Is. 44:28.) As the term refers to the pleasure and Will of God so it is used for the desire and Will of man, as in the description of Solomon's completion of his purpose in erecting the Temple and a royal palace, 'all Solomon's desire' (השק), which he was pleased to do (אשר הפץ לעשות).

The term נדב implies a spontaneous urge of noble generosity, a volunteering of one's own self in service or of a gift as an offering of one's own free will. Both לב and נדב are sometimes

1. Cf. A.R. Johnson: The Vitality of the Individual, pp. 42-45.



spoken of as the origin of this inner urge, but the verb is also used in the reflexive construction (Hithpael) implying the person's urging or inciting himself to perform the act from his own rather than another's instigation. (Judg. 5:2,9.)

Finally, the verb **רצה**, meaning 'to be pleased with', 'accept favourably', 'be favourable to' (B.D.B. s.v. **רצה**) is the root meaning of the word **רצון** which is translated as 'goodwill', 'favour', 'acceptance' and, lastly, 'Will'. Where the term is used in the meaning of 'Will' it is very similar to the Hebrew word

**חפץ** meaning 'good pleasure' or 'desire', as when the Psalmist says **לְעֵשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ אֱלֹהֵי חַפְצֵי** 'I delight to do thy will O my God' (Ps. 40:8), implying an identification of the objects or ideals of the Psalmist's desire with those which gives pleasure to God. Similarly in the description of Ahasuerus' banquet, 'And the drinking was according to the law; and one could compel; for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure'. (Esther 1:8.)

**רצון איש ואיש**. The distinctive impelling power of a man's 'desire' or 'good pleasure' is referred to in Jacob's description of the violence and lack of restraint in the character of Simeon and Levi. 'In their anger (**אִפְּרוֹ**) they slew a man, and in their self will (**רְצוֹנָם**) they houghed an ox' (A.V. 'dugged down a wall'). (Gen. 49:6.)

The term, **רצון**, can hardly be translated as 'will' in our general sense of 'the human will' except perhaps in Lev. 1:3 and parallel passages (Lev. 19:5; 22:19,29) in which the burnt sacrifice brought by the Israelite for his atonement is required to be brought

**לְרְצוֹנוֹ** (A.V. 'of his own voluntary will'). But even here

this translation is dubious, and already the Revised Version has 'that he may be accepted before the Lord', i.e. that he should be forgiven for his transgression. This alternative translation coincides with the Septuagint (  $\delta\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu$  ) and the Targumin (  $\text{לְרַצוֹן לֵיה}$  ). It is possible that the A.V. translation of  $\text{רָצוֹן}$  'of his own voluntary will' might have been influenced by the later Rabbinic usage of the term. (Torath Cohanim on Lev. 1:3; Arachin 21a.)<sup>1</sup>

It follows therefore that the term  $\text{רָצוֹן}$  as used in the Old Testament means 'goodwill', 'favour', 'acceptance' and, hardly at all, 'Will'.

Among the characteristics of the Hebrew language it has been pointed out that abstract formations are found only in late Hebrew. The early Hebrew appeared to be unable to conceive of abstract usages of language so that an abstract noun such as 'steadfastness' would be personalised into the feminine adjective form  $\text{נְכוֹנָה}$ . Similarly manifestation of the affections and of character are figuratively attributed to the 'kidneys' and 'liver' as well as more generally with 'soul' and 'heart'. Likewise, almost all words can be traced back to roots denoting originally something that can be grasped by the senses; and accordingly intellectual ideas are expressed largely by roots of concrete significance. Thus the radical ideas underlying the roots  $\text{bîn}$  'to understand' is the Arabic  $\text{BĀNA}$  'to separate', 'to distinguish';  $\text{bātah}$  'trust' is the Arabic 'to cast oneself at a person's feet for protection';

1. Cf. Commentaries on Lev. 1:3,4 in Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Nachmanides, Rashban, and Klei Yakar.

Hēmah 'anger' is from Yāham 'to be hot'.<sup>1</sup>

It is accordingly instructive to note that the word רצון which in later Hebrew acquired the abstract meaning of Will, was in early Hebrew understood to mean 'acceptance' or 'favour'. Thus this original meaning indicates that in the Hebrew conception the Will is in fact the 'choice' or 'good pleasure' of the person as a whole rather than any particular power or agency in him.

##### 5. Original Will.

The peculiar characteristics of Hebrew thought are especially outstanding when we examine the particular use made of early popular mythology as known in the ancient East, and its adaptation in Biblical narrative to describe their own thought and teaching.

Just as among all ancient peoples, so among the early Israelites, before the composition of the Bible, there were extant various tales of the Creation Epic, all of them of a concrete and picturesque nature. The Bible did not hesitate to make use of these tales and to form them into a pattern of its own. It selected such tales which could be used as vehicles for its own teaching and by moulding them into a suitable form expressed through them the Conceptions of Jewish belief.<sup>2</sup>

The early mythology was adapted to coincide with Jewish monotheistic thought and its graphic picturesqueness was used to convey important lessons of religious and moral value.

The story of the Tree of Knowledge (Gen. 3:1-24) is explained by Cassuto as an example of the Hebrew method of describing the

1. G.R. Driver: 'The Modern Study of the Hebrew Language', The People and the Book, p. 118 f.

2. V. Cassuto, Me'adam 'Ad Noah, (Jerusalem, 1953) - 2nd ed. p. 4 f.

mysteries of human nature and experience in simple allegorical form. Cassuto rejects the views which interpret the story according to the doctrine of Original Sin, as well as those which interpret 'good and evil' in the moral, aesthetic, sensual or utilitarian senses.<sup>1</sup>

According to Cassuto the life of Adam in the Garden of Eden was a description of human childhood where the trees of the Garden take the role of the father and mother in supplying all the needs of the child without the child being aware of any <sup>cause for ?</sup> or anxiety or having the need to take any trouble to obtain its wants. As the human being grows out of childhood he begins to 'know the world' and experiences the difficulties and troubles of life. This 'knowledge' is expressed in Ecclesiastes 1:18 'For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow'.

Adam and Eve were like little children 'which this day have no knowledge of good or evil' (Deut. 1:39), i.e. no knowledge of life at all. The story relates that man would be happier if he remained in the blissful ignorance of childhood. But the Personality of man asserted itself, and as he became aware of his intellectual capacities, his mental development resulted in his leaving the protected Paradise of childhood and entering the thorny and toilsome paths of the world at large. The hardships of life, as experienced by both man and woman, are on the one side attributed to man's disobedience of God, and, on the other, as the price to be paid for man's unique power of understanding. This gift of

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1. An account of the various views of modern scholars is given in Humbert: 'Etudes sur le récit du Paradis et de la chute dans la Genèse.' (Neuchâtel, 1940) pp. 82-116.

understanding, however, is probably prized by man more greatly than the simple bliss of childlike ignorance, as the Psalmist proudly declares: 'Thou hast made him but little lower than God' (Ps. 8:5), and, as the Genesis story itself relates 'And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil'. (Gen. 3:22.)<sup>1</sup> The Genesis account of the Tree of Knowledge may be described as the Hebrew conception of Original Will.

Summary: The Will is the expression of Individual choice.

The characteristic style of Biblical language in attributing to various organs of the body independent and self-operative functions has given rise to a theory that in the early Hebrew conception consciousness was diffused throughout the body so that individual limbs possessed consciousness and psychical powers of their own.

Such a theory is contrary to the entire Hebrew conception of man according to which all the actions performed by man are attributable to man alone as a single personality and not in any way to any of the organs which are only tools of his activity.

Despite idiomatic usage attributing independent activity to various organs of the body the generating power of Will which underlies all acts and desires is the exclusive prerogative of man as a whole. The exercise of the Will is the exercise of choice by man according to his desire.<sup>y</sup>

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1. Cassuto, 'Me'adam 'Ad Noah', pp. 72-74.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY

#### The likeness of God.

The Jewish view of Personality is a deeply imbued religious belief which inspires the closest devotion of man to God even to the extent of martyrdom, and, at the same time, exalts the Individuality of Man to such an extent that if he is not personally convinced of the existence of God no other being can compel him against his will to accept that belief. This may be called the paradox of Personality. Throughout the Old Testament it is assumed that in his acceptance or rejection of the word of God man himself is the final arbiter.

It may be possible to subdue or wipe out Personality in another man, but so long as the Personality is active it cannot be dictated to by any one. So long as man possesses Personality he is the divine master of himself. Thus in the Jewish conception respect for the Personality of man is as sacred as respect for the personality of God. Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said that when Man walks along the way, a company of angels precede him and declare: 'Make way for the likeness of the Holy One Blessed be He'. (Deut. Rabba 4. Cf. Gen. 5:1 and Gen. Rabba 24.)

From the statement that man was created a single individual the Rabbis taught that 'whoever destroys one life, Scripture ascribes it to him as though he had destroyed the whole world; and whoever saves one life, Scripture ascribes it to him as though he had saved the whole world'. (Sanhedrin IV. 5.)<sup>1</sup> Of such pre-

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1. Cf. A. Cohen: Everyman's Talmud (London, 1932), p. 72.

eminence is the Personality of man that Rabbi Nehemiah said: 'A single man is equal to the whole of creation'. (Aboth. d'R. Nathan XXXI.)

The fundamental teaching of Judaism as expressed through the Old Testament is that every human being is a free Personality.<sup>1</sup> From the very beginning of human life Man is advised or exhorted or commanded to act in a particular manner, but the actual performance is decided by Man himself. This unique power of Choice and Decision is a characteristic of the Divine nature of God which God himself bestowed upon man. The Hebrew monotheistic conception of God was not merely a numerical concentration of the power of God into one single Divinity. To the Hebrews God was a Supreme Being endowed with the supreme attributes of Personality. He is the infinite Personality. The relationship between God and the Universe is simply that of Master with that which he has created. But Man is not only a creation of God, he also enjoys a personal relationship with God. The description of man as having been made **בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים** in the image of God, expresses the belief that the distinct characteristic of Man is his extraordinary power of Personality. By reason of this quality man possesses mastery over all other creations, and even before the infinite vastness of the Universe his significance is 'but little lower than God'. (Ps. 8:5.)

It is only to man that God declares that the paths of blessing or curse, of life or death, are open to him for his own choice, and, in his love for man, urges him **וּבְחַרְתָּ בֵּינֵם**, 'thou shalt

1. See Julius Guttman: Dath Umada', Jerusalem, 1955, pp. 264-272.

choose life'. (Deut. 30:19.) Man is the only creature in the whole of Creation which thus determines his own life. Already in the opening chapters of Genesis, in his first disobedience, man acts in conformity with this characteristic power of Choice.

This conception of Personality in God and Man is the basic idea underlying many Jewish beliefs about God's direct relationship with man such as Providence, Prophecy, Prayer, and Revelation.

Divine will demands man's obedience, but it is a just Will and not an arbitrary one, for the Hebrew could not conceive that the supreme Personality could be anything other than just and moral. (Gen. 18:25.) The Personality of God is also the basis of his Mystery. It may be possible for the Intellect of man to perceive all the facts of the Universe, but he cannot perceive Personality itself even in his fellow man. He can only perceive the products or manifestations of Personality. (Cf. Ex. 33:23.)

The ethical conception of Imitatio Dei in Man is likewise based on the belief that man was created  $\text{בְּצַלְמֵי אֱלֹהִים}$ , in the image of God. 'Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.' (Lev. 19:2.)

In Society the love of man for his neighbour is directed to all the needs of man, physical and spiritual alike. There is no division in Judaism between the spiritual and material needs of man. The independence and self-realisation of Body and Soul in every individual must command the respect and assistance of his fellow men. The fullest expression of every aspect of Personality is the divine gift and right of every human being. Man has obligations towards the preservation and harmony of Society - and the Israelite also to his people as a whole - but, nevertheless,



Society must not infringe on the sovereignty of human personality. The 'Divine image' in man places upon each separate individual - and in the last resort upon him alone - a personal responsibility of self-realisation and obedience to God.

R. Akiba said that Man was beloved of God in that he was created in the image of God, and it was 'by a special love that it was made known to him that he was created in the image of God'. (Mishna, Aboth III. 18.) When Rabbi Akiba is quoted as saying that 'love thy neighbour as thyself' (Lev. 19:18) is the golden rule of the Torah way of life, Ben Azzai said 'In the likeness of God made he him' (Gen. 5:1) was an even more fundamental principle of Jewish life. (Sifra on Lev. 19:18.)

#### The nature of Personality.

It is often said that the measure of passion in man corresponds to the measure of his genius. The 'wise old man' of the Talmud penetrated deeper into human nature when he said: 'If one man is greater than another, then also his Yezer, his original spiritual and physical energy is greater.' (Sukkah. 52a.) The condition of human greatness was attributed to the measure of energy, drive, thirst for action that was inherent in his nature.<sup>1</sup>

The original vital energy dominating man's activity, without discrimination as to whether the impulse leads to what is morally good or morally evil, is one of the three factors which generate man's conduct or character. The first element may be described as his general predisposition, including all the unassessable hereditary and constitutional talents and peculiarities. The

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1. Cf. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism II, p. 107.

second important element in the formation of his character is his environment, i.e. the character generated reactively in response to his experience in his surroundings, both in closer and wider societies as well as in the world in general. The third element is the varying measure of vital drive which is generated by the prolific combinations of the given elements of his physical and psychic constitution.

This vital power is sometimes spoken of as man's 'will-power', meaning the energy with which man pursues his determinations. But this is not to be confused with the 'will' which directs the 'power' with which it is endowed.

Above all the elements of human character we find the ultimate kernel of the human being which organises, determines and directs the parts taken in life by the varying elements that compose it. This unique metaphysical something which, so to speak, 'determines the mixture' is the 'person' or the 'will' or, in the words of Spencer, 'the principle of cohesion' unifying the aggregate of subjective states constituting the mental 'I'. This 'I' is an indeterminable portion of the 'Unknowable Power'. Caird describes it as the primary nucleus or soul, behind the mental 'I', being one in nature with the Universe. 'The innermost secret of each man's heart is the secret of the whole world.'<sup>1</sup> 'No created mind penetrates into nature's innermost.'<sup>2</sup>

Man is susceptible of understanding, and as Bishop Butler said: 'We are plainly constituted such sort of creatures as to

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1. Quoted in T. Mark, The Unfolding of Personality (London, 1910), p. 25.

2. A.V. Hallers, quoted in Rudolph Allers: The Psychology of Character (London, 1931) - Chap. I. See pp. 34-43.

reflect upon our own nature.<sup>1</sup> But this understanding is limited by the fact of the uniqueness of man's 'person'. There is, as Haering says, a 'resignation-stage' of human understanding when we must be content with mere statements and descriptions in place of vital understanding.<sup>2</sup>

The autonomy of the individual is unmistakable when we consider that it is always to this 'person' that the Torah, the prophets and psalmists appeal in complete confidence in the possibility of the 'person' sanctifying his behaviour by directing his understanding, desire and energy towards the good. "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deut. 6:5.)

When the Law in all its manifold requirements addresses simply the 'person' it is not merely to the Intellect, Emotion, Imagination or Active Energy that it appeals, but to the co-ordinating power that can bring all these faculties into combined operation. The Law must be known and understood, embraced with love, revered as the supreme and blessed ideal and fulfilled with zeal and energy. In Talmudic language the whole range of the psychical elements of the 'Person' is described by the inclusive term Lev corresponding closely to the modern expression 'heart'. Thus, רחמנא לבא בעי, 'The All merciful requires the heart' is the essential rule requiring the presence of all the psychical faculties in addition to the physical action in the performance of all duties of the Law. (Sanhedrin 106b; Berachoth 20a.)

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1. Quoted in W. Temple, 'Mens Creatrix', p. 195.

2. R. Allers: The Psychology of Character, Chap. I.

Character and Person.

In order to appreciate a man's character it is necessary to study all that a man does, including his verbal expressions and even his gestures and looks. The more one knows of his conduct the truer will be our judgement of his character. Isolated actions are insufficient to base an estimate of his character. If we had full knowledge of the facts and the ability to discern their relationship, we could then perceive in every given movement that which is truly characteristic of the man. Observing his conduct generally we would not see merely an aggregate or mosaic of separate traits and elements but we would see the man as a whole and be able to describe his character. The character of a man thus represents that basic 'something' which is common to his general behaviour pattern.<sup>1</sup>

We would fail to understand the significance of the Individual in Jewish thought, however, if we identified this basic 'character' of man with what we call the inner 'Person', 'Self', or 'Ego'. Character is not identical with the 'Person', nor is it a component part nor even a quality of the 'Person'. Character represents only the behaviour-pattern of a man and may be regarded as an added property of the 'Person' rather than as something congenital, simple and unchangeable. Character is only an evaluation of the outward expression of the 'Person', but it is by no means the 'Person' himself.

The general belief in the untransmutability of character is based on the confusion of 'Character' with 'Person'. It is not

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1. Rudolph Allers, The Psychology of Character, (London, 1931), Chap. I, pp. 1 ff.

correct to state as is sometimes held that an individual is bound up with a definite character which is permanent in essentials and only capable of change within narrow limits. Many cases of religious and moral conversion are known. Sometimes quite remarkably different and anomalous characters can co-exist and alternate with each other in one and the same individual. The exact causation of these psychogenic disturbances is difficult to establish. The phenomena of multiple personality, or split personality, although belonging to abnormal psychology, show how an individual can pass from one character to another, as in the case of religious conversion. Modern processes of psychotherapy and leucotomy are known to effect marked changes in character.

The very basis of all ethical teaching is that man can be taught or influenced to change and improve his behaviour-pattern, i.e. his character, thought, reason, faith, law and custom. The purpose of ethics is to elevate human activity by assigning definite boundaries to all instincts clamouring for satisfaction, by indicating a moral scale of values in choosing between the claims of contradictory demands, and in presenting standards and ideals higher and nobler than his original impulses. There would be no purpose in all the moral exhortations of the prophetic, proverbial and poetic writings if man could not change the character of his conduct in accordance with the noble examples placed before him. The Bible in all its parts bears the impress of ethical instruction. The legal books contain definite laws for the regulation of man's conduct, and the historical books present examples, attractive or repellent, as the case may be, of deeds good and just, generous and stimulating, or unjust,

iniquitous and despicable.<sup>1</sup>

Rabbi Hananya said, "God was pleased to make Israel worthy; wherefore he gave them a copious Torah and many commandments." (Mishna, Makkoth, III. 16.)

Rabbi Hanina said, "If you obey and fulfil the commandments of God, it is as if you fulfilled yourselves, as if you created yourselves." The Torah helps man to discover the fulness of his own holiness. It awakens him to the realisation of his highest potentiality. The laws of the Torah certainly effect improvement in character but their achievement goes much further; they purify and sanctify the person who conducts the pattern of his behaviour.

This desired change and improvement in character, however, does not imply any change in the basic 'person'. The 'person', the actual kernel of man's being, remains unchanged even in organic diseases of the brain. The outward expression of the 'Person', i.e. his character, may be checked, stopped or altered by various psychological or pathological causes, but the fundamental 'Person' of the individual remains unchanged throughout. Character mutation caused by conversion, psychotherapy, or even leucotomy does not change the fundamental 'Person'. They only affect the expression of the man which is considered as his character. Cerebral pathology gives no indication that even in the case of a distinct localised lesion accompanied by, for example, loss of memory, the nature of the Intellect, including the original faculty of memory, is in any way changed. What are damaged are the nervous pathways, the cerebral links, which normally permit the

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1. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism, Vol. I, p. 1 ff.

memories to manifest themselves, for the brain is but the instrument which links the Intellect of the 'Person' with the outside world. The efficiency of the 'Person' may be damaged, but not its nature.<sup>1</sup>

Even in cases of recognised organic mental disease, where clinical examination demonstrates the existence of destructive processes in the central nervous system, such as dementia paralytica, called General Paralysis of the Insane, where the behaviour of the patient is completely changed and unrecognisable, the original 'Person' of the individual still remains unchanged throughout. Allers shows that during a period of remission or recovery, the behaviour of the patient reverts to exactly the same pattern as obtained before the illness. During the illness the true nature of the 'Person' was obscured, but on recovery it is revealed again. Even by such methods of therapy as artificially inoculated malaria it is possible to secure an abatement of the pathological symptoms, (as practised by the Viennese psychiatrist Julius Wagner von Jauregg), occasionally remission occurs spontaneously without apparent cause. It is probable that only our ignorance prevents our treatment of schizophrenia, etc., with the same success as general paralysis.<sup>2</sup>

Behaviour, it must be concluded, is but the manifestation of the 'Person'. The 'Person' is wider than character. The 'Person' is the creator of character. The 'Person' is the artisan of man's

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1. Henri Bergson, Matter and Memory, (New York, Macmillan, 1911), pp. XI, XIII, 231-232. Cf. Jacques Chevalier, Henri Bergson - translated by L.A. Clare, (New York, Macmillan, 1928), pp. 166-170. Cf. Henri Bergson, Mind and Energy, (New York, Henry Holt and Co., 1920), pp. 45-46.
  2. R. Allers, The Psychology of Character, (London, 1931), pp. 17-19.

life working continually with the material furnished to him by past and present, by heredity and circumstances, creating ever anew form and figure unique, new, original, and unforeseeable, as the form given by the sculptor to the clay.<sup>1</sup>

### The Source of Will.

It is a basic notion of Jewish thought, borne out by the infallible testimony of immediate experience, that we are not determined by Emotion or Reason or Physiology or Experience unless we determine to be determined by them. We ourselves, our 'Persons' are the creators of our intentions, our decisions, our acts, our habits, our characters and, in the final result, ourselves. Intellect is the master of deliberation; the body is the instrument of activity, but the exercise of both is dependent on the dynamism of the 'Person'. Reason and Action are a pair symbolised by the Rabbis in the celebrated allegory of the halt and the blind, animated at once by vision and energy. Man through both is master of both.<sup>2</sup>

The individuality of man's Ego or 'Person' as distinct from all his substantial nature, and from all expressions of Body, Mind or Soul, by which we describe him, is of the greatest importance in analysing Biblical psychology. The psychologist who recognises only associations sees but a shadow of man's self. He subdivides the interior life to render its states reproducible, after the manner of physical phenomena, to which the law of causality applies. He makes them amenable to the discipline of language, which expresses

1. H. Bergson, La pensée et la mouvante, (Paris, 1941), p. 102.

2. Cf. H. Bergson: The Creative Mind - translated by M.L. Anderson, (New York Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 110.



what is common to all men, but not what is unique, what is personal.<sup>1</sup>

To the numerous almost mechanical acts of our daily round the associationist theory applies - but never to the relatively few but far more significant acts which spring from our own unique personality.

Throughout the Old Testament, in addition to the frequent references to the 'soul' or 'spirit' and the various bodily limbs as the sources of human behaviour, we find references to the Ego of the Person as the innermost depth of his innate being. Not only does the heart rejoice when it succeeds in prompting man to act wisely and righteously, but so also does the 'Person' (Prov. 23:15)

לְבַי גַּם אָנִי

The Person applies the wisdom of the Intellect to seek out the reason of things. (Eccles 7:25) סִבּוֹתַי אָנִי וְלִבִּי לְדַעַת. The relationship of the 'Person' to the 'spirit', 'soul' and 'heart' - Lev, Nefesh, Ruah - is sometimes described by the term עָלַי 'upon me', in which the Ego appears as the centre having the substantial condition of the human being above or around itself. Thus רִחַף עָלַי (Ps. 142:4; 143:4); נִפְּטִי עָלַי (Ps. 42:5,6,7,12; 43:5. Job 30:16. Lam. 3:20); לְבַי עָלַי (Jer. 8:18. Neh. 5:7).

The terms בִּי, 'in me', and בְּקִרְבִּי, 'within me', are also used. Here the Ego appears as the circumference which encloses and contains within itself all that belongs to it. (Is. 26:9. Ps. 107:5. Lam. 1:20.)

The 'I' or the 'Person' in man is an independent power endowed with the potentiality to act freely and in control of all or any of

1. Henri Bergson: Les Données immédiates, p. 182; Time and Freewill, p. 236.

the natural forces which constitute the lifepower of his human nature, to be the master and not the machine of all his behaviour. The freedom of this 'Person', spoken of as the freedom of the Will, is the basis of the Biblical conception of moral responsibility.

Leibnitz has similarly described the 'Person' as the one that possesses the faculty of acting, who puts into operation the Active Power, (described by the Scholastics), removes all hindrance to its activity, and endows it with effort and purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Individuality, in the view of Bosanquet, is a complete cosmos of its own. As a cosmos, although finite, it carries within itself its own mode of self-determination and initiative. The Self is an active form of totality realising itself in a certain mass of experience, and striving towards unity and coherence. It is composed of a mass of data and yet it transcends all that it contains and transfigures it in the manner of the most triumphant achievements of art and poetry.

The individual Will is a principle and content having far deeper roots than what we commonly take to be the individual mind, and the task which is really and rightly its task, is set it by the universe. The Self recognises an act made 'necessary' to him by external circumstances or by the inner imperative of the moral law; but no matter how 'necessary' the act may be whether physically, emotionally, or intellectually, the actual performance of the act is always determined and put into operation by the master power of the Self.<sup>2</sup>

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1. G.F. Stout: Mind and Matter, (1931), p. 15.

2. Cf. B. Bosanquet, The Principle of Individuality and Value, The Gifford Lectures for 1911, (London, 1927) - Lecture IX, 'Freedom and Initiative', pp. 318-357.

The Self of every individual is completely immersed in and intimately connected with the natural facts of constitution and environment, but the attitude to these facts, and to other things by reason of these facts, belongs to Self.<sup>1</sup>

In this sense it is possible to interpret the well known Rabbinical paradox thus **הכל צפוי והרשות נתונה** - 'Everything (outside the Self) is foreseen (determined), but the Self is free. The world is judged by grace, yet all is according to the amount of the work.' (Mishna, Aboth, III:19.) *freedom is given*  
*ref. different in Beer's Edit*  
*different bits III:15*

Throughout Jewish teaching it is plain that the perfection or height of individuality is when it becomes identified in fulness and spontaneity with the creativeness of God. The splendour of the Self is most completely revealed when it works itself out in perfect harmony with the whole scheme of the Divine creation of the Universe. The original nature of the Self, as a creation of God, was life in the likeness of God. Its nobility is when it corresponds to its original source. Man's fullest blessedness is when his Self is in union with God.

Every day, and even throughout a single day, we experience a kind of fluctuation in the value and significance of our existence. These changes in our experience may be described as living in different levels of reality, - even as living in different worlds (Plato: Republic V) - although still living in the same world. It is within the power of man to rise to the highest level of existence by application of the fullest individual energy to the mental, physical, and moral powers at the disposal of the Self.

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1. B. Bosanquet, Ibid., Lecture X, p. 361.

When Personality is 'dynamic' it is most truly itself.

In conformity with this notion of the 'Self' as the master 'Will' conducting all the self-created events of man's experience, both subjective and objective, by way of self-determined reaction to them, we can fully understand the repeated references in the Old Testament to the continual ebb and flow of soul and spirit, heart and body, in the experience of man.<sup>1</sup>

In the Hebrew Bible we find numerous expressions describing the various activities of the Self, but these efficiencies of the spirit are not sharply distinguished from each other. The actions of 'thought', 'knowledge', 'experience', 'understanding', 'speech', 'willing', 'remembering', 'purposing' are frequently interchangeable in such words as *ידע, טעם, אָמַר, רָעָה, דָּבַר, יָצַר*. These activities are always expressed by way of positive experience. The abstract conceptions of 'the will' or 'the notion of willing' are not found in the Hebrew Bible. Descartes (Discourse on Method) similarly considered understanding, willing, imagining and feeling as included in the term 'thought' which embraces 'all that of which we are conscious of operating in us'. Thus 'thought' is equivalent to conscious experience, and the subject of such experience is not the Mind but the Self.<sup>2</sup>

Delitzsch suggests that the spirit of man in the immediateness of its origin is called Neshamah; in the concentration of its activities, especially of its thought and will, Lev; and in the circumstantial and sensitive unity of its thought and will pervading

1. Cf. A.R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, (Cardiff, 1949), p. 14 f.

2. See Encyclopaedia Britannica, Article 'Descartes', VII, p. 248.

from Neshamah throughout the Lev is Ruah. But even Delitzsch admits that this distinction is not clearly marked.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that all the activities of Will, Thought and Experience, including all the higher and lower ramifications of the functions, are variously and indiscriminately predicated to Ruah, Lev and Nefesh without any clear distinction of capacity or function indicates that the real subject of all these psychical activities is in fact none of these, but is the Self, the ultimate Ego which is expressed by these terms in an effort to concretise its manifestations.

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1. F. Delitzsch: A System of Biblical Psychology, p. 207 f.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PRINCIPLE OF INDIVIDUALITY

#### Transcendence of Personality.

##### 1. Religious Experience.

In order to understand the Bible it is not words which have to be explained, or sentences to be expounded, but it is men who have to be understood. The mere knowledge of every word of the Scriptures does not guarantee any possession of religious experience. An inner contact however by any individual with one of the 'souls' of the Scripture will ensure a personal experience of spiritual rebirth. The supreme value of the Old Testament lies in the revelation of that which the writers have in their own souls experienced. In the thoughts that lie beneath, within and beyond what is said and done the companion soul discerns the independence and transcendence of human personality.<sup>1</sup>

One of the great experiences of Jewish religious thought is the sublime conception of Man as a creative Personality.

Although he is a creation of God like everything else in the Universe, Man alone has been endowed with the power of becoming 'a helper of God in the work of creation'. God made a living world, but only Man can make this world 'a Kingdom of God'. The doing of good by man's own resolve is man's voluntary creativeness in the service of God. Man finds the fullest meaning of life not merely when he discovers his dependence on God which in itself can only make him the helpless object of Universal fate, but when he

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1. Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, (London, Macmillan, 1936), p. 36.

perceives that he himself has some special value even for God. The knowledge of the divine origin of man must certainly govern his place and destiny in the Universe, but the realisation that man has been created in order that he himself is to create, and that the existence of the Universe itself will be affected by the manner of his own independent creation, raises the dignity and responsibility of man far above all else in the Universe, and establishes a personal relationship between each man, as an individual, and God as the supreme, but yet a similar architect of creation.

Man as a person hears himself called upon by God, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee... (Deut. 10: 12,13. Cf. Mica 6:8.) Man himself, conscious of the secret of his divine origin and yearning for the nearness of God, turns to God hoping, praising, expecting. In the intensity of his own self-consciousness, man can bring himself into the presence of God. The feeling of being created is only the beginning of religion. Its wholeness and completion lies in man's knowledge of being able to create and the conscious responsibility of being called upon to create.

The awareness that, having been created, man is now responsible for his own life presents man with the immediate challenge of choosing the way in which he should live. In the Old Testament the true way of life is shown to man. Firstly, 'The just shall live by his faith' (Hab. 2:4) - i.e. in his firm and constant conviction that he is the beloved and loving child of the Divine Creator; and secondly, only the laws laid down by God can lead to life's realisation and blessing.

It is the essential virtue of Israelite thought that it is man who originates all pondering and seeking and that his thoughts are directed inward and outward to and from Man. 'The Israelite genius did not move from nature to man, as later in the case of the Greeks, but it moved from man to nature. Even nature itself talks to the Israelite of man: it shares, either happily or mournfully, in nearness to God and in human sin, in man's joys and in his sorrows; man's yearnings are revealed in nature. The riddles of the world are heard also in nature, but they are only the undertone to the riddles in the life of man. In man the world manifests itself, everything has its origin in his soul, and everything leads back to his soul. The world is the world of God, and God is the God of man. Thus they are felt and comprehended and in feeling so Jewish genius is unique.' The unique conception of the Jewish genius is that the spirit of religious experience has its origin in the human heart. There is no need in Judaism for an external doctrine of 'grace'. Man feels himself impelled by the strong power of his own spirit which reaches its climax in the powerful feeling of inner compulsion which is described as the spirit of prophecy.<sup>1</sup>

The concern of the prophets was not what God was in Himself, but what he meant to Man and to the world. They did not seek to analyse the nature of God, or the psychology of the soul, but simply to proclaim their relationship and that of the world to God. In their experience of Divine beneficence and Divine will they discovered the dignity, the duty and the hope of man. Their

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1. Leo Baeck: The Essence of Judaism, (London, Macmillan, 1936), p. 32.



understanding of man meant to them the comprehension of what God gave him and commanded him. Such conceptions as human free-will, responsibility and conscience were to them as much matters of course as the existence and sanctity of God.<sup>1</sup> 'To know God' and 'to love God' were considered the highest religious duties and achievements of man. But these duties, in prophetic speech, had no mystical connotation. They did not belong to the realms of metaphysical speculation, nor were they <sup>the</sup> privilege of a select band of mystics. The Knowledge of God was synonymous with the Knowledge of God's will and His commandment to man, and man's fulfilment of that law.

The conviction of the prophets, and of Judaism throughout the ages, was that, 'knowing God' meant the understanding of man's ethical obligations and the directing of his conduct in accordance with what God bade him to do. The thoughts of God are unfathomable but the commandments of God are revealed 'unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of his law'. (Deut. 29:29.) "Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgement and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." (Jer. 9:23,24.) The duty of man in 'knowing the Lord' meant 'Fear God and keep his commandments'. (Eccles. 12:13.)

Judaism did not conceive of the slightest division between

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1. Leo Baeck, Ibid., p. 28.

belief and deed. There could be no piety without religious expression in conduct and in fulfilment. Doctrine and life did not lead to the exclusion of one or the other. They were both essential and correlative components in the highest experience of man's existence.

'Did not thy father eat and drink and do judgement and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him. Was not this to know me? saith the Lord.' (Jer. 12:15,16.)

Just as 'to know God' meant to know His righteousness and lovingkindness, so 'to love God' meant to perform His righteousness and lovingkindness. That which God speaks to man is the good that He demands of him. To do that good is 'to know God'.

## 2. Personality in Prophecy.

The religion of the Old Testament was not a passive acceptance of the imposition of the will of God on man. Although at times the prophet speaks as though he was constrained by an irresistible force compelling him to receive and announce a divine revelation, as 'God spake thus to me with strength of hand' (Isaiah 7:11), the prophets present themselves to us in all the accounts of their experiences with God as men of very definite personality and individuality.

Their prophecies are confessions of their innermost personalities. One of the most sublime qualities of human personality, apart from its own creativeness, is its unceasing accessibility to spiritual influence from without, both human and divine. In the ecstatic experience of prophetic inspiration, as

when Saul was infected by the enthusiasm and music of a dervish band and began to prophesy (1 Sam. 10:6 ff.; 19:20 ff.), it is difficult to distinguish between what might have been a fusion of 'inspiration' and a 'reaching out' by man's own spirit. It is a frequent occurrence however that even in the midst of the abnormal state of prophesying the very experience itself is contemplated by the prophet with the objectivity of his own personality.

The prophet 'is a man who knows God' so truly that not only is he able to announce unhesitatingly the mind and will of God, but that knowledge is so vividly present before him that when he conceives 'a grievous vision' he actually trembles in fright and horror at the reality of the inevitable doom that he foresees. (Is. 21:1-10.)

In the extraordinary spiritual nature of his close communion with God the prophet is fully aware that his faculties are 'possessed', so to speak, by a divine power of which normally he could never be capable. Both Isaiah and Jeremiah in their inaugural visions, speak of their mouths being purged and purified by coals of fire before they could use these organs to declare the words of God. They were intensely conscious that what they had to say belonged to the supreme purity and truth of God which man in his normal state was too defiled to utter.

The objective consciousness of the prophet in his experience is frequently expressed by such references as 'the Lord God showed me' (Amos 7-9), 'I saw in the night' (Zach. 1:8 ff.), 'the Lord of hosts revealed himself in my ears' (Is. 22:14). Although Jeremiah speaks of the compelling urgency of his divine knowledge as a burning fire shut up in his bones making it impossible for him to

forbear from giving expression to the word of God (Jer. 20:9), he is nevertheless able, in the very midst of his prophecy to complain to God that his vocation had brought upon him the undeserving reproach and hostility of his people. (Jer. 15:10 ff.) Jeremiah explains how he 'found' the words of God and that because of them he kept himself apart from them that made merry and was filled with indignation. The Almighty urges him not to capitulate before the wickedness of the people. If the prophet will persevere in declaring fearlessly the truth of his moral judgement, in taking forth 'the precious from the vile', and continuing to be as the mouth of God, God will be with him and deliver him out of the hand of the wicked.

The prophet here is not in an unconscious trance. He is able as a personality to detach himself from his prophetic faculty and contemplate objectively the result of his experience.

The inner urge of a purified and unselfish conscience compels the prophet to speak the irresistible truth which overwhelms him. 'I am pained at my very heart, my heart is disquieted within me; I cannot hold my peace.' (Jer. 4:19.) 'The lion hath roared who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?' (Amos 3:8.) 'But I truly am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and full of judgement, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.' (Micah 3:8.)

The message of the prophet is the result of the powerful yearning and seeking of man after the truth of the Divine Spirit. Yet even when the prophet feels himself embraced by the Soul of God he still remains a human personality, accepting or resisting,

fearing or fighting or even fleeing from that which he perceives; and bringing home his message in style and language suited to the conditions of his environment and strongly characteristic of his own personality.

The prophets in Judaism were not divine mediators of salvation but human beings who through their love of truth achieved a unique perception of the overruling will of God. Their experiences and confessions of faith have become embodied in the fabric of Jewish thought. Their religious and spiritual achievements most clearly demonstrate the ability and duty of man to approximate his life to the morality and purity of the Divine.

#### God and Man.

##### 1. The example of Divine Personality.

The extraordinary power and autonomy of human personality in the Jewish conception can be recognised in the Old Testament by the manner of its description of God. The Biblical conception of the Divine was not that of an abstract God of the Universe, but a mighty moral power acting in the likeness of a human personality. This personal conception of God provides the link in the relationship between man and the Divine. The ethical demands of God on man are based on the ethical nature that exists in both God and man. Apart from the arguments proffered by Job we find no doubt expressed by any of the prophets as in all the Holy Writings, that the nature of the will of God coincides with the ethics of the same morality that lay in the nature of man. The only reservation they maintained was the humble recognition that because of the supreme wisdom and omniscience of the Divine the recognition of the

morality of his actions was at times beyond the perception of man.

God's control over the Universe is not determined by any laws of nature but by the decree of His own free will. God is not part of Nature. He is apart from the Universe and above it. He is its Creator. The Biblical narrative is not concerned to give any scientific account of how the world was created. It was sufficient to state that its origin was through the will of God. The Biblical conception of God is neither pantheistic nor mystical, in the sense of creations being various stages of emanations from the Divine; it is simply a personal relationship between God and the countless items that he created. Likewise, the conception of the love of God has a personal rather than a metaphysical meaning. The greatness of God is not in His mystery but in His majesty. His omnipotence is shown to man in miracle but not in magic. The greatest praise of His salvation of man is not in an expression of spiritual purification but in the deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea. His most sublime revelation to man is not in frenzy or trance but by fire and noise and speech in the midst of all the people at Sinai.

The whole Jewish religion revolves around the acceptance of the existence of a 'personal' God. By this is meant the affirmation that what controls our life is not a blind force of which we know little or nothing, but a supreme Being which, although beyond our imagining, is yet possessed of intelligence, purpose, will and other excellent qualities which we are wont to associate with the term 'personality'. Whether it be in God or in man, Personality expresses the most glorious form of

existence with which we are acquainted.<sup>1</sup>

The classical Rabbinic teaching in this connection is the statement of Rabbi Johanan: 'Wherever you find in the Scriptures the greatness (Transcendence) of the Holy One Blessed be He, there you also find His humility (Accessibility, or Immanence).' This is written in the Torah (Pentateuch), repeated in the Prophets and again in the Hagiographa. (Megillah 31a.) The Scriptural quotations given are Deuty. 10:17,18; Is. 57:15; Ps. 68:5,6; 1 Kings 8:57; Deut. 4:4; Isaiah 51:3; 42:21. (Cf. Authorised Daily Prayer Book - ed. Singer, p. 214.)

The God who is both immanent and transcendent is addressed as 'Our Father which art in Heaven', near to his children as a Father and yet afar off in Heaven. The combined expression is traceable to Is. 63:15,16.<sup>2</sup>

Solomon ben Adreth (1235-1310) states that this personal relationship with God is the underlying idea of the formula, common to all benedictions, in which the invocation of God first in the second person is followed by another in the third person: 'Blessed art thou O Lord our God, who has, etc....' The relation of man to God is thus an 'I - Thou/He' relation.<sup>3</sup>

Just as God is not part of Nature but is separate from it as subject and object, so man is separate from the rest of Nature and, although also an object of God's creation, he is the supreme creation which alone is endowed with the subjectivity of personality.

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1. I. Epstein: The Faith of Judaism, pp. 136, 156.

2. See A. Marmorstein, The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God, I (Cambridge, 1927), p. 56 f. Cf. G.F. Moore: Judaism, III, p. 190.

3. Cf. I. Epstein, The Faith of Judaism, pp. 151, 163, 164.  
Cf. J. Abelson, The Immanence of God, pp. 286 ff.

In the possession of this personality his nature is in the likeness of God. By virtue of this divine gift of personality man can speak to God. The Biblical conception of the universe is anthropocentric, attributing the activities of heaven and earth not to Nature as a separate existence, but to God who created the Universe for the sake of man. The activities of Man, by reason of his divinely endowed personality, surpass in excellence all the workings of Nature, for Nature is determined, whereas man is autonomous. Even when man marvels at the wonders of the Universe, he is not praising Nature but the creations of God.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Covenant.

In the wonders of the Universe man can see the greatness of God's creation, but, in the Jewish conception far more important for man's knowledge of the nature of God is the revelation of his personal will in human history. The Biblical description of God revolves around the relationship in history between God and Israel. The interpretation of that history by the prophets is the account of the will of God and the extent of Israel's approximation to it or divergence from it. The supreme revelation of God's Torah at Sinai was an historic event at which the relationship between God and Israel was established by covenant. God promised Israel the blessing of Divine Providence, and Israel undertook to obey the laws of God. This 'undertaking' was a demonstration of their realisation that the ideal life of man as indeed it was practised and required by God, was in conformity with the moral law.

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1. Julius Guttman: HaFilosofia shel Hayahaduth, (Jerusalem, 1953), p. 17.



Throughout all the subsequent history of Israel, religious leaders appealed to the obligation of this covenant, and to the truth of this historic moral testimony.

Once the people of Israel had recognised the true vocation of their life, any erring from the right path was condemned as faithlessness to their covenant with God. The rebuke of the prophets on account of Israel's moral backslidings speaks of Israel's sinning against God and despising the Holy One of Israel. The ritual observances of religion were an abomination to God if they were not accompanied by moral uprightness. Oppression of the poor, bribery, perjury, injustice, exploitation of the widow and the fatherless, the unscrupulous pursuit of luxury and pleasure - all these moral wrongs on the part of Israel were described as the faithlessness of a harlot. (Isaiah 1:21.)

The potential morality of man and the disappointment of his achievement in practice is graphically described in Isaiah's parable of the vineyard. Man is the vineyard whose soil is that of a fruitful hill. It is cleared of stones and fenced and planted with the choicest vine. It is most carefully tended by pruning and hoeing and abundantly watered. Nothing more could be done to help the vineyard yield the choicest grapes. In nature the desired result would certainly follow; but in man the result still depended on the autonomy of his own personality. The Almighty had every reason to expect from Israel 'judgement but behold oppression; righteousness, but behold a cry'. (Is. 5:7.)

The burden of the prophecies of Isaiah and Amos and Hosea and the other later prophets is the warning of the impending doom to be meted out on Israel by God in punishment for their faithlessness

to the covenant whose morality they had themselves recognised, freely accepted and solemnly confirmed. (Ex. 24:7.)

The detailed offences of Israel as they are denounced by the prophets always refer to their aberrations from the norms of ethics and morality in public and private life. But the whole of this immoral behaviour is attributed to the one cardinal sin of man's forgetting his relationship to God. When man pursues only the fleeting material pleasure and fails to live up to his true status of a partner with God in the realisation of the purest morality, he profanes thereby the divinity of his birthright and withdraws himself from the kingdom of God. The urgent appeal of the prophets is to warn Israel that when they cease to recognise their true place in life, and are false to the morality of their nature, they forfeit the love and protection of God and incur his wrath and punishment. "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation...they have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel." (Is. 1:3,4.) "Therefore my people have gone into captivity, for lack of knowledge." (Is. 5:13.) Israel's failure to 'know God' refers to their careless desecration of the morality of their vocation and their obstinate refusal to recognise the will and judgement of God in the events of their history.<sup>1</sup>

The above analysis of the free relationship between man and God in the Old Testament leaves no room for the criticism of Pfleiderer that this 'theocratic form of religion and morals' is

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1. Ezekiel Kaufman: Toldoth Haemunah Haisraelith, (Tel Aviv, 1947), Book VI, pp. 194-7.

supposed to imply that the good is a command to men from a strange and external will of God, the supermundane Lord. For 'in this form of religious consciousness', he complains, 'man does bear a relation to God which is as unfree as that of a slave to his master, or of a minor child to his tutor'.<sup>1</sup> The real authority of the Torah was its intrinsic truth and morality which was inherent in the nature of man - the justice of its laws and judgements. Nevertheless owing to the Jewish concept of the freedom of the individual even those demands of righteousness could not be imposed upon the people without their free consent. Ancient laws, outside Israel, rested on the status of the lawgiver; but at the Covenant on Sinai the united consent of the people was an essential element in the establishment of the Torah as the constitution of the Jewish people. 'The idea of absolutism and coercion as the basis of government did not exist in Jewish law. The prophets propagated their lofty ideals through the education of the people; those teachers had a full appreciation of the human personality - God created man in his own image.'<sup>2</sup>

The real basis and authority of the Covenant itself was, in Jewish thought, its righteousness and morality. The legal means of establishing the Covenant was by mutual contract.<sup>3</sup>

The word Torah itself is wrongly understood if it is translated as 'Law'. It means 'teaching', 'guidance' or 'doctrine' applying equally to man's thought, feeling, and conduct. What is generally

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1. O. Pfleiderer: Religion and Historic Faiths - translated by D.A. Huebsch, p. 42 - quoted in Salis Daiches: Aspects of Judaism, (London, 1928), p. 77.
  2. K.K. Kagana: Three Great Systems of Jurisprudence, (London, 1955), p. 95.
  3. K.K. Kagana, Ibid., p. 114.

called 'The Ten Commandments' is, in Hebrew, termed 'the ten words' or 'principles', **עֲשֵׂרֵת הַדְּבָרִים** (Deut. 14:13.) Thus, 'I am the Lord thy God', etc., is hardly a commandment; it is the first principle of Judaism. 'To the command concerning the return of lost things, these words are appended: "Thou are not at liberty to withdraw thyself" ( **לֹא תִוָּכַל לְהִתְעַלֵּם** ) (Deut. 22:3) - words which add nothing to the meaning proper. What, then, are they intended to convey? Nothing but what Kant wished to express by his "Categorical imperative" - the inner, inevitable necessity whereby the bidding becomes a law.<sup>1</sup> A frequent expression of the Rabbis is as follows: 'These are words of the written law, but if they had not been in writing, they would have to be written down'; that is, their substance would have been arrived at by man's independent activity, and raised to the status of a law. A distinction however is drawn between such 'judgements' and religious 'ordinances' which, of course, rest upon institution. (Yoma 67b.) The morality of Judaism was not created and imposed by the Sinaitic code. The Torah was a unique expression of Divine Law revealing the demands of morality which had parallel roots in the nature of God and man. It was in this sense that it could be claimed by the Rabbis that even before Sinai Abraham observed all the laws of the Torah. (Kiddushin 82a.)

Maimonides accordingly finds no conflict between Revelation and Reason. He conceives of Revelation as supporting and supplementing the knowledge won by unassisted human efforts. Maimonides gives five reasons for the necessity of Revelation which

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1. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism, I, p. 128 f.

may be summarised as follows: 1. The subject matter of revealed religion is difficult, subtle and profound, so that few can discover it by unaided reason. 2. Human intelligence is insufficient and limited. 3. The preliminary studies involved are many and of long duration and thus liable to prove wearisome to those who would by their own researches seek to reveal the desired good. 4. The defects in man's physical constitution and his inner disposition are often a bar to moral and consequent intellectual perfection. 5. Man's preoccupations with his material wants cannot but interfere with his proper application to study.<sup>1</sup>

#### Law and Personality.

##### 1. The Authority of Law.

Law according to Hobbes, and followed by the great jurisprudentialists, Austin and Holland, is nothing other than a command. They did not deny that moral considerations might in certain instances influence the superior, i.e. Sovereign, in determining the content of the Law, and that moral considerations might help to persuade the inferior to obey it, but this, they held, was irrelevant in any interpretation of law itself; the stark fact remained that law was nothing more than an expression of physical force determining uniformity of conduct.

It is, no doubt, owing to the conception of the Command theory of law that the Jewish system of obedience to the Torah is

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1. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, Book I, Chap. 34 - ed. M. Friedländer, (London, 1925), pp. 44-49. See I. Epstein: The Faith of Judaism, p. 86, note 12.  
2. A. Goodhart: English Law and the Moral Law, (1953), p. 12.

criticised as 'legalism' or 'nomism' demanding unquestioning and even mechanical compliance with the letter of the law. It is no wonder that Pfleiderer (quoted above) considers that under the Torah man's relation to God is that of a slave to a strange, external and supermundane Lord.

But Hobbes' concept of government was totally different from that of Jewish thought. This theory was based on his pessimistic interpretation of human behaviour, that people could be controlled only by the institution of a sovereign ruler. Whatever the sovereign willed was law by virtue of the power invested in him when the people surrendered their liberty to his authority. But the Hebrew view of human nature was an optimistic one which believed that society could be ordered by understanding and inner morality rather than merely by compulsion. The mind and will of human personality could by education be true to its own moral responsibility. The King in early Hebrew thought was under no circumstances the source of law, he was the supreme officer who dispensed law strictly in accordance with the requirements of the Torah. (Deut. 17:18-20). When Israel demanded of Samuel a King 'like all the nations', the prophet was displeased, because they wished to replace the supremacy of the Divine Moral law with that of the power of the sovereign as it obtained among other nations. (1 Sam. 8:20. Cf. Sanhedrin 20b.) The independence of every human personality was a sacred principle of Jewish thought. Every person possessed inalienable rights of individuality as a human being, and he was completely free of any mechanical obligation even towards God. In the experience of Israel man has found that by the voluntary will of his own moral nature he perceives his

perfection in channelling his human powers along the paths of the moral law. He accordingly binds himself in contract to the personality of God as the Supreme expression of the moral law and by so doing he becomes obligated to abide by its terms. In conformity with the principle of human personality it is now the sanctity of free contract which becomes the foundation of legal and religious duties.<sup>1</sup> 'In Jewish law the legal concepts and the ethical notions are very closely interwoven. The principles of both spring from the same source. The law was never based on sanctions. The validity of the law was based on the fact that it was good and just. It is true that, when circumstances demanded, sanctions were made use of; it was however historically proved that even when the people had no country of their own and no state of their own, nor any compulsions to support the law, nevertheless the Torah and its laws were the dominating factor in the life of the people.'<sup>2</sup> During the Middle Ages the moral sanction of the Shamta, excommunication, was so effective a punishment that there was no need of police power or physical force of any kind in the execution of an order of the Jewish Court.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Theistic Morality.

'The Torah is at once a text book of ethics and a theocratic code.'<sup>4</sup> All the laws of the Torah including the political, civil penal, are laws of the theocratic state. They are meant to

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1. Agus: Rabbi Meir of Rothenberg, (1947), pp. 108-9 - quoted in K.K. Kagan, Three Great Systems of Jurisprudence, (London, 1955), p. 100.

2. K.K. Kagan: Ibid., p. 135.

3. L. Finkelstein: Jewish Self-government in the Middle Ages - quoted in K.K. Kagan, Ibid., p. 135.

4. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism, I, p. 167.

regulate the association of individuals and communities in a spirit of national consciousness which harmonises the rule of God with the material needs of society. 'They assign boundaries to the sporadic, inconstant impulses of man, systematise them, and direct them towards higher aims. To this end the religious feelings are to be cultivated, and the dogmatic notions arising from, and corresponding to them, are to be preserved and transmitted inviolate to future generations. Though rooted in religious soil they are treated from the point of view of public law. In this case, law is religion as well, and the religious standard is at the same time the law of the state.'<sup>1</sup>

In Judaism every moral injunction is looked upon as being at the same time a religious requirement. Man's destiny is sought in his relation to God, its goal being likeness to God and the means of reaching it being obedience and willing devotion to Him who is the prototype and fountain-head of all morality. The all-embracing ethic of life is love of God; for God is at once the Good One and the principle of the good. What we can grasp concerning His nature are notions of the good, perfect prototypes of the good. In God they are personal attributes, as virtues should in man become permanent attributes, and thus features of character. In the theistic morality of the Old Testament the fulfilment of the laws of the Torah is the expression of our love of God.

Since, according to the basic conception of the Old Testament, man is created in the image of God, the highest form

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1. M. Lazarus, Ibid., p. 168.



and ultimate purpose of his life is the attainment of likeness to God. It is therefore man's task, and within his power, to make these attributes his own. The Torah is the teaching of God, but its laws are not the arbitrary laws of an all-powerful despot. They are laws of the moral order recognised by God, as the archtype of morality, and revealed to man for his guidance. The Torah is described as 'This is your wisdom and your understanding'. (Deut. 4:6.) The moral principle of the Torah is the same moral principle that works in the mind of man. The nature of the human mind is such that man could of his own perceive of these laws, but being human and less perfect than the Divine, he seldom does. It is by the grace of God that man has been shown in the Torah the moral attributes of God (Ex. 34:6) and thus guided in the way of his own self-realisation. The fundamental law of Leviticus which sums up all morality in one comprehensive expression, 'You shall be holy', does not continue with 'for so I will it', nor with 'for so I command'; it reads, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy'. In Rabbinic literature the endeavour to emulate the morality of God is consistently based on the knowledge of God's attributes, 'Because I am merciful, thou shalt be merciful; as I am gracious, thou shalt be gracious, etc.'<sup>1</sup>

In the Jewish conception life is unthinkable without God as the Creator, the Lawgiver and the Judge. Divine regulation and moral law are inseparable concepts. Both are equally pleasing to God and are the standards whereby man is to conduct his life. It is not merely utilitarianism or happiness that man must pursue in

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1. M. Lazarus, Ibid., p. 112 f.

life, nor even the promise of reward and the fear of punishment, but the most complete perfection of the the potential morality possessed by man according to the pattern of its ideal expression of the nature of God. Many such types of psychological urges may be exploited to induce man to achieve this result, but they are not to be confused with the fundamental nature of man which is his free and voluntary identification, with the Divine perfection, in whose image man is made.

The Divine Law is not an external compulsion on man, but a revelation of man's own morality. Obedience of the law is not helpless submission, but the fulfilment of one's true life. Transgression of the Law is a digression from life leading to death. The Law of God is not a negation of human personality but the light whereby the human personality finds its most excellent expression. (Prov. 6:23.)

This theistic principle of Jewish ethics has been the subject of misunderstanding by some critics of the Jewish idea of the moral law. Hartmann, for example, delivers himself of a vigorous criticism of every sort of theistic morality. 'So long as I believe in a theistic God who created me and the world,' he claims, 'my morality depends upon a command imposed from without; that is, it is perforce heteronomous morality. But genuine morality begins with moral autonomy.'<sup>1</sup>

Hartmann, however, is mistaken in his denial of the autonomy of theistic morality because he fails to recognise the nature of morality according to Jewish teaching. He fails to understand

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1. Eduard von Hartmann: Selbstzersetzung des Christenthums, p. 29  
quoted in M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism I, p. 126 f.

that for the autonomy of morality it is not necessary that man should give the laws of this morality to himself. What is necessary is that, whatever the source of the knowledge of the law, whether by God or lawgiver or the morality within man himself, man autonomously recognises its moral character and submits to it as to an inner compelling necessity. The Kantian formula of the 'categorical imperative' of morality is expressed in Judaism by the idea of God giving reason to man as the origin of his moral understanding. The morality of the human mind is according to the essence of man's nature. The moral law originates in the nature of the human mind as created by God. It is irrelevant to any discussion of ethical principles to point out that the human mind was not self-created. The sole consideration here is that the human mind, as man finds it, possesses the power, with complete autonomy, entirely independent of every external force, even in opposition to powerful inclinations, to lay down moral laws, based on its own recognition of the value and dignity of that morality. Morality springs from the very nature of the human mind because God created the human mind with the power of recognising the necessity of the moral law. Morality is not a principle 'above or beside the Divine Being', according to Hartmann's reproach, but it is an attribute of God in as much as God is the arch-type <sup>or archetype?</sup> of morality. In the creation of Man, God endowed him with a moral nature in the likeness of that of God, capable of recognising and following the good without compulsion and without any sort of ulterior motive apart from the urgency of his nature which constitutes his own good will. Compliance with the Torah represents man's freest and purest

expression of moral personality.

Summary: Freedom and holiness in Personality.

Man does not diminish his freedom and dignity, but increases it, by alliance with God. The unhappiness and slavery of man is when he is the plaything of his own manifold impulses, ambitions, cravings, fears and desires. Under the lawlessness of nature man is in miserable bondage, but through the power of man to elevate himself above nature and live on the level of divine will and freedom he experiences the true fulfilment of human personality. 'Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgements: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.' (Lev. 18:5.) 'No man is free,' say the Rabbis, 'but he who labours in the Torah.'<sup>1</sup> By living the laws of the Torah Israel is enabled to excel as human beings, becoming entirely a 'holy people' (Deut. 26:17-19), following the pattern of God as the type of holiness. There then is the supreme fulfilment of human existence enabling man to be far more than an impulse but a constant enduring, consistent and active force, exercising good through the entirety of his being and existence. God is holy; meaning, in him the good is an absolute reality. In man likewise the infinite idea of the good must be given its highest, though admittedly finite, expression through the united energy of the entire individual including mind, ability and might. (Deut. 6:5.) Through the incarnation of the good in the character of man, man experiences his holiest personality.

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1. Ethics of the Fathers VI, 2. Cf. Seneca, 'To obey God is to be free'.

## CHAPTER IX

### S U M M A R Y

#### THE WILL AS THE CENTRAL FORCE OF PERSONALITY

We have seen above, in the analysis of Old Testament usages, that the term Nefesh is used homonymously to refer equally to the totality of the human being and his personality and also to the many particular manifestations of his conscious activities in Mind, Connation and the Affections generally. By combining the various usages of the Nefesh we may construct a picture of the nature and faculties of the inner Self of man. The Self is the independent Life-Force which constitutes man into a living and sentient human being. The Self embraces a multiplicity of powers both mental and physical all of which it has the power to comprehend and direct either in a mechanical or a creative manner. The Self can allow itself to be penetrated by the power of another Self or of the non-Self generally, just as it has the power equally of affecting the non-Self in a positive and creative manner.

The Self is conscious of its experience, feeling, disposition and connation and is able to give expression to everything that it comprehends. All these activities are not several distinct capacities of the soul, as it may appear from the usages of Nefesh, but they are the unique and varied manifestations of the Ego or the Self of every individual. What we term the Will of man is not a separate faculty of the man but the manifestation in whatever manner he may express it, of his own inner self.

The determinations or directions of the Will in man are

expressed in the Old Testament by a number of literary usages which at times picture the Nefesh or Lev or Ruah or even the body as the source from which the Will emanates. Personality, Disposition, and Emotion, although frequently attributed to the Ruah of man, are not, scientifically, the particular properties of the Spirit, although some interaction of the Divine element of the Spirit with the Self of man is implied in these activities. Likewise the Lev, the Mind, is not the original source of volition, although it is commonly so described. It is implied in this usage that Mind is the particular faculty employed by the Self when it manifests itself as Conscious Resolve. And similarly where Nefesh is employed as the source of Will the Hebrew language conveys the conception of man directing the vigour and vitality of his Life-Force in the pattern of behaviour chosen by his Inner Self.

The following Rabbinical teaching sums up the Jewish conception of the Will as the central force of Personality, the dynamism of the Individual, the essence of man himself. A classic teaching of Rabbi Meir was: 'Determine with all your heart and with all your soul to know My ways, and to attend early at My doors day by day. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Keep My Law in thy heart; and let the fear of Me be before thine eyes. Guard thy mouth from all sin; purify and sanctify thyself from all transgression and iniquity; and I shall be with thee always.' (Berachoth 17a.)

It is fundamental in Jewish teaching that it is not the heart nor soul nor tongue nor any physical or psychical element of the human being that is the origin of man's behaviour and therefore responsible for moral goodness or iniquity, but it is the Man

himself who determines the actions of heart and soul, lips and eyes, hands and feet, as the expression of his own free Will and Personality.

Man may feel his spirit dejected within him, but he need not accept that condition as his inevitable lot. He can restore health to his countenance by adjuring his soul to hope in God. (Ps. 42:12.) 'Wait on the Lord; be strong and let thine heart take courage...' (Ps. 27:14.) Because the resolves of a man's heart are the determinations of his own Will, we find throughout the Old Testament the repeated appeal of prophet and poet, 'Now set your heart and your soul to seek after the Lord your God'. (1 Chron. 22:19.) 'Direct your heart unto the Lord, and serve him only.' (1 Sam. 7:3.)

The inner Self of man has the power to control not only his resolutions, but also his emotions. 'Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry...' (Eccles. 7:9); 'he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.' (Prov. 16:32.) Accordingly man can be commanded to love God and to fear Him and to rejoice in His service; to hate evil and love good; to love thy neighbour, and to refrain from jealousy and covetousness. Israel is adjured not to forget Amalek, but is commanded to forget the uncollected sheaves during reaping. It is not in accordance with the Hebrew psychology to claim that the emotions or what is commonly called the Will of man are outwith man's control and direction. In the final analysis every action of man, including the habitual or automatic, even a mere gesture or facial expression, is a representation of the nature of the 'Person' - his constitutional talent and his scale of values.

Furthermore, every human being, forming part of the organic

and inorganic realms of being as a whole, is in constant association with the social, cosmic and even supernatural existences. Throughout every moment of his life man, by his very nature, continually determines for himself the position which he takes up in the relationship between his Ego and the non-Ego. The movement in this relation may be from the non-Ego inward to the Ego as in the act of perception, towards which the Ego takes up some position in the reaction which it allows. Or the movement may be from the Ego outward in which even the most trivial action affects in some way the state of the non-Ego or the cosmos. Not only actions, but even every attitude, judgement, feeling and direction of the Will, although only mentally, are charged with their self-created consequences and effects upon the general structure of the cosmos. These changes within the cosmic continua are the creation of man and he is responsible for that which he has initiated.

In the Rabbinical system of the observance of the Sabbath as a day devoted to holiness even a man's thoughts and conversation must not dwell on actions which are contrary to the spirit of the Sabbath. Even the most thoughtless habit is voluntary in origin; for habit only indicates our readiness, born of repeated acts to do certain things. Since we permit it to continue, it partakes of our freedom. It is therefore the duty of man to choose and direct even the more or less mechanical activities of our daily actions. We do not free ourselves of responsibility by abandoning our continuous conscious control and permitting ourselves to degenerate into automatic functionaries. Thus even though a man 'sin through error' in doing any of the things which the Lord commanded not to be done, although he acted unwittingly, he is guilty and requires



atonement to purge him from his sin. (Lev. 4:27.) Transgressions performed wittingly but unwillingly, under duress are always exempted from punishment and generally even from moral blame, except in the cases of idolatry, incest, and murder. (Nedarim 27a, Sanhedrin 74a.) Particularly on matters of regular daily behaviour the Torah emphasises the need for purposive attention and energy so that our actions are performed with conscious deliberation and responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

The dynamism of man's Personality, and therefore his responsibility, extends even beyond that which he himself initiates. Even the completely subjective acts of perception need to be controlled so that particular external influences are not allowed to exert evil effects upon our 'Person'; for every perception results in some impulse or idea which will in some way strive for expression in thought, speech or action. Thus a man is required to stop his ears from hearing of blood and shut his eyes from looking upon evil. (Isaiah 33:15.)

In the continual intermingling of different and often opposing urges and opportunities the self-determining 'Person' of man always makes his own 'act of appropriation', and his eventual action of performance or restraint, whether for good or for bad, is the value judgement of his 'Person' which reflects the character of the Individual.

When these value-judgements of ours stray from the moral code of the Torah we depart from the uprightness and purity of God.

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1. Torahh Cohanim on Lev. 6:2 dealing with the daily burnt offering: 'The term "command" is used here (exceptionally) in order to emphasise the need for enthusiastic performance...'

We can become so completely estranged from our original purity by our sin that we lose all direction in life and our creativeness is turned into chaos, so that life itself becomes death. So the Torah sets the alternatives before man of 'life and good, death and evil'. The Self of man is urged to pursue the good. The fate of man is the decision of the Individual.

PART TWO

THE CONCEPT OF THE WILL  
IN RABBINIC THOUGHT

## CHAPTER I

### RABBINIC PSYCHOLOGY

#### The Origin, Nature and Capacities of the Human Soul.

##### 1. Origin.

The first form of life, as well as all the subsequent forms of life, originated from the four elements, earth, air, water and fire, the creation of which constituted an act of 'creatio ex nihilo'. This is expressed by the Sages when they say that all things were created together but were separated from each other successively.<sup>1</sup>

By the motion of the spheres the elements intermingled with each other and by the further action of light and darkness on them, their constitution changed.<sup>2</sup> The first change consisted in the formation of two kinds of mist; these were the first causes of meteorological phenomena such as rain. They also caused the formation of minerals, of plants, of animals and at last of Man.

The spirit of life which animated the animal was the same spirit which animated Man. Thus the life force Nefesh, which has its origin in the four elements, which are described by the comprehensive term 'earth', is present both in animal and in man alike. This life force Nefesh is described as being in the blood.<sup>3</sup>

In the creation of man, God said 'let us produce man'. (Gen. 1:26.) The combination of the forces of the creation referred to God together with the earth, i.e. the four elements. The earth

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1. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, p. 213.

2. Maimonides, Ibid., p. 216.

3. Maimonides, Ibid., II, 30, p. 213.

contributed the animal form of man, possessing life in the same manner as any animal, and God endowed this animal with His divine spirit. (Gen. 2:7.) This new combination of the animal life with the divine spirit Neshamah produced a new type of living being Nefesh Hayyah. (Gen. 2:7.) The addition of this divine Neshamah changed man from an animal to a human being with the power of intellect and speech.<sup>1</sup>

Thus man is described as being created 'in our image', i.e. in the image of God and earth signifying that he possesses the qualities of both types of life. Man is later described as being created partly 'in the image of God' because that aspect of his nature, viz: his intellect and creative capacity is the special characteristic of man.

Although the 'higher soul' was breathed into man by God after man already possessed the power of animal life, this added divine Nefesh did not remain something separate from the original animal Nefesh. Both life-forces mingled in man to make the new Nefesh Hayyah - the new type of human living being as distinct from the earlier Nefesh Hayyah, the animal living being. All the three types of Nefesh Hayyah, viz: 1. the elemental power of growth as is found in plants, 2. the power of movement as in marine and animal life and 3. human power of Active Intellect and speech, all merged into one living soul - the Nefesh Hayyah which is Man.

All these souls are elements in the creation of man. They are not separate parts of him. He is one whole integrated by all three. Each element may initiate different forces within him

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1. Cf. Targum Onkelos on Genesis 2:7.

which may be opposed or assisted by forces originating from other elements of his constitution. The final result, however, in thought, speech and action is man as a whole, not part of him.

## 2. Nature.

The urges in man that are derived from the earthly Nefesh, i.e. the blind forces of animal life are termed the Yezer Ra. The urges that derive from the divine Nefesh, i.e. the power of the divine intellect are termed the Yezer Tov. Not every desire of the animal Nefesh is evil. It is evil only when the balance of the four elements has been upset. The Divine Intellect instructs us as to what is proper in man, and would in fact be the desire even of the animal Nefesh itself if the 'elements' were in true balance.

The nature of each man is different from the other by reason of the varying constitution of the 'elements' within him.

Man is compared to the ladder of Jacob composed of two parts, viz: the earthly base and the spiritual power which has its source in Heaven.

Man in his basic element form is called Adam. As he ascends towards the divine form he is called Ish. The unique nature of man is his possession of the faculty to follow that which leads to his improvement and to reject that which belongs to the nature of the lower animals. Man is a microcosm, and his instinctive longing is for perfection. (Cf. Sanhedrin 38b.)

The task of man in his effort for perfection is to overcome the tendencies of his nature which lead to evil. According to the nature of some men the evil urges may be greater and accordingly a

greater effort would be required to overcome them.

The purest element of the soul which is present in every man possesses the potentialities of the most perfect wisdom and power both physically and psychically. The different actual capacities of men vary according to the different effort exerted by them in realising the fullest powers of the soul. Man is judged by God not merely by the public appearance of his achievement but by the amount of effort he uses in producing the purification of his character.<sup>1</sup> Man has no alternative but to accept the constitution of his nature as it is. If man did not have this nature, he would not be man but something else. The unique nature of man is his possession of the faculty of creating himself out of the constituents which obtain in his nature. This is his glory and his greatness and the higher quality of his entire being.

Maimonides likewise distinguishes three kinds of soul: 1. 'that which constitutes animal life in general;' 2. 'that which constitutes human life in particular;' 3. 'that part of man's individuality which exists independently of his body - i.e. the soul.' This third kind of soul is the intellect. Maimonides likewise insists that the three souls are not three separate existences. They all form one essence composed of three aspects.<sup>2</sup>

The intellectual soul, however, he maintains, lives on after the death of the body. "All those who devote themselves to bodily pleasures, rejecting truth and choosing falsehood, are cut off from

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1. Cf. Isaac Arama: Akedath Yizhak, Leviticus, Emor, p. 192; also Lev. Vayikra, p. 10. See Louis Ginsberg, "Arama, Isaac ben Moses", in J.E. II, p. 66 f. See I. Broyde, "Soul", in J.E. XI, pp. 472 ff.
  2. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed - ed. Friedlander, I, 41, p. 56.

participation in that exalted state of things (i.e. the heavenly kingdom), and remain as detached matter merely." The final goal and highest felicity of man, states Maimonides, consists in achieving the morality of the soul through moral and intellectual perfection. Scripture refers to this consummate bliss in the verse, "And the soul of my Lord shall be bound in the bond of eternal life." (1 Sam. 25:29.)<sup>1</sup>

The aim of the Torah is that through the performance of the precepts man may attain that perfection and thus be worthy of the life of the world to come.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Capacities.

#### (a) Substance.

The first systematic investigation by a Jewish philosopher into the psychology of the Soul is made by Saadia Gaon of Sura in Babylonia. He discovered already a bewildering variety of opinions among philosophers regarding its nature and he warns his readers that this is a profound, abstract and subtle subject.<sup>3</sup> The view which he propounds after rejecting eleven other theories, is that the creation of the soul takes place simultaneously with the completion of the bodily form of the human being. The quality of its substance is comparable in purity to the heavenly spheres. It attains luminosity as a result of the light which it receives from God. The virtuous souls shine like the heavenly spheres. (Dan. 12:3.)

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1. J. Abelson: Maimonides on the Jewish Creed, p. 17.
  2. Maimonides: Mishna Commentary, Sanhedrin X, Introduction, I. See Abelson: Maimonides on the Jewish Creed, pp. 16-18, n. 3.
  3. Saadia: Emunoth Vedeoth, Treatise VI, 'On the soul', - ed. Rosenblatt. pp. 253-263.



(b) Faculties.

The soul possesses three faculties: (1) the power of reasoning, (2) the power of appetite, and (3) the power of anger. According to the nature of these three faculties the soul is described by three distinct appellations: (1) Neshamah (cf. Job 32:8; Job 26:4) - faculty of cognition, (2) Nefesh (cf. Deut. 12:20; Job 33:20) - faculty of appetite, and (3) Ruah (cf. Eccles. 7:9; Prov. 29:11) - faculty of boldness and anger. All three faculties of the soul have their seat in the heart. Although the great ramifications of the nerves originate from the brain, these are merely the sinews and ligaments of the body and have no connection with the soul as such. That is why the Scripture invariably mentions heart and soul together. (Deut. 6:5.)

(c) Unity.

Saadia is emphatic that soul and body constitute one agent, attributing the error of dualism to the failure to understand the language of Scripture. The expressions 'if a soul shall sin, etc.' (Lev. 4:2; Lev. 5:15; Ezek. 18:4) do not imply that transgression is an act of the soul exclusively. Likewise the expression 'the soul that eateth of the flesh' (Lev. 7:20) must refer to the body. On the other hand, 'all flesh come to worship before Me' (Is. 66:23) must involve the functions of thought and speech which appertain to the soul. Furthermore the expression, 'all my bones shall say: Lord who is like unto Thee?' does not mean that the declaration was made by the bones. "It is one of the peculiarities of the style of the Holy Writ that an act that is performed by three or four or five different things is sometimes

related by it to the first alone, and sometimes to the second alone, and sometimes to the third alone."<sup>1</sup>

(d) Behaviour.

Man's behaviour is the result of a combination of his likes and dislikes in various proportions. He acts as though he were a judge to whom the disposal of the different tendencies is submitted for his decision. Since man is by nature constituted of different elements and therefore different tendencies and traits it is an essential characteristic of his nature that he should weigh the impulses of his nature with a balance and give to each its due measure. Man stands in constant need of judgement in regulating his conduct and behaviour. Impulses must be indulged and checked according to the need and circumstances. Man must at all times exercise complete control and mastery, acting with deliberation and following the guidance of the divine wisdom of the Torah. The foolish despise discipline (Prov. 1:7), but, the fear of the Lord is the discipline of wisdom. (Prov. 15:33.) 'A prudent man seeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the thoughtless pass on, and are punished,' (Prov. 27:12), i.e. they suffer the evil with which they are afflicted as the result of their disregard of the injunctions of their intellect.

(e) Mind.

A modern account of the Mind given by C.D. Broad coincides closely with the Rabbinical account of the soul. Broad combines

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1. Saadia: Emmunoth Vedeoth, Treatise VI, Chap. V - ed. Rosenblatt, p. 252.
  2. Saadia: Ibid., Treatise X, Chaps. 1, 2 - ed. Rosenblatt, pp. 357-9.

the various Behaviourist, Mentalist and Neutralist accounts of the Mind and produces a compound theory compatible with the view of Emergent Materialism.<sup>1</sup> Mentality, he states, is an emergent quality of a compound composed of a living brain, and nervous system and another constituent which is not always at once destroyed when the brain and nervous system are broken up.<sup>2</sup>

We know extremely little about this other constituent. It may have some of the lower factors of mentality, though there is no need to suppose that it has. And, whether it has any of the factors of mentality or not, it may be matter of a peculiar kind. All that we positively know about this constituent is that it is capable of carrying traces of past experiences and of certain personal peculiarities.

We do not know how persistent it may be, and we do not know what conditions, if any, are capable of destroying it. But we do know that it is not immediately destroyed by those processes which destroy brains and nervous systems. It is therefore possible that, even if a cosmic disaster were to destroy all living organisms (and therefore, on our view, all minds) in the Universe, the other constituents of these minds might persist indefinitely. These persistent constituents may be described as merely waiting passively for the development of living organisms. But it is also possible that they play a more active part. It is possible that the development of living organisms out of inorganic matter depends on the agency of such persistent constituents as well as on the fulfilment of certain conditions

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1. C.D. Broad: The Mind and its Place in Nature, Chap. 14, pp. 607-653.

2. C.D. Broad: Ibid., p. 659 f.

in ordinary matter. We never find highly developed organisms without minds, any more than we find minds without organisms. It therefore seems not unlikely that the persistent constituents of minds act as cause factors in the original production of living organisms from inorganic matter.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Complexity.

Modern scientists are aware of the ascending levels or strata in the organisation of living matter. There is first the physico-chemico level of the electronic, atomic and molecule structures found in man's tissues as well as in trees, stones and clouds. The physiological level is reached when the molecules and their combines have developed into material aggregates larger than molecules as when they erect tissue cells and when these cells have associated together to form organs and organisms. At the highest level of organisation, in addition to electrons, atoms, molecules, cells and tissues, we encounter a whole being composed of organs, humours and consciousness. Here the psychological concepts characteristic of man are developed such as intelligence, moral sense, aesthetic sense and social sense.

The human being is too complex to be apprehended in his entirety. The whole of man must be divided into small parts for the purpose of study and observation. At the same time it is necessary to avoid the classical errors of reducing him to a body or a consciousness or an association of both and believing in the concrete existence of the parts abstracted from him by our mind.<sup>2</sup> Physiological activities are measured by techniques of physics

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1. C.D. Broad, Ibid., Ch. 14, p. 660.

2. C.F. Alexis Carrel: Man The Unknown, page 65.

and chemistry. Mental activities are checked by introspection and the study of human behaviour. The antithesis of matter and mind represents merely the opposition of two kinds of techniques. The error of Descartes was to believe that the material and mental qualities were two different things. In fact man is a complex being whose activities have been arbitrarily divided into physiological and mental. Both scientist and philosopher have been unable to trace the origin or locate or describe the exact nature of the intellect and the emotions and their interactions with the physiological conditions of man.

### The Nature of Man.

#### 1. The heart.

In Rabbinic literature all the manifestations of Reason and Emotion, Volition, and Moral character are attributed to man's heart. The entire range of mental activities referred to in the Old Testament as associated with the heart is quoted by the Rabbis in evidence of the central importance of this organ in the whole of man's activity and experience. The heart is not only the seat of all knowledge and understanding, but it is also associated with the activity of each of the '248 limbs of the body'. The heart receives diverse counsels from man's various members, it considers their respective value and decides and acts according to its own choice. The heart is the director of man's life. It is the Inner Man or the Real Man. Therefore when God considers a man He looks only to his heart. When Samuel was impressed by the countenance and stature of Jesse's son Eliab and mistakenly thought that he was the appointed of the Lord, (in place of David),

he was told: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7.)

A Midrashic text gives the following miscellaneous list of sensual intellectual, emotional and moral activities:

'The heart sees, hears, speaks, walks, falls, stops, rejoices, weeps, is comforted, grieves, is hardened, faints, mourns, is frightened, breaks, is tired, rebels, invents, suspects (or criticises), whispers, thinks, desires, commits adultery, is refreshed, is stolen, is humbled, is persuaded, goes astray, is troubled, is awake, loves, hates, is jealous, is searched, is torn, meditates, is like fire, is like stone, repents, is warmed, dies, melts, accepts words (of comfort), accepts the fear (of God), gives thanks, covets, is obstinate, is deceitful, is bribed, writes, schemes, receives commandments, does wilfully, makes reparation, is arrogant.' (Eccles. Rabba, 1:16; Pesikta de R. Kahana - ed. Buber, f. 124 a, b.)<sup>1</sup>

The Rabbis attribute to the heart not only all the Old Testament usages of 'heart' but also those of Nefesh, Ruah and Neshamah. These three terms are regarded as appellations of three faculties belonging to the soul; namely the power of appetite, Nefesh, the power of anger or enthusiasm, Ruah, and the power of cognition, Neshamah. These are not distinct psychic elements, but all belong to the Soul which is the one source from which man exercises all his faculties. The human soul is a

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1. Solomon Schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 255, Note 2. Cf. J.D. Eisenstein, Ozar Midrashim, pp. 417 b.f.; also pp. 352 a., 178 a., 407 a.

unique creation of God. There exists nothing comparable to it among all creatures either celestial or terrestrial. It is the nature of the human soul to function only through a human body just as fire burns only in conjunction with some material. The physical body of man by itself is in no way superior to that of the beast, but man achieves spiritual pre-eminence through his possession of the human soul. This soul has its seat in the heart, so that the Biblical expression 'with all thy heart and with all thy soul' (Deut. 6:5) naturally associates heart and soul as being coincident with each other. The 'heart' in Rabbinic literature is the source of all mental emotional and moral activity; and the activities of the heart are synonymous with the whole of man's psychical life.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Unity of Body and Soul.

Although the 'heart' is repeatedly referred to as the source of all conscious activity, the Rabbis frequently emphasise that a man's behaviour is not to be attributed separately either to the soul or to the body. At the beginning of man's creation, Scripture states: 'Then the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.' (Gen. 2:7.) Body and soul constitute one single human agent. Although we find in Scripture such expressions as 'If a soul shall sin' (Lev. 4:2) they do not refer to functions belonging to the soul exclusively, just as the expression 'but the soul that eateth of the flesh' (lev. 7:20) obviously refers to a physical activity. It sometimes happens that a function pertaining particularly to the

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1. Saadia: Emunoth Vedooth - ed. Rosenblatt, Treatise VI, pp. 235-264.

body or the soul is attributed to one member of the body only. Thus it is said: 'Her feet abide not in her house' (Prov. 7:11), 'And she worketh willingly with her hands' (Prov. 31:13), 'And mine eye abideth in their provocation' (Job 17:2), 'Cannot my palate discern crafty devices?' (Job 6:30.) It is recognised as characteristic of the style of the Old Testament that when an act is performed by a number of different parts of the body, such as the function of speech by the mouth, tongue, lips, palate, throat, the action is described as the function of any single one of these. (E.g. mouth, Ps. 71:15; tongue, Ps. 35:28; lips, Ps. 63:4; palate, Hos. 8:1; throat, Is. 58:1.) Thus although Hebrew usage may attribute a particular action to the soul only, or to the body alone, or to the bones or a limb exclusively, the language of Scripture bears no relationship to the science of anatomy. In reality the Torah conception is that every action of man represents the functioning of body and soul as one single agent.<sup>1</sup> In the Rabbinic conception, the human mind, described as Ley, 'the heart' (Gen. 6:5; 8:21) generates man's thoughts, imaginations, passions, promptings and purposes. But whereas the mind devises, wills and effects an action, the body is not a mere involuntary instrument in its accomplishment. The action is that of the man as a whole, and not of either half of his nature. It is related in the Talmud that Antoninus said to Rabbi that both body and soul could escape judgment by claiming that since they had been separated from each other neither had committed any sin, the body lying immobile like a stone in the tomb, and the soul soaring in the air pure like a bird.

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1. Saadia, Ibid. - ed. Rosenblatt, pp. 250-253.



Rabbi, however, in reply, told the well-known parable of the blind and the lame, who robbed the garden of the King. Each claimed that by reason of his incapacity he could not have committed the offence. 'So the King made the lame man mount on the back of the blind man and judged them together.' (Tanhuma, Vayyikra 6; Mechilta 36b; Leviticus Rabba 4:5; Sanhedrin 91a-b.) Body and Soul constitute one single being. It is impossible for the body to be a human being without the soul; and it is impossible for the soul to be a human being without the body. When the human being acts it is the act of both body and soul. (Tanhuma, Vayyikra 6.)<sup>1</sup>

Man is the only creature constituted as a unity of mortal body and everlasting soul. Other creatures were created either entirely from celestial substance, or entirely of earth. Man possesses the combined nature of both angels and animals. (Sifre 132a; Genesis Rabba 8:11; 14:3; 27:5; Tanhuma (ed. Buber) Bereshith 15; Hagiga 16a.) When man acts worthily according to the will of God he excels above the angels but if he is not worthy he is told 'Insects and worms preceded thee' (in creation, on the sixth day). (Genesis Rabba 8:1.)

In the Rabbinic notion of complete unification of body and soul the mortality of the body and the immortality of the intellect do not reflect the Greek idea of dualism as in Philo (Philo, de Opificio mundi c.46, 135 (ed. Mangey I, 32)) but rather they are two characteristics compounded into one single new element. Carrel has described the intimate relationship between mental activities and physiological activities. "Mind and organism commune in man

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1. Cf. Henry Malter, "Personifications of Soul and Body. A Study in Judeo-Arabic Literature," J.Q.R. II, April, 1912, No. 4, pp. 453-479.

like form and marble in a statue. One cannot change the form without breaking the marble."<sup>1</sup> The uniqueness of the human being is that man is given the power to determine for himself his own position in the realms of cosmic existence ranging from the least of earthly life, called death, to the highest approximation to the divine, called life.

### The Source of Good and Evil.

#### 1. The Impulses.

It is the common experience of man that there exist within him a contrariety of impulses, some urging him to actions that are morally good, and other to actions that are morally evil. This duality was early recognised by the Rabbis and deduced exegetically from the anomalous spelling of the word יְיָ, with two 'yods' in the verse "Then God formed man". (Gen. 2:7.) "The Holy One, blessed be He, created two impulses, one good, יְיָ הַטוֹב, and the other evil, יְיָ הַרַע. (Berachoth 61a.)<sup>2</sup>

Hellenistic writers assume that this duality of impulses corresponds with the duality of man's natural constitution, so that the evil impulse resides in the body while the good impulse proceeds from the soul. The Hellenised author of Fourth Maccabees writes: "When God made man he implanted in him his affections and dispositions; and then over all he enthroned the sacred ruling mind."

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1. A. Carrel, Man the Unknown, p. 136. Cf. pp. 141-144.
  2. F.C. Porter, "The Yezer Hara. A Study in the Jewish Doctrine of Sin", Yale Biblical and Semitic Studies, 1901, pp. 91-156.
  - G.F. Moore: Judaism - Vol. I, Part III, Chap. III, "The origin of Sin".
  - S. Schechter: Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, Chap. XV, "The Evil Yezer": "The Source of Rebellion".
  - J.D. Eisenstein, "Sin", J.E. XI, pp. 376b. ff.
  - A. Cohen: Everyman's Talmud, Ch. III, "The Doctrine of Man".

(4 Macc. 2:21 f.) The conception of evil was that its source lay in the appetites and passions all of which originated from the physical organism which being material was evil per se. The rational faculty, λογισμος, the Mind, possesses the power, when properly exercised, of dominating all appetites and passions and thus subduing any impulse to evil. Paul refers to this dualism when he describes the tragedy of man as a losing struggle between the aspirations of the mind and the impulses of the body. (Rom. 7:23.)<sup>1</sup>

Maimonides sees in the Biblical Story of the first sin of man an allegorical account of the psychology of sin. Adam, Eve and the serpent represent the intellect, the body and the imagination. The appetitive faculties are represented by Satan who is introduced into the dramatis personæ by the Rabbis. In a Midrashic account the sages say: "The serpent had a rider, the rider was as big as a camel, and it was the rider that enticed Eve: this rider was Samael (i.e. Satan)." Imagination (Serpent), the source of error, is directly aided by the appetitive faculty (Satan), and the two are intimately connected with the body (Eve), to which man (Intellect) gives paramount attention, and for the sake of which he indulges in sins. Instead of the Intellect acting firmly from pure truth and exercising authoritative dominion over Body, Appetite and Imagination, it allows itself to be subdued by these other powers, and, becoming debased by them, it forms false conceptions and does evil.<sup>2</sup>

1. G.F. Moore: Judaism, Vol. I, Part III, p. 485 f.

2. Moses Maimonides: The Guide for the Perplexed, - translated by M. Friedlander (London, 1925), pp. 15 f., 217; also Introd., p. lii f.

Maimonides describes man's disobedience as his giving way to desires which had their source in his imagination and to the gratification of his bodily appetities.<sup>1</sup> Man demonstrated thereby his inability to assert completely over all other faculties, the faculty of the Intellect with which he had been endowed by God in a perfect and complete condition, and through the exercise of which he would naturally choose the true and reject the false.

Through man's self-inflicted loss of intellectual perfection it was necessary for him to make use of a new faculty (originally unnecessary) of the moral sense, whereby he could continue to distinguish between that which was morally good and morally evil. This was the new source of knowledge received by man, figuratively described by the Biblical expression "And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked". (Gen. 3:7.) "There had been no blindness which was now removed, but he received a new faculty whereby he found things wrong which previously he had not regarded as wrong."<sup>2</sup> Maimonides here distinguishes between four separate elements, viz: Intellect, Body, Imagination, and Appetite, and he attributes a separate personality to each one. Although he appears to be following the Greek Dualism of Mind and Body, he does not go so far as to state that Imagination and Appetite originate in the Body, although he asserts that they are closely associated with the Body and exert their evil influence on the Mind through the Body.

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1. Loc. cit.

2. Moses Maimonides, Ibid., Part I, Chap. II, on Genesis 3:5 - pp. 14-16.

It is important to observe that although Man receives impulses and persuasions from various faculties, including also the Intellect which is fully at his disposal, it is not the Impulses which act if they prevail, nor the Intellect if it prevails, but always Man himself. The Impulses and the Intellect urge and give counsel, but man is the authority. Man himself is the author of the act. The Rabbis state, "A man should always oppose the good impulse to the evil impulse." (Berachoth 5a.) Man is not merely a spectator in the struggle between the impulses. He is more than the referee giving both sides equal opportunities to secure victory. He is the captain whose duty it is to suppress rebellion and maintain the order and perfection dictated by the Intellect.

It is commonly assumed that the source of evil in man is the Evil Yezer which is associated with the passions and impulses of the body, whereas the Mind is always the champion of the good. This division does not represent the view of the Rabbis. Although the passions may be loosely termed the Evil Yezer, they are not necessarily the source of evil. The Rabbis could not accept anything created by God as being inherently evil, for even the Evil Yezer was included in the Scriptural assessment. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." (Gen. 1:31.) If it were not for the bodily passions, they explain, a man would neither build a house, nor marry a wife, nor beget children, nor engage in commerce. (Gen. Rabba 9:7.) The sexual impulse (called the Evil Yezer), envy and mercy were described as three good qualities which the Holy One, blessed be He, created in this world for the world could not survive without them. (Aboth de Rabbi Nathan 9a.)

The Rabbis recognised the dangers arising out of giving free reign to the warm licentious satisfaction of man's emotional impulses; but they were careful to deny that they were unavoidably the source of evil and disaster. The emotions were essential characteristics of human life. It was necessary however that they should not be exercised in a completely subjective, animal fashion. If they were exercised consciously with due recognition of man's relationship with his fellowman and of his place in creation and before God they would serve as the vital instruments of man whereby he would build a true civilisation. The closest communion with God was expressed not in the form of intellectual adoration, but by the term, love.

## 2. The Mind.

Neither is the Mind regarded as the source of only that which is good, reasonable and divine. In the Old Testament as well as in the psychology of the Rabbis, the mind, which is termed the heart, Ley, is clearly described as the source of the evil impulse. (Gen. 6:5; 8:21.) The mind generates the thoughts and devices, the promptings and purposes of evil. The heart is often identified with the evil Yezer. Thus we find in Numb. 15:39, regarding the making of fringes in the borders of garments: "That ye go not about after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring." The Rabbis comment on this verse: "The heart (thought and imagination) and the eyes lead men into sin; but the eyes merely follow the heart, for there are blind men who are guilty of all abominable deeds in the world." (Sifrei: Numb. 5:115. Cf. Jerushalmi Berachoth 3c.) In the Apocrypha

likewise the evil impulse is sometimes identified with the heart. Thus in 4 Esdras, the cor malignum, or the granum seminis mali in the heart, is used in connections in which the Rabbinical texts say 'Yezer Hara'.

It is the Mind, which is responsible <sup>for?</sup> of imagining the pleasures of sin, of conceiving the plan to achieve the satisfaction of the passion and of seducing man to put the plan into effect. Temptation and the rationalisation of evil desires originate from the mind. Thus the Evil Yezer is to be found both in Mind and Emotion, but is not to be identified with either of them. What is termed the Evil Yezer is in fact a judgment of Morality and Theology. The 'heart' as Mind embraces the faculties of Reason, Imagination, Passion, and Purpose, all of which are at the disposal of man. When these faculties are put to improper use, whether in the scientific religious or moral sense, their actions are described as the doings of the Evil Yezer.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Person.

It is part of the nature of man that he is able to experience a number of inclinations, feelings and frames of mind, each of which may be associated with different and even conflicting motives. These inclinations however are not a group of separate powers fighting with each other for dominion over the person. They are all creations of the person himself who is sometimes agitated in hesitation before deciding which inclination should be followed, but generally decides to choose the one in preference to

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1. Cf. S. Schechter: Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 267;  
G.F. Moore: Judaism, I, p. 486.

the other. The inclination that is thus chosen is frequently described as being of greater strength than the other; but according to the Rabbis the choice of inclination merely reflects the disposition of the person who makes this choice. The man whose habitual behaviour earns for him the character of the saint or the libertine is the person who consistently harnesses his inclinations to the performance of good or evil. The evil of Mind or Emotion is not inevitably bad, and if any man will claim that he is compelled to evil by his Evil Yezer, the Almighty replies: 'Thou (man) hast made him bad.' (Tanhuma, Bereshith 7.)

The varying inclinations in man are not of varying inherent strengths, but of varying attractiveness to man. It is always the person, through his many faculties, that brings them into existence and who chooses one above all others. Of course the Evil Yezer in this sense was created by God, since it was He who endowed man with all his potentialities, but man has the power in his own hands to dominate the whole of his inclinations and use them only for good.

The difference between the wicked and the righteous is that the wicked are in the power of their hearts (i.e. conduct themselves continually according to the dictates of the Evil Yezer), while the righteous have the heart in their power. (Genesis Rabba 34:10.) Everything is a question of man's own choice; the wicked preferring to follow those inclinations which are known as the Evil Yezer, while the righteous decide for the Good Yezer. (Eccles. Rabba 9:1.)

### Personification of the Good and Evil Impulses.

#### 1. Personifications of the Impulses.

So real and vital is man's experience of the good and evil



impulses that it is typical of Hebrew style that these two powers should be personified, and qualities attributed to them according to the Rabbis' conception of their nature.

a) The kidneys.

When the Rabbis described the particular activities of the different internal organs of man they noticed that the kidney was duplicated and they assumed that each one had a particular function. Following the Old Testament conception that the heart contained the inner man or 'manikin' which determined a man's actions, they said: 'Two reins (kelayoth) are in a man: the one counsels him for good; the other for evil.' The former, they said, was on the right side; the latter on the left. 'The reins counsel, they continue, and the heart understands (to decide for action).' Thus it is said, "The heart of the wise man is on the right side (i.e. turns to the counsellor on the right), the heart of the fool is on his left." (Eccles. 10:2.)<sup>1</sup>

b) Two hearts.

Elsewhere the Rabbis identify the two Yezer with two different hearts. One statement following the above verse (Eccles. 10:2) states that the wise man's heart which is governed by the Good Yezer is actually placed on the right of man, while the fool's heart is placed on his left.

When they interpret the verse 'For the Lord searcheth all the hearts' (levavoth) (1 Chron. 28:9) they state that a man has two hearts, one occupied by the Good Yezer and the other by the Evil

1. Berachoth 61a. Cf. comment of Novellae Maharsha, ad. loc.

Yezer. (Midrash, Tehillim (ed. Buber, Vilna, 1891) Chap. 14.5.1.) This statement is explained by a further comment, "Has then a man two hearts? But by these are meant, the Good Yezer and the Evil Yezer." (Midrash Prov. 12, referring to Ps. 7:10.)

The Zohar describes the heart itself as having two cavities, the one full of blood, which is the seat of the Evil Yezer; the other empty where the Good Yezer dwells. (Zohar: Exodus 107a.) The Midrash speaks of both the good and evil Yezer watching to find the chambers of the heart free in order to enter and take possession of it. (Aboth de R. Nathan, 15b; Midr. Prov. 24.)

It is, of course, only in the allegorical sense that the Rabbis speak with such varying descriptions, of the two opposing powers within man, each representing an inclination of his personality.

c) Child and King.

The Good Impulse is the personification of a man's moral consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

~~e) Child and King.~~

It is described as a poor but wise child. It is poor because all do not hearken to it; wise because it teaches creatures the right path; a child because it is young in comparison with the evil impulse which is active from birth, whereas the good impulse manifests itself only from the age of thirteen. The evil impulse is described as an old and foolish king. (Eccles. Rabba, on Eccles 4:13.)

Elsewhere the Evil Impulse is a great king, who builds bulwarks (i.e. temptations to sin) against a little city (i.e. man), but the

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1. A. Cohen: Everyman's Talmud, p. 95.

Good Impulse by its wisdom delivers the city. (Nedarim 32b.)

d) Angel of Death.

The danger to man from the Evil Yezer is no less than from the Angel of Death for it 'accustoms man to sin and kills him'. (Exod. Rabba 30:18.) Thus R. Simon ben Lakish said: 'Satan and the Evil Yezer and the Angel of Death are one.' (Baba Bathra 16a.)

e) Satan.

The Rabbis quote seven references to the Evil Yezer in the Old Testament, in each case bearing a description indicative of its nature and function. 'The Holy One, blessed be He, called him "evil" (Gen. 8:21); Moses called him "uncircumcised" (Deut. 10:16); David called him "unclean" (Ps. 51:12); Solomon called him "fiend" (Prov. 15:31); Isaiah called him "stumbling-block" (Is. 57:14); Ezekiel called him "stone" (Ezek. 36:26); Joel called him the "hidden-one" in the heart of man (Joel 2:20). (Sukkah 52a.)<sup>1</sup> It is the continual concern of the Rabbis to uncover to man the dissimulations of the Evil Yezer which bring about his undoing. All the wicked arts exercised by Satan, the Tempter to evil, par excellence, are the demonic plots whereby the Evil Yezer ensnares a man, misleads him and brings about his destruction. When the imagination of a man urges him to do that which would be repugnant to his better judgment and moral conscience, the Rabbis speak of the evil Yezer as poisoning his conscience, as a fly even by the smallest infection causes the most precious ointment to become rancid. (Berachoth 61a.) It not only debases the moral conscience but also suppresses it and

1. Cf. S. Schechter: Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 244, n. 1.

blinds man to the consequences of his acts. (Sukka 52b.)

## 2. The Person.

### a) Heart and Soul.

We have seen that the Rabbis assign to the heart both the Good Yezer and the Evil Yezer. For this reason the heart is accused of inconsistency. On the Scriptural verse, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is desperately sick; who can know it?' (Jer. 17:9.) the Rabbis attribute to God the complaint, 'Two hundred and forty eight organs have I created in man, all of these keep in the same manner as I have created them, except the heart'. (Agadot, Bereshith, ed. Buber, Cracow, 1902, Chap. 2.) Schechter (Aspects, p. 259) translates the verse from Jeremiah (17:9) 'The heart changeth from moment to moment. It alters itself and perverts itself.'

When a man sins it is not the heart which itself is corrupt. The heart is the seat of all man's activities, both good and evil. It directs the activities of all the organs of the body. (Alphabetic Midrash of Rabbi Akiba, letter "Lamed".) The heart is none other than the person controlling his own mind and body. When the person acts sinfully he is described as being under the influence of the Evil Yezer. When the Rabbis speak of the 'heart' as being responsible for man's actions, both for good and evil, the heart is synonymous with the 'soul', Nefesh, in the Bible. The Nefesh commits sin; and the Nefesh loves God. Both these terms 'the heart' and 'the soul' are not intended to designate a particular organ of the body or a psychological faculty, as the particular source of man's good or evil acts. They are both concretisations of what

some may call the Will of man, but which to the Rabbis was nothing less than man himself. The Good and Evil Yezers were not the masters of man, nor his agents, but allegorised attributes of the moral character of a man's behaviour.

The 'person', in fact, whatever his attribute is always the man himself. He requires no corporeal organ. It is assigned to the heart only for the sake of concretisation.

b) Zelem.

Maimonides describes the human power of Intellectual Perception as the property which distinguishes man from every other creature.<sup>1</sup> On account of this intellectual perception the term Zelem, form, is employed in the sentence, 'In the zelem of God He created him'. (Gen. 1:27.) The 'form' of God did not refer to any particular shape or appearance, as would be implied by the word Toar, 'appearance'. It signified the specific 'form', viz: that which constitutes the essence of a thing, whereby the thing is what it is; the reality of a thing in so far as it is that particular being. In man the 'form' is that constituent which gives him human perception. In the exercise of this perception man does not employ his senses, nor move his hand or his foot, for this perception has been compared - though only apparently, not in truth - to the Divine perception which requires no corporeal organ. Thus when the Psalmist condemns the wicked before God with the words, 'Thou shalt despise their image,' (zelem) (Ps. 63:20), the contempt concerns not the organs, properties or shape of man's body, but his

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1. Maimonides: The Guide for the Perplexed, - translated by M. Friedlander, Part I, Ch. I, p. 13 f.

soul, his personality - i.e. the men themselves on account of their evil manifestations.

The functioning of the Soul, the exercise of Reason and the senses, and the initiation of movement are all in every way the activities of Man as a whole, as a Personality.

## CHAPTER II

### INDIVIDUALITY AND HUMAN INADEQUACY IN RABBINIC ETHICS

#### Religion and Morality.

Just as God is conceived as the personal Creator of the Universe, acting freely in thought, will and creativity and constituting his creation with purpose, law and morality, so man, 'created in the image of God' possesses the power of rulership over all that is in the earth. He is endowed with the perception which can distinguish that which harmonises with the moral order of things from that which conflicts with this order. He furthermore possesses the power to choose and to do that which coincides with the All-good of his Creator and to avoid that which is antagonistic to the morality of God.

The obligation of *Imitatio Dei* arises out of man's nature, being himself created in God's likeness. The fulfilment of this nature however is impeded by the imperfections of mortal capacities as compared with those of the Divine. Even when man inherently wishes to direct his desires and emotions in accordance with the moral law he may fail to judge correctly his duty or his capacity or to recognise the means of attaining his desired result.

The knowledge of the possibility of living on the level of the Divine, however, and the attractive ambition of consecrating one's physical and mental powers to their highest purposes, present man with the ideal challenge of being and becoming what man should and may be. The challenge and the achievement are meaningless unless man is a free moral agent. The fullest personality of man

is expressed not when he follows any and every inclination of his mind or imagination, but when he recognises the good, chooses to do it and executes the act with intelligence and resolve.

Man and God are two factors of one equation. The moral law results from man's own divinity. The patriarchs of the Bible perceived this relationship with God and accordingly they sought to carry out the implications of their 'godlikeness' in all the relations of human life, individual and social. Israel as a people made a covenant with God that they would be 'holy' as 'God is holy'. (Lev. 19:2; Ex. 19:6; Deut. 14:2, 21; 26:19; 28:9.)

The law of life that God revealed to Israel became the pattern of Israel's highest life. God himself is the supreme manifestation of the ethical life. (Ex. 34:6,7.) To revere God, to walk in His ways, to love and serve Him with all one's heart and soul (Deut. 10:12) was to fulfil man's innermost destiny. Through obedience to the law of God and the description of His qualities as revealed in the Torah, Israel experienced the ideal expression of their human personality and of their historical identity.

The worship of God, in Judaism, afforded freedom of expression, and yet assigned definite boundaries to all instincts clamouring for satisfaction. It established order among contradictory demands and harmonised the opposing claims that arose in social intercourse. But it did not rest with securing order and moderation. It developed man's own apprehension of the good and provided the dynamic of constant endeavour and improvement establishing in his instinctive character higher and nobler



desires than his original impulses.<sup>1</sup>

The pagan philosophers did not differ very much from the religious teachers in their system of moral values. The Aristotelians no less than the Stoics attached the greatest importance to rightness of purpose, preference of virtue for its own sake, and the suppression of vicious desires. They always conceived of morality under the form of Knowledge or Wisdom, it being inconceivable to all the schools sprung from Socrates that a man could truly know his own good and yet deliberately choose anything else. Both Plato and Aristotle agreed that perfect virtue and moral insight are inseparably bound up with perfect wisdom. The attainment of Wisdom the Stoics maintained was the ideal condition of perfect human life. Although, as Aristotle held, this knowledge might be permanently precluded by vicious habits or temporarily obliterated by passion, true knowledge when attained, was the only means of producing rightness of purpose. The body, the Stoics held, was the seat of unreason. If man was to possess pure virtue his Will was to be derived entirely from his Reason. Thus the perfect man was to be the expression of pure Soul from which alone arose perfect wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

Josephus observed the defects of the Greek systems of theoretical ethics and praised in contrast the Jewish conception of *Imitatio Dei* as being not only the foundation but also the practical motive and inspiration of human conduct. 'The reason why our legislator in his legislation far exceeded all other

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1. Cf. M. Lazarus: Ethics of Judaism, I, p. 3.

2. Cf. H. Sidgwick and A. Wolff: 'History of Ethics', Encyclopaedia Britannica, VIII, s.v. 'Ethics', p. 769.

legislators in utility to all, is that he did not make religion a part of virtue, but had the insight to make the various virtues parts of religion.<sup>1</sup>

In Jewish thought, both Biblical and Rabbinic alike, religion and morality were one and the same thing. Ethics was not a branch of philosophy to be treated as a subject of academic interest, but the medium of essential guidance to man as an individual and a member of society. The criterion of good was inextricably bound up with the doctrine of God and Torah. In early Jewish literature God is comprehended not from the standpoint of metaphysics - the Rabbis generally deprecated the attempt to define the nature of the Deity - but mainly and almost entirely in terms of ethics. And likewise in the ethics of the Rabbis, we rarely find attempts to solve abstract moral problems. Invariably the purpose of the Rabbis was to indicate how man was to direct aright his moral daily life.

The concept of God was the perfection of all the virtues, the pattern upon which the human being must mould his life if he desired to live worthily as a creature formed in the divine image.<sup>2</sup>

'As we follow the Divine pattern of Holiness,' wrote Kohler, 'all that we have and are, body and soul, well and woe, wealth and want, pain and pleasure, life and death, become stepping-stones on the road to holiness and godliness. Life is like a ladder on which man can rise from round to round, to come ever nearer to God on high who beckons him towards ever higher ideals and achievements.'<sup>3</sup>

1. Josephus: Contra Ap. II, 17.

2. Cf. A. Cohen: 'The Ethics of the Rabbis', Essays Presented to J.H. Hertz, (London, 1942), p. 70 ff.

3. K. Kohler: Jewish Theology, p. 491.

The source and ideal of all morality is God, in whose ways man is to walk. (Deut. 11:22.) As He is merciful and gracious so man shall be merciful and gracious. (Sota 14a referring to Deut. 13:5.) The prophet defined the whole of the moral law as faith in God. (Hab. 2:4.) (Makkoth 23b.)

### The Sanctity of Human Personality.

From the idea of God's holiness and his fatherhood of all mankind followed the concept of true humanity, for every man is created in the image of God. (Gen. 1:26.) A Rabbinic comment on the verse 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God (Deut. 6:5) teaches: 'Act in such a manner, that God will be beloved by all His creatures.' (Sifrei, Deut. 32; Yoma 86a.)

Respect for one's fellow creatures is of paramount importance in the worship of God. 'No one can be called righteous before God who is not good toward his fellow creatures.' (Kiddushin 40a.) 'It is forbidden to take advantage of the ignorance of any fellow creature, even the heathen.' (Hullin 94a.) Even Biblical prohibitions may at times be transgressed in order to maintain the dignity and personality of one's fellow. (Ber. 19b.) The weak and the poor in particular were to be given every assistance without hurt to their self-respect. (Exod. 22:24-26.) The mediaeval Jewish Commentator, Rashi, (ad loc.) interprets the duty of the creditors as follows: If you know he cannot pay, do not press him, and so put him to shame.

The servant, the slave, the captive woman, must be treated with respect not only as an expression of compassion but because the slave has equal right with the master the enjoyment of human

dignity. (Cf. Exod. 21:1 ff.) (Sifra, Behar 6; Kiddushin 22a - referring to Lev. 25:40 and Deut. 15:16.) Even the culprit must not be denied the dignity of his human personality. (Sifrei, Deut. 286; Sanhedrin 52a.) The laws requiring compassion to birds and animals were intended to instil in men's minds not only consideration for dumb animals but also the yet higher duty of respect for human dignity. (Nachmanides on Deut. 22:7.)

The whole Rabbinic system of Ethics is based upon humanitarian laws of righteousness. It is man's privilege to range himself on the side of the Divine. He cannot walk in that path unless he takes every fellow man with him as images of the Divine like himself. Denial of the 'Image' is tantamount to denial of God. Rather than transgress against Divine or human personality by the committing of idolatry, adultery, or murder, a man shall be prepared to forego his own life. (Sanhedrin 74a.)

Ethical principles of society underlie the entire Hebrew legal code. Dissolution of the bonds of confidence and disregard of the obligation to keep faith characterise the lowest conditions of society. (Micah 7:5.) Every advantage taken of man's ignorance by fraud, gambling or speculation is denounced as theft. (Baba Bathra 90b.) Every breach of promise in commerce is a sin provocative of God's punishment. (Baba Metsia IV:2.) Putting a fellow to shame in any way is branded as a crime in the same category as murder. (Baba Metsia 58b.)

The mediaeval Jewish philosophers recognised that the aim and goal of all religious teaching was the perfection of human conduct. The will of God is revealed to man in order to guide him in the attainment of that perfection, 'Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord

your God am holy'. (Lev. 19:2.) Through love of God, love of man, truth, prayer, study and the fulfilment of the discipline of the law man can attain that holiness. Through the knowledge of right and wrong and the energetic pursuit of the right each man can reach the category of the 'just'.

The basis of the Hebrew ethical life is the recognition firstly of God's all embracing lordship over all existence, governing His creation with love and justice, and consequently of the capacity endowed in each man to act in the likeness of the Divine character in creativeness, freedom and morality in his daily life and in his relationship with his neighbour. It was freely recognised that each individual possessed within himself a unique configuration of values according to the natural personality of his individual composition. The purpose of the ethical teachings of the Rabbis was to heighten the standard of his own valuational life and to enrich it through his experience of God.

Every human trait, interest, ability and experience, which are universally human in character are treated by the Rabbis within the framework of their ethical import.

Reverence and respect for human personality in all conduct characteristic of man, covering the broadest concept of human interests and attitudes, is termed by the Rabbis 'Derek Erez'. Without indulging in formal definitions that aim to classify acts or motives as ethical, the Rabbinical concept of Derek Erez entailed the assumption that the ethical life of good actions, motives and outlooks have their ground in human nature and that their practice is required by God to be the universal traits of all human beings.<sup>1</sup>

1. M. Kadushin, Organic Thinking, p. 122.

The Problem of Inadequacy.

1. Insufficiency of Reason and Conscience.

Man's conception of truth according to Saadia must rest on confidence in both sense perception and the power of reason. But man must recognise his insufficiency in both these faculties due to his very nature as a created being. The process of successive elimination of doubts has to proceed through various stages requiring knowledge and duration. Incomplete investigation offers deficient and therefore erroneous results.<sup>1</sup>

Truth about any problem would be achievable if we possessed the right method of thinking, complete the course of every investigation and guard against dreams of<sup>or?</sup> deceptions. The natural Will of man, however, dislikes labour and exertion. Many people shun the opportunity to acquire knowledge because of their aversion to exerting their reason. Truth is onerous and bitter, they would rather not be disturbed by it. Thus heresy, which Saadia must have regarded as the greatest error, is caused by the vacancy of mind from which many people suffer, their conscious laziness and ignorance; eagerness to satisfy carnal desires and passions; aversion to thinking, and lack of patience and concentration; insolence and haughtiness; susceptibility to any influence, disappointment and resentment transferred from a person to a thought.<sup>2</sup>

Modern thinkers likewise recognise the inadequacy of human wisdom and knowledge in being able to formulate moral law and to

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1. Saadia: Emunoth Vedeoth - ed. Rosenblatt, pp. 3-7.

2. Abraham Heschel, "The Quest for Certainty in Saadia's Philosophy", - J.Q.R. Vol. XXXIII, pp. 292-296.

assess blame and praise. In addition to being inspired with the highest intuition of ethical ideals the moralist must know the economics of society and the psychology of the individual, his 'Anlage', his mental capacity and his training, as well as the social and emotional conditions of the different circumstances and situations of life. 'It is too much to ask that all the qualities and qualifications required should be embodied in one man.' 'There need be no surprise or shame, therefore, at the discovery that, measured against this standard, even the greatest are only partly successful, and even the best fall short in one direction or another.'<sup>1</sup>

Kant holds however that because man is a rational being he will always be dissatisfied and in conflict with himself so long as he devotes his reason merely to the pursuit of pleasure and even of happiness. Since his reason has another and more essential function, his proper self cannot be realised in a life of self-seeking, and such a life must inevitably produce a feeling of frustration. Intelligence is real, he maintains, whereas desires are mere appearance. Therefore a rational agent will subordinate his desires to his intelligence.<sup>2</sup>

Kant maintains further that any rational agent who wills the end will necessarily - so far as reason has a decisive influence over his actions - will the means which are in his power. But experience shows that even where a rational volition wills the good it is at times overcome by what may be called a less rational

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1. S.E. Toulmin: The Place of Reason in Ethics, (1950), pp. 177-180.

2. Cf. H.J. Paton: The Categorical Imperative, pp. 254-6.

volition which leads us to the pursuits of another end or other means.<sup>1</sup>

It is known that the heat of passion blinds a man to the results of his action and even though he knows that the pursuit of his desires will not give him lasting happiness, the knowledge of this alone does not enable him to overcome his desires. There are furthermore many who, although they are fully aware that their way of life will not bring them peace of soul, prefer to enjoy the thrill and excitement experienced in following their desires rather than secure a quite unexciting peaceful life. Furthermore, even Reason itself may be employed by evil doers as the basis of their evil behaviour.

There are some who argue that it would indeed be wonderful if every man loved his neighbour and acted only in righteousness and truth and peace. But, they maintain, so long as they see that most people in society are concerned only with their own gain and advantage, if they alone were to act justly they would become martyrs to their own righteousness. Far worse is the behaviour of those who openly support the law of Morality for society as a whole but secretly plan themselves to depart from righteousness whenever it may lead to their profit. Why should he forego, he argues to himself, that which to his mind is for his own good, although it is condemned by moralists as harmful to society. After all, even the philosopher bases his argument of working for the good of society on the fact that eventually the good of Society will result in his own greater happiness. Since nature made me

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1. H.J. Paton: Ibid., pp. 124, 140.



strong and my fellow weak, or me wise and my fellow foolish, it must have been the intention of nature that my lot should be better than that of my neighbour. Therefore if I take advantage of him whenever possible I do not act contrary to the laws of nature, but abide by them. By cunning and contrivance even honour and approbation may be forthcoming from my fellowmen. By refraining from my acts of what you call immorality I would rebel against the inclinations of my nature and thereby inflict pain on myself - an action which is contrary to the purpose of nature.<sup>1</sup>

The real problem which faces man is, as Kant himself confesses at the end of his *Metaphysics of Ethics*, how to make the true rational will which is present in every man completely effective in governing all the actions of man.

Kant recognises that belief in God and in immortality is a great stimulus to moral effort and a strong support to the human spirit. 'It is a great stimulus to moral effort,' he states, 'and a strong support to the human spirit, if man can believe that the moral life is something more than a mortal enterprise in which he can join with his fellow man against the background of a blind and indifferent universe until he and the human race are blotted out for ever. Man cannot be indifferent to the possibility that his puny efforts towards moral perfection may, in spite of appearances, be in accord with the purpose of the universe, and that he may be taking part in an eternal enterprise under a divine leader.' (*Groundwork*, 462:3; 99.)

The dignity of man as a free and autonomous agent in a vast

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1. Cf. S.D. Luzatto (1800-1865): *Essay*, 'Yesodei Torah', Yalkut Sh'dal, (Tel Aviv, 1947), ss. 7-14.

mechanical universe arouses the feeling of reverence in man. The two things which fill Kant with an ever new and ever increasing wonder and awe are the starry heavens above him and the moral law within. Hence a good man will have reverence for others which is more than concern for their happiness. And he will also have a reverence for humanity in himself, a reverence which seems more than a concern for his own perfection. Kant's condemnation of many vices, for example his almost exaggerated horror of lying, seems to rest on a direct intuition that such a vice is incompatible with the worth or dignity of a free man.<sup>1</sup>

The feeling of reverence, which for Kant is the only moral motive that a man requires, is for him the necessary emotional accompaniment or consequence of his recognition of the universal ethical imperative to act in accordance with duty - "Handle pflichtmässig aus Pflicht".<sup>2</sup>

The validity of Kant's view of Reason as the means to ethical perfection is doubted by many philosophers, as Hume had to confess (of a man in whom self-love overpowered the sense of right), 'It would be a little difficult to find any (reasoning) which will appear to him satisfactory and convincing.' (Hume: Enquiries (ed. Selby - Bigge) p. 283.) If the man did happen to be satisfied by some ethical reasoning it would then become a case of a man in whom self-love was dominant until reasoning beat it down and reinstated the sense of right. The difficulty in ethics is not so much to

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1. H.J. Paton: 'Kant's Ideal of Good', Aristotelian Proceedings, 1944-5, p. XXI.

2. H.J. Paton: The Categorical Imperative, pp. 117-118.

show what one ought to do but to make one want to do what he ought to do.<sup>1</sup>

Kant speaks of 'willing our maxims' - i.e. determining our Conscience according to universal laws of Reason, but Conscience is generally regarded as a subjective emotion which is seldom the object of our will.<sup>2</sup> Conscience, or moral insight, is itself dependent on the individual's moral character. The evil ways of the individual blunt, corrode and even extinguish his understanding of goodness. Conscience itself degenerates, or becomes atrophied, as the moral character deteriorates.<sup>3</sup>

The Biblical historian damns a period of basest corruption by characterising it as subjective, 'Every man did that which seemed right in his own eyes'. (Judges 17:6; 21:25.)<sup>4</sup>

The writer of Proverbs, likewise condemns moral judgment based on subjective values. What a man does is good in his own sight. 'All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes: but the Lord weigheth the spirits.' (Prov. 16:2.)

Subjectivity cannot be a sound source of moral judgment. Man needs the authority of the Divine source of all good and wisdom.<sup>5</sup>

If however the realm of ethics rests on the pragmatic test, our difficulty becomes apparent in the description of them in Morley's 'On Compromise': 'Moral principles, when they are true, are at bottom only registered generalisations from experience. They record certain uniformities of antecedence and consequence in

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1. S.E. Toulmin: Reason in Ethics, p. 163.

2. H.J. Paton: 'Kant's Idea of God', Aristotelian Proceedings, 1944-5, p. XIV.

3. Laird: Moral Notions, p. 88.

4. Cf. Lazarus: Ethics of Judaism I, p. 102.

5. Cf. Lamont: Principles of Moral Judgment, pp. 55-60.

the region of human conduct.' 'Thus the moral judgments of the present may be reversed in a subsequent age and our conception of the good and the bad be upset.'

Plato held that all wives of men belonging to a particular class, e.g. princes, merchants, artisans, could be shared by all men of that class - i.e. that adultery consisted only in relationship with men outside that class. Aristotle denounced this view as a confusion of good with evil. Yet Aristotle himself held that moral judgment may be contingent on circumstances; but how to define those circumstances is not explained. How then can anyone be certain at any time that his moral judgment is good?<sup>1</sup>

Kant's objectivity is required to accord with Reason, although it is admitted that there is always the danger of disruptive agencies in the mind gaining the upper hand. Desire and aversion are powers present in man as well as in animals. An action which a truly rational will would require to be done we may or we may not do according to the extent by which we are obstructed by irrational desires.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Certainty and Effectiveness of Torah.

Rabbinical ethics escaped the problems of abstract ethical systems. They were practically concerned to guide the behaviour of their people along ethical lines. They were concerned with concrete human traits and common drives. All the uncertainties of correct behaviour produced by theoretical moralists were swept

1. Joseph Albo: Ikkarim I, 8.

2. T.L. Hobhouse: "Principles of Sociology" - 'Social Development', London, 1924 - quoted in M. Ginsburg: Reason and Unreason, p. 55.

away by the concept of the Torah as the divine revelation of the absolute criterion of right and wrong. The perfect law of God was the unfailing light which illuminated the path of man in his darkness. The laws of the Torah were clear and specific in every aspect of human activity. Its moral judgment was reliable and unchanging. Man's soul could rest with certainty on the truth of God's law.<sup>1</sup>

The ethical problem that faces the Rabbis in view of their complete subservience to the law of the Torah is whether this is not a renunciation of the individual's own moral judgment, the autonomy of which rests in the human mind as fashioned by God. The fact of the endowment of the mind with Reason points to autonomous power of the mind to lay down moral laws and to comprehend the good from its own self-sufficient reason independently of every external power or ulterior motive. The highest idealism of life is the self-elevation of man through the instrumentality of this reason from the vulgar and common-place to the nobility of pure morality. When man accepts the divine Torah as the absolute criterion of right and wrong, does he thereby surrender his own sacred faculty of moral judgment; and when he acts from motives other than the purest does he thereby lose the dignity of his morality?

In their practical approach to the problem of ethics the Rabbis were not content merely to philosophise on the ethical basis of morality. They were concerned to improve the behaviour of man and they undertook their task on the basis of their knowledge

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1. Albo: Ikkarim I, 8.

of human psychology.

It was fully recognised that the purpose of intellectual activity in man went beyond the gratification of the wants of his physical organism. His mind is occupied with matters affecting more than the senses. Joys of the intellect allure him, and psychical pain affrights him. Nevertheless the acts a man performs go back to the wholeness of his original nature and constitution as their last cause. Every action of his, resulting from whatever source, intellectual, sensual or even the force of external circumstances, is rooted in his own nature. Man is a natural being and obeys the laws of nature. To be sensible of pleasure and pain, to strive for the one and to flee from the other, is man's nature. Thus to act under the constraint of reward or punishment is to act in hope of a beneficent result or in fear of ill-success, and hope and fear alike have their basis in the original instinct to seek the pleasant and salutary and to avoid the painful and deleterious. His action in either case issues from his own nature, and is not a movement imposed on him by force, but is indeed an act of his own volition.

When man likewise accepts upon himself the authority and judgment of the Torah he does not thereby renounce his own will or volition but his very act of deference to the paramount standard of the Torah is his personal expression of modesty, insufficiency and reverence before the will of God. By the exercise of the liberty of his own volition he relinquishes the liberty to act contrary to the will of God.

However effective or otherwise may be the source of morality in man himself the paramount need of man is that he should practise

morality. Talmudic writings always demand that a man should ever act 'in the name or for the honour of heaven', but they also concern themselves most intimately with the means that a man may employ in order to advance his state of morality and ensure that the good is in fact always done. The means that are followed may not always reflect the highest ethical motives but they were required to be pedagogically effective in promoting the practice of the good. The Rabbis were confident that the practice of the good and education in the good would lead to the purest expression of morality and the love of God. (Pesachim 50b.)<sup>1</sup>

Antigonus of Socho said, 'Be not like servants who minister to their master upon the condition of receiving a reward; but be like servants who minister to their masters without the condition of receiving a reward'. (Mishna, Aboth I, 3.)

The Rabbis always taught that a man should always serve God as Abraham did, only from the purest motives of love. But they knew how difficult a thing this was and that not everyone could act up to it. Therefore, in order that the common folk might be established in their convictions the Sages permitted them to perform meritorious actions with the hope of reward and to avoid doing of evil out of the fear of punishment. They encourage them to these conceptions and their opinions become firmly rooted, until eventually the intelligent among them come to comprehend and know what truth is and what is the most perfect mode of conduct.<sup>2</sup>

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1. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism I, ss. 105-108, pp. 142-147.

2. Maimonides: Mishna Commentary, Introd. to Sanhedrin, Chap. X.  
See J. Abelson: 'Maimonides on the Jewish Creed', J.Q.R.,  
1906, Oct.

The superiority of Torah over Conscience and Reason and the essential requirement of Torah as the guide to the moral life of Israel was accepted by the Rabbis as a cardinal principle of Judaism. Bahya explains that the obligation of man to serve God is based on the feeling of gratitude for the absolute excellence of his creation. Reason leads man to recognise this obligation. But until reason develops we are unaware of our obligation. In the meantime the more our faculties are exercised the stronger they become. Thus the inclinations towards physical satisfactions are exercised from birth and are strengthened above the spiritual faculties. (Cf. Gen. 8:21.) In order to counteract this we need the Torah to help us recognise our duty to God. Thus religious observance leads us to the love of God which pure reason requires of us. (Cf. Ps. 19.)<sup>1</sup>

Performance of Torah is like the husbanding of a plant encouraging the growth of the plant itself, which is the pure service of God, free from any desire for gain or reward or the satisfaction of personal vanity in the sight of men. Torah service admittedly appeals to the motive of Reward and Punishment, but it leads to pure service which has only Joy as its reward. (Cf. Ps. 97:11.)

The Torah gives an equal and stable way of life for all, young and old, immature and wise. The Torah teaches man how to combine his natural concern with physical pleasures and social progress together with his inner urge for spiritual and mental

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1. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, Part III, Chaps. 1, 2. Cf. Plato: Republic, 409 A-D; 401 B - 402 A. See William Temple, Mens Creatrix, p. 228.



satisfaction. Reason makes man aware of a personal emotion of gratitude to God; but Torah gives him the historical outlook, recognising God's continued Providence throughout the ages. The service of God as taught in the Torah is based on the consciousness of gratitude embracing self, family, nation, and mankind.<sup>1</sup>

By means of the Torah a man not only learns to do what is right, but becomes so tempered as to find it natural to do good and to avoid evil. Torah renders good conduct and fine deeds implicit, so to speak, in a man's very personality. It ennobles and spiritualises his character. Torah possesses the immediate practical efficacy of directly influencing man's behaviour and conduct. The Rabbis felt no need to have recourse to philosophical niceties. They simply taught the practical efficacy of Torah in the affairs of life. Good deeds result from the knowledge of Torah. When a man comes to study Bible and Mishna, he learns from them the Fear of Heaven and Good Deeds. The knowledge of Torah stimulates him to perform the good deeds that he has learned, and prevents him from coming to transgression. (Midrash Seder Elishu (ed. Friedmann) pp. 138, 139, 37.) The fear of Heaven and good deeds which he will thus achieve is the end of all things. (Ibid., pp. 87, 196.)<sup>2</sup>

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1. Bahya: Ibid., Part III, Ch. 3.

2. M. Kadushin: Organic Thinking, Chap. II, 5. 4. - pp. 68-79.

## CHAPTER III

### MORAL EDUCATION

#### The Highest Good.

Two schools of thought appear already in the first century on the theoretical question of 'the highest good' and the purpose of moral behaviour. A discussion is recorded between Hillel and Shammai as to whether heaven or earth was created first. Shammai who maintained that heaven was created first held the view that the purpose of God was that the perfection of Divine law and goodness, symbolised by 'heaven' should be the aim of man whose creations followed that of heaven, and thus the life of morality and the Torah was the end to be sought for by man. Hillel, however, who maintained that earth was created first, held the view that man, being the highest creation of earth was, when perfected according to his own peculiar quality and potentiality, the acme of all creation purposed by God. The Torah, therefore, was not in itself the end of creation but the means of effecting the most complete fulfilment of man. (Genesis Rabba 36, 1.)

In matters of ethical theory mediaeval Jewish philosophers likewise maintained varying conceptions of the place of the Torah in the good life.<sup>1</sup> Maimonides, following Aristotle, held that the end of man was the perfection of his specific form, i.e. his intellect, and he considered that the primary purpose of the Torah was, through understanding and intelligent practice, to infuse right knowledge, to inculcate truth and to correct error. This

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1. See I. Epstein: 'The Conception of the Commandments', Essays Presented to J.H. Hertz, pp. 145-148.

view may be compared to that of Hillel. Halevi however attributed to the attainment of loving communion with God the highest good and supreme fulfilment of man's existence. Whilst not disputing the value of Knowledge as a means to attaining the highest good, he considered the laws of the Torah as instruments of communing with God, possessing a positive power in themselves of inspiring and deepening the love of man for his Creator. Saadia did not consider the human happiness resulting from the Torah as a quality inherent in the commandments themselves, being in the relation of cause and effect, but rather as a reward bestowed by God in consequence of man's obedience to God's will.

Aaron Halevi of Barcelona maintained that the purpose of God in creation was to make the goodness of God, which is the essence of all perfection, the practical experience of all humanity. In all goodness we see the manifestation of the Divine purpose; in all evil failure in its realisation. In so far as man strives in the service of his Creator he is in perfect correspondence with the will of God and brings good to pass on earth. Apart from the goodness of God there is no goodness, no morality. The Torah has been given to man as the means to fulfil God's will and thus to bring man to perfection. The command, "and walk in His ways" (Deut. 28:9) requiring the duty of *Imitatio Dei* is based on the concept of the goodness of God as the prototype of all moral behaviour. "God wanted His creatures to be worthy of being recipients of His goodness, He therefore trained them in all virtues, such as justice and kindness that they might help, thereby to fulfil the will of God to do good." (Sepher Hachinuch, precept 63.)

The single purpose of exhorting His creatures to do good according to the Torah was to render them worthy of His goodness. The observance of the Torah was the supreme means whereby a man could render himself fit to be the recipient of Divine goodness and thereby effecting the realisation of God's loving will to show goodness in the world that He had created. Thus the Biblical verse, "Now, O Israel what doth the Lord thy God ask of thee but to..." (Deut. 10:12.) is interpreted as saying, 'He does ask of thee nought in the observance of His commands, except that He wishes in His great goodness to do good to thee.' (Sepher Hachinuch, precept 98.)

Aaron Halevi considered that the observance of the precepts of the Torah, even by mechanical performance, helped to make goodness real in the world, "The constant practice of goodness makes of goodness a second nature, impelling man to walk in the paths of uprightness at all times, and when walking in the paths of uprightness and faith and choosing what is good, good will cleave to him and 'God will rejoice in His works'." (Sepher Hachinuch, precept 491, referring to Deut. 16:18.)

The final goal, he states, of the observance of all the laws of the Torah, whether social, moral or religious, is to help in the realisation of Divine goodness in creation. The ethics of the Torah, based on the religious conception of duty to God, thus possesses the unique quality of being capable of inspiring and directing all ethical and moral activity to the attainment not only of the good of the individual but also of universal good and perfection.

Torah as the System of Moral Education.

1. The discipline of the precepts.

The first purpose of the Torah is the making of the individual into a good man. By means of its precepts the Torah seeks to cultivate the characteristics of the good man.

Governing the observance of the religious precepts is the psychological law whereby bodily conditions and movements affect the mind.<sup>1</sup> "Know my son," writes Aaron Halevi, "a man is affected by his acts, and his heart and trend of thoughts are influenced for good or evil by his deeds. Even an evil man, completely evil at heart, let his spirit within him be but moved to the devotion and to the study of the Torah and the observance of the commands, will perforce tend towards the good. And, conversely, let a man, ever so righteous and possessed of an upright heart delighting in the law, be compelled, say by the King, to follow an occupation corrupting in its effects, he will after pursuing it continually for some time end in becoming himself an evil man. For this very reason the Torah has encompassed the Jew with a multiplicity of commandments designed so as to take complete possession of all our thoughts and feelings." (Sepher Hachinuch, precept 20 (some ed. 16).)<sup>2</sup>

In accordance with this view Aaron Halevi explains that all the manifold regulations relating to the sacrificial cult and Temple services were designed to arouse by means of action, movement and scenery the noblest of feelings and most exalted emotions, productive of the highest result in man's spiritual,

1. I. Epstein, Ibid., p. 156 f.

2. I. Epstein, Ibid., p. 157. Cf. Saadia, Emunoth Vedeoth, V. 1.

moral and religious life. The same psychological law also underlay the precepts relating to the celebrations of the various festive occasions and their attendant ceremonies. On the same principle as that whereby bodily actions affected the soul, so any injury to the body was considered harmful to the soul. Therefore the Torah also kept Israel far from anything which was considered harmful to the body or which through the body engendered base desires in the soul. This principle is given by Aaron Halevi as one of the reasons for various prohibitions of the Dietary Laws including the prohibition of fat (heleb), blood and unclean animals. (Cf. Sopher Hachinuch, precepts 79, 147, 148, 159.)

The Laws of the Torah are recognised as the system whereby man is trained for good. The notion of the good and the law of morality constitute the ultimate purpose of man and confer upon him his noblest distinction. The likeness of God in man is evidenced by the presence within him of the natural impulse towards ideas of truth, fitness and beauty. It is necessary for man to learn and obey the 'laws of technic' whereby he can realise the creative activity of his moral and intellectual powers, just as much as in the exercise of mechanical and industrial skill.

The discipline of logic, the purposiveness of concentration and the liveliness and sympathy of imagination must be trained and developed as the primary task of all education. In the degree in which these faculties are developed and harmonised with the ideal of the Divine good the individual gains the freedom and the power to give the fullest expression to the loftiest purposes of which he is capable.

From early childhood man must be set in such an environment that it comes spontaneously to pursue a great moral and religious purpose in life. The man who learns to control all the elements of his nature and directs them into the service of his general purpose of life is the man who is free from bondage to any single part of himself and who can really claim to exercise his truly human dignity of directing his own life. Through the discipline of the precepts man gains stability and strength of character which in turn promote the highest happiness of a fully developed personality. The real happiness of man lies in his freest and fullest expression of good as taught in the Torah.

Maimonides describes the perfection of man as the spontaneous and enthusiastic obedience to all the Laws of Moses, leading to the choicest deeds of goodness, justice and wisdom, and bringing man so close to his Creator in love and wisdom that the Almighty will declare 'Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee'. (Ps. 2:7.) This perfection is described as placing the Law 'in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it... And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord'. (Jer. 31:33,34.) When man reaches this state the stoniness is removed from his heart and he possesses 'an heart of flesh'. (Ezek. 36:26.)

Through the precepts of the Torah man can achieve the fullest perfection which should always be the goal of his desire. Although in the early stages, the average man needs to be encouraged in the practice of the ordinances of the Law by the

expectation of ulterior material gain and the threat of physical pain and loss, after long exercise in practising uprightness man will with advancing understanding attain the state of serving God for the pure love of God. It is good that men should be drawn to cultivate the necessary habits and training for acting in loyalty to the Torah. By their upright behaviour they bring themselves to an understanding of truth. Thus the Sages said: 'Man should ever engage himself in the Torah, even though it be not for the Torah's sake. Right action, although not motivated by pure morality, will lead to right action motivated by pure morality.' 'Mitoch shelo lishmah ba lishmah.' (Pesachim 50b.)

When man is perfected he does right and eschews wrong not because he entertains any hopes or fears about Paradise or Gehinnom or the days of the Messiah, or the World to Come, but simply because he is man. It is his perfected Manhood that of itself leads him on to the complete understanding and performance of the word of God.

## 2. Salvation through self-perfection.

The conception of 'The World to Come' is, in Maimonides' view, a synonym for the highest developed state of the soul of the self-perfected man. In this sense it is stated, 'All Israel have a portion in the World to Come'. (Mishna, Sanhedrin X, 1, referring to Isaiah 60:21.) Likewise, 'The righteous of all peoples have a portion in the World to Come'. (Tosefta, Sanhedrin XIII, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

The Torah is the supreme system of moral training which leads man to perfection and the immortality of 'The World to Come'. By

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1. Cf. Maimonides, Code, Hilchoth Teshuvah, III, 5.



the smallest defect in moral perfection, such as, 'publicly putting the face of his neighbour to the blush' or 'calling his neighbour by an offensive nickname', he fails to attain 'the world to come'. (Baba Metzia 58b.) But the power of perfection lies within man and by means of the Torah he is capable of attaining it. 'Salvation' is the lot of every man through his own self-perfection. Maimonides describes this achievement in the following way: Once man believes that God, through the Torah, has taught that virtuous deeds are of **such** and such a kind, and ignoble deeds of such and such a kind, it is obligatory for him, in so far as he is a man of well-balanced temperament, to bring forth meritorious deeds and shun vice. When he acts like this, the significance of man has in him reached the point of perfection, and he is divided off from the brute. And when a man arrives at the point of being perfect he belongs to that order of man whom no obstacle hinders from making the intellectual element in his soul live on after death. This is 'the world to come', as we have made clear, and herein lies, the significance of the Psalmist's remark, 'Be ye not as a horse or as the mule which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held with bit and bridle....' (Ps. 32:9.) This means that what restrains beasts from doing harm is something external, as a bridle or a bit. But not so with man. His restraining agency lies in his very self, I mean, says Maimonides, in his human framework. When the latter becomes perfected, viz: through the training of whole-hearted obedience to the Torah, it is exactly that which keeps him away from those things which perfection withholds from him and which are termed vices; and it is that which spurs him on to what

will bring about perfection in him, viz: virtue.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Communion with God.

Judah Halevi attributes more than a pedagogical value to the Commandments. He maintains that by each of the principal emotions of man - fear, love and joy-man may be brought into communion with God. The joy experienced in devoted service of God is as effective as the sincere contriteness of fasting. 'But the Torah did not leave these things to our arbitrary will, but put them all under control. For man lacks the power to make use of the functions of body and soul in their proper proportions.'<sup>2</sup>

Israel considered themselves particularly blessed both in the city and in the field because there was not a single thing which was not connected with a commandment, be it in the farm, or the home, or the garments of the man, or his flocks. (Tanhuma, Ki Tavo 4); (Sifra - ed. I.H. Weiss, Vienna, 1862, p. 42a.)

The regulative laws of the Torah were considered by the Rabbis a joy and a blessing and an expression of God's abundant love and mercy, in that all the faculties and passions of man were through the law, whilst suppressing none, submitted to the control of the Divine.

In the daily night prayer loving gratitude is expressed for the gift of God's commandments: 'With everlasting love thou hast loved the house of Israel thy people; Torah, commandments, statutes and judgments hast thou taught us... Yea we will rejoice

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1. Maimonides: Mishna Commentary, Introduction to Chap. X of Sanhedrin. See J. Abelson: 'Maimonides on the Jewish Creed', J.Q.R., Oct. 1906. (Off-print, p. 22.)

2. Judah Halevi: Kuzari - ed. Sluzki, p. 45.

in the words of the Torah and Thy commandments forever; for they are our life and the length of our days...' (Authorised Daily prayer Book - ed. Singer, p. 96.)

The protective power of the Torah against sin when combined with man's personal effort towards holiness, bring about communion with God. 'Learn with all thy heart and with all thy soul to know my ways, and to watch the gates of my Torah. Preserve my Torah in thy heart, and may my fear be present before thy eyes. Guard thy mouth against all sin, and make thyself holy against all sin and injustice, and I will be with thee.' (Berachoth 16a.)

Although the Torah possesses an essential sanctifying power the obligation, and the onus, is placed in the first place on man. The Commandments 'sanctified' man to the extent that they gave man the opportunity to find holiness through their observance. 'When man sanctifies himself a little, Heaven will sanctify him much.' (Yoma 39a.)

Occupation with the study of the Torah, combined with works of lovingkindness, was considered the best remedy against the Evil Yezer. (Avodah Zara 5b.) The Torah is the antidote to the Evil Yezer. (Baba Bathra 16a.) The Evil Yezer may pursue a man but it does not enter the Beth Hamidrash (School-house) where Torah is studied. Thus the Rabbis give this counsel: 'My son, if this ugly one (the Evil Yezer) meets you, drag him into the Beth Hamidrash. If he is a stone, he will be ground to powder, if he is iron, he will be broken to pieces; as it is said, Is not my word like unto fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rocks to pieces?' (Jer. 23:29.) (Kiddushin 30b.) He who is absorbed in the words of the Torah removes thereby from

himself all idle thoughts as well as the thoughts insinuated by the Evil Yezer. (Aboth de Rabbi Nathan - ed. S. Schechter, Vienna, 1887, p. 35b.)

Moral Power and Duties of the Will.

1. Power to resist evil.

According to the Rabbis man has the power to subdue every evil-producing passion and control it by means of his thought and reason. Vanity, selfishness, lasciviousness, greed, and excess, can be brought under the discipline of the commandments by applying his mind in the proper manner. Wherever possible the driving force of the passion should be directed into channels leading only to good action; otherwise the passion should be subdued completely and killed. The Rabbis counsel man that he should never consider himself impotent in the face of an overwhelming Evil Desire.<sup>1</sup> Man should always stir up his good Yezer (of reason and the desire for good and the service of God) in battle against his Evil Yezer and strive to secure victory for the good. If his reason fails to defeat the Evil Yezer he should occupy himself with the Torah so that his thought may be strengthened by the Torah's wisdom and inspiration. If the Evil Yezer nevertheless persists he should read the Shema, reminding himself of the Sovereignty of God, his duty of allegiance to His will and the fear of punishment resulting from disobedience. If he still fails to subdue the Evil desire he should humble himself by sober contemplation of the frailty of man's life and his putrid and paltry end in death. (Berachoth 5a.)

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1. Cf. R. Bultmann: Primitive Christianity - transl. R.H. Fuller (London, 1956) p. 183.

The Torah not only tells man that he ought to act morally and rationally but through its study actually helps him to achieve the capacity of acting rationally. It inspires him both with the ideal and <sup>or?</sup> conduct and also with the desire to pursue it. By directing his thought into the words of the Torah man gains a sense of responsibility and moral obligation so that morality and reason will be the consistent and natural basis of all his conduct.

Not only the actions of man are effectively controlled by the Torah but also his sentiments. On the verse in the scripture 'And thou shalt love the Lord thy God', (Deut. 6:5) the Sifri asks: how can man be commanded to love, since love is a matter of the sentiment? A commandment can be applied to an action but not to a sentiment? Kant expounds this law in the sense of 'treat him as if we felt such affection'.<sup>1</sup> The Sifri explains that the command 'thou shalt love' applies to the following verse, 'And these words shall be', i.e. the command to love means the command to study the words of the Torah. Study and thought and understanding of the words of the Torah will influence also the sentiment of man and will create in him the actual disposition to love.

## 2. Duties of the Will.

According to Bahya it is natural that just as the manifest physical actions of man are subject to the laws of God so also, and even of greater necessity, the non-manifest acts of the Mind, or the Will, should be subject to the laws of God.<sup>2</sup> Since God has

1. Cf. Laird: Moral Notions, p. 63.

2. Bahya, Hovoth Halevavoth, Introd.

commanded the performance of manifest acts, which cannot be complete without the participation of the Will, so He must have commanded the performance of the non-manifest acts, which are the motivations of the Will in the performance of the acts of the body. It is possible in philosophical analysis to consider thought and action as separate activities, but in their concrete existence they are so connected that an instance of the one may be considered also as an instance of the other.<sup>1</sup>

The Torah lays down clear duties of the Will - Bahya calls them 'duties of the heart' - which man is required to obey by directing his Will to act in accordance with God's law.

The duties of the Will are both positive and negative. Among the positive duties, as enumerated Bahya are the following:

To believe in the existence of the Creator - ex-nihilo, that He is One and Incomparable;

To serve Him in our heart, to contemplate the wonders of Creation as a reflection of Him;

To trust in God, to be humble before Him and fear Him;

To long to fulfil His will and to devote our actions to serve Him;

To love Him and all those who love Him;

To hate those who hate Him.

Among the negative duties the following are mentioned: not to covet, not to bear vengeance or grudge, not to desire transgression nor contemplate it, not to hate thy brother in thy heart, not to turn astray after your heart and your eyes, not to harden your heart.

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1. Cf. Collingwood: Philosophical Method, p. 43.

The foundation of all observance of the Torah lies in the proper directing of the Will by man. The first step in any fulfilment of God's law is that man should determine to do it and through his Will should 'energise' his intention. Once man sets the action in motion so to speak, God helps him to complete it.

The Sages likewise emphasised the importance of man's directing his Will to perform the Law of God in their repeated teaching - Rahmana libba ba'i, 'God requires the heart'. The fact that the Court does not inflict the accustomed penalty for a transgression done unawares (shegagah), e.g. the unintentional murderer is not put to death, and the unwitting transgression of any negative commandment does not suffer the penalty of stripes (but only brings a sin-offering), demonstrates that the action is not considered complete if it is not motivated by the Will. Similarly the Sages state that the reward for the fulfilment of a commandment is given only if it is motivated by the Will to fulfil the commandment. David however was rewarded for willing to build the Temple although in fact he did not perform the act of building.

Thus of primary importance in the fulfilment of all laws of the Torah is the understanding of the concept of serving God contained in the law and the co-ordination through the Will of that understanding in the mind with the physical action of the body. This requirement is summed up by Moses in the words, "Thou shalt be whole-hearted (tamim) with the Lord thy God." (A.J.V. Deut. 10:10.) The wholly righteous man not only does righteousness but also wills the truth. (Ps. 101.) Isaiah condemns the solemn assembly when accompanied by an iniquitous mind. (Is. 1.) The Rabbis go so far in their regard for the acts of the will that they declare that an

act of willing righteousness although in fact producing (unintentionally) a transgression is more worthy than a physical act of righteousness originating from the willing of an unrighteous act - (gedolah averah lishmah mimizvah shelo lishmah). Saadia states that if a man yields to evil ideas to the extent of planning how to execute them, although not carrying them out, there attaches to him the guilt of the intent although not of the act, as Scripture says: 'The thoughts of wickedness are an abomination to the Lord.' (Prov. 15:26.) There is indeed, he adds, no instance in which a human being is punished for his intention or his inner conviction except for the denying of the existence of God, since that is a conclusion reached only by the mind. Nevertheless atonement was made by the whole-burnt-offering for thoughts of sin entertained in the mind. (Lev. Rabba, 7:3; Tosefta Menahoth, 10:12.)

A person receives much reward, however, when he rejects unwholesome ideas from his mind, as Scripture says, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the man of iniquity his thoughts.' (Is. 55:7.)

We may not know how evil thoughts arise in the mind, but, however that may be, it is the duty of man not to yield to them.

### Prayers for Help.

#### 1. Personal Insufficiency.

The consciousness of sin and the need for atonement completely pervaded the Hebrew religion. Confession of sins and prayers for forgiveness form an essential part of all Hebrew liturgy. The sense of dependence on God for all man's needs is especially prominent in the need for God's help in man's struggle to overcome the temptations of the Evil Yezer. It is true that God had given



Israel the Torah as the means of combatting the evil desire, yet the realisation that even with the help of the Torah man was still continually in grave danger of falling into sin, was the subject of repeated confession of man's moral frailty. 'Every day, the Yezer of man assaults him and endeavours to kill him, and but for the Holy One, blessed be He, who helps man, he could not resist him.' (Sukkah 52b.) The evil inclination which is the perpetual enemy of the will of God, is rooted in the heart of man. It is spoken of as the 'leaven in the dough' forming an inherent defect ~~defect~~ in human nature which man feels incapable of outrooting. (Jer. Berachoth, 7d.)

Man feels that if he were only freed from that 'leaven in the dough' his natural self would, by its spontaneous nature, be only too anxious to live in accordance with God's commandments.

Only once Israel experienced the uprooting of the Evil Yezer from their hearts, when at the Revelation on Mount Sinai they heard, and accepted, the commandment: 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.' (Ex. 20:3.) When they called on Moses, however, to become the messenger between God and Israel, 'Speak thou with us...' (Ex. 20:19) the Evil Yezer returned to its place. (Canticles Rabbah 1:2.)

With the advent of the Messiah the Holy One, blessed be He, will kill the Evil Yezer. Pseudo Jonathan describes this event as follows: 'And the Lord your God will remove the folly of the hearts of your children, for He will make the Evil Yezer cease from the world, and will create the Good Yezer, who will counsel you to love the Lord your God with all your hearts, and all your souls that your lives may last forever. (Pseudo Jonathan, Deut. 30:4.)

Among the private prayers of individual Rabbis preserved in the Talmud we read the following prayer of Rabbi Alexander: "Lord of the worlds, Thou knowest perfectly that our will is to do Thy will. And what hinders? 'The leaven in the dough', and the tyranny of the (heathen) empires. May it be Thy good pleasure to deliver us from their power, and that we return to fulfil the dictates of Thy will with a perfect heart." (Berachoth 17a.)

R. Eleazar ben Pedat expressed the longing of all servants of God: "Establish in us...a good impulse in this thy world, that when we arise we may daily find our heart waiting to revere Thy name..." (Berachoth 16a; Jer. Berachoth 7d.)

The general view of the Rabbis is that the evil Yezer which formed so great an obstacle on the path of righteousness was created with the purpose that man should make a strong effort to overcome it, thereby demonstrating his loyalty and devotion to God. (Seder Eliahu Zuta, ed. Friedmann (Vienna, 1900) p. 193.) The Evil Yezer may be bitter, but if it has a bitter effect in life it is the fault of man. There are many things harder and more bitter than the Evil Yezer yet man finds the means to sweeten them. If man succeeds in making things palatable that are created bitter, how much more can he succeed in tempering the Evil Yezer which is delivered into his hands. (Tanhuma, Bereshith, 7.)

Man is warned not to be intimidated by the fact that the Evil Yezer is a creation of God and say that he has no authority over it, for it is written in the Torah 'And unto thee shall be his desire, but Thou shalt rule over him'. (Gen. 4:7.) (Genesis Rabba 22:6.) If the Evil Yezer rules over man it is only through man's own neglect and weakness. But although man recognises his

obligations to fight the Evil Yezer, nevertheless he is painfully conscious by experience of his inadequacy in face of the task that God has imposed on him.

At times the Rabbis give expression to thoughts which imply that the temptations which men face are beyond human endurance. Such a claim is said to have been made by Moses and Elijah on behalf of Israel. (Berachoth 32a.) Again we are told, with reference to the verse 'For he knoweth our frame (yizrenu); he remembereth that we are dust', we are told that this fact will save Israel from Gehenna; Israel will plead before God: 'Master of the World, thou knowest the Evil Yezer who seduces us'. (Sanhedrin 105a.) Because of God's responsibility for the existence of the Evil Yezer man feels entitled that his repentance will be accepted with perfect atonement. (Eccles. Rabba 10:1. Seder Elijahu Rabba, ed. Friedmann, p. 63a.)

Man's prayer to God for help in overcoming the Evil Yezer is based on his recognition that he is but clay in the hands of the potter, and that the entire nature of his being is the result of God's handiwork, and that therefore it is proper that he ask for help from his Maker. (Exodus Rabba 46:4; referring to Jer. 18:6.)

## 2. Strength through Resolution.

A second purpose is served by man's prayer to God. The very uttering of the prayer itself is a means of reminding man of the ideal which he has to set before himself.

Most men are described as belonging to the middle class of human nature in which now the evil impulse dominates and now the good. (Yalkut on Gen. 8:25; Gen. Rabba 34.) It is man's duty

not to be neutral in this struggle between the two Yezer. He must fight on behalf of the good Yezer in order to establish its continual dominion in the nature of man. (Berachoth 5a; Lev. Rabba 34:1.)

The prayers to God for help to overpower the Evil inclination do not imply that man is impotent in this struggle. They are an exhortation to himself of the goal to which man must labour, and, at the same time, a humble recognition of frailty and imperfection. Combined with this determination is the supplication that the Almighty, who knows our weakness, may assist us in the prosecution of our pious resolve. The very fact that he utters the prayer demonstrates the determination, or at least wish, in his mind to achieve that purpose.

Since Man can succeed in nothing unless he has the grace of God, it is natural that he should pray for God's help in pursuit of the most difficult task imposed on the whole of creation. God has given man the words of the Torah, but David says: 'If thou wilt not make me understand them, I shall know nothing.' (Midrash Tehillim, Buber Wilna, 1891, 119:16.) David also prayed: When I study Thy Torah, let not the Evil Yezer lead me astray and divide my heart. (Exod. Rabba 19:2 referring to Ps. 119:80.)

In this sense R. Judah the Saint supplicates that God may save him from the Evil Yezer (Berachoth 16b), or, in the positive form, that God should endow him with a Good Yezer. (Berachoth 17b.) Likewise we find the prayer 'May our heart become single in the fear of Thy name. Remove us from all Thou hatest. Bring us near to all Thou lovest, and do with us a righteousness for Thy name's sake'. (Jer. Berachoth 7d.)

The following Rabbinic prayer has been incorporated in the Synagogue Liturgy: 'Make us cleave to the Good Yezer and to good deeds; subjugate our Evil Yezer so that it may submit itself to Thee.' (Berachoth 60b. Cf. Authorised Daily Prayer Book (Singer) p. 7. Cf. pp. 40, 55, 74, 139.) In the Day of Atonement Liturgy the repeated supplications for atonement and forgiveness are associated with the prayer: 'Subdue our heart to serve Thee, and bend our Yezer to turn unto Thee; renew our reins to observe Thy precepts, and circumcise our hearts to love and revere Thy Name...' (Festival Prayers (Routledge), Day of Atonement, Part II, pp. 14, 185, 234.)

Likewise in the Daily Amida Prayer the section of supplications commences with a prayer that God may graciously bestow on us understanding, and then continues that He may draw us near to His Service and bring us back in perfect repentance to His presence. This is followed by, 'Forgive us, O our Father, for we have sinned'. (Authorised Daily Prayer Book (Singer) p. 46.) The close association of these prayers with the fervent prayers for forgiveness indicates that the recital itself of the wish to subjugate the Evil desire is an expression of repentance and of the determination to exert one's efforts in the pursuit of this ideal.

Jewish theology required that in repentance the initiative must come from man. Man on the other hand feared that he would be a miserable failure if all depended entirely on himself. The Rabbis recognised the dilemma. Man says 'Turn Thou us unto Thee O Lord, and we shall be turned'. (Lam. 5:21.) God replies, It is for you to do, as it is said: 'Turn unto Me and I will turn unto you.' (Mal. 3:7.) The Rabbis solve the problem with a compromise

'Neither Thou God wilt return by Thyself, nor will we return by ourselves, but we will return both together'. (Midrash Tehillim on Ps. 85:3; Cf. Lam<sup>b</sup>. Rabba on Lam. 5:21.)

## CHAPTER IV

### KAWWANAH

#### The Concept and Usage of the Term.

##### 1. Concept.

The "Inwardness" of Judaism is expressed in the word **כַּוְנָה**. Kawwanah is a technical term which includes attention and intention, concentration, devotion and the direction of thoughts and desires to God. Kawwanah requires the repression of evil desires and the setting up of a positive rightness of the inner thought and will. It means however more than inner rightness or propriety of heart. It signifies active and purposeful communion with God. Uprightness of heart and concentrated devotion are the necessary constituents of such communion.<sup>1</sup>

##### 2. Usage.

Although the word **כַּוְנָה** is not found in the Old Testament the root **כּוּן** is used frequently, coupled with 'heart', 'spirit' or 'way', in the meaning of setting aright, preparing or directing the heart or way to God. Thus **כַּוְנָה** means 'right', 'steadfast', and in heart 'properly directed'. (1 Sam. 7:3; Ps. 78:8; 57:8; 78:37; 108:2; 112:7; 51:10; Ezra 7:10; 2 Chron. 12:14; 19:3; 27:6; 30:19; Job 11:13.) We may compare Amos 4:12 **הִכִּינָה לִקְרַאת אֱלֹהֶיךָ**

— usually translated 'prepare to meet thy God' — the verb here also has the meaning of 'direct thy heart towards God' in the sense of 'return'. (Cf. Yerushalmi Megilla 71 where the verb is explained as **הִתְכַּוְּנָה** .)

1. G. Enelow: "Kawwanah: the struggle for Inwardness in Judaism", Studies in Jewish Literature in honour of Kaufmann Kohler, pp. 82-107.

Inwardness in religious precepts.

All acts of Divine Service ( מצוות ) belong, according to Bahya, to one or the other of these three classes: first, those that are solely duties of the heart; second, those that require both the heart and the body, as prayer, study of the Torah, acquisition of wisdom, pursuit of the good; and third, those observances, the performance of which requires the body alone, where the heart does not enter save at the start, in that it is understood that their general aim is toward God. Examples of this third type of duties are such as the ceremonies of the booth, the fringes, the lulav, the mezusa, the observance of sabbath and holy days, and the duty of almsgiving, in which it does not detract from the performance if one's mind is at the same time occupied with other matters.<sup>1</sup>

Opposing opinions are reported in the Talmud as to whether every commandment is required to be accompanied by the conscious intention and devotion applicable to its spiritual purpose.

( מצוות צריכות כונה ) (Pesachim 114b; Rosh Hashanah 28a-b; Berachoth 12b-13a; Eruvin 95b-96a.) Even according to both these general opinions Bahya's distinction <sup>between?</sup> in the different types of commandments would be accepted.

A further distinction has been made in the classes of requiring physical action between (1) such whose purpose is only that some action be achieved, such as shechita, circumcision, or tevila, thus removing a prohibited state, and (2) other actions whose whole purpose is not the physical achievement of the action

1. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, Shaar Heshben Hanefesh - Chap. 3, s. 9.



but the effect of the action on the mind, such as shofar, where apart from the mental effect nothing remains of the action. In the latter case the performance is invalid without devotion in performing the act as a divine service. In the former actions the performance, even without religious devotion is accepted. On the other hand, in the case of a transgression, e.g. of Sabbath, only purposeful action is punishable, although in the case of forbidden eating or sexual intercourse even a haphazard action ( מתעסק ) would be punishable since satisfaction in the act would inevitably be enjoyed.<sup>1</sup>

This distinction would also be generally accepted by both schools of thought reported in the Talmud.

From the detailed discussion in the Talmud, and its commentators and codifiers, it is made clear that apart from the class of observances which are in fact not part of a positive worship but, rather, only the physical removal of a technical state of prohibition, the performance of all religious acts do require at least some measure of inwardness if only the awareness of the act being a service of God.

With the support of numerous citations from Bible and Talmud, Bahya says, 'Religious duties in which organs of the body are engaged are made complete only by the desire of the heart and the craving of the soul. Their performance must proceed from the heart's desire...seeing that no religious performance has any value unless it expresses an inner desire'.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Jacob Zevi Yalisch: Melo' Haro'im, (Warsaw, 1898), Article on מצות צריכות כונה, p. 138a, ff.  
 2. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, Introd.

## Religious Devotion.

### 1. Worship.

The Jewish idea of Kawwanah in divine service is described by Bahya as the essence of religion. Bahya's book, the Hovoth Halevavoth ('Duties of the Heart'), was intended to awaken his contemporaries to the spiritual purpose of religious activity, and also to instruct them how to train themselves in forming the correct intentions and devotion in religious service. In his chapter on Heshbon Hanefesh ('Contemplation of the Soul') Bahya enumerates thirty different points which a man should consider frequently, and if possible continually, for the thoughts that would arise in his mind as the result of such contemplation would purify and strengthen his will to good and create within him the true attitude with which man should serve God. The ideas which he describes, accompanied by instructive quotations from Bible and Talmud, mainly emphasise the consideration of man's place in the universe, his mortality and his extraordinary endowments, and the need for man's natural expression of gratitude, reverence, duty and the fear of God's displeasure.

The following is Bahya's description of the attitude a man should adopt when engaged in prayer which requires the activity both of the physical organs of speech and the inner thought and devotion of the soul. 'He should free his body from all occupations appertaining to this world or the next, and his mind from all thoughts that might separate him from the subject of prayer, and having removed every sort of physical impurity, he should set his heart upon Him whom he would address in his prayer, and upon what he seeks in it, and how he means to speak to his

Maker - in a word, upon the words and contents of his prayer. Moreover, he should realise that the words of the prayer are but as a shell. While the inner sense is the kernel, the prayer is the body, and the sense is the spirit, and if a man prays with his tongue only, while his heart is busy with other matters, his prayer will be as a body without a spirit, a shell without a kernel, seeing that his body is taking part in the prayer, while his heart is missing.' Arama likewise expresses the same thought - תפלה בלא כונה כגוף בלי נשמה - 'Prayer without Kawwanah is like a body without a soul'.<sup>1</sup>

'By devotion in prayer,' adds Bahya, 'we mean nothing save the yearning of the soul for God; it is an expression of our humility before Him, of our praise and thanksgiving, and of our dependence upon Him.' The object of the regular forms of prayer fixed by the Sages was to assist individuals in the proper expression of these emotions, and also by right speech to stimulate their Will in the right direction. The words of the prayers were intended to create in our minds the right ideas which would direct our Will to good. Better is a smaller amount of performance of religious duties accompanied by the appropriate religious contemplation than much performance devoid of it.

Maimonides describes the first requirement of the devotion appropriate to prayer as emptying one's heart of every other care and regarding oneself as standing before the Shechinah. A man should not begin to pray until he has composed his attention to God. We must hold undisturbed converse with God. If we pray

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1. Isaac Arama (14th Cent.) Akedath Yizhak, III, 13a.

with motion of our lips and our faces to the wall, but really think of our business, or if we recite the Torah with our tongue, while our heart is occupied with the building of our house, and so forth, we are like those of whom the prophet has said, 'Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins (i.e. inner thoughts).' (Jer. 12:2.) It is proper to attend to worldly affairs and bodily wants, but man should multiply those periods when he cuts himself off from external cares and interruptions and enter into quiet and attentive union with his Creator. 'In this admonition,' says Maimonides, 'is contained the entire purpose of this work.'<sup>1</sup>

It is the universal Jewish teaching that a religious service either in the form of fulfilling a precept or of prayerful worship, requires composure of the mind and the direction of one's attention to the spiritual contemplation of the religious service. Although in precepts involving a physical performance the performance itself even without Kawwanah is accepted as a meritorious deed, the ideal performance is only when it is accompanied by Kawwanah. (R. Solomon ben Adreth, (Rashbo) - on Berachoth 13a.) The lack of the power of complete devotion is recognised by mediaeval scholars who, accordingly, require the fulfilment of precepts even though the appropriate devotion is not possible. (Cf. Mordechai - on Berachoth - s. 50.)

From the discussion of this subject in the Talmud (Berachoth 13a-b) we can observe the requirement of various degrees of attention. In the case of the precept of reading the Shema

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1. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Ch. 51; also, Code, Hilchoth Tefilla, 4, 16.

(Deut. 6:4 ff.) at the due time, attentive reading alone is not sufficient if the intention is only for the purpose of examining the text. He must fix his mind on the reading with the intention of taking on himself thereby the 'Yoke of the Kingdom'. The reading must furthermore be intelligent; it must be understood. The commandment, 'And these words which I command thee shall be upon thine heart', entails the requirement of devotion throughout the prayer. Furthermore, the greater the intensity of the devotion, 'his days and years will be prolonged'.<sup>1</sup>

The concentration of devotion required in the fulfilment of all religious duties is summed up in the following Midrashic comment: 'A man should see to it that his eyes, ears and heart are set upon the words of the Torah. For thus the Lord says to Ezekiel: "Son of man, mark well and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the Lord." (Ezek. 44:5.) If, in the case of the sanctuary that could be seen and measured, concentration of eye, ear and heart was necessary, how much more so in the case of the words of the Torah, which are as fine as mountains hanging on a hair.' (Sifrei, Deut. s. 335 (ed. Friedmann, p. 140b.))

## 2. Sacrament.

Whereas Maimonides and his school based their love and devotion to God on the right knowledge and apprehension of God, other groups in Judaism taught that, quite irrespectively of knowledge or wisdom, man should give himself unreservedly to complete and passionate unification with the Divine. The fulfilment of each commandment,

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1. R. Anram Gaon, Siddur - (ed. Warsaw) pp. 6-7.

even to its last detail, was to be a sacrament whereby man joined himself to the Divine. A mizvah was not to be merely an objective consummation without any really personal participation. Man must devote the whole of his being in effecting the sacrament. Israel sinned grievously at the end of the Temple period when they allowed the sacrificial system to degenerate into an objective ritual of atonement instead of grafting their own lives into the life of the animal that was sacrificed.

The sacrament has rightly been called 'the most dynamic of all ritual forms'.<sup>1</sup> Martin Buber in his essay on 18th century Chassidism in Eastern Europe has attempted to describe the dynamic character of religious devotion. 'But what is of greatest importance about this, its dynamic character, is that it is stripped of its character when it no longer includes a supreme, life-claiming, and life-determining experience of the other person, of the otherness, as a coming-to-meet and as an acting herewards. The three-dimensionality of the event, the existence of its depth of dimension, is given by the fact that the human being in the sacramental consecration neither merely "commits" something, nor, even less, merely "experiences" something, that he is laid hold of and demanded in the core of his wholeness and needs nothing less than his wholeness if he is to sustain it.'<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Communion.

Judah Halevi's *Kuzari* recognises from the description of the

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1. R.R. Marett: Sacraments of Simple Folk, (Oxford, 1933), p. 9.
  2. Martin Buber: 'The Interpretation of Chassidism', Mamre - transl. by Greta Hort, (Melbourne Univ. Press, 1946) - p. 134.

Rabbi of the true meaning of Kawwanah in prayer, that perfect prayer by man is nothing less than a 'fusion of his soul into the Divine'. Whoever achieves such contact with God, says the Cuzari, while he is yet subject to the defects and ills of the body will surely gain an even more intimate relation when his soul has been free and detached from his 'unclean vessel' (i.e. the body) in the world to come.<sup>1</sup>

### The Will as a faculty of man.

#### 1. The duty of directing the Will.

In expounding the Jewish conception of Kawannah and the preparation for prayer, Halevi describes the power of man over his Will and the manner which the religious man is required to direct his Will. The pious man (hasid) must be like a prince; he must have full control over the whole of his body and personality. He must be undisputed master of all his powers, leanings and appetities. Every organ and every faculty must be trained to do his bidding for the common good of soul and body. 'He that ruleth his spirit (is better) than he that taketh a city.' (Prov. 16:32.) When all his organs and faculties have received what training and indulgence properly belong to them, the hasid calls them together as a masterly prince summons his disciplined army, in order that by their aid he might reach that divine degree which is above the intellect. He arranges his community in the same manner as Moses ordered his people round Mount Sinai. He bids his will-power receive obediently every command issued by him, and to carry it

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1. Judah Halevi: Kitab al Khazari, Part III, s. 20 - transl.  
H. Hirschfeld (London, 1931) p. 140.

out at once. He makes his faculties and organs do his bidding without demur, forbids them evil inclinations of mind or fancy, forbids them to listen to, or believe in them, until he has taken counsel with his reason. If he permits, they can obey his inclinations, but not otherwise. In this way his will-power receives its orders from him, carrying them out accordingly.

The pious man masters his desires and faculties, directs the organs of thought and imagination, to produce, with the assistance of memory, the most splendid pictures possible, in order to resemble the divine things sought after, such as the picture of Israel at Mount Sinai, Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah, the Tabernacle of Moses, the Temple Service and the presence of the Divine Glory in the Temple, and such like. He then orders his memory to retain all these and not to forget them; he warns his fancy and its sinful prompters not to confuse the truth or to trouble it by doubts; he warns his irascibility and greed not to influence or lead astray nor to take hold of his Will, nor subdue it to wrath and lust.

After all this preparation, securing the balance of harmony within his soul, his will-power causes all his organs to serve him with zest, skill and joy, ready to stand, bow or sit as required. All the members of the body show themselves eager to do the Will of their master no matter what the trouble or discomfort. In this disciplined harmony of body and soul under the command of the master, the tongue will agree with the thought and will not overstep its bounds. Prayer will not be a mere matter of mechanical habit, like the words of a starling or parrot, but every word will be uttered thoughtfully and with



devotion. The pious man will long for such occasions of approach to God, for then he resembles most the spiritual beings, and is farthest removed from animality. Such hours are the heart and fruit of man's time for then he attaches himself with Joy to the spirit of the Divine.<sup>1</sup>

When man is required, in his service to God, to direct his Will to the fulfilment of that service, it is assumed that the Will of man is a faculty which is in the power of man. Man is particularly responsible for the activities of his Will in the matter of his duties towards God. The Rabbis insist that if a person has no fear of God, he is himself the sole cause of its absence and he alone is responsible for it. 'Everything is in the hand of God, except the fear of God.' (Berachoth 33b.)<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The adoption of religious attitudes.

The attitudes towards God in the pursuit of which it is the duty of man consciously to direct his Will are as follows:

1) Fear of God. Man must be conscious of the fear of doing anything that might displease God and make us unworthy of His love. 'And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God?' (Deut. 10:12.) 'Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.' (Eccles. 12:13.)

2) Love of God. Man must be constantly longing for communion with Him; anxiously seeking the opportunity of fulfilling the

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1. Judah Halevi: Kitab Al Khazari, Part III, section 5, (first half) - transl. H. Hirschfeld (London, 1931) pp. 121-123.  
Cf. H.G. Enelow: 'Kawwanah' in Selected Works, IV, pp. 267-8.
  2. M. Friedlander: The Jewish Religion - 4th ed. (London, 1931) p. 274.

Divine command for the sake of the joy of being with Him. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.' (Deut. 6:5.) 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' (Ps. 42:2.)

3) Gratitude towards God. We are obliged to our Creator for whatever power or faculty we possess, and it is our duty to use these endowments to fulfil His will. 'But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant, which He sware unto thy fathers, as at this day.' (Deut. 8:18.) 'For all things come of thee, and of thine own hand have we given thee.' (1 Chron. 29:14.)

4) Reverence for His Name. It is the duty of man to experience the feeling of awe and reverence when becoming aware of the nature of God's glory, and that the duties imposed on us originate from this supreme Master of all Creation. 'And he was afraid and said, how dreadful is this place; this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' (Gen. 28:17.) 'For I will proclaim (i.e. when I...) the name of the Lord: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.' (Deut. 32:3.)

5) Obedience to the Will of God. Because of our love and fear of God our happiness is attained only in doing His will. Our joy is undisturbed when we constantly direct our Will in the fulfilment of God's law. 'I delight to do thy will, O my God, Yea thy law is within my heart.' (Ps. 40:8.) 'But this thing I commanded

them saying, Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in their own counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.' (Jer. 7:23-24.)

6) Faith and Confidence in God. We can safely entrust ourselves to the loving and all-powerful God. In His teachings and commands we have the best and surest guide. 'Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.' (Jer. 17:7.)  
'Trust in the Lord, and do good.' (Ps. 37:3.)

7) Resignation to the Will of God. Even when our courage, reason, and will, fail us, and we are unable to overcome misfortune, we may resign ourselves to God completely with trust and confidence that He will uphold us. 'My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.' (Ps. 73:26.)  
'And David said unto God, I am in great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great.' (2 Sam. 24:14.)<sup>1</sup>

Summary: Man is master of his Will.

The observance of the Law is incomplete unless it is accompanied by man's deepest desire for worship. "Inwardness" of worship is the essence of religion. Worship which is sustained by the wholeness of man's soul constitutes a sacrament before God and true communion with the Divine Spirit.

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1. M. Friedlander: The Jewish Religion, 4th ed. (London, 1931)  
pp. 273-278.

It is in the power of man to direct his heart in fullest devotion to God. The religious devotion of Kawwanah is a duty obligatory upon every individual, and each man is himself responsible for any failure in its proper exercise. The pious man exercises complete control over his Will. True Kawwanah can be attained by the purposeful adoption of religious attitudes which will lead to perfect piety.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE EFFECTIVE WILL

#### The Training of Character.

##### A. Internal Influences.

##### 1. The dynamic process of personality.

The implanting in man of the divine image gave him reason and freedom in such a manner that it depended entirely on man's use of these gifts whether they would lead to the realisation of his spiritual nature which at birth possessed only the incipient potential of development, or whether these very powers would bring about his undoing. 'All this is part of the Divine wisdom to teach man...that his perfection depends on himself in so far as he strives to achieve it.' (Tobias Katz (1652-1729): Maaseh Tobiah I, 1 - Gloss. by son of author, - quoted in I. Epstein, The Faith of Judaism, p. 226.)

It was not enough however to accept the Torah as the ideal code of morality and righteousness, it was necessary to train the Will of man to adhere to that code. The practical character of man should be in complete harmony with the requirements of the Torah.

Every individual is not endowed with an equal standard of intelligence, nor with similar inclinations, desires and moral values. But the Rabbis endeavoured to train the character of every individual so that the influence on the thought and action of each in his own way would result in the common practice of the ethics of the Torah. The cult of Judaism developed by the Rabbis reflects the training of the human Will into obedience to the

perfect Will of God.<sup>1</sup>

Aristotle realised that in talking about motives we are talking about dispositions of a certain sort, a sort different from competences; he realised too that any motive, unlike any competence, is a propensity of which it makes sense to say that in a given man in a given walk of life this motive is too strong, too weak, or neither too strong nor too weak. He seems to suggest that in appraising the moral, as distinct from the technical, merits and demerits of actions, we are commenting on the excessive, proper or inadequate strength of the inclinations of which they are the exercises. Furthermore he recognises as a cardinal fact that the relative strengths of these inclinations are alterable. Changes of environment, criticism, and example can all modify the balance of power between the inclinations which constitute one side of a person's character. But so can his own concern about this balance modify it. If a man has sufficient inclination to do so he can correct his own character, strengthening some of his weak propensities and weakening others that are strong. Through the drive of idealism or prudence or ambition a man can by schooling and self-discipline produce in himself the propensity he desires.<sup>2</sup>

The propensity of mind which the Rabbis wished to induce in man was that of 'love of God' (AhaVath Hashem) and 'fear of God' (Yirath Hashem). The effect of such a motivation could not fail to result in the spiritual perfection of man, for the feelings of

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1. J.H. Moulton: Religions and Religion - quoted in Salis Daiches: Aspects of Judaism, p. 15.
  2. Gilbert Ryle: The Concept of Mind, (London, 1951), p. 112 f.

Love and Fear are the original pattern of personal motivation.<sup>1</sup>

Since human behaviour, however, seldom corresponds with any single tendency of the whole dynamic process of Personality, the approach of the Rabbis to this task was based on the recognition of a confluence of many tendencies within each individual and a multiplicity of motives governing different individuals.

## 2. The Place of Emotion in religious training.

### a) Reason and Emotion.

In the Old Testament both Emotion and Reason are divine endowments which man may use either to perfect himself in the worship of God, or to destroy himself by their abuse. Emotion may be irrational and used only to serve man's animal desires but it may also be raised above the egocentric and seen as part of the development of humanity. Emotion when harnessed to the objectivity of Reason can provide the most powerful motives for morality. 'The development of human nature in its concrete livingness is, in fact, the development of emotional reason.' Although for the Stoics the emotions in the widest sense were the source of evil, and had to be dominated by Reason, Jewish thought did not consider that they were to be completely ousted and replaced by Reason, but rather be developed and controlled as an essential basis of moral behaviour.<sup>2</sup>

The religion of the Old Testament, as explained by Rabbinical tradition, harmonises Emotion and Intellect in one unified

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1. Cf. John Macmurray: 1954 Gifford Lectures, 'Persons in Relation', Lecture II.
  2. Cf. John Macmurray: Reason and Emotion, (London, 1935), pp. 30, 50, 123.

personality. The Torah recognises no distinction of Spirit and Matter as sacred and profane. Good and evil are only judgments on the use man makes of all his faculties. The emotion of love as humanly understood also describes the sublimest spiritual experience, as when the human being is spoken of as joined in loving marriage with God. (Midrash Rabba on Song of Songs.) The emotions of love, wonder, reverence, gratitude, fear, desire, are all evoked by the Torah, and channelled by the Rabbis into modes of behaviour consistent with the morality of God's Law. It is possible to find an ethical application of some emotion in each of the 613 commandments of Judaism.<sup>1</sup>

b) Reverence.

The system of educating the new generation to the observance of the Torah is described in Deut. 6:20-25. Children are to be told of the miraculous redemption of their ancestors from Egypt in order to establish them in their own promised land. As the result of fearing God and obeying His Laws it would be well with them; and their fulfilment of the commandments would be regarded as righteousness before God. Nachmanides in his Commentary (ad loc.) explains that the details of the redemption from Egypt and all the many ceremonial laws associated with it, so frequently appealed to in the presentation of the commandments, are intended to inspire us with feelings of reverence before His wonders and greatness, gratitude for our personal salvation, and humble acceptance of any law which He in His infinite wisdom may require

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1. Moses Alschich: 'Essay on the Ten Commandments', Commentary on Song of Songs, (Warsaw, 1875), pp. 63-70.



of us. The knowledge that God had already shown such Grace to us would convince us that the fulfilment of His laws would lead only to our good. Furthermore if our obedience be regarded by God as righteousness, we may be confident that He would reward us for our fulfilment of His will.

Bahya, in his system of character training, outlines a scheme whereby a number of the facts of life are brought to our notice for reflection and contemplation. By filling our minds with thirty different considerations, which he outlines for us, we would be impressed with feelings of wonder for the miraculous nature of our existence, of reverence and humility before God's majestic glory, and, in particular, of gratitude for the endowments of body and soul, for the revelation of His wisdom and for His love towards us.<sup>1</sup>

c) Gratitude, Duty and Fear.

The mention of the redemption from Egypt in the first of the Ten Commandments was intended to establish in the mind of Israel the feeling of gratitude to God which would lead them to obey the laws of God out of a sense of duty to their all-powerful and all-provident Sovereign.<sup>2</sup>

The feeling of gratitude served only as a basis for the feeling of duty which was more effective in securing obedience to God's law. The constancy of duty displayed by the Levites in refraining from worshipping the Golden Calf (Ex. 32:26) made them worthy of replacing in priesthood the firstborn, who although they owed a special debt of gratitude to God for having been spared

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1. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, Part VIII, Heshbon Hanefesh, Chap. 3.  
 2. Albo: Ikkarim, III, Chap. 26.

when God killed the firstborn of Egypt, nevertheless succumbed to the temptation of the Calf. (Numb. 8:14-18.) The foundation of piety is that man should recognise that his duty in this world is to serve God with all that God has bestowed on him, using the law of God as his guide. The aim of piety should be to strive towards God and to cling to Him like iron to a magnet.<sup>1</sup>

If man is still too self-concerned to feel gratitude to God he should at least fear the wrath of God because of his disobedience as he would certainly fear the punishment a mortal king would inflict on him. Would he not restrain his lusts if faced with the gallows? (Cf. Lev. 26:14-43.)<sup>2</sup> Gratitude, pleasure and fear are generally recognised as basic motives of human behaviour.<sup>3</sup>

#### d) Compassion.

These motives however can lead either to good or evil, according to the manner in which they are applied. For the purpose of training the good character the most effective natural impulse which should be developed is that of Compassion or Sympathy. Compassion supplies the motivation for good without thought of accompanying reward. Its satisfaction is its own pleasure and it suffers pain if it is not satisfied. Compassion is a natural basis of love, kindness and uprightness. Every human being, even the most brutish, is endowed with the feeling of Sympathy to some extent or other. The most effective way of

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1. Moses Hayyim Luzatto: Mesillath Yesharim - quoted in N. Glatzer, Time and Eternity, p. 75.
  2. Cf. Kant - quoted in Laird: Moral Notions, p. 120.
  3. Cf. W. Macdougall: 'Religion and Morality', Social Psychology. Cf. Swedenborg: True Christian Religion, (ed. Everyman), No. 570, p. 619.

training a child to follow the moral law is to strengthen his natural feeling of human sympathy by both word and action. If we accustom the child to the sight of cruelty and to the admiration of unscrupulousness we shall undoubtedly weaken thereby his feeling of sympathy, and the child will become hard-hearted and cruel. But if we accustom him to acts of kindness and pity and the dislike of cruelty, the child's natural sympathy will be strengthened and he will grow into a kind, upright and just man.<sup>1</sup>

A highly developed emotion of sympathy may have the effect of 'universalising' the individual's pleasure instinct, enabling him to experience the emotions felt by society at large. The non-selfinterestedness awakened by sympathy could thus become the instinctive foundation of moral behaviour.

The feeling of compassion is ascribed in the Old Testament alike to man and God. It is the main attribute of God. (Ex. 34:6.) The Rabbis speak of the 'thirteen attributes of compassion'. (Pesikta 57a; Rosh Hashanah 17a.) The compassion of God to man, and man to his fellow, is described as equalling the compassion of a mother for her child. (Cf. Ps. 103:11-13; Is. 49:15; Ex. 2:6; Deut. 13:17.)

The laws of the Torah school men in the practical expression of Compassion. The harvest gleanings must be left for the poor. (Lev. 19:9-10; Deut. 24:19-22.) The garment that is taken in pledge must be returned each night. (Deut. 24:13.) Even when the year of release is at hand a man should not refrain from lending to the poor. (Deut. 15:9,10.) The repeated injunctions of the Law

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1. S.D. Luzatto (1800-1865): 'Yesodei Hatorah', Yalkut Sh'dal', (Tel Aviv, Schocken, 1947), ss. 16-18.

and the Prophets that the widow, the orphan, the stranger and the slave, shall be protected show how deeply the feeling of compassion was to be rooted in the hearts of Israel. The feeling of compassion was to be extended likewise to dumb animals. The mother bird sitting on her young does not escape at the approach of man because of its own compassion on her young. Man himself must likewise exercise compassion when removing the eggs from the nest. (Deut. 22:6.) The ox must not be muzzled when threshing. (Deut. 25:4.) The ass must not be expected to share the plough with the ox. (Deut. 22:10.) An ox, or lamb, shall not be slaughtered on the same day as its young. (Lev. 22:28.) Do not seethe a kid in its mother's milk. (Ex. 23:19.)<sup>1</sup>

To such an extent did Israel through its training in Torah become distinguished for its compassionate disposition that the Rabbis declared that one who is merciful falls under the presumption of being of the seed of Abraham. (Betsa 32b; Cf. Yevamoth 79a.) Ahab, king of Israel, although contrary to the command of the prophet, could not bring himself to kill Ben-hadad of Syria when the latter surrendered to him. The Syrian servants of Ben-hadad had been confident of being spared when they advised their king to surrender, saying: 'Behold now we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings'. (1 Kings 20:31.)<sup>2</sup>

### 3. The Cultivation of good habits.

#### a) The Place of Habit in Moral Character.

The Rabbis recognised that human actions do not always arise

1. See J.E., Vol. IV, Articles, 'Compassion' and 'Cruelty to Animals'.

2. S.D. Luzatto: Ibid., ss. 19-24.

directly from conscious motives. It is always possible that they are done from force of habit. It is difficult to distinguish between a kindly act done from force of habit and one arising directly from a particular kindly emotion. The explanation of the good deed in either case would refer to the disposition to kindness on the part of the individual.<sup>1</sup>

The Rabbis believed that a disposition or propensity to right behaviour can be acquired and cultivated through the exercise and repetition of good habits.

Bad habits easily take root and after a while become almost ineradicable. Raba said, 'At first the evil inclination appears as a wanderer, then as a guest, and finally as master of the house'. (Succoth 52b; Genesis Rabba 22.)

Another Babylonian Amora, Abba Areka, expounded the equal effectiveness of good habits: 'It is well that people busy themselves with the study of the law and the performance of charitable deeds even when not entirely disinterested; for the habit of right-doing will finally make the intention pure.' (Sota 47a; Sanhedrin 105b.)

Bahya instructs his disciples that they should consciously accustom themselves to acts of divine service until their performance becomes habitual. They should at the same time pray to God that He should help them in having the acts and their significance deeply rooted in their consciousness. Through man's consistent effort in this direction he will gradually rise to higher states of real piety. Bahya compares the process to that

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1. Cf. G. Ryle: The Concept of Mind, p. 91 f.

of an apprentice who is at first trained in the performance of simple routine acts, and as he learns their significance progresses to the understanding and performance of more complicated actions. The physical performance of the commandments will eventually awaken the mind to their spiritual significance. Moses himself declared that man will have the capacity to understand the Torah through its performance. (Cf. Deut. 30:14.) The Rabbis compared this process to the man who plants a tree, keeps its roots clear of weeds, hoes the ground, and manures it. Even though he may not understand the biological process of the growth of the tree, his actions will have the required results that God will yield to him the glorious fruit of his efforts.<sup>1</sup>

It is furthermore suggested that God is the divine physician who alone knows how the malady of the evil inclination is to be treated. If the physician prescribes the laws of the Torah as the only means of saving the patient's life, the patient will follow His instructions even though he does not understand the full significance of how the remedy works. Thus the Rabbis recommend the actual performance of Torah as of greater importance than even the necessary religious contemplation. (Nedarim 81b.)<sup>2</sup>

Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair said: Study of the Law, **תורה**, leads a man to its performance, **מעשה**; performance leads him to moral heedfulness, **זהירות**; heedfulness to moral diligence, **זריזות**; diligence to restraint, **פרישות**; restraint to guiltlessness, **נקיות**; guiltlessness to purity, **טהרה**; and

1. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, Part VIII, Heshbon Hanefesh, Chap. 3, p. 534.

2. Moses Hayyim Luzatto: Mesillath Yesharim, ed. Oskar Sachariasohn, (Frankfurt a/M, 1907), Chap. 5, p. 42 f.

pubity to saintliness, **חסידות**. In saintliness man communes with the Divine Spirit. (Ps. 89:19.) (Aveda Zara 20b.) In some texts the Rabbis add the higher grades of humility, **ענוה**: the fear of sin, **יראת חטא**; holiness, **קדושה**; and the possession of the Holy Spirit, **רוח הקדש**, leading to eternal life, **תחית המתים**. (Jer. Shekalim III, 6a; Yalkut Isaiah I:363.)

Schürer criticised Rabbinic Judaism that the stress they laid on the accuracy of performance led to the degradation of religious life as a mere matter of outward performance.<sup>1</sup> I. Abrahams likewise stated: 'The fixation of times and seasons and formulae for prayer does tend to reduce the prayer to a mere habit.'<sup>2</sup>

Bousset however was of the opinion that the externalisation of prayer, as a result of fixed forms and periods, was not inevitable. 'One must not underestimate what the regular order of worship and fixed prayers must have meant to the average religious life, what this saturation and transfusion of everyday life with the thought of God must have meant to a religious community.'<sup>3</sup>

It is an error to assume that the minute regulation of the religious life was in itself antagonistic to spirituality and inwardness, or that it necessarily had that effect among the Jews; as if the discipline of an army, or the laws of country, must necessarily suppress patriotism, or the rigorous training of the sciences destroy love and enthusiasm for them. The Rabbis never lost sight of the ultimate religious object of its institutions

1. Schürer: Geschichte des jud. Rel. II, 4, p. 569 ff.

2. I. Abrahams: Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, (Cambridge - 2nd series), p. 84.

3. D.W. Bousset: Die Religion des Judentums, p. 205 f.

and precepts and continually added their positive efforts to safeguard the inwardness of the religious life.<sup>1</sup>

The ultimate value of all religious life depends indeed on the true devotion of our actions; as the Rabbis say: 'The Almighty requires the heart.' (Sanhedrin 106a.) Thus the fulfilment of many laws done without reflection may achieve but little in comparison with the performance of one law with due and proper reflection. Nevertheless the performance itself of the commandments has its effect in creating the disposition in man to do that which is good. That disposition is at least the foundation of the true exercise of spiritual devotion.

So powerful is habit in character formation that it sometimes causes confusion in the mind of observers who identify the pursuit of habit with an infringement on the freedom of the Will. Although habit is our readiness, born of frequent acts, to do certain things, it must not be forgotten that the disposition which we thereby create in ourselves in reality issues out of free volition. Thus the 'fallen man' is not denied freedom of Will, although on account of his acquired disposition he appears to be unable to do other than evil. Similarly, the man of stabilised virtuousness is not in fact free from temptations, but his choice of good is so consistent that it appears as though his good is determined.<sup>2</sup>

The Rabbis say man should mould his habits while they are still as 'thin as thread and not as thick as a rope'. But even an established habit can be broken by the decision of man's free

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1. H.G. Enelow: 'Kawwana', Selected Works, IV, p. 254.

2. F.R. Tennant: Philosophical Theology, Part I, p. 131, Note 1.



will. 'God however guards the feet of His righteous ones.'

Habit is voluntary in origin. 'We are the creators of our intentions, of our decisions, of our acts and hence of our habits, of our characters and of ourselves.'<sup>1</sup>

It is our dignity, the noble burden of humanity that we carry to choose and direct the more or less mechanical activities of our daily actions. The fullness of freedom however is manifest only in those acts stamped by our personalities. If in the daily round, we are to gain something by acting automatically, we must be conscious automata.<sup>2</sup>

b) Heedfulness, 'Zehiruth'.

The beginning of piety according to R. Pinhas ben Yair is the cultivation by man of an attitude of heedfulness. Man owes his continual allegiance to the King of Kings, and like a soldier on military service his primary object must be to obey whatever order is given to him by his superior. It is his duty not only to obey a specific command but always to be in the frame of mind to do whatever he is ordered. He must be in a state of readiness to meet all contingencies and also to anticipate them. He must pay heed to the needs of conditions as he finds them and give himself the right instructions at the right time, and follow them.<sup>3</sup>

The Evil Inclination wages ceaseless war against man, trying by his seduction to remove man from this world and from the world

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1. H. Bergson, on accepting the Nobel Prize. Cf. The Creative Mind, - transl. by M.L. Andison, (New York, Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 110.

2. H. Bergson: Time and Freewill, p. 168. See John Dewey: 'Place of Habit in Conduct', Human Nature and Conduct, Part I, (London, 1922).

3. Cf. G. Ryle: The Concept of Mind, p. 144 f.

to come. (Lev. Rabba 29:17; Eccles. Rabba 2:11.)

Man must not be neutral in this war. It is his duty not only to assist the good Yezer and save him from his enemy but he should bring the Evil Yezer completely under his control and establish the Good Yezer in command of all his actions. (Berachoth 5a; Lev. Rabba 34:1.)

According to the exhortation of the Psalmist: 'Depart from evil and do good, seek peace, and pursue it' (Ps. 34:14), man must ever be watchful of how he can avoid evil and do good. It is not enough merely to desire or wish to act piously. Man must consciously strive to effect the transition of the ideal to the actual. By cultivating a disposition and readiness always to act in accordance with the ideal which presents itself to him he converts desire to purposive action and imbues his Will with efficiency.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of heedfulness is described by Maimonides in the following terms: 'A man should devote all his thoughts and actions to the one purpose of knowing the Holy One Blessed be He. His sitting and rising and speaking should all be directed to achieving this end.'<sup>2</sup>

The concept of heedfulness includes also the manner of acting with attentiveness and with intent, Kawwanah. Man by his nature is created especially with the power of awareness, and any behaviour void of attentiveness is a self-mutilation of his divine-given dignity.

The voice that comes from within, from our own heart and

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1. Cf. F.R. Tennant: Philosophical Theology, I, p. 129 f.  
 2. Maimonides: Code, 'Deoth', 3:2.

conscience, is the best reminder of God's presence and Will. But it does not always sound with sufficient force to make itself heard. The Divine Law has therefore set up signs as outward reminders to us of our duty to God. Such are the commandments of the statutory prayers, charity, fringes, phylacteries and mezuzah; the erection of booths and the waving of the palm-branch and the observance of Sabbaths and Festivals.<sup>1</sup>

Maimonides reminds his readers that the purpose of the fringes is that 'ye shall look upon them and remember all the commandments of the Lord'; that through wearing phylacteries a man is inclined to be humble and God-fearing; and that as our eye meets with the name of God on the Mezuzah we regret our foolish devotion to the vanities of the time and remember His love.<sup>2</sup>

The performance of all these commandments require in the first place attentiveness. Through the performance of the commanded actions and through the recital of the words of the statutory prayers the thought of man may be inspired by the suggestions and reminders contained in them. Before any possibility arises of attaining true devotion a man must begin by being mindful and attentive in that he is in the process of fulfilling the command of his King.<sup>3</sup>

Just as a man may teach himself, or may be taught, to perform certain actions in the most effective manner, so he is capable of developing in himself a disposition of paying heed to the manner

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1. See M. Friedlander: The Jewish Religion, (London, 1931), Chaps. 3, 4, 5.

2. Maimonides: Code, 'Tsitsith', 3:12; 'Tefillin', 4:26; 'Mezuzah', 6:13.

3. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, Part 9, Ch. 3, s. 9.

in which he lives, of being circumspect in his actions, and of being ready at all times to fulfil the will of God.

The first law of the daily Code, Orah Hayyim, refers to the disposition a man should adopt the moment he awakens from his sleep. R. Moses Isserles in his gloss to the first paragraph recommends the adoption of the following Scriptural verse as an inspirational text: 'I have set the Lord always before me'. (Ps. 16:8.) He continues with the following quotation from Maimonides: 'We do not sit, move or occupy ourselves when we are alone and at home, in the same manner as we do in the presence of a great King; we speak and open our mouth as we please when we are with the people of our own household and with our relatives, but not so when we are in a royal assembly. If we therefore desire to attain human perfection, and to be truly men of God, we must awaken from our sleep, and bear in mind that the great king that is over us, and is always joined to us, is greater than any earthly King, greater than David and Solomon. "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?" (Jer. 23:24.) When the perfect bear this in mind they will be filled with fear of God, humility and piety and with true reverence and respect for God.'<sup>1</sup>

c) Eagerness, 'Zerizuth'.

The attitude of heeding or 'minding' is the reversal of acting or living absentmindedly. But heeding can vary in degree. A duty may be performed in a perfunctory manner, with some heed

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1. Shulhan Aruch: Orah Hayyim, 1:1. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Ch. 52 - transl. M. Friedlander, (London, 1925), p. 391. Abraham Danzig: Hayyei Adam, Chap. 1:1.

but without interest, without enthusiasm, merely done as a piece of routine for form's sake or as an official duty that has to be fulfilled.

A man may demonstrate resolution, or strength of Will, when in the execution of difficult or disagreeable tasks he tends not to relax his efforts or let his attention be diverted. He firmly resists temptations to abandon or postpone his task. By his effort of Will he exercises tenacity of purpose without surrendering or even becoming disheartened in the face of great obstacles and notably strong counter-temptations.<sup>1</sup>

A person who is described as possessing such strength of Will will always be disposed whenever he so desires to act with such resolution. Such a character can be developed by every individual by cultivating regularly and without default the disposition of acting always with eagerness, spiritedness or enthusiasm.

'Judah, the son of Tema said, Be strong as a leopard, light as an eagle, fleet as a hart, and strong as a lion, to do the will of thy Father who is in Heaven'. (Abboth 5:23.) 'Ben Azzai said, Run to do even a slight precept and flee from transgression.' (Abboth 4:2.) David declared, 'I made haste, and delayed not, to observe Thy commandments'. (Ps. 119:60.) Thus the Tur and Shulhan Aruch, Orah Hayyim, begin their Code of daily life, with the duty of 'zerizuth' - of the exercise of diligent eagerness to perform the service of our Creator.

Plato pointed to various levels of human experience as a multiplication of strata rather than of columns. The conscious

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1. Cf. G. Ryle: The Concept of Mind, p. 72 f.

Self is subject to constant fluctuations like the rising and falling of a tide, although without its regularity. Every day and all day long the levels of our experience and mental energy fluctuate according to the significance and value we attach to the details of our existence. Every individual actually lives in different worlds according to the different mental energy he employs. Our lives contain uncounted degrees of power and insight. As we rise to some conception of these powers we become aware of what more there must be. The more we do in fact recognise the more we perceive of their full nature.<sup>1</sup>

The Rabbis explain that the human being differs from the animal not only in the possession of the Intellect but also in the entire nature of their creation. All the potentialities of the animal develop naturally with the growth of the animal. But the potentialities of the human being come into existence only as the result of the energy, choice and diligence exercised by each individual. Man's development from the animal state to that of a human being depends entirely upon the zeal and effort with which he devotes his intellect and his body in fulfilling the will of his Creator.<sup>2</sup>

The Divine Spirit, the Rabbis said, rested on a man when he was happy in the pursuit of a precept; but never when he was in a mood of indolence, grief or inertia. (Pesachim 114a.)

The Rabbis urged the forming of the habit of instantaneous compliance with the law of the Torah. When faced with the

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1. B. Bosanquet: The Principle of Individuality and Value, Lecture X, (London, Macmillan, 1927), pp. 375, 386.
  2. Solomon Ephraim Lontshitz: Klei Yakar - commentary on Pentateuch, Genesis 2:7.

performance of a precept one should not stop to weigh and consider whether it should be done, for in that manner the Evil Yezer has the opportunity of creeping into one's thoughts and preventing its performance. Particularly when any expense is involved we need to be urged to act with alacrity. (Torath Cohanim on Lev. 6:2.) The Temple Priests were noted for their enthusiasm and eagerness in the performance of their duties. (Sabbath 20a.)

Man should eagerly ally his Will with the spontaneous Will of the Divine which urges him to the fulfilment of the Law. 'He that spoils his Evil Yezer by tender and considerate treatment (i.e. allows him slowly to gain dominion over him without immediately rebuking him) will end by becoming his slave.' (Genesis Rabba 22:6. Cf. Commentary of Rashi on Prov. 29:21.)

Whenever necessary a man should place himself under the sanction of an oath in order to assist him in his resolve to resist evil, as did Abraham (Gen. 14:22 f.), Boaz (Ruth 3:13), Elisha (2 Kings 5:16). An impressive oath, whether for good or evil, can at times transform the human being into a completely new personality.

The disposition of heedfulness will save a man from transgression. The disposition of eagerness will ensure the speedy overthrow of the Evil Inclination and the immediate performance of all his true duties. (Pesachim 3a.) Never delay, say the Rabbis, but hasten towards the fulfilment of any precept that comes thy way. (Nazir 26a; Berachoth 6a; Mechilta on Ex. 12:17.)

There is an inclination in man which seeks to avoid effort and trouble. This propensity to inertia must be attacked with conscious effort and overcome. For this reason God said to

Joshua: 'Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee.' (Joshua 1:7.) Although inertia may not be the active agent of evil, the indolent man, through his inactivity, 'is brother to him that is a destroyer'. (Prov. 18:9.) The evil affliction of indolence grows out of the early habit of acting without enthusiasm. The habit of acting with alacrity leads to the virtue of diligence. 'Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before Kings.' (Prov. 22:29.) All the acts of the pious are carried out with alacrity, like Abraham, who hastened to lavish hospitality on the strangers, and Rebekkah who hastened to draw water for Eliezer. (Numbers Rabba 6.)

Although the highest spirit of religious zeal cannot be mechanically induced whenever the individual wishes it, the Rabbis believed that the external manner of eagerness in the performance of the deed will induce the inner mood of enthusiasm and devotion.<sup>1</sup>

d) Trust in God, 'Bitahon'.

It is essential that man develop in himself an attitude of trust in God before he can reach the true state of piety. The feeling of trust will give him freedom from subservience to the needs and struggles of daily life and enable him to devote himself with a peaceful mind to the service of God.

This attitude of trust is not identical with the pure faith in God which is achieved only as the climax of a life of piety. It is the first step, almost in the sense of an hypothesis, (except that in Judaism belief in the idea of God was always taken for

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1. Moses Hayyim Luzatto: Mesillat Y<sup>sh</sup>arim, Chap. 7.



granted) which a man must adopt as the beginning of his effort in piety. A trustful attitude need not be a conviction arrived at as a result of knowledge - it can be a disposition which man can train by habit. The attitude of trust can be a behaviour tendency inculcated in himself by repetition as a result of a resolution. Trust in God does not describe the conclusion of his spiritual search but is an exercise of Will, the adoption of a habit, which will lead him to the experience of piety.

The Psalmist taught the need for trust in God before the performance of pious acts. 'Trust in the Lord, and do good.' (Ps. 37:3.) The exercise of trust here does not mean 'belief' in God, which is self-understood, nor does it mean confidence that God will give his reward, for that would be contrary to the principle which denounces the serving of God for the sake of receiving reward. (Aboth 1:3.) Neither does trust here mean complete reliance on God that He will provide all man's needs and man may absolve himself from the responsibility of providing for his own requirements. The concluding words of the verse of the Psalm quoted are interpreted by Nahmanides ('Haemunah Vehabitahon') to mean that man is required to be practical and 'down to earth' and to tend his flocks faithfully. Thus, only when man trusts that God wills and enables man to achieve the pious life will he begin to live up to the precepts required of him.<sup>1</sup>

Consideration of a number of Biblical statements describing the relationship of God to man will strengthen him in his feeling of trust in Him. All the requirements which any man would wish

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1. Bahya bar Asher: Kad Hakemah, Article 'Bitahon' - ed. Hayyim Breit, (Lwow, 1880), p. 26b.

to find in his closest friend in order to inspire him with complete trust and confidence in him man will find in the friendship of God towards him. The teachings of the Bible about God give us confidence in God's friendship towards us. Each individual may derive assurance and strength by reminding himself of the following truths. God loves me, trusts me and sympathises with me in my difficulties. His love never weakens nor falters. His concern for my good is unceasing. Nothing is too much or impossible for God to do for me. God can be relied on implicitly even when I am away from His presence. Since the moment of my birth He has never failed me. The behaviour of any man towards me whether for good or evil, is subject to the control of God. And, finally, although I am unworthy of God's loving care and kindness will never depart from me.<sup>1</sup>

The use of the term 'faith' meaning 'reliance' in Matthew 9:22 may be compared to the Rabbinic conception of 'bitaḥon' - trust, reliance on God.<sup>2</sup>

The attitude of trust in God will affect the manner of all man's actions. 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.' (Prov. 3:6.) Man can train himself that even in his smallest undertakings he should feel a sense of confidence in, as well as the need for, the help of God. Bar Kapara taught that this attitude of trust is basic to all the laws of the Torah. (Berachoth 63a.)

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1. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, Part IV, 'Bitahon', Chap. 1.
  2. John Baillie: 'The Idea of Orthodoxy', Hibbert Journal, Vol. XXIV (1925-6) pp. 232-249. See M. Kadushin, Organic Thinking, Chap. 2, Note 352, p. 286.

As the result of the sense of confidence and assurance which man will feel because of his trust in God he will secure the true balance of his desires and his reason. He will be liberated from the destroying terrors of physical and psychical fears. His mind will be efficient and at ease. He will have complete power over his passions - indulging their true requirements but free from all excess in accordance with the rule of the golden mean. He will be able to direct his behaviour in the fullest measure of his divinely endowed power to do good. The divine gift of manhood will manifest itself in the exercise of self-control, humility, love of God, and piety among men. For these reasons the Psalmist proclaims the unequalled happiness of the man who trusts in the Lord for he is fortified by the love and power of God. (Ps. 32:10.)<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Summary: Man is the creator of his own Personality.

The perfection of man's character depends on the effort he devotes to training, modifying and purifying the character tendencies which arise naturally within him. In each individual there obtains a multiplicity of tendencies which man must govern and apportion in the dynamic process of Personality.

When the Emotions are harnessed to the objectivity of Reason they can provide the most powerful motives for Morality. A wide variety of emotions are employed in the ethical training of the Torah, including Reverence, Gratitude, Duty, Fear and Compassion.

The cultivation of good habits is an essential part of character training. Although the ultimate value of all religious acts depends

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1. Cf. Maimonides: Code, 'Deoth, 1:4.

See A. Cohen: Everyman's Talmud - on the virtues of Humility and Temperance - pp. 229-232; 244-249.

on the depth of inwardness and devotion, habitual performance of the precepts of the Law creates in man a disposition to good which may be the foundation of true spiritual devotion. The creation of habit does not infringe on subsequent freedom of Will because man himself is always the free originator and destroyer of habit. It is of the dignity of man consciously to control that which he permits himself to do automatically.

Man is capable of developing in himself a disposition of heedfulness in respect of his moral obligations and his reverence for God. Strength of Will can be cultivated by habitually endowing one's actions with eagerness and enthusiasm. The habit of heedfulness will save a man from transgression, and the development of a disposition of eagerness can transform a man into a completely new personality. The evil dispositions of indolence and inertia will be overcome by accustoming oneself to act always with alacrity.

An attitude of trust in God, which is the beginning of piety can be engendered in man by an exercise of Will. When man trains himself to act with reliance on God he will be liberated from fear and excess and will behave with temperance, humility and self-control.

The Will is at the disposal of man. Through custom and training man can himself perfect his personality. Man is not impotent in face of his predetermined Will. The Will is the effective tool which man can use to mould and create his own perfection.

## B. External Influences.

### 1. The Temple.

#### a) The bliss of the Divine Presence.

During the Biblical period one of the most powerful factors that influenced the people of Israel to follow the law of God was the knowledge that God himself was actually present among the people. The presence of the Ark and the Temple among the tribes of Israel was always regarded with the greatest awe as representing the very presence of God in their midst.

The basic conception of Judaism since its earliest Abrahamic origin was that God, the all-powerful, all-knowing and all-merciful Creator of the Universe, cared for His people, accompanied them, protected them, and provided for them. After God's Covenant with Israel, Moses was instructed to erect a Sanctuary so that God may demonstrate in some tangible form His visible Presence among the Children of Israel. (Ex. 29:38-46.) So long as the Divine Presence dwelt among them Israel were assured of the enjoyment of the greatest physical and spiritual well-being. Just as the company of God protected and sustained Jacob in his wanderings (Gen. 31:5; 48:13. Cf. Ps. 23) so the Presence of God led the Israelites through the wilderness (Numb. 9:15-23; 10:33-35) and into the Promised Land. (Joshua 3:2-4.) Exceptionally the Ark was taken to accompany Israel in battle. (1 Sam. 4.) But in particular the Ark was placed where God revealed Himself to Israel and where intercession to Him may be made both by prayer and sacrifice. (Joshua 7:6-9; 1 Sam. 1:4; 2 Sam. 6:13-17; 1 Kings 1:39; 2:28-30; 3:15; 8:5.)

The greatest happiness of the people lay in the secure

confidence of knowing that so long as God was obviously with them and had not deserted them, all would undoubtedly be well. Moses would not attempt to lead Israel out of the wilderness unless he was assured that God's Presence would accompany them. (Ex. 33: 15-17.) Judah Halevi explains that the knowledge that God was in the midst of Israel and the experience of real closeness to God was the highest bliss for which they longed. 'We do not find in the Bible, "If you keep this Law, I will bring you after death into beautiful gardens and great pleasures". On the contrary it is said: "You shall be my chosen people, and I will be a God unto you."<sup>1</sup> Thus when Moses describes the rewards of obedience to God he says that God will bless the land with plentiful harvest and with peace, that Israel will subdue their enemies and will enjoy supernatural prosperity. But above all, or perhaps embracing all these blessings, God Himself will dwell among Israel. 'And I will set my tabernacle among you, and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.' (Lev. 26:11-12.)

The jubilant, though solemn, rejoicing of the people of Israel when Solomon consecrated the Temple and set the Ark in its place (1 Kings 8) is vividly described by Josephus. He writes thus of the Presence of God: 'Now, as soon as the priest had put all things in order about the Ark, and we were gone out, there came down a thick cloud and stood there, and spread itself after a gentle manner into the Temple... This cloud so darkened the place, that one priest could not discern another, but it afforded to the

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1. Judah Halevi: Kuzari, I, 109.

minds of all a visible image, and glorious appearance of God's having descended into this Temple, and of His having gladly pitched his tabernacle therein.<sup>1</sup>

After praying to God that in heaven He should hearken to the supplication of His people Israel 'when they shall pray towards this place' (1 Kings 8:30), King Solomon addressed the congregation of Israel and prayed for the continuation of the presence of God with the people, for the knowledge that the Presence was among them would 'incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers'. (1 Kings 8:59.)

After the destruction of the two Temples the Rabbis were at pains to emphasise to Israel that the Divine Presence still remained with them. In the first place they taught that the Presence continued to rest on the only remaining Western Wall of the Temple. (An early Tanhuma on Shemoth referring to Cant. 2:9.)<sup>2</sup> But the more general teaching was that of R. Simeon ben Yochai that wherever Israel were exiled the Shechinah accompanied them and at the appointed time God would return together with His people to the land of Israel. (Megillah 29a. referring to Deut. 30:3.)

In the Jewish liturgy it is understood that the 'Shemoneh Esrei' Prayer replaces the daily ritual of the Temple Service. But it was found difficult to achieve the same solemnity of worship in prayer alone - 'avodah shebalev' - as was experienced

1. Flavius Josephus: The Antiquities of the Jews - transl. W. Whiston, Book 8, Chap. 4, s. 2. (106).

2. C.N. Bialek: Sepher Haagadah, (ed. Odessea, 1912) Part I, Book I, p. 180.

in the physical ritual of the Temple before the actual Presence of God. Thus, after concluding this prayer, it is customary to add a further prayer for the speedy rebuilding of the Temple so that 'there we shall serve Thee with awe, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord'.<sup>1</sup>

The Temple was not specifically a place for supplication to God - as it may appear from the prayer of Solomon. (1 Kings 8.) Prayer itself was not dependent on Sanctuary or ritual. We find throughout the Old Testament prayers by all the forefathers offered to God without distinction of time or place. Even Solomon refers to the prayers of Israel in exile. (1 Kings 8:46-50; Cf. Lev. 26:40.) The Psalmist speaks of prayer to God in a strange land. (Ps. 42-43, 107:1 ff.) Sailors pray on board ship, Jonah prays in the belly of the whale, the citizens of Nineveh in their own town (Jonah 1:14; 2:2; 3:7-10; 4:2,3), Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah pray in Babylon.

The specific function of the Temple was that it was the particular place where man could obtain communion with God. In the Temple he could appear before God, and see 'the face' of God. It is for this bliss of communion with God that the Psalmist sings and for which he longs. (Ps. 42; 43:3-5; 84:2-11; 5:8; 92:14.) David in time of distress prays to God and vows that for his fullest praise and thanksgiving he will come to the Sanctuary of God. (Ps. 22:23-28.) David's single longing is to enjoy the bliss of dwelling in the presence of God. (Ps. 27:4.) David prays

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1. Code, Orah Hayyim, Chap. 123, s. 1 - gloss of R. Moses Isserles. Authorised Daily Prayer Book (Singer) p. 54.



also that his prayer should be acceptable to God as though it were part of the Service of the Sanctuary. (Ps. 141:2.)

Hezekiah prays to God on his bed of sickness. (2 Kings 20:2,3.) Isaiah assures him by the word of God that he would not only recover from his illness but on the third day he would go up to the House of God. The promise of being able to visit the Temple greatly excites the eagerness of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:5,8), and in his song of thanksgiving he makes special mention of being able to 'see the Lord' again and to sing songs in the House of the Lord throughout the whole of his life. (Is. 38:11,20.)<sup>1</sup>

Because the people of Israel enjoyed the singular blessing of having God dwell in their midst every individual Israelite became aware of the need to guard himself from both moral and religious impurity so that he should not be 'cut off' from his people's bliss in communion with God. The people as a whole were also aware of their obligation to keep their camp free from defilement so that the Divine Presence should not depart in abhorrence from them. When a man had acted sinfully, but without rebellion, he was given the opportunity to retrace his steps and return in penitence to God who would grant him atonement. The feeling of being separated from God entailed the deepest spiritual suffering and the knowledge that within the well-known and familiar Temple-site God Himself watched and judged his actions, immensely deepened his sense of guilt and remorse, and compelled him to repent and seek atonement. Before man sinned, the fear of the

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1. E. Kaufman: 'Toldoth Haemunah HaIsraelith', Part II, Book 2, pp. 500-502. See also pp. 474-476 on the religious value of the Sanctuary as the place of holiness, purification, atonement and blessing.

intimate presence of God acted as the most powerful restraint.<sup>1</sup>

b) The practical effect of Awe and Inspiration.

The visible sight of the Sanctuary and the Temple, the awe-inspiring ritual and the elaborate precautions for the maintenance of purity and sanctity, inspired the mind of every Israelite with the sense of 'Yirath Hashem' - the Fear of God. This religious attitude of mind created in the individual the effective desire not merely to refrain from sin and to guard against the failure to perform the will of God, but also the determination to realise the Law of God at all times and under all circumstances.

2. Punishment.

a) The retributive element in human punishment.

1) Vengeance.

In considering the Old Testament notion of Punishment it is necessary to distinguish between human punishment, i.e. punishment demanded by human beings, and Divine punishment.

Any system of human punishment must take into consideration the basic retributive emotions of human psychology. It is natural that a person who has been wronged should experience a desire for revenge or retaliation. An individual who has been deeply hurt experiences some satisfaction and a measure of redress, at the discomforture of his enemy. 'It relieves his soul of the sorrow in which it is wrapped.' (Cf. Is. 41:11,12.)<sup>2</sup>

Modern jurisprudence recognises the retributive notion as a

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1. D. Hoffmann: Sefer Vayikra, (Jerusalem, 1953), Vol. I, p. 66.  
 2. Saadia: Emmunoth Vedeoth, Treatise X, Chap. XIII - ed. S. Rosenblatt, p. 390.

basic element in the theory of punishment. 'Although the system of private revenge has been suppressed, the emotions and instincts that lay at the root of it are still extant in human nature, and it is a distinct though subordinate function of criminal justice to afford them their legitimate satisfaction. For although in their lawless and unregulated exercise and expression they are full of evil, there is in them none the less an element of good. The emotion of retributive indignation, both in its self-regarding and its sympathetic forms, is even yet the mainspring of the criminal law.'<sup>1</sup>

If the desire of vengeance were indulged in without restraint so that the wronged person is overcome by a passion of vindictiveness greater injustice might result <sup>in</sup> bringing further suffering and even destruction on the head of the avenger. Revenge therefore must be controlled and regulated according to the measure of satisfaction allowed by the law.

Some regard the penalty to be suffered by the wrong-doer as a debt which the offender owes to the victim and the liability for which is extinguished only when the punishment has been endured. (Lilløy, Right and Wrong, p. 128.) The most just estimation of the measure of this debt is in accordance with the 'lex talionis'. (Deut. 19:21.) The fact that the literal application of this principle was never followed in Old Testament or Rabbinic times because it was never found to be possible of fulfilment, did not destroy the validity of the rule as a principle of justice.<sup>2</sup> A

1. J. Salmond: Jurisprudence - 10th ed. by Glanville Williams, (London, 1947), p. 116 f. See Ch. 4, ss. 30-33, pp. 111-120, for discussion and bibliography of the theory of punishment.
2. Cf. I. Abrahams: Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels - 1st Series: p. 154.

remnant of the idea of 'debt' in punishment may be found in the term 'Kapparah' (atonement) associated with the word 'Kofer' (ransom) which was the legal term for the propitiatory sum of money to be paid as 'a ransom for the life' when a man was killed by a goring ox. (Ex. 21:30.) This ransom however was not accepted in the case of murder. (Numb. 35:31.)

Indignation against injustice and the instinct of retribution are experienced not only by the victim of wrong but also by society as a whole. Such retributive indignation is one of the chief constituents of the moral sense of the community. Public satisfaction demands that evil should be returned for evil, and, according to Kant, the sole and sufficient reason and justification for inflicting punishment on the wrong-doer lies in the fact that evil has been done by him who now suffers it. (Kant: Rechtslehre - (Hastie's transl.) p. 195.)

## 2) Deterrence.

But society is concerned with more than the desire of vengeance on the part of the victim. Society wishes to prevent repetition of the wrong by the wrong-doer either by removing from him the possibility of repeating the offence, or by reforming his moral character so that he would not have the inclination to act wrongly again in the same manner. The concern of society in its own protection is particularly evident in the determination of criminal justice to inflict such punishment on the evil-doer that the example of his suffering to anyone contemplating performing a similar evil would convince him that every offence is, in the words of Locke, 'an ill bargain to the offender'. It is intended

that the fear of retribution created by criminal law, in a measure applicable to each particular offence should counteract the desire for self interest and supply in sufficient strength a motive for right-doing which otherwise might have been lacking or ineffective.

In the Old Testament law the retributive aspect of punishment is satisfied in that as a general rule it is intended that there shall be done to the offender exactly as he had done to the victim. On this account the judgments are 'righteous'. (Deut. 4:8.) In the case of a heinous crime, such as murder, even the pardon of the victim before losing consciousness does not release him of punishment for his crime. Punishment must equal the enormity of the offence whether it be directed against man or against God. But apart from the most grave offences the principle of deterrence governs the severity or leniency of the punishment. Thus the greater the frequency of the transgression, and the greater possibility of its being committed, the more severe must the punishment be. Sins of rare occurrence however require a less severe punishment. (Cf. Ex. 22:1 - the differentiation in the penalty for stealing an ox or a sheep - see Mishna Baba Kama VII, 1.) Theft is more frequent than robbery, therefore the thief pays double whereas the robber only returns the value of the goods. (Lev. 6:1-5.) (The additional fifth part is an atonement offering for his perjury.)

Similarly, severe punishments were necessary to restrain people from actions for which there existed a great desire either through custom or temptation. The severe punishment of spiritual excision, 'Kareth', was placed on the prohibition of eating blood (Lev. 17:10-16) because in ancient days people were eager to eat

blood as a kind of idolatrous ceremony. Offences such as incest which are committed secretly with little chance of discovery require to be deterred by the fear of a great and strict punishment.<sup>1</sup>

b) The purpose of Divine punishment.

Whereas in human punishment the retributive element of personal and society's satisfaction is involved, this basic emotion of vengeance does not obtain in the case of Divine punishment. Here we find the ideal notion of punishment, which consists of the three elements of deterrence, moral education and atonement.

It is sometimes suggested that Divine punishment in the Old Testament was mainly retributive, being the expiation of transgressions against the Divine Will.<sup>2</sup> Examination of Biblical examples of Divine Punishment, however, demonstrate that the purpose of punishment is firstly to deter man from sinning and then, if nevertheless he does evil, to bring about his moral cleansing.<sup>3</sup>

1) Foreknowledge of punishment as deterrence.

The Rabbis insist that no punishment is inflicted for any transgression unless warning is previously given that the act is prohibited, as well as an announcement made of the nature of the punishment for which the offender will be liable. Thus in

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1. Cf. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, Part III, Chap. 41 - ed. Friedlander, pp. 344-347.

2. Cf. G.F. Moore: Judaism, II, (Cambridge, 1927), p. 249.

3. See Moses ben Joseph of Trani (Mabit): 'Beth Elohim', (ed. Warsaw, 1872), Part III, Chaps. 42-49.

the Genesis story Cain was punished for killing Abel because the prohibition of murder and its penalty had already been communicated to Adam as one of the seven Noachide Laws. (Sanhedrin 56b.)<sup>1</sup> Cain was aware that he was liable to the penalty of death. (Gen. 4:14.) His repentance however reduced his punishment.

The purpose of warning Adam and Eve that they would die if they ate of the Tree of Knowledge was to deter them from transgression. The threat of severe retribution is intended for man's benefit so that he should be stimulated into the proper frame of mind for serving God. If in spite of this intimation man denies the authority of God and rebels against His Will, he separates himself from God and is in need of atonement. When punishment is executed by the death of the evil-doer an evil influence is removed from the nation and the suffering of the wrong-doer will have a deterrent effect upon the remainder of the nation. 'And thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.' (Deut. 17: 12-13.)

## 2) Moral purification through contrition.

God inflicts suffering on man in order to stir more intense repentance in his heart. As a result of man's repentance God forgives him and cleanses him of his sins. This attribute of forgiveness is in distinct contrast to the feeling of vengeance which prompts the execution of punishment by man. God welcomes repentance whereby He discards the need for retribution. But human retribution is a right which God does not abrogate and its

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1. Albo: Ikkarim, III, 7.

validity remains in force until the individual or the society wronged has been satisfied or placated. (Sifrei Zuta on Numb. 6:27 - statement of R. Akiba interpreting Ex. 34:7 (ed. Horovitz, p. 50).)

The suffering of punishment by the wrong-doer is also an essential element in his own moral purification. The offender has committed a positive act in violation of the law, his repentance therefore requires also to take the form of a positive act - not only in mental remorse but also physical contrition.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Rabbis welcome the institution of the punishment of thirty-nine stripes for they give man the opportunity of atonement. (Midrash Tannaim on Deut. 25:3.)

The voluntary confession and restitution of the embezzler or robber even after perjury, frees him from any punishment, because the purpose of the punishment would have been to induce his repentance. The guilt-offering represents the completion of his atonement. (Lev. 6:1-7; 5:5; Numb. 5:7. Shevuoth VIII, 3; Baba Kama IX, 8.)<sup>2</sup>

A Rabbinic teaching expounds the meaning and motive of Divine punishment by contrasting the replies of Wisdom (Reason) and Torah to the question 'What is the punishment of the sinner?' Wisdom replies, 'The soul that sinneth shall die.' The Torah replies, 'Let him bring a guilt-offering and his sin will be atoned for to him.' (Lev. 1:4.) The two answers completely contradict each other. Then the question is put to God and His answer bridges the gulf between Wisdom and Torah. God replies, 'Let him repent

1. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism, I, p. 56, n. 1.

2. A. Büchler: Studies in Sin and Atonement, Ch. V, p. 402 f.

Cf. D.Z. Hoffman: 'Sefer Vayikra' (ad. loc.).



and it will be atoned for to him.' Thus the purpose of punishment, that 'evil pursueth sinners' (Prov. 13:21), is that the sinner should repent and finally win for himself atonement. The purpose of Divine punishment is, therefore, stated by referring to the Scriptural verse, 'Good and upright is the Lord: Therefore will He instruct sinners in the way'. (Ps. 25:8.) God leads sinners to repentance. (Pesikta 158b; Cf. Yalkut Makhiri on Psalm 25:8; Jer. Makkoth II, 3ld; Jer. Sanhedrin, Chap. 12, with slight variations of text.)

Not only is the threat of punishment intended as a deterrent to transgression but also the actual suffering itself, whether it be the self humiliation accompanied by sacrifice or the pain of stripes. Even in the extreme case where the death penalty is executed the remorse and repentance induced thereby effect before God atonement, 'Kapparah', for the soul which is accordingly cleansed from guilt and restored to its original purity.

That the aim of Divine punishment is repentance, is reflected in the statement of R. Johanan that repentance annuls the evil decree, for the end of punishment having been achieved it dispenses with the need for the punishment. (Rosh Hashanah 16a.)<sup>1</sup>

### 3) The improvement of moral character.

The justice of God's punishment is described by Ezekiel in that it is dependent on the wickedness or righteousness of the individual. (Ezek. 33:18,19.) The motive of His punishment is described in the verse, 'For I have no pleasure in the death of

1. S. Schechter: 'The Doctrine of Divine Retribution in Rabbinical Literature', Studies in Judaism, 1st series, pp. 259-282.

him that dieth, saith the Lord; wherefore turn yourselves, and live'. (Ezek. 18:32.)

This motive for punishment, i.e. for the improvement of moral character, as taught in the Old Testament, is followed also by the Rabbis. An early dictum stated, 'The court have a right to flog and decree punishments unauthorised by the Torah. But they may do this not in order to transgress the words of the Torah, but merely in order to make a fence around the Torah'. (Sanhedrin 46a.) 'Punishment is proper if it is for the purpose of preserving the law of morality and deterring the individual from transgression; but if its imposition beyond the measure stipulated in the Torah is for the purpose of personal satisfaction, then it is an offence against the Torah.'<sup>1</sup>

a) The case of the unintentional homicide.

The penalty of exile imposed on the unintentional homicide (Numb. 35:25 ff.) troubled Philo because of its inequality of the punishment as suffered by different offenders since the return from exile was dependent on the death of the High Priest. (Philo: De fuga, s. 106f.)<sup>2</sup>

The penalty however may be understood when it is realised that the exile is not intended as an act of retribution which would have to be just and commensurate with the injury. The discomfort of exile is an award of some satisfaction to the injured family and also a protection, 'refuge', to the unfortunate

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1. Saadia: Emmunoth Vedeoth, Treatise V, Chap. 8 - transl. by S. Rosenblatt (Yale Judaica Series), p. 232.
  2. A. Marmorstein: The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God, II, p. 153 f.

offender. The release of the offender is associated with the death of the High Priest whose normal function particularly on the day of Atonement is to obtain pardon for the unintended transgressions of the whole people. (Lev. 16:30. Cf. Numb. 15:25,26.) As a certain element of blame is attached to the High Priest in that such an accident would not have occurred if he had not been guilty of some neglect in caring for the well-being of the community (Maccoth 11a), this guilt, together with the guilt of the offender is removed on the death of the High Priest. 'The death of the righteous atones for the sins of the people.' (Tanhuma, Vayakhel 9; Ex. Rab. 35:4.) Resentment has been controlled and satisfied and as a result of Atonement the offender's punishment may be brought to an end.

b) Respect for the moral law.

The purpose of punishment is sometimes to encourage the exercise of care even in one's private affairs. (Cf. Baba Metsia III, 3 - comment of Bartenoro.) Sometimes its intention is to uproot the disposition to repeat an evil action. (Baba Kama 67b; Cf. Yoma 86b.) Its purpose is also to instil respect into the mind of the individual for the maintenance of the moral law. It is a public expression of society's condemnation of deceit and injustice and abhorrence of the ways of evil.<sup>1</sup> It is not essential that punishment should exact complete requital. Where such exaction would itself become abhorrent it is sufficient if the resentment of the law is expressed. On this principle we can

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1. S.D. Luzatto: 'Yesodei Hatorah', 'Yalkut Sh'dal', (Jerusalem, 1947), pp. 26-33.

understand the Rabbinic maxim, 'har'gu ein neheragin', in the law of the false witnesses. (Deut. 19:19.)<sup>1</sup>

A number of relaxations in the strict law of restitution by the robber were instituted by the Rabbis 'for the sake of assisting repentant sinners'. (Baba Kama 103b; Tosefta Baba Kama 10:6; Baba Metsia 101a; Baba Metsia III:12.)<sup>2</sup>

The classic example of the infliction of punishment by the Rabbinical Court, purely in order to maintain the moral law is to be found in the law of divorce. An essential requirement of the formal act of divorce is that it should be performed by the husband, of his own free will. In certain circumstances, however, the law may demand from the husband that he divorce his wife. If the husband refuses to comply with the ruling of the court, the court is empowered to inflict corporal punishment on him until he accedes to their demand. But would not the giving of divorce in these circumstances be contrary to his own free will and therefore invalid? The ruling of the Rabbis in this case is 'kofin otho ad sheyomar rozeh ani' - the court exerts physical pressure on him until he proclaims, 'I am willing'. (Cf. Arachin 21a.)

Again the question arises, but does this declaration signify true assent? Maimonides explains that in this case the husband is not considered as acting under compulsion, 'anus'. The legal term 'under compulsion' is applicable only to actions that are not obligatory according to the Torah. But if a man is obsessed with an evil inclination to abrogate a precept or to commit a trans-

1. Maimonides: Code, Eduth, 20:2 - see discussion in Kesef Mishne (ad loc.).  
2. A. Büchler: Sin and Atonement, p. 386 ff.

gression, and he is beaten by the court until he performs his obligation, or refrains from the transgression, he is not regarded as acting 'under compulsion', but he had already placed himself under the compulsion of his evil inclination and because of that compulsion he now refuses to divorce his wife. According to his true nature he desires to comply with the laws of Israel, obeying its precepts and refraining from transgression.<sup>1</sup> Through the suffering of his punishment his evil inclination is weakened and overpowered, and his true moral character emerges. Thus when he declares, 'I am willing', he duly divorces his wife according to his own free will.<sup>2</sup>

3. Summary: Inspiration and Punishment stimulate man to Morality.

The genius of the Old Testament religion provided most powerful influences in the daily life of the people which were largely effective in instilling and strengthening in the individual the will to good and the observance of the moral law.

Awareness of the presence of God in the midst of the people, evidenced by the sanctity of the Temple, inspired each individual with awe which deterred him from evil and encouraged him to do good.

Although in the general system of law the human emotion of retributive indignation was afforded legitimate satisfaction, the threat of severe retribution was intended not for the purpose of vengeance but so that man should be stimulated to the proper frame of mind for serving God.

The law usually provided a measure of satisfaction to those

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1. Cf. S. Schechter: Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, (London, 1909), p. 262.

2. Maimonides: Code, Gerushin, II, 20. Cf. Arachin 21a.

who had been wronged but its real aim was to secure atonement for the offender by leading him to repentance. God inflicts suffering on man in order to stir a more intense consciousness of repentance in his heart, so that this repentance will lead to his forgiveness. God welcomes repentance whereby the need for retribution is discarded.

The purpose of punishment is firstly that by public demonstration of society's abhorrence of evil, respect for the maintenance of the moral law is instilled in the mind of every individual. Secondly, through the suffering of punishment a man may be released from the power of the evil inclination, and, being thus helped to return to his true nature, his original desire for good will reassert itself.

Man by his natural tendency represents the Good Inclination. When he commits evil he acts under impulses not exactly identical with his natural 'divine' self. Every effort must be made by man to keep himself true to his original goodness. By the institutions of religion external influences are properly brought to bear on him to assist him in his task.

## CHAPTER VI

### FREE WILL IN JUDAISM

#### Bible and Apocrypha.

That God made man unrestrained and free, acting voluntarily and of his own choice is the undisputed opinion of all Jewish religious thought.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. Old Testament.

In the Old Testament man's freedom of action is consistently affirmed. The choice between good and evil is clearly enunciated in Deut. 30:15-20. "See I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil, in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, to keep His commandments and his statutes and His ordinances...I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day that I have set before thee life and death the blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy posterity." The choice is left to man; but lest Israel shall say, In as much as God has set before us two ways, we may go in whichever we please, the Scripture adds: "Choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy posterity." (Sifrei on Deut. 11:26 (s. 53).)

Numerous Scriptural texts may be quoted as reflecting the principle of human freedom. Saadia quotes in addition to the above, also Mal. 1:9; Is. 30:1; Jer. 23:21; Ezek. 18:23,32; Ezek. 33:11.

Apart from Biblical teaching on this subject which of course

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1. G.F. Moore: Judaism, Vol. I, pp. 454-459.

the Jewish philosophers used as the foundation of their investigations and aimed to coincide with their conclusions, there were during the period of the religio-political sects varying views on the question.

## 2. The Jewish Sects.

The doctrines of Divine Providence and Free Will which were generally unquestioned in the Old Testament became the subject of opposing factions in the post-Biblical period. Josephus states, 'Now for the Pharisees they say that some actions, but not all, are the work of fate, and that some of them are in our power, and that they are liable to fate, but not caused by fate. But the sect of the Essenes affirm that fate governs all things, and that nothing befalls men but what is according to its determination. And for the Sadducees they take away fate and say there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal, but they suppose that all our actions are in our power, so that we are ourselves the causes of what is good, and receive what is evil from our own folly'. (Ant. XIII, V:9.) 'When they determine that all things are done by fate, they (the Pharisees) do not take away from men the freedom of acting as they think fit; since their notion is that it hath pleased God to make a temperament whereby what He wills is done, but so that the will of man can act virtuously or viciously.' (Ant. XVIII, i:3.) The Pharisees 'ascribe all to fate, and to God, and yet allow that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men, although fate does co-operate in every action'. (B.J. II, viii:14.)

Graetz describes the view of the Pharisees thus: "It is not



human strength nor wisdom nor military power that can determine the weal or woe of the Jewish people. The Fate of Israel is determined by Divine Providence alone. Everything happens according to the immortal decision of Divine Will. Only the behaviour of man, i.e. his moral choices, belong to the power of human Free Will. The eventual result and effect of man's actions are in no way within the bounds of human computation. The opposing view of the Sadducees broke away from this Pharisean view of life, and the Essenes went completely to the opposite extreme."<sup>1</sup> The Sadducees placed greater value on Freedom while the Essenes lay stress on Divine Providence which completely determines human fate.

The Divine likeness in man was described by Philo as being particularly the intellectual soul. Intelligence, said Philo, was the only imperishable thing in man. "For it alone the Father who begot it deemed worthy of liberty, and having loosed the bonds of necessity, let it range at large, having gifted it with a portion such as it was able to receive of His own most proper and distinctive possession, the faculty of volition. (Philo: "Quod deus sit immutabilis", c. 10, s. 46-50 (ed. Mangey, I, 279 f.)) Other living things, in whose souls mind, the thing for which liberty is specially claimed, does not exist, are handed over, yoked and bridled to the sacrifice of men, as menial slaves to masters; but man is endowed with a free and self-controlled judgment and volition acting for the most part purposefully. (Ibid.)

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1. Graetz: Geschichte des Juden, III, pp. 92,93, d. 3.  
jüdischen Volkes.

### 3. Jewish Apocryphal Literature.

All the Palestinian Jewish literature of the 2nd Century B.C. maintains the absolute freedom of the Will.

Sirach states that an intuitive knowledge of the reality of moral distinctions was implanted in man at his creation. (Sirach XVII, 7 ff.) He re-echoes the freedom of choice taught in Deuteronomy. 'Say not, my transgression was of God...Death and life are before a man: That which he should choose shall be given to him.' (Sirach XV; 11-17.) By obedience to the commandments of the Law man will overpower his evil Yezer. (XXI:11.) God will help man who trusts in Him and strives for the truth. (II:6; IV:28.)

In one section of Ethiopic Enoch (I-XXXVI) there appears the doctrine that evil had its origin in a lapse in the angel world, which brought consequent corruption upon the race, and left men the victims of demonic incitement to evil. (VI, XV, XVI.) This view might appear to have encouraged a sense of moral impotence but in fact it did not disturb the author's firm belief in the complete freedom of the Will. (V:1-5; XXVII:2.) The teaching as to retribution in other sections of this work attests to the belief in moral freedom and responsibility. (XC:26.) Free Will is particularly emphasised in Ethiopic Enoch (XCI-CIV) as well as in the 'Similitudes of Enoch'. (XXXVII-LXXI.) 'Sin has not been sent upon the earth, but man of himself has created it, and into general condemnation will those fall who commit it.' (XCVIII:4.) The two ways of righteousness and violence (XCI:18), of holiness and death (XCIV:3 f.) are set before men and they are exhorted to choose righteousness.

In Tobit, Sin is traced to its source in the Will: 'Let not

thy will be set to sin, and to transgress His commandments.'

(Tobit IV:5.) Prayer for help in choosing the right should be directed to God 'that thy ways may be made straight'. (Tobit IV:19.)

Moral responsibility is assumed throughout the Book of Baruch. Disobedience to the Divine commandments is an act of the Will. (Baruch II:29,30; Cf. II:10.)

The Book of Jubilees exemplifies the Pharisaic combination of determinism and freedom. Men are held morally responsible for their actions. (V:13.) Repentance is possible. (XII:25.) Moral accountancy varies according to knowledge and opportunity. (XXXIII:16.) 'May the Most High God...strengthen thee to do His Will.' (XXI:25; XXII:10.) The same Pharisaic view is maintained throughout the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Man is beset by two spirits - the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit; 'and in the midst is the spirit of understanding of the mind, to which it belongeth to turn whithersoever it will'. (T. Jud. XX.) The will to good is reinforced by the 'love of God' (T. Dan. V:3) and the 'fear of God' (T. Ben. III:4,5) as well as by the 'love of man'. (T. Dan. V:3.)

The Alexandrian Sybilline Oracles of 2nd Century B.C. likewise declares unmistakably the belief in Free Will. The confident appeal is made to the will: 'Change entirely the thoughts in thy heart.' (III:762.)

The Sadducees' view that man is complete master of his destiny and the Pharisaic combination of Providence and Free Will are both reflected again in the Palestinian Jewish literature of the first century B.C.<sup>1</sup>

1. Cf. I. Maccabees (III:19,50); Psalms of Solomon (IX:7); Judith (VIII:32-34).

The Alexandrian Book of Wisdom follows the Pharisaic view of moral responsibility. Wisdom is found of all that seek her.

(VI:12 ff.) Man can increase Knowledge by the exercise of his own will. (XIII:8,9.)

In IV Maccabees (1st Cent. A.D.) the human will possesses absolute sufficiency for self-determination. The will, directed by religious reasoning has absolute authority not only over fleshy lusts (I:35 - II:3), but also in the realm of thought and motive. (II:4-16.) Despite this complete Freedom the writer likewise maintains Divine Providence and co-operation in human affairs.

Even where little is said of Freedom, as in the Palestinian first century writings, the Assumption of Moses, the Martyrdom of Isaiah, Baruch (III:9 - IV:4) and the Sybilline Oracles, the freedom of choice is always implied. Divine Sovereignty is real, but man is not the mere child of destiny; his fate is in his own hands. 'Ah miserable mortals, change these things...if in your hearts ye all will practice honoured piety.' (Sybilline Oracles, IV:162-170.)

The Apocalypse of Baruch is completely free of any sense of the impotence of the will. The Sovereignty of God is recognised, but man is the captain of his own destiny. The issues of right and wrong are clearly set before him. The choice of unrighteousness is deliberate. 'He transgressed though he knew.' (Baruch XV:6; XIX:1-3; LI:16.)

Despite the strong element of Divine determinism in IV Ezra, even this determinism is influenced by human choice. 'The Most High willeth not that men should come to nought; but they which be created have themselves defiled the name of Him that made them.'

(VIII:59 f.) The writer however appears to despair of man's choice of good despite his possession of understanding and the law. (VII:72.) In the Apocalypse of Abraham complete human freedom is maintained without any limitation by the power of the Evil Yezer, or by the sin of Adam. 'Every man is the Adam of his own soul.' (XXIII.) There is no antithesis between Divine Sovereignty and human freedom. The human will realises its fullest freedom in obedience to the will of God. (XXVI.)<sup>1</sup>

### Rabbinic Literature.

#### 1. Free Will in Talmudic Literature.

Talmudic literature does not present a systematic account of the views of the Rabbis on Free Will. Rabbinic theology consists of a complex pattern of concepts in which particular beliefs or dogmas are not always clearly described. The underlying concepts are usually taken for granted, and it is necessary, at times, to perceive by inference the existence of a particular concept. The Rabbinic belief in human Free Will is nowhere logically demonstrated although it is consistently assumed. It was the universal belief in Talmudic literature that man possessed a faculty of Will in the exercise of which he was free and unrestricted. Moral freedom is in fact the essence of the nature of man.

The Rabbis in their exposition of Ecclesiastes 1:9: "There is no new thing under the sun," state that the natural material world is regulated by invariable laws, but the world of morality, i.e. ethical conduct is not governed by such laws - "not under the

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1. See H. Maldwyn Hughes: 'The Ethics of Jewish Apocryphal Literature.' Chap. IV.

sun but above it". Here the Will of man is Free.<sup>1</sup>

The creation of the Universe which is governed by definite laws laid down by God is continued and supplemented by the further creation in the spiritual sphere by man's free exercise of morality. This spiritual creation is essential to the whole purpose of the creation of the Universe. "He who does a moral deed, as for instance a judge who pronounces a righteous judgment, thereby associates himself with God in the work of creation." (Mechilta: Yithro, Chap. 2.)

The description of the offer of the Torah to Israel suggests that without the moral order the Universe would remain purposeless chaos. (Avodah Zarah 22b - 23a.) Man, the summit of all creation, is epitomised by his possession of the outstanding power of Free Will.

The only manner in which it may be said that man is morally determined is in that the source of the moral law lies within man himself. The moral law is part of the nature of man and is independent of legislation and every sort of outside dictation. (Cf. Deut. 30:11-14.)<sup>2</sup> This moral nature of man flows from the essence of God's being and is inherent in man's creation. The moral urge is thus naturally "foreseen" by God, in the words of R. Akiba, just as the physical impulses and passions of man - also the work of God's creation - are "foreseen". But the decision as to whether man will follow the promptings of the moral law or of the passions of the body is left in the hands of man. "See I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil...

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1. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism, Vol. I, ss. 118-119, pp. 157-160.

2. M. Lazarus: Ibid., Vol. I, p. 123.

therefore choose life that both thou and thy seed may live."

(Deut. 30:15,19.) God does not determine man's actions but urges upon him the claims of the moral law. R. Haninah bar Hama likewise bases his view on the verse: "Now O Israel what doeth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to revere the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him." (Deut. 10:12.) God requires morality of man; He does not constrain him to it.<sup>1</sup>

The Rabbis of the Talmudic period did not consider that this freedom of choice conflicted with the belief that all things were ordained by God. Nevertheless they found it necessary to assert emphatically that there was no such thing as a moral providence. Rabbi Akiba said: "Everything is foreseen (by God), yet freedom of choice is given (to man)." (Aboth III:19.) Likewise, Rabbi Hanina bar Hama (early in the third century): "Everything is in the power of Heaven except the fear of Heaven." (Berachoth 33b; Megillah 25a; Niddah 16b.) God in His providence determines beforehand what a man shall be and what shall befall him but not whether he shall be godly or godless, righteous or wicked. (Niddah 16b.)

## 2. Original Sin.

The Talmud does not teach the doctrine of Original Sin as it is found in Christian Theology. "Judaism utterly repudiates such a doctrine as that of Original Sin which declares that there is something inborn in all men which forces them to do wrong whether they wish it or not."<sup>2</sup> Sin is conceived as a free act

1. G.F. Moore: Judaism, I, p. 456.

2. Morris Joseph: Judaism as Creed and Life, p. 107.

of the individual, and not as a power enslaving him. No Rabbi of the Talmudic age would admit that any human being committed a wrong for which he or she was not personally responsible.<sup>1</sup>

The Bible and Rabbinical literature, however, do contain a number of expressions which appear to reflect some of, if not all, the elements of this doctrine. Tennant rightly claims, "it is certainly an exaggeration to assert, as has frequently been represented, that Judaism possessed no doctrine of original sin".<sup>2</sup> The Rabbis recognised the general sinfulness of humanity and even that sin was inherent in man from birth, as King David pleaded "when Nathan the prophet came unto him after he had gone into Bath Sheba": "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me". (Ps. 51:5.) The Rabbis speak of a poison or dirt which the serpent injected into Eve and which continued among her descendents. (Yebamoth 103b.) Death and grief were brought into the world through the sin of Eve. (Jer. Sabbath 5b.)<sup>3</sup> Even the deaths of individual men are ascribed to this sin: "Four died on account of the serpent" (Sabbath 55b), i.e. had it not been for the disobedience of Adam and Eve these men would not have suffered death.

Similarly the Rabbis held that the sin of the Golden Calf left its taint and affected the destinies of mankind ever since. "There is no generation in which there is not an ounce from the sin of the Golden Calf." (Jer. Taanith 68c; Cf. Sanhedrin 102a.)

These statements of the Talmud however are not to be

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1. A. Cohen: Everyman's Talmud, p. 102.
  2. F.R. Tennant: The Sources of the Doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin, p. 232.
  3. S. Schechter: Studies in Judaism - 1st series, p. 289.



understood as implying responsibility for the guilt of parents. The Rabbis (Sanhedrin 27b) make it clear that guilt rests entirely on the principle enunciated in the Torah: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin." (Deut. 24:16.) The "sins of the fathers" psychologically constitute a tendency which may overtake the children but they are not a doom.<sup>1</sup> They make the task of the children more difficult, but they can be resisted. Where there is no personal sin there is no guilt. "Happy the man whose hour of death is like the hour of his birth; as at his birth he is free of sin, so at his death may he be free of sin." (Jer. Berachoth 4d.)

The Jewish notion of 'Original Sin' or 'the sins of the fathers' never assumed an extreme deterministic form. Tennant recognised this when he stated: Talmudic literature insists on man's capacity to control his evil inclination, mighty as it is. There is no hint that his free will is diminished in consequence of the sin of his first parents; and herein lies the main difference between the spirit of the teaching of the Synagogue and that of the Church.<sup>2</sup> The corrupting effect of sin caused a diminution of Adam's (i.e. man's) intellectual faculty but this only made the moral sense only more necessary to guide him in his freedom of choice.<sup>3</sup>

Although according to some Rabbinical statements the Sin of Adam did affect with a stain the whole of his future progeny, the

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1. Morris Joseph: Judaism as Creed and Life, p. 107.

2. F.R. Tennant: Sources, p. 175.

3. Cf. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, I, 2, p. 15.

Rabbis insisted that each individual had nevertheless the power to purify himself from that stain, as was done individually by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron and Miriam. (Baba Bathra 17a; Moed Katan 28a; Derekh Eretz Zuta I.)

Thus in opposition to R. Simeon ben Eleazar's view that death was the result of the Fall (Cf. Mekhilta on Ex. 20:19) R. Ammi maintained that every death was caused by each man's own sin. (Sabbath 55a.) It is held elsewhere that Israel as a whole overcame the fatal effect of Adam's sin when they accepted the Torah at Sinai, and death would have been removed from Israel forever if they had not sinned again by worshipping the golden calf. This sin brought death back to Israel. (Sabbath 88a, 146a; Avodah Zara 5a, 22b; Yevamoth 103b. Cf. Midrash Rabba, Ex. 32:1. Cf. Psalms 82:6,7.)

According to another statement commenting on Lev. 26:31 'if ye walk in my statutes', the Rabbis quote Adam's sin and punishment as an example of freedom of choice which is the possession of every individual. (Tanhuma Lev. Bechukothai I.)

The concept of original sin begins to appear in the late Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha. In II Esdr. III:7 it is stated that when Adam was punished with death, his posterity also was included in the decree. Later in the same work (VII:48) Adam is reproached: "O Adam what hast thou done! When thou sinnest, thy fall did not come over thee alone, but upon us, as well, thy descendants. (Cf. Ecclesiasticus of Sirach XXV:24; Apocalypse of Baruch XVII:3.) Nevertheless from II Esdr. III:3 it appears that the Christian doctrine of Original Sin was not an accepted dogma since it is suggested there that the consequences of the Fall came

*Book referred to on TV Egan on p. 269.*

to an end with the flood.<sup>1</sup>

Philo's allegorical interpretation of the Genesis account of the Fall as a representation of the psychological process of temptation and sin in man - without implying any theological dogma - is more closely in accord with Rabbinic thought on the nature of man. (Philo: *De Mundi Opoficio* 56.) The dramatic imagery of Adam's sin was elaborated by the Rabbis in homiletical moralisations. As far as their theology was concerned, however, it was not the inevitability of sin that they accepted as a dogma, but rather the original purity of every human soul and the freedom granted to it to defile it if they so choose, as was done by Adam, or to maintain its original purity as God required them so to do. A Baraitha explains how before a child's birth it is adjured by God to be righteous during its life on earth and not to be a sinner, and to consider that God is pure, His ministering angels are pure, and the soul that is put into the child is pure. (Niddah 30b. Cf. parallel sources in Bacher: *Paläst. Amoraer*, III, 538:4.) The Midrash Rabba on Eccles. 12:7 'And the spirit returneth unto God who gave it', says 'Return it to him in purity, as he gave it to thee in purity'.

This is the conception of man as accepted in the Synagogue and incorporated in the daily Morning Service: 'My God the soul that Thou didst put into me is pure.' (Authorised Daily Prayer Book, ed. Singer, p. 5.) The soul as given by God to each man is pure, free from sin and would only lose its purity if defiled by sin. (Berachoth 60b.) The wise keep their souls clean and

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1. Cf. Emil G. Hirsch: 'Fall of Man', *J.E.*, V, 344b f.

free from sin. (Sabbath 152b.)

It cannot be denied that on examining Rabbinic literature statements may be found which support each of the elements of the doctrine of Original Sin.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore the discussion between the schools of Shammai and Hillel and their final decision that, owing to man's deplorable sinfulness resulting from his inherent moral weakness, it would have been better for man if he had not been created, points to the conviction from experience that man is wont to sin and will undoubtedly suffer as a result. (Erubin 13b.)

'There can be little doubt,' says Schechter, 'that the belief in the disastrous effects of the sin of Adam on posterity was not entirely absent in Judaism, though this belief did not hold such a prominent place in the Synagogue as in the Christian Church. It is also thought that in the overwhelming majority of mankind there is enough sin in each individual case to bring about death without the sin of Adam. (See Tanhuma, Exodus 11a and Sabbath 52a and b.) The doctrine was resumed and developed with great consistency by the Cabalists of the sixteenth century.'<sup>2</sup>

But Schechter has also warned us that great care must be exercised in attempting to use individual statements as expressions of a theological dogma, since the special circumstances of their expressions often necessitated a changing accentuation of different principles of Jewish belief.<sup>3</sup> Even those scholars who held a

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1. Cf. S. Levy: 'Jewish Conceptions of Original Sin', Original Virtue and other Short Studies, (London, 1907), pp. 45-57.
  - F.C. Porter: 'The Yecer Hara', Biblical and Semitic Studies, (Yale University, 1901), pp. 93-156.
  2. S. Schechter; Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 188, n. 2.
  3. S. Schechter: Ibid., Introductory, p. 12.

pessimistic belief in man's sinfulness did not despair of man's capacity to purge himself from his sins in spite of his weakness. Furthermore they held, contrary to the doctrine of original sin, that all man's actions were the products of his own responsibility and not of his evil inclination. On account of the unshakeable belief in the potentiality of human virtue and the freedom of man to do righteousness and avoid evil, it was agreed by the followers of both Shammai and Hillel that in view of this responsibility man should search his actions, and before he acts carefully consider the consequences. (Eruvin 13b.)<sup>1</sup> With diligence and thoughtfulness man has the ability generally to escape sin.

### Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy.

#### 1. The Concept of BEHIRA.

##### a. The Nature of human Free Will.

Successive stages of creation were commonly described in mediaeval thought as beginning with prime Hiule and progressing from mineral to vegetable and then to animal life. Certain states of each stage of creation formed intermediary stages linking the simpler with the more complex. The ape, for example, formed a link between animal and man. Similarly, the marine sponge was a link between the mineral and plant life.

In analysing the concept of human Free Will Arama states that the animal possesses senses and also the power to choose that which is good for it and avoid the harmful. This power of choice is called BEHINAH. The animal also possesses the power of Will in pursuing his choice of good or evil by the exercise of his Behinah.<sup>2</sup>

1. Cf. A. Büchler: Sin and Atonement, p. 209.

2. See Isaac Arama: Akedath Izhak, Genesis, VI, pp. 84-87.

Man possesses not only this natural power of Will, Behinah, but also the power of contemplative choice, BEHIRAH. By the exercise of Behirah man can choose an act which may bring an immediate hurt for the sake of an eventual greater good. This Freedom of Will in man is called the Intellectual Will (Ratson Sichli). It is termed the Behirah. This faculty of Behirah is the peculiar possession of Man as a species. The exact quality of this faculty in each individual varies according to his natural constitution at birth. The original natural power of intellect must, however, be distinguished from the acquired intellect which is within the power of each man to attain.

The natural intellect can be developed by man by means of diligent effort, upright habits, the regular exercise of the Behirah in choosing good and the pursuit of his natural inclination to excel in knowledge and understanding. Through these efforts man is able to acquire for his natural intellect the divine attribute of the Active Intellect. The presence of the Active Intellect in the fullest measure completes the Natural Intellect into its most perfect form.

According to Maimonides (Guide, Chap. 70) this new intellect grows into a spiritual existence which is independent of the body and does not perish with the body. The original Natural Intellect, however, does not have this power of existence beyond the body. It is this intellect which man possesses in its original form which gives birth to the Immortal Acquired Intellect.

The power of Behirah is greatly strengthened by the possession of the Acquired Intellect, far above what was possible in its original form as an expression of the natural intellect.

The desire to acquire this Acquired Intellect derives from the exercise of the simple desire for what is pleasant and beneficial, i.e. Behinah. The natural sense of Behinah would desire the possession of the acquired intellect just as the animal Behinah would choose the sweet and reject the bitter.

The presence of the Acquired Intellect, according to Arama, is termed Neshamah, and the original soul is called Ruah. (Cf. Isaiah 57:16.) The three stages of the psychical nature of man are therefore (1) Nefesh, (2) Ruah and (3) Neshamah. Thus Scripture speaks of the Neshamah of the righteous and the Nefesh of the wicked, i.e. the wicked who do not advance above the original state and faculty of the natural intellect. The Nefesh of the wicked remains at the level of that of the animal. That Nefesh perishes with the body in the same manner as the Nefesh of the animal. Arama distinguishes between the notion of Behirah and that of Possibility or Free Will. Although all Behirah is included in Possibility, all Possibility is not the same as Behirah. Free Will is attributed to man but not to angels or animals. Free Will refers to the possibility of doing good or evil equally. Behirah on the otherhand refers only to the doing of good. One cannot speak of the exercise of Behirah in one who takes for himself an evil portion. This is Free Will but not choice. In truth it must be said of him that he did not know how to exercise choice. The term Bahar refers only to the choosing of good, e.g. 'choose good' (Isaiah 7), 'God has chosen him' (Psalm 135), 'and thou shalt choose life' (Deut. 30).<sup>1</sup>

1. See Isaac Arama: Akedath Izhak, Genesis, VIII, p. 113.

The part of Free Will which includes the possibility of evil is indeed no boon to man for it includes the possibility of death or even suicide. But although man by the nature of his creation possesses the power of Free Will by which he may turn to good or evil, the special gift given to him by God was the power of Behirah whereby he would be able to choose good. The divine intellect that is bestowed on man enables him to use wisdom and understanding to choose the good. By reason of this intellect he becomes free from the irrational forces that are within him. When man heeds the counsel of his intellect, he exercises Behirah. When he follows the irrational forces within him he does not employ his Behirah. When man sins he fails to use Behirah in that action and follows his natural Free Will in which he is similar to the animal. When man does good he is using his faculty of Behirah. In this way philosophers distinguish between good actions as acts of the Will and evil actions as acts without Will. They describe only such acts where Behirah is used as acts of the Will. This, however, is not so, because the Will embraces more than Behirah.

Although Behirah does not apply to evil actions, the Will nevertheless does apply to them. The Will is in the power of the Behirah which can direct it according to its wish, unless man chooses not to exercise his Behirah.<sup>1</sup>

The only possibility of choosing evil by Behirah is the case of choosing a lesser evil for the sake of a greater good.

Behirah may make use of passion but such passion will not lead to evil since it is controlled and directed by Reason.

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1. Cf. A. Heschel: 'The Quest for Certainty in Saadia's Philosophy', J.Q.R., XXXIII (Oct. 1942 - Jan. 1943) Nos. 2 & 3, p. 297.



Behirah is Will exercised according to Intellect. Thus Behirah may be described as Intellectual Will. The power of Intellectual Will is a divine attribute, which in man is called Behirah. In this sense the Scripture says "let us make in our image". Angels and divine beings are not described as possessing Free Will; but they possess perpetual Behirah by which they unfailingly perform the Will of God without having the Possibility of ever doing otherwise. But there is a difference between the Behirah of angels and human Behirah. The use of perfect Behirah by angels is completely determined by God. They do not possess Free Will. For this reason reward and punishment do not apply to them.<sup>1</sup> Because Man possesses Free Will he is rewarded when he exercises Behirah, and thereby does good.

The power of Free Will in man whereby man has the possibility of refraining from exercising Behirah is referred to in the scriptural verse "there is no man on earth who doeth good and sinneth not". (Eccles. 7.) This means that the "doing of good" by the exercise of Behirah is always subject to the freedom of Possibility. The power of Free Will must at times lead man to evil. Where the power of Free Will does not exist, as in the angel, and only Behirah obtains, there is no possibility of doing evil. Once an act is decreed by divine Will, as a personal act of God, the power of Free Will in this matter no longer obtains. An example of such a divine decree is referred to by Laban and Bethuel in their reply to Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, when they said "the thing proceedeth from the Lord; we cannot speak

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1. Cf. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, II, Chap. 8.

unto thee bad or good". (Genesis 24:50.)

The presence of Free Will in man represents man's unique distinction. In having the power to choose evil, man possesses the potentiality of excelling the nature of the heavenly bodies. In this sense Rabbi Samuel Ber Nachman said "'good' refers to the Yezer Tov, 'very good' refers to the Yezer Ra". (Genesis Rabbah Chap. 9.) When the emotions and passions are ruled by Reason they contribute an essential part to the perfection of man.

A controversy which covered a period of two and a half years took place between the Schools of Shammai and Hillel regarding the merits of the human soul before and after the creation of man. The conclusion was reached that it would have been easier for man to have remained in the state of divine soul, having the nature of the heavenly beings, rather than being created with the power of Free Will and the possibility of doing evil. The Rabbis concluded, however, that seeing that man was created in his present form with the freedom of doing either good or evil but always possessing the power to choose good, he should "examine his actions", i.e. he should exercise his power of reason so that he chooses only good. (Eruvin 13b.) Once man decides to choose good, the Almighty helps him in its fulfilment. (Yoma 38b.)

b. Summary.

By Free Will we mean the possibility of doing either good or evil. By Behirah we mean the intellectual faculty whereby man chooses the good. In doing evil man exercises Free Will but fails to exercise Behirah.

Behirah may be described as reasoned choice or intelligence.

It is Will when that Will is intellectual.

From the above analysis it can be seen that the Will, RATSON, is a concept far wider than the idea of Behirah in the general sense of Free Will or intelligence.

That Will is free is nothing other than the freedom of movement or action of natural forces. When we speak of the human power of Free Will we mean the human power of intellect and reasoned choice.

## 2. Saadia on Free Will.

### a. The Doctrine of Free Will.

The theological problem of the freedom of the Will in relation to the doctrine of Divine Providence and the omniscience of God did not emerge until the tenth century, when Jewish thinkers like Saadia (d. 942) heard around them on every hand the Moslem controversies over predestination.<sup>1</sup>

The Jewish doctrine of Human Free Will is found by Saadia completely to harmonise with the facts of human existence. Like the Mutazilites in Islam he vigorously opposed Predetermination. There is no doubt that evil results from Human Free Will. Furthermore Divine omnipotence in the government of the world must appear to permit this evil. Thus it appears that the Deity may not be entirely free from at least permissive responsibility from this evil. But, claims Saadia, such evil is permitted wholly for man's sake. It is the unavoidable result of God's goodness to man in granting him freedom of choice. The evil committed by man may be the outcome of God's beneficence to man but cannot therefore be

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1. G.F. Moore: Judaism, Vol. I, p. 454.

ascribed to God. As compensation to man for the suffering of various evils there is the doctrine of future existence and reward.

Human freedom is Man's high prerogative and a Divine gift. Freedom of the Will is the corollary that follows on the gift of Reason. Man's reasoning powers are his supreme endowment - not even Revelation abrogates man's reason; it only supplements it.

In the matter of human choice between right and wrong the Will of man is free from all determination and even influence on the part of God.<sup>1</sup>

The Arab theory of determination arose out of their view of the direct dependence of the Will on God. Saadia opposed Determinism by insisting on the independence of human Will from God or any other force. Other Jewish philosophers stated explicitly that even the omnipotence of Divine Will was limited by the fact of the freedom of the human Will.<sup>2</sup>

Saadia adduces evidence for his assertion based on inner conviction or feeling, on logic, and on Jewish tradition as stated in Scripture.

#### b. Problems in Biblical Exegesis.

A number of Scriptural passages which apparently support the fatalistic view are carefully examined by Saadia and explained in a manner consistent with the principle of Free Will.

1. Gen. 20:6. "And I also withheld thee from sinning against me."

This may appear as though God exercised compulsion on Abimelech to prevent him from doing wrong. Saadia explains this

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1. Saadia: Emunoth Vedeoth, IV, 10.

2. Cf. Ibn Dau'ud: Emunah Rabbah, Introd., p. 97.

E. Kaufman: Haemunah Haisraelith, II. pp. 244-254.

was only a moral pressure. Moral consciousness is also described as 'Yirath-Elohim', 'the fear of God', as when Amalek 'did not fear God', but Pharaoh's midwives 'feared God'. Thus Abimelech was prevented from sinning by an inner sense of moral consciousness. This is described as God preventing him from sinning, but Abimelech was still free to act differently if he so chose. God did not in fact personally constrain him so that he did not sin.

2. Is. 6:10. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see..."

Similarly Deut. 28:29; Job 5:13. These verses refer to God withholding insight from men so that they do not fully realise the true position and thus make a wrong decision - the decision nevertheless is their own, freely made by themselves. Divine intervention in human affairs is part of Divine Providence.

3. Ex. 7:3; 10:1 (Pharaoh); Deut. 2:30 (Sichon). The hardening of man's heart by God.

This means that God strengthens the boldness of man so that he does not submit under the trouble brought on him by God. These are further cases of Providential intervention.

4. Prov. 3:34; Ezek. 14:9; Jer. 4:10; Is. 63:17.

These quotations are likewise explained as referring to acts of man and not acts of Divine compulsion. They are Divine pronouncements on the state of man's character but not its determination.

5. Ps. 119:36; 141:4. Prayer to God to turn my heart to good and away from evil.

The meaning of this prayer is that by forgiving me you have already so guided me that I shall not sin again.

6. Prov. 16:1. "The preparations of the heart belong to man: But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord."

This refers only to the fact that the possession of this capacity originates from God - but not that man is influenced in his speech by God.

7. Prov. 21:1. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the water courses; He turneth it whithersoever He will."

This must be understood figuratively. This does not mean that the heart of the king is directed by God just as the stream flows according to God's desire. It means that even the king is also dependent on God and is thus obliged to obey Him. The Will of the king is nevertheless free.

8. 1 Chron. 5:26; 2 Chron. 36:22; 1 Kings 18:37 and others.

These verses mean that God allows or causes an event to take place as a result of which our strength of Will alters. If we would have perceived the event in its true light we <sup>would?</sup> may not have allowed this change of Will. Again it is man's decision and not a decision forced on him by God.

It is fully maintained as the principle of personal Providence on the part of God that God participates in the affairs of man, but He does not determine them. The power is always left with man to decide his own actions.

### 3. Maimonides on Free Will.

#### a. The Doctrine of Free Will.

Maimonides by far surpasses his predecessors in his treatment of the problem of Free Will both in clarity and in soundness. He goes deeper into the question whether the Will is free or not, and

deals also with the metaphysical side of the question, the harmonising of Divine Prescience and Providence with Human Free Will and choice of action.

Throughout the exposition of his philosophy Maimonides demonstrated that in addition to his encyclopaedic knowledge of the whole of Biblical and Rabbinic literature he had an excellent knowledge of the works of all earlier Jewish philosophers. He likewise had complete mastery of Arab philosophers. Furthermore he was familiar with Greek philosophy - especially Aristotle for whom he had the greatest respect and whom he regarded as hardly of less standing than the Sages of his own people.

The chief sources in Maimonides' writings on this subject are as follows:

1. Mishna Commentary, Introd. to Tractate Aboth - 8th section, (Shmoneh Perakim).
2. Moreh Nevuchim, 'Guide for the Perplexed', III, 16-21.
3. Code: Hilchoth Teshuva, V and VI.
4. Code: Hilchoth Yesodei Hatorah, II, 10-11, also a few isolated comments in other places.

Maimonides' direct presentation of the problem is clear and systematic; but at times his views in different places on the problem require explanation and harmonisation. Maimonides' arguments in his 'Introduction to Aboth' are more Talmudic than in the 'Guide' which is more philosophical.

His proof of Human Free Will is mostly indirect, resting on his refutation of Fatalism and Determinism. His arguments are sound and logical. The proof derived from Feeling, found in Saadia and Halevi, is strangely absent in Maimonides. His first

word on Free Will is given in the eighth section of Introduction to Aboth as follows: Virtue and Vice, states Maimonides, are not born in Man.<sup>1</sup>

No one comes into the world already endowed with either a good or a bad character. Character just like any skill or ability is developed through training and practice. Virtue grows through the frequent repetition of that ~~thing~~<sup>which</sup> is morally good, and Wickedness through the frequent repetition of evil practices. Nevertheless Man can be born with a certain Disposition following which he will automatically incline towards Virtue or Wickedness. But this innate Disposition or Susceptibility does not determine unalterably the development of Man. A Disposition towards Virtue is not in itself Virtue, for man can develop himself if he so chooses in a manner contrary to his natural dispositions. Of course it is not so easy to do this as to follow his natural disposition, but with effort and exertion it can be done.

Thus if by nature one has a hot temperament, this innate disposition could give rise to a virtue called Valour. Such a person is courageous without difficulty so long as he accustoms himself to the performance of courageous actions or to the instruction in their advantages. These actions will influence the development of his natural disposition into the actual character of being Valourous.

On the other hand, other influences could impede the development of this natural disposition to Valour, or even suppress it. Likewise in opposite circumstances when a man is endowed at

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1. Cf. Aristotle: Eth. Nic. II, 1; III, 7; Alexander, de facto c. 27.



birth with the natural disposition to Timidity and Fear, and these dispositions are encouraged by education and training, he will certainly become a Coward. Nevertheless if he were educated to Bravery, he could become Brave.<sup>1</sup>

These facts of experience refute the senseless false teaching of Astrology that the Virtue or Wickedness of man is strictly determined by the form of the Constellation that obtained at the moment of his birth, and that he is compelled to apply himself in all his actions with that inborn character, and that any self-determination on his part is quite impossible.

Quite apart from this, the claim that Virtue and Wickedness can be inborn in man is rejected by the religious assumption of Free Will and by Reason.

Not only our Religion, says Maimonides, but also Greek Philosophy, particularly Aristotle, teach, in complete agreement, that all actions of man are dependent on his Free Will.

Maimonides asserts that man's actions are actually determined by his Will only and by no other external causes. Although it is true that his moral development can be encouraged or hindered in any particular direction by his natural dispositions, they are in fact subservient to the Will which has a free hand in their direction.

If we lay down that man is not free in the sense of Arab fatalism we impose on ourselves a mountain of inconsistencies. Thus, if man's actions are controlled either directly by God, or intermediately through the stars, we cannot understand the purpose

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1. Cf. Maimonides: Code, Hilchoth Deoth, I, 1 and 2.

of God's issuing Command and Prohibition. It would be unjust of God to command us to do something which we have not the power to do, or to forbid what we are compelled to do.<sup>1</sup>

Further, study and tuition, training and experience, would all be useless if, according to the Fatalists, whatever we achieve must be achieved, whether we do anything about it or not.

Likewise Reward and Punishment would be entirely inconsistent with Divine justice. No murderer should receive punishment either from man or God if he is constrained to murder and is compelled to do so even though it be against his own will. All transgressions must, according to the Fatalists, be forgiven, no matter what aim the transgressor had in view, since man must follow his fate and cannot fight against it.

These unreasonable conclusions to which we are led by Fatalism strengthen us in our assumption of Human Free Will, according to which all these difficulties fall away.

The psychological feeling of Remorse, the pang of conscience, and the feeling of penitence likewise prove that the Will is free. The existence in us of this feeling after an evil action, demonstrates that the power to refrain from the action was in our hands, and that we ourselves are responsible and accountable for what we have done. Only when we are conscious that our actions must be ascribed to our Free Will can we do Repentance for our wrong.

Physically, there can be no question that we have the free Ability to do that which we are physically capable of doing if in our Will we so determine.

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1. Cf. Maimonides: Guide, III, 32.

Maimonides explains the Talmudic statement, "Sitting and standing and all movements of man take place only through the decree of God". This means that the ability that man has to do these things, of his own free choice, was endowed in him by God. (Cf. Sukka 53a.) Likewise there are physical laws governing movement, e.g. when a stone falls from a height, its movement is not a special act of Divine Providence, it merely follows the natural law of gravity.<sup>1</sup>

b. Problems in Biblical Exegesis.

Since Maimonides quotes Scripture in support of Free Will, he must likewise explain such passages which appear to deny Free Will. His explanations of these passages are of more than normal exegetical interest. In particular when compared with the problems discussed by Saadia, they throw light on his own view of Psychology.

1. Gen. 15:13. "And they shall afflict them four hundred years."

This declaration by God to Abraham that the Egyptians will oppress Israel was a prophecy of what would occur in the future. It was not an injunction which compelled individual Egyptians to oppress Israel. Maimonides explains elsewhere that Divine Prescience in no way interferes with Human Free Will. But Human Understanding cannot comprehend the nature of Divine Prescience.<sup>2</sup>

2. Deut. 31:16. "Behold thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the strange gods of the land."

This does not mean that any Israelite is compelled to worship

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1. Cf. Maimonides, Guide, I, 73.

2. Cf. Maimonides: Code, Hilchoth Teshuva, VI, 5.

idolatry. This is a threat and warning that should Israel in the future transgress my Prohibition and nevertheless engage in idol worship, then the previously ordained punishment for this transgression will surely fall upon them. This sentence is not a prophecy but a warning addressed to the Free Will of Israel. Punishment to any Idolator will be just, since he acted through his own Free Will.

3. Exod. 10:1. "For I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs in the midst of them."

Maimonides states that it is inconceivable that God should punish Pharaoh if Pharaoh's Will was not free and undetermined by God. We must assume that Pharaoh acting freely without any compulsion chose to oppress Israel. For this act of Pharaoh he was punished that his power of Free Will was taken from him. If he had not forfeited his Free Will he would have been able to improve his ways and avert destruction. In order to prevent this escape from Punishment, God removed from him the Ability of free self-determination so that his evil fate should overcome him.

If we were to ask why did God punish Pharaoh in this way that he deprived him of his power of Free Will, we must reply that God's Wisdom and Justice determine the punishment appropriate to a particular sin. We may further ask: does it not appear then purposeless to make any further demands on Pharaoh to release Israel once he had been punished with impotence in moral choice? Maimonides replies that through these repeated demands we see a demonstration of Divine Wisdom by making known to Pharaoh and the World that God can punish also by removing the power of Free Will,

the Free Will itself being an exclusive and inviolate good. (Cf. Deut. 2:30 (Sichon); Isaiah 6:10; 1 Kings 18:37; Hos. 4:17; Jos. 11:20.)<sup>1</sup>

Similarly Maimonides gives the same interpretation of other passages in Hilchoth Teshuvah, VI, 4 and 5, thus:

4. Ps. 86:11. "Teach me Thy way," and Ps. 51:12: "Uphold me with a free spirit."

Here David prays that his sins shall not hinder him in the recognition of good and evil, neither should his guilt deprive him of his power of Free Will to return to good and to do repentance.

5. Ps. 25:8,9. "Therefore will he instruct sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way."

Here we appear to find Divine leadership and determining of man's ways. This seems to limit Human Free Will. But these passages must be understood to mean that God has sent his prophets to teach man and that man has the Ability to understand and to choose to follow that teaching. The more man follows this teaching the closer he approaches to the real good, and God helps him in his efforts.

#### 4. The Theological Problem of Free Will in Maimonides.

##### a. Omniscience.

The chief source for the discussion of the metaphysics of the problem is found in the 'Guide for the Perplexed', III, 16, 19, 20, 21.

After examining critically the philosophical views of Divine

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1. Maimonides: Code, Hilchoth Teshuva, VI, 3.

Knowledge, Maimonides deals with the problem of how a man can have freedom in the light of God's Omniscience. Maimonides finds no difficulty in explaining this problem. It is a fundamental teaching of Scripture that God's Knowledge does not prevent the existence of Possibility in the development of things and events, and that something which is at present undecided will in the future be decided. Many texts, as Deut. 22:8; 20:7, and in fact the whole teaching of Judaism with its Commands and Prohibitions, express most clearly this view of Human Freedom without any possible doubt.

Of course, admits Maimonides, this juxtaposition of two teachings which apparently contradict each other - i.e. God's undoubted Knowledge and man's undecided freedom of choice - this cannot be understood by us. But this lack of understanding on our part results only from our poor understanding. It does not alter the facts in any way. It can be stated with positive certainty that both Human Freedom and Divine Omniscience are firm facts. To the question how they can be reconciled we must answer - ignoramus - 'we are unable to understand'.

We here encounter in Maimonides a new solution of the problem of Free Will and Omniscience. Is this solution an improvement on previous attempts? At first it would appear that Maimonides' solution is no solution at all. It just does away with the problem but does not solve it. Maimonides frankly confesses he does not know the solution. Thus his answer - ignoramus - could hardly be expected to satisfy the philosophers. It may be regarded by intellectuals as a mean and cheap escape from the difficulties of Reason. This judgment however would be wrong. We must distinguish

between a powerless and cowardly retreat by Reason before the immenseness of a Problem, and a true estimation of Reason's capacity and a realisation of its limits that circumscribe human Reason. Maimonides does not seek refuge in the asylum of Lack of Knowledge. He rescues the problem from resting in the purposeless, and resultless speculations of philosophers, and brings more certainty to his solution than existed in any previous attempt.

The solutions to the problem of Omniscience and Free Will given by earlier philosophers of Judaism follow the idea of the curtailment of Divine Knowledge for the benefit of Human Free Will. Bahya is an exception. His view has a certain similarity with Maimonides.<sup>1</sup> Albo accepted completely the view of Maimonides.<sup>2</sup> Human Free Will seemed to them to be sufficiently proved by Conscience, Religion, and Philosophy. They had no doubt of it. Likewise Divine Prescience was undoubted. Maimonides, it may be noted, does not need to speak of Prescience in particular since to him Divine Knowledge embraces in one and the same act past, present and future.

But Divine Knowledge was always to them an unknown quantity. Thus in order to escape the quandary of the problem and to retain the principle of Free Will, it was only natural that they should subtract from this unknown X as much as was necessary for their purpose without it ever becoming obvious that they were in fact reducing the value of this X. From the theistic point of view the difficulty of reconciling Omniscience with Free Will is undeniable. For from the theistic view any attempt to reduce Divine Knowledge

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1. Bahya: Hovoth Halevavoth, III, 8.

2. Albo: Ikkarim, VI, 1.

must be rejected. Thus since Divine Being and likewise Divine Knowledge must be supreme and transcendent and beyond our perception, so for the theist the problem of reconciling this with Human Free Will is beyond solution.

Since Maimonides, remarkable advances have been made in the investigation of the problem of Free Will. Psychologically the problem has been dealt with in all its difficulties. Likewise it has been fully treated from the ethical point of view. But, metaphysically, there has been no substantial advance. Maimonides' view remains that man cannot describe the nature of Divine Knowledge.

Many and not unimportant people, partly because of these metaphysical difficulties and partly through proofs accumulated in support of Determinism, feel compelled to reject the view of Free Will and thus avoid altogether this metaphysical problem. (Cf. Spinoza, Kant, Schleiermacher, Herbartian Psychology.) But whoever recognises the existence of the problem, recognises also the impossibility of its solution. The Talmudic statement of R. Akiba, **הכל צפוי והרשות נתונה**, is the conclusion reached by Maimonides after his philosophical investigation. Descartes, five hundred years after Maimonides, confirms the same result. (Descartes: princ. phil. I, ss. 37-41.)<sup>1</sup>

#### b. Providence.

##### 1) The doctrine of Providence.

The problem of Divine Providence and Human Free Will is discussed mainly in the 'Guide for the Perplexed', III, 17-18.

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1. Lesser Knoller: Das Problem der Willensfreiheit in der älteren jüdischen Religionsphilosophie des Mittelalters, (Leipzig, 1884).



Maimonides first describes the views on Providence held by the Epicureans, Aristotelians, Ascharites and Mutazalites. He then quotes the views of the Bible, Talmud and later Gaonim. After reasserting firmly the undisputed principle of Scripture that man possesses complete Freedom of Will, Maimonides deals with the precise teaching about Providence. This is not based on philosophical proof but on evidence from Scripture, which evidence, he states, in no way contradicts sound human reason and can well be accepted as true.

Scripture teaches, says Maimonides, that we can never ascribe injustice to God. Whatever befalls an individual, whether good or evil, has been merited personally by man, evil as punishment and good as reward - and not as Aristotle by mere chance, nor as the Ascharites because God just so desired, nor as the Mutazalites so that God would give reward according to His wisdom in the future life.

Maimonides quotes several passages in Bible, Talmud, and Midrash illustrating the Jewish view that God rules over the world with justice and deals with man according to his deserts. It is true that some passages speak of suffering from love - *סורין של אהבה* - bringing future reward (as the Mutazalites later taught) - but nothing of this teaching is found in Scripture itself. (Cf. Berachoth 5a.)

Maimonides states that some later scholars (perhaps Karaites) did accept the teaching (as the Mutazalites) that there is reward in future life for unmerited suffering, as suffered also by animals.<sup>1</sup>

1.S.Munk: Guide des Egarés, p. 128, n. 4.

Maimonides' own view, however, based on Biblical teaching, was that in the sublunar world Divine Providence guides the fate of individuals of the human race, but only of the species in all else. He agrees with Aristotle that the falling of the leaf is not an act of Divine Providence. The spider was not ordained by Divine Providence to kill the fly. These things are completely accidental.

Only reasoning beings share in Divine Providence - and only human beings are endowed with Reason. The fact that God rewards and punishes man for his acts is proof that God is concerned with man's behaviour. (Guide, III, 17, 18.) In fact, continues Maimonides, the very extent of Divine Providence enjoyed by an individual is dependent on the extent of his Reason. Providence is bestowed on man in varying measure according to the standard of his Reason. Philosophers likewise, says Maimonides, confirm this view. (Cf. Aristotle: Eth. Nic., X, 9.)<sup>1</sup> Thus Divine Providence is more active with a prophet than with a boorish man, for the latter because of his poor quality of intelligence is little different from an animal and thus does not enjoy much more Providence than an animal. Maimonides says he was led to accept this view because he could find in no prophetic book any evidence that God shows Providence to individuals except to men. Even the fact that man despite his frailty and mortality enjoys God's Providence strikes the prophet with wonder. (Ps. 8:5; 144:3.) Many Biblical passages show that God's Providence rests on man, e.g. Ps. 33:15; Jer. 32:19; Job 34:21, etc. The Biblical account of the Patriarchs in particular shows how individual men are

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1.S.Munk: Guide des Egares, p. 139, n. 2.

governed by Divine Providence - and even the varied extent of that Providence. Maimonides finds no objection to this view that Providence affects only humans in such Scriptural passages which refer to God's providing also the animals with their daily needs. (Ps. 147:9; 104:21.) (Cf. Avoda Zara 3b.) These passages refer only to God's care for the animal species that food, etc., be provided for their preservation. If we are to ask why should not individual animals and objects, just like men, also enjoy Divine Providence, to this we could likewise ask why were they not endowed with reason just like men? Maimonides says that to those questions we can only reply that God so desired it, or thus in His wisdom He arranged it. Halevi, Saadia and Ibn Daud adopt the same view.

## 2) Providence and Free Will.

Throughout all this discussion by Maimonides on the subject of Providence we search in vain for an answer to the problem of how Providence can be reconciled with Free Will. This remarkable circumstance is explained by the fact that Maimonides does not speak of Providence in the sense of Predetermination but as Care and Concern by God over the affairs of men.

The Hebrew terms used by Ibn Tibbon are thus:

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| 1. Providence, i.e. predetermination = | גזר   |
| 2. Providence, i.e. care =             | השגחה |
| 3. Lack of Care =                      | עזיבה |
| 4. Lack of predetermination (divine) = | בחירה |

By this terminology we can see that the reconciliation of Providence (i.e. Care השגחה) and Free Will (בחירה) presents little

difficulty for they do not exclude each other.

The only circumstance where difficulty would arise would be the presence of both **גזרה**, i.e. predetermination and **בחירה**, human Free Will. Although Maimonides speaks of Creative Knowing by God, and also of Prescience, he does not clearly state that God's Prescience definitely predetermines man's action, i.e. excluding **בחירה**. To Maimonides Providence means Care and is a different thing from God's Omniscience and Prescience. God's Prescience does not predetermine man's actions which are left to his **בחירה**. His foreknowledge of man's choice is a special form of knowing which we cannot understand. Maimonides does not even raise the question whether this Divine Care for man's affairs impairs his Free Will.

On the other hand, in his Introduction to Aboth Maimonides speaks specifically of Providence in the sense of Predetermination. There he lays down that Divine Providence (predetermination) governs all the fate events of men with the exception of such actions that depend on his Free Will - i.e. particularly his ethical behaviour. God does not compel man to either Virtue or Sin. The decision in a matter which depends on an ethical choice is left to man.

Thus it is erroneous to say that marriages are determined by God, because a marriage of two people may be a permitted or a forbidden marriage - thus here is an ethical choice by the two people and the decision is made by them and not by God. Similarly money-making is not determined by God, for a man can deal honestly or dishonestly - and the choice is his own. So it is with actions that depend on our own ethical choice.

Divine Providence (i.e. Predetermination) governs everything that does not depend on man's free choice, e.g. natural disposition, form, capabilities, aptitudes, etc.

Apart from this ethical freedom, man is also physically free. His movements cannot be regarded as Divinely determined. When we say that a man's sitting, standing, walking, are determined by Divine Will, we mean only that God endowed Man with the ability of doing these things.

We see here that Maimonides completely separates Human Free Will in man's actions from Divine Providence, in order to assert Human Free Will entirely undiminished. But the question may be asked: Does not this free and undetermined (and even determining) Free Will of man detract something from the power of Divine Providence, so that the working of God is itself reduced? To this Maimonides replies: In no way is there any such detraction from God's power, for the nature of God's influence on man is not by direct means. This fact does not reduce his Omnipotence, for God himself bestowed on man the power of Free Will and self-determination; even the freedom of the Human Will is itself a gift from God; it is itself the work of the Almighty. 'Just as it is the Will of the Creator that fire and air rise but that water and earth sink down, and that the wheel turns around and around, and that the other creatures in the world are according to their fashion as it was His Will, so also He wished man to have the power over his actions in his own hands, and that what he does be left to him, and that none compel him or draw him this way or that.' (Hilchoth Teshuvah, V, 4.) This solution of the problem of Free Will as reconcilable with Divine Omnipotence resembles the solution given

to the problem of Free Will with Omniscience and Prescience. Here also the Divine Power remains undiminished - just as Divine Knowledge suffered no diminution through Human Free Will. In each case the precious boon of Free Will is preserved as the privilege of noble humanity.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Lesser Knoller: Das Problem der Willensfreiheit in der älteren jüdischen Religionsphilosophie des Mittelalters, (Leipzig, 1884).

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CONCEPT OF THE WILL

#### Mind and Will.

##### 1. Agents of the Inner Person.

In Rabbinic literature the various terms for Will, or Inner Personality, are used to describe the faculties of Mind rather than refer to the Will in its general sense.

##### a. Razon.

The term RAZON in the Talmud is not used in the general meaning of Will but rather signifies consent or approval. To do an act with Razon is to do it willingly. To act in a manner ~~contrary to the Razon is to do it willingly. To act in a manner~~ contrary to the Razon of the Sages is to do it without their approval. To fulfil the Razon of God is to act in accordance with His wish.

##### b. Nefesh.

The term NEFESH in Rabbinic literature is used generally in the same sense as Nefesh in the Bible. This term includes the vitality or animal life of the person, and consequently, by transferred use, the person himself. It represents both the "Blood Soul" and "Breath Soul". It is the soul which departs from man after his death. It is the life which is endangered or, at times, forfeited. The term is equally used in the Biblical sense of Will, Wish or Desire. A man of bad character may also be described as possessing an evil Nefesh. A person's wish or

intention lies in his Nefesh.<sup>1</sup>

c. Lev.

Another expression for the seat of mind and thought is the Biblical term LEV. This is particularly noticeable in the matters which are described as being DEVARIM SHE - BALEV. Although the fulfilment of most precepts requires the utterance of the prescribed spoken words, there are a number of precepts in which mental thought alone is predominant and effective. Among such matters are Belief in God, Rejection of Idolatry, Avoidance of Evil Desires and Unchaste Imaginings, the Avoidance of Lust, Repentance and Forgiveness. In ritual matters also the mental determination is sufficient to effect the Removal of Leaven, the apportioning of Teruma and Maaser, the appointment of a Fast and the confirmation by the husband of his wife's oath.<sup>2</sup>

d. Maḥshavah.

The ideas of Thoughtful Plan and Intention are expressed in the Talmud by the terms MAḤSHAVAH and KAVVANAH. One of the basic ideas of work forbidden on the Sabbath is that which involves creative design, i.e. skilled work - 'M'lecheth Maḥsheveth'. (Hagiga 10b.) When Intention is carried out to a successful conclusion, it is described as a Machshavah which bears fruit. (Kiddushin 40a.) When rewarding the merit of a good deed, God adds the merit of a good intention, Maḥshavah. (Kiddushin 40a.)

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1. See Aruch Hashalem - ed. Kohut (Vienna, 1926) Vol. V, p. 368a f., s.v. Nefesh.
  2. See J.D. Eisenstein (editor): Ozar Israel, Article on "Devarim She - Balev", Vol. 4, p. 12. Cf. M. Lazarus: The Ethics of Judaism, Part 1, Appendices 23, p. 291.



When man plans secretly to deceive or do evil, he is warned that punishment will be inflicted upon him by God who is the Master of all man's inner thoughts (Baal Mahshavoth). (Sanhedrin 19b.)

e. Kavvanah.

In the Rabbinical precept that the fulfilment of the Commandments requires Kavvanah, this means that their performance must be accompanied at least with the intention of complying with the Law. (Berachoth 13a.) Thus in the ritual act of Shechita, a distinction is made between an intention, Kavvanah, merely to cut but not to kill ritually. (Hullin 31a.) The term Kavvanah is also used in the meaning of meditation, attention and devotion. (Cf. Berachoth 13b; Megilla 20a.)

f. Hirhur.

Inner contemplation not associated with any speech or action is described as HIRHUR. This may refer to contemplation of proper thoughts or of sinful fancies. In the latter sense it is similar to the Biblical expression "turning after your eyes", by which is implied indulgence in unchaste or sinful imagination. Although speech about one's daily pursuits is forbidden on the Sabbath, it is recognised that contemplation, Hirhur, is not included in the prohibition. (Sabbath 113b; Cf. Shulchan Aruch, Orah Hayyim, 16.)

Contemplation of the holy words of Scripture, however, is regarded as unseemly in a place of impurity. (Berachoth 24b.) Although a difference of opinion is recorded as to whether contemplation, Hirhur, is equivalent to speech, it is stipulated that in the reading of the statutory prayers of Grace after Meals, the Shema, the Amida and the Blessings for other precepts, it is

necessary that the words should be enunciated by the lips, unless he is prevented from doing so by ill health or impurity. (Berachoth 20b; Cf. Shulchan Aruch, Orah Hayyim, 62.)

The man who allows himself to indulge in the contemplation of sinful fancies, although he does not actually perform the evil, is excluded from the presence of God. (Nidda 13a.) He who is afflicted with an unclean flow is questioned regarding his indulgence in immoral thoughts. (Zabim II:2.) Innocence as far as acts of transgression, does not necessarily imply innocence from sinful fancies. (Sabbath 64a.) Sinful imaginings are regarded as more injurious to spiritual health than the sinful act itself. (Yoma 29a.) The avoidance of sinful thoughts by day saves a man from impurity at night. (Avodah Zarah 2a.) The contemplation of idolatrous worship is called Hirhur Avodah Zarah. (Berachoth 12b.)

## 2. 'Daath'.

### a. Knowledge and consent.

The term of greatest importance among the agents of the Inner Person in Talmudic literature, which is most frequently used in the sense of Mind or Will, is the expression DAATH. Derived from the root Yada, to know, this term is frequently used in legal phraseology as very nearly the equivalent of the English legal expression "knowledge and consent". It is sometimes used in the sense of sheer awareness and, at others, it refers to acts done out of the free Will. It generally refers to Mind as the faculty of intelligence and considered opinion.

### b. The basic agent of Personality.

In a very special sense the term Daath has a far wider meaning

than having reference to any particular ability of the mind. It refers to Mind as a general mental Energy or as the psychical source of Intelligence and Opinion.<sup>1</sup>

Gulak describes the vital importance in Jewish law of the notion of Daath. The creation or termination of every legal relationship between individuals requires both Form and Daath. The external legal requirements of Form are laid down in Jewish law requiring the performance of certain acts of Kinyan whereby evidence of the new legal relationship to things or persons is publicly demonstrated. The performance of the legal Form by the individual is apparent. The unseen subjective agent in the transaction, however, is called Daath.

The essential element of Agreement and Contract is the fact that Daath obtained in the creation of the contract. The term Daath in this legal sense denotes more than the general meaning of knowledge, wish or awareness. It is not always necessary that the party should wish or desire that the legal act take place, but it is always essential that the parties should intend, whether willingly or unwillingly, that the particular act in which they are engaged should be effected. This Intention is not described as the RAZON, will or wish of the individual, but rather as deriving from his DAATH.<sup>2</sup>

The term RAZON in the Talmud refers to the Volition of the individual in the sense of personal wish or desire. This element

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1. See Aruch Hashalem - ed. Kohut, Vol. III, p. 105 ff., s.v. DEA.  
 2. Cf. Anson: Law of Contract, p. 2 - "Contract is that form of agreement which directly contemplates an obligation: the contractual obligation is that form of obligation which springs from agreement."

of psychology is considered to be too subjective to be accepted as the criterion of any legal action. Whereas some of the legal acts performed by an individual may be in accordance with his Razon, wish or desire, it is probable that far more are done under the pressure of necessity. If Razon was required to be the criterion of legal agreement such acts as the selling of one's home through the pressure of circumstances would be voidable on account of the absence of Razon. The main concern of the law is that the act is intended by the individual. The psychical force of Mind, which is the essence of the Person considered in law, is termed Daath. If that element of the person is present in the performance of a legal act, the law is satisfied that the essence of the Person has participated in the act. The various personal considerations, or external circumstances which have brought, or even compelled the individual to reach such an intention are considered by the Law to be extraneous to the essential fact of the individual's eventual intention and action. Through this conception of Daath the Talmud recognises the validity of an act which is done under the influence of physical pressure exerted by the Court. (Baba Bathra 48a.)

In acts of Alienation and Acquisition it is, of course, essential because of public policy, to be governed by the evidence of objective acts in the law. But the insistence on objective performance is due particularly to the requirements of the administration of law. The actual constitution itself of the right is based on the subjective Will. Jewish law in the final analysis always requires the direction of Will in order to achieve a legal result.

The essential part played by the Will in the creation of a

right is demonstrated also in the distinction which Jewish law accepts between Original and Derived Acquisition. In Derived Acquisition, the acquiring person plays a more passive part than in Original Acquisition and therefore requires less capacity since a more active will is alienating the property to him. In the case of Original Acquisition, "animus acquirendi", i.e. the intention to acquire, is the essential co-efficient. Thus here complete capacity on the part of the acquirer is essential. In the case of Derived Acquisition there is the legal maxim "Daath Ahereth Makneh", i.e. another active mind is engaged in alienating the property. In all cases it is clear that the underlying factor constituting the legal act is the activity of the Will, DAATH, acting in some part or other of the process.<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental importance of the element of Daath is exemplified in the requirements that each party in an Agreement or Contract should, firstly, possess capacity not only in Personal Status but also in Daath or Intelligence.

The legal criterion of Intelligence usually coincides with the age of puberty. Maimonides states that the power of Agency is not invested in Minors 'because Minors are not endowed with sufficient Intelligence'.<sup>2</sup> The lowest degree of Intelligence for the endowment of some restricted acquisitive rights is determined by the presence of the sense of discrimination which prompts him 'to throw away a pebble but to take a nut when handed to him'. A person both deaf and dumb, Heresh, is considered mentally defective and is on a level

1. I. Herzog: The Main Institutions of Jewish Law, Vol. I, p. 275.

Cf. A. Gulak: Yesodei Hamishpat Ha'ivri, Vol. I, Chap. 5, p. 103.

2. Maimonides: Code, Shelichuth, II:2.

with a minor of minimum Intelligence. An imbecile has no acquisitive capacity whatsoever.<sup>1</sup>

The second requirement is the awareness of the nature of the act in which they are engaged and of the intention of both parties to effect such an act in accordance with the terms and conditions known to both parties. Thirdly there must be common reliance by both parties that the acts in which they are engaged are legally effective. Thus the term Daath embraces four essential elements: Intelligence, Awareness, Intention, and Reliance.<sup>2</sup>

From the above outline of the Jewish concept of Daath, it may be assumed that the Jewish notion of Mind covers a far wider field than Thought, Intelligence, Wish or Intention. The notion of Daath appears to suggest the basic psychological energy of the person which is the source and active power of all his general and particular abilities. Mind, according to this notion, is immensely wider than the cerebral state or the functions of the brain. There is, of course, a close connection between the brain with its faculties and the Mind or Conscious Life. The brain, however, is a functionary of the Mind or, as is termed in Jewish thought, the Soul. The brain but mimes the thought, translates it into action, and links it to the outside world.<sup>3</sup>

In cerebral injury, it is not mind, as an occult power which is

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1. For the distinction in the requirement of the element of Daath in Original or Derived Acquisition see I. Herzog: The Main Institutions of Jewish Law, Vol. I, (London, 1936), Chap. 15, pp. 275-280.
  2. A. Gulak: Yesodei Hamishpat Ha'ivri, (Berlin, 1922), Vol. I, Chap. 3, pp. 55 ff. See I. Herzog: The Main Institutions of Jewish Law, Vol. II, Chap. 8, pp. 107-133, 'Mind and Will in Conveyance and Contract'.
  3. H. Bergson: Matter and Memory, p. 231 f.

damaged but the nervous pathways, the cerebral links which permit the memories to manifest themselves. Mind is hindered by cerebral disorders, not through a defect in mind itself but in the loss of the use of the service of the brain to mind.<sup>1</sup>

The brain is only one condition out of many on which intellectual manifestations depend. It is not just the brain that thinks but the man, the organism as a whole. All parts of the body, the highest and the lowest have a sympathy with one another more intelligent than conscious intelligence can yet, or perhaps ever will, conceive.<sup>2</sup>

Thought, memory, volition, desire are neither functions of the brain nor manifestations of matter although both these elements play an integral part in their manifestation. They are all expressions of the deeper and far more extensive power of Conscious Life, Mind, or Soul. This Conscious Life is the principle of individuality which may be termed the Will of the individual.

The Will of the individual must be recognised as a principle and content, having far deeper roots than what we commonly take to be the individual mind. Its powers, function, and task are appointed by the divine power of the Universe.<sup>3</sup>

### Soul.

#### 1. The Universal Mind.

Each individual possesses his primary nucleus which is unfolded during the course of his life-history "after its kind". The primary

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1. Jacque Chevalier: "Henri Bergson" - transl. by L.A. Clare (New York, Macmillan & Co., 1928) pp. 166-170.
  2. D.A. Gorton: The Monism of Man (1893), pp. 54-56.
  3. B. Bosanquet: The Principle of Individuality and Value - The Gifford Lectures for 1911-12 (London, 1927) p. 354.

nucleus which is one in nature with the Universe is the soul. The soul which is behind the Mental 'I' is "the inmost secret of each man's heart".<sup>1</sup> In the animist view Mind is fundamental in the Universe of Being and all human beings share in the common stock of universal Mind; but each person does so in his own peculiar way which constitutes his individuality.<sup>2</sup>

The special attributes which unite man with the divine soul and which separate him from the rest of creation are precisely the divine attributes of rational and creative activity. The possession by man of Will, intellect and freedom constitutes man as a personality and moral being.<sup>3</sup>

Saadia describes the Will as the basic "imperceptible air" of all creation which was implanted by God in nature for a special purpose and whose workings are everlastingly superintended and directed by Him.<sup>4</sup> He furthermore states that when the Soul is united with the body it possesses the three faculties of reasoning, appetite and anger referred to in the Old Testament by the terms neshamah, nefesh and ruah respectively.<sup>5</sup>

The faculties of man are his executive powers which man instructs and trains to be obedient to his orders.<sup>6</sup> Reason, being one of the faculties of man, is directed by man. The force of direction may be described as the power of Will. According to

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1. T. Mark: The Unfolding of Personality, (London, 1910), p. 25.
  2. G.F. Stout: Mind and Matter, (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 309, 311-315.
  3. I. Epstein: The Faith of Judaism, p. 216. Cf. Chamber's English Dictionary, s.v. MEAN = to have the mind, to intend, to signify. A.S. maenan; Ger. meinen "to think" from a root man, found also in MAN and MIND.
  4. Saadia: Sefer Yezira, Chap. 4.
  5. Saadia: Emunoth Vedooth, VI, 3.
  6. Judah Halevi: Kuzari, III, 2-5.



Halevi's view of the insufficiency and unreliability of Reason, Man possesses in addition to Reason an inner vision culminating in prophecy and divine influence. These powers likewise become faculties at the disposal of man in the perfection of his Being and Personality.<sup>1</sup> In the process of moral judgment man's desire for evil is opposed by a certain sentiment or inner knowledge that such actions are prohibited by God whose nature and authority are beyond the power of man.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The 'manikin'.

The notion that the soul takes the form of an exact reproduction in miniature of the nature and personality of the entire individual, and tenants the chambers of the heart, reflects the idea that the Will is in fact the totality of man. Thus good done by the heart is the virtue of Man, just as evil done by the heart is the sin of Man. (Berachoth 61a; Tanhuma - ed. Buber, Vayyikra: 12.)<sup>3</sup> This presence of the Will in the heart explains the association by Scripture of the evil impulse with the heart. (Genesis 6:5; 8:21.)<sup>4</sup>

In the use by man of any of his faculties the larger the measure of Will that accompanies the action, the more effective is that action. Thus the sensitive testing of the smoothness of the blade of a knife depends for its effectiveness in the amount of sensory power which energises the act of touch by the finger, ("Kavvanath Halev"). The concentration of this power of Will is not the function of the senses or of reason but of man himself. Reason

1. Cf. Halevi: Kuzari, III, 7.

2. Halevi: Kuzari, III, 19.

3. G.F. Moore: Judaism, Vol. III, p. 149, n. 205.

4. G.F. Moore: Ibid., Vol. I, p. 486.

and intellect are used by man to serve him in the exercise of all his faculties. Will is the power by which man directs all the faculties - appetitive, impulsive and cognitive - of the soul.<sup>1</sup>

Halevi in his description of the proper conduct of man states that man when he truly exercises his Personality, governs all his faculties both mental and physical, as well as his senses. The nobility of such control is described by Scripture as "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city". (Prov. 16:32.)<sup>2</sup>

### 3. The source of all action.

Arama in his analysis of all acts, both physical and mental, states that for their perfect performance the three essential elements which must always obtain are Will, ability and skill. Ability and skill are the tools of the Will.<sup>3</sup>

It may appear that whereas Halevi attributes to Will the fundamental power of behaviour, Maimonides subordinates everything to Reason which for him is alone the master of man. It may be explained that Halevi is a Hebraist and empiricist, whereas Maimonides is a Hellenist and a rationalist.<sup>4</sup> But in Maimonides also Reason is the tool of man. By man's perfection of this tool, he becomes an actual intelligent being. The highest development of intelligence is the means whereby man achieves his most effective

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1. Saadia: Emunoth Vedeoth, X, 2 - ed. Rosenblatt, p. 361.
  2. Halevi: Kuzari, III, 5. Cf. William James's notion of 'The Will to Believe' as well as the general notion of 'The Will to Win' as used in athletics. Cf. Bishop South: Sermons: "Whosoever wills the doing of a thing if the doing of it be in his power, he will certainly do it; and whosoever does not do that thing which he has in his power to do, does not properly will it."
  3. Arama: Akedath Vitzhak, Deut; Reeh, Chap. 93.
  4. H. Wolfson: 'Maimonides and Halevi', J.Q.R., Vol. II, (Jan. 1912), No. 3, p. 336 f.

activity.

When Maimonides discusses the Attributes of God and denies the possibility of finding any similarity between the divine attributes and those man, he mentions the attributes of Wisdom, Power and Will. The nature of these attributes in man although, as Maimonides insists, in no way comparable to those of God, may be nevertheless understood by their relationship with those of God. Whereas in God all these attributes are complete and perfect, in man they are present in lesser and different degree. Thus even where man possesses sufficient understanding and power to perform a certain act, he may still fail in its performance through a lack of Will. Whereas in the pure Will of God there is absolute perfection in activity and driving power, in the Will of man there exists a certain indifference or laxity, derived from the material constituents of his being.<sup>1</sup>

The duty of man according to Maimonides and Halevi alike is to realise through training the fullest capacity of Intellect, Power and Will.

### Volition.

Volition has been described as the highest stage of human mentality.<sup>2</sup>

The basis of all Volition is the experience of various desires, impulses, emotions, resolves and intentions.

These may be divided into two types, namely, such as do or do not involve moral judgment. The latter type, e.g. whether to build a house of stone or wood, or whether to cross a river by swimming or by

1. Maimonides: Guide for the Perplexed, I, 56-58.

2. C.D. Broad: The Mind and its Place in Nature, Chap. 14, pp. 634-7.

building a bridge, may be decided by Ratiocination. The former type, involving the choice between acts which cause good or evil, require the exercise of moral judgment. In this case Volition or Conation in itself is not more than an Idea which may result in good or evil. As such the Volition is neither creditable nor discreditable. The Volition is translated into an Action by the exercise by man of the Will. Neither an act of Ratiocination nor of Volition is effected without the application by man of his Will.

In the performance of an action a man exercises free Will in two stages. Firstly, in reacting to the impulse of a Volition he may decide his action by the intelligent use of Behinah in matters of Ratiocination, or by the intelligent use of Behirah in matters involving moral judgment. If he exercises Behinah or Behirah he will decide to act wisely and well. Secondly, having reached a decision on the proper course to be followed, he is still at liberty to apply his Will so as to translate his decision into action or to withhold it, or to apply it in a different direction. A man may at times know what is right and want to do what is right and yet not do so. He may consider that he is 'weak-willed'. In fact he is exercising his complete freedom of Will. He has decided to act contrary to the counsel of Behirah in favour of some other immediate desire. He has not been denied the exercise of Free Will but he has freely chosen to abandon his power of choosing what is right. It is, however, also possible that a man may not only decide in favour of a certain right action but also apply his Will to effect it, and yet through some special disfavour of circumstances or constitution, fail to produce the result intended. In addition to Motivation by Determination and Will certain elements of skill,

strength, and perseverance are essential to the procurement of the desired result.

The Volitions of a rational agent are determined not by any external causes but only, through his free Will, by himself.<sup>1</sup> The possession of Intelligence gives us freedom from the force of powerful irrational urges and freedom to act in accordance with Reason.<sup>2</sup>

### The Will.

In Hebrew thought the Will corresponds with the entire Self, Ego or Personality of man. Whatever faculties man possesses both physical and psychical are faculties of the Will. Every manifestation of Reason, Appetition or Emotion is the result of some activity of the Will.

The many different activities of the Will are generally described by varying concrete terms, and the source of all these activities, the Will, accordingly appears in different personalised forms. These personifications, however, are typical of Hebrew thought and language. They reflect the Hebrew conception of the powers of the Will but not its real essence.

The totality of the power of the Will is more than just a capacity of the individual; it is rather the power of the Individual as a whole.

When Will is fully exercised by man it is a self-manifestation of the whole of his being.

When man is required by Scripture to strive for communion with

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1. Cf. H.J. Paton: The Categorical Imperative, p. 210.

2. Cf. H.J. Paton: Ibid., pp. 213-216.

God, he is exhorted to do so with his entire Will. "With all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deut. 6:5.) The notion of the Will here represents the entire Personality of man, the Scriptural expression "Heart", Lev, referring to the natural Yezer, instincts or passions of man; "Soul", Nefesh, referring to the intellect and the power of choice; and "Might", Meod, referring to the basic vital energy or Will. All these powers and faculties are the heritage of man and all of them together constitute his Will. They are the whole of man. With that wholeness man is exhorted to serve God.

Man possesses the ability and is required to perfect and purify the entire complex of all his faculties. According to the perfection and purification which he achieves is the measure of the success of his life. His effort in this process, feeble or strong, good or bad, is his Will.

## CONCLUSION

That which we term the Will and consider as a faculty of man is in fact not a real entity but a convenience of speech. It is a mode of expressing the conscious activity of man. An effort of the Will is not the exercise of a separate faculty of man called Will. It is a manifestation, in whatever particular manner he may express it, of the inner Self or Personality of man. Since the exercise of Will corresponds with the effort of man, it may be claimed that the Will is the man himself as the origin of all conscious activities of Mind, Connation, Volition and the Affections generally.

In the Old Testament the many usages of the term Nefesh present a picture of the totality of the human being as well as of the multiplicity of powers both mental and physical which lie in the power of the Self to comprehend and direct. Personality, Disposition and Emotion are frequently attributed to the Ruah, while the Lev is usually considered as the seat of the Mind and of conscious Resolve. Various emotional experiences are also described as the activities of particular bodily limbs. All these Hebrew expressions are employed to convey the conception of man as the central force of human personality directing the thought and vitality of his Life-Force in the pattern of behaviour chosen by himself.

The Life-Force itself is sometimes thought of as the 'will-power' of man, but the Will in Hebrew thought transcends this vital power. The activity of the Will is the activity of man in organising, determining and directing the parts taken in the life

of man by the various elements and faculties of which he is composed. The Will is the innermost power of man which no created mind is able to penetrate.

The dynamic creativeness of human personality is the manifestation of the human Will. Every activity of Reason, Appetition or Emotion is the result of some activity of the Will. When the Will is fully exercised in its most proper manner the human being manifests his real Self, his Individuality, in the fullest measure of his divinely endowed nobility.

Thought, memory, volition, desire are neither functions of the brain nor manifestations of matter, although both these elements play an integral part in their manifestation. They are all expressions of the deeper and far more extensive power of conscious life, mind or soul. This conscious life is the principle of Individuality which may be termed the Will of the individual.

The Torah is concerned with the practical result of man's thoughts, desires and imagination, that man should always act with morality. Therefore the Torah repeatedly exhorts man, and uses various psychological means to influence him, to apply his Will always to the choice of that which is morally good. It is the fundamental belief of Judaism that man is always free in his moral choice. The faculty of Behirah is his human birth-right of which no man should ever despair nor discard. If a man should say that a frivolous impulse is not under his control Scripture declares, 'Unto thee is its desire, but thou mayest rule over it'. (Gen. 4:7.) Scripture likewise reminds man 'In yourself should be your trust'. (Is. 26:3.) (Genesis Rabba 22:6; Sukkah 52a.)



The Divine Creator does not himself alter the nature of man. The peculiar characteristic of man is that he possesses the power freely to direct his Will so as to secure his own development and improvement. Man was created in this manner so that he should create his own perfection. It is not the nature of God to deal with man other than according to the plan of His creation. God helps man in his struggle by rewarding his successes in virtue with happiness, but at all times He preserves for him the exercise of Free Will and the faculty of Behirah whereby he may act consistently in accordance with Torah and Reason.

When the 'heart' of the Psalmist says to God, 'Thy face, Lord, will I seek' (Ps. 27:8), the writer is describing the noblest conception of the Will of man. In Rabbinic phraseology, ha-elohim yevakesh eth ha-adam - 'God seeks the Man', reflects the view of Jewish thought that the Will of man is nothing other than the man himself.

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