

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's Lectures on Genesis, X through XIII

Based upon Rabbi Robert Blau's notes taken at Bernard Revel Graduate School in the late 1940s. This is the third of a three-part series covering thirteen lectures.

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Introduction to Lecture X

In this lecture, the Rav discusses the Jewish understanding of eschatology, the culmination of history. For the *Kabbalah*, this is described by the historical and metaphysical merger of the two concepts of God: *Deus Persona*, the personal God, and *Deus Mundus*, the God of creation. According to the Rav, this represents the merger of the natural scientific order with the moral order, thereby uniting ontology and ethics.

Lecture X

- 1) *Keter, Hokhmah, Binah*—intellectual
- 2) *Gevurah-Gedulah*—ethical
- 3) *Tiferet, Netzah, Hod*—Esthetical Affective *Deus Persona*
- 4) *Yesod*—synthesis of 2–3
- 5) *Malkhut*—natural order of the cosmos or *Deus Mundus*¹

¹ In Lecture IX (*Hakirah* vol. 29, pp. 48–57), the Rav says that *Keter* is God's "will to reveal Himself"; *Hokhmah* is the "emergence of wisdom" which begins with "God's self-knowledge"; and *Binah* (p. 28) is "instinctive knowledge." There he says that "aesthetical affective persona" refers to "feeling, love, grace, etc." Here, he says that *Gevurah-Gedulah*, which are called *Gevurah* and *Hessed* in Lecture IX, refer to ethical relationship between God and man, whereas *Tiferet, Netzah, and Hod* refer to the Aesthetical relationship between man and God which comprise feeling, love, and grace. The above nine *sefirot* are part of God's personal relationship with man which the Rav calls *Deus Persona*. The tenth *sefirah*, *Malkhut*,

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Both Saadiah and Maimonides explained all anthropomorphic terms as being allegorical. To the *Zohar*, however, these anthropomorphic terms are revelations of God's personality.²

The synonym of *Malkhut* is *Shekhinah*, from the word *shekhen*, to dwell, because God's will is imprisoned in nature.³ There are other synonyms, all being feminine because the concrete order is dependent on the transcendental order. Femininity in *Kabbalah* is always passive, being dependent on something.⁴

Revelation for the *Zohar* is what medieval philosophers called "*processio Dei ad extra*," the procession of God toward externalization. For Maimonides there were two types of revelation⁵:

refers to God's relationship with man through the objective order of creation. The Rav refers to these relationships as *Deus Persona* and *Deus Mundus*.

² This is based upon the distinction drawn by the Rav in Lecture VIII between medieval philosophy, which views God's creation as creation of the natural world, and *Kabbalah*, which views creation as revelation. As a result, anthropomorphism of God, for Saadiah and Rambam, is paganistic, for by viewing the world as possessed of spiritual content, it attributes physical dimensions to God. Therefore, to the rationalists, anthropomorphism must be understood allegorically. On the other hand, the Kabbalistic understanding of creation as revelation allows anthropomorphism to exist in "spiritual realms" alone, thereby avoiding paganism. The spiritual realm is referred to by the Arizal as *אצילות*. This realm eschews any concept of physicality. For a detailed discussion, see *לשם שבו* 'ואהלמה ספר הדעה דרוש עולם התורה חלק א' דרוש ה' סימן ו' אות ד'.

³ It is not to be understood that God dwells in nature, but rather that His will, or ethic, is hidden within nature.

⁴ The basic idea expressed by the Rav here is that the physical world is viewed by *Kabbalah* as a type of receptacle which contains the spiritual. This idea, which is called *Malkhut* or *Shekhinah*, lends itself naturally to a male-female metaphor, in which the physical world is likened to a female who acts as a receptacle for the male who emerges from the transcendental. This relationship is characterized by the Rav as "dependent," for the entire *raison d'être* of the physical receptacle is to receive its transcendental content, which emerges from higher spiritual worlds in order to dwell within it.

⁵ According to the Rav, Maimonidean rationalism and *Kabbalah* share the concept of revelation in which God emerges through a process of externalization. The difference between Maimonides and Kabbalistic thought is that for Maimonides, physical creation and prophetic revelation are two separate processes of revelation, whereas, in Kabbalistic thought, the physical and prophetic are part of one continuum.

- 1) Through the cosmos, *Deus Mundus*.
- 2) The prophetic,⁶ or *Deus Persona*.

The Jewish mystics and the medieval philosophical rationalists both reached the same conclusions in explaining Genesis. How two movements so diametrically opposed reached the same conclusions is a paradox of the history of culture.⁷

From this point of view of Jewish mysticism we may now come to the idea of a Jewish eschatology in regard to Shabbat.⁸ It would appear that an eschatology is a purely human hope. For God has no need for the end of time, since He already abides in eternity. However [despite the fact that eschatology is a “purely human hope”], in Jewish philosophy, man has little to do with an eschatology and it is, rather, a Divine affair.

ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון לשפוט את הר עשיו והיתה לה' המלוכה. והיה ה'
למלך על כל הארץ. ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד. (עובדיה א: כ"א)
The saviors will ascend Mount Zion to judge Esau's mountain, and
the kingdom will be God's. Then God will be King over all the
world. On that day, God will be one and His name will be one. (Oba-
diah 1: 21)⁹

True, man is also concerned, but he is only secondary. It is a parenthetical motive, the prime motive being Divine. That man is secondary,

⁶ The use of the term “prophetic” in relation to *Deus Persona* indicates that God relates to man in a personal manner through the act of prophecy. In *Kabbalah* this is expressed by the concept of *Partzufim* (פרצופים) in *Atzilut* (אצילות).

⁷ That is to say, both systems come up with the idea of two aspects of God: *Deus Mundus* and *Deus Persona*. It seems that the Rav is drawing an important parallel between the Kabbalistic notion of revelation and Maimonidean revelation as expressed either through the physical world (the “cosmos”) or “prophecy.” The Rav is basing himself on a passage in Chapter 12 of Section II in the *Guide*, in which Rambam discusses the thoughts of God as a series of intellects emanating outward and culminating in the active intellect, which serves as the basis of the creation of the intellectual celestial sphere, and, afterwards, of the physical world. In that very same chapter, Rambam describes the prophetic process in much the same way: the prophet senses God's emanating intellects by means of his rational and imaginative faculty, and uses them to express his prophecy. These, however, are two distinct processes, as opposed to the Kabbalistic notion of one process of revelation, where the emergence of the Divine begins with the spiritual and proceeds to the physical in one continuum.

⁸ By eschatology, the Rav means the conclusion of history.

⁹ The Rav invokes the verse to show that the end of history is primarily for God, and not for man; namely, that God and His Name will be one.

however, is not important. The point is [that a question remains:] what can God expect to attain in eschatology, since He is already in eternity.

Some explain the passage of *ביום ההוא וגו'* as meaning when all idols will disappear.

והאלילים כרות יכרתון.

And false gods will be utterly cut off.¹⁰

However, this interpretation for us is insufficient, since *Avodah Zarah* today is only limited, most religions being monotheistic. Secondly, idolatry is not a cosmic evil, but a social evil. As the Midrash says, “If God didn’t want man to worship the stars, why did He not destroy them? So they answered, for a few human fools, should God destroy the cosmos?” So we see that idolatry is a social affair.¹¹

This the medieval philosophers did not answer.¹² But the period of classical mysticism answered it. They say that at the end of time, the two-fold modus [of] revelation, the *Deus Persona* and *Deus Mundus*, will merge. The disjunction of subject-object will disappear. Personality and concreteness will merge into one great order. *Malka Kadisha* and *Shekbinah* will unite. The prime objective of the universal purpose is this merger. In short, the vision of *kol ha-yamim*, כל הימים (not *aharit hayamim*, אחרית הימים, which will take place in the historical time), anticipates the ascent of a mechanical, insensate, automatic, scientific cosmos imprisoned in natural laws to a free intelligible order of Being.¹³

In science, all that is done is [the forming of relationships between] natural phenomena: A in relation to B. A cannot be seen but only in relation to B. What A or B is, science does not know. Terms philosophers of science employ [such as] force, matter, substance, electricity, are metaphors. A exists not by the virtue of itself, but of B. B exists because of C,

¹⁰ From the liturgy of the Jewish prayer *Aleinu*.

¹¹ The Rav is referring to a passage in *עבודה זרה נ"ד ע"ב*. What the Rav means by “social affair” is that idolatry is not a serious theology but the phenomenon of foolish human behavior.

¹² That is, the medieval thinkers did not answer why the end of days is so important for God.

¹³ The Rav’s point is that on the Sabbath, the metaphysical worlds undergo a process and transformation which is similar to that which the entire world will experience at the end of history. Although God in and of Himself “has no need for the end of time,” God reveals to man a metaphysical process which culminates every Sabbath in the union of the Personal God with the God of nature. As such, the eschatology of world history plays itself out every week, thereby giving cosmic significance to man’s observance of the Sabbath.

and so on. This all implies necessity. When the *Deus Mundus* emerges with the *Deus Persona*, this is what *Kabbalah* called a free intellectual order of Being—from necessity to freedom.¹⁴

Man has two types of experience. One, for example: I see the table as a separate faction, as dead matter, as a mathematical formula, as the physicist would see it, or as a bundle of sensations to me. I can see it, touch it, bang it, and produce a sound. Two, for example, I can see another person. Here the experience is looking at someone like me. However, merely seeing him through the senses is only seeing his external and not his real self. His physical features are only a disguise. When I see the physical world there is no disguise. The world is revealed and open. No mysteriousness. I and the table exist in two different orders. I cannot love or hate the table in a personal sense. To summarize, there are two types of experience:

- 1) Knowability.
- 2) Feelings of strangeness or otherness. The table and I can never merge.¹⁵

Now my feeling of a person is first a feeling of homogeneity. We belong; we are related. Number two, the feeling of disguise: I know that my sensations do not reveal to me the real essence which is inaccessible to my perception. When the *Zohar* says that there is no answer to *mi* in regard to God, the same may be applied to man. As Kant said,

¹⁴ In other words, science is limited to a deterministic theory of the world, and so the meaning of a scientific term or concept reduces to either the effect it has on something else, or how it is itself affected. In the merger of the personal and natural God which, according to the *Kabbalah*, takes place every Sabbath, the world ceases to be deterministic and is instead possessed of free will. As a result the entire cosmos takes on a more human nature, as will be described in the following lines.

¹⁵ The Rav is asserting a fundamental epistemological distinction between the objective world and another person. The objective world can be completely known through sensation and other types of information. Another person, save for his external features, is inaccessible. This inaccessibility, however, allows for the possibility of what the Rav calls “merger” and “a feeling of homogeneity.” In his eulogy for Rav Chaim Heller, published in the collection *In Aloneness, in Togetherness*, the Rav expands on this idea to describe man’s relationship to God. There are themes in common between the Rav’s thought and the philosophy of Emanuel Levinas who also asserted the absolute unknowability of the “Other” in his work *Totality and Infinity*. Levinas, however, used this idea in order to develop a philosophy of ethics and responsibility. The Rav, rooted in traditional Jewish sources, is elaborating a philosophy of man’s relationship to God within the framework of the halakhah, in this case, the Shabbat.

When I investigate something which is perceptible to my senses I can then form abstractions, but since the personality cannot be seen through the senses I can never know the personality.¹⁶ Modern psychology investigates the personality in defeat, claiming that there is no personality, rather than admit defeat.

Man possesses a *tzelem Elokim*, which cannot be investigated. When I speak of God as a *mi*, I mean God is inaccessible, but, nevertheless related. Man as a spiritual personality feels related to others though they are unknowable. The same experience is applied to the finite thou as is applied to the infinite thou.

However, when you investigate God through the cosmos, God addressing Himself through matter, it is an objective experience. There is no relation between myself and the spiral nebulae or the table. There is a feeling of strangeness. Loneliness means man is surrounded by strangeness. I feel the world is hostile, or at least neutral to me. This is metaphysical strangeness. When I'm in a subway at rush hour, crowded together with the rest of humanity, this is accidental strangeness. When a person has an enemy he does not feel strange, since he lives in a relation. Loneliness is only when I exist alone without any relations. God, therefore, seen through the cosmos is knowable, but strange. God as seen through this [is] *mi*. The *Deus Persona* is friendly, but unknowable. This is the experience of *Malka Kadisha* on the one hand, and the *Shekhinah* on the other.¹⁷

Now let us see what is the eschatological idea: to discover that the cosmic order is not one ruled by necessity, but a free order. The trouble is that we see only an infinitesimal part of the universe, never seeing the

¹⁶ In *Critique of Pure Reason*, Book 1, Section 3 titled "On the Relation of the Understanding to Objects in General, and the Possibility of Knowing Them a priori" (p. 109 in F. Max Muller translation), Kant describes the relationship of our understanding of the world with the world itself. Through perception of a phenomenon, we accumulate sense data with which the mind constructs a representation through which it understands the world. The Rav is asserting that this process, being dependent on the mind of the observer, cannot apply to the mind of another person. See previous note for the comparison to the French Jewish philosopher Emanuel Levinas.

¹⁷ The term "*Malka Kadisha*" appears in the *Zohar*. The Ari interprets it as the *Partzuf* of *Zeir Anpin* which spans what the Rav described above, in this lecture, as the ethical-aesthetic *sefirot* of *Gevurah*, *Gedulah*, *Tiferet*, *Netzah*, *Hod*. The relationship of God with man through ethics and aesthetics is what the Rav calls *Deus Persona*. God's relationship with man through the cosmos, *Deus Mundus*, corresponds to the *sefirah* of *Malkhut*, which is also referred to as the *Shekhinah*. The merger (*zivug*) of *Malka Kadisha* and *Malkhut* is the theme of the Shabbat and the culmination of human history.

whole, and this microcosmic part is not typical of the macrocosmic universe. That is why the world appears to be impersonal and mechanistic. But the macro cosmos as a whole is a great personality.¹⁸ Just as if I saw only the finger of a man I would look upon it as an object and not as part of [a] whole, expressing or revealing a personality, since every movement of the body reveals some part of the personality.

When the Torah says,

השמים מספרים כבוד א-ל וגו'. (תהילים י"ט: ב)

When the heavens sing God's praise. (Psalms 19: 2)

true, it is only a metaphor, since the heavens are dead and cannot sing. But the ocean as part of a great cosmic anthropos possesses a personality.

For Christianity, when they wait for the coming of Christ it is just dependent on the whim of Christ, when he decides to come. Man has no part in bringing it about. However, in Judaism, man can bring about this eschatology when man will attain a knowledge or experience of the universe as a whole. When man will encompass the whole order of creation, man will realize the *Deus Mundus* as the *Deus Persona*-God imprisoned in the concrete order of things, the same as if a man be imprisoned in the cell of a prison. My investigating the prison yard or walk does not reveal to me the prisoner locked away in the cell. The same is true of man investigating the cosmos. The *Kabbalah* says that if man should conquer the universe through knowledge, he would then realize that the cosmos is just a disguise. How it should be done, the *Kabbalah* did not tell us, i.e., as to the final merger but the approach [is] through the logos.¹⁹

¹⁸ The Rav appears to be saying here that knowledge of the entire universe reveals the personal God. By knowledge he appears to mean scientific knowledge, as is implied at the end of this lecture when he says, "man can bring about this eschatology when man will attain a knowledge or experience of the universe as a whole." Although Kabbalistic sources speak of bringing about of the Messiah and the messianic age through studying the secrets of the Torah, they clearly refer to metaphysical, not [just] scientific, knowledge. The Rav is claiming that science, which he describes as "the approach through the logos," is also alluded to in the *Kabbalah*.

Rav Tzadok Ha-Cohen makes a similar point in *Tzidkut Ha-Tzadik* (section 30) where he claims, based upon a *Zohar*, that there is a correspondence between Torah knowledge and "secular" knowledge; and that, as Torah (apparently Kabbalistic knowledge) progresses, "secular" knowledge advances accordingly. The same idea is expressed by Rav Kook in *Orot Ha-Kodesh*, II, Fifth discourse pp. 537–551, ההתפתחות המתעלה.

¹⁹ The Rav is claiming that through the advance of scientific knowledge, the merger between *Deus Persona* and *Deus Mundus* will take place. The Kabbalistic claim

השמים מספרים כבוד א-ל וגוי

The union of God's will and *Shekhinah*: The *Deus Persona* addressing me through the natural law is the I and the Thou, addressing me through the ethical law.²⁰ Of course, the idea²¹ is a philosophical one, but *Kabbalah* used images which they called *yesod ha-zivug*, where the I and Thou merge.

Introduction to Lecture XI

It is useful to summarize some of the ideas mentioned in previous lectures in order to understand the way they apply to this lecture. In Lecture X, the Rav divided up the *sefirot* into two general groups: the upper nine (*Keter, Hokhmah, Binah, Gevurah, Gedulah, Tiferet, Netzah and Hod*), which constitute the revelation of the personal God, *Deus Persona*; and the tenth *sefirah* (*Malkhut*), which reveals the creator God, *Deus Mundus*. The natural order which man beholds in the cosmos, *Malkhut*, is the feminine, which passively receives, and therefore hides, the other *sefirot*; i.e., the personal God. The *Zohar* quoted in Lecture IX, which questions, "Who created these?" (*מי ברא אלה*) identified the term "these" (*eleh*, which refers to *ma*) with the revealed *Deus Mundus*, and the hidden, personal God, *Deus Persona*, with the term "who" (*mi*). The only question that man can ask, and of which he can achieve some degree of understanding, is "what" (*ma*), about the revealed universe. The hidden God, "who" (*mi*), can never be proven, and one who asks about Him is left with an unanswerable question.

of this merger at the end of history is that it will take place when man's exploration of the nature of the universe, *Malkhut*, will be completed. At this point, there will be nothing else to achieve except for its merger with the personal God.

²⁰ The Rav is claiming that ultimately, natural law and ethical law merge. This corresponds to the merger of *Deus Mundus* and *Deus Persona*. The Rav's point here is that the personal relationship between God and man, *Deus Persona*, is one of mutual God-man responsibility, which the Rav refers to as ethics. Much as man is required to respect his fellow man, man is required to respect the will of God and thereby merit God's blessings and reward. This relationship is referred to by the Rav as an I-Thou relationship.

A source for the idea that the personal relationship with God is an ethical relationship with parallels to human ethical relationships, is the passage in *Shabbat* 33a in which a potential proselyte comes to Hillel and requests that he teach him the entire Torah while standing on one foot. Hillel responds, "That which you would not want your friend to do to you, you shall not do to him." Rashi, in his commentary, writes that "friend" can refer both to man and to God. It follows that the fulfillment of the commandments of the Torah, which constitute Jewish ethics, are an expression of man's ethical relationship with God.

²¹ I.e., the merger of ontology and ethics.

In this lecture, the Rav makes use of these ideas in explaining the Kabbalistic understanding of the three meals of Shabbat. Tur writes:

The reason [the Men of the Great Assembly] established three different types of prayers on the Sabbath: 1) אתה קדשת, You have sanctified; 2) ישמח משה, Moshe will rejoice; and 3) אתה אחד, You are One, as opposed to festivals when only one form of prayer, אתה בחרתנו, was established, is because these three prayers correspond to three Sabbaths: 1) אתה קדשת corresponds to the Sabbath of Creation, as is clear from the liturgy; 2) ישמח משה corresponds to the Sabbath on which the Torah was given, for all opinions (in the Talmud) concur that the Torah was given on the Sabbath; and 3) אתה אחד corresponds to the Sabbath of the future. (*Orach Hayyim* 292)

This passage makes evident that the liturgy of the Sabbath spans the entire history of the world and of the Jewish people, beginning with creation and culminating in the final Sabbath, which heralds the “end” of the world. Hence, the idea of the Sabbath is bound up with Jewish eschatology, and it is on this basis that the Rav proceeds in this lecture and the next.

Lecture XI

Let us now examine the Sabbath idea. In Exodus 20:8 it states, "זכור את יום השבת לקדשו", "Remember the day of Shabbat to keep it holy," while in Deuteronomy 5:12 it states "שמור את יום השבת לקדשו", "Observe the day of Shabbat to keep it holy." Ramban on *Yitro* (Exodus 20:8) asks:

ואני תמה אם נאמר זכור ושמור מפי הגבורה, למה לא נכתב בלוחות הראשונות. ויתכן שהיה בלוחות הראשונות ובשניות כתוב זכור, ומשה פירש לישראל כי שמור נאמר עמו. וזו כוונתם באמת: ובמדרשו של רבי נחוניא בן הקנה (ספר הבהיר, אות קפב) הזכירו עוד סוד גדול בזכור ושמור, ועל הכלל תהיה הזכירה ביום והשמירה בלילה, וזהו מאמר החכמים (ב"ק לב ב) שאומרים בערב שבת באי כלה באי כלה, באו ונצא לקראת שבת מלכה כלה, ויקראו לברכת היום קדושה רבא (פסחים קו א) שהוא הקדוש הגדול, ותבין זה. ואמת הוא ג"כ כי מדת זכור רמזו במצות עשה, והוא היוצא ממדת האהבה והוא למדת הרחמים, כי העושה מצות אדוניו אהוב לו ואדוניו מרחם עליו, ומדת שמור במצות לא תעשה, והוא למדת הדין ויוצא ממדת היראה, כי הנשמר מעשות דבר הרע בעיני אדוניו ירא אותו, ולכן מצות עשה גדולה ממצות לא תעשה, כמו שהאהבה גדולה מהיראה, כי המקיים ועושה בגופו ובממונו רצון אדוניו הוא גדול מהנשמר מעשות הרע בעיניו, ולכך אמרו דאתי עשה ודחי לא תעשה, ומפני זה יהיה העונש במצות לא תעשה גדול ועושיין בו דין כגון מלקות ומיתה, ואין עושיין בו דין במצות עשה כלל

אלא במורדין, כמו לולב וציצית איני עושה, סוכה איני עושה, שסנהדרין היו מכין אותו עד שיקבל עליו לעשות או עד שתצא נפשו:

I ask, if both *Zakhor* and *Shamor* were heard from the mouth of the Mighty One, why were they not both written in the first set of tablets? The answer seems to be that only *Zakhor* was written on both the first and second tablets, but Moshe explained to the people that *Shamor* was also said at the same time. This seems to be the true explanation.

In the Midrash of R' Nehuniah ben Ha-Kanah they mention another great secret of *Zakhor* and *Shamor*. The principle is that *zekhirah* must be in the daytime and *shemirah* at night. This is the meaning of the statement of the Sages (*Bava Kamma* 32b) that in the evening we say “Welcome bride, welcome bride, let us go outside and welcome the Shabbat queen bride.” And the blessings of the day are called “*Kiddush Rabba*,” the great sanctification (*Pesahim* 106a) because it is the greater holiness. Understand this. The truth is also that the concept of *Zakhor* refers to the positive *mitzvot*, which comes out of love and this is the attribute of mercy. For someone who does the command of his master loves him, and his master will have mercy on him. And *Shamor* refers to the negative commandments, which is the attribute of judgment which comes from the attribute of fear. Someone who is careful not to do something that is bad in the eyes of his master, fears him. Therefore, the positive commandments are greater than the negative commandments, just as love is greater than fear. Someone who keeps and fulfils the will of his master with his body and his money is greater than someone who refrains from doing something bad in his eyes. Therefore, the [Sages] said that a positive commandment overrides a negative commandment. Because of this, the punishment of a negative commandment is greater and he is punished with [such things as] lashes or death. But there is no punishment for someone who transgresses a positive commandment unless they are rebellious. For example [if they declare] “I will not do [the *mitzvot* of] *lulav* or *tzitzit*,” “I will not do [the *mitzvah* of] *succah*.” In such a case, the Sanhedrin gives him lashes until he accepts upon himself to do them, or until his soul departs his body.

זכור refers to the day of Shabbat. שמור refers to the night of Shabbat. Because שמור is feminine, we say, בואי כלה בואי כלה; זכור is masculine and so it is referred to as קדושא רבא.²² לילה, although masculine, has a feminine

²² According to Ramban (*Shemot* 20:8), *shamor* is called feminine because it refers to the negative commandments, and *zakhor* is called masculine because it refers

ending, and so the *Kabbalah* always used it in the feminine form. We have here the correlate of the masculine and feminine principle.

Ramban wanted to prove this halakhically and so he said (ibid.): זכור is the זכרו בקידוש and שמור is the לאו of *melakhah*.²³

In *Bereishit* (chapters 2, 3) on ויקדש, ויברך, ויברך Ramban [interprets] מעין הברכות as מעין הברכות although in halakhah it means מעין.²⁴

to the positive commandments. Negative commandments are associated with the *middah* of *din*, which is seen by the *Kabbalah* as possessing feminine qualities; positive commandments are associated with the *middah* of *hesed* and therefore possess masculine qualities.

²³ Ramban, according to the Rav, is drawing a similarity between the Kabbalistic distinction between זכור and שמור and the halakhic distinction. According to the *Kabbalah*, זכור refers to the upper 9 *sefirot* which represent the personal God, *Deus Persona*, and שמור refers to the *sefirah* of *Malkhut*, which represents the God of creation, *Deus Mundus*. Just as the *sefirah* of *Malkhut* “receives” and thereby hides the upper 9 *sefirot*, so does the God of creation “hide” the personal God. Correspondingly, זכור, which refers to the positive commandments, express man’s service to God out of love, and שמור refers to the negative commandments which express man’s service to God out of fear. The halakhic distinction between service from love and service from fear corresponds to the distinction between *Deus Persona* and *Deus Mundus*. A halakhic consequence of this distinction is the halakhic concept that a positive commandment can suspend (push away) a negative one.

²⁴ The expression מעין הברכות appears in the blessing said after *Ma’ariv* on Shabbat evening where the Gemara in *Shabbat* 24b discusses שליח צבור היורד לפני התיבה. There Rashi describes it as ברכה מעין שבע meaning that it is an abridged version of the seven *berakhot* said in the *tefillah* of Shabbat night. The halakhic meaning of מעין is “abridged.” Ramban in his commentary is using the word מעין with altered vowels to indicate that it refers to a wellspring of *berakhot*.

The *Zohar* says in *Va-Yakbel*²⁵ our faith is completely integrated with the different phases of [our relationship to God].²⁶ Shabbat consists of three phases:²⁷

- 1) Transcendental.²⁸
- 2) Day as an idea.²⁹

²⁵ The *Zohar* to which the Rav is referring is in *Yitro* 88a. בעי בר נש לאתענגא תלת זימנין אלין דהא בהא תליא מהימנותא דלעילא בעתיקא קדישא ובזעיר אמפין ובחקלא דתפוחין. The three relationships to God are: עתיקא קדישא is the *Partzuf* corresponding to the *sefirah* of *Keter*, which represents God's will; זעיר אנפין is the *Partzuf* of the *sefirot* of *Hessed, Gevurah, Tiferet, Netzah, Hod, Yesod* which represents God's ethical and aesthetical relationship with man; and חקלא דתפוחין refers to the *sefirah* of *Malkhut* which represents God's relationship with man through the physical creation.

²⁶ The Rav refers to the three Kabbalistic notions of God and His relationship to man and the cosmos, as represented by the three Shabbat meals.

²⁷ The Rav does not list these phases in order. In reality, the night meal comes first, the second meal is transcendence, and the third meal is an "idea" of the day. In the *Ari*, the evening meal corresponds to the *sefirah* of *Malkhut* and is therefore referred to as the meal of חקל תפוחין. This is expressed in the song he composed to be sung at that meal, למיעאל גו פתחין, דבחקל תפוחין, נזמין לה השתא אזמר בשבחין, דאיינון קדישין, עתיקא קדישא. The second meal, on Shabbat morning, corresponds to the *Partzuf* of עתיקא קדישא. This is expressed in the song he composed to be sung in the second meal, בצפרא דשבתא, ואזמין בה השתא, עתיקא קדישא. The third meal, towards the end of Shabbat, corresponds to עתיק יומין which, like עתיקא קדישא, is the *Partzuf* of the *sefirah* of *Keter* which is God's will. This, like the first two, is expressed in the song he composed to be sung at the third meal, והא אזמין עתיק יומין, למנחה עדי יהון חלפין.

The difference between the second meal and the third meal, explains the *Ari*, is that in the third meal, זעיר אנפין ascends to עתיק and unites with it whereas in the morning meal it ascends but does not unite.

The Rav describes what takes place in the second meal as "transcendental" whereas he describes what takes place in the third as "an idea" which will not be fully reached until the final stage of history. For this reason, he uses the term *Atika* to refer to the second meal and *Zeir Anpin* to refer to the third.

²⁸ The Rav uses the term "transcendental" to describe the second meal during which the *Partzuf* of עתיקא קדישא reveals the personal God, *Deus Persona*, which transcends the physical world. In truth, this *Partzuf* transcends all aspects of God, for it is the *Partzuf* corresponding to the *sefirah* which, representing the will of God, transcends all of the other *sefirot*. In the Rav's language, עתיקא קדישא has a "rendezvous" with *Malkhut* during this meal, but the ultimate merger will take place only in the future.

²⁹ The Rav's expression "Day as an Idea" refers to the third meal, the meal of זעיר אנפין, wherein the ultimate merger of *Deus Mundus* and *Deus Persona* remains a

3) Night.³⁰

All these unite into one whole called “Shabbat,” and each aspect when it prevails invites the other to accompany him. With the night of Shabbat comes the idea of *Shabbat Ha-Malkab*, who invites the *Shabbat De-Ye-mama*³¹ to her palace for a rendezvous. Then, when the transcendental idea of Shabbat comes, the two merge.³² The *Zohar* in *Shemot* (*Yitro* 88a) says:

יהודה אמר: בעי לאתענגא בהאי יומא ולמיכל תלת סעודתי בשבתא בגין
דישתכח שבעיו ועינוגא בהאי יומא דעלמא. זהר שמות פ"ה ע"א...
R' Yehudah says: One is obligated to take pleasure on this day [Shabbat] and to eat three meals in order that this day bring spiritual sustenance to the other days of the week.

R' Abba says: One must [set the table and take pleasure in the meals] in order to connect with the supernal days (meaning *sefirot*) which receive their blessing from this day (meaning *Binah*). From this day (the *sefirah Binah*) the head of the “Little Face” (*Zeir Anpin*) is filled with dew (spiritual flow), which falls from the “Holy Ancient One” (the *Partzuf Arich*), and brings spiritual flow to the “Holy Field of Apples” (*Malkhut*), so that all of the worlds may be blessed at once. Therefore, one is obligated to take pleasure three times (three meals), for these three worlds (*Atika*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Malchut*) produce the spiritual flow and therefore one is required to take delight and to

vision of the future, which presently is not yet realized. The reason the meal is called זעיר אנפין and not עתיקא קדישא, as the second meal is called, is because it is not realized and therefore does not directly involve *Malkhut*. The Ari writes:

ולכן צריך לומר בקול רם דא היא סעודתא דזער אנפין כי המלכות איננה עולה עמו רק
הוא לבדו (שער בכוננות ע"ה ע"ד).

Therefore one must declare loudly, “This is the meal of *Zeir Anpin*,” because the *Malkhut* does not ascend (to *Atika Kadisha*), only *Zeir Anpin*.

This is interpreted by the Rav that the merger does not actually occur; it is a vision of the future.

The Rav’s distinction between the second meal which he describes as a “rendezvous” of *Deus Mundus* and *Deus Persona* and the third meal which expresses a future merger has its source in the Ari:

והנה בסעודת שחרית עולה זעיר עד אריך אפין הנקרא כתר ולכן אמרו בתפילת מוסף
כתר יתנו לך וכו' ולפיכך הסעודה הזו נק' סעודתא דעתיקא ר"ל שעולה עד עתיקא ואינה
סעודת עתירא עצמו (שער הכוננות סעודת שחרית של שבת ע"ד ע"ג)

³⁰ This refers to the first meal of Shabbat, which expresses the concept of God as creator, *Deus Mundus*, as represented by the *sefirah* of *Malkhut*, which yearns to be united with the personal hidden God, *Deus Persona*.

³¹ Shabbat day.

³² The Rav is saying *Deus Mundus* and *Deus Persona*, meet, but do not yet merge.

rejoice in them. But one who detracts from these meals acts as if these worlds are blemished and will be punished.

R' Shimon says: For He who completes the three meals on Shabbat, a voice comes out and announces, "Then you shall delight with God,"³³ (meaning *Arich*). This verse refers to the meal which one receives from *Atika Kadisha De-Kol Kadishin* "The Ancient Holy One, of all which is holy."

"I will cause you to ride upon the high places."³⁴ This refers to (סעודתא תנינא) the second meal which man eats from the "Holy Field of Apples" (*Hakal Tapubin*).

"And I will feed you from your inheritance of Yaakov your father."³⁵ This is the final of the three meals which is completed with "the Little Face" (*Zeir Anpin*).³⁶

Each *avodah* is assigned to a different aspect.

The evening meal symbolizes the *hakal tapubin*, and is also the meal of the *Matronita*.

R. Elazar asked his father R. Shimon in what order the three meals corresponded to the three divine grades. R. Shimon replied: Concerning the meal of Sabbath night (i.e., Friday night) it is written: "I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth."³⁷ והרכבתיך על במתי ארץ.

In this night the *Holy Matronita* (*Shekhinah*) is greatly blessed and the whole "Field of Apples" (*hakal tapubin*) also, and the man's table is blessed, who partakes of his meal daily and with joy, and a new soul is added unto him. This signifies the rejoicing of the *Shekhinah*.

³³ Isaiah 58:14.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ In the above statement, R' Shimon is not listing the meals in order, but is describing them in the order of the clauses of the verse in Isaiah 58 (*Matok Mi-Dnash*). Therefore, according to R' Shimon we have the following correspondence: First meal—"Then you shall delight with God"—*Malkhut, Hakal Tapubin Kadishin*.

Second meal—"I will cause you to ride upon the high places"—*Arich, Atika Kadisha*.

Third meal—"And I will feed you from your inheritance from Yaakov your father"—*Zeir Anpin*.

³⁷ *Zohar* 88b.

The evening meal symbolizes the *ḥakal tapubin*, the “Field of Apples,” and is also the meal of the *Matronita*, the *Holy Matrona*. *Matronita* is synonymous with *Shekhinah*, *Malkhut*, and *ḥakal tapubin*. This refers to God as a *Deus Mundus* in the cosmos; the unalterable sequence of necessity. *Malkhut* expresses necessity, the natural law, a certain order: determinability in scientific terms, the reverse of freedom.

Malkhut also expresses femininity, *Shekhinah-Deus* abiding in the cosmic drama; a metaphysical term. This expresses the presence of Deity in the cosmos, or, as *Kabbalah* expressed it, “The King imprisoned in the cosmos.” *Matronita* expresses the feminine aspect of revelation, of passivity, or dependability.³⁸ It [suppresses] (expresses)³⁹ the revelation of *Deus Persona*—a metaphysical principle, the experience which is hidden behind the guise of the objective experience, a personalistic order beyond the cosmic order.

The *Kabbalah* and Naḥmanides always pictured nature as a bride waiting for her Lover to free her from the bonds of nature. God, Who is mute and silent in His self-imposed imprisonment, is the *Shekhinah*. Divinity in exile, homeless and lonely, is longing for redemption and elevation to transcendental order of personalistic experience.⁴⁰

The world suffers because God suffers. There is tragedy in the world because the whole act of creation was a tragic act upon God: Divine suffering, which is eo-ipso cosmic suffering reflected in every individual.⁴¹

³⁸ In other words, *Malkhut* has two meanings. On one hand, *Malkhut* designates the physical universe as viewed objectively and scientifically; on the other hand *Malkhut* is Femininity, which means it exists as the repository for something other. Taken together, these meanings of *Malkhut* express the concept that the objective physical world is a repository for a Divine spirituality. The physical world, identified with God as creator, *Deus Mundus*, encloses and houses the metaphysical worlds, identified with the personal God, *Deus Persona*.

³⁹ The original appears to be a mistake in the text. It means, “It contains and hides the revelation.”

⁴⁰ In other words, God as *Deus Mundus* is “trapped” within the physical world, and is compared to a bride who longs to be united with her “groom,” God as *Deus Persona*, who will redeem and elevate her through reestablishing a personal-ethical relationship. The Rav understands this as the merger of ontology and ethics.

⁴¹ The root of all human suffering is that the physical world creates a barrier between man and God. This is only possible because God Himself is imprisoned within the physical world. As a result, God Himself experiences suffering. The idea of God's suffering as a result of human suffering is understood by R' Hayyim Volozhiner in his work *Nefesh Ha-Hayyim* as the basis of prayer, the purpose of which is to alleviate Divine suffering (*sha'ar* 2, chapter 11).

God, *keviyokbol*, is the helpless prisoner, and man is the omnipotent *moshiakh* who will break down the barrier of objectivity [nature?] and free the *Shekhinah* and bring her to her Lover.

בשם יחוד קודשא בריך הוא ושכינתיה בדחילו ורחימו ליחד י"ה בו"ה ביחודא
שלם בשם כל ישראל:

In the name of the union of the Holy One, Blessed be He and the *Shekhinah*, with awe and love, to unite the two letters [of the Tetragramaton] *Yud-Heb* with *Vav-Heb* in a complete unison in the name of all of Israel.⁴²

To unite the *Shekhinah* with her Lover, the motif of Shabbat is the uniting of *kallab* (bride) with *hatan* (bridegroom); Shabbat [as] the bride chained to mechanical activity and awaiting freedom. *Shekhinah*, *hakal tapubin*, is dependent on rain, *tal*. This is symbolized by the Sabbath night representing loneliness; man surrounded by thinghood is lonely. *Shamor* means to wait. The night waits for the day to come. Man waiting for the answer to *mi* (who), not *eleh*. This is man's anticipation of the *ketz hayamim*, where not only the question of *eleh* will be solved but also the unanswerable question of *mi*.

נפשי לה', משמרים לבקר שמרים לבקר. (תהילים ק"ל: ו)

My soul waits for Hashem more than they who watch for the morning: more than watchmen for the morning.

The *Zohar* interprets (it as) *nafshi le-Hashem*—man surrounded by the strange universe awaits for the *Deus Persona* to whom he feel close to and related. The entire world awaits the Great Day of eschatology.

There is another⁴³ symbol infused in Shabbat. *Zeir Anpin*, the “Little Face”—the *Deus Persona*—God as living master of the universe as experienced by the apocalyptic vision of the moral law, of the *ve-amor* of the

⁴² The *Yud-Heb* of the Tetragramaton refer to the *sefirot* of *Hokhmah* and *Binah*, or in terms of *Partzufim*, *Abba* and *Imma*. The letters *Vav-Heb* refer to the *sefirot* of the *Partzuf* of *Zeir Anpin* (*Hessed*, *Gevurah*, *Tiferet*, *Netzah*, *Hod*, *Yesod*) and *Malkhut*. The full Tetragramaton thus refers to the full union of all *Partzufim* which includes the complete merger of *Deus Mundus* and *Deus Persona*. This statement of intentionality recited before the performance of each *mitzvah* expresses the metaphysical teleology of the commandments and, thereby, man's service to God.

⁴³ As mentioned in the introduction to Lecture X, the three prayers of Sabbath correspond to the three Sabbaths: the Sabbath of creation, the Sabbath of the *Matan Torah*, and the great “*Sabbath*” of the future. In the following section, the Rav understands the personal God, Kabbalistically referred to as *Zeir Anpin*, the “Little Face,” in terms of the moral law which God reveals to man. This was the

actus.⁴⁴ This is *yoma de-Shabbat*, the Day of the Sabbath, or זכור (*zakhor*), masculine and independent. *Deus* as root of ethos, not natural law which is *Deus Mundus*, but God, who addresses himself through the world, not phenomena which is *midat ha-din*, [with] no exception, no changing of rules, [where] man feels insignificant—no deviation or *rahamim*. Man experiences misery, wretchedness and helplessness in the face of the cosmic order.

God then addresses Himself through the *Deus Persona* or the world, the moral law. Here man is the center of creation, which is subordinate to him. There is a mutual relationship of man to God, of sympathy and friendliness. Their address can be the apocalyptic level through prophetic revelation and also through the inner revelation or natural revelation of man.⁴⁵

Existence, if seen from the personalistic level, gains meaning: *Tiferet*, the unity of all objective matter evolving through the moral law. God at Sinai addressed Himself at the coming of dawn. Man alone⁴⁶ can give meaning to existence, as the agnostics have done. For man is driven to unity by the mere fact that he exists. This personalistic revelation lends meaning to existence.⁴⁷

law that was revealed by the giving of the Torah at Sinai and corresponds to the prayer of Sabbath morning. This moral law, the Torah, creates a “personal relationship” of man to God as opposed to the “impersonal relationship” which defines man’s relationship to the created cosmos. As explained above in Lecture IX, the “personal” relationship is one of warmth and friendliness, as opposed to the “impersonal” one which is described by the Rav in this paragraph as full of “misery, wretchedness and helplessness.”

⁴⁴ The phrase “the *ve-amor* of the *actus*” is not clear. What the Rav may mean is that Man experiences God’s moral law in his act of cognition in a similar way to God’s act of cognition as discussed by Maimonides in chapter 68 of volume 1 of the *Guide*. This is translated as “intellect in *actu*” (see Pines 165).

⁴⁵ In other words, the moral law is discovered by man in one of two ways, either through revelation, such as we experienced at Sinai, or through man’s own “inner natural” sense. The Rav already mentioned these two sources of morality in lecture III. While most of the Torah laws can only be known through revelation, there is a class of general moral habits which man can discern through reason and nature.

⁴⁶ That is, without the prophetic revelation at Sinai, man can give meaning to existence by discovering ethics within the creation. See *Eiruv* 100b where the Sages assert that had the Torah not been given, one could derive ethics from nature. The Rav elaborates on this theme in *The Emergence of Ethical Man*.

⁴⁷ The Tur writes in Section 292 that the second *tefillah* on the Shabbat corresponds to the Shabbat of the giving of the Torah at Sinai. The Rav is asserting that at the revelation at Sinai, God revealed the “unity of all objective matters evolving

Suddenly, the great mystery of union meets in Shabbat.⁴⁸ The bride meets the groom, who is God Himself. For creation and God's revelation are united to Himself. God and world are one. This is eschatology.

Shabbat shows this duality of God and unites the *Kallab* with the *Zeir Anpin*. Two *modi* relationships merged into one. Of course, the duality is only as man sees it. For God, nothing exists and this merger is עתיקא קדישא, סתימא דכל סתימין,⁴⁹ the complete unity of God. Man finds his home in this world because he finds friendship between himself and the world which expresses the *Deus Persona*.

The word "Shabbat" grammatically in the *Humash* is read (*keri*) as feminine היא. The *ketiv*, however, is הוה, masculine. It is interesting that the *keri* is feminine because we cannot yet pronounce the masculine, which represents the *Deus Persona*. The *ketiv* tells what the true Being is and the *keri* as man experiences it.⁵⁰ In *ketz ha-yamim* (the end of days) only the *ketiv* will be read.⁵¹ This is exactly what *Hazal* have said:

through the moral law." The second meal, similarly, represents the ascension of the objective world to the ethics of God. The discovery of the ethics embedded in nature can be achieved, however, without the Sinaitic revelation. As a consequence, all men are privy to natural ethics and, therefore, obligated to it. Divine ethics, however, can only come through the revelation at Sinai, and therefore obligates the Jewish nation. The uniqueness of the Shabbat is that the Divinely revealed law at Sinai merges with the natural world. This is what the Rav refers to below as the "great mystery of union" which takes place on the Shabbat.

⁴⁸ While in terms of the Sabbath prayers, it is the third prayer, at the *Minhab* service, which refers to the "Great Sabbath" of the future, the eschatological Sabbath, as the Rav calls it, nonetheless, it is the second and not the third meal which is the meal of *Atika Kadisha* (עתיקא קדישא), "The Holy Ancient One," which is the highest world of absolute unity not recognizing any dualism, so that God is united unto Himself. The Rav is therefore referring here to what happens at the second meal. The third meal, of *Zeir Anpin* ("The Little Face"), closes the Shabbat by reminding us that the great unity has yet to be achieved.

⁴⁹ "The Holy Ancient One, Hidden of all Hiddenness." The phrase עתיקא קדישא refers to the *Partzuf* of עתיק, which has no distinction between male and female, זכר ונקבה. See *Eitz Hayyim* ב"ב פרק ב' ע"ב.

⁵⁰ The Rav is referring to the fact that while the word Shabbat itself is feminine, nevertheless, the Torah also refers to it in the masculine gender. In fact, the Shabbat is referred to in three ways: feminine, masculine, and plural. These three usages appear in each of the three prayers of Shabbat. On Shabbat night, Shabbat is referred to in the feminine (*Malkhut, Deus Mundus*); in the morning, in the masculine (*Malka Kadisha, Deus Persona*), and in the evening, in the plural; which reflects the fact that the two never merge.

⁵¹ See *Pesachim* 50a.

מזמור שיר ליום השבת: יום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים. (מסכת תמיד
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A psalm and song for the Shabbat: for the day which is entirely Shabbat and rest for He Who is the life of all of the worlds.⁵²

These main motifs were already in the Midrash.

Let us analyze the three meals. What happens *lele de-Shabbta*, on the night of the Sabbath? The world on the night of Shabbat is lonely and in a state of expectancy. The *Shekbinah* arises from the depths of thinghood to an upward path endowed with grace and friendliness. Haunted by loneliness and frightened by the muteness of mechanistic existence to the bright light of a personalistic existence, the meal expresses the feeling of a community of existence. The *Shekbinah* takes the upward path toward merger and we join in. The day belongs to *Malka Kadisha*, belonging to the *Deus Persona*. While in the weekdays there is passivity to (muteness) [indifference], on Shabbat, there is revolt. The *Deus Persona* then descends from the finite recesses to meet the *Shekbinah* or Himself.

This is the *Zeir Anpin*, the Little Face, which is the third meal. It should have been second⁵³ but it was placed as third because they never meet. It is in the twilight of the day [in] which [it] is done. The last meal is of joy and of parting because it is never realized; only a dream in the distant future. There is then eternal vigilance for the next encounter during the following week and so the cycle goes on.

The Sabbath morning meal is symbolic of self-awareness and self-consciousness. The world is experiencing its selfhood and experiencing God Himself. This *seudah* is related to the “great end” and is placed in the middle to show that the “great end” is never reached—splitting [Shabbos] by the second [meal], which is the meeting of the eschatological realization described above.

Introduction to Lectures XII and XIII

In the first lecture, the Rav declares that in the “analysis of the metaphysics of Genesis,” his audience will explore the issues of the “dichotomy between Jewish and Christian hermeneutics,” as well as the “dichotomy between modern science and the Bible.” In these lectures, the two issues are discussed in relationship to each other. This is because the two opposing methods of interpretation of Judaism and Christianity result in two

⁵² That is, the Midrash itself refers to *Ketz Ha-Yamim* (eschatology) by the term “a day which is entirely Shabbat.” On that day, the *Kallah* and *Zeir Anpin* unite forever, and man will directly experience the personal God.

⁵³ Because the second stage would be yearning to meet but not meeting yet.

entirely different anthropologies. This, in turn, results in two opposing theological responses to the modern scientific concept of man. Christian Biblical interpreters have always exclusively emphasized man's "transcendental being," thus isolating the description of the creation of man in Genesis from the rest of the account of creation. The Talmudic Sages, however, recognize man as a natural being occupying a place among the rest of creation. Man's transcendental component, the "image of God," instead of excluding his natural aspects, complements them. This concept is the basis of the Jewish halakhah, which emphasizes the significance of man as a physical being in his natural environment. In the following two lectures, the Rav draws upon a variety of sources from verse and liturgy, which express man's natural aspects.

Lecture XII

Should we ask an educated Christian what he understands by the word "man," by sheer force of association he will refer to:

- 1) Biblical interpretation of man⁵⁴
- 2) Greek
- 3) Scientific

To further elucidate he would say that 1) and 2) contrast man to the animal kingdom and plant. The only difference is that the Bible explains man as a unique, divine image possessing two opposing forces, man's obedience to and his [Satanic] revolt against his Creator.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ It seems that there is a mistake in the notes as it read "Biological." In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 3) the Rav writes:

Should we inquire of a modern historian of philosophy or of any educated person well acquainted with the history of ideas what he understands by the word "man," he would immediately advise us about a basic controversy concerning the destiny or essence of this being. By the sheer force of associative thinking, he would at once refer to three disparate anthropological-philosophical viewpoints: the Biblical (referred to by many as the Judeo-Christian view), the classical Greek, and the modern empirico-scientific. Pressed further, he would probably say that the discrepancy between the concepts of man dating back to antiquity—the Biblical and the classical Greek—is by far not as wide as the gap separating those two from the empirico-scientific one. As a matter of fact, he would say we may speak of some degree of affinity, of commensurability between the Biblical and classical anthropologies. Both are united in opposition to the scientific approach to man: they set man apart from other forms of organic life.

⁵⁵ In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 8) the Rav writes:

The Greeks also believed man to be different from the animal and plant kingdom as one who is endowed with the logos, with reason. He has the capacity of grasping the essence of things, of raising himself from a sensuous being to an abstract order of being.

The modern scientific theory in contrast to Biblical spurns the idea of human autonomy and denies that there is an ontic discrepancy between man and plant. There is one continuity of man, animal and plant. The difference concerns just the degree of diversity and complexity of life processes. Life as such is a common grant to all exponents of nature and they share it alike. Man arose later in nature and even his psychosomatic faculty is part of the natural scheme.⁵⁶

The conflict of the mechanists and vitalists is indifferent to our problem. Whether life is the end of a chemical or physical process or is a unique endowment of matter and directed by finality, not by accidents, does not matter in the controversy between Biblical and scientific theories. For if you accept vitalistic theory then it applies to plants too, and the problem is not changed.⁵⁷

The New Testament, drawing on the idea of individual *het* ("sin") which found its full formulation in Ezekiel, shifted man to a different plane and portrayed him in a different light. Man is not any longer the pendulum, that swings between birth and decay but the being who is torn by satanic revolt, sin and obedience, between living and falling from his God-Father. Both sin and submission are traits related to man as a spiritual-transcendental being.

⁵⁶ In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 4) the Rav writes:

In contradistinction, the modern scientific viewpoint spurns the idea of human autonomy as mythical and unfounded and denies the ontic discrepancy between man and animal-plant. The unity and continuity of organic life is looked upon as an indispensable postulate of all chemical sciences. Man, animal and plant are all placed in the realm of matter, organized in living structures and patterns. The differences between the vegetative-animal and human life concern just the degree of diversity, complexity and organization of life-processes. Life as such is a common grant from nature to all three forms of organic matter, and they share it alike. As a matter of fact, the contemporary scientific view insists that man emerged very late in the process of organic evolution and thus differs very little from his non-human ancestors as far as his biological existence is concerned. He is an integral part of nature. Even his so-called spiritual activities cannot lay claim to autonomy and singularity. There is no unique grant of spirituality in man. The alleged spirit is nothing but a mere illusion, an appearance, the sum total of transformed natural drives and sense experiences. Spirit, or soul, is reduced to psyche, and the latter—to a function of the biological occurrence.

⁵⁷ In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 4 note 1) the Rav writes:

Indeed, one of the most annoying scientific facts which religious man encounters is the problem of evolution and creation. However, this is not the real problem. What actually is irreconcilable is the concept of man as the bearer of a divine image and the idea of man as an intelligent animal in science. Evolution and creation can be reconciled merely by saying that six days is not absolutely so, but is indefinite and may be longer.⁵⁸ Maimonides spoke of Creation in terms of phases⁵⁹ and the *Kabbalah* in terms of *sefirot*, the time of which may be indefinite.⁶⁰ Our conflict, however, is man as a unique being and man as a friend of the animal. Science can never explain how being came into being, for it is out of the realm of science, while the Bible is concerned with the problem of *ex nihilo*. Aristotle could not accept evolution because he believed in the eternity of forms.⁶¹

The controversy between mechanists and vitalists is impertinent to our problem. Whether life be considered as an accidental end-result of physical and chemical processes similar to those appearing elsewhere, or is a unique endowment of matter whose unfolding is determined by finality, not by accident, does not alter the implications of the controversy between the scientific and Biblical-classical formulae. Even the staunchest vitalist would accept the scientific thesis concerning the unity and continuity of organic matter. The simplest organism and man are determined by a specific biocausality.

⁵⁸ See *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (pp. 4–5):

Indeed, one of the most annoying scientific facts which the modern homo religiosus encounters and tries vainly to harmonize with his belief is the so-called theory of evolution. In our daily jargon, we call this antinomy “evolution versus creation.” The phrase does not exactly reflect the crux of the controversy for the question does not revolve around divine creation and mechanistic evolution as such. We could find a solution of some kind to this controversy. What in fact is theoretically irreconcilable is the concept of man as the bearer of the divine image with the equaling of man and animal-plant existences. In other words, the ontic autonomy or heteronomy of man is the problem. The Bible and Greek philosophical thought separated man from the flora and the fauna; science brought him back to his organic co-beings.

⁵⁹ See *Moreh Nevukhim* chapter 30 of part II. See also Abarbanel, *Commentary on Bereishit, Introduction*.

⁶⁰ See Ramban, *Commentary on Bereishit* 1: 1. See also Leshem, *Sefer Ha-De'ab* II 74–75 (חלק ב' דרוש ג' ענף כ"א).

⁶¹ See Lecture I, footnote 12.

Is man autonomous or one of the organic forms of existence? This is our problem. All we know of man in the Bible through Christian channels [is] that he is a separate being.⁶²

Whether an idea is typically Jewish can best be judged by the halakhah, not by Aggadah.

(To understand any work as the authority meant to convey it you must have lived in the same social environment and cultural forces as the author. Mankind is changeable in his cognitive adventures, and to say that I understand Aristotle means in the tradition of Aristotle, which, of course, has been subject to change. In halakhah there is a *masoret*, a tradition as to method, but if I give an interpretation to Maimonides, it does not necessarily mean that Maimonides meant just that. If measured by halakhic standards it is correct; that suffices. As to Aggadah, however, there is no tradition, nor in philosophy do we have a tradition. In halakhah there is a certain *kabbalah* without any missing links,⁶³ while in Aggadah and certainly philosophy there are many such missing links. True, there are certain episodes and revelations, but they are isolated incidents without any correction. As to halakhah, it would be ridiculous to say that the Vilna Gaon and Rabbi Akiva Eiger were not as great as some of the *Geonim*. Anyone can apply his own interpretation to a *Gemara*, even against Rashi or Tosafot. However, as to practical application as a halachic decision, there is a certain reverence paid to authority in legislation.⁶⁴)

⁶² In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 9) the Rav writes:

Man's haughtiness becomes for Christianity the metaphysical pride of an allegedly unconditioned existence. Jewish Biblical pride signifies only over-emphasis upon man's abilities and power. In view of all that, the New Testament stresses man's alien status in the world of nature and his radical uniqueness. To be sure, all these ideas are not only Christian but Jewish as well. Christianity did not add much to the Biblical-philosophical anthropology. We come across a dual concept of man in the Bible. His element of transcendence was well-known to the Biblical Jew. Yet transcendence was always seen against the background of naturalness. The canvas was man's immanence; transcendence was just projected on it as a display of colors. It was more a modifying than a basic attribute of man. At any rate, both ideas were considered inseparable by the Bible; Christianity succeeded in isolating them and reducing the element of naturalness to a state of corruption and encountering the transcendent being with an alternative: death or life, while death means transcendental forms of existence and non-existence.

⁶³ In his book *The Halachic Mind*, p. 101, the Rav writes that "there is only a single source from which a Jewish philosophical Weltanschauung could emerge; the objective order—the Halakhah."

⁶⁴ See the Rav "שני מיני מסורת" in מארי לזכא אבא מארי.

To return to our subject, there is only one criterion by which to judge whether something is genuinely Jewish, and that is the Halakhah. The Halakhah is a well-organized, codified system, while the Aggadah is a jungle land without any definite path.

We often wonder whether the Psalmist did not have an insight into the affinity of man to nature (Psalms 8: 4–6)

ד כִּי-אֲרָאָה שְׁמַיִם, מַעֲשֵׂה אֲצְבָעֶיךָ—
גַּם וְכֹכָבִים, אֲשֶׁר כּוֹנְנָתָה.
מִה-אָנוּשׁ כִּי-תִזְכְּרֵנִי; וּבֶן-אָדָם, כִּי תִפְקְדֵנִי.

When I behold Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,
the moon and the stars, which Thou has established;
What is man that Thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man that Thou thinks of him?”

What troubled the Psalmist? Man is a natural being seen as a low level of natural things. Then he says:

וְתַחֲסֶרְהוּ מַעַט, מְאַלְהֵיִם; וְכְבוֹד וְהָדָר תִּעֲטֶרְהוּ. (תהילים ח: ד'–ו')

Yet You have made him but little lower than the angels. And You crowned him with glory and honor.

Man is also a unique, glorious, almost divine being.

וְרָמַתָּם, שְׁנָה יְהִיוּ;

You carry them away as with a flood; they are as asleep.

Man, carried by a forceful stream of existence that drifts away on a tide like a nightmare, represents the natural process of birth, life and death.

בְּבֹקֶר, כְּתֹצֵיר יִתְלֶף.
בְּבֹקֶר, יִצְיֵץ וְתִלָּף;

לְעֶרְב, יְמוּלֵל וְיִבֹּשׁ. (תהילים צ': ה')

In the morning, they are like grass, which grows up.

In the morning, it flourishes and grows up.

In the evening, it is cut down and withers. (Psalms 90: 5)⁶⁵

⁶⁵ See *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 6, note 3):

The Psalmist already came across the miracle called man and defined in no uncertain terms his paradoxality and the discrepancy. Sometimes we wonder whether the Psalmist did have an insight into man's affinity with nature. “What is man, that You art mindful of him? And the son of man, that You visit him” (Ps. 8:5). Ben Adam should be interpreted in the sense of “the son of the earth” and in the very moment he deprecates man to a low degree in the natural frame of things, he exclaims in rapture, “Yet You have made

Man as a natural being was known to [men] of the Bible and the antinomy and discrepancy of man was known to them. Man as a natural being is a weak being, even in comparison to other forms of organic nature. On the other hand, man in certain respects is unique. This discrepancy, however, troubled more the minds of the Christians than the Jews, because the Jewish scholar was more concerned with the practical problem of what man should do than with the metaphysics. The naturalistic formula of man was common knowledge among *Hazal*. But the Christians, beginning with St. Augustine, down to today are still struggling with this problem.

The discrepancy lies between the Old and New Testaments. Man as a natural being, put into contrast with the eternity of God, was a popular theme of the Prophets. This led to the emphasis of the ethical norm. Whereas to the Christians, if man is a natural being, why should he be ethical?⁶⁶ But man is a transcendental being, a spiritual being, and therefore ethical. If he were a natural being, there would be no reason for him to be ethical.

him a little lower than the angels, and You dost crown him with glory and honor" (Ps. 8:6). Man's autonomy and uniqueness find glorious expression in other psalms: "You turn man back to dust; and say, return, you children of men" (90:3); "You engulf them, they are like sleepers, they are like the short-lived grass in the morning. In the morning it flourishes, and fades; by evening it is withered and dried" (90:5–6). There is no naturalist who could describe [the] nature of man in more effective and beautiful words. In the metaphor "You engulf them," man is carried by a forceful stream of existence, constituting just a particle of an all-powerful process; the human individual being likened to a flower of the field that blossoms and withers is a most striking presentation.

⁶⁶ In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 6–7) the Rav writes:

Surveying the history of the problem of man's autonomy or heteronomy (which came to the fore long before Darwin, when people were ignorant of evolution), we notice that this problem troubled Christian theologians more than Jewish scholars. The naturalistic formula of man was to a certain extent common knowledge among *Hazal*, who did not resent it, while Christian theologians, beginning with Augustine of Hippo and ending with the neo-scholastics, are still struggling with the secularization of human existence by scientific research. The reason lies in the discrepancy between the Jewish Bible and the Christian gospels, the "Old" and "New" Testaments. The Hebrew Bible is cognizant of man as a natural being found on the same plane as the animal and the plant. Indeed, such an idea is a motivating force in Jewish ethics and metaphysics. The nihility, instability, helplessness and vulnerability of man—human life and death—are popular themes of prophets who contrast him with the eternity, unchangeability, everlasting

מה אנחנו, מה חיינו, מה חסדינו, מה צדקינו, מה כחינו, מה גבורתינו... ומותר
האדם מן הבהמה אין כי הכל הבל.⁶⁷

What are we? What is our life? What is our piety? What is our right-
eousness? What is our helplessness? What is our strength? What is
our might? And the pre-eminence of man over the beast is nought;
for all is vanity.

Man is a natural being coexisting with plant and animal. Nevertheless,
following this we say: *אתה הבדלת אנוש מראש*, “You distinguished man from
the very beginning.” But the Christians could not understand. If man were
a natural being, why should he be ethical? He should revolt and adopt an
Epicurean philosophy.

Death in Hebrew, *mavet*, applies equally to man and animal. *כי ימות מן*
הבהמה, “and if any beast. . . die.”⁶⁸

Man is presented by the Prophets under the aspect of temporality,
who tries to transform into glory and magnificence. And so the Prophets
say to him, “Man, as the plant of the field, why are you proud?” In all this,
man and nature come into intimacy.⁶⁹

Now the New Testament draws the idea of *bet*, sin, from Ezekiel,
while Isaiah represented to them the prediction of a redeemer because
Isaiah is the prophet of the Messiah. Their theology, therefore, was not
influenced by the optimistic Isaiah, but, rather, by the pessimistic Ezekiel,
the prophet of Jewish calamity in exile and in whose writings the idea of
bet, sin, comes to the fore with tremendous force.⁷⁰

life and omnipotence of the Creator. All those negative traits suggest the
naturalness and immanence of man rather than his spirituality and tran-
scendence.

⁶⁷ From the liturgy of the Jewish daily prayer.

⁶⁸ Leviticus 11:39.

⁶⁹ See *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 8):

“Death,” in Hebrew, *mavet*, applies equally to man and animal—“and if any
beast. . . die” (Leviticus 11:39)—and bespeaks the end of the organic pro-
cess. Man is presented by the prophet under the aspect of temporality
which he tries to convert to eternity, of weakness that in his pride man
disguised as glory and magnificence. In all this the intimacy and immediacy
of man with the physis comes to expression.

⁷⁰ In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 8) the Rav writes:

The New Testament, drawing on the idea of individual *bet* (“sin”) which
found its full formulation in Ezekiel, shifted man to a different plane and
portrayed him in a different light. Man is not any longer the pendulum, that
swings between birth and decay but the being who is torn by satanic revolt,
sin and obedience, between living and falling from his God-Father. Both

The New Testament did not see man as the pendulum that swings between life and death, but as a man who is torn by two drives, the Satanic and the Divine, a man who swings toward God and away from Him; between the devil and the Divine Being. Man-animal can neither sin nor humble himself before God. But the spirit revolts or the spirit submits himself, and reaches out to regions of absoluteness. The source of all evil for Christianity is metaphysical pride, when man wants to become unconditioned and independent. Man is an alien in the world of nature and his uniqueness is totally different.

The Psalmist believed in the unity of man, who is at the same time transcendental and natural. But he couldn't understand why man is sometimes weak and helpless and sometimes so strong and powerful. But for Christianity the body and spirit are at an eternal struggle and in order to save man, defeat of the body is necessary. Christianity reduced the element of the natural being to a state of corruption and [man] has two alternatives; damnation or salvation. Death and life in the Bible to Christians is either damnation or salvation, and not natural life or death.⁷¹

The Bible was aware of the duality of man and the emphasis on the natural being of man. The influence was an ethical one and man has a certain unity, whereas in Christianity man is on the one hand a Divine being and on the other flesh, corrupt, evil, and the most mortal enemy of his spirit. To resolve it he must overcome the flesh—mortification of the flesh. This often leads to suicide. This, however, is prohibited because God should redeem the spirit, but in life, man should overcome the body and suppress it.

Somehow many Jewish scholars were influenced by this, but put it in terms of modification. In the fourteenth century, the *Hasidic* movement in Germany, Rokeah, fell under the impact of medieval spirit which was full of disgust and despair, and the Inquisition led to this type of mentality.

sin and submission are traits related to man as a spiritual-transcendental being. Man-animal can never sin nor humble himself. It is the spirit that revolts, the spirit that submits itself. Man as a biological being is incapable of either. "The spirit is in an eternal quest for self-transcendence, to exceed its own relativity and conditionality and reaches out beyond itself toward regions of absoluteness and indeterminacy."

⁷¹ In *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 9) the Rav writes:

Christianity succeeded in isolating them and reducing the element of naturalness to a state of corruption and encountering the transcendent being with an alternative: death or life, while death means transcendental forms of existence and non-existence.

Asceticism is a sign of decadence and sophistication when one becomes weary of simplicity.

Yissurim for *Hazal* was not self-infliction of physical punishment, but disappointment: E.g., if a man asks the waiter for a glass of hot tea and receives a glass of cold tea; or being short of change for the subway.

If there were any ascetic tendencies in Maimonides, it would be found in the *Moreh Nevukhim*, not in the *Mishneh Torah*. Asceticism is an inclination, not a philosophy, and was influenced not by Jewish thought but by a certain Arab sect of Sufism. Whatever these Jewish philosophers found acceptable in another philosophy, they assumed that it was taken from Judaism. And no doubt some of this is true, as with Plato. There is also an ascetic movement in the school of the Ari, though due to a different reason.

Lecture XIII

The Christian theologians never tried to relate the story of man with the first five days of Creation or to the wholeness of Creation. But they confined it to the story of man on the sixth day as a transcendental being and so detached him from his environment.

For Judaism, however, the story of Creation is the story of nature unrelated to any transcendental world. The *hakhmei ha-Kabbalah* tried to lend a mystical interpretation to Creation, but in the Pentateuch, in its simple terms this transcendentalism is not emphasized. God Who created the world is *Elokim*, a powerful king Who is in contact with His creation. The medieval philosophers and *Hazal* interpreted *Elokim* as being the owner behind Creation, the source of the world related to it, not only as the artisan but the source of the dynamics of Creation.⁷²

⁷² The Rav writes in *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (pp. 9–10):

The story of creation is the biography of nature. The story is not related to any transcendental world or any supernatural phenomena. On the contrary, the Creator is depicted not as transcendent God, who creates a world with which He will never come in contact (what would be a *contradictio in adjecto*), but as E-lokim, as the powerful being who dominates all, and who is not at an infinite distance from His creatures. There is no doubt that E-lokim bespeaks the dynamics of the world whose source is the Creator. Creation of the earth, light, water, darkness, vegetation, planets, atmosphere (sky), the sun, animals, constitute the main phases of the story. Even the elements with which the Torah begins its story are concrete natural phenomena.

True, Rambam interpreted *shamayim* as being the spiritual transcendental world, but he also admitted that in its simplest terms it was sky of the world.⁷³ In a word, there is no mention of a transcendental realm.

Secondly, the story expresses the idea of unity and regular systematic emergence of the world; some logical and dynamic sequence by which the world emerged. First, *shamayim ve-aretz*, the frame of the universe. Then light, the earth, vegetation, animal kingdom and, last, man. There is a clear-cut, stable order. One phase leading into the other. The first two days—inorganic matter. The third, organic, the appearance of life. Beginning with the

תְּדַשָּׂא הָאָרֶץ דְּשֵׂא עֵשֶׂב מְזֵרִיעַ זֶרַע. (בראשית א: י"א)

Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs yielding seed. (Genesis 1: 11)

The fourth—heavenly bodies

The fifth—the aquarium life and birds.

The sixth—animal, and finally man.⁷⁴

All three reports of creation of plant, animal and man all seem identical as to the emergence of each. All have the common origin of life, viz. the earth. Moreover, man's name *Adam* bespeaks his arising while (animal) [woman] is identified by the fact of life, *hayab*. Man, however, is *adam me-ha-adamah*. The curse of man being condemned to death is a return to his origin.⁷⁵

It is obvious that man as a Divine being cannot be identified with the soil that nourishes him. The Torah, however, emphasized man as an

⁷³ See *Moreh Nevukhim* 2:30.

⁷⁴ The Rav writes in *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (pp. 10–11):

Secondly, the story bespeaks the idea of the unity of the created universe. The emergence of the world by the word of God is presented to us according to a certain principle of order, of a logical dynamic sequence. First Heaven and earth—the frame of the universe—then light, the emergence of the earth-globe, the coming forth of vegetative life, animal, and finally man. The Torah pursues a meaningful pattern of succession; there is no heterogeneity of a disorderly creation. Of utmost importance is the description of the creation of life.

⁷⁵ The Rav writes in *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 11-12):

All three reports about creation then, of plant, animal and man are almost identical. All three, for example, take account of the common origin of life, namely the earth. All three exponents of living matter emerged out of Mother Earth. Moreover, the fact that man is named Adam bespeaks his origin. The curse of death which was imposed on man after his first sin is founded on the affinity of man with his “Mother” Earth: “. . . for dust you are, and to dust shall you return” (Gen. 3:19).

earthly creature. Primordial man, *adam ha-kadmon*, of the Bible, is a natural man.

וַיֹּאמֶר in regard to plant is used in terms of a command. In man וַיֹּאמֶר, is in the sense of deliberation, but this should not disturb us (in the time being). The term וַיַּעַשׂ is also used in other phases of creation (א': כ"ה) although it is used in regard to animals:

The uniqueness of man is thus not in regard to terminology but only in regard to the *tz'elem Elokim*.⁷⁶

All in all man in the story of creation does not occupy a unique, ontic position but is a particle that falls into the scheme of the concrete order. Man is only the last of three stages of living matter. Science and evolution interpret man only as part of the emergence of organic matter. Christianity splits the story into two and explained man without taking into consideration animal and plant and misinterpreted Biblical philosophical anthropology.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ The Rav writes in *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 12):

It is obvious that man as a divine being, endowed with a transcendental image, is not one with the soil that nourishes him. Adam—man as an earthly creature—is the first man in the Bible. But man is not only identical with the universal source of life, the earth. He is also enmeshed within the entire physical environment. Let us not forget that *ruah* in the Bible means “wind, breath,” related to the atmosphere surrounding man. While the Bible’s first chapter speaks of *tz'elem E-lokim*, “image of God,” the second chapter mentions “and breathed into his nostrils the breath (*ruah*) of life” (v. 7). The fact that in regard to vegetative and animal the Bible uses the term *va-yomer* (“said” or “spoke”) as the direct command of becoming and in regard to man the *va-yomer* is used in the sense of deliberation should not disturb us much. The same verbs (e. g., *va-ya'as*, *va-yivra*) are applied to plant and animal in the same manner as in reference to man.

⁷⁷ The Rav writes in *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 12):

Man in the story of creation does not occupy a unique ontic position. He is, rather, a drop of the cosmos that fits into the schemata of naturalness and concreteness. The Torah presents to us a successive order of life-emergence and divides it into three phases; the last of those living structures is man. The viewpoint is very much akin to modern science. Christianity split the story of creation in two, and analyzed the story of man without taking cognizance of that of animal and plant. That is why it arrived at half-truths and misinterpreted the Biblical anthropology.

Hakhmei Yisrael interpreted death as part of a natural phenomenon. Maimonides says that death is not due to the “Original Sin.” The Christians say that death is the direct result of the “Original Sin.” However, Maimonides said that if man is biological then he must die.⁷⁸

“For on the day that thou eat thereof thou shalt surely die.” This passage should not be interpreted as a curse, but it could mean, rather, that “you are worthy of death,” as with the transgression of any other halakhah that is punishable by death. ❧

⁷⁸ The Rav writes in *The Emergence of Ethical Man* (p. 13):

The relationships of Jewish scholars and Christian theologians to death will serve as a very conspicuous illustration. Jewish scholars are inclined to accept death as a natural phenomenon that is a part of the biological process (Maimonides, *Guide to the Perplexed* III:10; Ibn Ezra on Genesis 3:6; Nahmanides, Genesis 2:17 and many statements of *Hazal*), while Christian theologians consider death a punishment for what they term the original sin.