

The Problem of Prayer in Medieval Jewish Philosophy.

Graduation Thesis,

Presented by,

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Cincinnati.

1919.

THE PROBLEM OF PRAYER

IN

MEDIEVAL JEWISH PHILOSOPHY.

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INTRODUCTION.

"Religion", says Dr. Kohler, "offers a wondrous medium to bring the heart of man into close communion with Him who is enthroned above the Heavens, one that overleaps all distances, removes all barriers, and blends all dissonances into one great harmony, and that is -- Prayer". "Prayer, communion between the human soul and the Creator is the glorious privilege enjoyed by man alone among all creatures, as he alone is the child of God" (Jewish Theology p.261).

Prayer may assume various forms depending on the mental development of the worshiper, his God conception, and his circumstances and needs. The loftiest relationship that the worshiper may assume toward his Maker is that of adoration. Adoration is a form of prayer which expresses a sense of the excellence, glory, majesty and holiness of God and delight in His work of Providence. Or the heart of the worshiper may be filled with gratitude to God. Then his prayer will take the form of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a form of prayer which recognizes with gratitude the special goodness of God as it has been manifested in nature, in history, in the benefits bestowed upon a certain people, or upon the worshiper himself. A third form prayer may assume is that of petition. To the popular mind the terms prayer and petition are synonymous. But petition is only one mode of prayer. It is man's appeal to God to grant him his physical wants or endow him with certain spiritual gifts. Finally, prayer may take the form of confession of sins in which the worshiper recognizes his sinfulness, and promises to lead a better life in the future.

* Both Thanksgiving and Adoration may be included under the single term of Confession of Faith. The latter, however, is broader in its implications, and may be added as a fifth form that prayer may assume.

In all these forms of prayer, the worshiper assumes not only the existence but also the continuous Providence of God. Logically, the atheist can not satisfy the longing of his heart for prayer. Man can not pray to a Voltair^e God. Nor can man pray to a transcendent deistic God, or to an Unconditioned Absolute. Psychological reasons alone will not prompt man to pray regularly. Sincere and devoted religiosity is, as Schleiermacher holds, the result of man's feeling that he is finite, and that there is an unseen Power upon which he depends. Prayer is the result of a feeling of dependence upon God, the object of worship, and involves a feeling of mystery, awe or reverence toward Him. The worshiper must feel that there is a God who hears his prayers, and who can answer his prayers.

The student of the life and the customs of primitive peoples is apt to conclude that religion and prayer - the heart of religion - are not to be found in the earliest periods of human history. Both Tylor and Frazer hold that magic preceded religion; that religion became universal only when those practical primitive peoples discovered that magical rites were unreliable. Jevons, on the other hand, maintains that religion and prayer universally preceded magic. Magic, Jevons believes, is but a form of gesture that accompanies prayer; that the actions that the medicine man goes through are meant to explain the words and make them more forcible, just as modern man in moments of emotion expresses himself by gesture, by the play of his features as well as by words. Several facts would tend to prove that the principles of magic are similar to those of religion, and that magic is not the science of primitive man, the principles of which, according to Frazer, are opposed to religion:

1. Magic, like many modern religious systems, holds that only certain persons - the medicine men - can prevail upon the Powers to do the worshiper's will. Science knows of no such selection of its agents.
2. Magic is usually accompanied by a chant that seems to form a persistent

part of the rite. Is it not plausible to say that this chant is a form of prayer?

3. It is a fundamental scientific doctrine that the quantity of the effect depends upon the quantity of the cause. Neither magic, nor religion, know of any such quantitative relationship.

4. The view that magic is but the concrete expression of prayer, and that religious sentiments developed early in the history of man before he ever conceived of an elaborate system of magical rites, is corroborated by modern social psychologists who claim that religion and prayer are social impulses that are a function of personal development.

Religiosity and prayer developed as soon as man developed a social self-consciousness. Prayer originally accompanied magical rites. Later, magic may have stiffened into a formula, and the significance of the prayer may have been forgotten, or the prayer may have dropped out altogether. The same may be said concerning primitive sacrifices. Sacrifices without prayer would have been meaningless. Prayer was the motive with which the sacrifices were bought. Later, the prayer may have dropped out as the form of the sacrifice would indicate to the deity what the worshiper desired. This is sufficient to show that prayer was probably prevalent among primitive peoples.

Primitive prayer is practically all of a petitional form. Primitive man is pragmatic in his prayers. He prays and performs certain rites because he expects to gain certain ends. He never doubted the ability of his deity to help him. Had he been disturbed by the problem of the efficacy of prayer, he would have resorted to other means to gain his ends. His prayers are offered up through an intermediary - the medicine man or priest. The deity must be propitiated or flattered by sacrifices or other ceremonial rites. This brief survey of primitive prayer will give us a point of view from which to discuss the attitude toward prayer, manifested by Biblical and the other literatures to be discussed in this chapter.

In the Biblical period the institution of sacrifices is assumed to be coeval with the race. Cain and Abel approached God by means of a sacrifice. The Patriarchs are frequently represented as building altars to God and sacrificing on them. This individualistic method of sacrificing finally evolved into the centralized sacrificial cult of the "P" Code. However, it is undoubtedly true that all these sacrifices were accompanied by some form of prayer. Abraham "called in the name of the Lord" after he had built an altar upon which a sacrifice was probably offered up (Gen. 12:9). In connection with the Atonement sacrifice, Aaron lays his hands upon the head of the goat and confesses over it the sins of the children of Israel. The prophets of Israel and the Psalmist denounced the sacrificial cult not because they were opposed to the institution of sacrifices ~~per se~~, but because, to the mind of the masses of the Jewish people, these sacrifices became the way of gaining God's favor and of appeasing His anger; because the people came to believe that all their moral sins could be expiated by the properly instituted sacrifices. To these prophets, the sacrificial cult was not an end ⁱⁿ itself. It was but a means to an end, and this end was the purification of Man's heart and soul which result sacrifices could only help bring about, but could not substitute.

In addition to the prayers offered up in conjunction with the sacrificial cult, the elect of Israel - patriarchs, prophets and other sainted men are depicted as praying to God. It is only the heroes of Israel that are able to approach the Divinity in this voluntary and spontaneous manner. The masses of the people were probably excluded from this close relationship to God. Most of the prayers found in the pre-exilic portions of the Bible are of a petitionary form. The prayer ascribed to Solomon at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings, 8:11-53) includes all the forms of prayer - adoration, thanksgiving, petition, and confession. The Psalter is the book of prayer in the Bible. There, prayer assumed its loftiest ex-

pression. The Psalmist feels that by prayer he can commune with the Divine, and this relationship gives him satisfaction and sustains him in trial.

Up to the time of Ezra, we saw that only a few felt that they had the privilege of praying to God, and they prayed very rarely. From the book of Psalms we learn of the preponderance of prayer over sacrifice. Two causes, DR. Neumark points out in his recently published book "The Philosophy of the Bible" (pp. 252-60) led to this development of prayer. One cause of this institution of prayer, private and public, may be found in the centralization of the sacrificial cult. This circumstance led those Palestinian Jews who lived at a distance from the Temple to come to look upon prayer as the divine service. Another cause that led to the institution of prayer was the necessity felt by many Jews of defending Judaism against the dualistic principles of Parsism and against the inroads later made by Hellenistic philosophy. The book of Psalms is really such a defense. The Psalmist states the fundamental theoretical doctrines of Judaism. When Psalms were recited at the Temple or at a private prayer-meeting, they were meant to be a confession of faith. The leaders of Judaism introduced at the Temple services such recitals and songs that would state the authoritative position of Judaism. All other prayers were excluded. In the Province, those prayers that were in conformity with the authoritative position were established as obligatory. Additional readings and Psalms could be recited, but they were not obligatory. "Thus at the time comprising the end of the Persian and the beginning of the Greek periods, there has developed the fixed institution of national religious liturgy at the Temple in Jerusalem, and at the prayer-meetings in the Province, and by and by, also, in the Diaspora" (ibid pp. 254-5).

Dr. Kohler (Jewish Theology pp. 266-7) traces the origin and the development of prayer, as an institution, to an earlier period and to different causes. The underlying point of difference between Drs. Kohler and Neumark is probably the date of some of the Psalms. To Dr. Neumark, the whole Psalter

is of Maccabean and post Maccabean origin; while DR. Kohler believes that some of the Psalms trace their authorship to an exilic writer. Hence, public prayer would have its origin prior to the period we stated before. DR. Kohler traces the origin of prayer in the following way: In Babylon where sacrifices could not be brought "a class of devout men... Hasidim or Anavim, assembled by the rivers of Babylon for regular prayer, turning their faces toward Jerusalem, that the God of Israel might answer them from His ancient seat". Public prayer was, then, the result of the natural longing, on the part of these Godly men to commune with God. Prayer was a substitute for sacrifices. It was the Hasidim who elaborated a liturgy, under the Persian influence, in which prayer was the chief element, and the readings from the Torah and the prophets were secondary. Later, says DR. Kohler, prayers were introduced into the Temple by an unwilling priesthood, as a concession to the lay movement of the Hasidim, and added a prayer service, morning and evening, to the daily sacrifices.

But whatever the cause of the origin of the institution of prayer, it is practically certain that at the close of the Biblical period prayer, private and public, was a fixed institution and, in the minds of some, possessed a greater efficacy than even the divinely instituted sacrificial cult. Thus Daniel "kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks to God" (Daniel 6:10). Psalms 55:18 speaks of three daily prayers. This would lead us to conclude that the triple daily services were a fixed institution at that time. The attitude of turning the face toward Jerusalem may have been considered necessary to make the prayer effective.

The efficacy of man's prayer is ^{rarely} ~~never~~ questioned in the Bible. Though the God conception of "P" is rather transcendent, nevertheless, God cares for His children, and, especially, for Israel. The prayers offered by the Biblical heroes are either immediately answered, or God informs the petitioner why they can not be answered. The prayer of Eliezer is answered

immediately. God fulfils the petitions of Hannah and Hezekiah. The prayers of Moses stem the various plagues of Egypt and cure the leprosy of Miriam. Even the doom of Nineveh is averted by prayer, fasting and repentance. Individual Providence is ^{hardly} ~~not~~ questioned. God changes His will, and repents of what He had done (Gen. 6:6). Even those late Biblical writers who discussed the problem of justice did not question God's relation to man.

The Biblical prayers are addressed directly to God, though the early Biblical sources are intimately bound up with theophanies and angels. It was in Judah that the opposition to the doctrine of angels arose, and this opposition is very evident in the "D" Code, where the mention of angels is purposely omitted. Ezekiel believed in angels, but authoritative Judaism later rejected angelology, and excluded from the Temple services all those prayers that had any reference to angels. Though human intermediaries were still considered necessary in the sacrificial cult, no sort of intermediaries were necessary in prayer. Thus prayer came to have a more personal and spiritual appeal. Everyone could pour out his heart directly before God. And He would hear their prayers.

PRAYER IN APOCRYPHAL AND APOCALYPTIC LITERATURES.

The Biblical writings of the post-exilic period may be conveniently divided into: 1. "Legalistic"-represented by the authoritative "P" Code, and 2. "Philosophic"-represented by such books as Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Kohelet etc. These two schools of writings were continued into the post-Biblical period, giving us the Talmud on the one hand, and the Apocryphal and the Apocalyptic literatures on the other hand. In this latter class of literatures, which we shall treat first, the problem of prayer is not discussed directly. But almost all these books contain prayers. In an introductory chapter, it is impossible to go into a detailed discussion of the attitude toward prayer and its dependent problems that we could

* We only find it questioned in connection with the problem of Justice.

infer the various authors of the several books contained in these literatures held. It will be necessary merely to indicate, in a few lines, what the authors of these books thought about such problems as, the Efficacy of Prayer, Providence, Prayer through Intermediaries etc. For the purpose of this inquiry, fifteen books are chosen—five from those composed in the second century B.C., and five from each of the following two centuries. This method will enable us to trace a certain development in the attitude of the authors toward the questions we shall here discuss.

FIRST GROUP.

1. ECCLESIASTICUS.

Ben-Sira insists on God's personal administration of the world: "The power of the earth is in the hand of the Lord, and in due time He will set over it one that is profitable" (10:4). He believes in Individual Providence: "Prosperity and adversity, life and death, poverty and riches come of the Lord" (11:14). Therefore God can hear man's prayers, and He answers them: "The prayer of the humble pierceth the clouds...and will not depart till the most High shall behold to judge righteously and execute judgment" (35:17). There is no reference to angels.

2. TOBIT.

Each of the principal characters of the book is described as approaching God in prayer, but there are seven angels who carry the prayers to God: "I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints" (12:15). Yet God is not remote from man: "For Thou hast scourged and taken pity on me" (11:15).

3. ETHIOPIA ENOCH.

Here also angels mediate between man and God. The prayers of men first reach the angels: "To you, ye holy ones, complain the souls of men" (9:2). In the latter chapters, however, we are told that the believer has the

privilege of praying directly to God(83:10).God's relation to man is entirely through angels.Israel has been committed into the hands of seventy angels because of its wickedness.But in a coming age God will again be in direct contact both with Jews and Gentiles(90:28f).

4. JUBILEES.

To the author of Jubilees God is remote from man.Angels are God's lieutenants and execute His will.The Torah was given to Moses through angels.But God is near to His people when they pray to Him.All the heroes of the book pray repeatedly to God.God's Providence is manifested everywhere:"He causes the rain and the dew to descend on the earth,and does everything upon the earth"(12:4).

5. THE TESTAMENT OF THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS.

Like Jubilees this book also teaches that angels minister to man.Levi prays to an angel"Ipray thee,O Lord,tell me thy name that I may call upon thee in a day of affliction"(2.Levi,5:6).But most of the heroes of the book pray directly to God.The experiences of Joseph are all arranged by God.

SUMMARY.

In all these works we find that man can pray directly to God;and that God answers the prayers of the righteous.However,all the authors of this period,with the exception of Ben-Sira,have a transcendent God conception.God comes in contact with man usually through angels only.

SECOND GROUP:

1. I MACCABEES.

The Israelites pray directly to God:"Now,therefore,let us cry unto Heaven,if peradventure He will have mercy upon us"(4:10).God interferes on behalf of the Jews and delivers them from the enemy.We find no reference to angels.

2. II MACCABEES.

Here also God alone directs events. God shows His power through miracles. Men pray directly to God. But God also uses angels. Prayer and angels save the Israelites in their struggles with the enemy.

3. THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON.

God is accessible to man in prayer, and He answers prayer: "The lord hearkeneth unto the prayers of everyone that feareth God" (6:8). God's Providence extends over all men. Angels play no role here.

4. JUDITH.

There is no reference to angels. God can be approached directly by prayer: "Then every man of Israel cried unto God with fervency" (4:9). And God heard their prayers (ibid v. 13).

5. I ESDRAS.

Man can approach God directly in prayer. Zorobabel prays to God (4:58). Angels are not mentioned. God's Providence is taught. It is He who stirs up the Jews to return to their land, and influences kings in their favor.

SUMMARY.

With the exception of II MAC., angels play no role in the writings of this group. Men pray directly to God, and He answers them. God's Providence is manifested, especially over Israel. In this century, the God conception is not as transcendent as in the former one.

THIRD GROUP.

1. WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

In this book Wisdom is the Logos through which God acts. Yet God hears the prayers of man: "I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me" (7:7). In chas. 9-19 there is a long prayer for, and panegyric ^{on} to wisdom. Men are urged to thank God and send ~~their~~ petitions up to Him (16:29).

2. BARUCH.

There is no mention of angels here. But there are several references to demons (4:7). God is accessible by prayer: "Cry unto the Lord, and He shall deliver you" (4:21).

3. II ESDRAS.

Esdras addresses himself to an angel. There are no prayers in this book. His God conception may be one that makes Him too remote for prayer.

4. THE PRAYER OF MANASSES

Even so sinful a man as Manasseh may approach God directly by prayer and may hope for forgiveness after sincerely repenting for his sins.

5. THE REST OF ESTHER.

We have frequent references of prayers offered by the Israelites to God that were effective: "And my nation is this Israel which cried unto God and were saved" (10:).

SUMMARY.

In this group we found no references of prayers being offered up to angels. God's Providence extends especially over Israel whose prayers He always hears.

CONCLUSION.

From the fact that so many prayers are offered up in these books, we can see that during this period the institution of prayer had become established. The efficacy of man's prayer is not doubted. Even those books that teach Merkabah assume God's Providence over man and that He hears man's prayers. There are many other interesting points in regard to prayer in these books, as, the turning toward Jerusalem during prayer, the order of the prayers, their contents etc. But these points can not be treated here.

PRAYER IN THE TALMUD.

Though Angelology and the Theory of Ideas were fostered by two Talmudic schools, yet authoritative Judaism, as represented in the Mishna taught the absolute unity of God and His control of events without any intermediaries. The Mishna makes no reference to angels. It is difficult to say what the attitude of the Talmudists toward prayer was. Some Rabbis emphasized the importance of prayer; others neglected it. Some Rabbis would not interrupt their studies in order to pray. R. Judah recited his prayers only once in thirty days. Other Rabbis would excuse a man from prayer for almost any reason. Most of them would emphasize study and the ceremonial law. The personal side of religion they neglected. This accounts, to a large extent, for the rapid growth of Christianity among the ignorant classes.

The efficacy of man's prayer is taught in many forms. The prayers of some Rabbis were considered more efficacious than that of others. Some of them could even cure disease by prayer. They did not doubt that God's Providence extends over each individual, and especially over Israel. This leads R. Akiba to teach that every event is predetermined. But he also adds that man's will is free. There is very little mysticism in the Babylonian Talmud. Medieval Jewish Philosophy was influenced greatly by this rationalistic spirit of the Talmud. So far we found very little discussion of the problem of prayer, and its dependent problems. It is in Medieval Jewish Philosophy that we shall find these questions ^{more} fully treated.

CHAPTER 1

Isaac Israeli.

Isaac ben Solomon Israeli (circa 845-945) though the first Jew in the Medieval Ages to write scientific treatises on philosophical questions can no more be said to be the first medieval "Jewish" philosopher, than those many Jews who are teaching philosophy in modern universities can be upheld as "Jewish" philosophers. Those doctrines that are purely Jewish do not concern him. The reader will seek in vain a Biblical verse or Talmudic saying in Israeli's chief philosophical treatise ספר היסוד "Book of the Elements".

Israeli is the first Jewish philosopher to formulate clearly the doctrine of "Creatio ex Nihilo":

הנה במהדר שם הקדוש ית' אית' יסוד אלא שהוא דבר אלוהים אמר
ספר היסוד, Edition Fried, Drohobicz, 1900, p. 71):

"Thus it has become clear that the power of the Creator is not an element but that He creates things and produces them ex nihilo". And though Israeli does not discuss the problems of Prayer, Providence, Justice, Retribution etc., his doctrine of Creation gives us a background as to his probable views concerning these doctrines. To the question why God created the world he says:

הוא ית' כשרצה לעולם העולם או הלא היה חכמה אוהא אלה שזו אה
אל העולם הזה העולם אוהא אלה... לא לעולם אלא אלה אלה אלה
אל אלה אלה נצח ית'... אלה אלה אלה אלה אלה אלה אלה אלה

"When the Creator wished to create the world, to show His wisdom and to bring everything in the world from a state of potentiality to actuality, He created and fashioned the world ex nihilo ... not because He had any need for it to derive any benefit from it or to obviate any harmbut He did it out of His goodness and mercy" (ibid, p. 57). The Creator of the

world is a good God and had a purpose in creating the world. He created it not for His own benefit, but for the good of mankind;

וְכִּי יִרְבֶּה חַסְדּוֹ לְבָרִים לִפְנֵי ה' וְיִרְבֶּה חַסְדּוֹ לְבָרִים לִפְנֵי ה'

"And when His mercy increased He wished to benefit His creatures and servants" (ibid). God's goodness toward men will be shown by the rewards He will bestow upon them in return for their performance of God's commandments:

אֵל הַיּוֹד עֲשֵׂה לְבָרִים חַסְדֵּי ה' וְיִרְבֶּה חַסְדּוֹ לְבָרִים לִפְנֵי ה' וְיִרְבֶּה חַסְדּוֹ לְבָרִים לִפְנֵי ה'

"And men could only attain their advantage by their knowledge of God's will concerning them in order that they might perform it and be worthy to receive His compensation and reward for their services to Him" (ibid).

The question now arises: How is man to know God's will? Israeli believes that God does not reveal His will to every man, for not all men are fit to commune with God. Those men in whom the animal soul or vegetative soul predominates could not understand God's message. Therefore, God selected the man with a rational soul (probably referring to Moses) and gave him two kinds of teachings, one class of teachings (for the wise) that need no further interpretation, and another class of teachings (for the ignorant) that need further interpretation (Cf. Saadya's division of the laws into Rational and Revelational). This theory would naturally lead Israeli to defend traditional Judaism. We must worship God and serve God, not in the way of the Karaites who endeavored to follow the letter of the Bible, but rather in the way that the Sages had interpreted the will of God, expressed in the Bible. The letter of the law is deceiving. Words may apparently say one thing and imply something entirely different. Therefore, the ignorant needed the aid of those endowed with a rational soul to interpret for them the true meaning of the words of God:

וְכִּי יִרְבֶּה חַסְדּוֹ לְבָרִים לִפְנֵי ה' וְיִרְבֶּה חַסְדּוֹ לְבָרִים לִפְנֵי ה' וְיִרְבֶּה חַסְדּוֹ לְבָרִים לִפְנֵי ה'

"Therefore, the ignorant among men needed ... instructors who possess understanding and sages who seek true interpretations, for the books do, indeed, speak from ^{one} point of view and the words ^{have} may ~~bring~~ only one meaning" (ibid, p.59). Were men to rely upon their own intellect they would be left in their ignorance. The wise, however, could give them the various meanings and interpretations of the words.

Israeli does not once mention the word prayer in his work on "Elements". But should we try to infer his attitude toward prayer from the quotations given above we could say that Israeli believes that man ought to pray to God, or to be more definite, ought to thank and adore the Creator of the Universe for His goodness toward man. God delights in such service. But such service must be performed in the way that our sages have told us God wills, not in the way we think God wills. God watches over all the actions of men and will reward those who follow His will.

Prayer is efficacious only in that it brings man reward for his efforts. We nowhere have any indication that Israeli believes God would or could grant man's petitions. Through out the book we can perceive the mind of the scientist who believes in the uniformity of the laws of nature. But prayer in the form of admiration and thanksgiving is due to God, because of His goodness as manifested in His creation of the world ex nihilo for the sake of man; and if carried out in the manner prescribed by the teachers of Israel would bring man the reward which God has reserved for those who obey His will. Whether this reward is to be given to man in the future world or in this world, and if in this world, how such reward could be given in a world whose laws are uniform, Israeli nowhere discusses.

CHAPTER II

Saadya Ben Joseph Al-Fayyumi.

The first great Jewish philosopher after Philo is Saadya (892-942). Like Philo, Saadya is mainly apologetic. Philo tried to harmonize the Republic of Plato with the teachings of the Bible. Saadya tries to harmonize traditional Judaism with the Aristotelian philosophy of his day. * Saadya ^{offers} four proofs for Creatio ex Nihilo. And to the question concerning God's purpose in creating the world, Saadya gives three answers that were given by Israeli before him:

1. "God created all things not because of any outside cause, and yet they were not made in vain; . . .
2. God wished through this creation to show His wisdom; . . .
3. God intended by this creation the advantage of His creatures in that He might lead them to His worship".

(Emunot ve-Deot, translation of Judah ibn Tibbon Yozefov edition, p.82). We can all readily realize that God created the world for our good, and that God desires that mankind worship Him. Hence, our intellect would require of us that we thank the Creator for the good which He hath bestowed upon us;

אלהינו מן השמים ואלהינו מן הארץ ואלהינו מן המים ואלהינו מן הרוח ואלהינו מן האש ואלהינו מן הארץ ואלהינו מן המים ואלהינו מן הרוח ואלהינו מן האש

"Our intellect requires us to greet ^{with} everyone of our benefactors either with kindness, if he has need of it, or with thanksgiving, if he is not in need of ~~our~~ reward" (p.106). But would not our intellect also tell us that God needs not and cares not for our worship; that He could have prospered us without having imposed any commandments or prohibitions upon us? Saadya's answer to this question is that God has given man commandments in order that He may reward man for obeying them, as the pleasure that man derives from reward given to him for service to God is incomparably greater than the pleasure man might have derived from

* Although an oversight, the typist omitted a few sentences here, as they were only a footnote on the matter, I did not deem it necessary to have a number of pages reprinted.

reward given to him by the grace of God (p.105). This is a psychological truth which Saadya perceived and which he used to explain the purpose a good God had in giving commandments to man.

Saadya classifies all the commandments of the Torah into two classes: Rational and Revelational. We have seen that he includes prayer, especially prayer in the form of thanksgiving and adoration, among the rational laws. A rational law is one which man would have found out by his own intellect, even if it were not commanded to him by God. The reason that God gave unto man rational commandments is first, in order to increase the joy of man's reward for obeying these laws; and secondly, in order that these laws may serve as a guide unto man until the time that he is able to discover them by the aid of his own intellect (p.51). Now, Saadya tells us that prayer is a rational law for two reasons: First, because the world was created for the good of man. Man is the ultimate purpose of all creation:

וְהָאֱלֹהִים יָצַר אֶת הָעוֹלָם לְטוֹב אָדָם

"We find, then, that man is the ultimate aim (of creation) (p.124)". Therefore, man ought to thank God for His goodness toward so insignificant a creature (p.126). But Saadya realizes that this reason, in itself, would not suffice to induce man to pray. He perceived that the principle:

אִם יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֱלֹהִים לְטוֹב אָדָם בְּלִי שְׂכָר

as it is generally interpreted - namely, that man ought to serve God without the expectation of any reward, is impracticable. Man is so constituted that he will not always follow the Categorical Imperative of his intellect, especially where there is a sacrifice involved, unless some kind of a reward is held out before his eyes. Saadya, therefore, states the second reason that should prompt man to thank God and observe His laws - namely, that there is a reward awaiting the obedient and punishment the rebellious. Saadya thus uses the doctrine of Reward and Punishment to explain two facts. He uses it to explain God's purpose in

giving rational commandments to man, and also to explain the purpose man should have in observing God's laws.

That there is Reward and Punishment in God's universe for man's deeds, he concludes from the idea that God must be just. Justice requires that the righteous and the obedient receive some sort of a reward. And to the question that had so frequently been asked: "how is it that we find that the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper". Saadya gives many answers that had been given by others before him. But his chief answer to this problem of Justice is that man is incapable of judging the amount of Reward and Punishment allotted to man, as there is a future world where all inequalities will be balanced up by God who constantly watches man's deeds:

וְהוּא הַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ
מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ

"While we are yet in this world, He watches over each one of His creatures, and has already prepared his reward for him in the future world which is the world of Compensation" (p.138). This general problem of Justice which forces Saadya to conclude that there is a future world where every wrong is righted, has a particular application for the Jewish people, - the righteous people that has endured so much suffering. Justice would demand that there be אַתְּ הַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ "A Final Redemption" for Israel;

וְהוּא הַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ מֵהַיּוֹמֵהּ

"And we can not possibly believe that God does not know how much we suffer for Him, and that He will not redeem us from our sufferings". (ibid p.176)".

That Saadya believes that man is incapable of praying to God and serving God without the expectation of thereby gaining a reward in the future world is evident from the questions ~~he~~ He asks in his discussion of these problems in the ninth chapter (p.186). Why should Isaac have

been willing to sacrifice his life if there is only this world in which we are compensated? Why should Daniel have been ready to be devoured by the lions, because he wished to pray to God, if he felt that this is the only world and that he could expect no recompense for his sacrifice in a future world? These questions show clearly that Saadya believes that it is impossible for man to serve God for His own sake. Man would not pray to God if he did not expect to be rewarded for his efforts.

The question of Reward and Punishment for man's obedience, ^{to} of God's laws, which forms a part of Saadya's general problem of Justice, is involved with the problem of the compatibility of God's Omniscience, ^{with} and man's Free Will. If man's actions are foreknown, his obedience or disobedience is also foreknown or predetermined. Why, then, should man be rewarded or punished when both his obedience and disobedience, ^{are} is a product of the Divine will? Saadya's answer to this question is:

אין שום הוכחה כי ידעו אלהים את מעשיו של אדם וכן הדין

"There is no proof that God's knowledge of things is the cause of their being" (p.130). God's knowledge is not causative. Man has absolute free will to accept or to reject God's law; and, therefore, are the obedient rewarded and the disobedient punished:

אין שום הוכחה כי ידעו אלהים את מעשיו של אדם וכן הדין

"It would accord with the justice of the Creator ... that He should give man the strength and the power to do what He commanded him, and to avoid what He forbade him (p.127)". Later he is more positive in his declaration that:

אין שום הוכחה כי ידעו אלהים את מעשיו של אדם וכן הדין

"The Creator has no direction over men's actions and does not force them either to serve Him or to rebel against Him" (ibid p.128)".

So far we have treated of the purpose of, and reason for prayer, a rational commandment of the Torah. Saadya also tells us that the

כיון שכל אדם חייב להתפלל ויחזרה ויזקקו כדבר

"For I am certain that during the period of fasting and prayer, they will forsake evil, repent, and seek forgiveness" (p.143). This statement is a product of Saadya's own thought, his own conviction. Prayer, he believes (and modern psychologists will agree with him) puts man in a certain attitude of mind, an attitude that helps him in his determination to lead a better life.

Saadya enumerates seven cases when prayer can not be efficacious.

They are:

1. "When man prays, after judgment on him in regard to that thing has been decreed",
2. "Prayer without the accompanying ^{devotion} ~~intention~~ of the heart",
3. "He who refuses to hear the words of the Torah",
4. "He who conceals himself from the outcry of the needy",
5. "He who permits himself the use of money that is prohibited to him",
6. "If he prays while in an impure condition",
7. "He whose sins have multiplied and he does not pray in a repentant spirit" (p.144).

The second, fourth and fifth cases are worthy of our special attention. Mechanical prayer, Saadya teaches has no value. Man must attend to what he prays. He must feel that he is praying before God and must feel the words his lips are uttering. Saadya also teaches that man's conduct toward his fellow-men is an important factor in deciding whether his prayers will be answered. God will not heed the voice of him who prays in the Synagogue and leads an immoral life outside of it, who refuses to help the poor or robs his neighbor. This is rather a modern point of view concerning the efficacy of prayer, a point of view that people know is to be found among the ancient writings of Israel's prophets or among the sermons of modern preachers, but that few people would think

applies here also his principle of "the mean" which he develops in the last chapter of the book. Man must serve God, but must also attend to his bodily wants. Saadya states here, in a brief form that which Kant, centuries later, developed into a general maxim for the guidance of man's "practical reason". Saadya says that it is wrong for man to devote himself to "the Service of God" only:

וְאִם כָּל הָעָם בְּדֹרֶם אֶחָד יִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת הַשְּׂמִיטָה וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת הַשְּׂמִיטָה וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת הַשְּׂמִיטָה

"For if all the people of a certain generation were to agree upon this (line of conduct) and they were to die, then the service of God would die, with them" (p.211)". To Kant lying is wrong because it is logically self-contradictory, for were all men to lie all the time there would be no lies. Any line of conduct which when universalized would become logically self-contradictory, Kant considers wrong. This same principle is here used by Saadya. He says that it is wrong for man to serve God constantly and neglect his worldly affairs, for if all men were to follow his example, all would die, and there would be no one left to serve God. The principle of "the mean" must guide man in his prayers and in the performance of other ceremonies. Saadya also maintains that the economic condition of the poor is a sufficient ground for them to be brief in their prayers. However, this applies only to those who are so poor that the recital of all the prayers and the performance of all of the ceremonies would prevent them from earning their bread, but these observances must be complied with to the full if it is a question of their earning for goods that are not in the category of immediate wants (pp.147-8). An interesting subject for discussion here would be Saadya's probable attitude toward the modern Sabbath problem, a problem that is chiefly economic.

Saadya also tells us that prayer on the part of worthy men is of greater value than the prayer of their less worthy brethren; that prayer in the chosen place set aside for it

is of greater value than the prayer recited in any other place; and that prayer recited at daybreak *אמרו בלשון קריא* is very precious (p.147). Another interesting theory of Saadya in regard to prayer is that the righteous pray in the future world just as they prayed in this world; and on Sabbaths and New Moon days they assemble at a certain spot and pray. The wicked, however, are not permitted to pray in the future world, first of all, because their pain is so great that they could not pray, and secondly, because it would be necessary to give them a respite from their sufferings which Saadya believes to be continuous (p.196). Saadya was probably ignorant of the tradition that the wicked are granted a respite from their misery on Sabbaths and other festivals.

In this chef-d'oeuvre of Saadya there are no traces of mysticism. His silence both in regard to Merkabah and Ma'aseh B'reshit shows that he was opposed to both, as he surely knew of these two trends of thought. Saadya constantly emphasizes that our intellect should be our chief guide. Logical reasoning is one of his primary sources of knowledge. He maintains that it is man's duty to explain even the Revelational laws by reason in order that these laws may become clear to us, and that we may be able to refute those people who may wish to dispute our tradition (p.49). Sense-perception and reason are the first two proofs he mentions to show that God's omniscience is not causative. Biblical quotations and tradition are only used to corroborate that which our senses and reason established. To the Rabbis of the Talmudic period all religious commandments were to be considered as the decrees (*אמרו*) of God; to Saadya all religious commandments can and must be explained by reason.

CHAPTER III.

Bahya ibn Pakuda.

That Bahya was a Rabbi and a preacher is evident from the style and spirit of his main work *ḥ/ḥḥḥḥḥḥ* "The Duties of the Hearts". You can feel in almost every page of this book that it is a religious enthusiast and zealous preacher who is addressing you. Many of the chapters of this book could, with but a few changes, be turned into inspiring sermons for a modern congregation. Saadya appeals to our reason only; and leaves us unconvinced. Bahya appeals both to the mind and to the heart, and he captivates both. Were I asked to choose a modern book, written on a kindred subject with which to compare "The Duties of the Hearts" of Bahya, my choice would immediately fall upon Dr. Kohler's "Jewish Theology". Bahya's book is primarily a religious and ethical treatise. Dr. Kohler writes on Jewish Theology from the point of view of an exponent of Reform Judaism. Both authors deal with subjects that have been especially famous for their "dryness". Yet these two books possess a remarkable power of eloquence that carries the reader along without any effort on his part. In both books the reader finds the penetrating intellect combined with intense feeling, beautiful diction and a lucid style - qualities that are rarely found in ethico - religious treatises. No wonder then that "The Duties of the Heart" became so popular among the Jewish people. Though Bahya constantly repeats the same idea, again and again, the reader is not fatigued; for he always discerns a freshness in his expression and a new meaning in his thought. Bahya's aim in this book is, as he tells us in the introduction, to inspire the heart of the Jew with a love for the service of God, a love that is the product of both mind and heart. And he succeeds in his effort.

Bahya adopts what we might call the prophetic classification of the commandments into ritual and moral. The ritual laws, Bahya calls *mitzvot* "The Duties of the Limbs"; and the moral laws he calls *mitzvot* "The Duties of the Hearts". As man is composed of body and soul, the invisible and the visible, so should man worship God both in a visible and an invisible manner (*mitzvot* Int.par.6). "The Duties of the Limbs" Bahya subdivides into Rational, which the intellect would have required us to observe even if the Torah had not instructed us concerning them and Revelational which the intellect neither requires nor rejects. Prayer and worship of God fall under the Category of "Duties of the Limbs" and in the "Rational" class. As to the Duties of the Hearts, they all have their basis in man's reason: *mitzvot* (ibid par.3). This classification of the laws by Bahya does not differ widely from that made by Saadya. Bahya gives us a second classification of the Commandments of the Torah. There prayer is classed among the positive commandments, and in the division of *mitzvot* "Commandments that include both the heart and the limbs" (III:4). Prayer is, therefore, not merely a matter of the limbs, something mechanical. Bahya, as we shall see later, emphasizes that prayer is essentially a matter of the heart, and that unless the worshiper's tongue is in harmony with his heart, his prayer is of no value.

Bahya holds that the study of metaphysics will lead men to the true worship of God and love of God. Therefore, he devotes the first two chapters of the book "The Duties of the Hearts" to the exposition and the establishment of the principles of the Existence and Unity of God, and that He is the Creator of all things. The understanding of the proofs brought to establish these truths will lead man to appreciate God's kindness and to be thankful unto Him (III;Int.). Man fails to appreciate God's kindness for three reasons: First, because he is so engrossed with

that He forgive his sins. It is one of the steps that must be taken before a full act of repentance can be satisfactorily consummated. Man must also confess his sins before God when he repents (VII:5). Otherwise, Bahya believes, man should thank God for His goodness and wisdom, and should praise Him when he realizes:

1. How wonderful is the work of God (II:5),
2. That man is too weak to be able to thank God sufficiently (III:5 cf.

Toras-Hanefesh, Introduction):

למה נאמר לו ונאמר לו ונאמר לו ונאמר לו ונאמר לו

"But because we recognize our weakness to thank Him, do we praise Him".

We have seen that the argument Bahya uses in his effort to persuade men to devote their lives to thanking and praising God is that our intellect tells us that we owe it to the Creator of the universe whose goodness is manifested both in man and in nature; and who created everything in so wonderful a way ex nihilo. Bahya holds that the belief in primary matter would lead to the denial of the existence of God, and the goodness of God, and would automatically do away with the worship of God:

למה נאמר לו ונאמר לו ונאמר לו ונאמר לו ונאמר לו

"And he would not feel obliged to praise for them and to thank the Creator" (II:6 cf. V:5, par. 2). Bahya's belief in "Creation ex Nihilo", *or his cosmological God conception* is the fundamental basis of his whole religious philosophy and ethics.

We saw above that Saadya gives Reward and Punishment in this world and in a future world as an additional reason that should prompt man to pray. We also saw that Saadya was convinced that without this hope for compensation man would not worship God. But Bahya, the religious zealot, who advocated the purification of religious service, believed that the worship of God would lead to love of God - the ultimate goal of life, only if man would so train his mind and heart as to be able to serve God only because of His goodness and greatness, and not be-

cause of any ulterior motive. He accepts the principle:

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as it is generally interpreted, namely, that man ought to serve God not as the slave who expects a reward for his services (Int.par.2). *24/12/11*
"Unity of Action" - the harmonious worship of God with body, heart and soul will result only when man learns to worship God for His sake and not for compensation. In chapter 3, Bahya divides men into ten grades. To the seventh grade belong those man who worship God because they expect to be rewarded. The tenth and the highest grade of men are those who know that the Torah promises rewards and punishments for man's obedience or disobedience, but who give no thought to these promises when they serve God, who are prompted to worship Him only because they recognize His goodness and greatness.

By means of a dialogue between the Body and Intellect (III:6).Bahya discusses the psychological question whether it is possible for a human being to reach this tenth stage, whether it is possible for man to worship God and to give no thought, while he is worshipping, to the benefits that may accrue to him therefrom; whether it is possible for man to thank God without at the same time hoping that God may continue His goodness toward him. The Intellect answers that such thoughts and hopes entertained while man prays to God are reprehensible, and offers a psychological treatment which, when followed, will bring man to the stage where he will serve God for God's sake only. The Intellect advises the Body to do three things in order to attain this highest human stage;

1. Train yourself not to think of yourself when you worship God
(Psychology of habit).
2. Remember that God had manifested His goodness ~~toward~~ toward you before you were even able to pray to Him; that God's goodness toward you is not conditioned by your prayer.

human praise as it is to serve God to gain divine rewards. Bahya denounces those people who cater to public opinion while seemingly they are worshipping God. He indirectly denounces also the whole institution of *שוחט* "Cantors" who sing and pray with their eyes always directed toward the public to note the effect they make (V:5). The Rabbinic saying:

למה דברים טובים נאמרו לך ה' ואלו דברים רעים נאמרו לך ה' ואלו דברים טובים נאמרו לך ה'

does not mean that one must endeavor to please his fellow-men in order to gain divine favor. Bahya interprets this sentence to mean that he who finds favor in the eyes of God will at the same time find favor in the eyes of his fellow-men.

Neither Saadya nor Bahya had any difficulty with the problem of providence, as a problem of relation between a transcendent God and a "contemptible being" like man. Since man is the ultimate goal of all creation, and since God created everything for the good of man in order that man worship His Creator, He would certainly watch over and take account of the deeds and the destinies of mankind for whose sake everything else exists. God created matter. Such a God can certainly be in direct communion with man. The Saadya group of philosophers do not find it necessary to produce arguments to prove that there is both general providence and individual Providence. The History of Israel, Bahya holds, shows that God has taken more care of this people than of any other people; hence, Israel owes greater worship to God:

ואשר ה' עשה לך ה' ואלו דברים טובים נאמרו לך ה' ואלו דברים רעים נאמרו לך ה' ואלו דברים טובים נאמרו לך ה'

"And because of them (the special favors) it is necessary that they also be distinguished from other people by a greater worship of God" (III:5). But Bahya's main emphasis is on individual providence. In his earlier work *חידושי חכמה* "Reflections on the Soul" he teaches that God's providence extends toward every existing thing:

ואשר ה' עשה לך ה' ואלו דברים טובים נאמרו לך ה' ואלו דברים רעים נאמרו לך ה' ואלו דברים טובים נאמרו לך ה'

"And then you will perceive the wisdom of God that arranges, and His will that prepares everything in its proportion and order ... in every existing and created thing (p.17). Man may be ready to attribute some of his actions to secondary causes; but all these secondary causes are the direct product of *חכמתו* "Divine Wisdom" (ibid). In his "Duties of the Hearts" Bahya emphasizes individual providence over man:

הוא יושב ורואה כל מעשה בני אדם וכל דבר שיהיה להם

"God watches the conduct of all men, and He does not abandon them, nor does He conceal Himself from them" (IV:3). And a still stronger expression of the same doctrine, one that might lead us to believe that its author is an absolute determinist is found a few lines later:

אין להם חלק בזה כלל ואין להם שום מעשה שיהיה להם חלק בו

"It is not within the power of any of His creatures to benefit himself, or to harm himself, or some one else. ^{unless} it is done in accordance with the will of God".

But Bahya is not a determinist. He does believe that there is a certain amount of Free Will that man enjoys. ~~His~~ ^{of} solution to the difficulty that ~~man~~ have in their efforts to harmonize these two incompatible doctrines is that man's mind is finite and that this problem is beyond the comprehension of the human mind. The best man can do is to act as if he were free (III:8) and to have faith that God will reward him for ~~this~~ deeds. The worship of God is entirely in man's hands.

אשר נתן לנו בזה חלק וזוהי תורתנו

"God has left in our power the choice to worship Him" (III:4, Par.5)

(cf. the Rabbinic saying:

אין אדם יכול לומר שיהיה לו חלק בזה

God may determine whether one be permitted to worship Him, but the original intention to worship God is a product of man's free will only.

Man must not, therefore, think that if God will desire to be worshipped, He will bring it about. Man must himself choose to pray (ibid), ~~three~~

an act of prayer has three
psychological stages:

not discuss the problem of the Efficacy of Prayer, as it is generally formulated, for he has very little to say about the petitional form of prayer except in connection with repentance. Bahya, throughout the book, emphasizes thanksgiving and adoration as the form of prayers in which man should indulge. We can not talk of the efficacy of such prayers. Their value lies not in the fact that they may change God's will, but that they may change man's will. This is the psychological value of prayer which we find Bahya, of old, states. He teaches that the value of all ritual laws lies in the fact that they promote *shleimut* "The Duties of the Hearts" - the moral laws. Prayer will develop in man the moral virtue of humility in that it will impress upon the human mind how weak man is to be able ever to repay the debt he owes to God, and how small he is in comparison with the Creator (IV:4 par.3). Another psychological value of prayer is that it will cause man to remember God's greatness and goodness and will lead him to the highest goal of life - the Love of God:

וְיִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהֵי אֲדָמָה וְיִתְחַנֵּן לִפְנֵי ה' וְיִתְחַנֵּן לִפְנֵי ה' וְיִתְחַנֵּן לִפְנֵי ה'

"They cause him to remember the Creator, to love Him with a perfect heart and to long for Him (I:Int.). Bahya more than any other Jewish philosopher emphasizes the psychological value of prayer, ceremonies, faith etc.

Though man's intellect tells him that he ought to worship his Creator it was, nevertheless, necessary that God command it in the Torah. The Torah has many advantages. ~~Some of them we have mentioned~~ over man's reason. He enumerates seven of these advantages. Some of them we have mentioned when we discussed Saady's explanation of the necessity of an explicit commandment in the Torah in regard to the worship of God. But Bahya first states the seven advantages of worship that is a product of reason, and we can see from the spirit of discussion that he places a greater emphasis upon reason. ~~One of the advantages of worship based on reason.~~ One of the advantages of worship based on reason is that such worship will lead to humility, and ultimately to "Amoré Dei"; while a

worship that is merely a compliance with a Biblical law will be a product of fear of punishments and hope for rewards(III:3). There is a constant appeal to reason in this book. Though Bahya advocates a moderate form of asceticism, there is no mysticism involved in any of his doctrines. The only mysticism we do find is in his earlier work "The Reflections on the Soul". There he talks of the *רוח* as an intermediary between God and man:

וְיָדָעְתָּ שֶׁאִם לֹא הָיָה הַרוּחַ הַקָּדוֹשׁ לֹא הָיָה שׁוֹמֵר אֶת הַמִּצְוֹת וְלֹא הָיָה מַעֲבִיר אֶת הַדְּבָרִים מֵעַל הַלֵּב לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים
וְלֹא הָיָה מַעֲבִיר אֶת הַדְּבָרִים מֵעַל הַלֵּב לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים
וְלֹא הָיָה מַעֲבִיר אֶת הַדְּבָרִים מֵעַל הַלֵּב לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים

"And know that were it not for "the Spirit" there would be heard neither the voice of the Creator, nor the voice of His creatures, for God created it to bring through it His speech to the prophets...It is thus clear that "the Spirit" is the source of the voice" (p.10). This was probably written before Bahya came under the influence of Saadya.

There is no trace of this ^{'spirit doctrine'} in Bahya's "Duties of the Hearts". There man prays directly to God.

Unlike Saadya, Bahya does not emphasize set prayers, that prayers must be recited in a certain form, at a certain time or at a certain place. He tells us (VIII:3, par.10) that the only reason we have set prayers is because it is impossible for most of us to compose our own prayers everytime we may wish to pray. It is also impossible for man to merely think his prayers, as he will be readily confused. Words are a help to prayer, the heart follows the lips. This is a recognized psychological truth. In an emergency Bahya says that it is permissible for man to simply think that which he wishes to pray. Prayer is not an end in itself; it is but a means to an end, and it is the end that matters, not the means. He, therefore, sees no objection to having each man compose his own prayers. As a matter of fact, he tells us (ibid) that he himself composed a prayer that he recited every night

("Amore Dei"):

כי יום חגת בתולת ארץ ישראל חזקת אליו חזקת ... חזקת חזקת חזקת

"For it is the goal of all the principles, and the highest stage (that can be reached) by those who worship God;...there is no stage higher than it" (X:Int.). Man can attain this stage by constantly devoting his heart and his actions to God. Man may know that he has gained this stage when he feels that he is worshipping God *וְעָבַד אֱלֹהִים בְּלִבּוֹ* without the thought of reward. This doctrine of "Amore Dei" of Bahya finds its traces in Maimuni and Crescas and, through the latter, in Spinoza.

JEHUDA HALLEVI.

(Translations in this chapter follow that of Hirschfeld).

The religious views of Hallevi, especially his views on prayer and religious worship in general, are diametrically opposed to those of

Bahya. If Bahya may be classified as a religious individualist, Hallevi may be characterized as a religious socialist. Hallevi constantly emphasizes the greatness of Israel - the people, the significance of its history and tradition, the value of its language and its land for religious worship. The religious faith advocated by Hallevi is a social faith whose character has been stamped by the whole people of Israel - the social group, and which can not be left to the self-determination of the individual. To Hallevi, Israel is the chosen people. It is the chosen people because of the peculiar racial characteristics of this people, the peculiar nature of its language, the peculiar character of its land, and the peculiar constitution of its established institutions and ceremonies. Israel ~~will be~~ amidst the nations like the heart among the organs of the body (Kusari, II:36) only as long as it will preserve intact its moral and ceremonial laws, its language and will live on its own land.

The time of Jehuda Hallevi was one in which the Jewish people and Judaism were attacked from all sides. Karaites, Mutazilites, Asharites and Aristotelians all opposed the doctrines of Judaism and probably sought to undermine the continued separate existence of its professors. The Jewish people was the despised people: *על כל עמלך לזלזל*
"For all despise them" (I:4). These historical circumstances must have had their effect on the religious temperament of Hallevi who loved his people and its traditions with his whole heart. He stands for a rigid, unquestioning orthodoxy, as far as practice is concerned, and it was such orthodoxy that solidified the Jewish group during the fiercest days of persecution. And now we can clearly trace the line of demarcation between the religious zealot - Bahya, and the religious nationalist - Hallevi. The former aimed at pure religiosity. The letter of the law has its value only in so far as it is fostered in the proper spirit. Ritual ceremonies possess value because they strengthen man in his

"duties of the Hearts". The emphasis is through^{out} on the individual. Hallevi looks forward to an integrated Jewish people restered to its own land, and whose law will become the universal heritage of all mankind. He aimed to inspire his readers with a love for Israel. The letter of the law is of paramount importance. The ritual laws that distinguish Israel from other peoples, are of greater value than the moral laws that are common to all peoples. His emphasis is throughout on the Jewish people, its institutions and life. Bahya is the modern radical reformer who is individualistic; Hallevi is the modern religious Zionist who is motivated by a social philosophy.

The Chazar king is disturbed by the feeling that although he means well in his religious worship, it is, nevertheless, unacceptable to God, because the ^{Ritual} actions he performs do not please God. There must be, the king feels (and this is really Hallevi's attitude) some system of rites whose efficacy depends upon its literal observance and is unconditioned by the spirit of the worshiper;

אלוהים יראה לך עשה ואלוהים יראה לך עשה

"There must be no doubt a ^{Ritual} way of acting, pleasing by its very nature, but not through the medium of intentions" (I:2)". The philosopher tells the king that there is no cause for his perturbation of mind. God is transcendent, and takes no notice of man.. "He, therefore, does not know thee, much less thy thoughts and actions, nor does He listen to thy prayers or see thy movements" (ibid)". The purpose of religious worship, the Aristotelian philosopher holds, is to become like the Active Intellect, and not to have certain prayers answered. It matters not, therefore, what religious system one pursues. What does matter is man's purity of heart. The King, however, can not accept this theory, for he feels that though his heart is pure, his method of approaching God is wrong. The King also reasons that were the philosopher right, he and

his colleagues should have been most fit to reach the prophetic degree, the degree of the Active Intellect; while, as a matter of fact, prophecy is found rather among those who do not devote themselves to the purification of their souls. The King concludes that there must be a certain secret that enable those prophets to gain the Divine Influence:

אין אדם יכול להשיג השפעה אלוהית בלי סוד מסתורי

"This proves that the Divine Influence has a certain secret which is not identical with what thou sayest, O Philosopher" (I:4). Hallevi prepares us here, in a masterly way, for his theory that man can not reason out the method by which to gain this Divine Influence.

Neither can the Christian Scholastic and the Mohammedan Doctor satisfy the King. Both base their respective faiths on a cosmological God conception, and the king feels that unless a man is born into those faiths, his reason can not accept most of their teachings. Especially is it inconceivable to him that God should hold intercourse with man:

אדם אינו יכול להאמין שיש יחסי חושים בין אלוהים לבין האדם

"The human mind can not believe that God has intercourse with man" (I:8). To convince man that such a relationship exists, irrefutable facts must be produced. The King is finally forced to seek enlightenment from a Jewish Rabbi, a member of that despised race. The Rabbi represents the views of Hallevi.

The Rabbi states that the doctrines of Judaism find their bases in Israel's history. Israel's God is the God who led the Jews out of Egypt, fed them in the desert, and sent them the prophet Moses and thousands of other prophets. The creation of the world which is the basis of the Christian and Islamic faiths, (and upon which, we saw, both Saadya and Bahya based their entire religious philosophy) is not considered by Hallevi to be of sufficient strength. For the doctrine of Creation is based on logical proof only, and is, therefore, subject

therefore, a constant relation, a relation that is maintained toward all those whose bodies are of a certain chemical composition. The Jewish people is a people of prophets, a people with peculiar racial characteristics, a people that is physiologically different from other peoples, a people that is so constituted as to be fit to receive the Divine Influence, the action of the form-principle on its matter. This is the secret sought by the king. Israel's matter is a mysterious chemical mixture that disposes it to receive God's Providence. This is a brief statement of Hallevi's solution of the principal problem presented in this book.

This solution of the problem of relation is at the same time also a solution to the problem of the efficacy of prayer. When God hears man's prayers and answers them, it does not mean that there is a change produced in God. God so created the world that under certain conditions He would answer man's prayers; which means, that when man's matter will be disposed in a certain way, the form principle will continue to act on this matter. Man can not find out by reason alone what the conditions are that render this matter fit to receive the Divine Influence. "It is impossible for him to gauge their quantity or quality, and even if their essence were known, yet neither their time, place, and connection nor suitability could be discovered. For this inspired and detailed instruction is necessary. He who has thus been inspired, and obeys the teaching in every respect with a pure mind, is a believer. Whosoever strives by speculation and deduction to prepare the conditions for the reception of this inspiration ... Such a man is an unbeliever (I:79)". He who worships God in accordance with the conclusions of speculative reason is likened to the ignoramus in the drug-store who knows nothing of the contents of the various jars, nor how much of each should be given to the patient. Prayer to be efficacious must be performed not only by the person disposed to receive the Divine Influence, but also in the right

language and in a certain place. And only the prophets who were inspired by God, and whose words were handed down by a verified tradition, can tell us what these are:

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל

"In the service of God there is no arguing, reasoning, and debating" (I:99).

Here, then, is the basis of Hallevi's answer to the original question addressed by the king to the philosopher. Of course, man's good intentions alone are not sufficient to make his worship acceptable to God. The acceptability of man's worship and the efficacy of his prayers depend first of all, on the worshiper's matter being properly disposed to receive the Divine Influence; (which means, that the worshiper must be a Jew. Hence, we find that at the end of the first Ma'amar, the king converts to Judaism). Secondly, they depend on the language used. The Hebrew language whose grammar is full of peculiarities, helps the sense organs of man to receive this Divine Influence. Thirdly, they depend on the land. Palestine, and especially Jerusalem has the proper climate that produces the proper disposition for God's Providence. All prophets either lived in Palestine or prophesied concerning it. And finally, they depend on the right deed. The right deed causes a generically different chemical composition of the body that disposes it to receive the Divine Influence. Hence, prayer to be fully efficacious must be performed by a Jew, in the traditional form, in Hebrew, and in Palestine. Even those gentiles who accept God and worship Him are not accepted by God. They are left to the government of natural law, Man should pray only during certain stated hours, for just as man can behold the Sunlight only during certain hours, so can he only behold the Divine Light during certain hours. Man's act of prayer is complete only if performed in Jerusalem: וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל "And the acts can only be completed in it (Jerusalem) (V:23). When man prays

outside of Palestine, he ought to face Palestine. The Mohammedans changed their Kibla to Mecca and, therefore, their prayers can not be acceptable:

אין כיוון עה"א מקום באלו אדגל דתן בא"י דמקום משה נא"ל

"But because they changed the Kibla and sought the Divine Influence where it is not to be found" (IV:13). And since religious zeal alone is not sufficient, man should recite his prayers. Prayers can not be thought:

אינך יכול לכלול כל דעתי דמחשבה אדגל דתן דתן קדו"א

"For you can not include all the subjects of your prayer in thought alone, without reciting" (IV:5). This is the first psychological explanation we find him giving for the observance of the traditional form of service. Later we also find him giving a psychological explanation why prayers in Jerusalem are more efficacious. Jerusalem helps men to gain the proper ^{devotion} ~~intention~~ during prayer and to love God (V:27).

Prayer also has a psychological effect on man's soul, just as food has on man's body:

אדם צריך הנהגה מהנהגת כבוד דתן דתן דתן

"This order of prayer stands in the same relation to the Soul as food does to the body" (III:5). To the pious man, the moment of prayer is the heart and fruit of his time, to which he looks forward. "The blessing of one prayer lasts till the time of the next, just as the strength derived from the morning meal lasts till supper" (ibid). Prayer has, therefore, a subjective value also. It strengthens man's soul and enables him to maintain the Divine Influence until the next period of prayer arrives. The ^{blessings} ~~blessings~~ that man is asked to recite over everything he enjoys are not a burden. They rather bring him an increased amount of enjoyment:

ההנהגה דתן דתן דתן ... כבוד דתן דתן

"Preparing for a pleasure and experiencing it ... double the feeling of enjoyment" (III:17). "They produce in his soul a kind of pleasure

and gratitude toward the Giver" (ibid). The Jew who prays and who recites the various blessings ^{have it} has, therefore, a life full of enjoyment: *ואתה יהיה שמחה כל ימיך* "And you will have enjoyment all your life". Prayer has, then, another subjective value. It renders man happy and contented.

This gives us another point of difference between Bahya and Hallevi. Bahya taught that man should lead a semi-ascetic life and worship God in humility, approach Him as a slave before the master. This ascetic doctrine is opposed by Hallevi. Humility is not one of his primary virtues. Man should pray to God with joy in his heart. Gratitude for God's bounties is a result of joy: *כי שמחה באהבה* "For praise follows joy" (III:II). The pious man described by Hallevi prays with joy in his heart, not in a spirit of humility: *ואהבה דמחה לא דכניעה* "And his worship is with joy, not in humility" (III:5). "Thy contritions on a fast day brings thee no nearer to God than the joy on the Sabbath and Holy Days (II:50). But this spirit of joy must be experienced in the name of God:

אדם שמתחנן ליריביו מתגורר אצלם בן העמיה זמלאל אהבה דמחה

"Just as prayers need thought and devotion, so does the joy in His command and in His Torah need thought and devotion" (ibid). It is not necessary for a weak person to indulge in prolonged fasting; nor is diminution of wealth ^{is} virtue (II:50). On the whole we see that Hallevi was the more human and practical Jewish religious thinker (though perhaps in the opinion of some, not so "advanced" a thinker) when compared with Bahya.

The real reason that prompts Hallevi to advocate strict adherence to traditional forms in religious worship we find later in the discussion, (III:49) where he says:

אדם שזקק להגדלות על צדקת אורח חיים סייג חסדו ושמך אל הפגמה יביא סגור אכזר
32/1
"If one would neglect the legalized forms which form the fence around the

law, and rely only on religious zeal, it would become a source of Schism and destroy everything". A faith based on speculative reason would lead to individualism, to the disintegration of the Jewish people and to the undermining of Israel's faith. Religious zeal can not preserve Israel and its faith. This can be accomplished only through a universal common system of practice. Schisms must be avoided. A stronger argument and plea for orthodoxy could be made by no one. The same motive that led him to advocate the traditional form of practice, probably prompted him to advocate that the value of religious worship and the efficacy of man's prayer depend on their social content and form.

Hallevi discusses the contents and significance of the important prayers in the liturgy. The prayers of the Amidah are primarily a confession of faith. First, the worshipper expresses his belief that God has a relation to the world; then he expresses his belief in God's sovereignty; and finally he offers up prayers that involve the welfare of the whole congregation. Individual prayers are voluntary and may be recited after the words: *אמן יי*. Then he tells us that prayers to be efficacious must have a social content or must be recited in the midst of the congregation:

וְהַתְּפִלָּה הַזֹּאת חַיָּבִים לִפְדוּתָהּ בְּרִבּוּת וְלִפְדוּתָהּ בְּיָחִיד וְלִפְדוּתָהּ בְּמִלְּוֵה

"For the prayer, in order to be answered, must be recited for a multitude, or in a multitude, or for an individual who could take the place of a multitude" (III:17). The king then asks: "If everyone read his prayers for himself, would not his soul be purer and his mind less abstracted"? (III:18) In his answer to this question (III:14) Hallevi gives an exposition of his social philosophy as far as it concerns Jewish ceremonial law in general, and prayer in particular. Common prayer has many advantages. In the first place, a community will never pray for that which is hurtful to any one of its members, while the in-

dividual may pray either for the disadvantage of another individual or for something that is to his own disadvantage. Prayer is efficacious only when it is for the good of the world:

אמרו רבותינו חז"ל אין אדם יכול להתפלל לבדו אלא יחד עם עשרה או יותר
אמרו רבותינו חז"ל אין אדם יכול להתפלל לבדו אלא יחד עם עשרה או יותר

"One of the conditions of the prayer that is to be answered is that its object be profitable to the world, but not hurtful in any way".^(III:19) To insure, then, the efficacy of one's prayer, man should pray in the midst of other members of the community. Another advantage of communal prayer is that the individual rarely accomplishes his prayers without slips and errors. But when one worships in a community of at least ten persons, his errors are made up by the other members of the congregation. The Divine Influence is like a rain which waters a whole area, even though some portion of the ground may be undeserving. Man should, therefore, pray in the presence of the whole community. "A person who prays for himself is like him who retires alone into his house, refusing to assist his fellow-citizens in the repair of their walls. His expenditure is as great as his risk. He, however, who joins the majority spends little, yet remains in safety, because one replaces the defects of the other" (ibid).

To-day sociologists speak of Society as an organism, and of each individual member of Society as a cell of that organism. This concept is found in Hallevi when he compares the group to a body and the individual member to a limb of that body:

כפי שגוף האדם אינו יכול לעמוד על רגל אחת אלא על כל רגליו יחד
כפי שגוף האדם אינו יכול לעמוד על רגל אחת אלא על כל רגליו יחד

"For the relation of the individual to the group is as the single limb to the body" (ibid). Just as the body is in its healthiest state when all its limbs function and cooperate, so will the body cooperate - Israel - function best and accomplish most when all its various component limbs will cooperate and do their share. The Jew can contribute his share by performing the ceremonial law; by prayer and by believing in the abstract

should consist of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~principles~~ ^{principles} of Judaism. Man's prayers, for enlightenment and for intelligence in obeying God. In this way he will be brought nearer to God.

To sum up: the efficacy of prayer depends upon the following five conditions: -

- 1 - The right person - must be a Jew.
- 2 - The right language - Hebrew.
- 3 - The worshiper should be in Palestine, preferably Jerusalem, or face Palestine.
- 4 - The prayer must be recited in the traditional form.
- 5 - The prayer must be recited in the midst of other Israelites, and must tend for the welfare of the Community.

Like Saadya and Bahya, Hallevi divides the commandments of the Torah into rational and ritual laws. He also calls prayer, in the form of thanksgiving, a rational law:

אמנות השכלות קדמת האצק

"The rational laws demand justice and recognition of God's bounty" (II:48).

The rational laws are the basis of Society. Without them the divine laws could not exist. The rational laws have been given to all peoples. The ritual laws have been given especially to the Jewish people. It is these ritual laws that distinguishes the Jewish people from other peoples and that attracts the Divine Influence to them. He can not imagine how any Jew could be so deceived as to obey only the moral law to the neglect of the ritual law:

היותכן שיתקצק הישעכאלו דעמולת מעט אל אלהות קסב אינעל דעם אהעזת אלהות
דעסע אעל דעל אלהות אלהות

"Can it be imagined that the Israelite observe "the doing of justice and the love of mercy", but neglect circumcision, Sabbath, the law of Passover, and the other laws, and feel happy" (II:48)? We see, then, that, to Hallevi, it is the ritual law that is of prime importance. Prayer alone will not attract Divine Providence. Man must perform all the difficult rituals, he tells us, in order to gain the Divine Influence. "Proof of the Divine

Influence is not found in well chosen words, in raising the eye brows, closing the eyes during prayer, contrition, movement, and talk behind which there are no deeds" (II:56). And by deeds, Hallevi means the ceremonial law.

This ends our discussion of Hallevi's attitude toward prayer, and how he differs from the philosophers that we discussed previously. There is only one other point that may be of interest for the student of the problem of prayer and that is Hallevi's ingenious explanation of the fact that the Jews toss to and fro during prayer. As books were scarce, many people had to use one book. The book would lie on the ground, and each person reading from that volume would be obliged to bend down in order to read a passage, and then he would straighten up again. This resulted in a continual bending down and sitting up. Later people followed this custom through sheer habit and imitation, even though they possessed a sufficient supply of books to provide each individual with a book. But there is nothing sacred to the custom, and it is not necessary to follow it (II:80).

CHAPTER V.

Prayer in Other Pre-Maimunean Jewish Philosophers.

1. Solomon Ibn Gabirol.

Gabirol, the founder of the dualistic school in Jewish philosophy, treats only purely ~~stikizak~~ ~~problem~~ metaphysical and philosophical problems in his most famous work "Fons Vita~~e~~", and only purely ethical problems in his "Tikkun Middot Ha-Nefesh" (Improvement of the qualities of the Soul). Neither of these books offers us any glimpse ~~in~~ *regarding* to his views concerning those religious philosophical and ethical problems of Prayer, Providence, Freedom etc. We are however, able to glean some of his views about these questions from his most important religious poem ~~המלך~~ "The Royal Crown". This poem, which is usually found in

the Sephardic ritual for the Atonement Day is permeated with a fervently religious spirit, a spirit that is the product of the poet's extreme humility when he contemplates the greatness of God. In the greater part of the poem the poet talks of the greatness of God, the divine attributes, and the wonderful work of God as manifested in the world. There follow, then, a few paragraphs which contrast with this greatness of God the helplessness and insignificance of man, the enormity of man's sin and the manifestations of God's goodness toward this helpless creature. It is because of this great contrast ^{of} ~~between~~ the Divine ^{with} ~~and~~ the human, his realization of his extreme helplessness in the presence of the Fashioner of the world that he implores divine mercy and ends with a petition to God to grant him future life.

This contrast between God and man imposes upon man the duty to glorify God's name through worship:

אשר אלהינו באלהינו אלך בזה העולם הזה ואלך בזה העולם הבא

"Thou art the God of Gods, and all the creatures are Thine: and for the honor of this Name every created being is obliged to worship Thee". God created man not because He had to, but as an act of Divine Grace:

אלהינו באלהינו "For Thou hast created me not because of any need, but as

a gift". Individual Providence is clearly taught in the paragraph in which the poet describes God's care over man and His guiding hand throughout man's life. Therefore, man should thank God and praise Him.

2. Abraham Bar Hiyya.

Abraham Bar Hiyya is known chiefly as an astronomer and mathematician. His only contribution to religious philosophy is the small book *דפן הנפש* "Meditation of the Soul" (Edition E. Freiman, Leipzig, 1860). Like Bahya's "The Duties of the Hearts", this book treats of philosophical principles only as a basis for the religious and the ethical lessons that the

the author wishes to expound. The book is in the form of a homily based on the Haftaret of Sabbath Shabbah and the Day of Atonement.

As Hiyya is a follower of the Gabirol school we do not find here the doctrine of Creatio ex Nihilo, as a basis for religious worship. According to Hiyya, God may be said to have created the world only in the sense that He ~~endowed~~ ^{endowed} potential matter with form.

Hiyya begins the book by urging his readers to study and to reason about all things "in the Heavens above and on the earth beneath". This study will force man to confess the wisdom of God as shown in the creation of the world, and that He is the only God. By study man will also learn that he is the culmination of all creation; and that he differs from all other ^{creatures} ~~creations~~ in three ways: 1. He was not created by means of something else; 2. He was endowed with a soul; 3. He was given dominion over all other creatures. And just as God has placed man above all other animals, so has He set aside one people - Israel ^{and} and placed it above all other peoples. This God has done in order that Israel might sanctify the name of God, as can be seen from Isaiah 43: *אֵלֹהִים יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה*

וְיִשְׂרָאֵל Israel is the people that was created in the name of God in order that it honor the name of God. Gentiles are excluded from the high degree of the people of Israel - a people that is called by the name of God; that has the privilege to glorify His name, and that will be the greatest people in the days of the Final Redemption. Gentiles can attain this degree of the Israelites only through repentance (pp.7-8).

Here we have, then, Hiyya's basis for religious worship and prayer. They are for the purpose of glorifying God's name, and Israel is a chosen people in that it is the instrument through which God's name is to be glorified. Prayer in the form of adoration is, therefore, the duty of every Israelite. The Jew should also express his thanks to God for he must realize that He is absolutely dependent on God and that all he enjoys is a blessing from God, a result of His goodness

and mercy: ⁵¹ *לְהַלְלוֹת אֶת ה' בְּכָל עֵצֶר וּבְכָל חַי וְנֶפֶשׁ וּבְכָל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו*
"That man is obliged to thank for everything that comes to him and to
give praise to its author" (p.9b).

But Hiyya is opposed to petitionary prayers that man may wish to of-
fer up in time of distress. He warns man not to petition God for the re-
lief of pain and distress, as these afflictions are all from God, and
everything that comes from God is good. It is possible that this pain
and distress may keep the individual away from a still greater evil.
Nor should man pray that God fulfill his desires. Man should only pray,
after he had repented, that God forgive the worshiper's sins (p.16 b).
However, if man should petition God for relief, God will answer his
prayers: *וְיִשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל הַצָּרִים* "Through his prayer he can be saved
from his affliction (21 b)". Especially will God answer man's petition
for relief, if the distress is caused by another man. Yet it is better
that even in the latter case, the injured party should not seek help
from God, as the man who will bear his grief without complaint will not
only be relieved by God, but will also be compensated for his pain in
the future world. But he who is so unwise as to pray to God for help
will be relieved by God, but he will lose that reward in the future world
which might have been his for bearing his pain quietly (ibid). Man is
justified to plead for help only when he suffers extreme pain and is in
dire distress. Then if he should pray to God with his whole might, heart
and soul, God will have mercy on him and answer him as He answered Jonah
in the belly of the fish (p.24 A). This shows us that Hiyya had a lofty
conception of prayer. The purpose of prayer is to glorify God. Only in
rare instances may man pray for himself. Hiyya is even opposed to pray-
ers offered up for the dead. He tells us that these prayers have no
value and are of no avail:

וְאֵין לָהֶם שָׂרָף וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹלָם
"And we do not find in the Torah anything from which we could ^{infer} understand
that the ^{any} action (prayer) of a living man in this world would be of bene-

his people produced. But we saw that he had a very lofty conception of the nature and purpose of religion and prayer and, therefore, he attacked the current superstitions of his time, as the prayer for the dead that are still recited to-day.

3. Abraham ibn Ezra.

Abraham ibn Ezra is known primarily as a poet and as a Bible exegete. He wrote no philosophical treatise. Some of his philosophical views may be gathered from his Bible commentary. These have been collected by Nachman Krochmal in his *מגן עזרא* under the caption *מגן עזרא*. In this collection we find practically no material for our purpose. Ibn Ezra has very little to say about the problem of prayer and kindred problems.

God's Providence is only general. God knows the individual only as a part of the whole:

וְיָדָעַתְּ כִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל כֻּלּוֹ יָדוּעַ בְּעֵינֵי ה' וְיָדוּעַ בְּעֵינֵי ה' כֻּלּוֹ

"For He alone knows particular things and their parts only in a general way" (Commentary to Ex. 33:21). Man's destiny is determined by the heavenly stars:

וְיָדָעַתְּ כִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל כֻּלּוֹ יָדוּעַ בְּעֵינֵי ה' וְיָדוּעַ בְּעֵינֵי ה' כֻּלּוֹ

"Know that all plants ... and all men are dependent on the upper spheres (ibid)". But it is useless to pray to the stars for their course which determines the destiny of man is fixed, and man's prayers can not change it. But Israel's destiny is not left entirely to the stars. As long as Israel observes the law, God will see to it that the Jewish people is saved from the evils destined for it in the stars. God's Providence extends to Israel when it clings to the Torah. This idea of Providence is not in logical contradiction to the idea of *גזירה*. He uses an example to show the compatibility of the two. Suppose it is decreed in the stars that the inhabitants of the city will be drowned by a flood. The people are warned by a prophet to repent. The people then leave the city and pray to God. The river meanwhile floods the city. Thus the decree in the

stars is satisfied and the men who returned to God are saved. This is how Ibn Ezra reconciles natural law with Divine Providence. The wicked are left entirely to natural law. The Jewish people are also under the direction of God's Providence. Prayer helps men in that it attracts to him this Providence, and God will find some way of saving the worshiper from an evil destined for him in the stars (ibid).

4. Joseph Ibn Zaddik.

Ibn Zaddik, like Saadya, Bahya and others before him introduces the book by providing that God created the world. His cosmological God conception is the basis for the practical ethical teachings of the last part of his book *מקראות פשוטות* "Microcosm". (Edition Horowitz, Breslau 1903). It is impossible to believe that God needed the world for Himself. God created the world because of His goodness and generosity and for no other reason (pp. 52-3). He created the world, ex nihilo (p. 55). Since the world is a product of God's goodness it must be absolutely perfect (p. 57). Therefore, our intellect would require us to thank God for His goodness toward us, although we can never thank and praise Him sufficiently (no. 56, 59). Now, if ^{man} ~~man~~ should refuse to follow the dictates of his intellect, and he should not thank God, which action is the foundation of all other means of worship, then it would also mean that he denies the existence of God, for it is the same intellect that informs him that God exists. Man can only gain a God conception through his intellect:

וְהַיְתָּאֵלֹהִים לְפָנָיו וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּח לְפָנָיו וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּח לְפָנָיו
וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּח לְפָנָיו וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּח לְפָנָיו
"And the neglect of thanking Him which is one of the ways of worship and like the foundation and pillar for them all (the other ways of worship), is like the denial in the kindness of God, and rejection of His existence (p. 60)". We can realize how much we ought to thank God by comparing His goodness toward us with that which a man may bestow upon us. We then can see that God's goodness toward us is infinitely superior, for He does not need us in any way.

God gave men commandments in order that man may be rewarded for obey-

ing them. Like Saadya, ibn Zaddik uses the doctrine of Reward and Punishment as an additional reason or ^{motif} for the worship of God. This good that man can attain by following God's commandments is the ultimate purpose for which God created the world (p.62). It was necessary that God should give these commandments to man, otherwise there would have been no reason why some men should be rewarded and others be punished. Man should thank God for everything that proves to be of benefit to him or give him pleasure. Ibn Zaddik does not talk of petitionary prayer, Providence or the efficacy of prayer. He only emphasizes Thanksgiving, and Adoration as requirements of the intellect.

Ibn Zaddik's almost complete dependence on Saadya can be seen from his answer to this question: If man is created for his own good, why should God have created the ^{world} when God knows that he will sin? The answer ibn Zaddik gives is that God's knowledge is not causative:

למה יצאנו לזה כי ידוע לנו כי יתכן שיהיה לנו חטא ויגדלנו עליו
 ויגדלנו עליו ויגדלנו עליו ויגדלנו עליו ויגדלנו עליו ויגדלנו עליו

"It is not necessary for him (the ^{world}) to anger God because God knows that he will anger Him (p.63)".

It is not sufficient for man to be merely morally good. For were man the model of moral perfection but ~~he~~ should not recognize that God is the source of all goodness, then all his other good actions are in vain (p.66).

5. Abraham Ibn Daud.

Abraham Ibn Daud in his philosophical treatise ^{הנחמה} "The Lofty Faith" states that happiness is the goal of all practical philosophy and that he who leads an ethical life will attain happiness. Morality is one of the three means that tends to make man's life happy. The practice of "the mean" or justice (^{דבור}) is one of the highest virtues by which we may govern our actions, ^{דבור} tells us also that we should requite our benefactors for the favors they bestowed upon us. If we can not requite them we should at least thank them. The principle of ^{דבור} would,

therefore, teach us that we ought to thank our Maker. It is for this reason that divine worship is the first commandment:

וְהָיָה לְפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ כְּכֹחַ אֱמֻנָתֵנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְהָיָה לְפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ כְּכֹחַ אֱמֻנָתֵנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

"For it is but just to requite a benefactor in accordance with his kindness, if one can, and if one can not, to thank him with all one's power.

This leads to divine worship which is the first of the commandments (p99)."

Even the skies or spheres which, according to Ibn Daud, are endowed with life, thank God and praise Him by means of their intellect (I:8). The commandment "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" implies that man must know God (p.100), for a man can not love that which he does not know:

וְהָיָה לְפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ כְּכֹחַ אֱמֻנָתֵנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

"For it is impossible that a man should love something intensely and should not know its "what". The function of philosophy is to teach man the "whatness" of God - His unity, incorporeality and other attributes.

Divine worship does not mean merely praying in the morning and in the evening. It means even more constant contemplation concerning God, His attributes and His law (ibid). Indeed, the chief value of prayer and the other ceremonies is a pedagogic one. They cause us to think about God, and to produce intellectual Divine Worship. We shall later see that Maimuni also emphasizes intellectual prayer, that is, prayer through contemplation. In this respect, Ibn Daud and Maimuni resemble the Aristotelian philosopher mentioned in the Kusari who advises the Chazar king that the form of one's prayers does not matter. Man should rather endeavor to reach God through his intellect.

Ibn Daud nowhere talks about the efficacy of prayer, but we can see that he does believe in Divine Providence. In discussing this subject he tells us that the problem of evil presents no difficulty because evil is only negative, and that certain other apparent evils are really for the good of mankind (p.94). In this doctrine also he is evidently the

precursor of Maimuni. He is much more consistently philosophical and rationalistic than Maimuni in his harmonization of Divine Providence and Free Will. He tells us that God does not know the outcome of the "possible". However, this lack of knowledge on the the part of God does not ~~know the outcome of~~ indicate that God is not absolutely perfect; for God so created the world as to enable man to choose freely.

Ibn Daud is the most consistent philosopher with whom we have dealt so far. He solves his chief problem of Free Will by denying God's absolute Omniscience. He clearly saw that it is logically impossible to maintain both the doctrine of Free Will and that of Omniscience and he chose the one that to him seemed to be the more rational and the more basic religion and ethics. The denial that God knows beforehand what the outcome of the "possible" will be carries in its train the denial of complete Divine Providence. Absolute Individual Providence means that God who foreknows what will happen guides man in a certain direction. But since God Himself does not know the outcome of the Contingent He can not guide man toward the achievement of a certain result. It, therefore, follows that God is unable to answer always man's prayers. The doctrine of the Efficacy of Prayer in its objective connotation can only be maintained in conjunction with that of Individual Providence. But Ibn Daud did not shrink from the conclusions to which his teachings concerning God's Omniscience naturally led. Not so Maimonides. "e shall see in the next chapter that Maimonides, though he is generally considered as the greatest Medieval Jewish ~~xxx~~ philosopher is, ~~far~~ behind Ibn Daud both in philosophic temperament and in consistency of philosophic argument.

CHAPTER VI.

Moses Maimonides (Maimuni)

Maimonides is generally called the Jewish Aristotle, and his philosophical method is labelled "rationalistic". In a few instances, Maimuni does appear to a follower of reason only. He is rationalistic when he criticises the views of others. But he is the true scholastic when he wishes to uphold those theological principles the maintenance of which a pure rationalism makes impossible. A rationalist is one who relies chiefly upon reason in his investigations. There is no final truth. He encourages further research; and reason is the chief judge that is to decide the rival claims between two systems of truth. The rationalist would not say that man's reason is finite; that the boundaries of human knowledge are limited. He is rather convinced that ultimately man, by the aid of reason, will come to understand all he wishes to know.

Not so the scholastic. It is the task of the scholastic to make the established theological doctrines seem as reasonable as possible. But he works on the assumed hypothesis, unconsciously perhaps, that reason is but the handmaid of theology. Therefore, when he finds that Revelation is contradicted by reason, he dogmatizes. He tells us that our reason is limited; that there are certain phenomena that no man will ever be able to explain.

If this definition of the rationalist and the scholastic be accepted then we can assert that it is wrong to call Maimuni a rationalist. As was said above, he only deserves this appellation in a few instances. No matter what we may think, his criticism of Aristotle's mechanical conception of nature, (The criticism really has very little value; for to prove that the Stagirite's explanation of certain phenomena in the

in the celestial regions, in accordance with the mechanical principle, is unsatisfactory, may but prove that Aristotle's application of the principle was wrong. Moreover, it is the motions of the heavenly bodies that modern science has succeeded in reducing to uniformity, in accordance with an immutable law. It is ~~the~~ rather the phenomena of life, of the human mind and will that have thus far baffled all attempts at mechanization), Yet we must agree that his method of criticism is rationalistic. The same holds true of his criticisms of the Kalamistic proofs for the existence, unity and incorporeality of God, and creation in time. That which probably, more than anything else, procured for him the title of rationalist is the fact that he sought to explain all the commandments of the Torah by reason, (though Saadya had also said that even the Revelational laws have a reason) and also the fact that Maimuni gave such a radical interpretation of the origin and the significance of the institution of sacrifices.

But when Maimuni presents his own point of view, he is frequently dogmatic. It is true that he claims that reason leads him to prefer the theory of "creatio ex nihilo" to that of "primary matter". He even claims that were he convinced that the latter theory is true, he could have interpreted certain passages in the Bible in such a way as to harmonize them with the views of the Paripatetic. But, somehow, the reader feels that this is only a statement; that Maimuni accepted creation in time because of a theological bias. And what is the principle that he substitutes for mechanism? He tells us that certain celestial phenomena, the fact that certain stars move East and others move West, prove that there is design in the universe:

אבד כי לפי צדקת אמת קרה האלוקים חזקתם וקל זה על אדם
לפי שכל האמת שאמר שיש ייחוד על כל דבר שרצה מלבד השלש אלהות
אלא האמת שכל אלהי החכמה דהיינו זה כן... אמנם כשואלן שזה על דבר
מבין שכל אלהי החכמה דהיינו זה כן... אמנם כשואלן שזה על דבר
חכמה אלא אמרן מה שזה דבר זה לא שרובד אהיכל שזה על דבר
לא נעבד אלא זה דבר זה אלא באשר בצדק.

"According to our theory of creatio ex nihilo, all this can easily be explained; for we say that there is a being that determines the direction and the velocity of the motion of each sphere; but we do not know the reason why the wisdom of that being gave to each sphere its peculiar property ... But if we assume that all this is the result of design, there is nothing strange or improbable; and the only question to be asked is this: what is the cause of this design? The answer to this question is that all has been made for a certain purpose, though we do not know it; there is nothing done in vain or by chance" (Guide for the Perplexed, II:19). The argument from design is a truly scholastic one. It forbids further argument, further investigation. Maimuni even forbids you to investigate what the design of a certain phenomenon is. Man is too ignorant to understand the nature of this design. Such is the language not of a rationalist, but of an obscurantist. He warns his pupil to whom this book is addressed:

ואם לא תמצא חכמה בזה לא תאמר שזהו חסד ולא תאמר שזהו חסד

"You should not abandon the theory of creation except when there is demonstrative proof, but such proof does not exist in nature" (II:23). Here he talks in the most dogmatic terms, as if he knew all that can ever be known. But later on he tells us why he is so dogmatic about this theory of creation. In Book II Chapter 25 he says that the doctrine of "primary matter" would be destructive of the fundamental principles of religion; while the theory of Creation makes Revelation, Miracles and Prophecy possible. And should we be tempted to ask why God did a certain thing in a certain way then our answer must be:

כי רצה אלהים שיהיה כן

"He willed it so, or His wisdom decreed it so". This is a purely dogmatic method. Maimuni felt that, when ever possible, he must harmonize theology with reason. When he can not do so, he uses the scholastic subterfuge

that the human mind is too finite to grasp a certain idea:
אולי יאמרו שזהו חסד ולא תאמר שזהו חסד... אולי יאמרו שזהו חסד ולא תאמר שזהו חסד

"A boundary is undoubtedly ^{at} for the human mind ... And you should not attempt to ^{comprehend} perceive that which is beyond your ^{comprehension} perception. In this way you will have attained the highest degree of human perfection" (1:31,32)". We can not expect, then, a thoroughly satisfactory philosophical presentation of those theological doctrines that interest us in this thesis, although we shall find that his views on Providence and Prayer, that his conception of the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer are much more satisfactory than any we have met so far.

The most important problem in connection with prayer is that of Providence. The belief in Providence, and especially in Individual Providence implies that God can and does hear our prayers, and that prayer may have an objective efficacy. Maimuni goes into a full discussion of the problem of Providence (111:17). He first outlines and briefly criticises the views of the Epicureans, Aristotle, Ashariyah, and the Mutazillites concerning this problem. He then gives the view of the Torah which does not fully satisfy him.. Finally he states fully his ^{own} opinion. Maimuni holds that there is Individual Providence but it only extends to the individual members of mankind; at least to those whose intellect entitles them to such Providence. All other creatures in the animal world and in plant life, as well as those human beings who are unable to use their intellect enjoy only a general Providence. He is led to this belief because he is convinced that:

השכל האלוהי... נמשך אחר השכל האנושי אשר עזקו בו השכל האנושי
השכל האלוהי אשר עזקו בו השכל האנושי אשר עזקו בו השכל האנושי
השכל האלוהי אשר עזקו בו השכל האנושי אשר עזקו בו השכל האנושי

"Divine Providence is connected with Divine intellectual influence, and the same beings which are benefited by the latter so as to become intellectual, and to comprehend things comprehensible to rational beings are also under control of Divine Providence, which examines all their deeds in order to reward or punish them" (ibid)". Again Maimuni says that we can

"It necessitates the disturbance of the social order, removes and destroys all the moral and intellectual virtues of man" (ibid). No modern pragmatist who wishes to see the present social conditions preserved and the present ethical standards maintained could give a better defence of the theory of Individual Providence.

In Chapter XVIII Maimuni tells us that this Divine Providence is not a constant, that it varies in accordance with the moral and intellectual perfection a man has attained. The greater the human perfection, morally and intellectually, the greater the amount and the greater the intensity of the Divine Providence that man enjoys. We shall later see that Maimuni believes that prayer and especially the intellectual worship of God serve as aids to man in gaining the desired perfection that is necessary to attract this Divine Providence.

For Saadya and Bahya the doctrine of Individual Providence contains two elements: Predetermination by God for the ultimate good of the individual and society, and Retribution. Maimuni's view of Individual Providence seems to contain only the element of Retribution. In the quotation given above, ^(p. 61) he defines Individual Providence as that which examines all the deeds of man in order to reward or punish him. Yet Maimuni's doctrine of Individual Providence must contain an element of Predetermination, since he believes in the doctrine of Omniscience. However, he also believes in the doctrine of man's Free Will. This doctrine

he considers to be the basis of the whole Torah and no religious Jew can ^{reject} ~~reject~~ it. It was necessary for Maimuni to meet the problem raised by the maintenance of the two contradictory doctrines of Omniscience and Free Will. The subject of Free Will is practically omitted in the "Guide for the Perplexed". It is in his Talmudic Code "Yad Ha-Hazaka" that we have definite statements on this subject. There he tells us:

רמאות לא אצק מלמד אק רמא אהטא זמא אצק טאה אהיא זצק רמא
זיצא אק רמא אהטא זמא אצק רמא אהיא רמא רמא זיצא

"Freedom is given to every man, if he wishes to follow the good path and be a righteous man, he is free to do so; and if he wishes to follow the path of wickedness and be a wicked man, he is free to do so" (V:I:1).

In the next paragraph there is a still more definite statement:

אין בלא לא אצק אהיא טאה אהיא רמא

But he adds in paragraph 4:

זע רמא רמא (מלמד) יזע אק א רמא רמא רמא רמא

This reminds us of Rabbi Akiba's statement:

המ רמא אהיא רמא

The contradiction is evident. The solution that Maimuni adopts in his "Guide" is almost similar to that of Saadya. He tells us that God's foreknowledge of the possible does not change the possible in any way:

זיצא רמא רמא זיצא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא
רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא
רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא רמא

"For God's knowledge of things while in a state of possibility, when their existence belongs to the future, does not change the nature of the possible in any way; the nature of the possible remains unchanged; and the knowledge of the realization of one of several possibilities does not necessarily effect the realization" (III:XX). But Maimuni could see that this solution was only a solution of words, that really could not satisfy. He, therefore, escapes the difficulty by becoming dogmatic. He says that the subject is too difficult and too complex for the human mind to

comprehend, that the word "knowledge" is a homonym, for God's knowledge is different in kind from human knowledge:

ה' אלוהים יודע כל דבר וכל דבר ידוע לו (אבות 1:5)
 and in the "Guide":

...לפיכך ידוע לנו כי ידוע לו כל דבר וכל דבר ידוע לו
 "For His knowledge is not the same kind as ours, but totally different

from it ... indeed it is the homonymity of the term "knowledge" that has misled people" (III:XX)". The terms: *ידע*, *יודע*, *ידוע* are homonyms.

Therefore, we can not reason at all when we speak of the doctrines of God's Omniscience, His Providence and Intention. This is the final solution that Maimuni gives to the problems raised by the maintenance of Providence and Omniscience, on the one hand, and Freedom on the other. It is not a solution that will satisfy a modern man. It is the solution of the dogmatist who fears the results of your own thoughts.

The two doctrines of Individual Providence and Free Will make the value of prayer real. Individual Providence implies that God may change His will or the laws of nature in order to reward or punish an individual; or as Maimuni would put it, if an individual becomes more perfect he enjoys a greater share of Divine Providence. Free Will implies that man can not say that his piety or impiety, his morality or immorality, his reward or punishment have been predetermined. It is true that God foreknows whether the individual will obey God's law and be rewarded, or rebel against it and be punished. Yet man enjoys perfect freedom of choice to worship God or to refuse to worship Him. But the hope for reward and the fear of punishment are not the only means Maimuni uses to induce man to worship God. Prayers, reading of the Shema, Tefillin, Zizit and other ceremonies serve as a means to remind man continually of God, of man's duty to fear and love Him, and lead man to believe concerning God all that which a religious man ought to believe (III:44).

By thus thinking constantly of God man will come to enjoy more and more of Divine Providence. This should be the real goal of the worshiper. The difference between the prophet and the ordinary human being is not one of kind, (as Jehudah Hallevi would have it) but one of degree. The prophet enjoys a very great share of Divine Providence. Prayer serves a psychological purpose. It puts man into the proper attitude that disposes him to receive the Divine Influence. But in order that prayer be a real aid it must be accompanied with a thorough devotion in which the worshiper becomes oblivious to the material world about him.

This, then, is the meaning of the term "Efficacy of Prayer". Prayer leads man to think about God, His attributes and ^{His} ~~the~~ laws. This meditation concerning God will, in turn, lead to an intellectual worship of God (will be defined later). Man will become a more moral and intellectual human being. He will approach to a greater and greater extent the degree of the prophet; and as a result the Divine Providence will rest upon him. We said before that the happiness of enjoying such Providence is a goal in itself; that it has a subjective value. But Maimuni tells us that Divine Providence may also have an objective value. His doctrine of Providence enables him to give a novel solution to that ancient problem of Evil. No evil can befall man while he worships God and is enjoying God's Providence. It is only in those moments when man neglects to think about God and God's Providence is removed from him that evil can befall him, though that man be righteous and pious. God interferes with natural law only when man is praying ^{to} and worshipping God. At other times natural law operates. Prayer has, therefore, both a subjective and an objective value. It helps us to rise towards God, and it also serves as a means to ward off ^{evil} ~~it~~ from us. Maimuni can not consistently give us a different interpretation of the doctrine of the Efficacy of Prayer. He can not tell us that God hears all the prayers of men, and if He wishes He fulfills their desires. Maimuni's God conception is a too

transcendent one to admit of any such close relationship between God and man. He tells us that we can not ascribe to God any of the ordinary qualities that we generally attribute to man; that God's knowledge differs in kind from human knowledge; that "God's ways are not our ways". There is an apparent contradiction between the ideas of a transcendent God and that prayer is ^{heard by God} efficacious. Maimuni's conception of the nature of the efficacy of prayer satisfies this difficulty, to ^{some} ~~one~~ extent. Through intellectual meditation, man becomes more and more Godlike, and thus enjoys a greater share of Divine Providence and the consequent safety from evil.

We saw that most of the philosophers with whom we have dealt, and especially those who believed in "Creatio ex Nihilo", held that ^{world} ~~the~~ ^{was} created ~~created~~ (ex nihilo, or potential matter was endowed with form) by God for the sake of man; that God only sought man's benefit in His every act of creation, and that, therefore, man's intellect requires him to pray to God and observe His commandments. Their Cosmological God conception was their chief reason for prayer. Maimuni accepts the theory of creation in time. But he exhibits a truly critical and rationalistic spirit when he rejects the theory that everything in the world was created for the sake of man. For says Maimuni: "Even if the universe existed for man's sake and man existed for the purpose of serving God ... the question remains, what is the end of serving God? He does not become more perfect ... It might perhaps be replied that the service of God is not intended for God's perfection; it is intended for our own perfection. But what is the object of our being perfect? We must ... arrive at the answer: It was the will of God or His wisdom decreed it; and this is the correct answer ... Just as we can not seek the purpose of His ~~will~~ ^{existence so can we not seek the purpose of His will} ... Man's mistake is that he thinks that the whole of Creation is for his sake" (III: XIII).

We must assume that every living species exists for its own sake (though

the laws of Repentance and Prayer. Prayer is, one of the thirteen Maimon-
idean dogmas. That dogma, as it is summarized in the Prayer book, teaches
us that it is proper to pray to God, and that it is proper to pray to
Him directly, and not through any intermediary. Maimuni tells us that
originally the Jews prayed whenever they desired, and in any language
they pleaded. But Ezra fixed the number of prayers to be recited each
day, and also fixed Hebrew as the language of prayer. Therefore, to-day
it is ~~the~~ proper to pray three times a day. These prayers should be re-
cited, whenever possible, in the midst of a congregation. He who is able
to pray with the congregation and refuses to do so, may be looked upon
as a ~~very~~ "bad neighbor". He outlines the history of prayers and advo-
cates the traditional methods of prayer. Prayers are efficacious when re-
cited in the midst of the congregation, at the proper time, facing the
ark and when the worshiper conforms to all the other traditional require-
ments. Maimuni has nothing new to say about the method of prayer; only
that to him prayer becomes a dogma. By his historical treatment of pray-
er, he makes it clear that the prayers, as we have them to-day are not
divine. They are a human product. Their number and language were fixed
to suit the conditions of the days of Ezra.

Much more interesting is his conception of the intellectual worship of God which he outlines in Book III, Chapter 51 of his "Guide". In this chapter, he outlines, what he calls the highest form of worship which is the highest aim man can attain. As man can come in contact with God only through the intellect, ^{we} Man should worship God by meditating constantly about God so that he may gain a true knowledge of Him:

אין דיין דער דאזיקער פראנצאזישער
אלטער מאסן ערשט

"This is the worship peculiar to those who have attained a knowledge of the true principles; and the more they reflect on Him and think of Him, the more are they engaged in His worship". Those, however, who pray to

God, and have no correct notion of Him are really worshipping a false God, i. e. God of their imagination. "The true worship of God is only possible when correct notions of Him have previously been conceived". From the sentence: $\text{לֹא יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אִישׁ אֶל אֱלֹהֵי זָרָה}$ we can see that the true worship of God must be based on the true knowledge of God. The Torah impresses upon us the duty to love God; but we can not love God unless we know Him: $\text{וְיָדַעְתָּ וְיָדַעְתָּ וְיָדַעְתָּ}$

"Man's love of God is in proportion to his knowledge of Him". Faith in God can not be expressed in words: (I:50) $\text{אֱמוּנָה אֵינָהּ בְּלִי שֵׁנָה}$ It must be apprehended by the soul to be of any value". "It is, therefore, man's aim, after having acquired a true knowledge of Him, to deliver himself up to Him, and to have his heart constantly filled with longing after Him. He accomplishes this generally by seclusion and retirement. Every pious man should therefore seek retirement and seclusion, and should only in case of necessity associate with others".

This does not mean that Maimuni is preaching asceticism. We saw that he advocates that prayers should be recited in the midst of the congregation. But this intellectual worship of God to which man should devote as much time as possible, will bear ^{the} greatest fruit if done during hours of solitude. Man should so train himself that even when he is in the company of others he should only think about God.

Maimuni follows Ibn Daud in this conception of worship. They differ radically with Bahya to whom prayer is more a matter of emotion. Ibn Daud and Maimuni, emphasize the intellect as the greatest force that unites man with God. To-day students of religion generally believe that the true worship of God will result from a combination of the intellectual and the emotional factors. Man must have an idea of the kind of a God he is worshipping. But religion must also contain an element of mysticism; and it is this feeling of mystery which, when aroused in man, has produced some of the finest spontaneous prayers with which

sacred and secular literatures are replete, and that makes of man a truly religious man.

CHAPTER VII.

Levi Ben Gerson (Gersonides).

Gersonides is primarily a rationalist. He also wished to harmonize theology with reason. But in his hands, Reason holds a preëminent position. Frequently he places it, unconsciously perhaps, on a higher pedestal than that he assigns ^{to} ~~for~~ traditional dogmatic doctrines. The scholastic spirit so prominent in Saadya, and to a lesser extent in Maimoni, is delightfully ^{absent} ~~absent~~ in פנא אלהא "The Rattles of the Lord", the philosophical theological masterpiece of Gersonides. Human reason he holds to be unlimited in its possibilities and authoritative in its conclusions. He does tell us that should ~~these~~ doctrines be ^{present to} in opposition to Jewish Law, he would be ready to renounce them (I:14). Yet though his conception of certain theological principles is not in harmony with tradition (and he must have realized it) he, nevertheless, maintains it tenaciously and consistently. He prefers to change the meaning of a Biblical sentence (by interpretation) rather, than to distort reason:

ואם יחזקא חכמה אלהיה הלא היה חכמה אלהיה קדאמות נא ביטולא דנא
 "And let not the reader think that The Law can prevent us from believing in the verity of the conclusions reached by reason" (Int., p. 3). As a result, we get a very bold theology, a theology that is not in harmony with tradition, but that is thoroughly reasonable. Some of his notions may be medieval. The stars, he believes, contain and determine the destinies of man. Astrology is a science. But we may very easily eliminate his astrological ideas and obtain a theology to which any modern man could readily subscribe.

Prayer, as a ceremony or a commandment, is not discussed in this book. But he discusses, in full, those problems that are closely linked up with prayer, as God's foreknowledge of things, His Providence and Man's Freedom of Will. From an exposition of his conceptions of these problems, we may infer his attitude toward the problem in which we are in-

terested. We can not, from this exposition, judge his attitude toward traditional prayers, and the various ceremonies and customs connected with it. But we may be able to judge his attitude toward the chief problem that prayer presents to the modern man--its Efficacy.

We may best introduce Gerson's conception of the three problems mentioned above by presenting the criticisms he launches against Maimuni's view of these doctrines. We saw that Maimuni tries to harmonize the doctrines of Omnipotence and Providence, on the one hand, and Freedom, on the other, as well as other difficulties such as: How God can know the Infinite, the non-existent etc., by saying that God's knowledge differs from human knowledge in kind. Therefore, man cannot, and should not, reason about these seeming difficulties, as human reason is finite. Gersonides comes to the defence of the human reason. He believes that Maimuni was forced to this theory because he wished to retain a certain theology. He practically accuses him of intellectual dishonesty.

כיוון דבריו / מרחק זה... אלז וצנה שחשבת התורה זזה בראי לחזק רז

"For reason would reject this---but it seems that The Law forced him a great deal to expound this theory" (VII:2). We have no ground for believing that God's knowledge differs from our's in kind. All we may assert is that His knowledge differs from human knowledge in degree, that God's knowledge is more perfect. For should Maimuni follow consistently his "homonymy" theory he could ascribe almost any attribute to God. Why should he not also say that the attribute of motion can be ascribed to God? He might say that God's motion differs from our's in kind. Maimuni is also absurd when he argues that God's knowledge is not causative, for such knowledge we call mere opinion or error:

וצה שאין ראיה בדבר המורה צ"ל שישם ויחזק יצד שיתקן מחלקי האפשר שיצד שיעז
אשרי שאי יגיד (לכזה אכזה שיעז סתור) ... הנה כן זה לא יקרא אלא שיהיה ויבנה
אלז וצנה... כי אמת לא יקרא כן זה ~~הוא~~ ויבנה אלז ויבנה
"And if Maimuni wished to teach that God knows that certain part of the
"possible" that He knows will actualize may not actualize, and that it

may happen that the reverse will take place---this we do not call knowledge but opinion---for we do not call this opinion but rather perplexity and confusion" (III:2). It is like saying that that which we call ignorance in man, we call Knowledge in God. Gersonides succeeds in refuting Maimuni's basic argument.

Gersonides introduces the discussion of God's Omniscience with the problem of Prophecy. That there is such a thing as divination and prophecy he does not question. But it is here that a difficulty arises. If man can foretell the contingent, then that contingent has been transferred to the class of the necessary. Gerson's solution of this difficulty is as follows: We find that the higher in the scale of evolution a thing is the more nature cares for its preservation (p. 25). We can see, then, the reason why the heavenly spheres should take special care of man and should provide and order his life, to a large extent. Hence, astrology can frequently inform us about man's future. But man also enjoys freedom. He enjoys the freedom even to annul or to modify his destiny as determined by the spheres. Therefore, we may say that human events are determined so far as they follow from the spheres, and only so far can they be foretold. They are undetermined so far as they are a result of human choice and purpose, and in so far they can not be foretold (II:2). God, who knows this order ~~order~~ as it can be read in the heavenly spheres, sends this information to man either through dreams, diviners or prophets so that man may take advantage of this information and be able to obviate any evil consequences (II:5). Dreams and prophecies are, therefore, only conditional. They can tell man that if he does not exercise his freedom in an endeavor to change or avoid decrees of the spheres, those decrees will surely become actual facts.

This theory of prophecy enables Gersonides to solve the problem raised by the maintenance of the two traditional doctrines that God

foreknows everything and that man's will is free. Gersonides holds that God does not foreknow particulars, as particulars. God only knows the comprehensive formula by which these particulars are governed:

(p.149, cf. p.141). *כדפיס ותזקק ואלו אלף פועלם כדפיס כאלו אלף כדפיס כדפיס*

God, to use more modern terms, works through the universal laws of nature. Particulars, He does not know. He only knows them in so far as they are contingent (p.138). He does not want to know them. He wants man to enjoy the perfect freedom in choosing between several possibilities. This lack of knowledge on the part of God is no more an imperfection in Him than is the fact that He does not possess the attribute of motion.

Gersonides mentions that Ibn Ezra seems to hold the same view concerning God's Omniscience. He feels that his theology is rather bold and that he needs some support. Of course, he finds a few Biblical verses which seem to support his theory. Anyone can tell him, however, that his interpretation of the doctrine of God's Omniscience is not the general one held by Biblical authors. But whether bold or not, whether traditional or not, his interpretation of this doctrine is certainly reasonable. To put his doctrine into modern terms we may say that Gersonides believes that human events are partly determined (by heredity, environment, nature or any other factors you may please) and partly a result of freedom. None of the determining influences are final. They may all to a large extent, be modified, annulled or avoided, if man should but so choose and will to carry out his choice. God only foreknows the general formula. He knows better than any man can know what the result will be if man does not exert his freedom and submits to these determining influences. But God can not know whether man will take advantage of this freedom granted to him, nor how he will use it. It seems to me that this is the best and only harmonization of this difficulty with which all Medieval philosophers grappled. Neither science nor philosophy can dispute it.

Intellect, God cares for him more---it is clear that Divine Providence extends over some men, as individuals, in various degrees, and that over other men it does not extend at all" (p. 164). God knows all concepts *(فكره)* actually. Man only knows them potentially. Man's intellect aids him to bring these potentialities into actuality, and thus man may become one with God and enjoy His Providence. This theory is not in conflict with the theory that God only knows general formulae. The destiny of man is described in the heavenly spheres. Divine Providence may inform man of any danger in store for him through dreams, divination or prophecy. But it is only the man of intellect who can receive and benefit by the message Divine Providence sends him in these ways. The decrees of the heavenly spheres are being revealed to all mankind, and the nearer a man is to God the more readily can he perceive the meaning of these revelations and avert danger. In this sense only, can we say that there is Individual Providence. This means that those men who lack intellect can not understand these messages, so that by the exercise of their free will they might avoid danger. Hence, these men ~~are~~ are governed by the universal laws of nature.

From the study of this book, "The Rattles of the Lord" it would seem that since Gersonides denies Individual Providence, he must also deny the doctrine of the "Efficacy of Prayer": a doctrine, which, in its strict theological sense implies that God hears the prayers of each individual and that He may answer man's prayer. But since Gersonides maintains that God does not know particulars and does not provide for individuals, as individuals, he would seem to deny also that God can hear and answer man's prayer. It would, however, be erroneous to draw such a conclusion. We saw that Gersonides, like Maimon, holds that the greater a man's intellectual grasp, the greater the amount of Divine Providence that he enjoys. It is apparent that, according to Maimon, the intellect which brings a

man into relation with God is not a secular intellect. A man who knows a great deal about physics or other sciences, but who does not believe in or meditate about God, does not enjoy the benefits of the Divine Influence. The intellectual grasp that forms a bridge between man and God is the product of constant reflection about God, His attributes and His laws, which leads to a true understanding of the nature of God. Prayer is efficacious in that it leads man to think about God. From a study of the *מאמרי גרסונידס* only we might infer that Gersonides agrees with Maimuni concerning the nature of the Efficacy of Prayer. Gersonides tells us that the *צדיק* enjoys Divine Providence and that the *רשע* is abandoned to natural law (p. 163). The *צדיק* is near to God, while the *רשע* has no relation to Him. This would seem to show that Gersonides holds that the greater the moral and religious perfection of a man, the more readily will he attract the Divine Influence. Prayer, then, we could say is efficacious in that it helps man to attain that higher life which makes for oneness with God. Were this the view of Gersonides, it would be perfectly consistent with his theories concerning God's Omniscience and Providence. But in his commentary to the Bible we find that he says, again and again, that God actually hears the prayers of an individual and that He answers them. From Genesis 20:7 and 20:17 he infers two facts. First that God provides, in some way, for him who becomes one with God. In this case God sent a dream to Abimelech in order to save Abraham's wife. Second that God hears the prayers of those that cling to Him:

והוא שכל צדיק שיש לו חלק באלהים יתברך

The word *צדיק* shows that his criterion for the godly man is not an intellectual one, but a moral one. God answers the prayers of the righteous not only when they pray for themselves but also when they pray for those who are dear to them. Isaac when he prayed (Genesis 25:21) really prayed for Rebecca, yet God answered his prayer. No matter how unworthy a man may be he should, nevertheless, pray to God. Perhaps He may have mercy and an-

swer the prayer. The Israelites in Egypt were certainly unworthy, yet when they prayed to God (Exodus 2:23), He answered them. God answers prayer through the *Mal'ak* whom he identifies with the *Mal'ak* (commentary to Exodus 3:2). How Gersonides can harmonize this theory that God actually hears and answers the prayers of individuals, that He can have mercy even on those who are not near to Him, with the theory that God only knows universals, I can not see. It seems to be an inconsistency. His theology is so radical, that we must expect such an inconsistency. Of course, no one can deny the Efficacy of Prayer and consider himself a religious man. Gersonides had to maintain this, and he maintained it even though he had to sacrifice logical consistency.

CHAPTER VII.

Hasdai Ben Abraham Crescas.

Crescas is the last one of that long line of Jewish philosophers during the Medieval ages who makes some original contributions to our subject, and whom we shall treat in this paper. In theological problems his spirit is primarily reactionary. Ibn Daud, Maimuni, Gersonides, and to some extent, Abraham Ibn Ezra, were both theologians and philosophers. They all merit the adjective philosophers because they dared to modify and even to abandon certain traditional theological doctrines and concepts that were entirely opposed to reason. Crescas is opposed to this spirit of intellectualism that resulted from the great influence Maimuni wielded on his followers. In his philosophical treatise אור "The Light of the Lord" he defends all the traditional dogmas of Judaism in a spirit of bitterness and contempt for those who dared to deny any of these doctrines. His method and temperament are less philosophic, than even of the early medieval Jewish philosophers whom we treated. In the introduction to, "The Light of the Lord" he bewails the fact that many of our people, and Maimuni at their head, were led astray by statements and proofs of the philosophers, and that Maimuni had built up a system based on these weak Aristotelian principles. Crescas tells us that, as a result, people are turning away from tradition מפני שהם ראו שהם נכונים and do not heed the counsel of the Rabbis. Matters have come to this strait because:

כי לא נמצא עד הנה איש אשר יאמר כדברי אלהים
 "There has been no one up to the present time who would contradict the arguments of the Greeks (Aristotle) who made dark the eyes of Israel of this age". Crescas undertakes the responsibility that every one before him will do. He wishes to expound these fundamental doctrines of the Torah that some philosophers have questioned, but which he believes, can be well established upon the ground of the Torah and Reason.

Crescas is the first Jewish Medieval philosopher who definitely tells us that it is a doctrine of Judaism, a doctrine the denial of which is to be called a heretic, and the rejection of which would cause the collapse of the entire religious structure, that prayer is efficacious. All the philosophers, whose doctrines we have treated, believe in the Efficacy of Prayer, though not all attach equal importance to this doctrine, nor do all give it the same interpretation. They all believe that man ought to pray to God, though their reasons for this "ought" are different. Those who believe in Creatio ex nihilo (with the exception of 'Ainu) give as the chief reason for prayer the fact that man's intellect tells him that he ought to pray to God who created the whole universe for the good of man. This reason can be given and is given by some of those who believe that there was potential primary matter which God endowed with form (cf. Mureya and Ibn Daud). Ibn Daud, 'Ainu and Gersonides, whom we may call the rationalistic scholastics among the Jewish philosophers, give us a philosophical interpretation of the Efficacy of Prayer. Man can come in contact with God through the intellect, or when man will gain a right philosophic notion of God, prayer would cause man to think about God, it is efficacious in bringing man nearer to God. They also believe in the objective Efficacy of Prayer, but it is not the interpretation that they emphasize. Saadya, to some extent, and especially Bahya give us a psychological interpretation of the doctrine of the Efficacy of Prayer. Prayer, according to Saadya, will cause man to repent and to lead a more moral life. Bahya tells us that the importance of prayer lies in the fact that it changes the nature of man: that prayer fosters the development of *mitzvot*. Whichever of these reasons one may choose, none of them emphasize the importance of petitional prayer. It is a matter of fact that all of them emphasize the Thanksgiving and Adoration form of prayer. Mureya is opposed to petitional

prayers except in extreme instances. Hallevi is the only one who defends petitionary prayer and the traditional method of prayer. But Hallevi refuses to reason about certain theological doctrines. He tells us that we must accept that prayers prayed in a traditional way are efficacious, not because of reason, but because history shows us that such prayers have "worked". In the past, have attracted the Divine Influence to the worshipper. But none of these men, not even those who believe in Individual Providence make this doctrine of the Efficacy of Prayer so fundamental as does Crescas. It is true that to Maimuni prayer is a dogma. But he only tells us that man ought to pray to God primarily for the rationalistic reason we saw above. Maimuni's dogma of prayer does not teach that God hears and answers man's prayer, though Maimuni believes in its possibility.

Crescas calls the doctrine of the Efficacy of Prayer one of the "Beliefs that are attached to special commandments" Man is commanded to pray. This commandment finds its basis in the belief or dogma that God answers man's prayers:

האמונה כי שמים נזקקין להאזין אל צעקת העבד
 כי האלהים יענה את צעקת העבד

"The belief that is attached to this commandment is that we believe that God answers the petition of the worshipper who trusts in Him (22b)". No other medieval Jewish philosopher told us that man was commanded to pray to God because prayer is efficacious. Even Saadya and Ibn Ezra, who give the doctrine of Retribution as a basis for prayer, tell us rather that this Retribution will come in the nature of a reward. They do not tell us that man should pray because his petition may be answered. Crescas tells us that he who is otherwise unworthy, that even the non-Jew who would, on his own account, be considered unworthy to receive divine favor may gain what he desires through prayer (23a). This belief in the Efficacy of Prayer he calls *אמונה כי שמים נזקקין להאזין אל צעקת העבד* Man's prayer is efficacious not only when he prays for himself but even when man prays

for others, be they alive or dead.

From a philosopher, or rather a theologian of the type of Crescas, we need no definite statement to inform us whether in his opinion prayers must be prayed in the traditional form, for Crescas stands completely for orthodoxy. Yet should any one doubt what his attitude on this subject may be (for there is no clear statement), he might be able to infer it from his theory concerning the Efficacy of the Benediction pronounced by the Priests. In discussing this question, Crescas tells us that what makes this ^{benediction} ~~doctrine~~ efficacious is not the worth of the priests but the fact that they pray in a certain way. For just as the value of a drug lies in the nature of the drug and has nothing to do with the character of him who administers it, so the Priestly Benediction, if it satisfies certain conditions (prescribed by tradition) will be efficacious. This reminds us of Hallevi who warns us not to reason about these questions; but rather to accept the mandates of history and tradition which have proven so effective in the past. Crescas, we can infer, believes in the traditional form of prayer.

Crescas has a philosophical basis for his doctrine of the Efficacy of Prayer. He believes in Absolute Individual Providence. This Individual Providence differs with different men depending upon their character, their nationality and location. The Jews are more favored by God's Providence than other peoples. God rewards and punishes both in this world and in the next. The problem of justice he answers by saying that in a future world God rewards and punishes man according to merit, that there all wrongs are righted. He can believe that God provides for the future of an individual because he believes that God's Omniscience is not limited to universals, but that it extends also to particulars. This belief in Absolute Omniscience forces him to limit the idea of man's freedom, but he prefers to do that than to limit the concept of God's Omniscience. Man, he tells us, is free because of himself but determined

because of outside causes. Man's desire, choice and will are causes that determine action. Both Joel and Neumark as well as others have shown the relation of the monistic philosophy of Spinoza to that of Crescas. A monistic philosophy is essentially deterministic, and the philosophy of Crescas is also deterministic.

This ends the discussion of the Problem of Prayer in Medieval Jewish Philosophy. The rationalistic spirit which, under the influence of Aristotle began with Saadya and reached its highest point in Gersonides, is on the decline in Crescas. There were men who followed Crescas who dabbled in philosophical speculations, but there is not a Maimonid or a Gersonides among them. Perhaps the pervading spirit of the Kabbala may account for it, perhaps it was the Spirit of the Age. But whatever the cause may be, this much we can say that the Golden Period of Jewish philosophy which had begun so promisingly with Saadya passed away with the death of Crescas. Many years had to elapse before such bold spirits as Ibn Daud, Ibn Ezra, Maimuni, and Gersonides were born, ^{who were} ~~and~~ brave enough to proclaim their convictions.