

UNIVERSALISTIC ELEMENTS

in

TANA DEBE ELIYAHU

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By

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Table of Contents

chapter	Page
I Introduction Time of composition of Tanna debe Eliyahu	1-11
II What Is Universalism?	12-19
III Some Universalistic Elements In Tanna debe Eliyahu	20-49
Notes	50

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For simplicity of diction, beauty of poetic thought, and depth of insight, there is perhaps no midrash which excels Tanna debe Eliyahu. Tanna debe Eliyahu is written in a simple Hebrew style. The language is flowing and limpid. Unlike other midrashic works, it is not strewn with difficult expressions; and with a few bare exceptions it contains no Aramaic words or phrases. To read this work requires no profound mastery of the Hebrew language, but the profundity of its thought is not surpassed in midrashic literature.

This book is moved by a deep religious spirit, -- not the pious religiosity that takes its strength from dogmas and creeds formulated by others. It is inspired with the

mystic spirit of faith in divinity that flows from the heart. And it breathes with the breath of him who may be wounded with the sorrows of mortal life, yet lifts up his soul in trust and yearning and prays to his Father in Heaven. Rarely does the unknown author of Tanna debe Eliyahu give way to wrath or anger. Even in the midst of persecution he maintains a tranquility of temper which is governed by the vision of eternity.

Yet around this singular midrashic work has long raged a war among scholars. For in spite of the simplicity of its composition, scholars disagree very strenuously among themselves on the time of its writing. Some scholars place the date of its redaction as far forward as the ninth or tenth centuries of the present era. Other scholars just as erudite, on the other hand, fix its date as far back as the fourth or fifth centuries. The average man may well wonder how such learned scholars can differ so radically in the solution of the same problem. But the wonder ceases when he discovers that Tanna debe Eliyahu is essentially a book of poetic thoughts, and all allusions to historical data or events contained therein are, after the usual manner of poetry, indefinite and indeterminate. Poetically expressed, allusions offer a multitude of explanations. Each man beholds within the allusion the reflection of his own knowledge. Scholars, being men, are not immune to this mortal frailty.

Thus one scholar, Eppenstein, seizing on the word "Christian" jumps to the hasty inference that such a word must refer to a Christian, and assigns the redaction of the work to a redactor residing in Southern Italy. Another scholar, Dr. Jacob Mann, a great historian, points out the weakness of such a conclusion, and proves that this word could very well fit in under conditions in Babylon in the Sassanid period.^I Still another scholar, G. Klein, holds to the strange and curious theory that Tanna debe Eliyahu was originally designed by its author as a program for proselytizing the heathen, but was modified by a later redactor living in the days of the Crusades. Dr. Jacob Mann, however, makes short shrift of this theory by pointing out that this work expounds the spirit and the life of Judaism to a Jewish audience. It grapples chiefly with the problem of preserving Judaism, and its exhortations are directed essentially to the Jew. Thus we see that so zealous is the author to preserve his people from disintegration that he exhorts and commands the Jew against entering into close or intimate unions with the gentile.^{II} Graetz, too, on the basis of far-fetched textual interpretations, would assign the work to Italy about the tenth century. Mann, however, reveals the flimsy ground of Graetz's interpretation. Mann shows that Graetz's conclusion is entirely unwarranted.^{III}

Again, in assigning the redaction of Tanna debe Eliyahu to the tenth century, many scholars have buttressed their contention on two geneological statements present in the text of the work. To the innocent reader these geneological statements appear genuine, and the contention based upon them seems well nigh irrefutable. But Mann is not at all daunted by their presence. With clever insight he shows how these dates were augmented by later copyists who lived in the tenth century. ^{IV}

There have been scholars (Bacher and Oppenheim) who have placed the composition of Tanna debe Eliyahu at a later period on account of discussions appearing therein which question the validity of the Oral Law. ^V Such scholars maintain that these discussions prove the existence of Karaites at the time the work was written. To them, these disputations about the authority of the Oral Law present sufficient proof that the book was composed during the period of the Karaite revolt. Friedmann, however, in his admirable and well nigh exhaustive introduction to his edition of Tanna debe Eliyahu explains that these challenges mark the underground swell of opposition to the supremacy of the Oral Law which persisted throughout Talmudic times, and finally gathered force to break out later in the Karaite movement. ^{VI} Dr. Mann stands staunchly by Friedmann in

VII

this asseveration.

In opposition to most scholars who have attempted to VIII
unravel the time of the composition of Tanna debe Eliyahu,
Friedmann and Mann place the writing of this work in
Babylon in the period between the final redaction of the
Mishna and the redaction of the Talmud. They differ,
however, as to the approximate date. Mann is inclined to
assign a later date than Friedmann. Friedmann bulwards his
claim to an earlier date chiefly with Talmudic and midrashic
references. Mann, on the other hand, fortifies his conten-
tion chiefly with historical inference.

Minutely, Friedmann outlines the extent that later
midrashim than Tanna debe Eliyahu borrow from the latter.
He points out where the redactors of later midrashic works
had recourse to material whose original source is found in
Tanna debe Eliyahu. Zunz supports such a view with his
opinion that the redactor of Bereshith Rabba was familiar
with Seder Eliyahu. IX Furthermore, Friedmann skillfully
shows that the discussion introduced between the author of
Seder Eliyahu and a Magian priest, worshipper of fire, dates
the composition of the book at a period when the Magian
worshippers were in the ascendancy. X He further declares
that the phrase XI
הא לא חלק חקק"ה את עולמא דבבל ושלמא דבבל
clearly refers to the two great empires of the Sassanids and

and Byzantium within whose borders the greater part of Israel was divided in the time when the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu wrote.^{XII} Dr. Mann concurs in this interpretation of הַמְּלָכִים הַנִּזְכָּרִים, and says: "Both of these empires maltreated Israel in his the author of Seder Eliyahu time, as is evident from the re-iterated complaints of oppression, but fortunately a respite was given to the large Jewries in both empires comprising the vast majority of the Jewish people by the very fact that the oppressive acts occurred at different times, and were not guided by a united policy....."

"Such a situation does not fit in for the 10th century (and in fact from the middle of the 7th century and onwards) when the Jews under the rule of Islam were by far better treated than under Christendom in spite of occasional outbreaks of fanaticism on the part of the dominant Mohammedans. Moreover no author⁷ or redactor writing in the 10th century, whether in Babylon or Palestine or in Italy, would speak of "the world" (viz. the one wherein the bulk of Jewry was concentrated) as divided among two nations and two empires (הַמְּלָכִים הַנִּזְכָּרִים), when the Jews the Jews in Christian Europe belonged to different dominions (Byzantium, the German empire, France, etc.) and when the Muhammedan world was split up into

three Caliphates, viz. the 'Abbasid Caliphate centered in Bagdad, the Fatimid one centered in Mahedia, near Kairowan, and then after the conquest of Egypt in 969, in Cairo, and the Omayyad one centered in Cordova." XIII

Dr. Mann credits Friedmann with this erudite interpretation of נחבלין 'נח and conclusion therefrom as to the general period in which the author wrote, but Mann disagrees with Friedmann on the exact date of the writing. He is also quick to follow Friedmann's hint as to the significance of the discussion with the Magian priest, and says: "There is further a clear reference to the Magians in Babylon and to their power in the state, quite at the beginning of our midrash, which those scholars who assigned the work to the 10th century ought to have first accounted for...." XIV

Friedmann maintains that Tanna debe Eliyahu was composed at the beginning of the fourth century in the time of R. Anan. In support of this theory is that significant legend in the Talmud: "Elijah used to come to R. Anan, upon which occasions the prophet recited the Seder Eliyahu to him. When, however, R. Anan had given this decision [one previously narrated in the Talmud] the prophet came no more. R. Anan fasted in consequence, and begged forgiveness whereupon the prophet came again; but R. Anan had such great fear of Elijah that,

in order to avoid seeing him, he made a box and sat in it
until the recitation was over." ^{XV}

Dr. Mann, however, opposes so early a date. He states that the intolerable conditions of persecution which the author complains about repeatedly did not obtain in the time of R. Anan at the beginning of the fourth century, "because conditions in Babylon were really tolerable after the first flush of victory of the Magian Persians under Ardeshir (226 and following) had subsided." Basing his conclusion on expert historical information, Mann places the composition of Tanna debe Eliyahu in the second half of the fifth century. In this period the large Jewish population residing within the Sassanid empire began to feel the whip of harsh religious persecution, beginning with the "fanatical outbreaks of Yezdegerd II in 454-5, followed by that of his son Peroz. This coincided with the chronic intolerance against the Jews prevalent in Byzantium and resulted in a general ^{לחץ ישראל} in spite of which Israel was preserved, because in its vast majority it was under "two nations and two dominions," viz. Persia and Byzantium, so often at war with each other and not pursuing a unified policy with regard to the treatment to be meted out to the Jews." ^{XVI}

Jacob Mann also maintains that the Messianic hopes devoutly expressed in our Midrash refer to the Jews in Babylon

XVII
who would return to Palestine. According to Mann, also,
the belief was prevalent in the time when our author wrote
that Elijah would descend to Babylon, after which would come
XVIII
the Messiah.

These Messianic hopes may have inspired
the author of this Midrash to frame his work in the form of
experiences of Elijah in his peregrinations among the Jews
of Babylon, and thus raise a voice of consolation over Israel
and hope in the restoration of the holy people to the holy
land. From this inference, Mann puts forth the suggestion
that the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu adopted a pure Hebrew
style since "Elijah, the Prophet of Biblical times, trans-
planted among the angels, who were not supposed to understand
Aramaic (according to a widely spread tradition, cf., e.g.,
Sotah 33a), naturally has to recount his journeyings, arguments
and experiences in Hebrew!"

They who assign the composition of Tanna debe Eliyahu to
the period between the redaction of the Mishna and that of the
Talmud bring forth, among many arguments, a poignant proof
gulled from stylistic argument. They point to the significant
fact that this Midrash quotes frequently from the Mishnah.
The word Mishna is frequently used therein in a technical
sense. Not once, however, does it refer to the Talmud or to
the Gemara with technical connotation. Had this Midrash been
written in the tenth century, or at any period following the

redaction of the Talmud, it is reasonable to expect that the author of this Midrash would have made reference to Gemara or Talmud in the same technical sense in which he refers to the Mishna. Again, frequently our author urges disciples of the Torah to the study of Mikra, Mishna, Midrash, Halachoth and Aggadoth, but never^{to}/Gemara or Talmud in the same special sense.

The following midrash may throw some light on this point:

„חדשים גם ישנים דודי צפנתי לך“ (שה"ש ז' י"ד)
אברהם יצחק ויעקב ישנים. עמרם בן קהה
וכל הכשרים שהיו במצרים חדשים. --
חבורתו של משה וחבורתו של יהושע וחבורתו
של דוד המלך ישראל וחבורתו של חזקיה
מלך יהודה ישנים. חבורתו של עזרא,
חבורתו של הלל הזקן, חבורתו של רבן
יוחנן בן זכאי, חבורתו של ר' מאיר וחבריו
חדשים. -- עליהן הוא אומר חדשים גם
ישנים. (ס' אליהו רבה, פ' ז', דף 36)

It is reasonable to suppose that had our author lived after the compilation of the Talmud, he would have included the name of its compiler and his colleagues among the "chadashim", after R. Meir and his colleagues.

The writer of this paper is inclined to agree with Friedmann and Mann in placing the composition of Tanna debe

Eliyahu in the period between the completion of the Mishna and that of the Talmud.

However, whatever the period in which Tanna debe Eliyahu was written does not affect the universality of utterance which permeates it.

II

The subject of this thesis is the "Universalistic Elements in Tana debe Eliyahu". However, before an elucidation may be attempted of some representative elements scattered throughout our midrash, we must precede it with a presentation of what we consider a universalistic element to be.

Universality in Nature: We may affirm the proposition, first of all, without fear of contradiction, that no object in nature resembles any other object in every particular. The circumstances of nature differing in every instant, no two phenomena can ever be exactly the same. But though they may never approach absolute similarity, they may be classed together in the mind when they possess fundamental characteristics common to both, and they may be counted similar for practical purposes if the characteristics they possess in common outweigh the differences which distinguish them. No two snowflakes, scientists tell us, are cast in exactly the same design. Yet the characteristics which are common to all snowflakes are so fundamental that we class them all together in spite of the superficial differences which separate them. Likewise, the differences among men are often striking, yet the fundamental similarities are so deep that we class all men in one category. In brief, in the world of material phenomena we classify the scope of an object by the

basic properties which endow it. The study of one snowflake will reveal the principle characteristics of all, -- and the study of the anatomy of one man will reveal the chief principles which govern the anatomy of all men. We express our knowledge of a group by describing the fundamental properties which reveal themselves in the individual unit.

Universality in Experience. The world of human experience, though more intangible than the objects of the material universe, does not escape the rule of this principle. Here, too, we find that no two experiences ever coincide exactly. However similar they may appear, a close examination will reveal them distinguished by definite differences. And often, however diverse they may seem to the superficial eye, they are welded by deep basic properties inherent in both. The experience of one individual with hunger is essentially the same as that of all individuals. The hunger experiences of many men may enlarge the variety of detail, but throughout the difference of detail, the nature of the experience remains essentially the same. This holds true as well for the inner world of experience such as fear and hate, hope and yearning. The variety of causes and the variety of circumstances lend to each experience its own individual difference of form and color. But that property which constitutes the basic element in each experience is essentially the same for all of its own kind.

Universality in Art. What is true in the world of experience we find present as well in the realm of art. The universality of a work of art must be measured by the extent in which it embraces fundamental properties rooted in human nature. It is in the presence of these fundamental characteristics in a work of art that we measure the narrowness or breadth of its appeal to the hearts of all generations.

Shakespeare's Henry VI, Part I, contains a striking example involving this principle of universality. The narrative describes the English wars in France. Lord Talbot, commander of the English troops, had long been the scourge of the French. For years English armies under his command had terrorized the French and devastated French territory. Then on one occasion a French force greatly superior in numbers to his own surrounded him and his men. Unable to retreat Lord Talbot awaited the onslaught of the enemy. He scorned capture and determined to die fighting. At this critical moment, Lord Talbot's son, ignorant of his father's desperate position, rode into the English camp. Consternation seized the older man at sight of his only son. Instantly he explained his hopeless plight and urged his son to flee, and live to avenge the death of his father. The son, however, turned a deaf ear to his father's pleadings and determined to die together with his father. With the rash pride of youth he imagined that the act of deserting his father in this desperate situation would be branded as cowardly by the world in which he moved.

Soon the French, surrounding the English force, began to attack, and this ended all chance of escape. Lord Talbot led on his men with the courage of a lion. Young Talbot struck into the thick of the fray like a young lion. In the engagement Talbot was wounded and carried to the rear. Mortally wounded, surrounded by the clash and the din of battle, Talbot felt the darkness of death gathering in upon him. Then he turned about in anguish and cried out:

"Where is my other life? mine own is gone!"

With this cry which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Lord Talbot, he elevates this scene and its characters to the plane of the universal. Up to this point, the scene presents historical chronicle dressed out in poetic garb. As such, it does not differ materially from a thousand other battles which saw generals trapped and defeated. It stands as one fact to be conned with a thousand other facts, possessing a significance localized to the two nations concerned, but hardly any beyond their narrow borders. The descendants of one nation may exult at this fall of the other, and the children of the second may bitterly mourn this defeat and fortify a heart of wrath with a vow of vengeance. It may stand as a symbol of enmity to the nations involved, but it remains crowded in its narrow corner and dies with their death, but holds out no significant message to the life and mind of man at large. But with this cry of grief which he ascribes to Lord Talbot, Shakespeare hews out a place of

significance for this battle in the temple of human thought and experience.

Most writers would have felt their duty done with merely converting this battle into poetic metre. But not so with Shakespeare. Shakespeare was not satisfied with performing the function of mere recorder of historical facts. He was made of the stuff from which mortal creators are fashioned. He borrowed his materials from the facts of life, but he imparted to them the soul which inspired his own being. When Lord Talbot, dying, breaks forth in this immortal speech, the fulness of the battle and all the characters therein sink to a position of secondary importance. They assume the necessary but auxiliary position taken by figures in a great painting. The figures are there not for their own sake, but for the primary purpose of giving utterance to a universal feeling which resides in the heart of humanity. The battle recedes then to the periphery of the mind. Hate is forgotten, and the din of battle is drowned out by this basic emotion old as thinking man, yet ever new and profound in each generation. In that moment of dying anguish, Lord Talbot captured a truth which he may have uttered before as children utter words of wisdom they do not fully comprehend. Now it struck him in all its fulness. Now that his life was ebbing away, and his son was surrounded by a ring of steel thirsting for his blood, he was gripped in the tide of the truth that man is immortal in his child. His child is his other life, and through his

child man secures his earthly immortality.

Up to this point Lord Talbot is primarily a soldier, to be hated and feared or extolled and admired by the multitude of men. The man within him is hidden by the accidental circumstance of the soldier's uniform. As long as this accidental circumstance overwhelms the universal quality within him, Lord Talbot carries no significance to the mind of man. Then he finds significance only as a fact in a chronicle. But when he cries out in despair, "Where is my other life? mine own is gone!" the accidental circumstance falls away, and the true Lord Talbot stands forth. Not the soldier speaks, but the man. In this moment, Shakespeare makes him the mouthpiece of humanity. He speaks for himself out of his own experience, but the truth he utters casts its message into the heart of every man, every nation, every race, every movement that lives or struggles to live upon earth.

Such utterance marks a universalistic element in art.

Shakespeare was a master of words. But this mastery over words alone would not have served to raise him among the immortals in world literature. Besides this Shakespeare possessed the power to an extraordinary degree of fusing himself with the chronicle he adapted and subjecting the chronicle to the expression of universal truth. Great art demands beauty of execution, but more than this beauty of conception.

Before concluding, it is necessary to point out two circumstances which must not be allowed to influence judgment on the universality of experience or artistic expression.

In passing judgment on a work of art, we must subordinate the condition out of which it grows, the scene which forms the background, to the essential thought which it strives to express. Great truth springs forth from many conditions -- in the midst of the carnage of war and the struggles of peace. A vision of truth may spring into the human soul out of countless circumstances. To one truth may come from striving to subdue his own nature; to another it may appear out of striving to preserve the life of his nation. To one truth may be born out of serene faith in divinity; another may attain to great truth out of a condition of melancholy skepticism. But whatever its nature, the condition out of which truth evolves permeates the art which attempts to express it. Prejudice against the condition must not blind the eyes to the truth or the art which has evolved therefrom. The man who hates war must not be so prejudiced as to condemn a work of art expressing profound truth merely because it grew out of, and is permeated with, the condition of war. Another may oppose bitterly nationalism, but he would be wrong to condemn a work of art chiefly on the ground that the spirit of nationalism prompted its creation.

Judgment on a work of art is compounded of many elements. But the universality of expression in the work must be the essential criterion by which to measure its rank in the realm of art.

III

Tanna debe Eliyahu teems with universal poetic utterances. Here are presented some characteristic ones with annotations explaining the principle of their universality.

אמר לי: רבי, שני דברים יש בלבי,
ואני אזהבן אהבה גדולה. -- חורה וישראל,
אבל איני יודע איזה מהן קודם.
אמרת לי: דרכן של בני אדם שאומרים
חורה קדומה לכל, שנאמר, ה' קנני ראשית
דרכו (משלי ה' כ"ב). אבל הייתי אומר,
ישראל קדושים קדומים לכל, שנאמר, קודש
ישראל לה' ראשית תבואתו (ירמיה ב' ג')

Thus did our author affirm the declaration basic in Jewish thought that the creator stands above his creation. However sacred and noble the creation may be, its creator is more noble and sacred. The creator encompasses his creation and is thus greater than it. A work may reveal the essential spirit of its creator, but it can never replace the mind that formed it. The true creator is constantly active and ever revealing new reflections of the spirit which moves him. No creator can ever exhaust the breath of creation within him. Thus does it follow that if, at a given instant, we should collect the accomplishments of a creative mind, the totality of accomplishments can never equal the fulness of the creative mind that formed them.

Torah is sacred to the Jew. It is the reflection of his soul -- his yearnings and his struggles, his victories and his defeats. But however beautiful the reflection, however much of a necessity and a delight, in the end the reflection remains a reflection. The substance of which it is compounded is a substance of its own, and not the flesh of the original. The reflection lives a life of its own; it partakes of a resemblance to the life it reflects. But it is only a resemblance. The fulness of the life of the original can never be fully revealed by any reflection.

Israel is greater than its Torah, for at every instant the breath of Israel breathes forth new Torah.

This is true not only of Israel, but of every nation. The spirit which moves a nation is greater than the accomplishments which it brings forth in its lifetime. True, a great work once conceived and brought forth exerts its measure of influence on the life of the nation; and not only on the life of that nation, but also on the life of other nations as well. In this respect the projection of nation's soul exists independently of the nation that gave it birth. But the existence of its art, its Torah, cannot take precedence over the existence of the nation. The creation may influence, but the creator, though influenced, continues to create afresh.

Man is greater than his works. The creative spirit that

resides within man contains an unbounded energy to create eternally. His mortal element puts bounds to the period of his creativity. But God, knowing no death, is creative eternally.

This principle which grows out of our author's opinion finds support not only in the life of man, but, also, in the nature of God. God, Jewish belief affirms, created the universe. The universe breathes with the spirit of God, but the breath of the universe is not coextensive with the spirit of its Creator. However great the creation of the universe, God, the Creator, is greater. His spirit is not confined within the limits of His creation.

To conclude, the statement above quoted in our midrash affirms an opinion concerning a definite problem in the life of Israel. The principle on which it is based holds true in the life of every man, every group which desires to perpetuate its existence as a living force. It is true of God, eternally creative.

This is a universalistic element.

אהבה אדם למקום מגוריו - אלא אהבה חסודה סין
התורה ומלכות שמים נצודה. (סא"ר עמוד 140)

Here our Midrash affirms that not only love for Israel but also love for God takes precedence over love for the Torah.

The love for the Torah is a noble thing, but such a love may degenerate or petrify when it is not anticipated by the love for God. When admiration for his past achievements surpasses his desire to reach out for still greater achievements, man decays. This is a symptom of decline in his spiritual energies. When his past achievements loom larger in his eyes than the fulness of his soul, man loses faith in his soul, he no longer trusts its native promptings and yearnings and hardens in his spiritual life.

This is true not only of the individual. It finds expression in the life of nations and of the race of mankind as a whole. When a nation begins to console itself with dreams of a golden age in the past alone, and greets with disdain the striving of living men for a still greater golden age in the present or future, that nation is marked with the doom of decline and ultimate disappearance. It gilds the past with luminous glory, but darkens the hope for the future. It meets the motion of aspiring life with an ironic or despairing gesture. Such a gesture is not without its nobility. But it contains a worm which ultimately consumes the substance of its life. Such a nation drinks from the

wells of past achievements, but it steels its heart to the beckonings of the soul that lives in the present, and yearns toward the future. For a time such a nation may live on the breath of life that sweeps from the past, but in the end it must disappear.

Racial or national cultures often come to such a pass. Cultures like nations often die for lack of love for God above love for Torah -- lack of yearning to labor for accomplishments in the future exceeding those in the past.

In every age the Jew, too, like other nations, was attacked by this dread disease. But in every age men arose in Israel who gilded his vision of the future in brighter colors than were painted his accomplishments of the past. These men saved Israel from national death.

This utterance of our author speaks for all men, both for the individual and the group. Such utterance is universal in its scope.

יאבדו ישראל מן העולם וחאבד תורתן מן
העולם. (סא"ר, פרק י"ט, עמוד 112)

The author of our Midrash has affirmed that the creator is greater than his creation. (Page 20). The creation contains instances projected from the fulness of the creator. It is through these projections that we must interpret and build up our conception of the creator's inner life. But this penetration into and understanding of the life of the creator from his creation is an arduous labor. It demands refined sensibilities, keen perception, and delicate apprehension of the slightest vibration in the projections of the creator. It demands a heart utterly subjected to the soul that streams in the works of the creator. A casual perusal of the creative labors is not sufficient to penetrate to the heart of the spirit that permeates them. Neither will the aloof laborious experimental attitude of the scholar achieve this purpose.

Then, too, all men are not endowed in the same proportion with the capacities to penetrate deeply into the soul of the creator through his works. Neither are all men equally desirous of digging into the spirit that quickens the motion of creative works. Some men possess limited powers. They cannot penetrate below a superficial layer. They never see what lies imbedded deeper than the surface configuration. On the other hand, we find men who possess powers of perception and emotion sharpened to a fine edge, but they submit their souls to the sway of diverse spirits. There is the

pure ascetic, and the pure epicurean; there is one whose desire reaches out for power above all, and another whose spirit hungers for the golden mean. Each sights along the slant of the universe from a different angle, and subdues his soul to that vision of life which his spirit compels him to seek out. Thus the view of life which each culls from objects of creation differs from the others. One is attracted to that which repels the other, and rarely does it occur that all draw forth a similar interpretation from the same creative labor.

One sees a hand of righteousness governing the motion of the universe; another denies the presence of a controlling hand in the affairs of the world. One beholds the world and all that is therein mastered by the power of a mad fiend; still another views the world in the grip of a living force which itself cannot control the products of its own creation; and yet another is indifferent altogether to the problem of a universe in the control of a single power. Each one endeavors to order his life in harmony with his own world-view, strives to perpetuate its existence, and struggles bitterly against any attempt to suppress his view of life or his way of life.

Each one of such men hunts through the works of creation, both human and divine, to seek out the nourishment good for his own spirit. From the world of nature and the world of art each man culls out that part from the whole which will sustain

his spirit. Sometimes this is accomplished by direct consumption,;but more often the borrowed substance cannot be swallowed in its original nature, but each one must submit it to a process of change which will fit it for assimilation to his own spirit.

If we take such a collective creative work as the Hebrew Bible, we shall find that to the artist it derives value chiefly for its literary power. The scholar values the Bible as a source for scholastic labors. To the pious it is the book of formal devotion stamped with the approval of the tradition of centuries. Each one draws from Biblical literature that which will strengthen and feed his own spirit. In the process each one often changes the essence of the product greatly so that the authors, were they living, would bitterly resent it. But the authors are dead. Their voices are still. They cannot defend the products of their labors from the violence done upon them.

Thus we may affirm that the ideas of the creator exist in their purity only as long as the creator himself exists. He feels the fulness of his ideas only as the originator can feel them, and while he lives they live within him unstained. But once he dies, his works remain behind him like an echo of a once living voice. The fulness of his Torah, resident with him alone, dissipates with his death.

All this which we have affirmed of individuals holds likewise with groups. Each group creates in its own spirit,

and each group understands its spirit in an intimate way which can never completely be fathomed by other groups. Groups likewise demand sustenance for their own spirit, and borrow from the creations of other groups. Sometimes one group will borrow from another in such a way as to enrich its own spirit and yet keep intact, in essence, the spirit of the work which it consumed for its own purpose. On the other hand, it happens more often that in consuming the creations of others, the borrower subjects the borrowed creation to a process of assimilation which altogether destroys its essential spirit.

As an example of this more common form of borrowing, we may take the Christological interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. To strengthen its own existence, Christianity was forced to adopt the Hebrew Bible along with its own Greek Scriptures. But in the process of consuming it often completely nullified the essential spirit of the original. As one instance we may take the Christian interpretation of the Song of Songs. Songs originally expressing passionate love, the Song of Songs was later interpreted by the Rabbis as a love dialogue between God and the Congregation of Israel. The Rabbis did not violate the spirit of the original theme within these songs. They merely added one tier above another. They made a new interpretation to an old song. They did not deny the beauty nor the pleasures of passionate love. Like true poets they attempted to express spiritual beauty difficult of sense perception by means of sense perceptions capable of lifting

man into a rapturous state. Thus they guarded the spirit of the original, but attempted to create a new interpretation and enrich the old form with new meaning.

When the Catholic Church took over the Bible and adapted the Song of Songs to its own purpose as a love dialogue between Jesus and the Church, it completely violated the spirit of the original. It charged passionate love with being essentially degrading and defiling, yet it adopted the symbols of passionate love to express the deepest, and to it, the most sacred feeling of spiritual exaltation. It demolished the spirit of the original. This may have been its privilege. But it betrayed a fearful incongruity by utilizing the images of the temple it demolished for worship at its own shrine.

This is an instance of what often happens when one group borrows from the works created by another. It contorts the spirit of that which it borrows, and unless the creator of that work lives to testify in his own life to the true character of his creation, his creation, though it exert influence, may be counted lost to its essential spirit.

The Jew, throughout his history, has envisaged the universe from the slant of his own vision. This view has colored his perspective of life. This view he has embodied in his creations. Now were the Jew to disappear from the face of the earth, his creations would remain behind, but only as an echo, a reflection. Each individual, each nation, each religion might borrow from this reflection, but the fulness

of the original Torah imbedded in the Jewish soul would no longer exist among the living, -- ever remolding and reshaping his patterns with the roll of new ages, adding pattern to pattern, never ceasing for an instant to express his own view of life in new forms which every age creates for itself.

As long as the heart beats, man exists as an unfathomed entity. He sends forth streams of influence, but he is more than the totality of his influences. When the heart ceases to beat, that entity ceases to exist in its own dimensions, but continues a shadowy existence in the memories of those who come within the stream of his influences.

This is true not only of the Jew, but likewise of every individual, every nation, every movement.

Utterance such as this from our Midrash is universalistic in its scope.

אין הקב"ה נעתר לנדוּלִים עד שיִתְפַּלְלוּ קטנים
החלה. (סא"ר, פרק ה, עמוד ס"ד)

We often find in life that great men yearn for the realization of some dream which has become the goal of their aspiration. To realize this dream in life they pray and strive all the days of their life. But the fulfillment of great dreams is usually bound up not only with the lives of great men, but also with the lives of the multitude of lesser men. To effect the hopes of their prayers, these great men must win the support of the masses of men. Until the multitude is won over to dream the dream of its great men, the latter can rarely hope to behold their dream actualized. But once the multitude is won, and begins to pray together with its men of vision, then the prayers of the latter may be said to have been answered.

This is true with movements and endeavors the world over. As such, this poetic statement constitutes a universalistic element.

אין דברי חורו נבלעין, אלא בכי שהוא
ע"ף להם. (סא"ז, י"ב, ע' קצ"ו)

The true artist in any field of endeavor is he who yearns to labor in his field, and is unhappy when circumstances prevent him from sinking his strength in his work. He not only masters the subject with which he deals; he absorbs the spirit which permeates his subject. It is doubtful whether contributions of great originality are ever effected except by men who yearn to labor ceaselessly in the field of endeavor they have made Torah to themselves.

This is a universalistic element.

אמר (משה) לפניו: רבוננו של עולם, מי שקרא
ושנה הרבה ומי שקרא ושנה קימעה -- יהו
מאור פניהם שוין במאור פנים לעולם הנא? -
אמר לו: לא, כל אחד ואחד לפי דרכו.
(סא"ז, פ' י"ב, ע' קצ"ד)

The degree of spiritual state in the world of the future is based not on grace (as used in Christian sense), but on the degree of individual effort exerted for self-elevation and development. It lies not in a power outside, but in a power within the individual. Individuals differ in respect of striving to a higher spiritual state. The ultimate reward is according to the yearning and the striving.

What is true with individuals is true likewise in the life of nations and movements. The degree of development cannot be said to be equal among all. There are higher and lower degrees of spiritual development, all in accordance with

the desire and the groping to attain to high spiritual state.

This is a universal statement which men of deep feeling perceive.

The following statement, though differing in manner of expression, is allied in principle with the one quoted above:

עושה אדם שתיים שלש טובות, מוסרין
לו מלאך אחד לשומרו... קרא אדם תורה
נביאים וכחוכים, מוסרין לו מלאכים שנים
לשומרו... אבל קרא אדם תורה נביאים וכחוכים
ושנה משנה מדרש הלכות ואגדות ושימש תלמיד.
חכמים -- הקב"ה משמרו בעצמו. (סא"ר ע קנ"ה)

כשנתן הקב"ה תורה לישראל, לא נחנה
להן אלא כחטים להוציא מהן סלת וכפשתן להוציא
ממנו בוגד. (סא"ו, ע קע"ב)

This is the principle which controls the proper interpretation of law and art. Great legal documents form the basis for centuries of lawmaking by means of proper interpretation.

Great art expresses principles at work in the life of the unit. The function of interpretation is to unfold this principle and reveal the presence of its spirit throughout life. Without this principle of interpretation, no great document or work of art would outlive its immediate age and environment. Each age would be forced to create all things anew and drop the old altogether.

This is a universalistic element of deep significance.

The following statements differ in mode of expression

from this one above, but they lead to the same conclusion:

הרבה דברים יש לנו וחסורין הן,
ולא צרך הכתוב לאמר, לפיכך הסילן על
ישראל. אמר: הן יבדילו אותן כדי להרבות
את שכלן. (סא"ר, פ"ט, ע"ז, ע"ע"ב)

למה דברי תורה דומין: בדרך שנותנין
עור לאדם; מעבדו, ממחקו, ומסתחו, ומביאו
לידי מלאכה יפיפיה. (סא"ר פ"ג ע"ט"ז)

לא חרב עולם אלא מפני פשעה של תורה...
פשעה של תורה... שקולה כנגד כל העבירות
שנעולם. (סא"ר ע"קס"ח)

The heart that senses subtly will feel at once in this statement a great universal truth. The arrival at the truth depends in this instance on the interpretation which is placed on the word Torah as used in this text.

A careful examination will reveal that here Torah is not used as cognomen for any individual commandments nor for the sum total of commandments. Here it rather describes a principle of conduct which impells a man to exalted action. A man -- or a nation -- who vows to subdue his life to the rule of such a principle may sin occasionally. He may fall away from his principle in moments of ignorance, weariness, or despair. But it is not such sins which threaten the world with destruction.

That state of mind which abandons altogether the principle of exalted action as the chief aim in human life -- this it is which constitutes the great sin. Such defection leads the way to every sin which the human mind can imagine and execute, and finally leads to utter degradation and ruin.

כל מצוות שעושה אדם בעולם הזה
 אין בהם כח להאיר אלא כאור הנר בלבד.
 אבל תורה מאירה מסוף העולם ועד סופו.
 (סא"ר פ' ג', ע' ט"ז)

As in the previous statement, here, too, "Torah" is used as a principle or spirit which governs the actions of a man.

Though a man perform all the mizvot he might still fall far short of fulfilling the whole Torah. Torah is more than the totality of mizvot. Mizvot imply action -- Torah, the spirit with which the action is performed. The performance of the mizvah may induce greater or less transfiguration of the soul, according to the spirit of love, reverence, or understanding with which it is performed.

This principle is true throughout life. The degree of spiritual exaltation which accompanies the performance of a mizvah, a worthy action, is dependent on the degree of Torah with which the action is carried out.

אשריהם ישראל, בזמן שעסקין בתורה
 וגם לוח חסדים, יצרן מסור בידן ולא הם
 ביד יצרן. (סא"ר פ' ג', ע' קס"ז)

The universality of this statement is self-evident. Self-motivating action in a given field of endeavor usually strengthens the will and the desire for such action. Exercise in exalted action fortifies the will to pursue the course of such action. The reverse is also true.

יש בו באדם דברי תורה, יפרנס
לאחריו כדי שתרבה חכמתו בידו...
אבל יש בו באדם דברי תורה ואין ספרוסה
לאחריו, לסוף שהכמתו סתמעת בידו, ואין
מוסיפין לו עליה. (סא"ר פ"ב כ"ו, ע' קל"ז)

This thought is common in literature, but none the less universalistic. He who teaches or expounds adds to his learning from the attempt to teach others. Limiting knowledge to one's-self limits the breadth of such knowledge.

הקצ"ה... ירד משמי השמים... ושכן
בניהם של ישראל בשביל תורה שעשו.
(סא"ר פ"ב כ"ו, ע' קל"ז)

Our author uses the phrase תורה אשה a number of times in his work. Used in this sense, Torah implies not merely a code of abstract ethical doctrines, but includes also the idea of performance. Used in this manner, it embraces the connotations of both "midrash" and "maaseh".

God is a spiritual attribute which resides in the quality and character of performance. The descent of God among men is not occasioned by means of supernatural miracles. Each man possesses the power to evoke the presence of God by the spiritual quality of his conduct.

This is a universal statement imbued with deep mystic properties.

דברי חזרה מקוה סהרה הן לישראל בכל
מקומות מושבותיהם. (טא"ר פ"ח, ע ק"ה)

Nowhere does our author deride ceremony, but he realizes nevertheless that the nobility of spirit which accompanies any action alone contains the power to purify the soul.

This applies to all action among all people, and thus this statement assumes universality.

חביאני הסלך חדריו" (שה"ש א' ד') --
כשם שיש להקב"ה חדר חדרים בחורחו
כן יש להן לחסידים חכמים לכל אחד ואחד
חדר חדרים בחורחו....

The life of man includes manifold activities, -- the economic world in which he earns his sustenance, the world of friends, his wife, his children, his books, his deepest strivings. Out of them all there is usually an inner chamber of chambers which confines the most precious interest of his life. To this chamber he subdues every other.

This inner chamber affords him the fullest pleasure and happiness in the span of his life, and it is into this inner chamber that he flees when sorrows overtake him. Thereunto he retreats when he is afflicted in soul; the spirit which permeates this chamber comforts and consoles him in moments of tribulation.

God, too, has an inner sanctuary within the Torah. This affirmation would commit our author to the principle that not all divisions of the Torah are equal in sanctity before God. This is a statement of great significance in all human life.

על שהרבי'י אה בוי אדם כעופות
השמים וכדני הים, ואיון עושין לי רצוני
בחורה, לכן הסתרתי פני סהם. (סא"ר כ' י"ב)

The thought described here is couched in mystic form.

Divinity is present within man, but potentially only.

God reveals Himself to man only then when man strives to embody the spirit of God. The striving releases the divinity within him into a living creative force.

Where there is no striving toward divinity, the divinity within man sinks into a dormant state, and God "hides His Face from man."

כל זמן שבני אדם סבטלין סן התורה
מבקש הקב"ה להחריב את כל העולם. (סא"ר כ' י"א)

Torah here stands for those principles which enable mankind to progress. (See Page 34).

There are ages of progress when mankind struggles to live by the principles of Torah. There are periods, on the other hand, when men abandon these principles of noble action, and guide their lives by them no more. At such times decay sets in and men recede into degeneracy. It seems then that an end must come to human progress, and the world must sink into ruin.

And ruined it would be were it not that men, at a given point, recoil from the state of decay and struggle to return to Torah.

This describes the rise and fall of cultures. This statement above expresses a principle of wide human application.

האגדות... מקורשין את שמו [של הקב"ה]
הנדול... (סא"ר פב"ע י"א)

Folklore expresses the soul of a people more deeply and intimately than any other form of literature. It rises from the deepest chamber of the people's soul. He who desires, then, to know the world outlook of a people must have recourse primarily to its folklore. From time to time great individuals may arise in a nation who give expression to sublime teachings. These teachings may express the essential spirit of the people or they may not. The instrument by which we measure whether or no the utterances of individuals give expression to the will of the people is the folklore of the people. If his utterances express the spirit resident in the folklore of his people, he speaks for the people. If not, he speaks as an individual. What he says may, or may not, be noble, but he speaks for himself, or at most for a superficial group within the body of the people.

The chief characteristic of Israel's folklore, the author of our midrash maintains, is the sanctification of God.

The principle indwelling within this midrash quoted here applies to every nation and every religious group, and every race.

אין לו מנוחה להקב"ה, אלא עם עושי
חורה בלבד. (סא"ר עמוד ד')

It is noteworthy to remark that this statement says עושי חורה which includes both learning and action, both knowledge of the good and execution thereof.

The spirit of divinity that resides in human breast can never find rest nor be at ease except in that man who has attained to both knowledge of the good and execution thereof. There are rare moments in human life when men feel this divine ease inhabiting them.

This is a poetic utterance of rare quality.

אפילו עיר קטנה שבישראל ויש בה
חורה - טובה לפני הקב"ה יותר משטרון
ואין בה חורה. (סא"ר פ' י"ח, ע' צ"ט)

Truth cannot be determined by the acclaim of numbers, but rather by its own inherent properties. If one man stands against the judgment of the world, his judgment may be proven false and that of the world true, -- but not by reason of the numbers that stand opposed to him. When the minority is in possession of the truth, this minority, however small it may be, is more important to the welfare of humanity than however great a majority which is false.

To the world today, the life of Pasteur is more important than the lives of all who opposed his discoveries which flooded the world with truth.

This is a universalistic statement not difficult of comprehension.

יש בו באדם דברי תורה, ויסורין
באין עליו, לבו מתיישב עליו. --
אין בו באדם דברי תורה, ויסורין
באין עליו, לבו מתמרמר עליו. (סא"ר ל"ו קל"ו)

In this striking statement, **דברי תורה** appears to denote a view of the world governed in righteousness. Such a view enables a man to accept the afflictions of life with faith and trust, and aids in bringing about that state of resignation which may be mournful, but peaceful, too, at its core. The afflicted can summon up an explanation for his affliction, and this power of explanation, or justification, it is above all that induces a state of mind governed by the spirit of resignation.

We find such a state of resignation to affliction resident with those who have acquired a rounded view of life and the universe among whatever people or religion. He who has acquired a principle by which to explain the vicissitudes of life has acquired the power to comfort his bruised heart in times of affliction. This ability to explain circumstances of misfortune it is which enables man to strengthen his soul with resignation. The man who has not attained to a rounded view of life cannot satisfactorily explain the affliction which overtakes him, and therefore becomes hard and bitter.

This principle of resignation is true likewise in the life of a nation. A nation which has developed a rounded view of life can explain to itself its misfortunes and thus take comfort and strength. The life of the nation is imperilled when confusion shatters its view of life. Then it can no longer

explain misfortunes which strike at the root of its being. It becomes hard, bitter, cynical in spirit and, if it does not recover a view of life which will enable it to explain, or justify, its misfortunes satisfactorily, it sinks into apathy and meets with ultimate disappearance.

This principle is true in the life of all movements as well as nations and individuals. It covers mankind with its universality.

אין ישראל נואלין אלא סחוך הצער
ולא סחוך השעבוד, לא סחוך הטלטול ולא
סחוך הטרור ולא סחוך הדחק, לא סחוך שאין
להם סיונות, - אלא סחוך עשרה בני אדם
שהן זה אצל זה, והיה אחד מהן קורא לחבירו,
ואין קולו נשמע. (סא"ו, י"ד ע' קצ"ו-ז)

This is a statement of great beauty.

To the hasty, superficial eye, the message here seems to be that which the average preacher constantly professes from the pulpit in pious and platitudinous language: that suffering is good for humanity. (Ergo; Israel is delivered through suffering). The popular interpretation of suffering in this sense usually has in mind physical pain or affliction occasioned by external circumstances. External affliction, it was believed, purified the soul. From this belief grew up the multitude of flagellations which men afflicted themselves with, believing that thereby they were redeeming the soul and assuring purity to their spiritual life. If our author meant to express this view he would have stated a commonplace which would not have been worthy of comment.

The question arises, What did our author mean by צער? Did he mean to imply physical punishment? In Hebrew the word which denotes physical punishment is 'לי. If he meant to imply affliction administered from without by external agents, he would have found a much better word in יסורים. He uses neither 'לי nor יסורים, but צער. The connotation of צער is mental and spiritual more than physical. A man who grapples in the throes of spiritual struggle would certainly suffer צער, but not necessarily 'לי. Many men who pass through periods of spiritual anguish may become broken physically and suffer physical pains, but in such a case the first brings about the second, and not the second the first.

That our author felt that his readers might mistake him is proved by his careful attempt to define צער by stipulating what it does not denote. By צער he did not denote טענות

nor lack of sustenance, all of them afflictions that strike primarily at the body. Having defined צער by stipulating that it is not physical punishment or affliction, our author proceeds to explain the meaning of צער in a positive manner. מחוך עשרה בני אדם שהן זה אצל זה

וזה אצל קורא לחבריו ואין קולו נשמע.

In the light of this explanation, צער denotes that state of spiritual anguish which overcomes a man who is possessed of a message and strives to elicit understanding for his message from those about him, but cannot break through the iron barrier that separates the minds of men from intimate communion with one another.

Affliction endured for the sake of no ideal is degrading and usually harmful to the soul of man. Endured for the sake of an ideal, affliction may often ennoble. The struggle for the sake of the ideal purifies the soul of man; the affliction in itself does neither purify nor elevate.

To raise one's voice and proclaim a message which the world can seldom understand is disheartening. To suffer slavery, exile, hunger for the sake of such a message may often strike even the brave heart with despair. Yet no group can exist except by living and proclaiming its message. This may bring it anguish, but this anguish of soul which it is willing to endure marks the desire of the people to live. When weariness overtakes the group, and it rebels against the burden of its anguish, it deserts the message which is the breath of its life -- and disappears.

This principle stated above in our midrash is at work in both the life of the individual and society. Its universality is clearly marked.

העטופים ברעב בראש כל חוצות -
(איכה ב') -- אין חוצות אלא בתי מדרשות...
אזכה שעה היה הקב"ה סניס יונן ואזכה זאין
כל ברייה מכיר בו. (סא"ר פכ"א ע קט"ו)

דבק לשון יונק אל חבו בצמא" (איכה ד' ד') -
באזכה שעה בקש [הקב"ה] להחריב את כל העולם
כולו, ולא כל העולם כולו בלבד, אלא אף כסא
הכבוד בקש להפכו באזכה שעה. (סא"ר ל"ק נ"ג-א)

The destruction of Jerusalem was bemoaned by the Jew of past generations not primarily for the physical blow thus dealt the people Israel. The land was not valued for its own sake. It was beloved because it proved the means to build up a life in the pattern of Israel's own spirit. When, therefore, exile struck them with fatal blow, they wailed for the spirit that was pining away for lack of a proper environment in which to labor and create. The destruction of the land struck at the spiritual creativity of Israel. The foundation was destroyed which upheld the structure of Jewish life. The misery which this entailed sapped the spiritual strength of the nation.

There are certain blows in life which strike primarily at the physical well being of man, but by undermining his physical state endanger and undermine his spiritual strength. To a man whose life is grounded primarily in the realm of spiritual endeavor, such blows shatter his universe. The channel is destroyed through which he may attain his purposes in the matters of the mind, and he suffers anguish which none except him can feel and understand in their fulness. The faith of such a man totters on the verge of destruction. The agony he suffers

turns his heart against the world, the forces of which have conspired to deal him a crushing blow, and he rises up in bitterness even against the spiritual powers within him which till now have filled his life with joy and happiness.

Such a man was Beethoven. Here was a man whose life was altogether steeped in music. Without music the world was naught to him, life was a weary burden; with it, life was a song of glory. At the age of thirty this man, to whom life was altogether a spiritual adventure, was struck with deafness. Deafness of all blows! The whole structure of music was erected on the foundation of the auditory sense, and this foundation crumbled. To him the senses were important for the insight they afforded into an invisible world of spiritual creation. And that sense which afforded the central support to music was suddenly withdrawn. That channel suddenly shrunk and wasted away to nothingness. Then began a mighty struggle in the breast of Beethoven. Darkness and bitterness overwhelmed him, -- rage against the forces of the universe and the spirit of divinity within him.

Like the struggle of the Jewish people, Beethoven, the man, too, grappled with the woe that encompassed him.

Such a blow shatters the man, or the nation, of frail inner strength. The Jacobs among men wrestle with the woe, conquer it, and come forth from the battle, wounded and beaten, but essentially stronger than before.

The fate described in excerpts from our midrash above overtake men the world over. And the reaction of despair is

essentially the same among all of them. Some are completely demolished, others turn such a defeat into victory. But in all the voice of divinity weeps, and rage against the order of the universe sweeps over them.

This statements expressed in poetic language are universal.

כל הנושא פנים לסובבה זוכה ומקבל פני
שכינה. (סא"ר ג' ע' ט"ז)

There are two ways in which man lift up their faces to the good. There is the individual whose native temperament is essentially hopeful. The substance of his nature is molded into a pattern of natural joy, peace, and serenity. To such individuals great affliction may come, yet neither affliction nor agony are able to sour or embitter the natural sweetness that resides within their souls. And because of this serene and hopeful texture of their souls, the light of godliness ever rests upon and illumines their features. A divine serenity glows within their eyes, and these attributes lend a divinity of poise to the motion of their lives which men with embittered souls can never acquire.

Such is one type of man which merits "the gladness that transfigures the face of man". There is another type of soul altogether different in the substance of its texture from the first, yet it, too, merits that gladness which transfigures the face of man. This other soul feels the pangs of life keenly. Every shock, every blow shatters the walls of its

defense and floods the inner chambers of its soul with streams of bitterness. To such a soul life is like a weary dream. It beholds the failures of life, and the agony which such failures bring, too clearly to turn away its eyes in serenity. The pangs which permeate every channel of life strike against its sensitive tissues, until the soul throbs with the fulness of "weltschmerz". But this type of soul does not become sour with the bitterness that fills it. It does not possess the tearless serenity of the first, but it possesses a sweetness of its own, a sweetness that is sweetened with tears. It weeps over the pain that floods the avenues of life, and the tears of its weeping sweeten its bitterness. This gentle weeping fills it with a serenity of its own, and the glow of the Shechinah lights up its features, too, with the light of godliness.

Great souls derive from these two types. One soul feels the presence of divinity so intimately that afflictions cannot sour it. The other soul feels the bitterness of the affliction above all, but the greatness of its anguish draws unto its being a vision of a world which has overcome such anguish. Because of this vision within its soul it weeps over the present state. But that inner yearning toward that state of divine serenity sweetens the texture of its spirit. Essentially, therefore, both lift up their faces to the vision of goodness, and thus both become receptive to the glow of the Shechinah.

The greatest of art usually possesses either of these types of gladness. Rare is it that art can reach the heights of the greatest which possesses neither of these characteristics. Dreiser, the American novelist, may be taken as a case in point. His first work, "Sister Carrie," has been called by most critics his greatest work. This work belongs in the second category as explained above. In Sister Carrie there is the sound of gentle weeping and the color of a great vision, which other novels by this author lack in sufficient quantity. His other works are marked by strength, but they lack this other requisite residing in his first.

A survey of the greatest world's literature will find them divided between these two categories.

The writer of this paper has interpreted the declaration from our midrash given above more liberally than other excerpts. That it is a striking piece of poetry must be admitted. The principle that it enunciates is profound. The writer has interpreted it in the light of his own thinking.

NOTES

- I. Jacob Mann, "Changes in the Divine Service of the Synagogue Due to Religious Persecutions," in Hebrew Union College Annual, Cincinnati, 1927, page 303.
- II. *ibid.*
- III. *ibid.*, p. 306, note 139.
- IV. *ibid.* p. 249, note 10
- V. "Seder Eliyahu Rabba and Seder Eliyahu Zutta" (Tanna debe Eliyahu), ed. by Friedman (Vienna Seder Eliyahu Rabba, Ch. 16, and Seder Eliyahu Zutta, Ch. 2.
- VI. *ibid.* Introduction, pp. 93-98.
- VII. Jacob Mann, Hebrew Union College Annual, p. 309
- VIII. Friedman, Intro., pp. 77-83.
- IX. *ibid.* p. 77.
- X. *ibid.* Seder Eliyahu Rabba, Ch. 1, pp. 5-6.
- XI. *ibid.* Ch. 20, p. 114.
- XII. *ibid.* Intro. p. 82
- XIII. Jacob Mann, H. U. C. Annual, pp. 304, 5.
- XIV. *ibid.* p. 305.
- XV. Ketubot, 106a, Tr. from Jewish Encyclopedia, last volume, Art. under Tanna debe Eliyahu.
- XVI. Jacob Mann, *ibid.* p. 305.
- XVII. *ibid.* p. 307.
- XVIII. *ibid.*

Chapter III

Some Universalistic Elements in
Tanna Debe Eliyahu

Chapter III

In discussing the universalistic elements in Tanna debe Eliyahu from an objective point of view, it must be stated that not all the elements in this midrashic book which could be included under such a title can be quoted here. We shall proceed, however, to make a study of the most salient universalistic elements expressed in Tanna debe Eliyahu. These elements, clear and certain in their expression, will give us the basic view with which the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu looked upon life and the world at large. From them we shall be able to conclude essentially how the author of this book looked upon the world, what he thought of the relation that exists or should exist among all the creatures that inhabit it and every living form that resides and grows therein.

In ascertaining the world-view of the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu, we must first of all turn to the God concept held by him. How does he conceive God? Especially, how does he conceive the relation of God to the universe and all that inhabits it? The answer to this question is perhaps the most important aspect of any world-view. All other angles of a world-view are essentially based upon this one. The world view of a man usually flows forth from the God idea which he holds. It is essential, therefore, to know what is the God

concept which the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu holds, for the breadth of his God concept must necessarily influence every other view of his on the moral order of the universe.

God Concept

The author of Tanna debe Eliyahu says:

חזר הקב"ה לרצות את משה. אמר לו: כלום משוא פנים
לפני בן גוי ויבין ישראל, ויבין איש ובין אשה, ובן עבד ובן
שפחה. עשה משה - שכרה בצדה. (פאיר'ס "ד"ר ע"ג"ל"א-1)
(Friedman's edition)

In this passage the midrash under our consideration represents a view of God Who stands without favoritism to any group above any other group or to any individual over another. God here is represented as a universal God Who recognizes no national boundaries. He ~~meets~~^{meets} out absolute righteousness to all nations, Israelite or gentile,-- בן גוי ובין ישראל. Israel is not favored more than any other nation. In the eyes of the author of this book, every nation, every gentile stands equally with Israel before God. None is higher, and none is lower. Because a man is born of Jewish parentage does not give him priority over others in the sight of God.

The nations of the world, Israel included, stand equal before God. But not only nations, even individuals can claim no special favoritism before the throne of God. Because a human being is born of the male sex does not give him a superiority in the eyes of God over another individual born of the female sex. No man can claim more justice for himself

before God by reason of his being male and not female. The mere accident of birth does not give one individual the right to demand superior favors over another individual -- at least before the Ultimate Throne of Justice. When we consider the time in which Tanna debe Eliyahu was undoubtedly composed, we must be forced to the admission that this decision of its author is a decision of far-reaching import even for the age in which we live today.

But not only do all stand equal before God's Throne of Justice. Every individual is rewarded according to his merit. No man can claim merit before God merely by reason of the fact that he is a Jew. No man may claim merit before God by reason of his being male and not female. No nation has a right to demand special consideration merely because it is called by a sacred name. The sanctity of deed alone must be the deciding factor. עשה מצוה -- שכרה בצדה . The man who carries out a "mitzvah" will be rewarded before God accordingly. No other external or accidental circumstance can decide the balance of Divine Justice. Jew or gentile, man or woman, -- all must submit the claim for divine reward to the scale of

one absolute standard of universal justice and righteousness. **עשה מנוה** goes back to the phrase **משאל פנים** and thus decisively affirms the absolute impartiality of God's judgment unto all mankind.

It is worthwhile to note in passing that the author of this midrash attributes this principle of divine impartiality to Moses. He believed that at the very beginning, Judaism commenced with the universal God concept of absolute justice and righteousness.

Another statement brings out the great truth of the immanence of God within man. It reads as follows:

...בין גל וּבין ישראל, בין איש ובין אשה, בין עבד בין שפחה, — הכל לסי מעשה שעושה, כך רוח הקדש שורה עליו.
(סאד, פ' י. ע' מ"ח)

It is, indeed, somewhat difficult to ascertain exactly what the author meant by **רוח הקדש**, but whatever its exact import in the mind of the author, we may be sure that **רוח הקדש** is the essential attribute of God. This attribute the author ascribes as dwelling within the heart of all men, without any distinction of race or nationality; and also, as pointed out above, this attribute is attributed to all classes of men irrespective of sex or social status. The accidental circumstance of birth or nationality alone cannot influence the degree to which the spirit of God asserts itself within the heart of man. This property, too, is determined according to the divinity of action, — **הכל לסי מעשה שעושה**. In this

concept of our author on the immanence of God dwelling within man, we undoubtedly hear an echo of the same divine truth as uttered long ago by the great literary prophets of Israel.

The great literary prophets of Israel, in their concept of God as a universal God of absolute justice and righteousness to all men, have always ascribed the attribute of peace to God, that is, that God opposes all warfare and stands for peace among the nations of the world. This truth the author of our Tanna debe Eliyahu well expresses in the following words:

בשם שהקב"ה... עושה שלום ב... מלגבי השרת שעמדין לפניו...
מתכוון ועושה שלום בשבעים לשונות שבארץ... עם כל באי עולם
ועם כל מעשי ידיו שברא געולם. (סא"ר - ל'יא, ע' קנ"ז)

This declaration of peace given here is not attributed to any group of nations, but embraces in its utterance all the nations of the world without exception. **שבעים לשונות** is a Hebrew idiomatic expression including every nation.

But this statement does not stop with peace which may exist among nations. It seems to go a step further. It says **עם כל באי עולם**, that is, peace among all individuals who are born into the world. We know that while peace may exist among nations, yet within the nations themselves may exist virulent strife among individuals. In

the eyes of the author of this midrashic work, God strives for peace even among these individuals as among the nations which comprise them. One of the eternal strivings of God, then, is making peace both among nations and individuals.

But this striving of God for peace does not stop with humankind. From the statement **עם כל מעשי יצא** it seems that undoubtedly the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu conceives of God as striving for the peace of the whole cosmic creation. For we know that even as there exists strife and war among men, so there exists struggle and strife in the universe at large: as for instance, as science points out, the constant war that exists in the realm of the plant creation. There an unceasing struggle for existence takes place. This desire of God for cosmic peace is a desire ever close to the Spirit of God. This is clearly apparent from the simile **בן מלאכי השרת** who stand eternally before God.

This indeed is a far flung universalistic concept of the relation of God toward the peace of the universe.

Another universalistic element in the God concept of the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu we find in the statement: **יחזור אדם ויפתל במעשה ידיו של הקב"ה — בארם ובבהמה, ובעוף השמים ובדגי הים, שמזנות כל אחד ואחד בידו ונשמת כל אחד ואחד מסורים בידו. (סא"ר, ל' י"ח, ע' ק"ג).**

This statement speaks of the providence of God as manifested throughout all creation. God guides and watches

every creature in the world, and gives every living thing its needs. All depend upon God for their sustenance, and the soul of every living thing is entrusted in His Hand. In this expression of the providence of God we find no predilection for any one people above another, and no distinction is drawn between one living creature and another. The providence of God as put forth in this statement is not a providence limited to man alone, but a concept which embraces the whole universe. This is indeed a cosmic concept of the providence of God.

Reward and Punishment

Above (page 22) we have already hinted at the principle of reward and punishment which God metes out equally to all men irrespective of nationality. There, however, the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu touches on this principle casually in connection with other attributes of God. Elsewhere in his work the author takes up the problem of reward and punishment and explains his concept of this principle more clearly and explicitly. Touching his view of this problem, the author of this book says:

בזך המקום בזך הוא, שמשלם לגע אדם איש כדרכו, וכל אחד ואחד
איש כמעשיו... (פא"ר, פ' י, ע"ג)

Here is an explicit declaration that God draws no differences between individuals, that he recognizes no favorites, but that he rewards and punishes every man according to his deeds. That our author altogether assents to this view of reward and punishment is emphatically made evident from the decisive manner in which he phrased this statement. He commences it by blessing God Who ordained this principle of impartial reward and punishment unto all men.

There is still another statement of our author which tells us plainly that God measures out reward and punishment to all men equally according to the individual merits of every one:

דור כליון כן עשה תורה וכן קנסתי עליו טובה; ואדם כליון כן עשה
תורה וכן קנסתי עליו טובה.
ודור כליון כן עשה רעה וכן קנסתי עליו כעיתה; ואדם כליון כן
עשה רעה וכן קנסתי עליו כעיתה. (ספ"ר ל' ב', ע' קפ"ו)

Surely the word *תורה* cannot here mean the Pentateuch. From the context *עשה תורה* here cannot refer to any object but good conduct. Without this connotation, the phrase would be altogether obscure and meaningless. Thus we find that here also is declared that every generation and every individual, irrespective of creed affiliation or national lines, receive their reward meted out on a universal basis of right conduct.

Attacking the problem of reward and punishment from an angle close to that of the previous statement, the following two declarations, similar in text, appear in different sections of Tanna debe Eliyahu:

מגלגלין זכות על ידי זכאי וחובה על ידי חייב. וכן במדה
הזאת נוהגת בכל משפחות האדמה, בין בישראל, בין באומות.
(סא"ר, פ' ז', ע' קמ"ד)

מגלגלין זכות על ידי זכאי וחובה על ידי חייב, וכן במדה
הזאת לכל משפחות האדמה בין בישראל ובין באומות.
(סא"ר, פ' ש"ז, ע' פ')

The declaration stated here is so clearly, yet succinctly expressed, that its universality is altogether self-evident. The universality is enforced by a double emphasis, and there can be no mistaking the intent of the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu

A last passage emphasizing the principle of reward and punishment in its universal application is expressed as follows :

דרך המקום דהן הוא שמשלם לאוהבין וליראין שבר
דרך ואורן בעולם הזה וקרן קיימת לו לעולם הבא. (סא"ר, פ' י"ג, ע' נ"ט)

There is no reason to assume here that the words *ליראין* refer only to Israel inasmuch as there are no phrases limiting this statement to a particular group. It assuredly seems to refer to all whose hearts are wrapped in love of God, and declares that all such individuals are equally rewarded. They receive their reward in this world and store up the essential part of such reward for the world to come.

In all the statements considered above under the topic, Reward and Punishment, we find two universalistic concepts prevailing. First, every people equally is included in the sweep of this general concept of reward and punishment. None are exempt and none are favored. Secondly, every individual and every people is rewarded on the basis of its merit and punished on the basis of demerit. The deeds committed are the essential criterion by which judgment is executed. The universality and impartiality of reward and punishment before God are stressed above all by the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu.

Repentance

There are several passages which show the attitude that our author ascribes to the relation of God toward the penitent. The following passage no doubt expresses the underlying principle of this attitude of God:

אֵינִי יוֹדֵד אָדָם מֵאֵל עֲבִירוֹתָיו לִמְעַלָּה מִזֶּה וְזֶה לִמְעַלָּה מִזֶּה וְיִחְזֹר
וְיִשָּׁבֵר תְּשׁוּבָה, אֹמֵר הַקִּבֵּי: אֵין עֲמֹ בְרוּחִים וְנִקְבְּלוּ בְתִשְׁבָּה. וְאִם
יַעֲמֹד אָדָם וְיִחְרֹק בְּלִפְי מַעֲלָה וְיִחְזֹר וְיַעֲשֶׂה תְּשׁוּבָה, אֹמֵר הַקִּבֵּי
הָרִי אֵין מִוְחָל לוֹ עַל כָּל עֲשׂוֹתָיו. (ט"א, כ"ב, ע"ק ב"ש)

It cannot be but that the word אָדָם in this passage is to be translated as Man, the inclusive term for the species of humankind. We find here that God

yearns for the repentance of all men. Even when Man curses God, -- even then God is desirous of Man's return unto Him, and is willing to forgive in mercy every blasphemy against Himself.

A similar attitude we find in the following statement:

אילו מעשים טובים ותלמוד תורה שחנמ' תורה מצב'ן ליה-
הבל באין גא, -- מלי הקב'ה שידיו כשושנות לעושה תשובה, והכל
שלו והכל מעשי ידיו. (מאד ב' יח, ע' צ"ג)

This needs no separate discussion. The words *עושה תשובה* are not limited to the penitent of any one particular nation, but include the penitent of the world at large.

The following statement compares the forgiveness of God and the forgiveness of man:

אדם עושה מריבה עם חבירו -- הולך בוא לבדו ואין מתרצה לו
עד שיקבל לו בני אדם הודה ואמר בק מתרצה לו. ואזרע'י למתנה
לו יש לו מקצת קנאה בלבדו.

אבל אני איני כן, אלא אדם עושה מריבה לפני, אם חוזר
בו ועושה תשובה הרי אני ברחמים מקבלו בתשובה, וכיון שאני
מקבלו בתשובה אין אני זוכר אפילו מקצת צונג'ו.
(סא"ר פ' ג', ע' י"ח)

Here we behold essentially the same principle expressed as above with this further stress, that the forgiveness of God is absolute unto all mankind, and it is altogether different from the limited and partial forgiveness of man.

In a further passage we read as follows:

אמר [דוד] לפניו: רבונ של עולם, קבלני בתשובה שלמה
לפניך, כדי שתזכה את הרשעים לעולם הבא, ואמר להם:
מה דוד מלך ישראל שעה לפני דבר חסור, כיון שעשה
תשובה קבלת' אותו בתשובה, אל אתם אם עשיתם תשובה
אנ מקבל אתכם. (סא"ר, פ' ב', ע' ז')

Here we find the author expressing the prayer that even as God forgave David his grievous sin, (probably referring to David's sin with Bath Sheba), so does David pray that God forgive all the wicked of the world irrespective of their national boundaries. The word **רשעים** we must interpret to include the wicked of the world at large.

A final passage strikes the climax concerning the relation of God to the penitent:

המזוהם והמלוכלך אינו מוסב בפני המלך, במה
דברים אמורים, בזמן שלא עשה תשובה. אבל אם עשה
תשובה ונתן הרי הוא כצדיקי עולם לכל דבר. (סא"ר, פ' ג'
ע' ט"ז)

Here we find that the true penitent is given a place equal with that of the righteous of the world. As **צדיקי עולם**, unto whom the penitent is likened, embraces the righteous of the entire world irrespective of all national divisions, so we may deduce that the penitent, too, includes all men who strive to rise from sin to repentance.

In all these passages we find that the relation of God to the penitent is universalistic, there being no difference before God between the penitents of one people and those of another. Furthermore, we find that God forgives all sin no matter against whom committed, for all are equal in the sight of God. This, indeed, is a universalistic concept concerning the attitude of God toward the penitent.

Universalistic Attitude toward
the Torah

There are statements in our midrash of Tanna debe Eliyahu which clearly indicate a particularistic attitude toward the Torah, that is, that Torah was meant only for Israel. There are also statements regarding Torah which are not particularistic, but neither are they broadly universalistic. But there are, however, several declarations which explicitly give a definition of Torah of a broad universalism.

One passage reads:

מִיָּוֶה שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם עַד שֶׁיֵּצְאוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם חִזְקוּ
הַקִּבְ"ה אֶת הַתּוֹרָה עַל כָּל אֻמָּה וְלִשׁוֹן וְלֹא קִבְּלוּהָ ...
(בא"ז, פ' י"א, ע' קצ"א)

This clearly indicates that in the eyes of God the Torah could have been given to any nation in the world. It was not particularly set apart for Israel alone. The fact that Israel alone received the Torah is due to the very obvious reason, as stated in this passage, that the other nations refused to accept it. However, Israel did not receive the Torah because of original favoritism by God for Israel above the rest of the nations.

Another passage tells us:

אֵלֵינוּ אֲמוֹת הָעוֹלָם מִבִּירֵן בַּחֲכָמָה בְּיָנָה בְּדִיעָה בַּהֲשָׁכָה
וּמִגִּיעֵין לְגֹזֶלָה שֶׁל תּוֹרַתְךָ הֵינּוּ אֹהֲבִין אוֹתָךְ אֶהְיָה גְמוּרָה בֵּין
כִּשְׁהוּצָה שׁוֹב לָהֶן וּבֵין כִּשְׁהוּצָה רַע לָהֶן. (ס' א"ר, פ' ז', ע' ל"ח)

Here we find the revealing statement that were the nations of the world to recognize the inner spirit of the Torah, they, too, would love God just as deeply as Israel, whether this love brought them good or evil. It follows, therefore, that the self-sacrifice of Israel for the sake of God does not constitute an attribute particular to Israel. Any other people would have offered itself on the same altar of sacrifice for God as Israel had it sunk itself as deeply as Israel into the inner spirit of the Torah. Thus we see from this passage that essentially Israel stands on the same plane with all the other nations of the world before God.

In a final statement we find the following significant enunciation:

מה היתה מחשבה שהיתה בדעתו של הקב"ה. כך היה
בדעתו, שכל אומה ומלכות שיבואו ויקבלו את התורה יהיו
חיים וקיימים לעולם לעולם (עצ"ל, פ"ד, ע' קע"ט)

From this we learn that originally God did not predestine Israel alone to be an eternal people. All nations could become immortal like unto Israel in the eyes of God had they but accepted the Torah. Hence it follows that the eternity of Israel is not a characteristic possessed only by Israel. Every nation possesses before God the same capacity for eternal life. The matter of eternity lies within the power of all the nations. God is desirous of crowning all with the crown of eternity, would the nations themselves but give the signal of assent.

These statements surely present to us a far-flung and startling universalism with regard to the Torah, and emphasize the truth that the Torah was not meant by God to be the particular possession of Israel, but that all nations could acquire it did they desire to do so.

Human Conduct

From the beginning of the rise of nations, a distinction has always been drawn between the conduct which the individual employed to those of his own nation and that which he employed to men of other nations. The bond of conduct between man and man has usually been limited to the individuals of one's own group. It usually did not extend to the individuals of other groups. Thus History tells us that a Roman was not obliged^{by} his code of conduct to behave to an individual of another state in the manner which he did to another Roman. Human conduct has ever been determined by national and religious affiliations; it was rarely given a universalistic basis. It is therefore of value to note the attitude of the author of the Tanna debe Eliyahu toward human conduct. There are passages in this work which point out that our author, too, based the relations of man to man upon national and religious grounds, drawing distinctions between Israel and other nations. There are, however, several declarations concerning human conduct which overtly illustrate that the author emphasized the universalistic basis as being essential for human conduct.

a basis which recognizes no lines of demarcation between nations and classes of society, but which establishes one principle of human conduct for all men.

Thus one passage reads:

לעולם יהא אדם נאה בגיגתו, חסיד בישיבה, וערום בירצה,
ומרבה שלום עם אחיו ועם אביו ועם אמו, ועם רבו שלמדו
מקדא ועם רבו שלמדו משנה, ואיליו עם כל אדם בעולם
(מאיר, פ' י"ח, ע' ק"ד)

The words איליו עם כל אדם בעולם surely denote that the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu demands of man that he extend these social decencies and obligations stated in the passage to every human being regardless of his national, religious, or social status. A single code of social duties is presented in this passage, a code founded upon a universalistic basis where no distinctions growing out of particularistic world views are in any way recognized.

Another statement reads in similar manner:

לעולם יהא אדם ערום בירצה, ומענה רן גליו ומשיב
חמה, ומרבה שלום עם אביו ועם אמו ועם רבו ועם חבירו
בשוק, איליו עם גוי כדי שיהא אהוב מלמעלה ואהוב
מלמטה כדי שיתקבל על הבריות... (מאיר, ע' קנ"ז)

With the exception of a few words this passage is like in text to the statement given above. It is therefore likewise equal in its demands for a universalistic governing human conduct. Here, too, we find that the social obligations be extended to all men alike, that is, that every man conduct himself toward mankind at large with the same principles of ethical conduct. The words **אפילו עם גוי** only reemphasize the universalism which must prevail human conduct. In giving the reason why such a broad principle of human conduct should prevail among men in human life, the author points out that it is desired by God as expressed in the words **כדי שיהא אהוב מלמעלה**. This phrase makes it quite clear that God does not desire that man draw distinctions in his ethical relations with his fellowmen of whatever nation, creed or class they may be a part.

A like passage reads:

לעולם יהא אדם עניו בתורה ובמעשים טובים עם אביו
ועם אמו ועם רבו ועם אשתו, עם בניו ועם בני ביתו, עם
שכניו ועם קרוביו ועם רחוקיו, ואפילו עם הגוי בשוק, כדי
שיהיה אהוב מלמעלה ונחמה מלמטה. (מצ"ת, פ' ש"א, ע' קצ"ז)

In this passage the attribute of humility is particularly emphasized. One is to act humbly to all men irrespective of their social status and their national and religious affiliations. Here, too, in giving the reason why humility should be practiced to all men alike, the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu makes it clear that God desires it of man as expressed in the words

. כדי שיהא אהוב מלמעלה

Another universalistic truth concerning human conduct grows out of the following incident related by the author of the Tanna debe Eliyahu:

אמר לי: רבי, מעשה היה בי שמכרת לגוי אוגעה כורים של תמרים ומדדת לו בגית אפל מחצה על מחצה. אמר לי: "אתה ואלהים אשר בשמים יודע על פיה שאת מודד לי". מתוך שמדדתי לו, חסדתו שלשם אין של תמרים. לאחר מכן נשלתי את הפעות ולקחתי בקן כד אחד של שמן, והנחתיו במקום שמכרת התמרים לגוי. נקרע הכד ושפך השמן והלך לו.

אמרתי לו: בני, הכתוב אומר: לא תעשוק את רעך (ויקרא י"ז, י"ח) רעך הרי באחין ואחין הרי הוא ברעך. הא למדת שגזל הגוי גזל.

In this story the author of our work goes beyond mere social obligations, duties and decencies; here the law concerning robbery is not limited to the individuals of any one group. It is declared unlawful to commit

robbery against any man no matter whether he be Jew or Gentile. The argument which the author presents for his conclusion concerning robbery is perhaps more significant in our discussion of universalistic elements in Tanna debe Eliyahu. The author seems to take the term רעך to apply to a gentile, and the term אחיך to a Jew, and argues that רעך is like אחיך and אחיך like רעך. This surely proves that in the eyes of the author, both Jew and Gentile stand equally on the same pedestal. They are like friends and brothers to each other. Surely we can find no broader universalistic outlook.

Another passage reads:

יִרְחִיק אָדָם עַצְמוֹ מִן הַגֵּזֶל -- מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן הַגּוֹי
וְאֶמְלִיץ מִכָּל אָדָם שֶׁבְּשׁוּק. (אֶצִּיר, כ' כ"ח, ע"ק"מ)

This statement is similar in thought to the passage given previously. It likewise points out that the law against robbery is universalistic in that it is forbidden to rob both from Jew and Gentile. Here, however, the author emphasizes that no distinction is to be drawn between classes in society likewise, as the words וְאֶמְלִיץ מִכָּל אָדָם imply.

The Righteous and the World
to Come

A passage reads:

עתיד הקב"ה לישב בבית המדרש הגדול וצדיקי עולם
יושבין לפניו^{ואמר} להק: בני, אתם בשר ודם, בני אתם.
נשא אדם אשה טובה ומיובה, שמח בה ומשתוקק בה.
שינה יוליה ובקש לישב עליה אשה אחרת. אבל אין
אתם כן. אתם לי מתחלה לעולם ולעלמי עולמים.
(סא"ר, פ' י, ע' נ"א)

First of all the term **צדיקי עולם** shows beyond
a doubt that in the eyes of the author the righteous of
the whole world shall have a place in the world hereafter.
There are no distinctions between the righteous of Israel
and the righteous of any other nation. Furthermore, in
the words which the author puts into the mouth of God
we clearly behold that he considered the righteous of the
whole world, irrespective of national and religious
boundaries, as the everlasting children of God.

Again a passage reads:

לעתיד לבוא ישיבה להקב"ה בבית המדרש גדול
שלו וצדיקי עולם יושבין לפניו. (סא"ר, פ' ג, ע' י"ד)

Here, too, we see that the author believed that all righteous men, Jew and Gentile, shall sit in the assembly of God in the world to come.

Two more passages, with texts similar to the one above, use the term **צדיקי עולם** and imply the same universalistic message discussed above:

עֲתִיד הַקִּבְלָה לִישֵׁב בְּבֵית הַמְּדֻשָּׁה שֶׁלּוֹ וְצִדִּיקֵי
עָלָם יוֹשְׁבֵין לִפְנֵי... (סא"ר, פ' א', ע' ד')

הַקִּבְלָה יוֹשֵׁב בְּבֵית הַמְּדֻשָּׁה שֶׁלּוֹ וְצִדִּיקֵי עוֹלָם
יוֹשְׁבֵין לִפְנֵי... (סא"ר, פ' ה', ע' כ-כ"א)

Still another passage:

עֲתִיד הַקִּבְלָה לִישֵׁב בְּבֵית הַמְּדֻשָּׁה הַגָּדוֹל שֶׁלּוֹ
וְצִדִּיקֵי עוֹלָם יוֹשְׁבֵין לִפְנֵי וְלֹאמַר לְהַן: בְּנֵי, אֲנִי הוּא
שְׁנִמְסֵרְתֶּם לִמִּתָּה עָלַי, אֲנִי הוּא שְׁנִהַרְגֶתֶם עָלַי. אַתֶּם כְּמוֹתַי
וְאֲנִי כְּמוֹתְכֶם: מִה גִּבֹּר לְעוֹלָם חֵי וְקִיִּים לְעוֹלָם עוֹלָמִים, אֲךָ
אַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ חֵיִים וְקִיִּים לְעוֹלָם וְלְעוֹלָם עוֹלָמִים.

First of all, here, too, we find the term **צדיקי עולם** which implies that all righteous shall have a place in the Assembly of God as explained above. Secondly, here, too, God calls all the righteous **בני** "my children". Furthermore, we find here expressed that all the righteous irrespective of nation and religion sacrifice themselves

for the sake of God, and therefore all alike shall merit eternal life, even as God Himself is eternal.

* * *

There are other passages which describe the main outlooks on life held by the author of Tanna debe Eliyahu which have been presented in this paper. However, the statements which have been given here present in the simplest, clearest and most unambiguous terms the views on God, Reward and Punishment, Repentance, Torah, Human Conduct, and the Righteous in the World to Come held by the author of this midrash.
