

Isaac Arama

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Foreword.

Arama as a philosopher does not rank very high. He was not capable of a systematic synthesis of philosophy of Judaism. He summed up however in himself the thought^s and ideas of great minds who have labored in different fields of speculation. He culled from Greek sources as well as Arabian learning, alike. While it is true that the influences of Jewish minds such as Ha Levi Maimonides and the Kabbalists of his day are much in evidence, a presentation of the literary personality of our author must take into account also such influences that are less evident. It is because he was not an original thinker that so much has to be said by way of historical explanation. Aramas' view point or more correctly viewpoints, are best understood in the light of an exhaustive historical account which purposes to detail the thought movements leading up to the spirit manifested by Arama. For this reason I have written a rather lengthy introduction. I intended to give a literal translation of a few sermons. This I found to be obviously unnecessary because it would not contribute any additional information to the efforts made in the chapters dealing with his philosophy and homiletics.

Introduction.

The Allegorical Method of interpretation of Scripture appears wherever a conflict arises between the interpreter and the Text to be interpreted. It is a method to which men have had recourse whenever their Holy Books which contained their beliefs and sentiments were made the object of satire, by critics. In order to retain the sacred inheritance its ^{protection} perfection from intellectual attack was necessary. This method is the invention of this necessity. Any interpretation of a custom or word, becomes sacred by tradition, which seeks to harmonize a newer thought with that expressed in that custom or word, is a manifestation of a mind struggling between truth empirically acceptable and sentiments made untenable. Sentiments, ~~are~~ made strong by the attachment of ^a psychologic fabric, will persist. It is a true observation that made by James regarding the sensitiveness of some who are said ^{to} suffer great mental agony when laboring under a conflict of ideas. Both history and psychology may successfully be called upon to prove this. With the coming of Greek philosophy there came also the Allegorical Method of interpretation. Belief and speculative thought represent the two forces at work in the growth and progress of civilization. The two are always present in and necessary to the normal life of humanity. They are the conservative and the radical forces in every community. The work of harmonization is the attempt ^{on the} under part of those possessing a larger view to retain the old in the new garb, to make the old function under the new conditions. The past with its achievements may always be found to possess something of value and worth, and

to ~~con~~serve this valuable and worthful something for the benefit of the new age, The allegorical method has been adopted at all times. It is a way of rationalizing which ancient and medieaval man found most helpful to him in his explanation of things. The allegorical method then, is primarily a result of external force making itself felt in the life of a people of a certain civilization. It is in the nature of a concession which ^a ~~that~~ people must make in order to retain as much as possible of its own life and thought.

But in the case of biblical ~~ex~~egesis as practiced by ancient Jewish allegorists the method is an answer to an inner demand, a product of the living spirit of the Jewish people. "The ^{phetic} ~~profits~~ and the poetic portions of scripture must be studied in the light of this spirit. Also because ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ this spirit it is that Philo employs the mystic teachings of the Alexandrian School for allegorical use." (1) That spirit in the Jew is his idealisation of things, his love "for the abstract implication" in the text. Examples of this spirit are to be found every where. The literary ^{ple} ~~profits~~ are filled with horror at the absence of the ideal in the religious practices of the Jewish people of their day. Sacrifices without the purifying effect that ought to follow was as nought before God. The letter of the law without the spirit was never altogether ^{able} ~~accepted~~. The ^{ple} ~~profits~~ invested the religious vocabulary of their day with ideal and spiritual signifigance. (2)

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1. Treitel-Monnatsschrift, Sept 9/10, Sept - Okt 1911
 2. Bittenweiser- ~~The Jewish Prophets~~. The Prophets of Israel,

Their philosophic insight compelled them to render such an interpretation of history of their people that instead of the narrow National conception of a God inseparably bound up with a certain people and a certain land, a universal God, the Father of all, was the result. An example of the idealizing process at work in a later day is the changing of the name of the city of Luz to Beth-El. (1) The Rabbinic interpretation of the name of Luz is again evidence of the continued functioning of this idealizing spirit of the Jews.

The appearance of Philo is therefore quite in keeping with the natural spirit of the Jewish genius. The terminology alone is borrowed, the spirit is his own as a Jew. His excellence and superiority as a Platonist is due to that native philosophic tendency in the Jew. It is hard to believe that without this intuitive Jewish spirit Philo could have so successfully applied Greek thought to Jewish principles. The Theory of Ideas is known in the History of Philosophy as having originated in Greek thought; but it may safely be said that this idea lay dormant and was implied in Jewish teachings, ready to be elaborated at any time. Such a Theory is most Jewish: its unconscious formulation is to be found in the preachings, poetry and sayings of Jews of an early date. The allegorical method as far as the Jews are concerned came as a necessity of the inner philosophic spirit of the Jewish people. It was not a means by which a tottering edifice, the glory of a glorious past, was kept from utter collapse.

(1) Genesis-28:19

The spiritual edifice of the Torah was never threatening to fall as did the Homeric Gods.

This is true of Philo as well as the ancient allegorists of the Talmud. The *דורשי תורה* "were Palestinian teachers who developed their method of allegorical interpretation independent of external influences. Their allegorical interpretation of anthropomorphic expressions about God was the natural result of their strict and pure monotheism and of their conception of God as an incorporeal being." (1) It is not established that *חכמים* of the Talmud ^{were} ~~was~~ the product of Alexandrian culture. (2) The underlying conception of the Rabbis in the matter of Biblical exegesis was that the Torah, embodying God's plan for man to live by, contained all possible ideas and teachings (3) A wide range of experience is necessary to a reasonable appreciation of ^{the} depth and truths of the Torah. Any interpretation of Scripture leading to ethical enrichment carries with it a stamp of approval from God himself, (4) It matters not if two men rendered a text differently; both were correct if their interpretations were in the interest of vital truths. (5)

1. Lauterbach-Jewish Quarterly Review-January 1911

2. Es gibt aber keinen Grund, das homiletische Genre der auf alexandrian zurück zuführen. Die Richtung auf die ethische Hebung des Individuums ist zum indest ebenso jüdisch wie griechisch. Neumark, Festschrift zu Maybaums 70 Geburtstag.

3. Pirke Abot

הפך זה להפך זה דכולהו זה

4. *I take to cover both legal and ethical ideas.*

5. *אלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים*

With such a conception of God's revelation the Rabbis considered no thought, if it carried an important truth, foreign to the Torah. The thought however, had to be in keeping with the teachings about One God. It was because of their philosophic insight and love of idealization that they welcomed ~~their~~ new ideas no matter from what source. Their allegorical or any other method of interpretation of Scripture is a manifestation of the workings of their inner spirit. Not the influence of an Aristotle, Plato or Pythagoras made an allegorical interpretation necessary; rather the truth is that these influences striking the minds of men with the love for abstractions, made possible a further deepening of the word of God. Hence the process of assimilation of new ideas went on without the accompanying result of the absorption of the Jew. There never was ^{on the} ~~under~~ part of the Rabbis an entire acceptance of a philosophic idea at the sacrifice of another idea essential to Judaism. Always ^{the} ~~a~~ tendency was in the direction of spiritualizing the new idea and making it appear a product of the Jewish civilization. Rabbi Jochanan may have meant to say this very thing when he said: "Wherever you meet with the magnificence of the Holy God, blessed be He, there wilt thou meet with His humility: This rule is written in the Law, repeated in the Prophets, and ^{reiterates} a third time in the Hagiographa. In the Law it is written 'for the Lord Your God is God of Gods, the Lord of Lords, a great God, mighty and terrible, who regardeth not persons, not ^l ~~take~~th a bribe'. And immediately after, it is written 'He doeth him good and ~~reimment~~ ^{reimment}'. It is repeated in the Prophets, as it is written 'for thus saith the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, and whose Name is holy; the high and lofty place will I inhabit; and with the contrite and humble of spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble; and to animate the heart of

the contrite'. It is a third time repeated in the Hagiographa as it is written 'Sing unto God, chant hymns to his Name, extoll him who rideth upon the Heavens, praise him by his name, Yah, and rejoice before him.' And immediately after it is written, 'a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation!' Neither the idea of God as supreme and majestic, far removed from man, who disdains contact with earthly man, nor the opposite idea of God as having his abode on earth with interests only in things, an idea which was common to Pagan Greece, was acceptable to Judaism in its entirety. The Jewish philosophic outlook welded the two ideas into one, and made God both far and near to man. God is transcendent and immanent according to the conception of the best minds of Jewish history. Man was responsible for his act to God and society. Hence the prayer runs "May the Lord, our God be with us as He was with our Fathers. (1) Rabbis, commenting on ^{Jer.} Gen. 23:29 make the ^{moral} model Law as it develops every where, have its roots in God who is the source of morality. (1) Their attitude towards knowledge was such that they endeavored to make the Torah champion all that was eternally true and good.

Also Rashi and Ibn Ezra, although lovers of the literal meaning of scripture have made use of the allegorical method of interpretation. ^{regarding} The Song of Solomon, Rashi following Rabbi Akiba, interprets allegorically; while Ezra makes it a story of the individual mind and its connection with general mentality.

Not because of Arabian-Greek Philosophy, but rather because of his inborn Jewish spirit of philosophizing, Saadia is able to develop a philosophico-allegorical treatment of Scripture.

1. 70a שבת, T.B. כל דבור ודבור מה פשוטה בחלק לכהן יצואות אף כל דבור ודבור

Feeling that the distinctive Jewish teachings might suffer at the hands of men, who, though Jews and philosophers yet are not fully conversant with the spirit of the Torah, Saadia limits the use of allegorism (1) Solomon ibn Gabirol also, in his exegesis frequently made use of the allegorical interpretation. Paradise is the world invisible; the Garden, the visible world of the pious. The river going forth out of Eden is universal matter. Its force separating streams are the four elements. Adam, Eve and the Serpent represent the three souls; Adam, the rational soul, Eve the animal soul, and the Serpent the vegetative. The vegetative souls cleaves to materialism, even as the serpent must eat of the dust of the earth. Saadia's work is carried on and expanded in a great outburst of Jewish genius which showed itself most brilliantly in the "Guide of the Perplexed" of Maimonides, ^a the monumental work, the culmination of mediaval Jewish philosophy. Also to Maimonides the Bible contains metaphysical teachings. They are hidden beneath an allegory and are meant only for the more learned. To Maimonides the Bible is not only the standard of all wisdom, but it is "the Divine Anticipation of human discovery". God has there in "multiplied visions and spoke in similitudes" (2) That Maimonides has so successfully interwoven Greek thought with revelational truth is not surprising. The unconscious philosophic spirit of the Jew manifested itself in him to a very large degree. His outlook is a direct continuation of the idealizing process started in the hoary past of Jewish history.

1. See vii, p. 212. of the Arabic text in Landauer.

2. Hosea 12:11

After Miamonides philosophical allegorism offered a halt
 at the hands of conservatism, but finds an outlet in mystical
 allegorism of which the Zohar is the classical work. Nachmanides
 and Bachyah both speak highly of the advantages of the mystic
 allegorism. While admitting the merits of the literal meaning
 (שפ), of the philosophical allegorism (קפ), and of exposition
 (קפ), they claim that only in Kabbala (קפ) is their light.
 The rationalism of Miamonides gave birth to the mysticism of the
 post-Miamonidean age. Between the two stands Isaac Arama, the sub-
 ject of this treatment. He represents the ^{new} awakening of philosoph-
 ical allegorism, which while laboring under the influence of mys-
 ticism is an exposition of scripture on philosophic ground. Like
 Philo, Arama makes Sarah, the mistress, the Torah; her handmaid
 Hagar, philosophy. Philosophy has often tried to flee from and
 take the place of Divine inspiration; but she is finally convinced
 that it is better for her to be the servant of Sarah. In the light
 of the philosophyizing tendency native to the Jewish spirit, we can
 appreciate Arama's expositions of scriptural narratives.

2. In his הקדמה
3. הקדמה

The really great soul seeks to communicate with other souls; to impart ^{his} own experiences. In the spiritual realm, honest exchange seems to be the law of life. Deprived of his greatest joy of being surrounded by disciples, Isaac sought and found a new channel for his activities. His own community consisting of men, themselves great in Jewish learning, were eager to listen to expositions of Talmudic Law. On days of great assemblies, therefore, on Sabbaths and Holy Days, Arama delivered sermons logical in construction and philosophical in content. In the true spirit of a servant of God, Arama betook himself to the task of familiarizing himself with the philosophies of his age in order that he might be able to show to his ^{audience} listeners the richness of thought contained in Judaism. He found it necessary to present an exposition of Jewish religion which was grounded on the established ^{principles} hypotheses of philosophy in order to counteract those expositions of Christianity given in public by men hostile to Judaism. Indeed Jews had to attend these public Christian lectures by order of the king. (1) Too many were engaged in writing commentaries to the Bible, in which only the grammar and the literal meaning were given. A connected philosophic ^{history} story of the Biblical and Talmudic interjunctions was lacking. True, the great Maimonides had lived and labored in the interpretation of Judaism as a philosophic system. But, Maimonides was being misinterpreted. Those who followed him did not know the relation ^{philosophy} to the Torah. Perhaps Maimonides himself erred in regard to the proper function of the speculative disciplines as a guide to the right understanding of God's law.

1. חזון קשר, 4 ג'ש

Instead of strengthening Jewish religious principles as did those of the Gentiles who brought philosophy into relation with Christianity, the Jewish philosophers often weaken^{ed} them, by openly pointing out a breach between them and the teachings of philosophers. Every Sabbath and Festival Arama rebuked his co-religionists for their laxity in their observance of their ancient customs and laws (1) He did not withhold from charging them with imitating non-Jewish ways (2)

It seems that his reputation spread beyond the confines^s of his city. (3) He was recalled to the Jewish community in Calatayud towards the north of Aragon. There he once more experiences the great joy^d of lecturing for many eager disciples. He deepens in his philosophic appreciation of Judaism and writes and rewrites, adds and improves his sermons, which were to be handed down to coming generations. ^{Fearing} ~~Feeling~~ the harsh criticisms of opponents he hesitates to publish his sermons. Such is the characteristic modesty of all great souls; Bachaia in his introduction to his "Duties of the Heart" manifests the same experience. Arama did not publish his "Akedath Yitzhak" until he had reached old age. When he could no longer postpone the realization of his hope of immortalizing his name by a work. (4) He called it by the name אֶדֶת יִצְחָק to connote thereby the underlying purpose of combining philosophy with Jewish teachings, ^{as well as} ~~whereas~~ to express his won helplessness as a result of the commanding voice of God, summoning him to perform his noble service.

1. See אֶדֶת יִצְחָק for the status of Judaism in Spain before the Inquisition
2. שֶׁרָאָה עֵלְיוֹ הַעֲקִידָה
3. שֶׁרָאָה עֵלְיוֹ הַעֲקִידָה, 12, 14, 24
4. אֶדֶת יִצְחָק "AKEDATH YITZCHAK".

Arama read and intelligently quotes Ibn Ezra, Maimonides, and Nachmanides, Halevi, the manuscripts of the Arabic Philosopher Abu Algazali, Gersonides, *the ד ח י ג נ ס ה ז*, and the non-Jewish philosophers of his day. In *55 ר ג ע* he takes issue with Abraham Ba~~r~~ Chiya in the matter of the time of the Redemption. In *80 ר ג ע* he refers to Rabbi Abraham Bal Schem Tov as one of the scholars of his day. He also read the "dogmas" by Gabriel Gabino who lived near his time.

Arama's influence on men of his and of later days was great. Rabbi Isaac Abarbanel in his commentary to the Bible has taken over not only views but also whole passages from the "Akadath Yitzchak". Even a hasty comparison between the *ר ג ע* 97-97 of Arama's work and Abarbanel to *ד ב ז א ו ד ס ז ט כ* will show that Arama's work had gained wide prominence. The "Meor Enain"^{י מ} also refers to Arama very frequently as a great authority.

The work "*ד ש ק נ ו ת*" he wrote after his "Akadeth Yitzchik". It is a short work consisting of twelve chapters. In it he briefly states the philosophic basis of the religious dogmas which he elaborates more fully in his philosophic sermons. In addition to the two mentioned works Arama also wrote a commentary to "Koheleth". He wrote this commentary prior to his "Akadeth Yitzchak". (1) To the memory of his son-in-law Solomon whom he loved dearly he dedicated the book of "Canticles" of Solomon, and called it *ד ח ו ב א ד* making *ד ח ו ב* and *ד א ב ו* identical.

The place and date of his death are not known. ^{Just} Just has it that he was among those exiled from Spain in 1492, and that he died in Salonica. This is not probable. His "Akadeth Yitzchak" was in all probability published before 1482; seeing that Abarbanel, whose commentary was already in print in 1482, knows and makes use

of it. Arama was already old when he finished his work. Add to this the fact that the *קורא הדורות* speaks only of Rabbi Meir, Arama's son, who he writes came and died in Salonica and whose grave he tells us he visited, but makes no mention of Arama himself, which the author of the *קורא הדורות* would surely have done had Arama really come and died in Salonica. This much is sure that in 1505 he was no more among the living; for in 1506 his son Rabbi Meir writes a commentary to Job and calls it *קנינת לאבא מורו ז"ל*; and if a year at least had not passed since the death of his father he would surely have added *הריני כפרת משכבו* in accordance with the Jewish Custom.(1)

His son Rabbi Meir was Rabbi of the community in Salonica where it seems the exiles from Spain organized a congregation and called it the "Congregation of Aragon" to indicate the place from which they came (2). He was considered an authority in the Halacha(3). He also wrote a book called *מאיר תפילות* which is a commentary to the Psalms. In his introduction the author of *לחם שלמה* speaks very highly of Rabbi Meir Arama as scholar and philosopher. Since that Rabbi Meir was the only son that Isaac Arama had, and when Rabbi Meir's only son, Rabbi Jacob Arama, died childless, the name of Arama's no more heard of in Jewish history.

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1. יורה דעה ס' ר"ט סעיף ט'
והן אמת כי פה בסלאנקי דינא גבר מצורא, כיון הסניקו חכמים הקדמונים
קדושים אשר בארץ הקדשם המג לבד חכמם השלם כמ"ה מאיר'ן עראמה ז"ל
 2. בקק' שלו ארגון - הישדנ' בחלק ח' סימן רצ"ט
ולאנכיו נפשוין מספיקא שמעתי בשם מו"ה מאיר'ן עראמה ז"ל שגמר
 3. את הקהל - הרב' בטא"ח סימן תל"ו

The Spirit of His Age.

To read "Kadeth Yitzxhak" intelligently, it is necessary to know the literary personality of its author. The personality of the author must be read in the light of the spirit of his age. We are all more or less, influenced by the spirit of our times. The political and intellectual conditions are largely responsible for what we are. A description of the status of the Jews in Spain prior to the Inquisition and ~~the~~ the consequent expulsion has already been given by Abarbanel in his introduction to "Kings", and by Isaac Caro ^{in his} ~~whose~~ introduction to his book ^{קדוש} ~~קדוש~~, and others (1). Economically the condition of the Jews in Spain as a whole was one of prosperity. Every where could be found Jews of wealth and large possessions. Religiously, however, there was much to be desired. There was a tendency on the part of many to emphasize secular culture at the expense of Jewish observance. Many there were who longed to see their children attain positions of privilege and social recognition.

With the expansion of the Christian kingdoms in the latter part of the Middle Ages, there was a growing religious fanaticism which of course affected the conditions of the Jews gravely. James ^{VII} of Aragon ordered a public disputation between Jews and Christians in 1263. It was held in Barcelona. In it Moses ben Nachman figured prominently. Alphonso X (1253-1284) of Castile restricted Jews from the commercial activities and compelled the ^{to} wear yellow badges. In 1391 Ferdinand Martinez began to preach violent sermons against the Jews in Toledo, then

1. Also, שו"ת אור חיים, א' י"ג; קדוש קדוש; Dr. Frankel - Zeitschrift - Jahrgang 2, p 468-71; Isach, Geschichte.

the largest Jewish community of Spain. As a result riots broke out everywhere. The number of Jews killed and converted is great. Many fled to Mohammedan countries. The name Marannos and מרננוס comes into use about this time. In 1413 to 1414 another public disputation, arranged by Pope Benedict XIII, took place in Tortosa, Aragon. Again there was disaster to the Jews. Joseph Albo the author of the philosophic work "Ikkarim" took the side of the Jews in this disputation. The converts practiced Judaism secretly. This of course provoked the anger of the Church. The "Inquisition", a court of inquiry was established and there cases of heresy were reported and tried. It arranged public executions at which those convicted were burned at the stake. In 1483 Thomas Torquemada was appointed Grand Inquisitor and in 1492 Ferdinand, King of Castile and his wife Isabella, Queen of Aragon, decreed a law which ordered the expulsion of the Jews. Most of the exiles fled to Portugal, where they remained to 1498. A good many went to Turkey, others went to the Barbary states in northern Africa, and especially to Morocco. Many others went to Italy. Few remained in Spain. Up to the eighteenth century auto-da-fes were held and Jews publicly burned. Arama was largely influenced by the mystical age in which he lived. It becomes therefore necessary to devote some space to the nature and object of mysticism in general, and Jewish mysticism or Kabbala in particular. Mysticism appears in connection with the endeavor of the human mind to grasp the divine essence or the ultimate reality of things and to enjoy the blessedness of actual communion with the Highest. The first is the philosophic side of mysticism; the second, is its religious side. The first effort is theoretical or speculative; the second practical.

The thought that was not intensely present with the mystic is that of a supreme all-pervading, and indwelling power, in whom all things are one. Hence the speculative utterances of mysticism, are always more or less pantheistic in character. On the practical side, mysticism maintains the possibility of direct intercourse with the Being of Beings- intercourse, not through any external media, such as an historical revelation, oracles and the like, but by a species of ecstatic transfusion or identification, in which the individual becomes in a very truth, "partaker of the Divine nature." God ceases to be an object through him, and becomes an experience. In the writings of the mystics, ingenuity exhausts itself/ in the invention of phrases to express the closeness of this union. Mysticism differs, therefore, from ordinary pantheism in that its inmost motive is religious. Pantheism, considered merely as such may be either an elevating or a degrading theory; it expresses merely the resolution of all things into one metaphysical power or substance. But the mystic is animated not merely by the desire of intellectual harmony; he seeks the deepest ground of his own being, in order that he may cast aside whatever separates him from the true life. This religious impulse is shown in the fact that, whereas pantheism as such, seems to lead logically to passive acquiescence in things as they are-all things already being as divine as it is their nature to be-mysticism on the contrary, is penetrated by the thought of alienation from the divine. Even where it preaches most our essential unity with God its constant and often painful effort is directed towards overcoming an admitted alienation. In other words, the identity with God which it teaches, is not a mere

natural identity, as in ordinary pantheism, but the which is the goal of achievement. Alienation from, and yet implicit oneness with, the Divine, are the two poles on which all religious speculation and practice revolve. It follows that mysticism is distinguished from other religious theories of the relation man to God by the identity with which it realizes the Divine factor in the relation. The realization is so vivid that, though the theory takes its rise in the needs of the individual, the individual tends in the sequel to be lost altogether, in the excess of the Divine light. All relations tend to become unreal for the mystic except that between himself and God. His very sense of personality is weakened. The mystical ideal, therefore, is not a life of ethical energy among mankind; it is the eye turned wholly towards the life spent in contemplation and devout communion. The type of character to which mysticism is allied is passive, sensuous, feminine, rather than independent, masculine, and ethically vigorous. In full-blown mysticism the individual is paralyzed for action.

Now mysticism and Kabbala of the Middle Ages are not strange importations from without but a continuation of Biblical and Talmudic thought with the admixture of extraneous elements picked up from many lands. Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, Sufficism, Mithraism, not any of these are solely responsible for mysticism in Judaism; Jewish mysticism were here have not any of these been at all. We feel that as in the case of Jewish allegorism in Biblical exegesis, mysticism is implied in the Jewish philosophic and intense religious spirit. We feel that the disposition for the mystical point of view is to be found in the Jewish religious genius of idealization and abstraction. Rationalism and mysticism,

the two methods by which men have tried and solved problems of reality, are both natural outgrowths of Jewish tendencies. The Bible and the Talmud foreshadow them both.

It is characteristic to a temper of mind which feels the need of philosophizing its beliefs, to evolve methods of speculation. Mysticism is one of those methods. It is marked on its speculative side by a confidence in human reason. The possibility of a unity of the human mind with the Divine is its underlying presupposition. Intellectual intuition of the Absolute is of the essence of mysticism. Nothing is ^{ac}cepted from without; the appeal is ^{to} with the individual, who, if not by reason then by some higher faculty of his own, claims to realize absolute truth and to taste absolute blessedness. The mystic need not be uncritical and unscientific in his outlook. The apparent completeness of synthesis of a Kant or Hegel really rests on the subtle intrusion of elements of feeling into the rational process. It is difficult to find a systematic philosopher who altogether escapes the charge of mysticism. The ultimate problems of philosophy cannot be reduced to articulate formulas. The philosophic spirit^{ative} to the Jew sought to know God by the rational faculty and to realize him by the supra-rational faculty latent in him. Hence it is that emphasis now on the one and now on the other of these faculties is being given at different times in the course of the development of Judaism.

To say that mysticism or rationalism is a foreign element in Judaism is to fail in a proper psychological appreciation, of the real spirit of Jewish genius. Some declare Jewish mysticism to be a glaring and indefensible contradiction in terms. Bible and subsequent religious literature, they say, are grounded on an unquestioning belief of an exclusively transcendent God. The Jew

The Jew could not have that inward experience made possible to Christians by the life of Jesus and the teachings of Paul, Those who argue thus, must read and reread the Psalms and the prophetic utterances to see that nearness to God was possible also to the Jew. Others make mysticism among Jews a foreign element on the ground that Judaism, they say, is a religion of unrelieved legalism, and mysticism is the irreconcilable enemy of legalism. In this argument we see clearly the glaring error made by those who do not approach the study of Judaism with a philosophical mind. It is unphilosophical as well as unhistorical to claim that Judaism was this and not that at any period of its history. Even the Schulchan Aruch, the climax of legalism, makes room for individuality and independence in the matter of finding God. The Talmud contains Agada as well as Halacha. Again others say that intense and uncompromising national character of Judaism must of necessity be fatal to the mystical temperament. Mystical religion, they say, transcends all the barriers which separate race from race and religion from religion. The mystic is a cosmopolitan par excellence. Those who object to Jewish mysticism on the ground of nationality, do not reckon with the fact that the Jew, always the butt of the world's scorn, naturally retaliated by declaring in his liturgy and literature that his God could not possibly be the God of all those who acted wickedly towards him. But who shall deny that in all branches of Jewish literature there gleams a far wider, more tolerant and universal outlook? Who will gainsay ^{the} ~~that~~ fact that Jeremiah's conception of God was universal? Even the Talmud with its legalism finds God in the non-Jew as well as the Jew. (1)

1. "חסידי אומות העולם יש להם חלק לעולם הבא".

No, Jewish mysticism is most assuredly an expression of the inward religious and speculative genius of the Jewish temperament. Rationalism and mysticism both are Jewish; both are the activities of a temper which seeks to know and imitate God. They do not preclude one another.

Philosophically considered, one is always ^{present} pleasant with the other. ~~The~~ ^{the} more modern phraseology, mediate and immediate knowledge are inter-related. Both direct and indirect awareness of an object belong to the same process. It is ~~an~~ ^{an empirical} ~~empirical~~ observation founded on the modern epistemological theory that induction and deduction are steps in one act of ~~ah~~scientific thought. There is no doubt that the two types of reflection presuppose one another. They enter into conception as well as in perception. We have to have ideas to look in as well as to look out.

In logic, syllogisms are considered valid whose conclusions are based on a collection of data which is by no means exhaustive. We are allowed to conclude for instance, that all men are mortal, from the observation that Socrates, who is a man, is mortal. There is an evident jump of the intuitive faculty when making this conclusion. We can never examine all of the members of the human species; there always being one which may prove the exception ~~to~~ of the rule. And yet this is the way real knowledge is gotten. The conclusion that all the chairs in a room are made of wood because the 3 chairs a, b, c, which were examined were found to be made of wood, does not add to what we already know from the enumeration. The conclusion does not infer anything which is not already contained in the enumeration and their description of a, b, c. It seems that new knowledge is a result of the careful

analytic process combined with the intuitive synthetical flash of the human thinking spirit. Mysticism does not preclude reason, for it really raises it to the highest plain; its underlying principle being the possible unity of the human mind with the Divine. Nor does reason preclude mysticism, for the latter begins where the former ends. Both are the means of attaining real knowledge. The Jewish idealizing rationalizing spirit expresses itself in terms of both the practical sense of reason and the higher display of the intellectual intuitive faculty. The many detailed laws regulating the life of the people prove the existence of the former, and the ethical and religious speculation prove the latter.

We shall give a hasty historical review of the mystic tendencies in Jewish history so that we be in a better position to understand Kaballa of the Middle Ages, and how and to what extent Arama was influenced by it. In the Bible, Isaiah's and ^{Ezekiel's} vision, indeed prophecy itself, all belong to mysticism although not of the conscious and pronounced personal type. Later we find ^{the} Essenes ~~wherein~~ possession of Esoteric teachings. Their love of allegorical interpretation, their devotion to the knowledge of the existence of God and to the beginnings of things, their removal from the general society by reason of their sanctity, are all of mystic influences ^{to} of which Philo and Josephus make some reference in their works. From Rabbinic records it is not hard to deduce a theory that there existed as early as the first Christian centuries either a distinct set ^{of} individual Jews, who combined mystic speculation with an ascetic mode of life.⁽¹⁾ In the early Synagogue we have the Hasidim, a sect known together with the חסידים - the

1. Abelson, Jewish Mysticism

"Chamber of the Silent or Secret Ones", and also called *סוד* *סוד*, have had mystical doctrines (1). The idea of secrecy is frequently employed by early Rabbis in their mystical exegesis of Scripture (2). About the first century, ^a group known as "Vatikin" held to a mysticism which clustered round the sentiment and outward conduct governing prayer (3). They try to finish reading "Shema" at the exact moment of sunrise. The "Zenuin", the "lowly or ^{chaste} chaste ones", another esoteric order, emphasised the importance of letters comprising the Divine Name (4). In the elaborated system of ^{medieval Kabbala} ~~medieval~~, the many lettered names of God are the pivots in which ^{huge masses} ~~huge~~ masses of the most curious mystical lore turn. The "Ten Sefirot" have close connection with these doctrines of ~~the~~ letters. The Hassidim, or the *חסידים*, saints or miracle workers, another mystical sect flourished in the opening centuries of the ^{Christna} ~~Christna~~ era. (5) It is told that they used to dance and perform certain acrobatic feats with lighted torches at the joyous ^{or} ~~at~~ feasts of the water-drawing, at the Temple during Tabernacles. The Talmud gives a weird description of a *חסיד* who heard from "Behind the curtain" (*אחורי הפרקליט*) certain secrets hidden from ordinary men (6). It is not known whether these Hassidim are the ^{real} ~~lenial~~ descendants of the saintly party known by that name in the Maccabean Period—from which Wellhausen says the Essenes and the Pharisees came (7). The Essenes practiced celibacy, they

1 Tozefta - *ד"ה פ"ב* II-16

2 Mid. Rab. Gen - IV.

3 T.B. *נדרים* 9b.

4 T.B. *קידושין* 71a

5 *אשכנז*, 2

6 T.B. *נדרים*, 18b.

7 *א*

stressed inward religion, made nothing of sacrifices, although they never overlooked the claims of institutionalized religion. (1) These mystical sects were, at bottom, faced on the different commentaries they gave to the Bible in their attempt to get at its truest meaning. The *חכמה* mysticism, a sort of an emanation theory (2) has played almost fruitful part in the mystical speculations of the Jews since the time the first chapter of Ezekiel was written. From Rabbinic remarks it is to be inferred that there existed in early Christian centuries a small sect of Jewish mystics who had an Esoteric science of the *ספרי*. This science seems to have been a confused angelology, Metatron, a famous angel, playing a conspicuous part. God came in contact with the world through angels who are parts of His Being, say the Rabbis. Their Logoi, Divine agencies, are Philo's answer to the problem of the possibility of God's relation to the world. The Wisdom element is another characteristic of Rabbinic mysticism and finds its origin in the Bible (3). God acts in the world through a "Wisdom" which is ^{hypostasized} objectified. It is identified with the "Word" which appears in Rabbinic mysticism as *דבר, אקרא, אקרא*. The "Yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven" (*עול מלכות שמים*) is another idea of a mystical nature. An examination of several ^{sentences} contents where it occurs proves that it stands for the abandonment of ^{idolatry} ~~adultery~~; for the spreading of universal recognition of God; and for the acknowledgement of the possible nearness of God. The *שכינה* element in Rabbinic mysticism implies that the incorporation of the Heavenly Kingdom within the folds of an Israel welded in fellowship was made the ideal goal. It is again, a development

1

2 Neuman - class notes.

3

Proverb

of some Biblical passages (1). Through a series of spiritual and intellectual disciplinary acts only can the individual Israelite bring the נִסְיוֹן upon him.

The date of the book of "Yezirah" is not known. It is a mystical philosophy drawn from the sounds, shapes, relative positions and numerical values of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. A nucleus of this teaching is found in the Talmud, The Doctrine of Emanation on the "Ten Sefirot" play important parts in this book. God and the world are unity. The Sefirot and letters, which are the principle cause of matter, all emanate from the spirit of God. God is the matter and form of the Universe. He is also transcendent. The Zohar, which had a very great influence on the days of Arama is the book par excellence of Jewish medieval mysticism. Criticism has found that the Zohar made its first appearance in Spain in the thirteenth century and that it is not a production of a single author or a single period of history. Like the Yetzirah it is a syncretism. Its teachings are: The world is a series of emanations from Divine; man can have union with God; man is center of the world and ranks higher than angels; evil is the imperfect aspect of creation; by means of creation of the world, the Infinite became as it were "Contracted" (צמצום) and took on certain attributes of the finite to which belong "Darkness or Evil"; God is Infinite (אינסוף) and the world is to be explained under basis of the "Ten Sefirot" which are successive emanations from

1. "אנישן לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם" Ex. 25

"כי אני ה' שוכן בתוך בני ישראל" Num. 35

"והתהלכתי בתוכם והייתי לכם לאלהים ואתם

תהיו לי לעם" Lev. 26

the godhead; the soul of man is an emanation from the "Oversoul" of the Universe; the soul is a Trinity comprising the rational element; the moral element; and the instinctive or physical life. The Transmigration of the soul, Love at the most tangible quality of the soul, the ecstatic condition, phase of prayer, are also some of the teachings of this book. The subjects under consideration in mysticism in general are:

1. Agnosticism
2. Matter, a positive principal of evil
3. The Theory of Ideas
4. The Theory of Emanation
5. Dualism, Pluralism, Unity (1)

Some of these mystical teachings are to be found in Arama's work. We shall treat of the Kabbala influence in his work in the next chapter. But, Arama was not a thorough going mystic. He also shared the religious-philosophic concepts of the Jewish-medieval philosophies; hence, a brief statement of the philosophic outlook of his day in general and that of the Jewish thinkers in particular becomes necessary.

The philosophical movement in medieval Jewry was not "The result of the desire and necessity felt by the leaders of Jewish thought, of reconciling two apparently independent sources of truth."- revelation and reason. (2) Those who hold to this view begin of course when treating history of Jewish philosophy with Israeli. They do not find it necessary to give the historical background of the conscious and definite philosophical

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1. Newman - classnotes.
 2. Husik -

system of medieval Jewry, since they find that medieval Jewish philosophy has no historical background. Intimacy with the Jewish life as it existed prior to Isreali is of course necessary as a pre-requisite to a full appreciation of the philosophic tendencies, unformulated though they may have been, of the early Jewish literature. To the philosophically sensitive mind, the mind that is quick to register the pulse of human, mental and spiritual, throbbing, an unbroken chain of philosophic thought is traceable in Judaism from the moment it makes its first appearance down to our own. Such a mind finds, underlying the different formulas describing God, differences of philosophic outlook (1) In Jeremiah's outpouring concerning the Creation and its Creator there is foreshadowed a conception of God and of the world, that is radically different from that which follows from expressions of an earlier date, of Biblical records. The question of the Justice of God, must certainly have been a subject for the different formulations by men of different interpretations of God and history. Isaiah's idea of the Holiness of God, Amos's Universality in his God Conception, Hoseas's emphasis on Mercy, are all undoubtedly conclusions of minds trained in sustained processes of reasoning about the ultimate problems of reality. The Book of Job is primarily a consideration of God's relation to men. Certainly the Talmud contains philosophic opinions in matters of argumentative and debatable character. It is not difficult to trace medieval philosophic expressions to the Talmud. The more definite knowledge and expressions about primal matter and form principal, undoubtedly have their origin in the various and opposing formulas to be found in the Talmud. (2) It is no

1. Neumark - Geschichte

2. Neumark - Classnotes

chance happening that throughout the Mishna no mention is made of angels (1) And when we come to the Jewish philosophy of medieval Jewry we find thoughts and tendencies which have been heard of at a much earlier period of Jewish life. The orientation is, of course, ^{more} sure, more definite in language ^{and} than in thought. This is due primarily to the historic material at the disposal. The many generations preceding medieval Jewish thinkers afforded them great ^{help} ~~help~~. This immense philosophic material which medieval Jews ^{were} so conversant with Jewish sources, they formulated in terms of Greek philosophy. Aristotle, therefore, did not create Jewish philosophy. It had been, had not Aristotle existed. Greek philosophy gave method but not subject-matter to Jewish philosophy. A list of the noted Jewish philosophers in the Middle Ages will include Israëli, David Al-Mukammas, Saadia, Gabirol, Bachia, Abraham ben-Chiya, Joseph ibn Zaddik, Halevi, the ^{2nd} ~~Ezra~~, Ibn Daud, Maimonides, Gersonides, Crescas, Albo. And ^{if} ~~this~~ is because Medieval Jewish philosophy is as far as method goes very much influenced by non-Jewish philosophy, that its representatives may be classified as belonging to Mutakallimuⁿ, Neo-Platonism, and Aristotleanism.

The contents of medieval Jewish philosophy briefly stated is this: there was ^{the} question of Creation. They nearly all discuss the erroneous views concerning the origin and nature of the world. Some lay down their theoretical principles of physics, as the atom theory, in their treatment of those questions. The existence of God is generally proven on the basis of a consideration of the fundamental principles of physics. Maimonides does not place his proof ~~of~~ God ⁱⁿ of Creation, which to him is scientifically

difficult of proof. The question of the Unity of God was proven by showing that Dualism or Pluralism is incompatible with the Omnipotence and perfection of God. Maimonides proves Existence, Unity, and Incorporeality, by arguing from the principle of motion to a first mover which is ^a separate form or intellect. The Doctrine of Attributes occupies an important place in the writings of Medieval Jewish philosophers. The Anthropomorphic expressions in the Bible are philosophically explained. They felt that ~~a~~ ^{they contained} ~~pointed~~ philosophic definitions of God. In order not to do violence to the Unity and Incorporeality of God, they tried to explain ~~a~~ ^{by} the many descriptive expressions of the Bible about God. Saadia held that the ascription of life, power, and knowledge ^{to} of God does not involve plurality in his Essence. Maimonides conceived God as absolutely transcendent and unknowable. No positive predicate can apply to Him so as to indicate his Essence. We can only say what he is not. We cannot say what He is. The only predicates having application to God are negative and ~~as such as~~ ^{as} designates effects of God's activity in the world. Gersonides was not satisfied with this agnosticism and ~~believed~~ ^{defended} a more human view. The soul of man also was an important question to medieval Jewish writers. They prove that man has a soul, that the soul is not material, that it is a substantial entity and not a mere quality or accident of the body. Their classification of the soul is borrowed from Aristotle and Plato; the threefold division into vegetative, animal, and rational - all ^{or} the appetitive, spirited, rational. Prophecy was the manifestation of the active intellect in man. The freedom of man to act ~~with~~ ^{was} another great problem which engaged their minds. Many reasons are advanced in favor of its reality. The subject is felt to have its difficulties, and the arguments against free will taken from

the causal sequence of nature and heredity are ~~n~~ ignored. They also seek to reconcile the antinomy of freedom ~~v.s.~~ /S. God's fore knowledge. The ultimate sanction of ethics are of course theistic and Biblical. The ceremonial laws are brought into relation with the ethical motives. The dogmatic elements of Judaism receive much attention. The Bible is invariably accepted as Divinely revealed. The laws are divided into two classes, rational and traditional. Some consideration is also given in most of their books to eschatological matters, such as the destiny of the soul after death, the nature of future reward and punishment, resurrection of the body and Messianic ~~pyramid~~ period.

In this intellectual atmosphere Isaac Arama was educated. In this he carried on ^{his} the spiritual activities. He is not an original philosopher. He has no system to defend. He treats the same problems, although not always in the same way. His psychology is practically the same although more elaborated and made to apply to homiletical advantage.

A word remains to be said about the post-Maimonidean period. Maimonides did not treat the question of the immortality of the individual soul at length. It would appear ^{that} for him ^{or for} Averroes whose main ^{influence was effective} activities were carried after the death of Maimonides, the intellect when in separation from the body is not subject to the individual distinction; since matter alone is the principle of individuation and the immaterial cannot embrace a number of individuals of the same species. After the death of Maimonides the psychological treatment of the soul was carried on in great detail. It was the period of the decline of Jewish philosophy. The "guide of the Perplexed" had

been written. There were those who followed Maimonides and those who opposed him, but there were few indeed who attempted the systematic synthesis of philosophy and Judaism. Gersonides and Crescas are perhaps the only two who among the post-Maimonidean philosophers contribute original ideas of any value. Arama is an apologete. His main interests lie in the fortification of religious principles of Judaism. It became necessary to do this in his day. He was not confronted by the necessity of proving the Existence and the Incorporeality of God by reason. No one doubted these things, and they had been proven by men before him in a convincing manner. It was a time of religious disputations and forced ^{con-}versions. Arama had to defend Judaism against the attack of unfriendly Christians. Arama's work, the "Akadeth Nitzchak" may be classed among works of Biblical exegesis as well as under Jewish philosophy.

His Philosophy (Foreword)

Isaac Arama is first and last a religious thinker. As such he is intensely concerned with safeguarding the religious view concerning God and his relation to man. He is intensely concerned with the philosopher's view of the essential questions of religion in general and Judaism in particular. As a Jewish religious thinker he feels called upon to defend Judaism and its dogmas against the attacks of unfriendly Christians.

Philosophy had made inroads into the religious beliefs of men. Many who read the "Moreh" pointed to it, not always intelligently, as a corroboration of their unreligious opinions. It became necessary to make clear the relationship between philosophy and revelational truth. Arama does this in several places. (1) God's word is most helpful to man in his efforts to live the highly moral and spiritual life. (2) Philosophy must be brought to interpret God's truth. A knowledge of philosophical disciplines are therefore most necessary to him who would attain a knowledge of the hidden truths that are to be found in the Torah. The implicit reliance on the truth possessing nature of the Torah is of course the first necessity. The occurrence of two stories similar in content and even in phraseology must be explained on the basis of deep purpose which is knowable to him only who knows philosophy.

1.

2.

The Torah has very much to say about metaphysics, astronomy, arithmetic, and pure mathematics as well as physics, political science(1). We shall find that Arama knew the field of philosophy and that he had a critical appreciation of the ultimate problems with which philosophy busies itself. He felt the difficulties and inconsistencies which abound in the books of the Bible and he explains them in the light of his dogmatic and mediaeval philosophic spirit. We shall find that he is a prominent of the art of homiletics, possessing a superior ability in the idealization of Scripture stories. We shall also find that he is a great moral philosopher and possesses depth of thought in advancing his ethical system to which he gives a psychological basis. Altogether he is a man of unusual greatness and it is for good reason that he has wielded such enormous influence over philosophical teachers after him.

His Philosophy.
God-Conception.

Since it is not a philosophy which he is writing but rather a book of philosophical sermons, we must look for his God-conception as well as for the rest of his conceptions all through his sermons; he does not treat it exhaustively in any one place. And when we shall have found all his remarks concerning it, we shall find that he does not present it in a logical or philosophical order, giving first what is generally meant when speaking of God or when a denial of His existence is made, then proceed to give the different God-conceptions men have held, and lastly treat his own conception of God. In his sermon for the Parasha וַיִּבְרָא, where he shows that souls differ in the matter of the Divine light as bodies differ in the matter of the light that they get from the sun, he states that a correct God-conception is to be gotten, not as the philosophers say by a comparison of God with the soul, but rather as the Rabbis say, by a comparison of the soul with God; for we know nothing about the soul whereas we know a great deal about God from the Holy Books. Nevertheless, he proceeds to make the philosopher's comparison between God and the soul. Just as the soul possesses four characteristics so we might ascribe to God four attributes.

1. The soul is the cause of the functioning of every organ of the body; so God is everywhere the cause of motion. (1)
2. The soul is a pure spiritual essence and cannot be perceived through the senses; so God is incorporeal and may be known, even as the soul is, through acts. (2)

1. מה הקב"ה מלא את העולם כלו אף הנשמה מלאה את כל הארץ
also, מה הנשמה אין אדם יודע את מקומה כך הקב"ה אין כל בריה יודעת מקומה

2. מה הקב"ה הוא ואינו נראה אף הנשמה הוא ואינו נראה

3. The soul is the life of the body; so God is the life of the world (1).
4. The soul is unknowable; God is unknowable.

It may be safely stated however, that he accepts the Miamonid^ean conception of God. God may be known only in a negative way. Only the pure intellects (ד'ה-יג' ד'הכח) may know Him as He really is. Man may know God by knowledge of ^aposteriori kind, that is, from His manifestations in His relations to the world (2). And the reason that man cannot know God Himself, is that in the case of God, the attributes such as existence, unity, eternity, knowledge, will, etc., are not outside of Him as they are in the case of man, of whom a conception may be had even a part from his attributes. In the case of God His attributes are of his very essence. They are not accidents attached to Him; they are the things by which man must know Him if he is to know Him at all, without them a conception of God is altogether ~~an~~ absolutely impossible. (3) No sooner do we begin to speculate about the perfection of God, an idea which we must associate with Him, than we are met with many difficulties. If God is perfect then His acts are also purposive as well as purposeful; for aimlessness even in the case of man, is considered a greivous fault and a glaring imperfection. Consider the long and careful^a expended by Israel ^{on} and the building of the Temple, and consider also how it was finally destroyed. God Himself filled ^{h x h y z} with His own

- מה הנשמה דנה את כל הגוף אף הקב"ה דן את כל העולם
- שער 39
- שער 45

Divine wisdom, ~~at~~ for the glorified purpose of the Holy Tabernacle, and as far as human intellect can judge, it was all for nought. Is it possible that God works without knowledge of future developments? To affirm such a possibility is to declare God imperfect indeed. On the other hand, if we ascribe to God a knowledge of man's future acts we shall at the same time make Him open to changes of all kinds. We must therefore conclude that a knowledge of a real essence of God, since we cannot have an idea even of His knowledge which is His essence, is an unattainable object of man's spiritual efforts. (1)

Creation.

God is the Active Worker (הַיּוֹם) and not merely the Cause (הַגּוֹמֵל) of the Universe. Philosophers have held that there is a very close connection between God and creation. The connection they say is like that found between the fire and the heat which it generates. God is the Thinker, the Intellect, and Object of thought ($\text{הַמַּחְשֵׁב, הַמְּחֻשָּׁב, הַשֶּׁכֶּח}$). They mean to imply by this that the creation was an absolute necessity of God's and hence they used the word הַגּוֹמֵל and not הַיּוֹם . We, true believers in God, must not speak of God as the Cause but rather as the Creator of all things. He need not have created anything as far as His Existence is concerned. His essence would not have suffered in the least. Out of great love for man does He will to create the world. True, Maimonides, although a believer in Creation, refers to God as הַגּוֹמֵל . But he did so for philosophical considerations. He wished to use a word which would include three out of the four causes always present in the existence of an object, namely, 1. God the Creator, 2, ~~God as~~ Form Principle, 3, ~~God as~~ purpose (2).

1. 102 נ"ש

2. 38 נ"ש

We must believe that God created the world out of nothing, and because God is the Creator He can also be the Destroyer as indeed He was when the world was destroyed by the great Deluge. Now if the world is eternal, which the philosophers claim it is, God could not have destroyed the world since He did not create it.(1)

Unity

The philosophers had held that the relation of God to His creatures is that of the soul to the body. This is a mistake.(2) God is self-sufficient and independant of the world.(3) His essence is of the utmost purity. It is a unity the like of which is not found. The abstract intellects (שכלים) , although they are not compositions and each of them forms a unity, yet not even they can be described as being one in the sense in which God is One. They are under the necessity of thinking of their Cause, and this alone is enough to destroy absolute unity. Neither are the stars nor the spheres real unities. The star and the sphere are two different substances. We need not consider the objects of the lower stages of which are compositions of the four elements. God alone is real unity. The evil that befall man as well as the good are to be ascribed to the One God, the creator of all things. Even under evil of the utmost painful degree, the true believer must still declare God's unity. Rabbi Akkibah was strong in this belief as the Talmud testifies.(4).

1. 13 שער

2. 38 שער

3. 48 שער

4.

אשריך ר"ע שיצאה נשמתך באחד



Gersonides meets the difficulty of God's omniscience and His apparent aimlessness in commanding the building of the Temple which finally suffered destruction, by declaring that God does not know particulars as particulars but, as ordered by the universal laws of nature. He knows the universal order and He knows the particulars in so far as they are united in the universal order. The contingent acts God does not know else man were not free. He therefore accepts Free will with its consequences at the risk of limiting God's knowledge to events which are determined by the laws of nature. Maimonides was more true to the believer's view. God is omniscient and man is free. Man cannot know the nature of God and hence must remain in the dark as to the nature of his knowledge. Arama cannot accept the view of Gersonides. Any view of God's knowledge which makes God ignorant in any way of the future outcome of events, is ascribing to God an imperfection. But a more serious objection to Gersonides's conception of God's omniscience is Arama's criticism of his view on the basis of its implication of God changing. Gersonides admits that God does know man's free acts, and this makes Him open and subject to change. Arama dismisses Gersonides's view as hurtful to man's moral development. He accepts the more religious attitude of the problem already given by Maimonides in *קבלה תשובה ד"ה* (1). God knows particulars ^{by} ~~are~~ means of the universals, but man knows universals ^{by} ~~are~~ means of the particulars.

Prophecy

Maimonides had said that there were three ways of explaining prophecy: 1-the uncritical way, the one held by the people

According to this way God chose one without reference to his intellectual attainments and upon him He showered much of His Divine spirit. 2, the view of the philosophers; this view holds that prophecy is a natural result of a long process of mental and moral disciplinary life. 3, the religious view; According to this view the prophet is subject to God's will and selection but is also dependant upon a life exemplary in the matter of a long preparation of a mental and moral kind. It is surprising Arama states that Miamonides inclined to the philosopher's view. He finds Miamonides most inconsistent. Holding as he does to creation out of nothing (1) how could Miamonides make prophecy a natural phenomenon. The philosophers are consistent enough. He would not make prophecy a matter of hard training but rather a manifestation full of wonder and miraculous, to be explained on the basis of God's election. (2) The prophet must, to be sure, have a knowledge of the laws of nature. He must be able to distinguish between an event which carries with it God's wonders from an event which is only natural. Outside of this kind of knowledge the prophet need not have any more (3). In a general way we may say that prophecy must ever remain a mystery. It is beyond human ken to know it as it really is. (4) Arama seems to contradict himself at times. When speaking of Jacob's dream (5) he says ~~there~~ that only after an

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1. Moreh 2:13
 2. 35 270
 3. 35 270
 4. 20 270
 5. 24 270

intimate knowledge of metaphysics and logic does prophecy come to man. We see that Arama's conception of this very important philosophical problem, one so closely connected with the rest of the problems of a religious philosophy, is dogmatic and uncritical. We miss the philosophic background of this problem as it is found in Halevi, Saadia, and Maimonides. It does not follow logically from any principle in metaphysics or physics. It must be said once more that Arama was primarily a moralist. Accepting this and rejecting that philosophic view in accordance with not any definite world view of his own rather the generally accepted dogmas of the Rabbis. He also states that the נביא may even exceed the prophet in the matter of accuracy of details (1) The מלך knows the future in a general way although in a more certain way than does the נביא who may even know the particulars and the concatenation of events leading up to a certain historical happening.

Providence and Justice

The highest possible moral happiness that can come to man is the constant feeling of gratitude to God, the Giver of all things, the Provider for all. Nothing ever happens by chance. (2) God is inherently good and the apparent evil that befalls the individual is all for the good of the larger group. Man is of course free to act. Experience teaches that through his own efforts man may attain success. But, experience also teaches that his efforts may be in vain. This is because God does not wish that success come to Him. Arama believes that man's success

1. 79 ישי

2. 74 ישי

depend^{on}, even when his free acts be of good intention and under ordinary circumstances they should bring him success, in his fate or destiny (~~זהו~~ ^{הוא}) with which God's providence works together. Should His Fate be unfortunate or even tolerably good (^{הוא}), his good deeds will bring about God's providence in his behalf. When man's free acts are not so well intentioned and in addition his fate is only tolerably good, it becomes necessary for man to put forth more strenuous efforts in order to attain a measure of success.

Not even a fortunate fate (^{הוא}) will ~~not~~ save in case his deeds are decidedly wicked. In this way Arama makes the fortunes of man subject to an uncontrollable element which he calls (^{הוא}) a mysterious unphilosophical entity. (1) The laws of the Torah show the justice of God. According to the wrong done ^{is} the compensation meted out (2). God's promise that he would never again punish men by flood needs explanation according to Arama. If punishing people is contradictory to God's justice why did God punish them? If it is not why this promise? Only when those who receive His providence change, do His acts change. Before the flood every one had perverted their ways. Hence, God brought the flood. A great moral change had been wrought by the flood, hence God's promise. (3) God does not rule by one law, for then the world could not last. The natural law alone would require total annihilation, at certain times. The individual providence restores the proper balance of the univers. God rules by means of two laws, the natural and the moral or miraculous. And the two are operated for the good

1. ^{הוא}

2. ^{הוא}, and Tal. ש"ס ה"ב ש"ס ה"ב

3. ^{הוא}

for the good of society (1).

Cosmic View

The universe is of three parts; 1-the higher world, which comprises the abstract intellects (ד'ה'ט'ז) ד'ה'ט'ז and which shares the Divine spirit in a way that no other entity does. The resistance is eternal and the perfection of their essence of a very high degree; 2- the intermediate world which comprises the heavenly bodies and spheres. These are of a low degree of spirituality. They exist individually and are of purer substance than the compositions of the next world; 3-and the lower world; which contains all of the objects and compounds made up from the four elements. Their existence is ephemeral and their only purpose lies in the fact that a form principle will sometimes attach itself to them. (2)

Another classification is to be found in his introduction to Exodus. God is the first Cause and the Ruler of the universe. From Him emanates wisdom to all objects. The abstract intellects enjoy the largest emanation from God, and this directly. The angels therefore are nearest to God. Then God's emanation reaches the heavenly bodies. The souls with which God has endowed them makes possible that permanent movement, and lastly emanation reaches man indirectly. Arama recognizes three stages in creation: 1-the appearance of matter; 2-the attachment of form to matter; 3-the rule of natural law (3). This natural law however is only operated in the physical world; causation is not observable in the realm of the spirit.

1. 49770

2. 49770

3. 4 770

Knowledge may be either perceptual (השגת חושים) and/or conceptual (השגת שכלית). The soul is so constituted that part of it is intellectual and part of it is not. The intellectual part of the soul engages in the abstract and speculative knowledge, as logic and pure mathematics, as well as in concrete objects of arithmetic and practical life. The soul therefore has both the (שכל העיוני) and the (שכל המעשי) (1). Another classification is to be found in his book, which makes this division of the soul: 1 (the five senses) 2-(the passionate or excitable faculty) 3-(the imaginative faculty) 4-(the intellect) (2) The שכל העיוני is not productive of a life of action says Arama. Only שכל המעשי is calculated to bring about a life of energy and usefulness. Man attains perfection through a life of doing. (3) We might say that Arama was somewhat opposed to philosophy as such. In his day the speculative knowledge was not yet brought into the relation with practical life. It seems that he would hold in disregard the man who like the dreamer would waste away his time in mere speculation. In this he approaches the pragmatic view of our day concerning knowledge. There must be a translation of thought into action. Theory and practice must be closely related. The value of action in the development of man must be recognized; indeed a modern psychology does recognize it. It is interesting to see that Arama had some insight into the psychology of modern education. In one passage (4) he gives evidence of an

1. 76 נ"ש

2. 9 נ"ש

3. 39 נ"ש

4. ✓

educational principle made famous by Herbart-a principle by which teachers should be guided in the preparation of a new knowledge to be imparted to children. It is the principle of apperception.

Practically all Jewish philosophers have tried their hand at a classified presentation of the laws of Judaism. Maimonides introduces those principles of faith which reason approves by *שְׁנֵי עָשָׂר* and those not dictated by man's reason by *שֵׁשׁ עָשָׂר*. He reduced the 613 commandments to thirteen articles of faith. Crescas criticized Maimonides' principle of selection as well as the list of dogmas which he reduces to six. And Joseph Albo went still further and laid down ^{the} free fundamental dogmas from which the rest ought to be derived. They are; the existence of God, revelation of the Torah and future reward and punishment. Rational and traditional, "Duties of the Heart" and "Duties of the Limbs", theoretical and practical, are some of the classifications made. The number of the dogmas has been thirteen, twenty-six, six, and three. Arama's principle of classification is based on Jewish and General beliefs. Existence of God is a belief common to all religions and a believer need ^{not} necessarily be a Jew; hence this belief cannot be counted among the dogmas of Judaism. Arama, therefore, counts six dogmas

- (1) ^{a ē} ~~Creto~~ ex/ Nihilo
- (2) Omnipotence
- (3) Prophecy
- (4) God the dispenser of Justice
- (5) Repentance
- (6) Retribution

In order to strike deep into the hearts of the people Israel the belief in these six dogmas was absolutely necessary. The Festivals all symbolize and perpetuate the knowledge and observance 1.

of these ~~things~~. In one place it seems that Arama ~~does~~ not insist on Creation out of nothing as a necessary dogma to Judaism. (1). In another place it seems that he does insist (2). It is difficult to believe that Arama should have allowed an external Eyle, which would logically follow if the former was really Arama's view. He surely would have detected the implication of some violence to Unity in such an admission. It might be explained that the passage where he allows ~~היה קודם~~ is not his view but rather that of Maimonides. The apparent contradiction in Arama is, on further examination not explained in this way. It appears that Arama is speaking there of the necessity on the part of the pious Jew to believe in the creation by a Creator, even if it be allowed that the Creator had before him primal matter before Him. The probability is that Arama himself held to the strictly religious belief of Creation; and he was scholar enough to allow that good Jewish authorities have supported the view of the Eternity of matter.

Immortality.

Arama tries to explain why Torah is not more explicit on this important question. It is beyond the ken of mortals to grasp the truth about immortality in detail. Men may know it in a general way only. ^{The} Torah does speak of it in a general way. It does allude to the subject in several places. It is left to the individual thinker ~~who~~, if he believes in immortality, to elaborate by means of his own intellectual vision. True, the vagueness about this question in the Torah leads to doubt. Some have even denied this principle of Judaism because of this absence of certainty in the Divine Book. But, says Arama, there have always been sceptics and there always will be. Even had the Torah spoken definitely of the subject there ^{as} should still be

(1) ~~היה קודם~~ beginning
(2) ~~היה קודם~~ in ~~היה קודם~~ to Exodus 46.

those who disbelieved (1).

Immortality is a certainty; else why did God endow man with spiritual powers to seek divine wisdom? These spiritual powers are certainly not for the purpose of satisfying his physical wants. Arama believes in individual immortality. The נפש הקיוליונית and the מוח אלהים both remain immortal after the death of the body. If the מוח אלהים alone remained we should not have individual immortality but only general. (2). Arama admits that this is philosophically difficult of proof; he, nevertheless makes it a principle of belief.

Miracles.

Since the whole creation is for the sake of man, therefore, God sometimes changes the laws of nature for the benefit of man if the latter be only deserving. (3) This is very much like the prophetic idea advanced by Halevi, who, is to be remembered, speaks of a Moral law governing these highly evolved personalities. The "דבר נש" and דבר אלהים of Arama by which all things are governed, however, are not connected with any definite conception either of physics or meta-physics. God works by natural means. He could have saved Noah without resorting to the building of the Ark, if he had chosen to do so. Similarly God could easily have helped the woman out of her financial trouble without resorting to the means of the bottles of oil. (4)

(1) 33 נגז

(2) 32 נגז

(3) 15 נגז

(4) 57 נגז

He takes issue with those of the Jewish Philosophers especially Gersonides who sought to explain miracles as natural phenomena. The philosophers cautioned people against taking the miracles, such as the revival of the dead child of the Shunamite woman, or the stand-still of the sun by Joshua; for them it would appear these miracles were by far greater than those performed by Moses. Arama answers the philosophers by saying that it would not be a detracting of the greatness of Moses if he did not have to perform any miracles at all. Besides, the work of changing man's dispositions for moral betterment is by far a greater miracle than any that has been performed by any of the other prophets. It is by far more difficult to change the effect without changing its cause. Now this is just what Moses did. Without a change in the spheres, which of course are the cause of all happenings of this world, Moses succeeded in changing man's moral disposition. (1)

Ethics.

There are three aspects of man; (1) man as individual, (2) man in relation to his family, (3) man in relation to society. Man as individual does not commit any wrong. No one may properly interfere with him. Wrong pre-supposes the existence of group-life. He, the individual man, does commit a wrong when he is disobedient to the dictates of his *hoy*. The obligation that man as the head of the family has to those dependent on him is not

(1) 13 270

demanded by Justice, since ✓ , but rather by feelings of love and mercy. But as a political unit man has definite obligations which are demanded by Justice. Even speculation in divine things are not prior to a knowledge of man's duties in relation to society. Indeed it is through a proper training in his social obligations that man has attained also the appreciation of the Spiritual life. (1). Loyalty to laws, even if they be man-made is productive of ~~the~~ two good consequences namely, the orderly and peaceful relationship between man and the undisturbed training in philosophic disciplines. (2). The causes of man's moral degeneration are five; (1) The earthy substance out of which man is built tends to drag man downward to the low depths of sinfulness and land him in a state of moral degeneration; (2) The unbalanced state between the temperaments or inclinations- a man given to melancholy moods will not try to act socially; (3) The lack of training in childhood; (4) Bad associations; (5) Mistaken views regarding vital problems. (3)

Any really good moral quality is totally free from the opinion of people. 7) 2 2, dependant^e as it is on the opinion of others, it ~~therefore is~~ not a possession of moral quality. Only when people choose to do a man honor is a man honored. Secondly a real good moral quality must be permanent. Honor is not. Him whom a people choose to honor today they may disgrace tomorrow. Again a really good moral virtue must be an end in its~~self~~ self. Honor is ~~is~~ means to an end. A man who is honored by others uses this state of being

(1) 43 7y^u

(2) 46 7y^u

(3) 61 7y^u

(1)

honored to ~~effect~~^{eff} certain plans of his own. Arama he gives expression to a moral theory known in the history of philosophy as Intuitionism; the ablest representative of which was Kant. The theory holds that rightness is an intrinsic, absolute quality of special acts, and such is immediately known or recognized for what it is. Just as a white color is known as white, as a high tone as high, a hard body as existent, etc., so an act which is right is known as right. In each case the quality and the fact ~~have~~^{are} so intimately and inherently bound together that it is absurd to think of one and not know the other. This theory is opposed by Utilitarianism, as advanced by Bentham, Mill and Spencer. According to this theory rightness is not an inherent quality but one relative to and borrowed from external and more or less remote consequences. Intuitionism holds that the moral quality shines forth as an absolute and indestrutable part of the motive of the act itself. It proclaims the moral law as real as anything can be. And what is this moral law? The sentiments and actions of all rational free agents possess a certain character peculiar as such. All creatures, rational and irrational, experience sentiments and actions which may be properly qualified as strong or weak, durable or transient, useful or injurious. But it is exclusively to those of the rational free agents that we apply the terms right or wrong, good or evil, virtuous or vicious. The ideas symbolized by these words refer to the moral character of the sentiments or actions in question; and this moral character, according to the universal sense of mankind, can only be attributed when the subject or agent is rational- that is,

(1) 6574

✓ cognizant of such character in his sentiments or actions; ✓ are morally free - that is, capable of determining such character. This moral character of good or evil is a real, universal, and eternal distinction, existing through all worlds and for ever as long as there are rational creatures and free agents. As one kind of a line is a straight line and another a crooked line, and as no line can be both straight and crooked, so one kind of action or sentiment is right and another is wrong, and no action or sentiment can be both right and wrong. And as the same line which is straight in this continent of the earth would be straight also in another continent and what constitutes straightness in the twentieth century will constitute straightness also in the twenty-fifth century, so that action or sentiment which was right once is right now, and what constituted rightness in the times of the prophets will constitute rightness also through all eternity.

All this Arama meant to say when he laid down the three conditions of a moral quality. Practically considered, the distinction of right and wrong becomes clear when we attempt to analyze the terms. Their essential significance is that of obligation to do the right and refrain from the wrong. We cannot sever the idea of such obligation from the distinction, or think of the moral character of action as we can of the aesthetic or dynamic, with no concomitant sense of moral obligation. Only axioms of the science of ethics translate themselves spontaneously into the imperative mood: "It is right to speak truth" means "Speak truth"; "It is wrong to be cruel" means "Be not cruel". That which is right we "ought" to do. The obligation to do and feel all right actions and sentiments and to abstain from those of an opposite character constitutes the moral law. Moral law is not made to produce virtue.

It is not ~~made~~ at all. It is not a means to an end. It exists necessarily in the nature of things founded on distinctions properly belonging to the actions and sentiments of rational beings, as the distinctions of equality and inequality belong to numbers, and the distinctions of straightness and crookedness belong to lines. It is not ^{the} a standard of right which is or can be shifted so as to conduce to our beatification; it is our virtue, which must be fitted to meet that standard. This is the view of the absolute idealists on the question of the philosophic background of ethical conduct. Arama has had the same view. It is also the view of religion.

Arama objects to a negative morality. Friendship, for instance, means more than the absence of the strife between men. This is very modern. Joseph Mazzini in his Duties of Man has said the same.; "Only too much till now morality, to a large number of men, has assumed rather a negative than an affirmative form. The interpreters of the Law have said, 'Few, indeed none, have taught the obligations incumbent upon man, how he can and ought to help his fellows to carry out the designs of God's Creation!'"⁽¹⁾

Arama, like Aristotle and Maimonides before him, speaks of the happy medium ⁽²⁾ in the conduct of life.

(1) Joseph Mazzini, "Duties of Man".

(2) 6174

Philosophy of Jewish History.

There is more than one concept of history/ There is the concept which makes history an accumulation of events without any apparent design. There is also the other concept of history according to which things move on in an orderly fashion and for a definite end. "This earth is a roll with numerous small pegs seemingly scattered all over it without purpose. The roll is moving ^{ea} steadily, The pegs will strike here and there and the effect will be a charming music which is called The World's History" (1)

A philosophy of Jewish history simply means the application of the philosophical method in viewing history to the special history of Judaism. (2)

(3) The Jews have been the first to philosophize about history. They have always had the universal idea of world government. They always speculated about the problem of the destiny of mankind. Not only speculations but they have also had a definite view point. Humanity is moving towards the millennium. The ideal future will come. Man will come to know God and love to embody his principle. (4)

Prophets have conceived Isaiah as the ^{נביא} God's faithful servant who may be trusted with the responsible task of making the world recipient of the spiritual blessing entrusted to it. (5)

(1) Heine

(2) Deutsch, 'Philosophy of Jewish History',

(3) Neumann, class notes.

(4) Isaiah

(5) Isaiah 40

The Biblical writers have all had their philosophy of history in general and of Jewish history and Judaism in particular. The writer introduces us to the observance of the Sabbath immediately after giving the story of creation had his philosophy of Judaism. He viewed the purpose of creation in terms of Israel, God's chosen people. The observance of the Sabbath was to be the first important principle of Judaism as it symbolized the fact God the Creator. The writer gives the story of creation not merely as historical matter ^{but} rather for the purpose of that which he has in mind to say after it - that God, after the creation, rested on the seventh day. It is a religious philosophy of the development of Jewish institutions the only philosophy by the way which interprets Jewish History correctly. The Jahvistic, Elohist, Priestly and Deuteronomistic ^{codes} have all philosophic concepts of Jewish history and in each case it has been a religious philosophy.

Also in the Talmud the philosophic aspect of Judaism and Jewish history is not wanting. Rabbi Akiba's interpretation of *וְיָשָׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל* and Rabbi Joshua's of the same verse might be ² *cited* in this connection. But the Jewish thinker who enjoys most prominence in this field is Halevi. He is the first to have given a systematic synthesis of Jewish History in the light of world-mission. *Halevi builds* his philosophy of Jewish history on a conception of metaphysics based on Greek philosophy. The prophet is the highest intellectually evolved mind of ^{the world,} Israel, a nation of prophets, stands in relation to the world as the heart ⁽¹⁾ to the body. Israel is literally the best disposed people for the receiving of *the Divine Thing.* ⁽²⁾

(1) Cusari, II, 36.

(2) Neumark, "Halevi", H. O. C. Catalog, 1908.



Arama also has a historical-philosophical concept of Israel which is primarily religious and not a little influenced by that of Halevi. He too regards Israel and the morally evolving humanity in the relation of cause and effect. And the relation of God to Israel is of a special kind, not to be explained by natural Law. The relation is characterized by *נבחרת ישראל*. (1) Israel has been elected by God. To Israel alone he gave the Torah by means of which Israel has been able to obtain a state of Holiness. Israel among the nations is very much like the relation that exists between the world of spheres and the lower world; the higher world of the spheres determines ^{the} nature of the lower. (2)

How was it possible for Israel to remain steadfast to its promise made on Mount Sinai in all these many years of change and struggle? Before answering this question Arama presents the difficulties that are connected with the usual interpretation given to the Sinai^{itic} Covenant made between God and Israel. How could one generation of Israel bind itself to a Covenant in which all the future generations are involved? He points out many difficulties of philosophic and religious significance on the basis of which he finds the interpretations of Israel's long existence and loyalty to the Torah as unsatisfactory. His is on the idealization of this historical event. It means to symbolize the fact of God's special providence in relation to Israel.

(1) 31 *ya*

(2) 66 *ya*

From its earliest history Israel has been endowed ^{with} in the natural bent for the love of Spiritual life. By means of this natural inclination for the Divine thing it has remained ~~the~~ faithful to its nation. Not by one act nor by one event; rather, by ^a natural law of its own being given to *it* by God has Israel's steadfastness ^{been} made possible. (1) This sounds very much like Halevi's ~~with his~~ idea of Israel's favorable disposition for the Divine thing.

Israel has been able to cleave to God by means of seven equipments or institutions. They are:

- (1) ה' יי אלהינו , a synonym ^{for} the recognition of God and his providence.
- (2) ה' יי אלהינו , The guide for the moral life.
- (3) ה' יי אלהינו by which man can regain the spiritual life
- (4) ה' יי אלהינו synonymous for the spiritual retribution after death
- (5) ה' יי אלהינו " ^{Suffering of the soul after this life.}
- (6) ה' יי אלהינו symbolic for the great leaders of each generation appointed by God.
- (7) ה' יי אלהינו symbolizes our physical wants which, while the temple existed ^{were} ~~are~~ always satisfied. Prayer must now take its place. (2) In Halevi

In Halevi's system Palestine was the only land where the proper disposition ^{for} ~~of~~ the Divine thing could be maintained. Also Arama ^{as} much to say about Palestine ^{as} the fit place for Israel's normal religious life. (3)

- (1) ה' יי אלהינו
- (2) ה' יי אלהינו
- (3) ה' יי אלהינו , and Tal. " ה' יי אלהינו בירושלים בידו ציון "

When judged as a whole Israel looms high. Israel's enemies of all times have, therefore, always attacked a part of Israel but never the whole. Balak cautioned Balam against viewing Israel from a prominent height for then he should not see Israel partially.

The inabrogability of the Law in the case of Israel must ever, ^{more} impress itself as a fact ^{the} more we recognized its special and natural attitude because of the Divinely endowed disposition for the spiritual life. There will always be of course those who will be indifferent to this life; but Israel as a whole must never be, because it can never be wholly indifferent to the Torah. (1)

טעם תמצות

In order that Israel never swerve from ^{the} appointed task, God assigned them ת מצות. These many ת מצות have kept Israel a separate and distinct people. Such it must remain if Israel is to conserve God's moral laws for a struggling humanity. The גוים had no such responsibility, hence they were not given these many commandments. Every one of the ת מצות pointed to some one or another of the principles of Judaism. The first commandment beginning with אני יהוה stands for the principle of God as the only ruler of creation; the second לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים denies rulership to abstract intellects אלהים; לא תשא Warns people against assigning the orderly procedure of the world to the stars and sphere. ת מצות has reference to the heathenish beliefs regarding one

(1) תמצות

(2)

day in the week as the most opportune time for securing success.

722 refuted the philosophers argument by the natural beginnings alone determining man's future fortunes. This commandment is to impress the fact that parental influence as well as all other natural conditions are merely the means through which God acts. (1)

The month of Nisan is made first of the year also with the purpose of keeping before the minds of Israel that God rules it by a law other than the natural one (2)

The Shema has allusions to all the פסוקים. The פסוק and its significance, while it cannot be known either through syllogistic reasoning ^{or} ~~and~~ through experience, nevertheless, embodies ~~late~~ religious truth. Some have known it, as it would appear from the Talmud³. Arama applies his homiletical art to the exploitation of this mysterious command and finds that it stands for the evil inclination in man. Man can reduce the power of this evil inclination if he carry out the injunction concerning the פסוק. Just as the פסוק must be lead out of the camp (מחנות), ^{removed} see also the נפש הרע in man has to be extracted from the three souls - נפש, רוח, נשמה. The priest took of the blood of the פסוק enough with which to sprinkle. So also only a ^{few} little of the natural desires of man is to be gratified, and this for the purpose of satisfying his necessary wants. (4) The festivals all symbolize fundamental principles of Judaism. Passover and the פסח teach Omnipotence, Prophecy, and the Divinity of the Torah.

(1) 10377

(2) 3877

(3) 9077, Mid. Rab. 19.

(4) 7977

are observable only in Palestine they are nevertheless obligatory upon the Israelites; they are all full of great spiritual power for man. (1)

All the ⁽²⁾ מצוות have moral value for the observant Jew. ⁽³⁾ "The wicked desire wickedness" was ^{said} spoken of also such sins ~~of~~ which perhaps the ⁽³⁾ חטאים would not classify along with murder, theft, and the like.

Arama is the original author Sator Resartus. In his moralization of the ^{מצוות} he philosophizes about clothes much after the fashion of Carlyle. Man's outward acts are his clothes. He is judged by them. All the four corners of the garb ought to have ^{מצוות} (4) The manners of a man must ~~be~~ speak and inner holiness. In order that man may develop the three faculties of ⁽¹⁾ "hearing" which Arama says means obedience to tradition; ⁽²⁾ "power of speech" ~~and~~ "reasoned" by which the traditional truths are to be applied to the conduct of life; ⁽³⁾ "thinking" in order to draw the correct ~~inferences~~ inferences of philosophic import about Divine things, the commandment of Circumcision was given to Israel. The three-fold development demands that the body, the lower man, ⁽⁵⁾ be held in control, and ~~suffer its power checked~~ suffer its power checked.

The observance of the מצוות acts as mnemonic signs to help remember the teachings of Judaism. ⁽⁶⁾ Arama finds the psychological basis for the necessity of observing the מצוות.

(1) שיעור 51

(2) שיעור 2

(3) Opposes Maimonides פ"א שיעור 100

(4) שיעור 77

(5) שיעור 18

(6) שיעור 90

He writes as if he had in mind the psychologic factors to enter in-
to memory.

Disconnection of the Torah.

The Torah is both a history of Israel and a philosophy by which man should be guided in his moral life. The stories of the Bible are all true happenings in the life of our fore-fathers. They are all pregnant with significance for the individual as sources for moral instruction. The law of inheritance (כִּנְיָן מֵאֵלֶּיךָ) is derived from the incident of the daughters of ⁽¹⁾צִלְפָּזָה. The incident has historical reality and the law derived has ethical value. The law concerning the ⁽²⁾פְּסוּל שְׂנֵי is gotten from the story of the men ⁽³⁾שְׂמֵאֵל וְשִׁמְרֵאֵל. Both the story and the law of real worth for the Jew. The Torah is unique in this regard. In the case of the books of other nations, there are some which contain wisdom and others which contain historical material. Not one among them, however, is both history and philosophy. Arama raises the question of the apparent illogical and unchronological order of the Biblical stories. Why does not the Torah give its contents in more logical precision? The Rabbis too have busied themselves with the same question. ⁽⁴⁾

Since the מִדְּבָר incident occurred in מִדְּבָר and that of the מִדְּבָר happened in the wilderness of פָּאֵר right afterwards, their disconnection in the Torah is indeed difficult of understanding. Again

(1) Num 27

(2) Num 9

(3) שמעון

(4) "למה נסקרה פרשת מידבאח לפני פרשת מידבאר?"

The point of view is gotten from the age ~~in~~ from which a man moves. Arama could not possibly have had the modern evolutionary view of things. Carlyle's hero seems to be a part from his times; he seems to be able to evolve ideals which are not at all suggested by the spirit of his age and which the masses come to appreciate only after a long time. Such a view of history is unsocial as it is untrue. We believe in great personalities. But we also believe that they are great because of having summed up in themselves the achievements of the intellectual efforts of past ages as well as of their own day.

Arama further feels that only a Jew can know the truths of the Torah. This we think is correct. The spirit born of the Jewish spirit, can know the Jew, his genius and history. Just as Sprachgefühl is necessary to a mastery of a language so we think the possession of the native spirit of the people is necessary to a proper understanding of the people, its history and literature. To read into the thoughts of Jewish literature we must be first of all a Jew and then a Jew of the Jewish spirit. Only he who is nurtured from his very childhood ~~and~~ ^{on the} language thoughts and sentiments of Jewish life may, after proper training, come to realize the faculty by which he can hope to construct a synthesis of Judaism and its philosophy.

Mis Homiletics.

The Torah is the source of all knowledge. ^{Key} Faculty to reason a right is of course necessary. With Arama homiletics was a science any one of his sermons can be taken apart and its various steps ^{made} ~~are~~ observable. It is not difficult to see his method. There is always the Biblical and Talmudic text. /Following this is the ^{idea} philosophic thesis which expanded and elaborated leads to the interpretation of the text. Next comes a list of the ^{or} ~~or~~ difficulties ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ the text. In the light of the ^{and} ~~and~~ followed by the application of the moral, comes the newly elucidated text. The ^{is} ~~is~~ always interesting. His interpretation of the text however is not always so. It might be well to give ^{a few} examples of his homiletics (1)
He is no doubt a master in this art. Many have imitated him

It will be seen that consciously or unconsciously he interprets many biblical stories as well as many laws ^{very colorfully} ~~mythologically~~. His allegorical interpretation of many laws stamps him as a follower of Philo. In every one of the examples which will be given there is evident the deep-seated spirituality, under the influence of which even the text least suggestive is made to point to a high moral lesson. It is again the genuine Jewishness of the man, the religious spirit which can assimilate knowledge no matter what the source be, ^{and make that knowledge Jewish} if only the knowledge carries with it the stamp of real worth. To get a glimpse at the idealising and abstracting ^{spirit} ~~Jews~~ ^{one must} of a great Jew read and reread

(10) ק'ח ארץ קרא, ז"ה ל' תום

ה"ח ש' ד'ת"ח

the Akedath Jitzchak .

Samples of his homiletics.

With Arama homiletics is a science. It is not difficult to detect the various steps in the development of a sermon. There is always Biblical and Talmudic text. Following this is the , philosophic theses which when elaborated throws light on the text. Next comes the long list of or difficulties of the context of which the text occurs. Finally the application is made and the moral is drawn. The is always interesting, not so with its interpretation of the text. It might be well to give a few examples of his homiletics by way of showing ^{the} rationalistic philosophic and mystical elements in his ideas.

The philosophers have said that mans learning process is best understood if we imagine the mind a clean slate upon which impressions are constantly being made. Arama, as a Jewish moralist, holds that man is born with moral tendencies. But some of us do not follow these tendencies. We must sooner or later come to realize that we have gone astray; and in order to embark upon moral life we must painfully ^{re}learn and experience what the moral life is, the moral life an appreciation for which we could have had if we had ^{re}only followed the moral tendencies endowed to us by birth. Upon the heart of man are inscribed the moral injunctions. They are the ^{re}אלוהים הראשונים, which sinful Israel caused to be broken. The second set of Tablets represent the efforts man must make in the direction of self education as a result of his disobedience to innate morality in him.

Israel must forever consider itself governed by a special providence. To deserve this special providence Israel must be faithful to its historic mission. The ^{re}קטן הראשון undoubtedly interfere with Israel's constant mindfulness of the law; but they need not be neglected; they must be looked upon as necessary to the sound condition of the body thru the medium of which the soul's activity is carried on. The ^{re}קטן השני are of course most essential. The ^{re}קטן השלישי was to be

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2 brought up as עומד . That is to say the material life must be disciplin-
 plined from the point of view of the spiritual. The day of the נסח
 came תרת שבת בראשית and not מאחרת שבת השבועית למחרת היום
 to show thereby that the תבואת הארץ which Israel might at any time possess
 must be viewed as gifts from God who takes special delight in Israel whom He
 guides נסח even as the miraculous event of the Exodus symbolizes;
 not as the ^{natural} national result of one's own effort which the שבת בראשית, signifies

דברי חז"ל as it does the commemoration of the תנוחת השבועות, might suggest. 1

The close ^{these are} of the manners of man. The כהן in wearing the
 בגדי כהונה, had to be mindful of the responsibilities of his dignified office.
 They were to be לזכרון לפני ה' and therefore always לבגדי כהן. 2.

Let not man become a slave to earthly things. The עבד
 was made punishable by the Torah because of his slavishness to the things
 of this life. when therefore the seventh period of his service comes he must
 go forth לחפשי, no matter how desirous he may be to cleave to his material
 possessions. (אמר אדוני, אמר אשתי ואמר בני 3)

Man must find a helpmate that is fit for him. Arama's homi-
 ical genius finds in this the story of the combination of נחש and אדם
 and of man. According to man's disposition for things, and this his
 position is given to him at birth, will be the degree of his attainment of
 his spiritual life. Only he who is נחש, that is with the proper disposition,
 will in the end find the נחש that is נחש. 4. This sounds very much like
 allegorization of Philo. It is more probable however that the influence of

- 1 שער 67
- 2 שער 51
- 3 שער 67
- 4 שער 7

Kabbala is responsible for this interpretation.

The $\text{הַיָּדֵי הַיְּמִינִי}$ represents the strain^{ing} of body after life ^{has} disapproved by the לֵב . 1

Clean speech is the result of deep thinking. The לֵב (Talmud, לֵב in order to cure ^{him} ~~itself~~ is commanded to go outside of the camp. The thought here is that, man, in order to aspire to ^{divine} ~~give~~ things, must be as much as possible free from the evils suggested by society. 2

The commandment concerning לֵב Arama makes another lesson ^{exhort} ~~exhorting~~ man to reduce the bodily demands to a minimum. Only when the the soul is allowed to act freely will the acts of man (לֵב) be motivated towards the highest good. 2

The interpretation of the passage in Aboth about the creation of the world, לֵב , is occasion for much philosophic speculation. Already לֵב , לֵב , לֵב have tried their hands at this Talmudic passage but none of them satisfy the homiletical taste of Arama. He makes the Ten Words stand for the ten qualities or Causes by which all things in the physical world are known. They are: the essence of a thing; its quality; its quantity; its place; its time; its condition; its relation; its function; its receptiveness; its attributes. לֵב for instance symbolizes the לֵב or the essence of things; and לֵב represents ^{their} ~~its~~ places. Just as the לֵב teach the ten causative factors in the world of natural law, so the ten commandments stand for the ten miraculous ways by means of which Israel is related to and guided by God. 4. It is all of course far-fetched and rationalistic; the result of reading into an innocent folk legend speculations.

- 1 לֵב
- 2 לֵב
- 3 לֵב
- 4 לֵב

of a comlex and complicated system.

Although gold under ordinary conditions is known not to burn in fire, Moses was nevertheless ~~was~~ able to burn the ~~277, 4, 8~~ because he knew the secrets of Chemistry ^{according to} which the fire when containing a certain substance could burn even gold. 1.

Do not pray with a feeling of having done ~~acts~~ of unquestionable good, on the basis of which you expect your prayers to be answered.

יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּהִיָּה עַל הַיָּדָא means therefore according to Arama that man must never feel certain of being positively righteous. The knowledge of having been righteous (27) must not be made the basis of a prayerful petition to God.

Many more samples might be brought to illustrate his homotele. It is not necessary however to duplicate these.

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