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"Maimonides and Spinoza on Prophecy"

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The highest faculty of man in the Maimonidean system is the intellect, through which man may actualize himself, achieve Divine Providence and become immortal. Man is endowed with reason only potentially. However, through study and moral preparation he actualizes the potential and attains the true form "Man".

Prophecy involves this process. It is the highest form of cognition man may attain. Maimonides considered the prophetic phenomenon as an integral part of the order of Nature. It is not a miraculous experience. Man is in a state of prophecy when he has activated his reason to the highest degree possible. The element of Divine Will in prophecy is no greater than it is in any natural event. Since the world operates by Design and not Necessity, it is possible for God to suspend any Natural Law. However, the suspension of the natural process will never occur, since the universe is the result of Divine Wisdom. Therefore, when one is duly prepared Prophecy will invariably follow. The possibility of Divine Interference is only a theoretical concession to the demands of religion.

In addition to the intellect, the imaginative faculty also plays a vital role in prophecy. Maimonides makes both the bearers of prophetic inspiration.

The imaginative faculty makes it possible for the intellect to achieve truths unattainable by syllogistic steps. However, when the imagination combines with the intellect and receives prophetic influence, it is qualitatively different from the normal imagination.

Prophecy is for Maimonides the superlative in the cognitive process of Man. In this state the loftiest concepts attainable by mortals, are perceived. These ideas possess a truth sui generis. During the prophetic experience the prophet feels an absolute certainty which stems from absolute intellectual knowledge.

Spinoza, on the other hand, relegates prophecy to the realm of the imagination in its most negative connotation. One cannot gain wisdom or knowledge of truth from prophecy or the prophets. they only taught certain rules of moral conduct which would establish and maintain a particular state and a particular form of government. Since imaginative ideas are only reactions to partial, disjointed, erroneous perceptions, and since prophets were distinguished only by their extraordinary imagination not by their intellect, it naturally follows that prophetic knowledge is in the lowest category. Prophecy was significant only for the contemporaries of the prophets since their imaginative reactions (the prophetic message) were the result of their immediate environment and pos-

essed moral validity only for them (i.e. those ~~for~~^{to} whom the message was addressed).

MAIMONIDES AND SPINOZA ON PROPHECY

Submitted by

Eugene Mihaly.

sition... From the Introduction to this treatise you may learn that its principal object is.....to answer questions raised in respect to Prophecy and to the knowledge of God... I have mentioned, explained and demonstrated the subject (natural philosophy, metaphysics, etc.) only because it...explains some principle with respect to prophecy.²

In viewing the overall scheme of the Moreh, one is again struck by the centrality of the chapters on Prophecy which appear as the connecting link between the Existence and Unity of God and his creation, which precede the discussion of Prophecy, and Providence, Free Will and the Commandments, which follow it.³ Prophecy, insofar as it represents the connecting link between man and God and thus attests to His active presence in a well ordered though created universe, is the fulcrum of the entire Maimonidean System.

2. Moreh II, 2 Note: It is perhaps of further interest in probing for the aim and central motivation of the Guide that though the subjects to be explained by Maimonides include as well *מלאכי ברוח* and *מלאכי חסידים* in addition to *מלאכי חסידים* since he states, *והוא שיהיה זה המלאך המורה* nevertheless, it is only with reference to Prophecy that he states *הוא שיהיה זה המלאך המורה*. Furthermore, in enumerating — — — — — the essential problems the clarification of which necessitate the digressions, one may find the implication that *מלאכי ברוח* and *מלאכי חסידים* are also treated only as introductory to Prophecy or, at any rate, insofar as they are necessary for the proper understanding of Prophecy.

3. The chapters concerning themselves directly with prophecy are found in the Moreh II, 32-48. However, the first seven chapters of Book I ~~II~~ also concern themselves in a broader sense with prophecy. The thirty-first chapter of Book II of the Moreh is the transitional discussion from creation to Prophecy. Maimonides discusses in this chapter the reasons given for the observance of the Sabbath (Ex. xx, 2 and Deut.V, 15) and concludes that the dual

However, whether Prophecy is the key to the understanding of the Maimonidean system as expounded in the Moreh or not, it undoubtedly occupies a most prominent rôle and its investigation must be of interest to any religionist to whom prophecy represents a challenging reality. For Maimonides, prophecy was not a historic curiosity, an event in a book without vital implications for his life and thought as it later came to be for a Spinoza.⁴ Prophecy was a reality to be reckoned with; a phenomenon which presented disturbing problems bearing on the validity and truth of Judaism, inexorably intertwined with the finality of Mosaic Law and the authority of scriptures.

3. (concluded)

purpose for rest is, "(1) That we might confirm the true theory, that of the creation, which at once and clearly leads us to the theory of the existence of God. (2) That we might remember how kind God has been in freeing us from the burden of the Egyptians. The Sabbath is therefore a double blessing: it gives us correct notions and also promotes the well being of our bodies." Thus, in this chapter, Maimonides briefly summarizes his entire previous discussion - The existence and unity of God, creation and not eternity of the universe. Yet, though there was creation, there is also order and causality for He rested on the Seventh Day (aimed at the occasionalism and contingentism of the Kalam). Nevertheless, God freed Israel from the Egyptians, i.e., there is room for Divine intervention which permits the phenomenon of prophecy; negatively, at any rate. We can thus understand the phrase *כלל מלכות מלכות* which presents such difficulty to Abarbanel, as referring to the Sabbath. The order would thus be 1. The Existence and Unity of God. 2. Creation. 3. Sabbath, i.e., Order and Causality which nevertheless leaves room for God's leading Israel out of bondage and thus the Divine contact with the prophets. See Abarbanel's lengthy comment. cf. Moreh II, 13 - End of first theory. This chapter will be more fully analyzed later in our study. It is also of interest that the double blessing of the Sabbath includes the two prerequisites for prophecy.

Prophecy, accordingly, is a form of cognition which constantly manifests itself. The ^{role} which is the essence of prophecy, continuously emanates from its source and Maimonides is compelled to find reasons why prophetic insight is absent in Israel. He attributes it to the sad and oppressed state of the Jewish people in exile. The essential, intrinsic elements of prophecy are always present. However, conditions in exile prevent the would-be bearer of the prophetic emanation, its receiver, from attaining the necessary prerequisites, i. e., intellectual and moral perfection. "In the Messianic period, may it soon commence, prophecy will therefore again be in our midst as has been promised by God."⁵

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4. M. Joel, Spinoza's Theologishah Politischer Traktat, p. 17.
 5. Moreh II, 36 end. The problem of whether prophecy is necessarily restricted to Palestine and further, whether only the Jewish people are qualified to receive the prophetic hinges on this discussion, and Moreh, II, 45. In his Iggeret Teman he argues against "the vulgar view that no non-Jew can be a prophet." "We believe a prophet or we reject him only on the ground of the nature of his prophecy and not on the ground of his descent." In the Moreh II, 45, Maimonides places all the non-Jews in the second of the Eleven categories of prophecy and states concerning this degree that it is not a degree of prophecy "properly so called", but only "a step leading to prophecy" ^{אבל ראוי להקדים ויגדלם ויגדלם הם מעלות אלה}. But even if we accept the above statement as conclusive, i.e., that a non-Jew cannot rise above the second degree of prophecy - it would merely indicate that the fulfillment of all 613 commandments are prerequisites for true prophecy and not only the Noachism laws. So here again, as with the geographical limitations of Palestine, the lack is not in an essential element but in preparation. Compare the view of Halevi in Cuzari I, 95, 115 and II, 14. Also H. A. Wolfson, Halevi and Maimonides on Prophecy, pp. 61, 73 f.

A detailed investigation of the Malmonidean theory of prophecy with its internal and external stresses and tensions is, therefore, of more than historic interest. Philosophic (i.e., the psychological roots and the part of the various faculties of the soul) and religious (i.e., whether prophecy has an element of divine will or is a purely natural process determined by laws of necessary causality) aspects of the phenomenon of prophecy are treated by Maimonides with both as vital realities which must be reconciled. Halevi hardly touches upon the former since right action as prescribed by law is sufficient preparation for prophecy which emanates directly from God without an intermediary. Only the religious element of prophecy, the concept that it is a direct act of God's will is of pertinence to Halevi.⁶

For Spinoza, on the other hand, prophecy in its religious aspect had no reality except as a subject for ironic treatment. The "conclusions on the subject must be drawn solely from scripture... And since there are, as far as I know, no prophets now alive, we have no alternative but to read the books of prophets departed, taking care the while not to reason from metaphor or to ascribe anything to our authors which they do not themselves distinctly state."⁷

6. Cuzari, I, 42: I, 79; I, 98; II, 49; III, 23; V, 30.

7. Spinoza, A. Theologico - Political Treatise, translated by R.H.M. Elwes, London, 1905, Chap. I, p.14; also see note 5 p.4. Spinoza is extremely zealous not to explain prophecy except on scriptural bases and by insisting on its ~~super-natural~~ ^{imaginative} character eliminates it completely from the realm of reality and relegates it to a problem in scripture. cf. Joel, Spinoza's Theologisch - Politischer Traktat, p. 18.

We shall have occasion to return to this subject later in our study and draw the full implications of the above statement which is a major key in understanding Spinoza's treatment of prophecy and prophets. For the moment it is sufficient to point out that Maimonides makes the greatest contribution of value for the modern religionist on the subject of prophecy, since he approaches it from a dual point of vantage, both real and vital for his system of thought, and reconciles the two in a manner which best demonstrates his methodological approach in points of tension between Judaism and philosophy.

Maimonides begins his discussion of prophecy by citing three views concerning it, corresponding to the different opinions with regard to the Eternity or Non-Eternity of the Universe.⁸

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8. All quotations are from the Friedländer translation of the Guide, except when otherwise specified. Moreh II, 32. The three views on creation referred to are in Moreh II, 13 and are: (1) "The theory of all philosophers...(who) assume that a certain substance has co-existed with God from eternity..." (2) "Those who follow the laws of Moses...i.e., Everything except God has been brought by Him into existence out of non-existence". (3) "This Universe has always been the same in the past and will be the same eternally". (Aristotelean view of the eternity of the Universe). The comparison of the views on Eternity and Prophecy presents serious difficulty since they apparently do not correspond either in order or content. The only common element is the member (three opinions in each instance) which is a weak comparison, indeed. In this commentary to the Moreh, Abarbanel attempts to reconcile this difficulty by finding others common elements, i.e., creatio ex nihilo with the view that prophecy requires no previous preparation; the Aristotelean view on the eternity of the universe which obviates miracles finds its correspondence in the philosophic view on prophecy, since it makes of prophecy a purely natural phenomenon; and finally, the Platonic view of an eternally co-existing substance is equated with the Torah view on prophecy, since, in both instances, God does not create ex nihilo but out of a previously prepared substance, however, Divine intervention is essential in both. Schem Tob, on the other hand, is satisfied that the comparison refers only to the number:

כי צורת הדברים הנבואיים כצורת
הנבואיים הנבואיים והנבואיים...
הנבואיים הנבואיים והנבואיים...

First: The ignorant view, i. e., "God selects any person he pleases, inspires him with the spirit of prophecy and entrusts him with a mission..." Second: The philosophic view, i.e., "That prophecy is a certain faculty of men in a state of perfection, which can only be obtained by study.....if a person perfect in his intellectual and moral faculties and also perfect as far as possible in his imaginative faculty prepares himself in the manner which will be described, he must become a prophet; for prophecy is a natural faculty of man. It is impossible that a man who has the capacity for prophecy should prepare himself for it without attaining it. Third: The Torah view, This view "coincides with the opinions of the philosophers in all points except one. For we believe that, even if one has the capacity for prophecy and has duly prepared himself, it may yet happen that he does not actually prophesy. It is in that case that the will of God (that withholds from him the use of the faculty)"

8. (concluded)

of. Z. Diesendruck, Maimonides' Lehre von der Prophetie, p.5. He finds the solution of Abarbanel unsatisfactory on the ground that the correspondence of the Maimonidean view of prophecy, with the Platonic view on creation, as Abarbanel suggests, is not tenable. In the beginning of his discussion, Diesendruck tentatively suggests that Maimonides' view is in complete agreement with the "view of the philosophers", and, therefore, would hardly correspond to the Platonic theory on creation. However, later in his analyses he subscribes to Abarbanel's solution, since he finally concludes that Maimonides radically differs from Aristotle in his prophetic theory.

In analyzing the first view we find the following elements inherent in it: Prophecy is of a miraculous character, which stems directly from God and therefore no preparation is necessary for receiving this prophetic emanation, for miracles are not suspended due to the lack of preparation of the object. God can change the nature which he created, at will, and can thus choose whomever He will, whether he be young or old, wise or foolish, and endow him with prophecy. The complete stress in this *דבורה מן השמים* is the Divine will, the source and inspiration of prophecy, but the preparation of the individual upon whom the divine inspiration is to descend is immaterial. Since prophecy is in the category of miracles dependent entirely on the will of God, He grants it to whomever and whenever He chooses. Another element in this view is that its proponents conceive of prophecy as coming directly from God and not through an intermediary agent which again obviates the necessity of intellectual preparation.

Accordingly, as we shall see, Maimonides is forced to reject this view since he would deny the miraculous character of prophecy, and also on the basis that prophecy comes to men through the Active Intellect which acts as the intermediary. However, Maimonides would accept the implication that Prophecy comes from God though not quite as directly and not in the same sense as this naive opinion would have us believe.⁹

9. (see footnote page 9)

The second or philosophic view maintains that prophecy is the perfection of the nature of man and consequently a completely natural process attainable by anyone qualified through preparation. It follows the same course as any actualization of a potential in nature. For, if prophecy were not a potential in the human species it would be impossible for any individual to have attained it. Therefore, as in any other natural phenomenon, if there is no internal or external hindrance, i.e., defective constitution, or lack of preparation, the process will reach its natural completion. The ultimate perfection of the species, i.e., prophecy, is, of course, not attained by every individual of the class, but it is impossible, being a part of the order of nature, that at least one member of the species should not have attained it. And, since prophecy is the ultimate in the actualization of man, it involves the perfection of all his faculties. It follows, therefore, that a person perfect in his moral and intellectual faculties, and also perfect in his imaginative faculty must attain prophecy necessarily. There is no element of divine interference in this view. Prophecy or non-prophecy depends entirely on the preparation of the individual. Whereas, in the first view the entire emphasis is on the

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9. Moreh II, 48: "It is clear that everything produced must have an immediate cause which produced it; that cause again a cause, and so on till the first cause, viz., the Will and Decree of God is reached. The prophets therefore omit the intermediate causes and ascribe the production of an individual thing directly to God, saying that God has made it." cf. Moreh II, 34 end. also I, 72, or the revealing, opening phrase of III, 32; השכלות האלוהית בלתי נפרדת מהשכלות האנושית Contrast this to the view of Halevi, who ascribes the order and composition which are observed in animals and plants and in the spheres to the direct action. This view closely approximates the position of the Kalam.

Divine Will and His active participation in Prophecy, the second view makes of it a natural process whose realization requires the preparation of the individual. In the first view, the sine qua non is the *הכרח*, while, in the philosophic view, it is the *הכרח*.

The philosopher's concept of prophecy involves, therefore, the following features: (1) The state of prophecy follows by natural necessity if certain conditions are present. It is a natural process. (2) The actualization of man in the superlative degree is achieved by the union of the Soul with the Active Intellect, the lowest of the ten Intelligences whose sphere of operation in the Sublunar world, and this constitutes prophecy, i.e., it is effected indirectly by God (as a natural process) through an intermediary.¹⁰ (3) The preparation necessary for prophecy involves the possession from birth of a certain natural perfection, the perfection through training in moral and practical virtues, and the attainment of intellectual perfection by means of instruction.

The third view, the one termed by Maimonides the *הכרח* presents many far-reaching implications and must be analyzed in detail since it is a summary of the religious aspect of the Maimonidean theory of prophecy. The opening phrase that "it coincides with the opinion of the philosophers in all points except one, i.e., preparation is an essential prerequisite for prophecy, but even if one has met all the preparatory conditions God may prevent him from prophesying, superficially, leads to the conclu-

10. Moreh I, 68; also see Cuzari I, 87; V, 2, 4, 10, 12.
cf. Wolfson, Halevi and Maimonides on Prophecy, pp.347-353 - for an outline of the philosophic view of prophecy.

sion that essentially there is no difference between the philosophers and the Torah view. For the element of divine intervention is not present in prophecy but in non-prophecy. When one achieves the prophetic state as a result of preparation he follows a process inherent in nature, and its attainment is not the result of a specific Divine Will. Divine Intervention plays a rôle only in denying prophecy to certain qualified individuals. Maimonides therefore continues

אשר הוא מציין, כי ה' אינו מוסיף להוסיף, אלא שיש לו חלק בזה

referring to the Divine Will which occasionally may prevent prophecy. It alone is of a miraculous character, but the positive achievement of the prophetic state is, as in the philosophic view, a wholly natural event. Thus, it would appear that the third view not only fails to combine the essential elements of the first two, i.e., the *נבואה* and the *חזון* but adds nothing to the opinion of the Philosophers.¹¹

That Maimonides considered the miraculous element in prophecy only the admission of the possibility that a natural causal process may be suspended by the intervention of the Divine Will, becomes eminently clear from the scriptural examples which he cites. The incident concerning Jeroboam when "his hand which he put forth against him dried up, so that he could not draw it back to him", or when the Amalekites were smitten with blindness, through the intercession of Elisha,¹² are interpreted

12. I Kings XIII, 4 and II Kings VI, 18. Whether these were instances of Direct Divine Intervention or are cited here only to illustrate that the miraculous consists of the suspension of a natural process hinges on the Maimonidean theory of miracles, which will be discussed.

by Maimonides as a direct Divine Intervention to stop a natural, causal chain. The normal use of one's hand or the power of vision are natural processes which, though ultimately traceable to God through a chain of causes,¹³ yet, are within the order of nature. When there is no immediate cause to which we may attribute the suspension of the normal function of the organ, it is then a miraculous event. So that the miracle occurs not in the positive act, but in its denial. Similarly, with prophecy; the *נביא* in its miraculous manifestation becomes a positive factor when, after due preparation, natural causality demands that the individual prophesy and yet the expected result does not follow. The state of prophecy remains, therefore, as in the opinion of the philosophers, a part of the causal nexus of nature.

In this instance, as in the treatment of other problems, Maimonides subtly reveals a major wave of his philosophical System. Even a superficial study of the Guide reveals that one of the major tasks of the work is to guard against two extreme views as represented by the rigid, necessary causality of Aristoteleanism, on the one hand, and the thoroughgoing occasionalism and contingentism of the Kalam, on the other.

13. See Note 9, also Moreh I, 69: "A certain production has its agens and so on and on until we arrive at a first agens which is the true agens throughout all its intervening links...In this sense everything occurring in the universe, although directly produced by nearer causes, is ascribed to the Creator." Note the entire chapter.

The Kalam denied the existence of an objective order of phenomena and thus sought to eliminate any principle of causality except that of God, who was constantly adjoining qualities to atomic substances. No object could be said to exist in its own right. Objectivity was reduced to Divine caprice. The analysis of the propositions of the Kalam by Maimonides amply demonstrates that their position was absolutely untenable and unacceptable.¹⁴ In their extreme zealously to safeguard the absolute omnipotence and omniscience of God both physical science and common sense were deprived of the assurance of an independent order of cohesion essential for a calculable universe. Every moment was for them a new creation having no causal relationship with the preceding event. Creation, for the Kalam, was, therefore, a constant event following in each instant the direct will of God. Knowledge, as well as phenomena, were atomized.

14. The twelve propositions of the Kalam and their proofs for creatio ex nihilo, which is then followed by the proofs for the Existence and unity of God, are analyzed and refuted in the first part of the Moreh, Chap. LXXIII to LXXVI.

In accordance with this principle they assert that when 'man is perceived to move a pen, it is not he who has really moved it; the motion produced in the pen is an accident which God has created in the pen ... There does not exist anything to which an action could be ascribed; the real agens is God. In short, most of the Mutakallemim believe that it must never be said that one thing is the cause of another."¹⁵ Maimonides concludes this proposition with a comment, typical of his attitude, "But I, together with all rational persons apply to those theories the words, 'Will you mock at Him as you mock at man?' for their words are indeed nothing but mockery."

In discussing the method of the Kalam who prove the existence of God from Creation, and thus make Existence dependent on the demonstrations for Creation, Maimonides comments, "Especially when I see that the proofs of the philosophers are based on those visible properties of things, which can only be ignored by persons possessing certain preconceived notions, while the Mutakallemim establish their arguments on propositions which are to such an extent contrary to the actual state of things as to compel these arguers to deny altogether the existence of the Law of Nature."¹⁶

15. Moreh I, 73 Proposition VI.

16. Moreh I, 71.

A world of complete chaos, dependent on Divine caprice, would be for Maimonides an impossible monstrosity and he is therefore constantly on guard against the dangers inherent in such a world view, as will be demonstrated.

The Aristotelean view, on the other extreme, maintains that the "Universe in its totality has never been different nor will it ever change...time and motion are eternal, permanent and have neither beginning or end; the sublunary world has always been the same...The whole arrangement, therefore, both above and here below, is never disturbed or interrupted and nothing is produced contrary to the laws or ordinary course of Nature.... Hence it follows that this universe has always been the same in the past, and will be the same in the future."¹⁷ The universe is subject to a rigorous, unchangeable causality and order, which operates by necessity, i.e., if a certain cause exists and there is no internal or external hindrance, it must necessarily produce an effect in accordance with the order of nature. The Universe, in the view of Aristotle, is a closed system, not subject to genesis and destruction. The sublunar world, which includes the transient elements, merely combines successively with different forms; when one is removed, another is assumed, but has always remained the same, and, more vitally, must necessarily remain so. Any change is logically inconceivable.

17. Moreh II, 13 Third Theory. Maimonides lists the Aristotelian propositions in the Introduction to Part II of the Moreh and devotes the following chapters to their analysis.

Maimonides was thus confronted by two diametrically opposed points of view and though his entire orientation tended in the direction of the philosophers, their position had to be modified to permit a Torah view with its necessary suppositions or prophecy, revelation, miracles and the other phenomena implied in it. The traditional Jewish position based on the idea of an active God who has a positive rôle in the world could not fit itself into a rigid Aristoteleanism. The solution offered by the Kalam is indeed a "radical cure of the malady"¹⁸ but in effecting the cure they destroyed the entire order of the universe. True that their arguments involved principles "which afforded support to the belief in miracles and to various other doctrines," but "when they laid down their propositions (they) did not investigate the true properties of things; first of all, they considered what must be the properties of the things which should yield proof for or against a certain creed; and when this was found, they asserted that the thing must be endowed with those properties...Properties of things cannot adapt themselves to our opinions but our opinions must be adapted to the existing properties."¹⁹

18. Moreh I, 71.

19. Ibid.

The elimination of the principle of causality and ascribing every moment to a new creation offers a very easy solution and permits the most dogmatic religious point of view. However, the rationalism of Maimonides shied away from such an extremist position. He did accept some of the conclusions of the Kalam but on totally different ground, "without ignoring the laws of nature and without being forced to contradict facts which have been clearly perceived."²⁰

To anticipate somewhat we may summarize his position as follows: There is order and system in the universe. The world operates in accordance with natural law. In this respect Maimonides is in complete agreement with Aristotle. His Judaism, however, dictates a slight deviation, namely: that the world was created ex nihilo, and secondly, that there exists the possibility of Divine Intervention, if God should will it. In actuality, the suspension of the natural process does not occur since it is contrary to the Will of God. But the implications of the Torah demand the admission of the possibility of the suspension of natural law. The essential difference between the rigid Aristotileonism and Maimonides, once creation has been granted, reduces itself to a fine point in causality...According to Aristotle it operates with absolute necessity, while to Maimonides, though once

20.

Ibid. end of chapter.

the world was created, it functions, in accordance with a Natural Law, which has an intrinsic necessity, yet it is not absolute, for it is, in a sense, dependent on the Will of God, insofar as it is possible for Him to interfere. A religious orientation cannot be conceived without an active Deity and demands this concession, which is an irreducible minimum.

Maimonides accepts the most important conclusions of the Kalam, creatio ex nihilo, and an active, creative God, but he does so without destroying the order of the universe and without making of it an incomprehensible chaos. There was creation but it was followed by rest.²¹ God created the world and endowed it with law in accordance with which it operates. He remains active and is not reduced to a mere logical principle, not as in the Kalam, by creating each moment directly and thus making knowledge impossible, but by positing the possibility of His intervention, if He so desired it.

21. See Note 3, page 2. The significance of Moreh II, 31 which deals with the Sabbath and is referred to as the ענין השבת is, in the light of our discussion, much clearer. Causality and Order in the Universe are possible only if the creative act is not a continuous one, i.e., God created for six days and then He rested. This is an essential principle and is therefore the third important principle following the Existence of God and Creation. The "rest", however, also contains a modification since the possibility of action remains. All this is implied in the chapter.

This modification in the Aristotelean position is many times explicitly stated by Maimonides and is an essential in understanding his approach to creation, miracles and prophecy, as we shall presently demonstrate. The passage "There is nothing new under the sun"²² in the sense that "no new creation takes place in any way and under any circumstances, expresses the general opinion of our Sages...Even those who understand the words 'new heavens and a new earth' in their literal sense, hold that the heavens, which will in future be formed, have already been created and are in existence and that for this reason the present tense "remain" is used and not the future "will remain"...They mean, perhaps, to say that the natural laws by which the promised future condition of Israel will be effected, have been in existence since the days of the creation, and in that they are perfectly correct."

"When I, however, said that no prophet ever announced 'a permanent change of any of its properties,' I intended to except²³ miracles. For, although the rod was turned into a serpent (etc.)...these changes were not permanent, they have not

22. Eccles. I, 9.

23. *אין מלאכה מן המלאכה* Not to think mistakenly that miracles do represent a permanent change. The implication is that miracles are not a change in the whole order of nature, for such a change is impossible.

become a physical property. On the contrary, the Universe since continues its regular course. This is my opinion; this should be our belief....Our sages, however, said strange things as regards miracles²⁴...that the miracles are to some extent also natural; for they say, when God created the universe with its present physical properties, He made it part of these properties that they should produce certain miracles at certain times, and the sign of a prophet consisted in the fact that God told him to declare when a certain thing will take place, but the thing itself was effected according to the fixed laws of nature. If this is really the meaning of the passage referred to, it testifies to the greatness of the author and shows he held it to be impossible²⁵ that there should be a change in the laws of nature or a change in the will of God (as regards the physical properties of things) after they have once been established." ²⁶

24.

Compare: Commentary on the Mishna, Abot, **K**, 6.

Following Munk's translation, the implication is not that the view of the sages contradicts what he previously stated, i. e., that there is no real change in a miraculous-phenomenon, as would appear in Ibn Tibbon's, ^{ספ' 1/4} but that the Sages.....present another explanation which puts miracles in the order of nature, cf. Munk Guide II, 29 p. 224. "A la manière les docteurs se sont exprimés sur les miracles, d'une manière fort extraordinaire."

25.

והיו קשה בדיון מאוד שיש להם את המעלה בדיון אלו יתחבב רצון
אולי שהיוני בן.

26. Moreh II, 29.

This chapter, which begins by explaining allegorically apocalyptic and other passages uttered by the prophets, which imply changes of nature, leads to the following conclusions:

1. That no prophet has ever predicted the destruction of the universe or a change in its present condition or a permanent change in any of its properties.
2. That miracles also represent no permanent change but that *ה' יתברך נס'ו*
3. He further cites the opinion of the Sages that miracles are inherent in the order of nature, i.e., when God created the world He made it part of the natural properties of things that at a certain time they act in a way different than usual, i.e., miraculously. So that, after creation, there is no change at all either in the properties of things or in the Will of God.

Maimonides sums up his discussion on miracles in the following words:

"We have thus clearly stated and explained our opinion that we agree with Aristotle in one half of his theory. For we believe that this universe remains with the same properties with which the Creator has endowed it and that none of these will ever be changed except by way of miracles in some individual instances, although the Creator has the

power to change the whole Universe, to annihi-
late it, or to remove any of its properties.²⁷
The Universe had, however, a beginning and com-
mencement, for when nothing was yet in exist-
ence except God, His wisdom decreed that the
Universe be brought into existence at a cer-
tain time... This is our opinion and the basis
of our religion."²⁸

We thus have a clear and explicit statement of the
Maimonidean modification of Aristotle, as was previously
pointed out. The universe operates in accordance with Natur-
al Law, which never changes, however, due to the fact that the
world is a result of Divine Will, the possibility of His Inter-
ference exists. This is the concession that Religion demands.²⁹

27. אדם שיש יתאף לו, יתאף זמנית בלא כל צדדיהן או צדדיהן וישיב טעם קצת

28. Moreh, II, 29.

29. Moreh II, 25: "If we were to accept the eternity of
the world as taught by Aristotle, that everything in
the universe is the result of fixed laws, that Nature
does not change, and that there is nothing supernatur-
al, we should be necessarily in opposition to the foun-
dation of our religion, היה הוא סוגר הדת מדיקרה ומכנה
זבל אור בהכרח... ודבר כי עם האמת חזון העולם יקלו הואילא לא
אפשר וזהו הדבר הקליל וקליל וקליל לא שיהא אפשר בזה הענין

Whether Divine Intervention ever occurred, i.e., whether it is only a theoretic possibility which the Religious view is granted, or whether there are actually historic instances of such suspension of the Natural Order, is again a subtle point in the Guide.³⁰ Miracles, as commonly defined, would, of course, serve as the best examples of Divine Intervention, and the many miraculous events in Biblical Literature would demand a positive reply to the question of the actuality of the Suspension of Natural Law. But they are analyzed in a manner which deprives them of all supernatural quality and thus with all the "miracles", Direct Divine Intervention remains but a possibility, and though Maimonides is often equivocal on this subject and uses esoteric terminology, yet, upon analysis of the various passages, his point of view emerges with eminent clarity.

30. Throughout the Moreh, there are expressions which would lead one to the conclusion that there are no exceptions to Natural Law. However, they are usually followed by some equivocal statement which qualifies the rigidity of the natural order and leaves the question as to whether there actually was Divine Intervention open to question, as we shall demonstrate. One apparently unequivocal statement is found in Moreh III, 25, *אין אנו יודעים כי יתכן שיהיה אחרת*

[illegible]

Another such phrase is found in Moreh III, 24: "For a miracle cannot prove that which is impossible, it is useful only as a confirmation of that which is possible." cf. Hil. Yesode Hatorah VII f., VIII, 3.

First, Maimonides disposes of prophetic utterances which predict a change not effected by any natural cause by giving them allegoric meaning.

Other "miracles", i.e., the rod was turned into a serpent, the water into blood, etc., were not "permanent changes", nor was there involved a "change in their physical properties." However, they do apparently represent a temporary change and thus a hiatus in the natural chain of causality. It is interesting to note in this connection, the significant passage:³¹

וְכִיָּא שְׁמַיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא
אִיךְ טַבַּח בְּנֵי אֱדָם דָּא יִשְׁרָאֵל הָאֵל עַל 33 הַמִּשְׁכָּה וְלֹא אֲמַרְתָּ מִכֵּן שָׁאֵל מֵאֵיךְ
שְׁמִינִי טַבַּח בְּנֵי אֱדָם קֶשֶׁת עַל הָאֵל יִשְׁרָאֵל, אִיךְ הוּא אֶפְסֵךְ וְנִפְסָךְ הָאֵל הַיְכָלָא
אֵלָּא שְׁמֵא דְּאֵל הַיְכָלָא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא
32. אֵלָּא שְׁמֵא דְּאֵל הַיְכָלָא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא

Therefore, though the change does not occur in the species as a whole, we would nevertheless be justified in concluding that individual changes do take place. But when the individual "miracles" are treated, they are either rationalized in such a way that no supernatural quality is discernable, or are themselves placed in the order of nature as part of the original creation.^{33.}

31. Moreh III, 32

32. Shem Tov comments on this passage. הַיְכָלָא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא
הַיְכָלָא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא
הַיְכָלָא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא דְּמִיָּא

33. See note 24, page 20.

The analysis of the Sun's standing still at Gibeon as "that day appeared to the people at Gibeon as the longest day in the summer" is a clear instance of the manner in which^a miracle is completely psychologized.³⁴ When, however, the miracle

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34. Moreh II, 35 - *וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַמּוּל שְׂבוּסֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ הָיוּ וְכִי הָיָה בְּיָמָיו בְּיָמָיו שֶׁהָיָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה*
 The comparison of Mosaic miracles and miracles of other prophets in this chapter is a good illustration of the method employed by Maimonides. First, the major differences are established that, whereas, Moses performed his miracles in the presence of the entire people and before friends and enemies alike, the wonders wrought by other prophets, or for them, were only in the presence of a few individuals, implying that despite the difference in the audiences before whom the miracles appear, they nevertheless involve in both instances an event outside the realm of natural causality. But as soon as this admission is granted it is immediately qualified by positing another possibility, i.e., that it was no miracle at all, but only appeared as one at the moment. We thus see again, in this instance, that Maimonides constantly strives to safeguard the order of Nature, being interested only in the possibility of its suspension, even when it is limited to individual instances. There is a further significant point in the statement:
וְכִי הָיָה בְּיָמָיו שֶׁהָיָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
 i.e., that the distinction between the miracles of Moses and those of the other prophets is the same as in their prophecy. Now we shall see that the major distinction in the nature of their prophecy was that the prophecy of all others involved the imaginative faculty, while Moses prophesied by pure reason alone. It would follow, then, that the nature of their miracles, as well, would involve this qualitative difference, and consequently, the distinction in the quantity and quality of the audience actually involves a qualitative distinction in the nature of the miracle. The explanation of the miracle at Gibeon as a psychological event would then not be an alternative solution, but would be a further clarification of the original distinction and actually characterize all miracles wrought by prophets other than Moses. However, a full statement of this point involves an analysis of the imaginative faculty and its function in prophecy. We will, therefore, return to this point after that has been accomplished. This will also be our procedure with the Mosaic miracles. See note 30, p.23, with references to the occurrence of any miracle.

has to be admitted as an actual occurrence, as in the events at Mt. Sinai, there is the possibility that even those events did not involve a violation of the Natural order, but were conditions in nature from the time of creation, and thus, themselves in the order of things.

It should be noted, however, that Maimonides does not definitely commit himself to the theory that miracles are themselves in the order of nature. In spite of the appeal which this theory has, in that it safeguards a rigid order of causality, which would bring him very close to an Aristotelian necessity, he nevertheless hesitates in definitely committing himself, since the possibility of intervention in individual instances must be granted.³⁶

Our discussion of miracles leads us, therefore, to the following conclusions:

1. That God could change the whole order of nature if He so willed it, but no prophet ever predicted such a change, nor will such a change ever occur. The nature of God and creation precludes its occurrence, although it remains within His power.

35. See note 24, p. 20.

36. Nerboni, in his commentary to Moreh II, 29, expresses his thought as follows: *ואם אלה יורה אל שני עבד מלכי*
שנכסיו המפורסם, עד כאלו הוא ממש נביא, נאמן ואלו האנשים, מלכות אשכנזי בהחלטה,
ואולי יורה וזה הוא כמו שכתבו כו"מ היה מורה על מלכות חלומות

37. See note 30, p.23, and also the citation from Moreh III, 32.

2. It is possible that God did temporarily intervene in individual instances, i.e., his interference in particular cases, had it occurred or if it were to happen in the future, would not involve a change in the Natural Order, and thus no change in His will. But, even with this modification, the tendency is to psychologize the miraculous events, or, as a third alternative, place them within the order of nature.³⁸

The Maimonidean view of miracles is a clear instance of his methodology. It is a compromise position between the Kalam and Aristotle, coming as close as possible to the philosophic view, yet, satisfying the minimum essentials of a religious orientation. His attitude to the Kalam and the Aristotelian school is even more forcefully demonstrated in the discussion of creatio ex nihilo and its alternative, eternity of the universe, which is closely linked with Maimonides' theory of miracles and prophecy.³⁹

38. Moreh II, 29, as analyzed above.

39. It is essential to note that although Maimonides attempts to make the reality of prophecy independent of creation, just as he insists that the existence, unity and incorporeality of God is proved even if one believes in eternity, nevertheless, there is a decisive significance in creation for prophecy. The passages which emphasize this thought are found in Moreh I, 71:

ואלו האלה וליק גמולת דבוריו ואל בדרם קדמון 38 שאלה
דבריו בקדמון 38 דבריו

Note the comment of Shem Tov on this passage: סבבי וכל שיהיה הדבר
קדמון וקדמון וליק

Or more significantly, Moreh II, 16: כמו שכתבתי שיהיה זה גמול וליק
38 דבריו וליק שיהיה זה גמול וליק

Since creation is not absolutely demonstrable and he accepts the alternative of creation solely on the authority of the prophets, he cannot, in turn, make prophecy absolutely dependent on creation. This would be a circular

As was previously discussed, there are essentially three points of view concerning creation. The platonic theory is only a modification and is of little importance in the Maimonidean system.

1. The view of the Kalam, that creatio ex nihilo can be absolutely demonstrated, and furthermore, that Divine creation is a constant process which negates any objective causality and denies the entire order of nature.

2. The view of Aristotle, that the universe is eternal.

3. The Torah view is interpreted by Maimonides, that there was creatio ex nihilo. Maimonides accepts the conclusion of the Kalam that there was creation, but accepts it on totally different grounds.⁴⁰ The followers of the Kalam maintain that they proved creation while Maimonides repeatedly insists that neither creation nor non-creation can be demonstrated

39. (concluded)

process and of questionable logical validity. Furthermore, prophecy is essential for the truth of the Torah and just as Maimonides insists that the existence of God be demonstrated independently of creation, so must the reality of the phenomenon of prophecy be considered independent of the philosophically problematic creation. So that in its philosophic aspects, Maimonides is interested only in establishing the possibility of creation. After that possibility is philosophically permissible, tradition fills in the void and decides in favor of its alternative. The truth of prophecy which supplies the alternative of creation cannot, in itself, stem from a phenomenon which it establishes and its possibility must therefore be independently proved. However, after this logical independence is established and creation is accepted on prophetic authority, Maimonides then goes on to show their interdependence, as in Moreh II, 25.

וידוע כי אם האמת אינו נמצא יתכן האמת באם אפשר ואם לאו ואם לאו
אשר יתכן כי האמת אינו נמצא יתכן האמת באם אפשר ואם לאו ואם לאו

See note 29, p. 22.

40. See next page.

with finality. He accepts the alternative of a created universe only on the authority of the prophets.⁴¹ The lengthy discussion of the vital twenty-sixth proposition of Aristotle intends to show that Aristotle did not succeed in proving Eternity, that he himself was aware of their weakness, that this Proposition, though logically admissible, does not have the finality of rational proof of the other twenty-five, and consequently, Creation is philosophically tenable. Here again we see that on the rational level Maimonides is interested only in establishing the possibility of a religious world-view and only after that possibility is philosophically granted is the alternative accepted on the basis of tradition. The other and more essential difference with the Kalam is that once the universe has been created no permanent change may occur in Nature, as was previously discussed.⁴²

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40. Moreh I, 71. "When I shall have to treat of creation I.... shall attain the same end which everyone of the Mutakallemim had in view, yet I shall not contradict the laws of nature or reject any such part of the Aristotelian theory as has been proved to be correct."
41. Moreh II, 15 "Since I am convinced of the correctness of my method and consider either of the two theories - viz., the Eternity of the Universe and the Creation - as admissible, I accept the latter on the authority of Prophecy, which can teach things beyond the reach of philosophical speculation."
42. In listing the three views of creation in Moreh II, 13, Maimonides lists them as follows: The Torah view: The Platonic view and the Aristotelian view. The theory of the Kalam is not mentioned since in his conclusion as to the act of the creation Maimonides is in agreement with the Kalam. However, the real tension is the view of the Kalam insofar as they make creation a constant one. They carry creation to a point where all nature is destroyed and it is this aspect of their philosophy that Maimonides views as the major threat. Consequently, the points of stress and the real contrasting views are the Kalam, Aristotle and the Torah views.

Before we return to our point of departure in prophecy we may note the following conclusions which emerge from our discussion. First: The Kalam was the most objectionable system, not because of their conclusions, which, in essence were accepted by Maimonides, but because of their method, which made of this world an incomprehensible chaos. Second: Maimonides worked within the Aristotelian school, accepting their twenty-five propositions and taking issue only in the twenty-sixth, which implies eternity of the universe, while Maimonides insisted on creation. This deviation is necessitated by the implications of Judaism, and insofar as the operation of phenomena is concerned, it remains Aristotelean. The only difference is the possibility of Divine Intervention, which actually never occurs. Third: Following the creative act there can be no essential change, since the Universe is the result of Design, i.e., of Divine Will and Wisdom. Fourth: There is the possibility of a permanent change in the entire Universe but it shall never occur, since it is contrary to the Divine Will. Fifth: It is possible that God does intervene in particular instances, temporarily, but historic examples of such occurrences found in Biblical literature may be either appearances or the product of "imagination", or may be part of the order of Nature.

With the above analysis in mind we may now return to the exposition of the various views on prophecy. The comparison of the opinions concerning creation and prophecy may now be seen in a new light.⁴³ The first view, which Maimonides terms the

43. Moreh II, 32

See note 8, p. 6.

הוא אינו אלא חזון או חזיון כדכתיב ויהי חזיון

וְהַלְלוּ אֶת ה' corresponds to the opinion of the Kalam in creation. Just as in creation the prime concern of the Kalam is an insistence upon a constantly creating God, who is the only cause, so, in the first opinion on prophecy cited by Maimonides, the essential element is the Will of God, who grants prophecy to whomever he chooses, be he wise or foolish. Maimonides, as in creation, agrees with the conclusions of this view, but categorically denies the method. It is possible for God to choose whomever he wills for a prophetic mission, whether he is prepared or not, but this would involve a change in nature and therefore will never occur - not because it is impossible for Him, but because it is not His Will. After the initial creative act, the world follows the Natural Law with which it was endowed and therefore only a person who has the necessary qualifications can be the recipient of prophetic emanation.⁴⁴

44. Munk, Guide II, 32, p. 265.

"Mais nous trouvons de nombreux passages, tant des textes bibliques que des paroles de docteurs, qui tous insistent sur ce principe fondamental, à savoir, que Dieu rend prophète qui il veut, pourvu que ce soit un homme extrêmement parfait et (vraiment) supérieur; car pour les ignorants d'entre le vulgaire, cela ne nous paraît pas possible, - je veux dire que Dieu rende prophète l'un d'eux - pas plus qu'il ne serait possible qu'il rendit prophète un âne ou une grenouille. Tel est notre principe, (je veux dire) qu'il est indispensable de s'exercer et de se perfectionner, et que par là seulement naît la possibilité à laquelle se rattache la puissance divine." If a man were to prophecy without preparation, it would involve as much of a change in nature as if a frog or a donkey were to prophecy, which is possible, but will never occur.

The second opinion that prophecy follows certain preparatory steps with absolute necessity, corresponds to the Aristotelean view of the Eternity of the Universe. In both instances, a rigid causality prevails and there can be no possible interference. Accordingly, if one is sufficiently prepared it is impossible that he should not prophecy.

The third view is consistent and follows logically Maimonides' theory of creation. Since the world is the result of Design, of God's will, His interference is possible, and, therefore, even if one be properly qualified, he may not attain the prophetic state. However, just as the creative act is continuous, ~~and~~ only potentially but in actuality אלהים מתעלה והוא

i.e., the world operates through a rational causal process since it is the result of His Wisdom, so in prophecy, as it

has actually manifested itself, preparation is essential, and if one has gone through the various preparatory steps, prophecy has invariably followed.

The various difficulties raised by the commentators are easily resolved when the notion of possibility and its significance in creation, miracles and prophecy, is fully comprehended.

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45. The term אפשרות as applied to the first view and which appeared very harsh and difficult to Abarbanel, is easily understood if we understand this view as that of the Kalam. Since they destroyed the efficacy of rational processes by denying causality, אפשרות is a natural epithet and is many times applied to them. cf. Abarbanel's Commentary to Moreh II, 32.

The most serious objection raised, namely, that the view of Maimonides adds nothing to the opinion of the philosophers,⁴⁶ since the *נביא* plays a rôle only in denying prophecy, but prophecy in its positive manifestation is a purely natural process, disappears upon realization that the admission of Divine Intervention as a possibility is the major Maimonidean modification of Aristotle and this apparently insignificant point is the major wave which makes possible a Torah view. The *נביא* fits into the general scheme of the Moreh insofar as it represents an application of the overall Maimonidean system to a particular problem. This view of prophecy is actually a subtle combination of the first two - Divine Intervention of the Kalam is granted as a constant possibility, thus satisfying the demands of religion, while the causality and order of the universe of Aristotle is adopted as the actuality, i.e., the manner in which phenomena have occurred or shall occur.

The difficult examples cited by Maimonides to prove "That those who have prepared themselves may still be prevented from being prophets"⁴⁷ assume a new clarity in the light of our

46. See note 11, p. 11.

47. Moreh II, 32.

זאלען הונדערטן דרעסערטענע וואו יענא הערשט צו מען ברענגן קען
 שוין האט זיך יעדער וועגן וואס, ווייזט מען אים, וועט זיך באהאלטן וועגן
 אים צוהאלטן, קענען אים דא יעדער ביי אים, וועט זיך באהאלטן אים
 וועגן אים, אים באהאלטן שוין, וועט זיך באהאלטן אים, וועט זיך
 באהאלטן אים, אים באהאלטן אים, וועט זיך באהאלטן אים, וועט זיך

discussion. The case of Baruch, the son of Nerijah, is mentioned to prove that though "he followed Jeremiah, who prepared and instructed him, yet he hoped in vain for prophecy; comp., 'I am weary with my sighing and rest have I not found'". Here then, is a clear instance of Divine Intervention, for in spite of his possessing all the necessary qualifications, Baruch was denied prophecy. But Maimonides immediately qualifies this example by continuing: "He was then told through Jeremiah, 'Thus saith the Lord, Thus shall thou say to him, Thou seekest for the great things, do not seek.' It may perhaps be assumed that prophecy is here described as a thing 'too great' for Baruch. So also, the fact that 'her prophets did not find visions from the Lord,' (Lam. II, 4) may be considered as the result of the exile of her prophets, as will be explained". So that immediately following a clear case of a suspension of the natural process, Maimonides equivocates and explains these instances as due to lack of preparation and wholly within the order of Nature.

However, following our discussion of miracles, this equivocation is not only understandable but typical.

47. (concluded) Abarbanel along with the other commentators
noted the apparent contradiction in this passage:
הנה הובנו מהלשון הזה שהיה היה מקדשה ברוך ויסודו דבריו ואמור שמה שקר הכתובים
אלי צדי אלה הנבואי, כי יפסיק הוא שיספיק באופן אלפי שלם ולכן על הדעת הזה... כי איך
ידעתי על הדעת שישאר צדי והכנסו תחת כד צבור, ואם אמר החילוקי הראשון כדי לאלף בבז' אפרסים
מה הרצון או אמרי שדוד חילוף בדומה לצד אחד ואם יפסיק יוצא ידיו

Arbanbanel resolves the difficulty in accordance with his
own views. However, Shem Tob senses the real implications
which he expresses:

כי האמת הוא כי אין הקרה מקטן שבו כל הניה ונחיה
ואולי שהוא נאמן מצד הקבלו וכוחו מצד למינו ומצד מלאכה המורה גבולותיו תמונה באי ספק

Maimonides is interested only in allowing for the possibility of Divine suspension of Natural Causality. The actual occurrence of such miraculous phenomena, even in the individual instances, and temporarily, where no change of the Divine Will is involved, are interpreted wherever possible to fit into the natural process. So, here, with Baruch, though it may be understood as a historic instance of the suspension of the causal nexus, yet Maimonides, clinging as closely as possible to an uninterrupted Natural Order, prefers to view the example of Baruch and Lamentations as impediments in preparation and thus not as super-natural phenomena, implying that if one is qualified through preparation, prophecy invariably follows. The possibility of Divine Intervention is logically implied in creatio ex nihilo and does not require historic instances.⁴⁸

Thus, Maimonides is only restating, in his theory of prophecy, what he has clearly expressed in his discussion of Creation and Miracles. ⁴⁹ The third view, which grants the possibility of Divine Intervention, differs from Aristotelian necessity to the same degree, as Maimonides' concept of Creation

48. See our discussion of miracles particularly note 34, p.25. Also see note 44, p. 31.

49. Moreh II, 29 - as analyzed above. שליחתי נאמר אזריסטו בתי מדרשו ונאמר
 שם המצוינות צד זה הטוב ויש צד זה הרע... ונאמר שיהא נצחי ולא יסור
 כל היום קדמון ולא נחלוהו, וכדי בלתי שיהא כל ימיו חיות, ונאמר שיהא נצחי וכל ימיו חיות.
 In other words, the entire tension is between rigid neces-
 sity and possible intervention.

differs from Aristotelian eternity. The apparently minor qualification in the position of the philosophers, that it is possible for one to prepare himself fully and yet not attain prophecy, introduces an entire system of thought and actually represents a combination of a modified Kalam and a modified Aristotle.

Motivated by the desire to preclude any instance of prophecy without preparation which would involve a change in nature, Maimonides explains the words addressed to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee and before thou comest forth from the womb I sanctified thee" as a prerequisite for all prophets, i.e., that they be endowed from birth with certain qualities, in order that they be eligible for prophecy.⁵⁰ Similarly, the words "For I am very young" (Jer. I, 6) are not to be taken literally. Nor should we be misled by phrases like "I will pour out my spirit over all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy", which seems to say that everyone, regardless of preparation, will achieve the exalted state, since "prophet" in this instance, as in numerous others, is used homonymously.⁵¹ The revelation on Mt. Sinai, as well, does not contradict the

50. Moreh II, 36. ואמר ואלו הקצתות אשר הוציאני מן הבטן ואלו
בדקרי בריאתי את אדם ואת חיות...

51. Moreh II, 32.

contention that only those duly prepared and qualified are prophetically inspired, for not all the people, but only those prepared, reached the prophetic state, "each according to his capacity".⁵²

The entire discussion of the revelation on Sinai and the insistence that God did not address the people directly, and furthermore, that only Moses discerned words whereas the people as a whole heard only an indistinct voice, is intended to interpret the Sinaitic event in a manner which would corroborate the theory that one may achieve prophecy only after due preparation, and thus assure its place within the order of nature.⁵³

52. Ibid. *אין הקד אמרנו כי כלל הנאמר... הוא כי בדרך האמת, וההכרח, אמרנו... אמרנו, ונצב ואמרו... וסגדים נקיים... ושל הודם אמרנו כי שמואל, ושל ברגו חכמים... אשר אמרנו דברנו ואמרו... אמרנו*

cf. Munk, Guide II, p. 267, note 3. Also Abarbanel's comment to this passage and his explanation of Neboni's cryptic remark:

ענין הודו דברנו הנאמר כי סגדים נקיים השתהו מן הודו

53. Moreh II, 33. There are actually two difficulties implied in the Sinaitic revelation which Maimonides attempts to resolve in this chapter. (1) That no one may achieve prophecy without preparation and (2) that God did not speak directly, which is necessary to safeguard the absolute incorporeality of God. The first difficulty is explained by differentiating between Moses and the people, i.e., only Moses heard words while the others only a confused sound. And even the Talmudic opinion that the first two commandments were clearly heard by all implies only that since the first two commandments, i.e., the existence and unity of God, are rationally demonstrable and "whatever may be established by proof is known by the prophet in the same way as by any other person", therefore, all the people comprehended them. The purpose of the voice was to persuade the people to believe in Moses (Moreh I, 63). The other commandments, however, were of an ethical and authoritative character and do not contain (truths) perceived by the intellect", therefore, the people heard them only through Moses.

The passage "Behold I will send an angel before Thee, etc." (Deut. XVIII, 18) is similarly explained. The usual interpretation implies that all the people would see the angel, who is the active intellect, and would therefore lead to the conclusion that preparation is not essential for prophecy. This passage is therefore interpreted to mean that "God informs the Israelites that he will raise up for them a prophet to whom an angel will appear in order to speak to him, to command him and exhort him; he therefore cautions them not to rebel against this angel whose word the prophet will communicate to them".⁵⁴

53. (concl.) The second problem is resolved by the which was the voice that was heard. Moreh I, 65.
 וכל המורה וצריך שיהיה מורה על דבר שהוא נכון וזהו המורה על דבר שהוא נכון
 וזהו המורה על דבר שהוא נכון וזהו המורה על דבר שהוא נכון
 The entire thirty-third chapter presents numerous logical difficulties. However, they are not of direct relevance to our subject and, therefore, we shall not concern ourselves with them. For a full discussion of the various phases of this chapter see Abarbanel's commentary; also Munk, Guide II, note 4; Diesendruck, Maimonides' Lehre von der Prophetie, note 210, on the relationship of the "created voice" and prophecy; Bacher, Bibelexegetische Moses Maimoni's, p. 87 f., on the miraculous character of the "created voice". We shall refer to this chapter later in our discussion in connection with Spinoza's treatment of the identical problem and his refutation of the Maimonidean position.

54. Moreh II, 34.

However, there is yet a more subtle point contained in this chapter, which makes it an intrinsic part of the entire discussion on the nature of prophecy, and not merely a digression in Biblical exegesis. The term "angel" is applied by Maimonides in the Moreh to the intelligences of the Spheres, the active intellect, to the prophet, the imaginative faculty, the *כח דבור* and *כח חשבון*, or, in other words, "natural forces and angels are identical."⁵⁵ The particular meaning of "Angel" must, in each instance, be derived from context, depending on what aspect of the natural process is being discussed. The essence of the concept of angels in the Maimonidean System is the insistence that God does not act directly, but through angels, i.e., through a natural process, and every phase of that process may be termed "angel". Maimonides is thus restating the notion that the prophetic emanation is a part of the order of nature ultimately traceable to God, like all other natural phenomena, through a causal chain.⁵⁶ This qualification applies to

55. Moreh II, 6

כי הכחות הם מלאכים

56. The passages dealing with angels are:

Moreh II, 6. The entire chapter and particularly:

שורה זו מלאכה
כל כח שיהיה להם ואלו על ידי מלאך, ובכך ידעת שכל מלאך שלי, וכל מלאך מלאך מלאך הוא
מלאך... כי הכחות הם מלאכים... שיהיה המלאך שם... הוא (מלאך) ימלא שמים וצדק, ואלו נוסף
מלאכים יתנו בכך בלתי לזמם שיהיה שם המלאך על ידי יקרא מלאך.

Moreh II, 7.

בכך בלתי שיהיה שם מלאך, וזהו כוח השמים, וקראים, וביסודות כי הם דושים מלאך

all prophets except Moses, who is in an entirely different category.

Therefore, before discussing the purely philosophic aspects of prophecy, i.e., its psychological roots and the part of the various faculties of the soul, Maimonides excludes from his discussion Mosaic prophecy, which differs essentially (in kind) from those that preceded and followed him. The extensive characterization of prophecy applies only

56. (contd.)

Moreh II, 34. וכיון של נבואה בלתי מלאה רבן תבואתו הנבואה ה' י' אלקי, ודברו

In this context אלוקי is interpreted by the commentators as referring to the imaginative faculty. However, this point needs clarification and we shall return to it after we analyze Mosaic prophecy.

Moreh II, 41. שכן נבואה נבואה מלאה נבואה מלאה

Moreh III, 22. אולי שבאנו לך שצריך היה להסבך הוא מלאה בלתי מלאה
לכונן ענין יקראו מלאה ויהיה ענין יצא ענין מלאה

If the Maimonidean conception of Angels is understood as the messengers of God as they manifest themselves in the various phases of the natural process, i.e., spheres, active intellect, prophecy, and the imaginative faculty, all the difficulties raised by the commentators (Ephodi, Abarbanel, Shem Tob) concerning the apparent contradiction between Moreh II, 34, and II, 7, as well as in Chapter 34 itself, disappear. The connotation of אלוקי differs in each instance, since it refers to different links in the causal chain.

Maimonides clarifies this view in Moreh II, 6, with the following example: "Say to a person who is believed to belong to the wise men of Israel that the Almighty sends his angel to enter the womb of a woman and to form there the foetus, he will be satisfied with the account; he will believe it and even find in it a description of the greatness of God's might....although he believes that the angel consists of burning fire and is as big as a third part of the Universe, yet he considers it possible, אולי
But tell him that God gave the seed a formative power which produces and shapes limbs, and that this power is called "angel", or that all forms are the re-

to the prophets before Moses and those who prophesied after him, but Moses himself is in an exclusive category. ⁵⁷

56 (concl.)

result of the Active Intellect and that the latter is the angel, the Prince of the World....and he will turn away, because he cannot comprehend the true greatness and power of creating forces that act in a body without being perceived by the Senses." We thus see that Maimonides' concept of Angels is also a polemic against the Kalam with their insistence on direct Divine action without intermediaries, as are his theories of creation, miracles and prophecy. Maimonides significantly concludes this chapter with a restatement of his position, namely: "There is nothing in the opinion of Aristotle on this subject contrary to the teaching of the Scripture. The whole difference between him and ourselves is this: he believes all these beings to be eternal, co-existing with the First Cause as its necessary effect; but we believe they have had a beginning....."

The revealing statement in Moreh III, 45 ^{החומר מציאות האלוהים} becomes in the light of our analysis a brief summary of the entire Moreh.

57. Moreh II, 35. ^{כי כל דבר שיש לו חומר נקרא בעיני כל החומר האנושי כחומר, וכל דבר שיש לו חומר נקרא בעיני כל החומר האנושי כחומר, וכל דבר שיש לו חומר נקרא בעיני כל החומר האנושי כחומר.}

Whether the difference between Moses and the other prophets was one of degree or kind is discussed by numerous commentators. Abarbanel comments: ^{יש ספרים שכתבו היה בספק ויש שכתבו שזהו דבר מפורש ויש שכתבו שזהו דבר מפורש}

Munk, however, translates this passage: "En effet, selon moi, ce n'est que par amphibologie, que le nom de prophète s'applique à la fois à Moïse et aux autres", and explains in a footnote, "...on peut le considérer comme nom 'homonyme.' puisqu'il a une différence essentielle et bien tranchée autre Moïse et les autres prophètes..C'est donc ce qu'on appelle un nom 'ambigu' ou 'amphibologique'". Bacher, Bibel-exegese Moses Maimuni's, p. 79. "Der Unterschied zwischen Moses und den übrigen Propheten vor und nach ihm ..ist ein so wesentlicher dass die Gemeinsamkeit der Bezeichnung als ¹¹²⁾ für Moses und die anderen Propheten nur als Amphibolie betrachtet werden muss.

There are a number of factors which compel Maimonides to make this essential distinction.

Prophecy is divided into eleven gradations, such sharing the same qualities. They differ only in the degree of perfection of the intellectual and imaginative faculties.⁵⁸ Now, if Mosaic prophecy differed only quantitatively, another category could have been added, which would have satisfied the scriptural demand that he be considered the peer of the prophets. However, this would not have been sufficient, since Moses' role as the Law-giver and numerous Biblical passages used exclusively to describe Moses' unique relationship with God, necessitate a much more radical distinction.

Maimonides expresses this thought as follows: *ואתן שם באת משה מורה נבדל מנביא נאמן, ויש שם ההבדל ההוא לבדו, והוא ההבדל בין הנביא שיקרא משה דניאל זה קדש כמורה אחר מן שקדש אדם אלו ואלו הנאמרים אחריו קראו כמורה אחר מנביאין, וזהו זהו דעתו של משה, ולא היה בזה חידוש אחר, והוא חידוש מורה... כי הדבר השם במלכותו מה שישלש בעין אלו שישבו בזהו אלו שם מן השמות הנכבדים...*

We may conclude, therefore, that the immutability of Mosaic Law demands that the existence of another Moses be removed from the realm of natural possibility.⁵⁹

58. Moreh II, 45. However, only the last nine are degrees in prophecy. The first two are only steps to prophecy. *ואלו העצמים הנאמרים והנביא הם מדרגות נביאיות*

59. Moreh II. 39. Shem Tob interestingly comments: *ויתבאר זה (שהגורם היה נביא) והנביאים שקדשו חסד ושוארו ואלו כי הם זהו הקדש המיוחד והוא שהבדל בו זהו ייחודו של משה מנביאין, והוא שיש בו חידוש מורה... כי הדבר השם במלכותו מה שישלש בעין אלו שישבו בזהו אלו שם מן השמות הנכבדים...*
As a further elucidation of the uniqueness of Mosaic prophecy, Maimonides states: *שם מן שקדש מורה מן הנביאים, בייחוד אחר מזה מזה כל אדם מן אדם שהם שמים אלים וזוין שמים אדם כמ וכן. כל זה בדקלא הידיו בו בתוכו התורה... ומשם ההוא השלש ההוא באברהם זה קדש האלים והוא דבר האמר וההילוך אל האל שבו ~~הוא~~ השלש... אלו שישבו ואלו זהו דברו של משה... ואלו מורה בדי יצחק מן שוארו זה שם שמו ואמר כל הדם זה, היום הזה ואלו כי ידבר אלים ואלו השלש והוא...*

If another prophet of the stature of Moses were with-
in the realm of possibility, without a change in the Divine
Will, it would endanger the contention that the Torah is
most perfect and that it shall never be displaced. The dif-
ference between Moses and the other prophets must involve,
therefore, a distinction in both the manner in which he re-
ceived the prophetic message and also in the ~~high~~ quality
of the emanation.

We have established in our discussion that Maimonides viewed prophecy as part of the natural process and any person properly qualified who has sufficiently prepared himself, will reach the prophetic state. Now, if the distinction between Moses and the other prophets were only one of degree, the possibility remains that some one in the future will attain similar heights, since the world, following the act of creation, remains the same. In order to guarantee, therefore, the uniqueness of Mosaic prophecy, it must be placed in a realm other than natural causality.⁶⁰

60. Moreh I, 54.

Moreh I, 21. In discussing Moses' request, Maimonides explains:

Abarbanel, in his comment to I, 54, interprets this passage:

Nerboni, in his comment to I,21 writes: ובוארזת הסודות אשר שם
הדב עלמאידו... וזה לשונו
אלו שנים עשרה אותיות בידידות החלפות ומביא וסומא על דרך
צבוי האמת שהוא הקיין הדעות מה שאין אמתו יכולים לידע אים

The same letter is quoted by Bacher, Die Bibelexegio
Moses Maimonides, p.82 , notes 3 and 5.

Thus Moses attained his prophecy in a manner different from all others, and the nature of his prophetic vision, i.e., the content of his prophecy, was also of another kind. There is a basic distinction in the role of the *הַנָּבִיא* in relation to Moses, in the *הַנָּבִיא הַמִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה* and further, in the faculties which are utilized for receiving the prophetic *נִבְיָה*.⁶¹

The four distinctions between Moses and the other prophets, which Maimonides lists in his Commentary to the Mishna and in the Mishna Torah⁶² and are repeated throughout the Moreh in different form, are as follows: 1. With all other prophets, God spoke through an intermediary, but to Moses

וְלֹא בְּיָד אֲחֵרָה כְּשֶׁלְּכָל הַנָּבִיִּים אֲחֵרִים.⁶³ Therefore, all the others saw their vision in the form of similitudes and riddles, but those of Moses were clear and distinct. 2. All others experienced their prophecy in a dream or a vision, i.e., while

60. (con'd)

This may also be the implication of the statement in the eighth creed of the Introduction to Helek; namely, that the Torah was given to Moses in such a manner that one may refer to it only metaphorically.

Note also II, 45: *וְכָל הַנָּבִיִּים הָיוּ נִבְיִים בְּחִלּוּם וְכָל מֹשֶׁה הָיָה נִבְיָה בְּעֵלְיוֹת*
וְכָל הַנָּבִיִּים הָיוּ נִבְיִים בְּחִלּוּם וְכָל מֹשֶׁה הָיָה נִבְיָה בְּעֵלְיוֹת
 61. cf. Moreh I, 21, 27, 37, 54, 63; II, 19, 35, 36, 45; III, 45, 51.

It may be noted that though Mosaic prophecy differs so radically, yet it need not represent an interruption of the natural order. The thought developed in our discussion on miracles and particularly Moreh II, 29, may here be applied. Maimonides expresses it briefly in his Commentary to the Mishna, Aboth 5, 6: *כִּי הַנִּבְיָאִים הָיוּ נִבְיִים בְּחִלּוּם*

62. Introduction to Helek and Hil. Yesode Hatorah 7, 6.

63. Moreh I, 37. *כָּל הַנָּבִיִּים הָיוּ נִבְיִים בְּחִלּוּם*

they were asleep, while Moses received the revelation, while awake ^{משה היה ער} 64

3. The prophets other than Moses felt an overwhelming fear and weakness, but this was not the case with Moses, for God spoke to him ^{כאלו ידבר אליו דבור}

Just as a man is not appalled to hear the words of a friend, so did Moses remain calm during the prophetic experience.

4. All other prophets could not prophesy whenever they wished, but Moses was always prepared to receive the prophetic emanation. ⁶⁵

64. Ibid, II, 45

65. The formulation of this distinction in the Mishne Torah seems much more precise: ^{כל הנביאים אין מלבדים בזה דבר שיהיה להם, אלא כפי צרכן, וזהו שכתבנו לעיל}

The Commentary to the Mishnah version raises a difficulty since it ascribes a positive role to God's Will in prophecy, while in Moreh II, 32, as we discussed above, the Will of God has only a negative function. ^{והיינו שכתבנו, כי כל הנביאים אינם מלבדים בזה דבר שיהיה להם, אלא כפי צרכן, וזהו שכתבנו לעיל}

...However, this may easily be resolved by understanding the ^{הוא} as the natural process since it is often used in that sense. The implication would then be, that lack of prophecy is due to an inadequate preparation. cf. Diesendruck, Maimonides Lehre von der Prophetie, p.4.

There is, however, a greater difficulty in this fourth distinction. Its implication is that Moses was at all times prepared for Prophecy, yet in Moreh II, 36 Maimonides clearly states the very opposite: ^{כפי צרכן, וזהו שכתבנו לעיל}

Ephodi and Abarbanel note this difficulty but their solutions are far from satisfactory.

These four characteristics which distinguish Moses from all other prophets have a common source. Since the imaginative faculty played no part in Mosaic prophecy but the union with the active intellect was achieved through reason alone, all the other differences necessarily follow. The dreams and visions, the fear and the erratic character of non-Mosaic prophecy are all characteristics of and caused by the imaginative faculty, as will be shown later in our study.⁶⁶

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66. This has been noted at length by Abarbanel, in his Commentary to Moreh II, 35. The four distinctions are for him actually only one difference, i.e., that the imaginative faculty has no part in the prophecy of Moses. This fact is used by Abarbanel to explain why Maimonides does not list the four differences in the Moreh as he does in his other two major works. Abarbanel explains that since the number four is not precise (it is really one) it would be out of place in the Moreh, which is intended for the *אברהם*.

There appears, however, a more cogent reason why they are not listed in the philosophic work, and more so, why he excludes all positive discussion of Moses in the Guide and refers to him only to distinguish him from the others; as Maimonides states in II, 35:

אברהם נבואה של רצון לא נבואה של חוץ, והוא נבואה של חוץ, והוא נבואה של חוץ, והוא נבואה של חוץ.

The only thing which distinguishes the prophet from the philosopher is a perfectly developed imaginative faculty. It is this faculty which raises him to the lofty state of prophecy unattainable by the philosopher who utilizes the intellect alone. Thus, intellect alone will never lead to prophecy within the natural process. Prophets achieve that state and yet remain in the realm of natural causality only because of the imaginative faculty which permits them to jump and arrive at conclusions impossible through syllogistic reasoning. It follows, therefore, that the orderly process of nature is maintained, and not constantly interrupted by the prophetic phenomenon, only because of the introduction by Maimonides of the imagination as a primary element in prophecy.

These essential distinctions between Moses and the prophets which preceded and followed him, lead Maimonides to distinguish also between Mosaic miracles and the miracles of other prophets. The unique identity with the active intellect which Moses achieved through the intellectual faculty alone, manifests itself also in the quality of the miracles of the *דברים הנבואה*.⁶⁷

66. (concluded)

Now, with Moses, the imagination played no part. He prophesied by reason alone. This is impossible within normal procedure, for if this were natural, all philosophers would be in the category of Moses. The implication is clear, therefore, that the attainment of the highest possible state of prophecy by Moses, through reason alone, had to be of a miraculous nature. It is also clear that Maimonides was compelled to adopt this extreme view, not by philosophic reasoning, but by the demands of the Torah and Judaism, as was explained above. Therefore, the entire question of Moses is of a purely religious nature, with elements of polemics against Mohammedism and Christianity, and would be totally out of place in a philosophic study. The Maimonidean concept of Mosaic prophecy is the result of assumptions necessitated by Judaism and no attempt is made to justify it philosophically. It rightfully belongs, therefore, in the *דברים הנבואה* or in the *דברים הנבואה* but not in the *דברים הנבואה*.

67. *Moreh* II, 35. *כי אי אפשר לו לנביא להשיג את הנבואה*
See note 34, p. 25.

"The wonders wrought by other prophets, or for them, were witnessed by a few individuals no prophet will ever, like Moses, do signs publicly in the presence of friend and enemy, of his followers and his opponents; this is the meaning of the words: And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses....in all the signs and wonders....in the sight of all Israel. Two things are here mentioned together; namely, that there will not arise a prophet that perceived as Moses perceived, or a prophet that will do as he did; then it is pointed out that the signs were made in the presence of Pharoah, all his servants and all his land, the opponents of Moses and also in the presence of all the Israelites, his followers."⁶⁸

In our discussion above we mentioned the theory of the Sages quoted by Maimonides, that God endowed phenomena at creation with certain qualities which became manifest at determined moments in history, and these extraordinary events are, therefore, in the order of nature, but due to their exceptional character, are viewed as miracles. According to this theory, the function of the prophet consists of predicting the exceptional event prior to its occurrence.⁶⁹

68. Ibid.

69. Moreh II, 29. כל המצאות והטבעות על ידו הטבעים, הם גשמיים, והם שיהיה בהם כח שיהיה בהם טבעות, והם שיהיה בהם כח שיהיה בהם טבעות, והם שיהיה בהם כח שיהיה בהם טבעות.

(Cont. on next page.)

Due to his prophetic insight he is aware of the future occurrence of a "miracle" and "the sign of a prophet consisted in the fact that God told him to declare when a certain thing will take place."

Maimonides further maintains that the prophet's ability to predict future events is caused by the perfection of the imaginative faculty when it combines with the intellectual faculty.⁷⁰ Now, Moses' prophecy was one of the intellect alone. Therefore, following the natural course applicable to all other prophets, Moses never should have been able to predict future events, or have foreknowledge of a "miraculous" event. However, Mosaic prophecy is excluded from natural phenomena. He achieved a higher state by intellect alone, than the others attained with the assistance of the imaginative faculty. It must follow, there-

69-(concluded)

This is the theory that Maimonides appears to have accepted in his Commentary to the Mishnah, and in the Mishna Torah (see note 61). In our analysis of the Maimonidean theory of miracles we also concluded that though Maimonides hesitates to commit himself absolutely to this view, since he is interested in establishing the possibility of Divine Interference on firm, philosophic ground, yet he accepts this view as an explanation of Mosaic miracles. In his works of a purely religious nature, however, even this slight hesitancy is no longer noticeable, and in the Commentary to the Mishnah he states categorically that "miracles were placed in the order of things at creation."

70. Moreh II, 38. ויתבון בה המעור ק"ב בהם יקידו הדגיות... או יוכל הודם בידן
אבר ארבעה הסבות אשר יתחייב מהם הידוד ההוא... שהספר ההוא גדלנו וזר שרד
הכל העצמי עד שהלחנו עד שהקיד מפורטת סקיד מה סיהיה, ויסיקוהו כאלו הם דתים
בהם הכניסו בהם הנושאים.

fore, that his miracles, i.e., his insight into future events achieved in an extraordinary fashion by reason alone, differed radically from those of all other prophets. This is the meaning of the phrase,⁷¹

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת הַקּוֹל וְיִשְׁמַע אֶת הַקּוֹל
וְיִשְׁמַע אֶת הַקּוֹל

The fact that his prophecy was the result of pure reason differing essentially from all others, necessarily implies that his miracles, as well, differed from those wrought by others.

We have established in our discussion thus far that prophecy is part of the natural process and, therefore, will never be attained by anyone without preparation, although, just as it is within the power of the Divine to change all of nature, He may grant prophecy to whomever He wills, or deny it, even if one possesses all the qualifications. However, this will never occur since the world operates according to a logical causal process established at the time of creation. The possibility of His intervention is granted as a concession to the Torah view and is implied in creatio ex nihilo.

Secondly, that prophecy does not emanate from God, directly, but through an intermediary. Prophecy, like intellectual knowledge, is attained through the active intellect.

Thirdly, that Moses is in a separate category and, therefore, the characteristics of prophecy in general, are not applicable to him.

⁷¹ Moreh I, 54.

Thirdly, that Moses is in a separate category and, therefore, the characteristics of prophecy in general are not applicable to him.

After determining the place of prophecy in the natural order, Maimonides proceeds to analyze the intrinsic aspects of prophetic cognition. Our discussion, thus far, concerned itself only with the manner in which prophecy emanates from its source, and have concluded that it stems from God as its ultimate cause and reaches the sublunar world through the intermediary of the active intellect. The process must now be reversed to ascertain the method whereby the individual partakes of this emanation. How does prophetic cognition, being part of nature, differ from philosophic knowledge? If, as we have concluded, anyone who activates his intellect and is perfect in his moral faculties achieves this prophetic state, why is not the philosopher a prophet? The difference cannot be in the source and in the character of the emanation since we proved conclusively that it follows the same pattern in prophecy as in all forms of knowledge, i.e., the process is a natural one. The distinction must therefore be found in the one who receives the emanation; either in the preparation, or in the faculties utilized in achieving the prophetic state.

This, then, is the problem which claims our attention. It may be termed the psychological or purely philosophical aspects of prophecy.⁷²

72. The two aspects of prophecy cannot be completely separated. the place of prophecy in the natural order, and the manner in which the individual partakes of the emanation are closely

The dual phase of the problem is summarized in the opening sentence of the thirty-sixth chapter: "Prophecy is in truth and reality, an emanation sent forth by the Divine Being through the medium of the Active Intellect, in the first instance to man's rational faculty, and then to his imaginative faculty; it is the highest degree and greatest perfection man can attain; it consists of the most perfect development of the imaginative faculty."⁷³ The only new element introduced in this chapter is the perfection of the imaginative faculty; and it is this faculty which distinguishes prophecy from other forms of cognition. In addition to the activated reason, which is the process in philosophic knowledge, the prophet also possesses a perfectly developed imaginative faculty. The combination of the two, sets prophecy apart and solves the difficulties which arise from placing prophecy in the order of nature, as we shall demon-*strate*.

72 (concluded)

linked. They not only form a logical entity, but the problems presented by the former serve as the basis for the latter. However, the treatment of prophecy in the Moreh divides itself into these two aspects, even though the division is but a superficial one. The problem from the point of view of the source and its place in the order of nature is treated in the first four chapters of the section on prophecy (Moreh II, 32-35). The "psychological" aspects are discussed in Moreh II, 36-48.

73. The opening words of II, 36 *אשר נאמר בפרק זה* suggest that this chapter actually discusses the essence of prophecy. This follows from the definition in Moreh I, 46. *כבר נבאר דבר זה בפרק זה* cf. I, 33 and I, 36, where the same distinction is made.

However, before we proceed with the analysis of the rôle of the imagination, we must define precisely the nature of the Active Intellect, so that the relation of the various human faculties to it may be clearly perceived.

Above the sublunar world, according to the Maimonidean system, there are nine spheres and corresponding to each sphere there is an Intelligence or Angel which acts as the cause of the motion of its sphere. The circular motion of the spheres is due to some idea which produces this particular kind of motion; "but as ideas are only possible in intellectual beings, the heavenly sphere is an intellectual being. But even a being that is endowed with the faculty of moving, does not change its place on each occasion, that it forms an idea; for an idea alone does not produce motion...it is only when a desire arises for the thing imagined that we move in order to obtain it."⁷⁴

The Intelligence of each sphere serves as the cause of the motion of that sphere insofar as it serves as the ideal toward which the sphere strives. In the realm of the spheres we note the following characteristics: The sphere is a body endowed with a faculty of forming an idea, i.e., each sphere has a desire for the ideal "which is the source of its existence, and that desire is the cause of its individual motion, so that in

74. Moreh II, 4.

fact the ideal sets the sphere in motion. The Tenth Intelligence is the active Intellect, whose existence is proved by the transition of our intellect from a state of potentiality to that of actuality, and by the same transition in the case of the forms of all transient beings. For, whatever passes from potentiality into actuality, requires for that transition an external agent, of the same kind as itself...As that which gives form to matter, must itself be pure form, so the source of intellect must itself be pure intellect, and this source is the Active Intellect. The relation of the latter to the elements and their compounds is the same as that of the Intelligences to their respective spheres; and our intellect in action, which originates in the Active Intellect and enables us to comprehend that intellect, finds a parallel in each of the spheres which originates in the Intelligence corresponding to that sphere, and enables the sphere to comprehend that Intelligence, to form an idea of it, and to move seeking to become similar to it."⁷⁵

The Active Intellect, the tenth of the Intelligences, has no corresponding sphere, but its realm is the sub-lunar world. The other spheres possess intellects through which they achieve a union with their corresponding Intelligences. However, the sub-lunar world has no such faculty. It is not a sphere like the

⁷⁵. Ibid. Particular attention should be paid in this chapter to the phrases, *ואל מה ש-ל-ל מן המה אל הפועל ואל מה ש-ל-ל מן המה אל הפועל* and *ואל מה ש-ל-ל מן המה אל הפועל*... *ואל מה ש-ל-ל מן המה אל הפועל*... *ואל מה ש-ל-ל מן המה אל הפועל*... *ואל מה ש-ל-ל מן המה אל הפועל*...

others. The relationship with the Active Intellect is achieved only through the human intellect. This explains the central position of man in the world. It is through the development of the hylic reason to the state of an acquired intellect, that the Active Intellect becomes operative in the world.

In the realm of the spheres we note a dual relationship between the sphere and its corresponding Intelligence. On the one hand, the Intelligence causes the motion of the sphere insofar as the Intelligence serves as the ideal after which the sphere strives. This implies an intellect in the sphere which is the cause of the desire to strive after the Intelligence; and it is this intellect which is in "contact" with its corresponding Intelligence. On the other hand, the emanation from the Creator is received by the Intelligences according to their order; from the Intelligences part of the good and the light bestowed upon them is communicated to the spheres, and the latter, being in possession of the abundance obtained of the Intelligences, transmit forces and properties unto the being of the transient world."⁷⁶

The Active Intellect, being the lowest of the intelligences, receives of the abundance of the ~~see~~ from the Intelligence above it, and, in turn, is the source for the human

76. Moreh II, 11

intellect by which it becomes activated. There is, in other words, a correspondence in the relationship of the spheres and the Intelligences, on the one hand, and the active Intellect with the human intellect, on the other.⁷⁷

Just as the spheres are endowed with a faculty of forming an idea and a desire to attain it, so, in the sub-lunar world, man takes the place of the sphere, and his reason, when activated, serves as the corresponding sphere for the Active Intellect. Thus, Maimonides proves the existence and function of the Active Intellect by analogy with the spheres and the Intelligences.

However, there is yet another proof which reverses the process. There is a transition in our intellect, from potentiality to actuality, just as there is the same transition in the forms of all transient beings.⁷⁸ This process requires

77. This correspondence is not a complete one, since the intellect of the sphere is always in an active state; so that the relation is similar only when the human intellect is activated. The real similarity is, actually, the method which Maimonides uses to prove that the spheres have intelligences toward which they strive, and, therefore, an intellect of their own. The same method is used to prove the existence of an active Intellect and by analogy, also, an activated human reason.

78. Moreh II, 4. *וזהו דמיון היות כלל הכוונה אשר הורה עליו צמח שאלו מן הענין
אל הכוונה וכלל הכוונה הנמצא-הם הכוונה הנמצא-הם אשר שאלו הכוונה
האחרים שאלו שאלו הכוונה...*

The transition of the human reason from a potential to an actual state, and the same process in the forms of other transient beings, are the identical process since the forms have only intellectual existence. Moreh III, 18.

*ואשר ענין שהקדמון עתה נשגבה מזהה הנה הודים לבדו אשר הנה כלל אשר כן כד
נמצא שאלו הודים מן נמצא ואלו הכוונה דברים שאלו כהן שידע.*
Maimonides lists them as the two functions of the Active Intellect, namely, activating reason and actualizing the potential forms in the transient species. However, fol-

an agent outside of itself and which is of the same kind.⁷⁹
This agent must be the Active Intellect. So that Maimonides presents here a double proof for the existence of the Active Intellect; from above, by analogy with the spheres and their corresponding Intelligences, and from below, by the transition of the hylic reason to an acquired intellect.⁸⁰

78. (concluded)

lowing Aristotelean nominalism, they are but two expressions of the same phenomenon. This is also implied in Moreh I, 68, where Maimonides demonstrates that when the intellect is activated, ie., when it comprehends sure forms, subject, object and process are identical. The form, when in combination with its bearer, exists only potentially; it becomes actualized in the intellect, and is identical with it. In referring to his example of the tree, Maimonides states, "and that which is called intellect in action consists of nothing else but the form of the tree." This is obvious when we realize that everything is in a state of becoming and thus the potential achieves a permanent "form" only in the intellect.

79. See note 75, p. 55.

80. The Maimonidean theory of providence is based on the fact that man activates his reason and thus comes under the influence of the Active Intellect. The same reasoning which led Aristotle to accept providence for the species, but not for the individual beings within the species, Maimonides uses to prove Divine Providence for individual men. According to Aristotle, Divine Providence gives permanency and constancy to the Spheres, since each Individual (among the spheres) has a permanent existence. "From the existence of the spheres other beings derive existence which are constant in their species but not in their individuals: in the same manner it is said that Providence sends forth sufficient influence to secure the immortality and constancy of the species without securing, at the same time, permanence for the individuals within the species..." (Moreh III, 17). Maimonides, however, finds a congruence between the relationship of the Spheres and the Intelligences, and the human intellect with the Active Intellect, and would, therefore, include man within the domain of Providence, to the extent to which he has actualized his rational faculty.

Thus, having proved the existence of the Active Intellect, Maimonides grants it the sub-lunar world as its domain. It is the *elohim*. It gives the Forms, and actualizes the human intellect.⁸¹ The active Intellect is not a body, nor is it a power within a body, and its influence does not depend on a certain relation to the corporal product; "being incorporeal, it cannot approach a body, or recede from it; nor can a body approach the incorporeal agent,

80. (concluded)

So that his theory of Providence is dependent on the congruence which he establishes; in that, the human intellect is considered the corresponding sphere for the Active Intellect.

Diesendruck, in his Maimonides' Lehre von der Prophetie, p. 92, presents this interpretation. It should be noted, however, that Maimonides accomplishes his end by making the Active Intellect the tenth of the Intelligences, and giving it the sub-lunar world as its domain. This is the real innovation. The rest follows from it.

81. Compare: Jesode Hatorah, 4,6. *והוא נותן אל קולם וקולם צרכה האלהים*
אין ידעו אלהים הדיבורי שיהיה הדיבורי הנקראת וקולם

Moreh II, 6. *אין* is defined as the Active Intellect.

The functions of the Active Intellect must be understood in the manner explained in note 78,

Maimonides is not quite clear whether the Active Intellect is responsible for the specific forms of elements and minerals or whether these are caused by the influence of the other spheres. However, it is quite clear that the forms of plants, animals and men are due to the Active Intellect. cf. I, 72; II, 10, 12.

or recede from it, because there is no relation of distance between corporeal and incorporeal beings. The reason why the action has not taken place before, must be sought in the circumstances that the substance has not been prepared for the action of the abstract form."⁸² It communicates its influence through an emanation, sending it forth on all sides and in all directions. The Active Intellect, like all Intelligences, is constantly active and whenever an object is sufficiently prepared, it receives the effect of that continuous action.⁸³

82. Moreh II, 12: "The efficient cause which produces the form is indivisible, because it is of the same kind as the thing produced. Hence, it may be concluded that the agent that has produced a certain form, or given it to a certain substance, must itself be an abstract form...that which produced form must itself be form."

Moreh I, 49: "The angels are likewise incorporeal. They are Intelligences without matter."

Moreh II, 18: In refuting the first method whereby Aristotle proves Eternity, Maimonides states "the Active Intellect is neither a corporeal object nor a force residing in a body."
c.f. Moreh I, 58 and I, 69.

83. Moreh II, 12. The emanation is compared to a water-spring. See also II, 11, where Maimonides cautions not to consider the "higher" source as existing for the purpose of supplying the emanation to the Intelligence "below it". The Emanation stems from a superabundance. It is an overflowing of the *em* which emanates from the ultimate Divine source. Moreh I, 72:

אין כל אי-שם, הנבדל מן יתן, כל, אי-שם, אין, הודא, כל, מושג, אין
13. אצל נביאנו, אי-שם, הנבדל מן יתן, כל, אי-שם, אין, הודא, כל, מושג, אין
טבד-הם, נאמא, 2.

Since the Active Intellect is not a material substance, its influence cannot be received by a body. Matter, in all forms, is a hindrance in "perceiving" the abstract Intelligences.³⁴ The more one can suppress his material demands, the greater the desire for the Ideal, and, therefore, the clearer the perception of the intellect. The degree to which the hylic intellect can become actualized, ie., detach itself from matter and become pure form, to that degree will it receive the benefit of the emanation from the Active Intellect.

In the Eight Chapters,⁸⁵ Maimonides lists the five souls as;

לֵב , מַעַד , מַחֲשָׁבָה , מַחֲשָׁבָה . These souls are functions of the bodily organs and are connected with them. However, the human intellect has the additional capacity to grow and

וכבר באלו הפילוסופים כי היותם הקטנות בימי הגלות
 84. Moreh III, 51. ונתן להם מילות המדות, צ"ס מאה המושגים הדלה ביד האדם משמות ומחשבות המבוללות
 לחוסר השם והדלה... כי כל אדם יחלש בליות הקץ... וחסר השכל וידע אלו ומצב השכל
 ישמע מאה שהשם עד בלידת האדם השם ביום ויקרה אחת למספר דבועה, וקברה השמחה
 בהשגה הריא והחשק לחוש עד שמתבדד הנפש מן הקץ אז בזה התנויה הריא.

Moreh III, 9. The corporeal element in man is a large screen and partition which prevents him from perfectly perceiving abstract ideals...However, great the exertion of our mind may be to comprehend the Divine Being, or any of the ideals, we find a screen and partition between him and us.

85. Eight Chapters I. They are also alluded to in Moreh I, 46, where Maimonides explains the sensuous functions attributed to God.

develop, thereby becoming separated from the body and re-uniting itself with the Active Intellect. The process would be as follows: Man is endowed with a potential reason.⁸⁶

This hylic intellect is a force in the body and not separate from it.⁸⁷ While it is in this state its functions are to procure and prepare food, dwelling and clothing for man, and to control every organ of his body, causing both the principal and the secondary organs to perform their respective func-

tions.⁸⁸ The hyllic intellect, following preparatory steps, detaches itself from the material, and thus receives the full benefit of the *roal* which emanates from the Active Intellect.⁸⁹ When it achieves this state it has become actualized and according to the philosophic view, has reached the stage of prophecy.⁹⁰

86. Moreh I, 72. *ואתם נאמר באדם זה מבני הדבר שיוצר בו הוֹדֵם והוא הנח המדבר, וְכֵן
השכל ההיולאטי, וזהו זה המצא ממנו גדלי חיים נאמר*

87. Ibid.

כ"ה. נח המדבר הוא בל הילול ובליל נדבר מלון

88. Ibid.

ומכאן נראה, כי זה הוא פסוקי וישר בו יאסוף ויסבב וישר ויבין ויבאן המילים מן
המקור, ממנו, וכן, ואכסוס, ובו יקרה כל מה שיש לו. וזה הפסוק שבו מוזכר וישר ויבאן מכל בחינות ק"ה.

89. Ibid. נרד שראוי היה שנידמה יום אלוה ית' לצום, יום שבו הנקב קוצר, צוידע אשר אין
בה מקום .. (הוא נכדו או הנסך רבדו אמר)

90. Moreh II, 32; of Moreh II, 12 .

This phrase refers to the natural inclination implanted within man to activate his reason. Just as with the spheres there must be a desire to reach the Ideal which is its corresponding Intelligence, and this desire is the Sphere's Intellect, so is there inherent in the hylic intellect of man a desire to reach the Active Intellect. This cannot be achieved without preparation. As a result, the Active Intellect is actually the cause of the various preparatory activities of man. It is a two-way process.

There is inherent in the potential reason, a desire to separate itself from the body, to actualize itself and become a *נפש* *be*. It is the same desire which exists in the spheres and causes their motion.⁹¹

"The Intelligence of man is at first insufficient; for he is not endowed with perfection at the beginning, but at first possesses perfection only in potentia, not in fact....If a man possesses a certain faculty in potentia, it does not follow that it must become in him a reality...There are many things which obstruct the path to perfection and which keep man away from it... The preparatory studies are of long duration and man in his natural desire to reach the goal,⁹² finds them frequently too wearisome...

Consequently, he who wishes to attain to human perfection must therefore first study logic ... Mathematics, Physics and lastly, Metaphysics...H e who approaches Metaphysical problems without proper preparation is like a person who journeys toward a certain place and on the road falls into a deep pit...and he must perish there.⁹³

91. This is one of the arguments Maimonides presents to prove design. If the cause of the motion of each sphere is the desire to reach its corresponding Intelligence, why does each sphere have a different motion in direction and velocity? This proof is discussed at length in Moreh II, 19.

92.. Moreh I, 34. *כי אדם בטבעו חלוש ופגום בהבנה... ואם איש אלהים היה שמונים בשמונים... ואם איש אלהים היה שמונים בשמונים... ואם איש אלהים היה שמונים בשמונים...*

93. The entire thirty-fourth chapter must be noted in understanding the gradual development of the potential reason.

The intellect must develop step by step. It would be futile, therefore, to try and understand purely metaphysical subject as long as the mind is still bound by the matter to which it is attached. Only as the mind is gradually freed from its material bonds, is it ready to comprehend the purely spiritual. Furthermore, the higher the level that the intellect attains, the more intense does the desire for the Active Intellect become.⁹⁴

Moral conduct is also considered by Maimonides a preparation for Intellectual progress. "Only a man who is pure, calm, and steadfast can attain to Intellectual perfection; that is, acquire correct conceptions."⁹⁵

The Maimonidean concept of the Active Intellect appears, in the light of our discussion, as follows:

1. The Active Intellect is the lowest of the ten Inteligences whose sphere of operation is the sub-lunar world.
2. It is the "giver" of the forms and through it the human intellect becomes activated.
3. It is itself pure form, i.e., it is neither a body nor a power within a body.
4. Matter is a hindrance for receiving the influence of the Active Intellect and, therefore, preparation for benefiting from its emanation entails freeing oneself from material bonds.

94. See note 84, page 61.

95. Moreh I, 34. *ואם שכל הגבוה בחוכמה כי מצינו המדות הם הצורות זמירות*
המדות והוא הוא דבריהם אמרנו כי המושבות שמהם מצינו את המדות הן
הן ויש להן מצינו הקדמות הצורות המדות המדות דבר שיש להם האדם
היושבים והשמות... והבנות בהם המדות וההנחות וזאת
האם והם מצינו את החכמה
 of. III, 8 and III, 52.

Approaching the problem from the human side, we may discern the following elements:

1. The intellectual faculty is the particular endowment of man. It is his form and he thereby has pre-eminence over the other creatures in the sub-lunar realm.

2. At first, man possesses reason only potentially, i.e., in its hylic state. In its potential state it is, like other potential forms, a power within a body. It is one of the five souls in man, although the highest of them.

3. It possesses a desire to achieve a state of actuality. This may be accomplished through a series of preparatory steps. As the actualization process begins, the intellect assumes certain functions. These functions concern themselves primarily with the proper functioning of the organs, etc.

4. As long as the intellect remains a force within a body, it is not prepared for the study of metaphysics, or the contemplation of purely spiritual notions. Before one may have correct notions of God, Angels, the Active Intellect, etc., man must prepare himself by proper moral conduct; the examination of the species, in order to infer from them propositions which will help in the study of metaphysics; by the study of Physics, Mathematics, Logic, etc; and ultimately, the intellect will have achieved a state of actuality. As the preparation proceeds and the intellect becomes more and more detached from its bearer, one becomes qualified to par-

ticipate in progressively more theoretical and lofty studies, until the point is reached when one contemplates only the permanent and the pure form. When this point is reached, Man has achieved the highest state and is under the direct influence of the Active Intellect.

It should be noted, that, in the first stages of the process of actualization the preparation stems from below. The intellect is assisted by potential forms inherent in the transient world; not directly, but through the senses and other faculties. However, when the intellect is fully activated, the process is reversed and the "object" of contemplation emanates from above directly to the activated reason. In the first instance the process is: transient objects, senses, faculties, reason. However, in the second instance, the process is reversed and the direction is God, Intel-⁹⁶ ligences, Active Intellect, activated reason.

With this analysis in mind we may now proceed to the investigation of the imaginative faculty, and determine its relation to the other faculties of the soul.

96. Moreh II, 12. Note the comment of Shem Tov and Ephodi to the passage

כי באורק נהג אור -
 ונאמר כי בלעז העל אמר שכל אדם נשכח הנמצאות השלמות ונאמר כי בלעז העל אמר

See note 90, p. 62.

Also recall in this connection the significant chapter on Gen. I, 68 with the comments of Nerboni and Shem Tov. Moreh I, 68

cf. Moreh I, 10 - with reference to the meaning of ^{לע} and ^{לר}, "ascend" and "descend", in relation to God and man.

There are numerous passages in the Moreh, Commentary to the Mishnah, and Mishna Torah, which describe the imaginative faculty, attribute various functions to it, and place it in a particular relationship to the other forces inherent in man. However, the various statements often appear contradictory and intentionally misleading. Is the imaginative faculty a force within matter? What is its relation to the human intellect? Is it capable of receiving the influence of the Active Intellect? Does this influence reach it directly or through the human intellect? What is its function and relation to the world of appearances? What is its relation to dreams and divination? These and other questions arise and must be resolved, due to the importance ascribed to the imagination in the prophetic phenomenon.⁹⁷

The imagination may picture certain phenomena which cannot possibly correspond to reality; and on the other hand, certain realities are unimaginable, and yet are rationally demonstrable. The corporeality of God and His existence as a force residing in a body are represented as possible by the imagination. However, Maimonides established by proof that God is not corporeal, nor is He a force within a body.⁹⁸

97. Whether the imaginative faculty is of equal importance with the intellect (or as some maintain, of greater importance) or subservient to it in prophecy is one of the problems that must be resolved. In order that we may understand the Maimonidean doctrine we must determine whether the imaginative faculty is constitutive, i.e., an actual bearer of the prophetic emanation and, if it is, how does it receive the prophetic emanation.

98. The major portion of the first book of the Moreh is devoted to the proof of this proposition. The interpretation

Conversely, two men standing on the two extremities of an axis in such a way that their feet are in the same straight line with the axis, and yet neither should fall, is a phenomenon that cannot be imagined; but this is exactly what happens with the inhabitants of the earth. It is in the shape of a globe and is inhabited on the two extremities of a given diameter. "Both the inhabitants have their heads toward the heavens and their legs toward each other, and yet neither can possibly fall". It has consequently been proved that things which cannot be perceived or imagined, and which would be found impossible, if tested solely by imagination, are, nevertheless in real existence. The non-existence of things which are represented by imagination as possible has likewise been established by proof. "Imagination perceives nothing except bodies or properties inherent in bodies." 99

98.(concluded)

of Biblical terminology, negative attributes, etc., all have as their motivation the negation of any hint of corporeality with reference to God.

99. Moreh I, 73 (10)

כך כי יש דברים בשיבושם האדם הדמיון לא יצוה
בא... ואלה יתנועע בחינת מציאות הדבר ההוא הנמצא אצלו .. וזה אולי הדבר
כדור (ובל) .. הנה כפי הדבר מציאות מה שזה ידועה ואלו ישיגה הדמיון
אלה הוא נמצא אצלו .. האין נמצא אצלו הדמיון אלא ילך אל דבר קלס.

As in the foregoing instance, the Moreh is replete with statements where the imagination and intellect are counterposed. The intellect "Analyses and divides the component parts of things, it forms abstract ideas of them, represents them in their true form as well as in their causal relations, derives from one object a great many facts...it distinguishes that which is the property of the genus from that which is peculiar to the individual and no proof is correct unless founded on the former (the property of the genus); the intellect further determines whether certain qualities of a thing are essential or non-essential. Imagination has none of these functions. It only perceives the individual, the compound in that aggregate condition in which it presents itself to the senses; or it combines things which exist separately, joins some of them together, and represents them all as one body or as a force within a body...Nor can the imagination in any way obtain a purely immaterial image of an object, however abstract the form of the image may be. Imagination yields, therefore, no test for the reality of things.¹⁰⁰ The imagination appears to be the very contradictory of the intellect and when they are in conflict, i.e., the imagination pictures something as possible and the intellect proves its impossibility or its converse, the intellect is the final arbi-

100. Ibid. ושהבדל זה הוהבדל בדעתן ואין בדעתן קצת השל אלא הפסד
 (ואו יכח הדעתן בשום פנים להשיג הדבר האל-אמיתי בהשקפה מן היחודי,
 ואולי הפסד צורה אחרת בגלל-ההבדל, ולכן אין בדין בדעתן.)

ter.¹⁰¹

Numerous other examples may be cited to prove that Maimonides considered the imaginative faculty as the cause of error, of evil, of sin;¹⁰² that it cannot conceive an incorporeal object;¹⁰³ that the imagination does not distinguish man from other animals since they also possess an imaginative faculty;¹⁰⁴ that only conduct dictated by reason and not the

101. Ibid. "For there are certain notions which some believe founded on reason, while others regard them as mere fiction. In such cases it would be necessary to find something that could show the difference between conceptions of the intellect and mere imaginary fancies." Since Maimonides insists that the universe operates by Design and not by Necessity, the possible, the impossible and the necessary cannot be proved, as the philosophers do, from Reality (הוא שכן). Just as it has been created with that special property, it might have been created with any other property, unless the impossibility which you postulate be proved by a logical demonstration." Thus, the final judge is the intellect. For if it can prove the logical impossibility of a phenomenon, its decision must be accepted.

102. Moreh II, 12. "All this is the work of the imagination, which is in effect identical with evil inclination. For all our defects in speech or in character are either the direct or indirect work of the imagination".
Moreh III, 22 הוא שכן, הוא יצר הרע, הוא אצור היות

103. Moreh I, 46. In discussing the anthropomorphic descriptions of God by the prophets, Maimonides explains:
מה שאין ידע ואין לה בקשר אלא דבר נמשך בשום פנים בהגלה צליל הודים
ובדבר אצל הדמיון
Moreh I, 49.

וכבר ידעת כי השגת נקי מן החומר הדומה מן הקשמה אצור בגדר האור על האדם
אם אחר אצור דם, ובגדר דמי שמו יבדל בין החושב העיוני, ודבר זה השגתו
על השגות הדמיון אצור, ויפיה על מדומה אצור נמצא לו אלא העצמי, ואם שמו יפול
בשגות הדמיון אצור נמצא נמשך העצמי לו בלא חושבים זה ואחר זה
בין אצורים...

104. Moreh III, 48. "The love and tenderness of the mother for her young ones is not produced by reasoning but by imagination and this faculty exists not only in man but in most living beings." This statement, however, should not be taken literally but is to be understood in terms of the distinction made by Maimonides in his Eight Chapters I.
אצל כל מין ומין משהו לו נפש יש לו נפש אחר בלתי נפש אחר ויתחייב מנפש
זה פדיון, ומנפש זה פדיון אחר, פדיון הנפש האדם הוא נפש האדם ופדיון הנפש
החומר הוא נפש החומר ואין זהם מין אלא שגל השם בלתי

imagination can lead one to God.¹⁰⁵ These, and other similar connotations are derived from the material character of the imagination.

However, these descriptions do not exhaust the matter. Along with the negative aspects of the imagination, its material and destructive character, there are positive and constructive functions attributed to it. In the various phenomena which are essential in a religious orientation, such as Creation, miracles and prophecy, the imagination is ascribed a most significant rôle. With reference to prophecy Maimonides states, "Prophecy is in truth and reality an emanation sent forth by the Divine Being through the medium of the Active Intellect, in the first instance to man's rational faculty and then to his imaginative faculty; it is the highest degree and greatest perfection that man can attain; it consists in the most perfect development of the imaginative faculty. Prophecy is a faculty that cannot in any way be found in a person, or acquired by a man, through a culture of his mental and moral faculties; for even if these latter were as good and perfect as possible, they would be of no avail unless they were combined with the highest natural

104. (concluded)

quoted on previous page

There are, nevertheless, other statements which equate the imagination in man and animals. cf. I, 73 (10)

105. Moreh III, 51 *והוא אמת קרב אל השם ולדמות דמיון דהבין האמיתית אשר הודגש, לא על דרך ההבדל והדמיון*

excellence of the imaginative faculty.¹⁰⁶ The only prophet with whom the imagination did not play a rôle was Moses.

However, "Even Moses our teacher received his first prophecy through an angel, 'and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire'" (Ex. III).¹⁰⁷

In distinguishing between the miracles of Moses and the other prophets we note again that the imagination is the distinguishing factor.¹⁰⁸ In other words, with the miracles of the prophets, except Moses, the imaginative faculty is a decisive factor. Similarly, the prophet's knowledge of future events is accomplished through the imagination.¹⁰⁹

These, and numerous other expressions ascribing higher, positive functions to the imaginative faculty, naturally raise the question why Maimonides attributed such a decisive rôle to the imagination after he continuously contrasted it with the intellect. Furthermore, how are these functions possible for a faculty which shares all the deficiencies of matter.

106. Moreh II, 36.

107. Moreh II, 35. See note 66, p. 47. Moreh III, 45.

108. Ibid. See note 34, p. 25.

109. Moreh II, 38. "This same faculty enables some persons to foretell important coming events."

We concluded above that when the intellect proves the impossibility of a phenomenon, even though the imagination may conceive the possibility, the intellect decides. If, on the other hand, the intellect proves something possible, and it appears impossible to the imagination, the intellect remains the final arbiter. The problem arises, however, in a case where the intellect cannot disprove the possibility of an event and that event is conceivable by the imagination. The intellect and the imagination are, in that instance, not in direct conflict. Is such a phenomenon to be rejected as subject to all the frailties of the imaginative faculty, or may it be accepted as possible? This is the problem in creation. The normal processes of syllogistic thought will not lead to creation but neither will they arrive at Eternity, according to Maimonides. Creation is neither proved nor disproved intellectually, but is imagineable. Miracles and prophecy, insofar as they are intimately connected with creation, would also be in the same category.¹¹⁰ These notions are ultimately accepted on the basis of tradition, which has a final truth.¹¹¹ It follows, therefore, that in certain instances the imagination is more efficacious than the intellect.

¹¹⁰. See note 39, p. 27.

¹¹¹. Moreh II, 16. "Since I am convinced of the correctness of my method and consider either of the two theories - viz., the Eternity of the Universe and the Creation - as admissible, I accept the latter on the authority of prophecy, which can teach things beyond the reach of philosophical speculation."

In every instance where Maimonides wishes to establish a principle dictated by the Torah, his method involves the proof that its impossibility is not intellectually demonstrable. But neither can they be proved. In the choice between the two alternatives, tradition is the deciding factor. The alternative which the Torah or prophecy provides is attainable by the imagination, but not by the intellect. This conclusion is an impossibility in a system where the Active Intellect is in "contact" with the human intellect alone, and the imaginative faculty, being a material force, is outside the ken of intellectual knowledge.

This problem is discussed by Maimonides and his analysis contains very far-reaching implications:

ואנחנו מקוים המעלות בן
 גדולי הדיון בלם הוא הנמצא אל מן אחר מן המדענים, כי קצת אנשי הדיון אחרים שנה מנה
 הנמצא אלם לא יתואר השם בנפשו עליו, וימאנו אחרים שהוא מנה האפשר אלם נפשו
 והם המדענים, שמושיגים שהוא אפשר, ואחרים אחרים שהוא מנה הדיון, יש לה מגדולי הדיון.
 במציאות מקרה לא בנושאו זה וביאורו זה הדיון אשר, אבל שמינה צנינים ודברים
מנה האפשר אלם, ומנה הנמצא אלם הפילוסופים ... ואני תמיה אלם זה השדר פה
 ומנה זה אלם שיאמר בלם זה דין שיצטווה שהוא אפשר, וימנה הולך שהוא נמצא
 נמצא בטבע, ואם בליה זה הדין ומצבו, בהה המדע או בשלם ובלי זה דבר ובלם בן
 המדע והמנהל, שפדמים שיחזוק האדם על חביו או תבליק עליו נפשו בעתן אחר הוא
 אפשר אלם בטבעו, וימנה החזק בה האפשרות הוא מביא הדעת, עלם בבחינת השלם,
 ואם יש גם בן דבר שבלם בו בן הנה המדע והבן השלם, ואם הוא דבר
 חזק שמינה וזה או בשלם צמנו מביאים בן המנהל והמדע.

In his own system, Maimonides accepts only those ideas not rationally demonstrable, which are dictated by the Jewish view. His entire struggle is to keep them at an irreducible minimum. So that his criterion in matters outside the realm of the demonstrable is the Torah, with its implications. However, how can the imagination, so often described as the very opposite of the intellect, lead to conclusions unattainable through reason, the highest faculty of man, his form, through which he actualizes himself. Furthermore, we determined that knowledge of forms, i.e., the actualization of the hylic reason, is accomplished through the emanation of the Active Intellect. The Active Intellect is the only source of pure cognition for man, and being pure form can transmit it only to form, i.e., to the activated reason. How, then, can the imagination, a force within a body, "perceiving nothing except bodies or properties within bodies" conceive notions unattainable by the intellect? True, that the intellect is the arbiter when the imagination pictures phenomena which reason proves impossible, but there are instances when the imaginative faculty pictures events which can neither be proved nor disproved by the intellect, and yet, tradition attests to its truth. This explains the vital significance of the imagination in all the phenomena necessitated by the Torah.

Prophecy, miracles and creation are notions which a religious outlook demands, but they are not conclusions of a systematic rational process. Their occurrence is rationally neither necessary nor impossible. However, they are all imaginable. Now, since tradition testifies to their reality, it would follow that the imagination may attain realities beyond the scope of the intellect. This is impossible, according to ~~the~~ Maimonides' concept of the Active Intellect, and its relation to human reason. The imagination must, therefore, have a function in relation to human reason other than the purely negative one which we described. The source of highest truth must be the Active Intellect, which is the intermediary between God and the sub-lunar world. The link between the sub-lunar realm and the Active Intellect is the rational faculty of man. The role of the imagination must, therefore, fit itself into this system.

We have thus arrived at the basic motivation for granting the imagination a vital role in prophecy. However, it surely cannot serve in this capacity if it is to be considered in its negative and destructive connotations only; for it would, then, represent a breach in the rational system of Maimonides. There must, therefore, be another aspect of the imagination which will reach the loftiest truths. It remains in the realm of imagination insofar as the phenomena it con-

ceives are not rationally demonstrable. However, "imagination" in this act of cognition is only a homonym. It becomes part of the intellectual process and acts as a "catalytic" to raise the cognitive act to the highest possible state of perfection.¹¹³

Prophecy, therefore, remains within the order of nature. However, it reaches truths unattainable through normal intellectual processes of the philosopher. Ideas beyond the realm of syllogistic reasoning are conceived in the prophetic experience achieved through the perfection of the imaginative and intellectual faculties. The criterion for prophetic cognition is the intellect, if it falls within its purview. Beyond it, prophecy contains a truth sui generis for the prophet himself. For those to whom the message is transmitted, the criterion is either a sign, as was the case with Moses, or Mosaic tradition, which served in all instances of prophecy after Moses.¹¹⁴

113. In the light of this analyses we may resolve a number of perplexing problems.

When one conceives certain phenomena not rationally demonstrable, how is one to know whether it is the result of the imagination in its negative, material state, or an act of highest cognition. True that, when one has a prophetic experience, the prophet is convinced of the certainty of that knowledge as if he had perceived it with his senses (Moreh III, 24). However, what is to be the criterion of those to whom the prophet transmits his message?

The prophetic messages which followed Moses could be evaluated in terms of the doctrine which the peer of the prophets transmitted. But what about Moses him-

113. (continued)

self? How were the people to know that his message was the result of the cognitive process or mere imaginative fancies? The existence and unity of God are rational propositions and

כא מה שידע במידה, ולפיכך הנביא בו, ויש לו משיגהו
שם, ואין יתרון, ולא ימצא שם השלם האלה (אנכי, ולא יהיה זקן) מצד הנבואה דבר .. ואולם שם
הדברים הם מנהג הענינים, והמקובלות לא מנהג המוסכמות (Moreh II, 33)

Therefore, a sign was necessary to convince the people that Moses was sent by God. Moreh I, 63.

השיבו זה ואמר
היה הם יקראו שם אלה נעלה בולו המוכרים השלם, מה גמיה דליות שנה הוליה
נעלה שמה, ואם נעלה הוא

The explanation of the names attributed to God, which follows in this chapter, assumes a new clarity. For, after Moses was established as the true "messenger of God" he could teach doctrines which could not be demonstrated through normal syllogistic reasoning.

This would also explain why the Mosaic miracles had to be different from the miracles of all others. They had a different function and, therefore, had to be wrought in the presence of all people. (See note 34, p. 25, and Moreh II, 35)

We may now also appreciate Maimonides' insistence that the patriarchs, i.e., those who prophesied before Moses, did not express their message as a prophetic utterance. They experienced prophecy, but they transmitted only rationally demonstrable ideas. Moreh I, 63

אבל איש שיתבאר הנבואה דומה, שהם דבר אליו, ואלו, לא ישמע זה כל קולם
מה רבנו זה, ולא יסדק מה שגא באבות .. מוכיחן דבר ה' זהם, והבאמת אליהם,
שמה זה גמיה דליות היה זקרון דבני אדם או דהייליר גמיה דב שמה
אברהם לא יצאק אלו שוקדים דבני אדם, אע"פ שהם עשו כן, או לא עשו, אולם
אליהם, זה לא היה כלל, אבל היכדבור דהם דמי שיהי מילד דהם, לא דבר אחר .. והם
היו מושגים בני אדם על דבר דיון ואמר.

Note in this connection Moreh III, 29.

Similarly, those who followed Moses taught doctrines proclaimed by him. They did not teach anything new. It was, therefore, not necessary to have signs which would convince people of the truth of their prophecy. Even though they were not rationally demonstrable, they had already been established by Mosaic Doctrine. It is for this reason that miracles have no role in prophecy in general. It remains but

We may now turn to the problem of how the imagination assumes its positive role. Its normal functions are "to retain impressions by the senses, to combine them and chiefly to form images".¹¹⁵ Its activity is restricted to the material. However, "Its principal and highest function is performed when the senses are at rest and pause in their action, for then it receives, to some extent, ~~so~~ in the measure as it is pre-disposed for this influence".

113. (concluded)

a cognative act of the highest kind. cf. II, 39.

114. See note 113. Also note the significant passage which concludes the discussion of creation or Eternity, in Moreh II, 24 אמר עתה, הלא קודם לא יצא עולם הזה לידינו, והלא

Parashah II, 24

The דבורה is the imaginative faculty, as explained in Moreh II, 47.

115. Moreh II, 36.

In the normal cognitive process the senses perceive individual objects and these individual perceptions are retained and combined by the imaginative faculty. So that the preoccupation of the imagination is restricted to the material objects which impinge themselves on the mind. The mind (*הנפש*) is the bearer of the faculty. When the imaginative faculty combines the impressions received through the senses the result involves an abstraction from the material objects. However, it is the intellect which utilizes the combinations of the imaginative faculty to conceive pure abstractions, i.e., the forms. This abstraction by the imaginative faculty to the point where it may be utilized by the intellect can only occur when the senses are at rest, and do not constantly transmit new impressions to the imagination. It is then that it ceases to be a purely material force and can serve as an adjunct to the intellect.¹¹⁶

116. Moreh I, 3

"The term *temunah* is used in the Bible in three different senses. It signifies, first, the outline of things which are perceived by our bodily senses, i.e., their shape and form. Secondly, the forms of our imagination, i.e., the impressions retained in imagination when the objects have ceased to affect our senses. Thirdly, the true form of an object which is perceived only by the intellect." Commenting on the imagination, Abarbanel states:

*וזהו כפי מושגו השלמה והמחשבה, והמציאות בשל היותו מושג ממש
הדברים. וזה היותו שבמחשבה אין מציאות בשל היותו יחיד ממש. והדבר הדד"א והבדל
במשל השל דם הדברים הקדושים מן החיים*

Shem Tov remarks on the same passage: *וזהו כפי מושגו השלמה והמחשבה*

המציאות בדמיון זהו השלמה בשל היותו יחיד ממש. והדבר הדד"א והבדל

Continued

This is the process in true dreams. For when the senses are at rest, ~~and~~ the imaginative faculty has an opportunity to perform its highest function, which is similar to the function of the intellect, i.e., it becomes part of the cognitive process of the intellect. It is at that point that the relation of the intellect and the imaginative faculty becomes a reciprocal one. Instead of receiving constant impressions from the senses which possess the deficiencies of matter, it receives some influence from the intellect. This influence, because of its intellectual character, provides the necessary order to make of it a true dream. The basis of the dream, however, remains the aggregate of material impressions. "It is a well-known fact that the thing which engages greatly and earnestly man's attention, whilst he is awake and in the full possession of his senses, forms during his sleep the object of the action of the imaginative faculty. Imagination is then influenced by the intellect insofar as it is predisposed for such influence."¹¹⁷

116. (concluded)

Or even more significantly, the interpretation of Ephodi:

כי בבחינת אלף נובל זיקה הענינים המדומים מצד היות מדומים כמו הענינים השמים, ובחינת אלף נובל זיקה הענינים המדומים מצד היות מופשטים מהמציאות קצת, בענין אלף נובל מצד הענינים השמים

Note well Moreh III, 21, particularly the example of the clock which distinguishes between a priori knowledge of God and a posteriori knowledge of ordinary men.

117. Moreh II, 36

Prophecy and true dreams are of the same kind since they both occur when the senses are at rest, they achieve their results through means other than logical

processes, and represent the product of a reciprocal relationship of the imaginative faculty and the intellect. The difference lies in the degree of this relationship, i.e., the degree of perfection of the intellect.

In a true dream the function of the imaginative faculty is the same as in prophecy. The imaginative faculty is fully developed. "Statesmen, law-givers, diviners, charm-ers and men that have true dreams or do wonderful things by strange means and secret~~s~~ arts, though they are not wise men" all belong to this category. Their activity stems from a perfectly developed imaginative faculty. However, since their rational faculty is only in a state of potentiality, "they perceive scenes, dreams and confused images, when awake, in the form of a prophetic vision. They then believe they are prophets; they wonder that they perceive visions and think that they have acquired wisdom without training. They fall into grave errors as regards import-^t and philosophical principles and see a strange mixture of true and imaginary things." (Moreh II, 37). The members of this category, having a perfectly developed imaginative faculty, achieve a degree of truth through the action of their imagination in direct proportion to the development of their intellect. The common element of the members of this category is the nature of their activity. It involves activity beyond the ken of syllogistic reason. However, when this type of free imaginative endeavor is not joined by a perfectly developed intellect, it is, then, the product of the imagination in its most negative form, leading to confusion and error.

When, however, the intellect is fully developed and is joined by a perfectly developed imaginative faculty, man achieves a state of prophecy and partakes of the a priori knowledge of God, transmitted through the Active Intellect. The process ceases to be a posteriori. It "passes over intermediate causes" and "draws inferences quickly". Through it man achieves the highest metaphysical truths and thus his knowledge becomes similar to the knowledge of the producer, in contrast to the knowledge dependent on things produced. It is the closest approximation of God's knowledge that man may achieve.

We noted in our discussion of the intellect and its relation to the Active Intellect that it is at first a force within a body and only after arduous preparation does it activate itself and is ready to receive the emanation of the Active Intellect. The whole process of preparation which involves knowledge of the transient world is caused by the Active Intellect, since it is the ideal after which the human reason strives. It follows, therefore, that every aspect of the preparation is the result of the Active Intellect, insofar as it shares in the cognitive process of the intellect as it passes from potentiality to actuality. When the senses are at rest, the imagination helps the intellect to conceive forms by combining the impressions and preparing them for pure abstraction. Thus, from this point

of view the imagination becomes ~~in~~ an intermediary (in a limited sense) between the Active Intellect and reason.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, when the intellect has achieved a state of actuality, which involves a complete separation from matter, it receives the emanation from the Active Intellect and some of it transfers itself to the imagination, insofar as it becomes part of the intellectual process, i.e., detaches itself from matter. The separation is never complete. The imagination remains a material force. Its functions concern themselves with material impressions. However, when the Senses are at rest it may divest itself, to an extent, of its material preoccupation and receive intellectual influence. The intellect is then the intermediary. Just as in the actualization of the hylic reason we noted a two-way process, from below and above,¹¹⁹ so with the imaginative faculty/^{which} also exists in both an actual and potential state. When it is only the function of the organ, which is

118. See notes 90 (p.62) and 96 (p.66). This is a posteriori knowledge, which even in the higher stages represented by scientific thought, is still dependent on empirical data.

119. See our analyses of the intellect and its relation to the other faculties.

its bearer,¹²⁰ and is wholly submerged in matter, it exists only in potentia. However, to the extent that it may become a part of the cognitive process, i.e., achieve a reciprocal relationship with the intellect, does it actualize itself.

Now, when the intellect is still in a potential state, i.e., not completely detached from matter, the influence it transmits to the imaginative faculty, even though it be fully developed, must, of necessity, be very slight. For, though the reciprocal relationship is attained, the main preoccupation of the intellect itself is still with the material. The cognitive process is still from the outside through the senses to the potential intellect. The intellect itself does not conceive pure form, and therefore, the ^{which} emanates from the Active Intellect, and which is the only Source of knowledge ^{in contrast to} ~~and~~ imaginative fancy, cannot reach the imaginative faculty.

The function of the imaginative faculty is the same, whether the intellect is activated or not. The difference lies in the truth value of the result. In one instance, it

120. Moreh II, 36.

אנוכי הוא נשק רוב אפסאם שיהיה נאמר
הוא הנשק רוב הנאמר

is an act of highest cognition; in the other, it ~~is~~ very contradictory. Therefore, when the rational faculty has reached a state of perfection and the cognitive process is reversed, i.e., the Divine Influence is received directly through the Active Intellect by the activated reason, the imaginative faculty becomes part of this intellectual process insofar as it achieves a reciprocal relation with the intellect, and becomes a direct bearer of the prophetic emanation. The perfection of both these faculties, when under the influence of the Active Intellect, constitutes prophecy.

The problem of whether the prophetic influence reaches the intellect first and is then transferred to the imaginative faculty, since the Active Intellect can only influence pure form, or whether the imagination also receives some of the emanation directly, is easily resolved. Upon realization that the function of the imagination becomes a part of the cognitive process, the element of temporal priority is no consideration. In the prophetic experience, the cognitive elements combine to form a unified process. The only priority is a logical one, in that the intellect must be activated before the process may achieve prophetic heights.¹²¹

121. There are expressions in the Moreh which indicate that the intellect is the intermediary between the Active Intellect and the imaginative faculty; that they are both under the direct influence; and, that the imagination is the intermediary. Moreh II, 36 "in the first instance to man's rational faculty and then to his imaginative faculty." Abarbanel, however, interprets

When the imaginative faculty functions in an isolated fashion, separate from the rational process, it is in a potential state and all the negative characteristics are present. When it becomes an integral part of the rational process, which culminates in the intellect, the imaginative faculty has then reached its positive, constructive aspect, and is in a state of actuality, regardless of whether the rational faculty is potential or actual. If the intellect is still in a potential state the objects of the entire cognitive process stem from the sensuous world and it is thus subject to the errors and misconceptions inherent in matter. When the intellect is activated, the entire cognitive process is reversed and a state of prophecy is achieved. The function of the imagination in this instance is "to conceive ideas that result from premises which human reason could not comprehend by itself."¹²² It passes over

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this passage ... *אין האלו שילקן בחזית ואילו זה, בשל, כי בשנים תחיל ההשפעה ... ואולם בזמן החכמה כבר נמצא בצדקה על הכל הדמיון תכלה, ויעלה הרבבות, ואולי היה פנה הדבר ישיג משיגין אלה בקבוצה אין כן.*

c.f. Abarbanel's comment to I, 37.

Moreh II, 38

ועי' לביק שיהיה הכל הדבר נולד, שיהיה כל הפעל אולם הוא דליל וקול
ולאחריו הפעל, ואין הכל העצם יגיע השל על הכל המדע

This passage, as well, must be understood to mean that the skipping over of logical premises is to be considered a rational process. Passages, which designate the imaginative faculty as the intermediary or an equal sharer, are found in Moreh II, 6, 36, 37, 38, 45; III 24. However, they must be interpreted in the manner we indicated.

122. Moreh II, 38.

the arduous syllogistic process and goes beyond it. However, it is all a part of a rational process in a state of actuality. Its flight is, therefore, not free imaginative fancy, but the highest function that man may achieve.

A philosopher has only an activated intellect; the diviner, the dreamer of true dreams only possesses a perfectly developed imaginative faculty; the prophet combines both.

We have thus reached the core of the Maimonidean doctrine of prophecy. It remains within the order of nature. It is a form of cognition, but the highest attainable. It consists of the combined action of the intellect and the imagination, when under the direct influence of the Active Intellect. The preparation for prophecy, therefore, entails all the preparatory steps required to activate one's intellect. However, in addition, "the substance of the brain must, from the very beginning, be in the most perfect condition, as regards purity of matter, composition of its different parts, size and position."¹²³ The preparation for the intellect requires study, training, etc. (as outlined above). For the imagination, however, no amount of culture of mental and moral faculties will bring it to a state of perfection, unless one be endowed from birth with an imagination of the highest natural

123. Moreh II, 36. The brain is the bearer of the imaginative faculty.

excellence. "Any defect in this respect cannot in any way be supplied or remedied by training. For when any organ is defective in its temperament, proper training can in the best case restore a healthy condition, to some extent, but cannot make such an organ perfect. But, if the organ is defective, as regards size, position or the substance and the matter of which the organ is formed, there is no remedy."¹²⁴

The various requirements for prophecy are, therefore, necessary for the actualization of the intellect or for the perfection of the imaginative faculty. Only these two faculties are the actual bearers of the prophetic ⁸²²
The others ⁸²² are the normal requirements for the direct participants in the prophetic experience to reach a state of perfection.¹²⁵

The degree of perfection varies with each prophet. There are, therefore, degrees in prophecy.¹²⁶ These variations are dependent on the degree of perfection of the imaginative and rational faculties. These degrees of prophecy include all prophets except Moses, who must be placed in a separate cate-

124. Ibid. This explains why philosophers are not prophets.

125. Moreh II, 38. cf. Moreh I, 34 and note 95, p. 64.

126. Moreh II, 45. There are eleven degrees in prophecy. Note that only with the third degree, where the element of dreams is introduced, does true prophecy begin.

gory.¹²⁷

The prophetic state, insofar as it involves the imaginative faculty which remains the functions of a material organ, is not a permanent one. The perfection of the imaginative faculty may, in many ways, be impaired. This explains the intermittent character of prophecy, as well as the other characteristics which distinguished Mosaic prophecy from the prophecy of others.¹²⁸

We have thus determined the place of prophecy in the order of nature, its relationship to other forms of cognition, its source, and the faculties of man which participate in the prophetic experience. The various difficulties raised by the commentators are, we believe, resolved in the light of our analysis.¹²⁹

127. See note 113, p. 77.

128. See note 66, p. 47-8 and text. All the differences between the prophecy of Moses and the prophecy of those who preceded and followed him stem from the imaginative faculty, insofar as it is a material force.

129. The Maimonidean theory of prophecy involves every aspect of the Moreh. It is the intent of Maimonides as expressed in his Introduction, never to state a problem and its solution clearly and succinctly. The problems are intertwined and the true meaning esoteric. We have, therefore, not applied our analysis to each difficult passage. However, with the general principles we have established the process is a mechanical one.

Having concluded our analysis of the theory of prophecy in The Guide for the Perplexed, we may now turn to Spinoza's Theologico-Political Treatise and determine the realm and nature of prophecy in the System of Spinoza. However, the essence of his teachings must be preceded by some general observations regarding the motivations and nature of the Treatise, in order to determine its objectivity and its logical connection with the other major work of Spinoza, The Ethics.

It has been maintained that since the Treatise was the "latest work of Spinoza's life",¹³⁰ or more precisely, "the composition of the Ethics was deliberately interrupted in favor of what Spinoza considered to be the more immediately pressing treatise on freedom",¹³¹ it is, therefore, the key to Spinoza's philosophy, and "particularly to its matured expression in the Ethics".¹³² Furthermore, the conclusion is reached, on the same grounds, that the sources for the Treatise also served as the sources for the Ethics.¹³³

130. R.M.M. Elwes, The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza, Intr., p. XXXII.

131. Roth, Spinoza, Descartes and Maimonides, p. 63.

132. Ibid.

133. Pearson, Maimonides and Spinoza maintains on the basis of some strikingly similar passages that, whereas the influence of The Guide is most manifest in the Treatise,

Even a cursory reading of the Treatise demonstrates that during its composition, Spinoza must have had the Guide before him. The entire work and, particularly, the chapters on prophecy and miracles are "so deeply impregnated, both implicitly and explicitly, with the teaching of the Guide, that without it they could not have been written."¹³⁴ Not only do we find direct quotations from the Guide¹³⁵, but,

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the Yad Hachazakah "has far greater importance for the student of Spinoza's Ethics". He finds a correspondence in their conception of God, where both deny all human attributes and affections; in the doctrine of God's unity, in His necessity, in the possibility of man to attain ~~to~~ same, if an imperfect, knowledge of God, which in both systems is the highest good of life. Pearson also equates the two conceptions of intelligence, God's knowledge and love of himself, and the views of the two philosophers on the immortality of the soul.

134. Joel, Spinoza's Theological Politischer Traktat, p.9" Ich glaube sagen zu können das ohne Maimonides und seine Fortsetzer ganze Capitel des Traktates gar nicht möglich gewesen wären, dass er trotz des Scheinbaren Gegensatzes häufig in des Maimonides Fusstapfen wandelt, dass er zwar seine methode lächerlich zu machen sucht dass er see aber selbst häufig angewendet, wo es sich um des neue Testament handelt..... The quote in the text is from Roth, p.66.

135. Treatise VII, p. 115. Maimonides is here quoted with reference to the interpretation of Scripture.

as Joel correctly points out,¹³⁶ Maimonides is constantly paraphrased and often his very words are used, only to be turned against him.

The dependence of the Treatise on the Guide is so very apparent that it leads to the misleading conclusion, adopted by many, that there must be a positive relationship between Maimonides and Spinoza and that the latter, with few minor modifications, adopted the major ideas of the former and made them the basis of his own philosophical system.¹³⁷ One may indeed find similar ideas and the same problems treated, but their motivations are at opposite poles. Other criteria, generally overlooked, must, however, be carefully considered if the ideas presented in the Treatise are to be grasped in their fullest significance.

136. Joel, Spinoza's Theol. Pol. Tr. In his brilliant pioneering analysis, Joel continually calls attention to the fact that the chapters on prophecy, miracles, scriptural interpretation and Philosophy and Theology are of the nature of a polemic aimed at Maimonides.

137. This is the thesis of Leon Roth, among others, in his Spinoza, Descartes and Maimonides. Roth maintains that the Arabic theologians were led by their religious doctrines to construct a metaphysical system which was essentially the same as that later adopted by Descartes, and that in rejecting the Cartesian system, Spinoza used the same objections, and put forward the same positive grounds of reconstruction, as Maimonides used in his devastating attack on the position of the Kalam. Roth finds the similarity in the separation of philosophy and theology which establishes the supremacy of reason. The superficiality of the entire comparison must be obvious to anyone who has considered Maimonides' philosophy. If there be a separation in the Guide, it is only to bring them together, as a conclu-

The Treatise consists of twenty chapters. The first fifteen deal with Prophecy, Prophets, Divine and Ceremonial Law, Miracles, the Interpretation and Authorship of the Scriptures, Theology and Reason. Only with the sixteenth chapter do we find a consideration of the Natural and Civil Rights of Individuals, which is again interrupted by two chapters dealing with the Hebrews, and only the last two chapters are devoted to freedom of thought and religion. The avowed purpose of the Treatise is Freedom, political and religious. What then, is the reason for Spinoza's strange procedure? What place does an Elaborate Excursus on Biblical Criticism have in a political document? What is the relationship between an analysis of miracles and individual freedom?

Professor Hermann Cohen, in his brilliant essay, Spinoza uber Staat und Religion, Judentum und Christentum, supplies the answer.¹³⁸

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sion, to a unity of the highest kind. While Spinoza destroys theology and with it, prophecy and Judaism, Maimonides raises them to the highest form of cognition attainable by man. The other points of contact are similarly based on superficial ground, disregarding the motivations and treating Maimonidean conclusions removed from their context and his system as a whole. Of what significance is it, if Scientia intuitiva bears a resemblance to prophecy, and even this must be very precisely defined, if the motivations are so divergent?

138. Hermann Cohen's Jüdische Schriften, Vol. III, p. 290-372.

He finds two streams of interest in the personal life of Spinoza, which converged in, and served as the basic motivation for the Theo. Pol. Treatise. One was his friendship for Jan de Witt, the other was his being excommunicated by the Jewish Community of Amsterdam. Professor Cohen, accordingly, finds that the tractate was not written in the spirit of philosophic objectivity but was on the one hand a "publizistische Tendenzschrift zur Unterstützung der republikanischen Politik Jan de Witts",¹³⁹ and on the other, an elaboration of an earlier brief protest against the action of the Jewish congregation.¹⁴⁰

When considered in this light, Spinoza's method becomes quite clear. He demonstrates in the first part of the Treatise that Mosaic doctrine had as its only aim and purpose the establishment and maintenance of the Jewish

139. Ibid. p. 290.

140. The earlier protest was issued under the name "Apologie" and was circulated only in the narrow circle of his friends.

State, inculcating obedience in its citizens and holding out the promise of temporal blessing. Further, his methodology in Scriptural interpretation aims at the destruction of the religious view of Judaism. In order to defend the politics of de Witt against the attacks of the Orthodox party, Spinoza seeks to demonstrate that the Hebrew State is the source of all Orthodox who threaten freedom of thought. He thus fulfills both his aims - a devastating attack against his people, thereby exonerating himself, and at the same time furthering the political ideas of his friend and patron. Cohen then concludes, that the entire method of Scriptural analyses is in reality a critique of the Jewish State and no matter how scientific it may be, its motivation is the opportunism of political partisanship.

Since the objectivity of the volume is thus brought into question his conclusions must be carefully examined and his severity and extremely harsh judgment of Mosaic Religion must be viewed from this point of vantage. His attitude toward Christianity as contrasted to Judaism;¹⁴¹ his contention that the covenant by which the Jewish State was created ceased to be binding, in its entirety, with the destruction; and that the Pharisees insisted on the re-

141. See the discussion on his attitude to Christianity, Ibid pp. 319 ff.

tention of Jewish Law only because of their opposition to Christianity, must be considered in terms of his basic motivation.¹⁴² More so, his entire treatment of prophecy and prophets and his relegation of the phenomenon to the realm of scriptural exegeses, making not the slightest attempt to give it rational significance, is to be evaluated in terms of an a priori prejudice. His conclusions in the Treatise, as Professor Cohen points out, are at variance with his Ethics,¹⁴³ because of the preconceived prejudice.

Spinoza begins his discussion of prophecy with the observation that conclusions on the subject must be drawn purely from Scriptures, being particularly careful not to reason from metaphor, and taking care not to attribute anything to the authors of scriptural books that they themselves did not distinctly state.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, not every-

142. We do not propose to pursue this matter further, since it is beyond the scope of this paper. We shall, therefore, return to the main theme of our investigation, the nature of prophecy in Spinoza. As in every system, the problem of prophecy in Spinoza is not an isolated one. Insofar as it is relegated to the realm of the imagination, i.e., the prophets had an unusually vivid imagination but were not endowed with unusually perfect minds (Treatise p. 27), the entire Spinozistic system must be comprehended.

143. See note 4, p. 4,^{above} with reference to the attitude of Spinoza and Maimonides. As to Professor Cohen's thesis, the reader is urged to refer to his definitive analysis.

144. Treatise I, p.14. It is interesting to note that when it suits his particular purpose, Spinoza unhesitatingly twists texts to correspond with his notion. See his interpretation of God's "Sending" Saul to Samuel, or

thing uttered by a prophet is prophecy or revelation, but only those things plainly announced as such.

Following this method, Spinoza finds that revelations were made to the prophet, "through words or appearances or a combination of the two".¹⁴⁵ These revelations were either real, i.e., external to the mind of the prophet who saw them, or imaginary, i.e., "when the imagination of the prophet was in a state which led him distinctly to suppose that he heard or saw them". The voice that revealed the Law to Moses was real, but this was the only instance of a real voice. With all others who heard a voice, viz., Samuel, Abimelech, it was only imaginary. The voice was heard by all the Israelites. Since scripture expressly states "God spake with you face to face", which is interpreted by Spinoza to mean "as two men ordinarily interchange ideas through the instrumentality of their two bodies". He finally concludes that according to the Biblical narrative, God Himself spoke, and the Elders of the people beheld Him, for nowhere does the Bible prescribe "the belief that God is without body or even with-

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God's changing the heart of the Egyptians, or the setting of the rainbow in the clouds, etc., as referring to the ordinary course of nature. Spinoza justifies his different methodology in scriptural interpretation in these instances, from that adopted with prophecy, by stating "I have proceeded in this way advisedly, for prophecy, in that it ~~supersedes~~ human knowledge, is a purely theological question..but in the case of miracles, as our inquiry is a question purely philosophical, I was not under any such necessity. (Treatise VI, p.95-6) However, even in matters not "purely philosophical" he follows the same procedure. See his treatment of Christ's utterances (Treatise II, et passim)

out form or figure, but only ordained, that the Jews should believe in His existence and in Him alone."¹⁴⁶ Only Christ communed with God, mind to mind, but in a later chapter Spinoza concludes that the knowledge of Christ and the Apostles was not prophetic knowledge.¹⁴⁷

This leads to the conclusion that all prophets received their revelation through the aid of the imagination through either/words or vision. "Therefore the power of prophecy implies not a peculiarly perfect mind but a peculiarly vivid imagination."¹⁴⁸ The prophets were said to possess the Spirit of God because they were endowed with a "peculiar" and "extraordinary"^{imaginative} power, and because men did not know the cause of prophetic knowledge and in their wonder referred it directly to the Deity.¹⁴⁹

Spinoza further maintains that the prophets perceived everything in parables and allegories; that prophecy did not remain with a prophet for long nor "manifest itself fre-

145. Treatise I, p. 15.

146. Ibid. Compare Moreh II, 36 cf. Joel, Spin. Theol. Pol. Traktat, p. 22, who rightly considers the entire discussion as a polemic against Maimonides. However, Spinoza's insistence that there was a real voice at Sinai and that all the people heard the voice is necessitated by the conclusions which he wished to establish. First, that prophecy does not need intellectual preparation since it belongs in the theological realm and is completely divorced from real knowledge. Secondly, that the Law of Moses nowhere prescribed that God is without a body (p. 17) which is necessary for his contention that the Bible does not teach philosophic truths, and with this one stroke would destroy the entire Maimonidean system. Thirdly, to form a basis for the distinction

quently, but was very rare, manifesting itself only in a few men and in them not often."¹⁵⁰

Now, since the prophets were endowed only with a vivid imaginations and not with unusually perfect minds, the implication is clear that it would be a grave error to suppose that knowledge of natural and spiritual phenomena may be gained from prophetic books. "Prophecies varied not only according to the imagination and physical temperament of the prophet, but also according to his particular opinions; and further - prophecy never rendered the prophet wiser than he was before."¹⁵¹

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146. between Moses and Christ, i.e., "that Moses spoke with God face to face as a man speaks with his friend (i.e., by means of their two bodies) Christ communed with God mind to mind" (Treatise p.19). Compare this view with that of Maimonides who set out to prove the very opposite. See note 53 for the Maimonidean position on the created voice. cf. Moreh I,54, and compare it to the manner in which Spinoza treats the same passage in the Treatise XIII, p.178. See also Spinoza's lengthy discourse on Ruah to explain that it also means imagination. (Treatise I,19ff.)

147. Treatise IV,p.64. "for Christ....must be taken to have had a clear and adequate perception, for Christ was not so much the prophet as the mouthpiece of God." This contrasts to his translation of Nabi as the interpreter of God. In spite of the terminology, this statement destroys prophecy and exalts Christ and the Apostles, as will be explained. One should note, as well, the statement "I must at this juncture declare that those doctrines which certain churches put forward concerning Christ, I neither affirm nor deny, for I freely confess I do not know them. What I have just stated I gather from Scripture." (Treatise I,p.19) This is Spinoza's attempt to circumvent the doctrines of institutionalized Christianity. cf. Cohen's Jüd. Schrif. p.319, on the influence of Zwengley. Note also that the role attributed by Spinoza to Christ bears striking similarities to the role ascribed to Moses in the Moreh.

148. Treatise I,p.19. Spinoza proves that Ruah may also mean imagination in contrast to Moreh I,40.

Having concluded that prophecy involved imagination and not the intellect, how was the prophet to know that what he imagined was a revelation. "Imagination does not in its own nature involve certainty of truth such as is involved in any clear and distinct idea, but requires some extrinsic reason to assure us of its objective reality.... In this respect prophetic knowledge is inferior to natural knowledge, which needs no sign and in itself implies certitude...the certitude of the prophet was moral, not mathematical." ¹⁵²

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149. Treatise I, p.24. This statement is clarified in a footnote (note 3). The words "peculiar" and "extraordinary power" are meant in the same sense as a "giant" who is a rarity but still human, or "the gift of composing poetry extempore" which is given to very few, yet it is still human. The terminology is further clarified in the following statement; "If the Jews were at a loss to understand any phenomenon or were ignorant of its cause, they referred to God". Therefore, thunder and lightning were called the arrows of God, and any unusual natural phenomenon, like trees of unusual size or very strong and tall men (Sons of God in Genesis) "though impious robbers and whoremongers" are called the works of God. (Treatise I, 21) cf. Moreh II, 48.
150. Treatise I, 26.
151. Treatise II, 27. Note the difference between Maimonides and Spinoza in their treatment of Hagar.
152. Treatise II, 28. Here we see most clearly the major distinction between Maimonides and Spinoza. For Maimonides, the prophet needs no proof for the certainty of his knowledge. Since that knowledge is intellectual it has intrinsic truth and requires no outside agent. Therefore, as we pointed out, the prophet needs no sign to convince himself of the certainty of his revelation. If a sign was ever utilized, and this happened with Moses only, it was to convince those ad-

The whole question of certitude of prophecy was based on these three considerations:

- "1. That the things revealed were imagined very vividly, affecting the prophets in the same way as things seen when awake;
2. The presence of a sign;
3. Lastly and chiefly, that the mind of the prophet was given wholly to what was right and good."¹⁵³

Spinoza further maintains that prophets held contrary opinions and prejudices in speculative matters, depending on their opinions, independent of revelation; that some of them were ignorant, while others were on a higher intellectual level; even Moses did not conceive of God as omniscient, nor did he know that God cannot be looked upon.

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dressed, but not the prophet himself. (See Moreh III, 24 and references above) Spinoza also requires no proof for an "adequate idea", i.e., "an idea insofar as it is considered in itself, without relation to the object, has all the properties or intrinsic marks of a true idea." The Ethics, Part II, def. 4. Further, in II, 29, note, "Whenever the mind is determined in anywise from within, it regards things clearly and distinctly". That which is real is known and that which is known is real. However, this is not the realm of prophecy. Prophecy is in the realm of imagination and, therefore, the problem of 'certainty'. Later in our study we shall define imagination in the system of Spinoza.

153. Treatise II, 29.

If prophecy is the product of the imagination and no intellectual knowledge may be derived from it, what is the function of the prophet and his prophecy? Spinoza's reply is that the function of prophecy is the teaching of morality; and the prophets differed from others who had the same knowledge, in that their imagination was unusually developed, ~~and~~ ^{consequently} ~~that~~ they felt a greater certainty concerning their teaching. Their knowledge was, therefore, ordinary knowledge, i.e., knowledge common to all men as men" and rests on foundations which all share".¹⁵⁴ However, ordinary knowledge is also Divine knowledge, insofar as all knowledge is dependent on God.¹⁵⁵

We have thus reached the following conclusions concerning Spinoza's view of prophecy:

1. That it stems from a highly developed imagination.
2. That it is not a source for intellectual knowledge. That is certainly outside its realm.
3. Since prophets have an unusually developed imagination they are more certain of their notions than others. However, their certainty is only moral.
4. That their knowledge is shared by all men, i.e., it is ordinary knowledge as distinct from the knowledge acquired by the natural faculties, which depends on the knowledge of God and His Eternal Laws.

154. Treatise, I, 13.

155. Ibid.

5. The function of ^{the} prophets is to inculcate proper rules of conduct and morality.
6. It would also follow "that an intellectual knowledge of God, which takes cognizance of His nature insofar as it actually is...has no bearing whatever on true rules of conduct".^{156.}

Before we define Spinoza's concept of "imagination", the fifteenth chapter of the Treatise, which is the most significant, must be analyzed. Spinoza discusses the dispute whether Scripture should be made subservient to reason or reason to Scripture, or, in other words, the relationship of Theology and Philosophy. Spinoza presents two opposing views concerning this problem, the view of Maimonides and the view of Jehuda Alpakhar. Maimonides represents the view that reason is supreme and he therefore uses a method of interpreting Scripture, which reconciles it with the demands of reason.¹⁵⁷ Alpakhar represents the op-

156. Treatise XIII, p. 180

157. It must be noted that by interpreting the Maimonidean position in a manner which make Scripture subservient to reason, Spinoza misrepresents the view expressed in the Moreh. We have amply demonstrated that in vital religious problems, i.e., creation, prophecy, etc., reason is circumscribed and Scripture becomes the final authority. True that with reference to Divine Attributes, Maimonides "reasons from metaphor". But the other element is equally, if not more significant. His method involves yielding but insignificantly, of the authority of Scriptures to the demands of reason, in order to ~~take much more. It is not order to~~ establish Scripture as the final authority in the basic problems of religious thought.

posite point of view.¹⁵⁸ After refuting both views, Spinoza concludes: "we may take it for indisputable that theology is not bound to serve reason, nor reason theology, but that each has her own domain".¹⁵⁹

The realm of reason is truth and wisdom; and the sphere of theology is piety and obedience. "The power of reason does not extend so far as to determine for us that men may be blessed through simple obedience, without understanding. Theology tells us nothing else enjoins us no command save obedience...she defines the dogmas of faith insofar as they may be necessary for obedience, and leaves reason to determine their precise truth."¹⁶⁰

But even "the theology" discussed in this chapter refers only to the objects "aimed at" by Scripture; namely, "the scheme and manner of obedience or the true dogmas of faith."¹⁶¹

158. The view of Alpakhar is taken from a letter which Spinoza recalls: "Ich erinnere mich dies Einst in einem Briefe gegen Maimonides gelesen zu haben, der sich unter den Sogenannten Maimonides - Briefen findet." (Footnote in the Gebhart edition of the Theol. Pol. Tr.)

159. Treatise XV, 194.

160. Ibid. Compare this view to the statement in Moreh II, 32. "The chief object of the law..is the teaching of truths to which the truth of creatio ex nihilo belongs. In addition to teaching of truths the Law aims at the removal of injustice from mankind." Here we see the fusion of imagination (statesmen, lawgivers) and intellect to attain the highest truth. Spinoza, in contrast, makes a complete dichotomy - the realm of prophecy is imagination; the sphere of philosophy is reason, truth.

However, the particular prescriptions of Scriptures were ordained for the Hebrews only and had reference only to their temporal bodily happiness and "the tranquility of their kingdom, and that, therefore, were only valid while the kingdom lasted."¹⁶²

It might also be mentioned that Spinoza demonstrates the impossibility of miracles in the sense of a change in the natural order. "Nature cannot be contravened, but She preserves a fixed and immutable order...God's nature and existence cannot be known from miracles;¹⁶³ on the contrary, it would make one doubt God and everything else. But even a miracle in the sense that an event surpasses human comprehension, cannot yield knowledge of the existence and providence of God."¹⁶⁴

161. For the meaning of "true dogmas of faith" see Treatise IV "Of the Divine Law".

162. Treatise V, 77 This entire chapter along with the preceding one on Divine Law is very significant.

163. Treatise VI, 82.

164. Treatise VI, 86

The imagination is discussed by Spinoza in his Treatise on the Improvement of Understanding, in the following terms: "The imagination is only affected by particular objects....(it) is only affected by physical objects...ideas fictitious, false and the rest originate in the imagination - that is, in certain sensations fortuitous (so to speak) and disconnected, arising, not from the power of the mind, but from external causes, according as the body, sleeping or walking receives various motions...the soul is passive with regard to it...we know that the operations whereby the effects of the imagination are produced, take place under other laws quite different from the laws of the understanding, and that the mind is entirely passive with regard to them...."¹⁶⁵ But, even with all these frailties, imaginary knowledge is still termed in the Treatise, "Divine knowledge" for the sensations which give the imagination its character arise from external causes and everything originates in God, i.e., these external causes have a thought side in Him.¹⁶⁶

165. Spinoza, On the Improvement of Understanding. pp. 30-33.

166. One must generally use great caution with Spinoza's terminology. "Revelation", "Divine Law" and similar terms must never be understood in their supernatural sense. That is an impossibility in Spinoza's system.

Imaginary knowledge is the lowest on the scale of knowledge. It is partial, disjointed, the cause of error - and it is to this realm that Prophecy is relegated. We may thus easily grasp the implications that the Biblical Laws were but temporary, to serve the exigencies of a particular situation, that the entire function of prophecy is to inculcate obedience and provide physical well-being, that its injunctions were but ^{(imaginational reactions to a particular situation,} ~~temporary~~ and no longer binding.

A great deal more might be written from an evaluation point of view. But, at present, it is beyond our scope. The task we set ourselves was to present Maimonides' and Spinoza's view on prophecy. That has been accomplished. The comparison is obvious. Maimonides placed prophecy on the highest plane of cognition; Spinoza destroyed the vitality of prophecy by relegating it to the imagination, the limbo of partial, detached erroneous perception. Each had his motive - Maimonides tried to make prophecy a living reality - Spinoza utilized it as an instrument of attack against his own people.