

A STUDY OF THE ORIGIN, CONTENT, AND
HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE
SHEVET MUSAR BY
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TO MOTHER AND DAD

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. ELIJAH HACOEN, HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.....	1
II. THE <u>SHEVET MUSAR</u>	6
1. ITS SOURCES.....	6
2. ITS IMPORTANCE.....	9
3. ITS IDEOLOGY AND MESSAGE.....	16
4. ITS STYLE.....	33
III. SUMMARIES OF AND COMMENTS ON CHAPTERS I-LII OF THE <u>SHEVET MUSAR</u>	38
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	165

CHAPTER I

ELIJAH HACHOEN, HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS

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ELIJAH HACOEN, HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS

Before analyzing the subject of this thesis: A Study of the Origin, Content, and Historical Importance of the Shevet Musar by Elijah Ben Solomon Abraham Hacoen it is well that we begin by understanding something about the nature of the literature of the second epoch of the post-Classical period of which the Shevet Musar is an example. *Handwritten: Hacoen*

Dr. Waxman in his History of Jewish Literature summarizes this period as one that is marked "by a spirit of rigorous piety and unquestioned belief in all teachings of tradition. Added to this, there is also the influence of the Kabbalah, which by this time had taken a strong hold upon Jewish life, and colored almost all literary productions of every type. It is small wonder, therefore, that an age like this should be productive in the field of ethics and the teachings of practical religion. However, most of these books are really not ethical treatises but compilations of maxims and Talmudic passages, interpreted homiletically and arranged in the form of homilies or commentaries on Biblical books".¹ As we shall progress with the subject of the thesis we shall see how closely the Shevet Musar follows the general pattern of the literature of this period as described by Dr. Waxman. With this brief introduction, we can now acquaint ourselves with the life and

¹ Waxman, Meyer, A History of Jewish Literature, vol. II, p. 288.

writings of the author of the ethical treatise, Shevet Musar.

Elijah ben Solomon Abraham Hachohen, also known as Abraham Haitamari after the title of his book Midrash Haitamari², was born in far-off Turkey, the birthplace of Sabbath Zevi. The sources that the writer of this essay has consulted have failed to indicate the exact date of his birth. In fact there is a poverty of material available on the biography of the man. We do know, however, that he was the author of more than thirty books, only some of which were printed in his own time, most of them after his death. The Jewish Encyclopaedia lists the following principle works of the author: the Midrash Eliyahu, eleven funeral addresses and a commentary on the sayings of the Talmud in connection with the Roll of Esther (Constantinople, 1693); Midrash Haitamari (ib. 1695); Midrash Talpiyyoth, selected rabbinic statements from three hundred works and arranged alphabetically; in accordance with the numerical value of the word talpiyyoth it has nine hundred and twenty six paragraphs only the first part of which, from aleph to kaf was published (Amsterdam, 1698); Meil Zedakah, an anthology of rabbinic and Biblical sayings on the subject of charity⁴ (ib. 1704); Megaleh Zefanoth, Kabbalistic treatises (Poritzk, 1785); Sheeloth Uteshuvoth, responsa (Sudilkov, 1796); Minchath Eliyahu, a book of sermons (Salonica, 1824); Semukim Lead, homiletic treatment on the parashiyvoth (ib. 1826); Velo Od Ella, a treatise on the

² Encyclopaedia Judaica, vol. VI, column 505.

³ Jewish Encyclopaedia, vol. V, p. 135.

⁴ cf. Dr. Cronbach's extensive treatment of this book in the Hebrew Union College Annual, vols. XI, XII, XIII, and XIV.

Midrashic and Talmudic passages dealing with the expression velo lo ella (Smyrna, 1853). Elijah Hacohen, however, wrote even more works which have not yet been published: a commentary to the Book of Psalms; Ezor Eliyahu, a commentary to Avoth and the Pesach Haggadah; Taame Hamitzvoth, a treatise on the taryag Mitzvoth, the six hundred and thirteen commands; Sheloshah Mahaduroth, a commentary on the Pentateuch; Shittach on Avodah Zarah, a commentary to the difficult passages in Taanith; a commentary to the Haftoroth; Chiddushim Nifradim; Yado Bakol, commentaries to the Song of Songs, Ruth, and Esther; mystical glosses to the Song of Songs and Esther; a commentary to Lamentations; commentaries to Pirke Rabbi Eliezer; a commentary to the various prayers; a commentary to the Jerusalem Talmud and others. Only occasionally does the author refer to his own writings in the Shevet Musar⁵.

The Encyclopaedia Judaica⁶ puts forth the possibility that Elijah Hacohen, author of Merivath Kodesh and Elijah ben Solomon Abraham Hacohen, author of Shevet Musar are the same persons. This theory is also offered by Graetz in his Divre Yeme Yisrael⁷. According to the latter, the book Merivath Kodesh attacked the Sabbatian Abraham Michael Cardoza and was written one year after the death of Cardoza. Graetz quotes as possible proof a letter addressed to the rabbis of Smyrna, Rabbi Solomon Algazi (an opponent of the Sabbatian movement), Rabbi Solomon Abraham Hacohen, and two others and states that although the name of Cardoza is

5 cf. the Hakdamah to the Shevet Musar where the author gives a list of his own works; cf. also Chapter XIII:13 of the Shevet Musar

6 Encyclopaedia Judaica, vol. VI, column 506.

7 Graetz, Rabinowitsch, Divre Yeme Yisrael, vol. VIII, p.573.

not in the letter (the end of the letter being missing) nevertheless by the thoughts expressed in it it was clearly written by him. Whether or not these two men were the same can, it seems to the writer of this essay, only be determined by more intensive scholarship and research. However, if the statement of Israel Zinberg is correct⁸, namely that the author of the Shevet Musar died in 1729 "at a very old age", it is possible as far as the age of Elijah Hacohen is concerned that he could have been the rabbi mentioned in Cardoza's letter in 1668, since he could have been in his twenties or even older at the time.

Elijah Hacohen besides being a most prolific author, scholar and dayyan of Smyrna was also a famous preacher. Funn in his Keneseth Yisrael⁹ describes him as a "rabbi, a great Talmudic scholar, a Kabbalist, and remarkable darshan, the father of the poor". Joseph Michael in his Or Hachayim¹⁰ likewise calls him a great preacher "who by the spirit of his lips turned many people away from sin". That the latter statement is not an exaggeration may be seen from an incident cited by Elijah Hacohen in his Shevet Musar (XXVII:38): "One Sabbath day I was made extremely happy when after having spoken publicly at great length on an ethical subject during the period of the Derash, a certain man there who had invited another man's wife to spend the approaching night with him was so moved by what I had said...(that) he put aside his inclination, yea he came to me that same Saturday night un-

8 Zinberg, Israel, Die Geschichte fun der Literatur bei Yidden, vol. V, p. 196.

9. Funn, Keneseth Yisrael, p.101.

10 Michael, H.J., Or Hachayim, p.189.

ashamedly to tell me of the matter and to thank me for the instruction". There are other references in the Shevet Musar in which the author makes mention of his preaching (XXVII:42, XL:175). However, not only did Elijah Hacohen preach but he also derived instruction from other darshanim as well. Thus we hear him saying to the reader; "I have heard the darshanim explain the Biblical verse as follows..."(XL:160).

The author of the Shevet Musar was the disciple of Rabbi Benjamin Melammed, one of the Rabbis of Smyrna. When Elijah Hacohen speaks of "my Master and Teacher" (XLII:184), he no doubt is referring to Rabbi Melammed. Michael ¹¹ tells us that when the latter died Elijah Hacohen delivered a sermon at his funeral in which he praised him greatly and that this sermon is the first sermon of his book Midrash Eliyahu. Similarly, when the report of Elijah Hacohen's death was heard in Jerusalem in 1729, Rabbi Abraham Yitzchaki delivered a hesped in his behalf ¹².

More of the other aspects of his character and personality- his religious pietism, his mysticism, his reflections on his own day, his style of writing etc.-will be given in connection with the analysis of the Shevet Musar.

¹¹ Michael, H.J., Or Hachayim, p.282.

¹² Ibid, p.189.

CHAPTER II
THE SHEVET MUSAR

1. ITS SOURCES

The Shevet Musar is the book by which Elijah Hacoohen is best known. He is often referred to as the "baal Shevet Musar ushear sefarim", the name of the book and his own name becoming almost synonymous¹³. It appeared for the first time in Constantinople in 1712¹⁴. The writer of this thesis used the Lublin edition, 1877, one of the many editions of the work. The Shevet Musar is divided into two volumes, both of which are contained in the Lublin one volume edition, the first volume having 227 pages and the second 232 pages. The work has fifty two chapters dealing with various aspects of religious and ethical conduct and, as its name reveals (The Rod of Correction), it attempts to humble the soul of the sinner that he might repent and become perfect. There are two explanations offered for this numerical division of the book: (1) that the fifty-two chapters correspond to the numerical value of the author's name Eliyahu¹⁵ and (2) that the number of the chapters corresponds to the number of weeks of the year¹⁶. It is possible that one or both of these explanations could be correct; however, it is the opinion of the writer of this essay that the second is more probable in view of

13 Chasan, S., Ha-Maalot Li Schelom, vol. II, pp.60,65.

14 Michael, H.J., Or Hachayim, p. 189; Jewish Encyclopaedia, vol. V, p. 135; Zinberg, Israel, Die Geschichte fun der Literatur bei Yidden, vol. V, p. 196; Funn, Keneseth Yisrael, p.101.

15 Michael, H.J., Or Hachayim, p.189.

16 Jewish Encyclopaedia, vol. V., p.135.

the nature of the book. For having an ethical teaching in each chapter, it is conceivable that the author intended it to be read on each Sabbath of the year.

The book consists of an abundance of quotations gleaned from numerous works. And in this connection, the conclusion of Dr. Cronbach in his thorough analysis and interpretation of another of Elijah Hacohen's works, Meil Zedakah¹⁷ that the term "author" used in speaking of Elijah Hacohen "must be employed with reservations" since the greater part of the work "consists of quotations from other works- which the author amplifies with extensive comments and homilies of his own " can also be applied here.

Indeed, the Shevet Musar makes a most extensive use of source material, the most important of which, exclusive of the Bible, the Midrash, the Talmud, the Zohar, and Rashi which are referred to on almost every page of the work, are the following listed according to the chapters and pages of the Shevet Musar, wherein they are to be found: I:10, Derushe Haneshamoth Vehagilgulim; II:20, Kehilloth Yaakov; VI:63, Shaar Shamayim; VI:68, Hovoth Halevavoth(cf.XIX:181,197); VI:68, Reshith Hachmah(cf.XX:199, XXIV:10); VI:67, Shene Luchoth Haberith (cf. XX:193, XXX:62, XXXVI:118); VII, Or Kadmon; IX:89,90, Sefer Razi'el; XI:107, Hilchoth Deoth; XI:107, Hupath Eliyahu; XIII: Orchoth Hayim; XIV:137, Kavanoth HaARI; XIV:138, Nishmath Hayim (cf.XXVI:25); XV:140, Beer Mayim Hayim; XVI:145ff,

¹⁷ Cronbach, Abraham, Hebrew Union College Annual, vol.XI, pp.503, 504.

Tzavvaoth Rabbi Eliezer Haggadol; XVII:162, Orech Yamim ; XVII:167, Shevet Yehudah; XVIII:178, Sefer Hacharedim (cf.XIX:179,188, XXIII:218); XVIII:178, Shalsheth Hakabbalah; XIX:182, Mussar Heskeli; XIX:183, Shaare Teshuvah; XIX:188ff, Melitzath Mattatron; XIX:189, Sefer Hayashar(cf.XX:190); XX:192, Azharoth Hakodesh; XXI:206, Totzaoth Hayim; XXII:215, Perek Shirah; XXII:219, Sefer Rokeach; XXIV:8, Sefer Hamiktzaoth; XXVI:24, Avkath Rochel; XXVII:33, Even Bochan; XXVII:38, Hakol Bo; XXVII:42, Keseth Yehonasan; XXVII:45, Huke Hayim; XXVIII:XXIX, Sefer Hatapuach; XXXI:72, Sefer Orchoth Tzaddikim; XXXI: Sefer Menorath Hamaor; X^AXI:77, Sefer Hanaharoth;XXXIII:90, Kol Negidim;XXXV:112, Siach Yitzchak(cf.XXXIX:149); XXXV:103, 104,Meirath Enayim; XXXVI:114, Sefer Hakaneh; XXXVIII:141, Hilchoth Teshuvah; XXXIX:144, Shaare Orah; XL:158, Otzar Hakavod XLI:164, Midrash Shocher Tov; XLI:165, Kevod Chachamim; XLII:178, Nagid Umetzaveh; XLII:179,180, Berith Avraham; XLII:179; Tur Yoreh Deah;XLII:181, Tzedah Laderech; XLIV:187, Avodath Haboreh; XLIV:190, Oleloth Efrayim; XLV:194, Shulchan Aruch (ARI); XLVI:201, Avoth Derabbi Nasan; LII:214, Tapuche Zahav.

Most generally Elijah Hacohen does not mention the names of the authors of these books. Those chiefly mentioned in connection with their respective works are:ARI(Zohar, Derushe HaneshaMoth.Vehagilgulim and Shulchan Aruch), Rambam(Hilchoth Deoth), Rabbi Yonah(Shaare Teshuvah), Rabbenu Tam(Sefer Hayashar), Hai Gaon (Mussar Heskeli), Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel(Nishmath

Hayim), Abraham Galanti(Kol Negidim), Rabbi Obadiah of Bertinoro (Mikrah Kodesh), Rabbi Solomon (Sefer Hatapuach), Rabbi Todroth Halevi(Otzar Hakavod).

2. ITS IMPORTANCE

For the student of Jewish history, the ethical treatise, Shevet Musar is truly a most significant work. For firstly, we find within it several works or passages of works which are today exceedingly rare¹⁸: (1) the Or Kadmon which made its appearance in Venice in 1703 (VII) (2) the Orchoth Hayim of Rabbi Asher (XIII), (3) the Melitzath Mattatron (XIX) which is taken from the Rokeach of Rabbi Eliezer of Worms, (4) the Tochachoth of the Spanish poets which were printed together with the Sefer Hatapuach in Venice in 1519 (XXVIII, XXIX).

But aside from the fact that these rare books are included in the work which undeniably makes it a book of great value, it is also important because of the great popularity which it enjoyed from the date of its first publication in 1712 in Constantinople. Zinberg¹⁹ writes that the book was just as popular as the Kav Hayashar, which appeared in 1705 but a few years before the publication of the Shevet Musar. The Kav Hayashar was written by Zevi Hirsch Kaidonower and like the Shevet Musar is replete with quotations from the Zohar and the

¹⁸ Jellinek, Adolph, Beth Hamidrash, vol. I, i. p. 16; Sähulman, E., Sefath Yehudith Ashkenazith Vesifruthah, p. 104, note 1; Jewish Encyclopaedia, vol. V, p. 135.

¹⁹ Zinberg, Israël, Die Geschichte fun der Literatur bei Yidden, vol. V, p. 196.

like; and also like it contains exalted and noble ethical teachings.²⁰ And Waxman states further that the Shevet Musar "is of a more popular nature than the Reshith Hokmah and appealed more to the masses...and was found on the bookshelf in every pious home".²¹ And by reason of its popularity, we can justly assume that it exerted a great and important influence upon the mind and conduct of the Jewish people and the nature of ethical and religious thought as expressed in Judaism. The popularity of the work is truly evident by the large number of reprintings that it went through since 1712. According to Friedberg's Beth Eked Sefarim²² there are twenty Hebrew editions of the Shevet Musar dating from 1712 (Constantinople) to 1889 (Warsaw); four Hebrew editions of the Shevet Musar with Judeo-German translations dating from 1732 (Amsterdam) to 1882 (Lublin)²³; five editions of the Shevet Musar in Judeo-German translation and no Hebrew text, dating from 1726 (Wilhermsdorf) to 1804 (Dyhernfurth); and two Spanish translations of the Shevet Musar with Hebrew text dating 1740 (Constantinople) and 1860 (Symrna).

And finally, if the personal observations of the author of his own time be correct as recorded in the Shevet Musar, a period approximating the first half of the 17th century through the first quarter of the 18th century (roughly the life span of Elijah Hacohen), then the book is of great value to the student

²⁰ Waxman, Meyer, A History of Jewish Literature, vol. II, p. 290.

²¹ Ibid, p. 289.

²² Friedberg, Bernhard, Beth Eked Sefarim, p. 582.

²³ The writer of this essay used the Lublin edition of 1877 not included in Friedberg's list and which would increase the number of such editions to five.

as an historical document. True these observations are not too frequently made in the book, but they are sufficient to throw light on a significant era in Jewish history. In the section of this essay dealing with the ideology and message of the Shevet Musar and in the summaries and comments to each of the fifty two chapters of the book, the writer of this thesis will go into greater detail in discussing this phase of the book. It is the purpose here, at this point in our discussion merely to mention some of these illustrative observations to indicate the value of the book as a reflection of an important period in Jewish history. The following are a few random samples of Elijah Hacoheh's own personal observations as found in the Shevet Musar on the religious, social, ethical and general communal life and relationships of his own day with their respective chapters and pages:

"Moreover, it is a common daily occurrence to observe poor people being very fond of each other and dwelling together as brothers when they are without money. But if one of them becomes rich, he does not care for his poor friend, but on the contrary despises him and behaves as a stranger to him and acts as if he never knew him"(V:48).

"And I observe very frequently that one who has a daughter whom he loves as the apple of his eye will lie awake at night and during the day will not cease wandering about the market places and streets to seek out a wealthy son

for his daughter. But my son, let not your heart be zealous for rich men's sons who are devoid of all wisdom and of every thing that approaches perfection of body and soul, who can neither speak nor write correctly, whose conversation is but vain and iniquitous talk. Moreover, in addition to being clothed in beautiful garments, they spend their gold and satisfy the desires of their sinful hearts; they strive with one another to gain the hand of a lovely and beautiful daughter, giving the father much money and gifts(V:50).

"An uneducated man once told me the reason why he loathes the scholar is that the latter regards him as an animal and the proof of this statement is found in the fact that he refuses to associate ~~or~~ eat or drink or take council with us and withholds from us the secrets of the Torah....I replied: 'the uneducated hate the scholar because it is the nature of man to be jealous of the good fortune of his neighbor and jealousy begets hatred, for they know that the scholar is busy doing God's work and thus are assured of the goodly things that are stored up for him in the world to come'(XL:108.109).

"There are many in Israel who do not care ~~very~~ much about praying with the congregation in the Synagogue during the week-days and on the Sabbath come to pray in the Synagogue but for a moment and even during that

moment they do neither pay attention to the prayer of the Hazan nor answer Amen but indulge in idle talk" (XVII:167).

"The discerning should weep and the wise should bemoan the evil of this faithless day, for the wisdom of the scholars is slandered and the ignorant and the haughty among the people regard themselves as sages and their words are heeded. Behold I shall now speak against the wealthy individuals who though bereft of wisdom and the fear of sin desire to lord it over the scholars" (XXV:17).

"Truly there are chazanim who do not bother themselves with the affairs of the poor people of the congregation, be they happy or sad occasions. They send messengers in their stead ...because they believe that they will derive no benefit from them. However, when they hear that certain rich men are celebrating on a joyous occasion or are in mourning, even though they be members of another congregation, they arise early in the morning, before dawn and hasten (to them) in the dark, exposing themselves to danger, to do evil and to provoke God's anger"(XXXIV:96). The fact that the author, in this same chapter, makes a point of cautioning the Hazan to show no preference to the rich when reciting the mi sheberach would seem to

indicate that the Chazanim of his own day did not always follow the democratic procedure in their relationships with the members of the congregation. Thus Elijah Hachohen declares: "when the Chazan pronounces the mi sheberach on festive occasions he should neither raise his voice high when he blesses the rich man nor lower it for the poor man nor should he stammer and hide the names of the poor as if they were nameless, for then the poor are publicly embarrassed and he who shames his fellow in public will have no portion in the world to come" (XXXIV:96).

"While our Sages have stated that most of the Shochtim are expert yet there are places where many of them are inexpert. Besides we have observed that many of the expert practitioners do not have the fear of God in their hearts and he who does not have such fear in his heart will not be scrupulous about the examination of the knife, a most important duty....Indeed, there are in this generation, many ignorant people who have received Kabbalah (a certificate indicating that one has adequately studied the code of laws pertaining to ritual slaughtering) though they be wholly without knowledge and the fear of God" (XXXVI:118).

"I would also speak of the punishment which will befall those landlords who will not let a house to a scholar, saying: 'He is unable to pay the rent...for he has neither bread nor clothes- yea, if I speak a

bit harshly with him people will condemn me to be stoned'. The heresy of such a landlord is well known...Be assured, that all that I have written has actually happened and I have observed it with my own eyes and I decided to tell it on the printed page, if the Lord found it worthy of being printed, in order that should(it happen that) landlords read or hear of it they might correct their ways. I refer particularly to those landlords who keep scholars afar off from their dwellings so that they might not discern their evil deeds and prevent them doing them" (XLII: 175,177; cf. also XLII:175-179 for a fuller discussion of the subject).

When we consider that Elijah ^Hacohen lived in that section of the world where the Sabbatian influence and the idea of the Messiah appearing on certain fixed dates had played, and no doubt continued to play, a dominant role in the life and mind of the Mediaeval Jew, then we can understand not only the amount of space given by the author to the Geulah or Redemption(XLIX,L, and L) but also the warning given in LI:208 to the effect "that man should not spend his time seeking intimations as to the time of the coming of the Redemption to say that on such and such a day the Redemption will take place, for he but wastes his time and will obtain nought from it, since the matter is concealed. Moreover, ruin can

result therefrom for ignorant people hearing that it is to come at a set time will rebel when it does not take place at that time and they will say: 'The Day of Redemption will not come' ". One should recall in this connection, that the dates 1648 and 1666 were looked upon by many Mediaeval Jews as those on which the Redemption would take place. And it is very possible that Elijah Hacohen as a very young man had at least witnessed the evil effects of setting the date 1666 as the one on which the Messiah was to appear.

Thus, because the Shevet Musar contains the whole or parts of rare Jewish works, because it has no doubt exerted a strong influence upon Jewish conduct and thought by reason of its great popularity since the day of its first publication in 1712, and finally because it reflects much of the Mediaeval scene of at least the period of the author's life, it is a most important ethical work and of great value to the student of Jewish history and culture.

3. ITS IDEOLOGY AND MESSAGE

If one were to characterize the entire book, Shevet Musar, by the word "optimistic", one would be accurately summing up its spirit and message.²⁴ From the very outset of the work, we are told of the goodness and mercy of God, of His creating the world for man, and of His bestowing upon him wisdom and truth in order

²⁴ Zinberg, Israel, Die Geschichte fun der Literatur bei Yidden, vol. V, p.196.

that he might understand the truth and thus inherit a great reward(I:2,3,9). And this optimistic philosophy continues throughout the fifty-two chapters of the Shevet Musar. Indeed, the very last page and word of the book ends with a positive note: Here we listen to man telling us of his having taken council with his soul which urged him to turn aside from the enticing words of his evil inclination, his Yetzer Harah and repent of his evil ways; he tells us how he had followed its words of advise and how as a consequence he heard God's voice of forgiveness, assuring him of a goodly and long life in this world (XL:231-232). Surely, says Elijah Hacohen though the Yetzer Harah wages a daily struggle within man to overcome the Yetzer Hatov, the good inclination, the latter can finally prevail(cf.VI:66,67, XII).

It is quite possible that in the time of the author, this view of God and man and the universe was not wholly accepted or at least that the negative defeatist philosophy of the Epicursim and Minim (the atheists and heretics) had infected Jewish life and thought in some measure, for the Shevet Musar constantly attacks this latter view and the apostles of it. For the Epicursim and Minim contended that God had created man only in order to punish him, that any greatness that had been given him was only for the purpose of humbling him (I:19,20), and that God was unconcerned with man's sins(XXXIV:101). Indeed, declares these heretics, God does evil to man to be a-

venge upon him (V:54). Thus, Elijah Hacoen bitterly attacks these heretics and their books (VIII:85) and states that they will be punished in Gehennah(the netherworld) eternally because of their evil doctrines (XXVI:26).

And to suffer in Gehennah is a most dreadful and horrible punishment. Elijah Hacoen, for the most part relying upon the current Rabbinic and Kabbalistic concepts of this domain, goes into great detail in describing this realm of the wicked and in narrating the severe chastizements that await not only the heretics but all sinners there. For it is the way of the Yetzer Harah, Satan, and the Destroying Angel to seize the sinner and cast him into the lowest depths of the netherworld, where he is punished in accordance with the seriousness of his iniquities (VIII:80,XXVI:25).

Elijah Hacoen tells us that God created this netherworld on the sixth day of Creation and that it is divided into seven stories: the first story is Sheol, the nethermost part of the netherworld, the second story is Avdon, Hell, the third story is the lowest pit, the fourth story is the thick heavy clay, the fifth story is the Gates of Death, the sixth story is the Gate of Darkness, the seventh story is Gehennah (IX:89). Man is consigned to these respective compartments in accordance with the gravity of his sins, each compartment having a fire that is sixty-one times as intense as the other(IX:89). And in these compartments there are fire and hail, stormy winds

and brimstone, burning coals and pitch, heat and cold, serpents and scorpions that bite the soul, darkness, ~~and~~ days that are as dark as nights(IX:89). Moreover, there are all kinds of evil spirits there to punish the wicked for their evil deeds: "there are those which hang him and those which slay him, there are those which bore out their eyes and there are those which hang them by the skulls"(XXVI:27). But there are two kinds of Gehennah, the Gehinnom shel matah, the earthly Gehennah, and the Gehinnom shel maalah, the heavenly Gehennah, the latter being the N'har Dinur or mythical Fire-River where the soul, after having been punished in the earthly Gehennah, ascends and is washed (XXVI:26:28).

But even more severe than the punishments of Gehennah is the punishment which the wicked suffer during the gilgul hanefesh, the transmigration of the soul (XXVI:194). This idea of the gilgul is developed at great length in the Shevet Musar. We are told that the soul of the sinner after death is changed into various forms. "He who speaks slanderously or the like will be changed into a stone; he who causes an Israelite to eat neveloth (animals not slaughtered according to Mosaic ritual) will be changed into a leaf of a tree which the wind will carry away ²⁵; he who does not wash his hands before and after meals and for prayer will be changed into water even as he who is not precise about blessings; he who has intercourse with a male will be changed into a hare...; he who has intercourse

²⁵ However, we read in XXVI:119 that the soul of such a one will enter the body of a dog.

with his sister-in-law will be changed into a mule, he who comes unto another man's wife will be changed into an ass..." (XIV:138). For a fuller treatment of this concept and that of the supplementary idea of the Ibbur or impregnation of souls, the writer of this essay would refer the reader to the following chapters and pages of the Shevet Musar: V:45, X:102, XVIII:178, XXIII:226, XXX:63, XXXIV:102, XXXVI:118, XLI:167, XLV:195, LII:229ff.

It is important to note in speaking of the concept of the gilgul hanefesh that it is one which plays a central role in the philosophy of the Zohar and general mystic and Kabbalistic literature. And indeed, Elijah Hacoheh draws greatly from these sources and quotes extensively from them in the course of this ethical treatise (VI:68, XIX:179, XXIII:229, XXVII:39 et al). Other Kabbalistic and mystic concepts found in the Shevet Musar are those of the Kelifah or shell (I:17), the Holy Hayoth or holy angels (VI:62, VII:70, VIII:80, XXI:202), the Sefiroth or spheres (XIX:186, XLIV:187, 190), the angels Sammael and Mattatron (XIX:183, 188, XXIII:226, XXIV:9), new heavens being created by Hiddushin or novellae (XXI:207, XLI:169), and the Nitzuth shel Kedusha, the spark of holiness (XXXVI:117, 121). These citations are sufficient to indicate how heavily Elijah Hacoheh leans upon the Kabbalistic and mystic ideology in his work.

But whereas the wicked suffer the greatest of tortures in

Gehennah and the more intense punishment of gilgul hanefesh, the righteous enjoy indescribable pleasures in Gan Eden, the Garden of Eden. There are gates of chalcedony in the Garden of Eden and over them are six hundred thousand angels and the countenances of each of them shines as brilliantly as the radiance of the firmament"(XXV:21). There the righteous are escorted into chambers studded with gold and precious stones and are cloaked with garments of the clouds of glory; and there they eat of all manner of sweet things and drink the choicest of wines, and they are made young again. (XXVI:21).

Man, says Elijah Hacoen, can enjoy the reward of the Gan Eden and escape the punishments of Gehennah if he but chooses to do so. The idea of man's bachirah or free-will runs throughout the entire work. Man can annul the will of the Yetzer Harah which seeks to drag him into the pit of destruction if he wills it and chooses the good and thereby exalts himself and obtains unlimited reward (II:21,22, XII:115, XVII:167, XXI:205, XXXIII:92, XXXVIII:138). This doctrine of the bachirah is cogently expressed in the words of the author when he says:"There are two ways before you, the way of death and the way of life, choose life in order that you may live and inherit your portion in the Garden of God, for the choice is within your hand to choose and it has not been decreed that you will be either a righteous or a wicked

person...yea, the choice is within the power of man to be clean or unclean that is to say, righteous or wicked; therefore it is within man's control to be pure and righteous or unclean and suffer the punishments of Gehennah or to enter the Garden of Eden"(XXVI:30,31). Further, man can by his deeds attain to the level of God (XLVII:202).

To "attain to the level of God"- this is and should be the goal of man during all his stay on earth. This means that he should strive in every way possible to achieve shelemuth lanefesh, perfection of soul (VI:60). And the chief way of perfecting one's soul and attaining the Madregah of God or the level of spirituality is through the constant study of Torah and the fulfillment of the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth or commands. The statement ; "the principle thing is the fulfillment of the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth mentioned in the Torah"(X:101), is emphasized time after time in the Shevet Musar, for the observance of these commands are the means of acquiring religious piety, they are the way by which man can keep from sinning and following the evil way of his Yetzer Harah. Elijah Hacoen never tires of quoting source after source from the Bible and the Talmud to the outstanding works of the learned of the Mediaeval Ages and the Zohar to stress the importance of this obligation. Like the typical orthodox Rabbinic Jew of history, he believes that they were given to man from Sinai and hence they are the Law of God and must be obeyed.

The performance of these taryag Mitzvoth and the study of

the Torah thus form the basis of all the teachings of the Shevet Musar. Since they deal with practically every aspect of daily life, both religious and secular, the author discusses them in great detail and amplifies them in accordance with the problems of his own time.

What then are these religious obligations that are incumbent upon man that he might become spiritual and attain a heavenly reward, the reward that is stored up for the righteous in the Garden of Eden? They are many, but as he has stated so many times, man has the power within him to achieve it. The chief duty is to become humble and avoid haughtiness or pride which is the root of sin (II:22, XII:117, XVII:165). The need for humility is developed at great length throughout the two volumes of the Shevet Musar. In fact, the author devotes the final chapter of the work to it that man might remember the greatness of it and the religious obligation upon him to pursue it all his days. Thus writes Eliyahu Hacoen: "Because I have spoken of humility in the beginning of the book, therefore I shall close the book with this subject for the attainment of perfection and the fulfillment of the Mitzvot depend upon it". (LII:211). One might almost say that the theme of the book is stated in the words: "Behold, everyone who is haughty descends, but he who humbles himself ascends" (II:26). Truly, the evil traits of the haughty person are many: "A haughty person does not do a Mitzvah for the sake of heaven but for the sake of his own pride. He is ever careful of his own honor but

not of the honor of the Creator, how much the less of the honor of other people? He elevates himself at the expense of his own neighbor's degradation. He slanders everyone and speaks haughtily and covers his face to keep from beholding the poor and the afflicted, for he regards the poor as having a foul odor. He clothes himself with haughtiness and if he be without money he steals and robs. The haughty one seeks after authority and the highest of power but in the end achieves enmity and strife...."(XVII:165).

Thus, from even this brief quotation on the evil ways of the proud, we are informed as to some of the evils from which man must turn aside if he would attain to the level of God and perfect his soul. Unlike the haughty person, he must do God's commands and tasks leshem shamayim (XVI:156), he must honor God and deal kindly with everyone, even the non-Jew (XVI:159). He must observe punctiliously each of the Ten Commandments and the laws that developed about them as a result of the interpretations of the scholars throughout the ages. Unlike these, who are the victims of the deadly germ of pride, who cover their faces so as not to look upon the poor and the afflicted the righteous man will help the poor and the needy, he will give as much food and drink to the hungry and the thirsty as he possibly can and will the naked "even if it be with tattered garments"(XVI:156), he will help the orphan and the widow (XVI:151), he will aid the bride and groom financially if they be in need (XVI:156), he will remember the ephemerality

of whatever riches and power and prestige that he may have (XX:191), he will give Zedakah or charity to the best of his ability (XVI:162). This idea of the virtue and necessity of Zedakah²⁶ is constantly repeated even as is the idea of the temporality of material wealth (VIII:85, XVI:160,162, XXVIII:48-51, XXX:68). Wealth is to be used neither for the enhancement of our position nor for pure material worldly enjoyment, but rather it is to be given to those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Man should not strive after material wealth, says the author of the Shevet Musar, rather his chief desire should be to enjoy the pleasures of the Olam Habah, the next world, and this can only be achieved through self-perfection, that is through humility and the study of Torah and the fulfillment of Mitzvoth (XX:191). Before concluding this discussion of wealth and charity, it is important to mention that Elijah Hacohen frequently urges man to remember that in death both rich and poor are equal (XXV:18). For if man recalls the democratizing effect of death, then he will have no eager desire to accumulate tremendous fortunes in the world. Furthermore, states the author, not only should the individual think of death in this connection, but at all times; he should conjure up the horrors of the grave and the decomposing process that takes place within him and then he will abstain from sinning (XX:200 ff, XXI:207).

²⁶ The terms Zedakah and Gemiluth Chasadim are used more or less synonymously and interchangeably in the Shevet Musar.

It is most difficult within the scope of this digest of the message and ideology of the Shevet Musar to mention all the other ethical injunctions which the author declares that man must heed in the course of his daily life. However, since Elijah Hacoheh agrees with the instructions of Eliezer Haggadol to his son, Hyrcan, to which he devotes the whole of Chapter XVII, and since these instructions contain essentially the basic ethical teachings of the Shevet Musar, the writer of this thesis shall cite a sufficient number of them to illustrate the message of the book(XVII:147-162): man should never neglect to recite the Shema, he should speak in a sanctified manner with his wife and not obscenely with her when he awakes in the middle of the night, he should put a vessel of water by his bed so that when he awakes in the morning he will be sure to wash his hands before putting on his clothes, he should remember to proclaim God's glory and to praise Him three times daily, he should wrap himself in Talith and Tzitzith "for garments that are not covered are false garments", he should be among the first ten in the Synagogue that he may obtain a "reward corresponding to that of the ten and the reward of everyone who is among the first three corresponds to that of a hundred", he should pray with reverence and should know before whom he stands, he should not converse in the Beth Hamidrash but should listen to the words of the Sages, he should not despise any man for "one may find many pearls in the under-

garment of a poor man", he should visit the sick and escort the dead to the graveyard, he should give charity while alive and at all times hear the cry of the poor and the needy, he should not frighten the members of his household unnecessarily, he should love the Sages and do all in his power to learn their words of wisdom, he should not reveal his secrets to his wife, he should be faithful to every man, he should have children and educate them in the Torah,²⁷ he should not be in the company of a woman in the market place nor among two women, he should not be ambitious for positions of authority, he should keep from disgracing his friend publicly, he should expose his ignorance in the Beth Hamidrash even though his friends laugh at him, he should avoid the company of the scoffers and slanderers, he should constantly remember that the righteous are assured of a goodly portion in the world to come, he should not praise the food that he has eaten at another's home when he is seated at the table of his friend for it is possible that he might imply thereby that the food of the former was better and that of the latter unfit, he should not praise his wife to his friend and how much the less to a company of men lest by so doing they may hate their own wives or have a sexual longing for his wife, he should not speak to another man's wife in the absence of her husband and if he should do so he should speak in a loud voice for it is possible that her husband

²⁷ cf. Chapter XVII of the Shevet Musar for Elijah Hacoheh's treatment of the education of the young, the material for which he gleaned from the book Orech Yamim.

will suspect him of having an illicit affair with his wife, he should avoid appearing too well-fed before the eyes of the hungry, he should humble himself when people praise him, he should not speak of the love of children in the presence of those who are childless, he should not enter the home of a friend at meal time, for he might prove thereby a burden to him, he should not regard any transgression as a light matter but should repent of that sin immediately, he should think of the youthful appearance of his wife when she grows old that he might continue to love her in old age, he should not converse overmuch with his women neighbors for by so doing he can be led to sin, he should think of words of Torah and of doing Mitzvoth even when walking in the market place, he should never be envious of the prosperity and exalted position of the wicked for they will be punished whereas the goodly will live and enjoy a future reward, he should seek a scholar of good character for his daughter's hand, he should speak soothingly to the afflicted poor and inspire them to keep faith in God "who has the power to bring low and raise up".

To these ethical teachings, one might mention a few others which are stressed constantly as greatly important by the author and which are illustrative of the nature of the book. "Man is repeatedly urged to follow the principle of the "golden mean" in all his ways. "Live according to the derech benoni" councils Elijah Hacohen," in eating and drinking and in all things"

(XIII:124). And in pursuance of this rule, he is told neither to fast to extremes(XVII:168) nor to be extremely humble but "rather"moderate in all his ways"(XVII:169). And further, he says, man should not sit in a seat that is too high or too low in the company of others or in the Synagogue (XVI:54, XLV:193). Indeed, the concept of moderation is a most important part of Elijah Hacoheh's ethical philosophy. Judaism, he seems to tell us, is a guide for a practical way of life, it is a religion for normal living. It is possible that the injunction to man to keep from fasting too greatly may have reference to practices within the Jewish fold by certain overly pious groups or may have reference to the practices of Christian Church groups of his own time or of preceding generations. There is no specific mention made however and of course this would be conjecture on the part of the writer of this essay.

A concept also occurring frequently is that of the need of forbearing retaliation. The individual is told to deal kindly even with those who curse him (XVI:154), that he should forbear to retaliate for the sake of peace (XXXVII:128,129), that he should even reward the harm which his Yetzer Harah does to him with good (XXXVIII:140).

Another idea that is equally as stressed as those mentioned above is the following:the Rabbinic concept that the "merit of a good intention does the Lord (in rewarding) add to that of a good deed"(XXI:208, XXVI:29, XXX:64, XLI:170, XL^V:195).

Elijah Hacoheh never ceases to say that the individual shall do all that is in his power to fullfill the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth so that he might merit being called "righteous". However, he was not of such a rigid and narrow mind as to say that failure to perform them meant that the individual was wicked. The individual must make a conscious effort to do them within his ability and talents but if he is unable to do them he should at least intend to do them and think about the merit of their performance. And "the merit" of intending to do a good deed, a Mitzvah, does the Lord in rewarding "add to that of a good deed".

From even this brief summary of the ethical teachings of the Shevet Musar one can see how all-inclusive they are and how they affect all aspects of individual and social life and relationships. For the most part, the ethical instruction of the book relays heavily upon Scriptural, Rabbinic and Kabbalistic doctrines and teachings as to the good life. This is certainly evidenced by the numerous sources to which reference has already been made, from which Elijah Hacoheh draws constantly and from which he often quotes directly at very great length.

Before concluding this section on the ideology and message of the Shevet Musar, one should point out another of the characteristics of the book, namely its abundant use of folk-lore (demonology, the Evil Eye, d'reams, and strange be-

liefs and superstitions). The following are illustrative:

(1) Demonology: Lilith, the female woman demon, is declared to be a doer of harm (XVI:152). One is told neither to sleep in the shadow of the sun during the days of Ab and Tammuz, nor to sleep facing the light of the moon because of the demons Keteb Meriri and Igrath, the queen of the demons (XVI:152). The individual is advised to do good deeds that he might avoid the accusing angels and the angels of destruction, the kefirim (XVIII:175, XXI:201). Throughout the work, reference is made also to the mazzikin, the harmful spirits (e.g., XVII:164).

(2) The Evil Eye: This is the concept that the glance of the eye can have injurious effects. Thus we read: "If your friend is wearing a new cloak be careful not to praise it overmuch lest it be stained or rent and he regard you as having bewitched it with an Evil Eye (XVI:154). But when man does Mitzvoth, God not only grants him a long life in this world and an abundance of children and prosperity but keeps the Evil Eye from him (XXXII:82).

(3) Dreams: Through dreams man can, even as God, see future events; moreover, he can converse "the spirits of the dead and places and things of great and wondrous nature which he cannot see while awake" (LI:209).

(4) Strange beliefs and superstitions: Elijah Hacoheh drawing upon Rabbinic, Kabbalistic, and other sources refers to the following beliefs which are unchallenged and hence were accepted by the author himself: that man's destiny is closely tied up with the constellation or planet at the time of birth (XVIII:176, XXIV:11), that an angel is appointed over the individual at the time of conception (XVIII:175, XXXVI:121), that if an individual who is about to embark upon a journey to some distant place should make a circle about him "either with his hand or with his staff" and should recite a certain prayer three times, he will be assured of being kept free from all harm and danger (XXXI:70), that if one's friend should give him a coin and "should make a sign therewith by scratching it upon the Mezuzah" and should declare that with this coin he should become his messenger of good deeds by giving it as charity in his behalf and should he do the wishes of his friend, he shall also be assured of safety on the way (XXXI:70). Then there are the beliefs that if one would rid himself of evil thoughts he should say "Pi Pi" three times and spit three times (XXXI:74), that if one desired to know what the market price of grain would be during the coming year, he could do so by understanding the meaning of certain astronomical indications (XXXI:78), and

that "the perspiration of man is poisonous with the exception of that of his face"(XL:163). There are many other such beliefs and superstitions running throughout the Shevet Musar but these are chiefly illustrative.

4. ITS STYLE

The message of the Shevet Musar -to teach man to lead the good life of Torah and Mitzvoth and humility - is developed and proven through various homiletical, exegetical, and stylistic techniques. It is the purpose of the writer of this thesis to briefly mention and describe in this section certain phases of the author's manner of presenting his ethical doctrines and teachings.

There are certain general features that characterize the style of the Shevet Musar, the most important of which on the basis of the frequency of their appearance throughout the work are:(1) the use of dialogue and debate between the soul of the sinner and the sinner himself(IV:38, 39ff), between the soul and the body (XV:139), between the body and the Yetzer Hara(XV:139,140), and between man and the earth (XV:142-144), (2) the use of nature symbolism (XXI:210,XXII:209,215,XXVII:31ff), (3) teaching ethical lessons by observing the ways and organs of the animal (XXII:211-214,217,XXV:19, XXX:66, XXXIII:137, XLVII), (4) urging the sinner as well

as the righteous to conjure up imagery be it as gruesome as the day of death or Gehennah or old age or as pleasant as the reward of the world to come and the Garden of Eden to keep them from following the evil ways of their Yetzer Harah and thus committing transgression (XII:116, XXI:207, XXII:210, 214, XXVII:37), (5) teaching ethical lessons by reference to the organs of the human body (VI:63ff, XXV:18, XXX:62, 63, XLV I), (6) repetition of ethical concepts through variation in language and style, it being the contention of the author that "through the process of repetition through variation the heart is moved and ceases to sin henceforth (XXVII:38) and that words expressed differently and given greater explanation "will prove more pleasant to the reader and will leave an impression upon his heart that he may fulfill them" (XL:164), (7) instructing in ethical conduct through sets of rules (XII:116, XIII, XIV et al), (8) beginning each chapter with a sentence the first letters of each of the first four words of which spell out the tetragrammaton יהוה - to illustrate:

יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה
 יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה
 יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה
 יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה

(9) the author's mention of his own observations of the time as illustration of the ethical concept he would convey to the reader (V:48, V:50, XI:108, 109, XVII:167, XXV:17, XXXIV:96, XXXVI:118, XLII:175-177), (10) the author's reference to himself in the work as

אני יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה
 אני יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה
 אני יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה
 אני יהוה יהוה יהוה יהוה

or some minor variation of these words, (11) the author's use of the words ad kan to indicate the end of a quotation from some source but more frequent omission of these words so that

the reader is most times at a loss to determine where the quotation has ended and where the words of the author begin, (12) the abundance of prayers for the individual, be he sinner or righteous, to recite, some original with the author, and this confusion can only be based on the fact that the language of these prayers follows that of the author and that the author in some cases offers them to the reader in a manner that would seem to indicate them as his own, and others quoted from sources at his command. They vary in character: (a) prayers of petition imploring God to deliver the individual from the power of the Yetzer Harah (IX:85), (b) prayers of repentance (XV:142, XVIII), (c) prayers of confession or Viddui (XXI:2020205), (d) prayers wherein the mother implores God after the birth of a child and before circumcision to grant her a son who will be God-fearing (XXIV:12,13,16), (e) prayers of declaration of faith in God and in the traditional principles of Judaism or Modaah (XXVII:41,43, XLIV:190), (f) prayers to annul the curses which the individual has uttered (XXVII:45), (g) prayers for those who have had a nocturnal emission (XLIV:187), (h) prayers for the ghazanim, wherein they ask God for the power to perform their function properly (XXXIV:93,101,102), (i) prayers for the Shoohtim wherein they implore the Lord to enable them to slaughter in accordance with the Mosaic ritual. These then are the general stylistic features of the Shevet Musar.

But before concluding this section and chapter, one should also point out the exegetical and homiletical techniques used by Elijah Hacoheh . The author, to prove the validity of his ethical instruction and philosophy relies greatly upon the use of the mashal, example or allegory or way of substantiating a certain truth by illustration(VIII:68,82,IX:91,XV:144,XXX:64,XLV:195, LII:213), the remez method of exegesis or the "allusion" method of interpretation of Scriptural and Rabbinic statement, for it is the opinion of the author (XXXI:73) that "everything has been hinted at in the Torah"(VI:64,VIII:79,XIV,XIX:182 ff,XXIV:16,XXVII:32,XXXII:80,XXXIV:93,XLVII:202), the kakasuv method or proof by Scriptural authority- this manner of exegesis is used throughout practically every page of the book, gematria, the system of computing the numerical value of a word and drawing an inference from that numerical value, e.g. the numerical value of the word ℓ' is taken to refer to the 310 worlds since ℓ' equals 310 numerically(XXXVIII:138), and the method of playing on the letters of words to form other words, e.g. the author writes: "the word pile contains the letters of the word ℓ' or "error" to show that peace covers up all errors and sins that one has committed inadvertently (XXXVII:125).

We have now analyzed the various aspects of the Shevet Musar in detail: its sources, its importance, its message and ideology and its style. In chapter III of this thesis, the writer will attempt to summarize and comment on each of the

fifty two chapters of the work.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARIES OF AND COMMENTS ON CHAPTERS I-LII OF THE SHEVET MUSAR

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SUMMARIES OF AND COMMENTS ON CHAPTERS I-LII
OF THE SHEVET MUSAR

CHAPTER I

"May the Creator who created His world in six days and created darkness and brought forth the light and made a distinction between them be praised and exalted." These opening words of the first chapter of the Shevet Musar set the tone for the entire ethical treatise. They seem to say to the reader: "Remember God in all your doings. Keep him ever before you!" And interestingly, each chapter of the work most generally begins with some form of exaltation of God and with praise of his Divine attributes.

Within this first chapter, the general principles and teachings of the Shevet Musar are given. God is the Creator of the universe and all that is therein. He created man in his own image and made him the choice of all His creations(2)²⁸ He is His servant to rule over all that He has made and to observe all his commandments(2). All that is in the world God created for him. He bestowed upon him great wisdom and understanding to discern the truth(3). And therefore, the author goes on to say that since God has been so good to man, how can he sin and traverse the way of evil and annul even^{on it} of His command-

28 Numbers inside of brackets at the end of sentences or alongside of a word will be used throughout Chapter III to indicate the page of the chapter under discussion.

ments (7). Man should not speak arrogantly saying: "Since there is nothing that repentance cannot help, I shall sin and then repent". Such a one speaking in this manner shall not have a chance to repent (8). Man should reflect upon the damage that sin entails and should remember that in accordance with the seriousness of his transgression so will he be punished. However, should man have done perversely all is not lost, for if he be sincere and repent God in His great mercy will pardon him.

The way of the sinner is one that leads directly to the "swampy mire of Gehennah, where the soul will be burned in the burning coals and be melted as tar in the fire (9). Accordingly, if man will desire escape from this horrible end he can do so for has within him the power to choose the way of life (9). What is the way of life it? It is the way of Torah and the observance of its many commands.

Through the study of the Torah there is great reward (9). Indeed, man must study the Torah diligently. And God seeing his love for it, will open unto him the wells of wisdom (10). Knowledge of the Torah should be his central desire and pleasure and thus he must give ear at all times to the words of the Sages who speak thereof and who interpret its meaning (12). Man should say to himself: "May it be thy will O God and God of my Fathers, that you regard my listening as equal to my studying, for I have worried about that which I

have not learned. Favor me with offspring who will busy themselves day and night that they might finish that which I have not studied. May it be accredited unto Thee, in the hour of their study as I were the one who did so, for my sons are a part of me"(12). It is man's duty to see to it that his children study the Law(12).

The rich man should understand that God enriched him because he hated him, that He granted him this reward for the performance of a single Mitzvah only to deny him the pleasures of the world to come(12). Or again, man should realize that God gave him riches in order that he might obtain thereby a perfect reward with it. Wealth is to be used essentially for the doing of good deeds. The rich man is the guardian of the poor (13), and as a guardian he should remember that unless he performs his duty properly, "God will remove him and put another in his place"(13). The rich man should know that with the wealth that God has given him he can acquire a place in the world to come and remove all the accusers from him and wash away the taints of sin which cling to his soul(14).

To the skeptic, who doubts the power of man, a corporeal creation, to attain to spiritual heights, and says: "How can one of earthen shape, created of foul smelling semen, purify himself to ascend to the upper levels", the author affirms the principle that it is "within the power of man", even though he be of flesh and blood, to purify his body and to elevate it to a spiritual plane through the study of Torah and the

fulfillment of Mitzvoth ,for when he is so occupied, he removes the corporeal shell from himself... and purifys (the body) even as the sun with its great heat strikes the earth and changes the dust of the ground into dust of gold" (17,18). Man should then be confident that he can mould his character and attain the pleasures of the next world, the Olam Habah. Mitzvoth and study thus provide man with the opportunity to achieve perfection and Divine favor.

It is evident from this brief summary of the chapter that basically the ethical instruction given by the author to the reader is the traditional teaching of the Bible and the Talmudic literature. As shall be made clearer in the analysis of the other chapters of the book, the author does not deviate from traditional Jewish teaching. The ideas mentioned here of God's greatness and mercy, man's spiritual nature, his power to choose the right and reject the evil, the need of the sinner to repent and the assurance given him of God's willingness to forgive, the divine command to man to live in accordance with the principles of the Torah and thus attain the reward of the Olam Habah and escape the punishment of Gehennah, God's command to the rich to use their wealth and good fortune to assist the scholar and the needy - these ideas are all developed at much greater length throughout the book, and hence more will be said about them later.

CHAPTER II

The author attacks the atheists and heretics, the Epicurim and Minim who contend that man was created only for punishment and that any greatness that has been given him is only for the purpose of humbling him. He berates even the Rabbi Baruch n. Baruch who in his book Kehillath Yaakov held this point of view(19,20). That this conception of creation is false is proven, so the author contends, by God's great patience with the generation of the flood. For had He not prolonged His wrath, that the guilty should not die but repent? Does not the Torah, the Midrash and the Talmud speak of the mercy of God and how grieved He is when evil comes upon the wicked?(20). Indeed, says the author, "when He is angry with the wicked it is because they prevent Him from pouring forth His good upon the world(20). "Shemidaso yisbarach lehativ tamid"(21). It is man and not God who withholds blessing from himself and the world by the deeds of his own hands and by the thoughts of his own heart, it is he and not the Merciful God who brings punishment upon himself. But man can escape chastizement if he will but choose to do so for it is within his power to ascend to the heavenly heights, "shebeya-decha ben Adam leloth basolem"(21,22).

The punishment that he receives is the result of living the sinful life, and the root of all sin is pride(22). The author enjoins the reader to keep the following points in mind

if he would avoid sin and the punishment that results from it because of haughtiness of spirit: that God is Master and that he is but a lowly spirit(22), that the strength of one's youth is not enduring but withers away in old age(22), that in many of his bodily functions he resembles the animal(22), that the power of riches is not eternal, for what we have today may be taken away from us on the morrow(23), that those who conducted themselves with haughtiness of spirit suffered grievously and were punished severely for it(23), that the great and noble spirits and Sages of the past, despite their wisdom and knowledge, humbly felt that they were of small intellectual stature and understanding(24), that he is of lowly origin, yea that he passed through the urinal tract of his mother(25), that in death he will become but worms(25).

The theme of the chapter which is expatiated upon at greater length in the book is that "everyone who is haughty descends but he who humbles himself ascends"(25). Wealth, power, beauty, strength- in a word good fortune-are not cause for pride, rather man should at all times be exceedingly humble in the sight of God and man should thank Him who bestowed the exalted state upon him and which he enjoys(29).

"God dwells with the humble of spirit"(29). Truly, "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" for as Elijah Hacohen points out, buttressing his contention upon innumerable quotations from Scripture and Rabbinic literature, "God hears the requests of the (humble) of heart and their desire and

fulfills their will even though they have not prayed for it"(29). Woe unto those who despite these ethical instructions still remains haughty for thereby he "takes his own life and is judged by the decrees of Gehennah along with others who have done similarly"(30).

CHAPTER III

Pride as has been observed in Chapter II is the source of transgression and thus man must make every effort to overcome it. The author asks: how can one be haughty and exalt himself when he considers the horrible changes that take place upon his body and his countenance in the course of a lifetime." Observe," he adjures the reader "the form of your body and derive instruction from it that you may make your ways straight. Let your eyes behold the flowing mucus of your nose and the stinking odors of your body and the urine and filth that come from it. When the body is overpowered by fever the face of man becomes a loathesome sight and his body is reduced to a fallen heap. And if his flesh becomes leprous or scabby or if there is a dripping wound upon it, then the body becomes like a stinking corpse the smell of which is carried to far away places"(31).

However, while pride or the glorification of self is evil all pride is not sin. One can take pride and be happy about one's good fortune or body and wealth if he does so in the knowledge that whatever blessings he enjoys provide him

with the opportunity to help others, to do Mitavoth and serve God. Thus Elijah Hacohe declares: "Let man exalt himself with his stately body to protect the congregation from any trouble that may come upon it or to instill fear in those who would make trouble for any of them...Let him be proud of his great riches and fine clothing of blue and purple for therewith he can help the needy and support those who seek to learn Torah...Let him be happy in having many children and in the good with which God has favored him to educate his children in Torah in order that they may serve Him and sanctify His name with all their heart and soul. Let him revel in the lucidity of his language while expounding the sweet words of the Torah to the multitude, making known to them the way wherein they should go and the deeds which they must perform" (33,34). Such conduct will of course earn for him a portion in the world to come and provide him with pleasures in this world at the same time.

As is apparent from the above quotations knowledge of the Torah is a most worthy Mitzvah and the support of those who devote their lives to it, the scholars, a duty incumbent upon all who are able to afford it. With reference to the subject of Torah, there is an important Rabbinic doctrine stated here and which is repeated many times elsewhere in the Shevet Musar, that if one does not have the ability to understand Torah he should at least think of studying it for "mac^hashava hakodesh Baruch Hu metzarefah lemaaseh"- the merit of a (good) intention.

does the Lord (in rewarding) add to that of a (good) deed (35).

However, should man fail to heed the injunction to lead the goodly life and perfect his soul, through humility of spirit and Torah and Mitzvoth despite the fact that he has the power to do so even if it be only through a good intention, then there is no limit to the evil that will befall the soul when it is separated from the body (35). But there is a way of deliverance from this sad end and that is through repentance. And at this point, the author quotes the well-known statement of the Rabbis: "Repent one day before your death" (36). For if one but confesses his iniquities, "even at the end of one's life, one can perfect the soul, for in the place where the penitents stand the wholly righteous are unable to stand" (36,37).

Thus once again, the author answers the charges of those heretics who maintained that man was created by God only to be punished. God does everything that is possible, even rewarding him for the benefit of a good intention, to encourage man to lead the good life that he might inherit a goodly portion in the world to come and escape the judgements of Gehennah.

As can be seen from the summary of the first two chapters of the book, there is constant repetition of ideas, such ideas as repentance, God's mercy and the like. But while the ideas are repeated constantly, they are amplified and developed and analyzed in all their ramifications.

CHAPTER IV

The central keynote of this chapter is that the individual no matter how greatly he has sinned can obtain favor in the eyes of God through earnest recognition of his guilt and sincere repentance. We hear the voice of who has transgressed during his whole life and who has, because of the greatness of his iniquities, almost given up in despair of any hope of redemption or of any salvation for his soul. In every word that the sinner speaks to God and to himself we see the distress of his very being and the regret that he feels because of the folly of his ways.

"Through my evil," the sinner declares, and my foul deeds I have caused the princess (the soul is called a "bath malcah shel olam") to bear the shame of my deeds...I have caused it to bear the uncleanness of my sins. And since I have sinned so greatly, are the boiling waters of the flood sufficient to cleanse me or is the fire which burned Sodom able to melt the thick mold of my impurity"(37). Cognizant of the greatness of his perversity and in desperation the sinner takes council with his soul that it might advise him in the way of salvation. And it this dialogue that is novel in the chapter.

The soul answers the sinner and assures him that the gates of repentance are open to all if they but repent sincerely for God is a merciful God(38,39). The words of the

soul to the sinner stress the fact, however, that true repentance must be through deeds, through a reconstructed life, a life devoted to love of the Torah and the performance of Mitzvoth. "Whereas our eyes gazed upon unclean things", the soul declares, "our eyes shall behold the light of Thy Torah...Whereas, we used our tongue for evil and for flattery we shall use it to bring peace between man and man and husband and wife, Whereas our hands were employed for thievery, we shall extend them to the poor and give charity to them. Whereas our feet were quick to run after evil things, they shall hasten speedily to perform every manner of Mitzvah. Whereas our heart thought evil we shall think always of Thy Divinity and cling to Thee, And in this manner we shall correct all that we have done perversely"(39,40).

Thus God's hands are even open to the sinner if he will but mend his ways. However, Elijah Hacoen states that in order that the penitent ~~do not~~ return to their former degeneracy it is necessary that they constantly recall the awful Yom Hadin, the Day of Judgement, when he shall give account of himself for all his thoughts and deeds- such thought will deter him from sinning(40). Should he sin again, it is only because of the strength of his Yetzer Harah, his evil inclination(40). Furthermore, if man would keep from sinning, not only should he think of the Day of Judgement but he should also consider whether the enjoyment that he derives from sin, such as promiscuity or homosexuality and the like, is worth the self-reproach and regret that will inevitably follow(41). Indeed,

man must do all in his power to cause his Yetzer Hatov, his good inclination to rule over his Yetzer Harah, his evil inclination, he must drive it out of his body until it will be unable to lift its head except to say Amen(41).

But should he fail to lead the goodly life, and to have fear and dread of God, he will be stricken with all manner of diseases and physical deformities or he will be bedridden or he will become impoverished or bereft of children or he will die an unnatural death, either by stoning, burning, or strangling and the like(43). But he who has the fear of God ever before him, who is benevolent to the poor, who observes the Mitzvoth, who is humble, who believes in the Oral and Written Law, who visits the sick and accompanies the dead, who is honest in his business dealings, who writes Hiddushe Hatorah or novellae- he will have a goodly reward in the next world and shall enjoy the pleasures of the Garden of Eden(45).

CHAPTER V

"The Lord knows the heart and tries the reins. He understands all the ways of man, yea, when they think of their bad fortune while bedridden and grumble about their conditions and hope for death"(45). As expressed in these opening words of the chapter, the author discusses here the lot of the poor and answers their complaints. He rebukes the poor who "grumble"

because of their economic misfortunes, contending that they cannot understand the mind of God(45), that God's ways are just and righteous(45) and that whatever He does to man is for his own good ~~amen~~ though it may seem evil in his eyes(45).

Man is poor, Elijah Hacoheh maintains, for specific and just reasons:(1) he may have sinned greatly in a previous existence and is returned to the world through the process of the gilgul, or transmigration, to endure the sorrows of poverty that he might be cleansed of his ~~past~~ sins and thus inherit the reward of the righteous in the next world(45),(2) God knows that certain people are of such character that should they become rich they would sin and ~~cause~~ others to sin and thus to save them punishment and to enable them to attain a goodly reward He keeps them poor,(3) He may be wholly righteous and by reason of his exalted character God afflicts them with poverty to bear the iniquities of the generation and thus keep them alive and well fed(45),(4) the world may have been so ordered that there should be masters and servants, the former to direct and the latter to do the daily tasks of life(46), For these and other reasons there are poor people in the world.

The poor man should not despair of his lot saying:"Since I have not the power to perform Mitzvoth....I am evil in the sight of God and man", for everyone in Israel, both rich and poor are equal in the daily performance of Mitzvoth from early morning to night"(47). Even the most impoverished individual can wear the Tallith and Tefillin, recite the daily prayers, study Scripture or Mishnah and recite the daily blessings (47).

However, if he is prevented in one way or another from doing these commandments, he can still obtain his reward in this world to come by a good thought alone(47).

If the poor man be grieved because he is hated for his poverty he should know that God loves him(48), if he is sad because he is not invited to the banquets of the rich, he should reflect upon the delectable foods that he will enjoy in the Garden of Eden(48).

Elijah Hacohen tells us that he has observed most frequently in his own day that oftentimes the poor who have become rich behave arrogantly towards the poor with whom they had once associated on most friendly and peaceful terms. The author warns these newly rich that they should remember that whatever riches they may have today may not be theirs tomorrow(48). This change of attitude is the result of giving ear to the enticing words of the Yetzer Harah(48).

And the author also observed the common practice of his time for parents to seek a rich man's son, however unrighteous and ignorant ~~he~~ may be, to take their daughter's hand in marriage in preference to a poor but scholarly and righteous young man(50,51). Will not parents such as these, he says, suffer grievously if their rich son-in-law have a change of fortune(51,52). They should choose a scholar for their daughter despite the shabby garment that he wears upon his body, For the scholar is an exalted person teaching man to live the good life, he is sustained by those who hearken to

him, he is beloved on earth and in heaven(52).

Of such money-seeking parents, the woman, says the author is the mos^t guilty, for the father listens to the council of his wife who being a woman considers only externals(53). "Women are frivolous and cannot see what will happen in the future and as a consequence they choose the pleasures of the hour(53). Parents should realize that the wife of a scholar will never suffer poverty, for "poverty never enters the homes of the learned"(53).

And finally, the author discusses the case of that category of poor people who yearn to die to escape the grief that their poverty entails. He reproaches them severely for entertaining such thoughts, for those who think in this wise testify to their disbelief in the coming of the Messiah when all sorrows will be removed, in Reward and Punishment, and in the Day of Judgement, when the righteous shall be rewarded and the wicked punished(54). Instead of wishing for death, man should wish for added life that he might cleanse himself of whatever iniquities there may be in him and thus become righteous and share the d^elights of the next world(55). Idleness is at the root of such thinking, for if man were busy with his task, he would not meditate upon his troubles, and thus for this reason, Elijah Hacohen urges the parent to teach their children a craft to occupy their minds(56).

Poverty then is not the unjustified lot of man bestowed

upon him by a thoughtless and mercifless God. The poor should bear their fate knowing that it is the righteous decree from on high. They shall inherit a reward in the world to come if they but perform Mitzvoh and tread the path of holiness. Riches are ephemeral possessions. What one has today may be gone tomorrow. Knowledge of the Torah is more to be esteemed than the acquisition of much wealth, the scholar is more highly exalted than the ignorant scions of the rich.

CHAPTER VI

To assuage the individual who suffers affliction and is grieved lest he be suspected of wickedness because of it, the author cites the cases of the many righteous and saintly souls who have been the victims of great misfortune. Did not Nahum ben Gamzu, Rabbenu Hakodesh, and Job suffer greatly, were these not pious men, the author asks(57). In all instances the smiting of man is for his own good and the knowledge of this truth will enable man to enjoy his days free of care and worry(58).

Indeed cognizant of the goodness of affliction, man will not withhold himself from the service of God, but rather he will spend his entire time in the study of the Torah and in the fulfillment of every detail of the ritual laws(58). And certainly an important part of these laws is sincere prayer. "Man can be sure of having a share in the world to come only if

he prays before God with absolute devotion and delivers over his soul to Him. Yea, he must pray devotedly to God because of his great guilt, for He is the God who created him and in whose hand is the power of life and death and besides whom there is no other God"(59).

Free of worry and thus complete concentration on the achievement of the goodly life, man should make every effort to keep himself from falling into the net of the Yetzer Hara. And to successfully escape the enticing words of this evil inclination within him, he should seek out the company of the Sages and God-fearing men; for beholding "their numerous good deeds and piety he will truly understand how exceedingly necessary they are to attain shelemuth laneefesh, perfection of the soul(60). As has been noted previously, self-perfection is a cardinal principle in Elijah Hacoen's philosophy. It is the goal of the religious man's efforts.

Further to avoid the evil and choose the good, man should consider that there is an Overseer over all the ways of man, Who counts his steps and therewith his stubborn heart will become humble"(61).

The advantages of the good life of Mitzvoth and the study of Torah, the life of self-perfection are many: through the observance of the commandment of Tzitzith, for example, he shall be endowed with great wisdom and with the understanding of the future(61), he shall have all the powers of the rare herbs

and precious stones such as the ruby and the sapphire and the diamond and thus he shall be able to give life to one who is deserving of life even as the prophet Eliyahu to heal every disease and pain and the like(62,63).

Moreover, in order that man might attain a perfect soul not only did God forbid and permit the eating of certain fowl and animals but He also hinted that we obtain instruction from them for the conduct of our lives through an understanding of their habits(64). Thus we are permitted to eat those animals that chew their cud that we might learn to chew our words and grind them well and swallow them and grind them again before they leave our mouths(65); we are permitted to eat those animals that are cloven of hoof that we might learn to make a sharp cleavage in our minds between the ways of life and the ways of death; we are forbidden to eat of those unclean animals that tear their prey and eat their kill, that we might learn thereby the ways of peace(64).

However, if despite these many ways that God makes known to man to perfect himself, man still sins and having sinned recognized the evil of his ways but is too ashamed to repent, the author assures him that God is ever ready to forgive the earnest penitent, though he has sinned greatly(65). It is characteristic of repentance and confession that it can remove all accusations from him(67). Man should confess the sin that he has wrought for "this is the first principle of

repentance"(67). But repentance should be made in one's youth for the reward thereof is greater than repentance that is made in old age(68). And Elijah Hacoen cites the Zohar as interpreting the Biblical verse: mipene sevah takum to mean that one should repent before old age comes upon us(68).

CHAPTER VIII

The importance of this chapter as has been stated previously lies chiefly in the fact that within it are contained passages of the Or Kadmon , a very rare work; and thus it is of especial worth to the student of history. The chapter is for the most part a series of prayers of admonition to man and his soul to keep from sinning and to seek repentance and the goodly life.

The chapter begins with a prayer by David ben Abi Zimra whom Elijah Hacoen calls the "wondrous Gaon"(70-72). The prayer glorifies God's names, thoughts, and deeds. God is the Cause of Causes, who is All Strong and All Mighty. He is All Holy He is All Wise and all wisdom emanates from Him. He understands all secret things. He is the source of prophecy. The individual implores God to grant him the knowledge of His Torah that he might understand its secrets. He asks God to favor him with wisdom and to accustom him to doing good deeds and to keep him from transgressing. "Man, says the author Elijah Hacoen, should recite this prayer daily that he might humble his "uncircumcized heart". The prayer has constant references

to such Kabbalistic terms as Sod, hayoth, and ophanim .

Elijah Hacoheh then quotes from two Tochechoth: one by Rabbenu Bechai(72) cited by the author of the Or Kadmon in which man speaks to his soul and urges it to clothe itself with wisdom, to keep itself from the enticements of the body and the heart and to seek out righteousness and humility and the other by Rabbi Judah Hechasid(73) in which the individual conjures up images of the horrors of the grave and of the decomposing process that takes place within it that he might keep from sinning.

The chapter concludes with Elijah Hacoheh quoting statements of Rav cited by the author of the Or Kadmon(73-75). Rav assures man that the ways of sin lead only to disaster. "If he sins with his eyes , they will become dim, if he sins with his ears he will hear himself reproached, if he sins with his tongue, chastizements will come upon him". Indeed, says Rav, in the end, the sinner will be removed from the world and will go "from light to darkness...from sweet light to worms and crawling things". Moreover, he who associates with a wicked person will live only half of his normal life. But happy is the lot of him who avoids sin and serves God with joy and clings to His Torah. Man, finally, says Rav should recall to his heart the day of death and the difficulties that will face it when it has to answer for its arrogance on the Day of Judgement and Reckoning. Therefore, man should

urge his heart to implore God's forgiveness of his sins that he might be saved from severe punishment.

CH AFTER VIII

In order that man might disregard the enticing words of his Yetzer Harah, and thus escape from its power, the author counsils him to speak chastizing words to the various parts of his body, head, eyes, ears, mouth, neck, arms and belly and inform them of the sad state of affairs that will befall them when they reach the grave(77-79). Thus should he speak :

"O, my head, my head do you not know the judgements of God that are destined to come upon you. For on that day you will be cast into the grave and your skin will waste away, you will become mere bone. Your skull will be as dry as marrow and full of holes...O, my eyes that shine when they are alive, do you not know that your starry light will be dimmed at the time of death, for a great darkness will fall upon your palace. the house will be as gloomy as a desolate land...O, my ears, that adorn my head, how will you be able to seal yourselves to the shrieking noises of the reptiles that will creep in and out of you...etc.(78,79). Rather man should adorn his head with Tefillin, his eyes should gaze upon the words of the Torah, his ears should hearken to words of reproof(79), for only in

this way will his body become a sanctuary wherein the Divine Presence shall make its abode(79).

Failure to follow these holy ways can only lead to the greatest suffering and disaster, for the Yetzer Harah, Satan, and the Destroying Angel will then at that time of death cast him into the lowest depths of Sheol(80). Elijah Hacoheh warns the erring man that the good fortune that he may enjoy at the present hour is no indication that he will not be punished later for God does not desire to punish the wicked immediately, preferring to requite him in this world for a Mitzvah that he may have accomplished in order to deny him a place in the world to come(82).

The wicked man, because he has no mercy upon himself is essentially a murderer, for by iniquities he kills his own children(84). His deeds result in his being punished in the fires of Gehennah(84). By his sins, he shortens his very life so that he is buried "among the scorpions" where "he shall eat dust even as the serpent" and where "he shall drink the poisonous mucus that drips from his brain to his neth" (84). Elijah Hacoheh's vivid language in describing the work of Death's hands upon man is so gruesome that it must have sent chills up the backs of the Mediaeval reader of the Shevet Musar . But since it is the author's aim to instill the fear of God in man, he uses every manner of admonition to accomplish this

end,

But if man would conquer the adversaries that seek to destroy him he can do so by arming himself with Torah and Mitzvoth(84), by dying if need be for Kiddush Hashem , for the sanctification of God's name(85), by abstention from excessive bodily satisfactions(85), by the giving of charity(85), by refraining from reading heretical books(85). Truly, "he who would bring near the day of Redemption should keep from thinking about it for it only distracts the mind. He who would desire many gifts should abhor them. He who would like to be as the angels should humble himself to the inglorious level of the animal. He who would have a reward in the world to come should keep himself from the rewards of this world. He who would be resurrected should die for Torah in this world"(85).

There is nothing that is new in this chapter, particularly that has not been said previously. Elijah Hacoheⁿ's main purpose here is obviously to repeat and repeat his council to man to escape from his evil inclination by constant reflection on the horrors of death that will be his punishment for evil ways.

CHAPTER IX

Beginning with along prayer in which supplicates God to accept his repentance favorably, to grant him the power to over-

whelm the Yetzer Harah which is eager to snatch his soul and to become holy and humble and a true servant of Him(85-89ff), we arrive at the chief point of the chapter- a detailed picture of the netherworld, which Elijah Hacoheh gleaned from the Sefer Raziel. Man must keep this picture constantly in mind, says the author in order that he might subdue his Yetzer Harah(89), for what man, knowing the punishments that await the sinner there would want to act iniquitously?

As the writer has shown previously²⁹ the netherworld is a terrifying place. Indeed, the word portrait of the Sefer Raziel is so imaginatively and vividly given that we can well understand the torturing fears that it must have instilled in the hearts and minds of the Mediaevalist.

To repeat that which was stated earlier, the netherworld has seven stories and there the malache habalah, the punishing angels rule over the wicked. Each story is three hundred years distant from the next story and the fire of each is sixty-one as intense as the fire of the story beneath it. The first story is the nethermost part of the netherworld and called Sheol, the second story is Hell, or Aydon, the third story is the lowest pit, the fourth story is the thick heavy clay, the fifth story is the Gates of Death, the sixth story is the Gates of Darkness, the seventh story is Gehennah(89). Man is punished in these compartments in accordance with the gravity of his sins and in each there are fire, hail, stormy

²⁹ Chapter II, pp.18,19 of this essay

winds, brimstone, burning coals and pitch, serpents and scorpions that bite the soul, darkness, heat and cold, and days that are as dark as nights(88,89).

Continuing his prayer to God after declaring to Him that he will keep the horrors of the netherworld ever in mind that he might subdue his Yetzer Harah, man assures God that once he is free of this evil inclination he will praise and exalt Him in accordance with His attributes spoken of in the Sefer Razi'el, namely, His Kingship, His Unity, His powers of redemption, His Goodness, Mercy, and Love etc.(90).

The remainder of the chapter is devoted to counselling man to make the most of his time to become righteous and earn the reward that is stored up for the righteous(91), to justifying the peculiar ways of the poor, their stranger habits and the like which are the result of their poverty. And in this connection, the reader of this essay is referred to the story of the poor guest in the rich man's home(93,94), He is counselled to spend his time in this manner and to admonish the wicked and to reflect upon the grievous misfortunes that befall man, in order that he might learn humility(95,96,97).

With respect to the latter, the author closes the chapter declaring: "when he recalls these many forms of grief and pain, then every material desire will leave him, then he will long for the light of life and cling to the Lord and the Torah and hope for a place in the Garden of Eden".

CHAPTER X

While the author has shown that God is merciful toward the sinner in permitting him to repent and thus obtain His good favor and a future reward, nevertheless He is not lenient in His punishments to those who have sinned throughout their lives and have failed to mend their ways. Thus Elijah Hacoen seeks to answer the sinful individual who is encouraged to continue sinning, thinking that God being lenient will overlook His iniquities and will deal lightly with him(97). For if God were lenient with the transgressor then "why are the righteous grieved about contending with their Yetzer Harah lest it cause them to sin"(97), if He be lenient with the wicked "how much the more should He be so with the righteous, but on the contrary God deals very severely even with the righteous...Thus God is not lenient in dealing out justice but is only long suffering, for He would give the wicked sufficient time to repent"(98).

At this point Elijah Hacoen divides the sinners into twenty various categories(100-103):(1) ~~Those~~ who maintain that He is lenient in dealing out justice, the error of whose thinking he has pointed out above (2) those who believe that the suffering which they endure atones for their sins and hence they can continually sin not knowing that God imposed suffering upon them to keep them from sinning(3) those who sin saying that God takes delight in the death of the sinner and will

help them in one way or another, but they err for God helps only the penitent (4) those who sin because there are so many others who do likewise; but only the fool would bring punishment upon himself because others have done so (5) those who sin thinking that because there are so many sinners in the world God would not dare destroy so many thousands, forgetting that He destroyed the generation of the flood (6) those who sin saying that they shall sin and repent, not realizing that one who speaks thus will have not the opportunity of repenting (7) those who sin declaring that they shall beget children who will be righteous, but they err too for it is possible that they shall have ^{not} any offspring (8) those who sin thinking that the merit of their parents and forebears will wash away their iniquities, but they err for the punishment of the sinner who is of righteous stock is two-fold (9) those who sin thinking that the merit of the few Mitzvoth they perform will exonerate them forgetting that man must fulfill the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth in his lifetime (10) those who sin believing that God cannot see their deeds, but they err for the generation of the flood thought likewise (11) those who sin thinking that the Messiah will come and then all their sins will be removed, but it is possible that the Messiah will not come in their day (12) those who sin seeing that their first sin was forgiven because of repentance, but they err for it is possible that God know-

ing the intention of such individuals will take their lives immediately after the first sin (13) those who sin rejecting the idea that they will be punished, but the author disproves such a thought by citing the example of the Egyptians and the plagues they suffered etc (14) those who sin saying that despite their so-called evil ways they prosper in this world, but in answer to such as these Elijah Haohen declares that God permits them some reward in this world for some Mitvah they may have performed to deny them the reward of the world to come (15) those who sin knowing that they will be punished but prefer to enjoy the pleasures of the world nevertheless, but they err for they forget that the pleasures of this world are ephemeral and hence not worth having (16) those who sin saying that since the punishments of Gehennah are but a year long they shall have the pleasures of a lifetime, but they err for before he enters Gehennah his soul wanders about in the air for many years, a punishment far greater than that of Gehennah, until it enters the bodies of animals and clean and unclean beasts and reptiles and then he enters Gehennah (17) those who sin saying that they have none to teach them right and wrong, but they err for it is the duty of every adult to study Torah even if he has none to teach him (18) those who sin thinking that since they are going to be punished for their past sins they might as well go on sinning, forgetting that God is always ready to receive the penitent

sinner (19) those who sin because being ill and thus being permitted to eat forbidden foods enjoy them the more knowing they are forbidden, but they shall be punished greatly for this sin (20) those women who sin by saying that it is well that we are exempt from the positive commands, but they err for they are not exempt for it is their duty to inspire their husbands and children to do them even if they are not compelled to do them.

After having carefully analyzed the various types of sinners and after having shown where they err in their thinking, the author then warns man about the types of people that he should avoid associating with: the ill-tempered, the cruel and miserly, the liar, the glutton - for all their ways are base (104).

And finally Elijah Hacohen concludes the chapter with a long series of laments for those who live unrighteously. The following are illustrative: Woe to the man who exchanges spiritual pleasures for the corporeal pleasures, Woe to the man who gives up the Garden of Eden for the orchards and gardens of this world...Woe to the man who purchases instruments to take his own life...Woe to the city whose inhabitants are few but always striving with each other etc. (105-106).

CHAPTER XI

This chapter is devoted chiefly to the glories of the Torah

and the benefits that accrue to those who study it deeply- in a word it exalts the talmid chacham, the scholar. Indeed, says the author, the Torah is a light to those who make it their daily occupation, it enables them to emerge out of the thick darkness of the day of death, it illuminates their way when they die and lie in the grave (106). The study of Torah saves man from the pit of Gehennah and teaches him the way to bring strength and health to his body and soul and thus to serve His Creator (107).

But while the knowledge of Torah is such a great achievement and the means of self-perfection, the scholar is not often respected for his understanding of it. Oftimes he is very shabbily dressed and as consequence he is despised by the ame hasratzim, the uneducated and the wicked. The frequent references in this chapter to the poor raiment of the scholar seem to indicate that scholarship was not highly rewarded in a material sense in Mediaeval times. To such as these who despise the scholar, the author declares that they should pay less heed to his clothing and more to the precious soul that lies beneath them(107) and that whatever poverty he may now have is but of the moment for soon he will ascend to the heavens to rule over the three hundred and ten worlds(107). Truly, the Shevet Musar goes to great lengths to exalt scholarship and to point out the rewards that the student of the Law will obtain in the next world. For then "their heads will shine

brilliantly from one end of the world to the other and the scoffers shall be made ashamed (108).

What then should be the attitude of the scholar to his fellowmen? If he should meet with uneducated people who are eager to obtain instruction from him then it is his duty of that scholar to teach them and to share the reward of the next world with them (108). However, should they treat him cruelly and despise and hate him then he should completely disregard them and consider them to be no better than animals (108).

Of course, says the author there are reasons why there are uneducated people who hate the scholar: **firstly**, it is the nature of man to be jealous of the good fortune of others and since they know that the scholar by reason of his occupying himself studiously to the study of the Torah, will obtain a goodly portion in the world to come, they hate him (109), **secondly**, they hate him because he understands the evil of their ways and as a consequence refuses to appoint them as guardians over the orphaned or reveal his secrets to them (109), **thirdly**, they hate him because they contrast their wickedness with his goodness, **fourthly**, they loath him in order to keep far from him and to follow their evil inclinations (109), **fifthly**, they despise him because in their ego-centrism they consider themselves to be all-wise and the scholar as lacking in discernment (10).

However, all uneducated people are not wicked, in fact

they may even be very pious, for because of their great eagerness for knowledge and the performance of Mitzvoth, they support the scholar and study the Torah; and even though they may be unable to comprehend the true meaning of ~~his~~ worlds and thus be unable to carry out the Mitzvoth correctly and even sin, they are accounted as those who sin inadvertently and not arrogantly (110). There is another reason why some individuals though uneducated are yet pious. Their piety is the result of their parents' thinking about the pious in Israel in the hour of marriage-because of these thoughts they begot children after the manner of their thoughts (11). And finally, the uneducated may be pious because of their jealousy of the scholar's wisdom and as a consequence they do all that is within their power to be as near like him as possible (111).

Elijah Hacoheh's parting advise to the wholly uneducated is that they attend the lectures on Aggadah and Ethics at the Beth Hamidrash each day and on Sabbaths and holidays (113). This is an indication to us of the regular lecture periods prevalent in the Houses of Study in the time of the author. And if the individual ~~can~~^{do} even this then the least that he can do is to recount the unfortunate happenings that have taken place in the world to his friends that they might become humble in the sight of God and thus ~~abtain~~ from sin and to speak of God's miracles that have happened that he might thereby strengthen his faith in God and cling more tightly to Him (114).

The significant character of this chapter is the knowledge that it affords of the value which the author places upon scholarship and of the niggardly Mediaeval treatment of the scholar on the part of the ame haaratzim. No doubt the great amount of space that the author gives to the uneducated would seem to indicate the prevalence of ignorance among the people of his own day and being a scholar himself, he would naturally bemoan this sad state of affairs.

CHAPTER XII

Repeating the doctrine of man's bechirah or power of choice, Elijah Hacohen reassures man that despite the seeming power of the Yetzer Harah he can still overcome it if he but chooses to do so. Thus he says again: "man should choose to do His commands and annul the will of his Yetzer Harah by reason of his power of choice" (115). And in this chapter the author offers several new techniques of which man can avail himself to prevail over his evil inclination that dwells within him. Firstly, man should conjure up an image of a great man, one whom he respects and fears at the moment that the Yetzer Harah would entice him and in this way he will be kept from sinning; moreover by following this method he will be led to think of God standing besides him (116). Secondly, should the first method prove unsuccessful, he should imagine wild dogs and destroying flames and fierce winds all about him, for such horrible images will cause him to quiver in

fear and thus abstain from doing evil (116). And finally, if both of these methods fail then man should contrast before his eyes the delights that will be his if he does good and the misfortunes that will be his in this world and the world to come that inevitably ensue from a life of sin (116). And if none of these aids help, man should not give up in despair but should try them over and over again until they prove successful(117). Furthermore, if man shows himself to be conscientious in his desire to do good and avoid evil he will receive assistance from Heaven (117).

However, if man follows all the above advise and still is helpless against his Yetzer Harah, then he should realize that the cause of his weakness lies in his haughtiness(117), for, as the author has stated previously, haughtiness is at the root of all transgressions. And thus the immediate solution for man's difficulty is to rid himself of it and become healed of soul. The author then observes that in his own day there have been those who were haughty in their youth but who changed their ways as a result of associating with scholars (117). Rid yourself of pride, the Shevet Musar repeats again and again, for "he who acts haughtily exalts himself over his Creator, as our Sages have said of the first serpent " (117).

Thus man should do all in his power to escape the death like fangs of the Yetzer Harah which misleads him into thinking that because he is prosperous at the present time there is

neither a Supreme Judge nor a Judgement Day (118). "Rather the prosperous sinner should weep because of his good fortune for poison is mixed with it and it is only a snare to trap him and cast him into the sea of punishments"(118). And in conclusion, states Eliyahu Hacoheh, never make peace with your Yetzer Harah for he who does so "strives with God from generation to generation", whereas he who contends with it is saved from contending with the Angel of Death.

CHAPTER XIII

In addition to the many principles already enumerated in the preceding chapter for the attainment of a perfect soul and for the avoidance of sin , Elijah Hacoheh lists two other sets of such principles which form the basis of the entire chapter. The writer shall give a sufficient number of the principles of each set as illustrative of the Shevet Musar.

The first set of principles arranged by Rabbi Asher are twenty three in all. They adjure man to give a tithe of all his profits, to be as charitable as possible, to pray morning and evening, to "davin" with Tefillin daily, to fulfill the command of Mezuzah , to study Torah at fixed times, to be honest in business, to honor scholars, to chastize the sinner, to judge one's neighbor according to his merit, to establish peace between man and man and husband and wife, to recite the blessings before and after meals, to fulfill on Friday

that which one has fixed as a duty but which one has failed to do, to honor the Sabbath and eat three regular meals on that day, to prepare a repast for the closing of the Sabbath, to help one's friend when he is in need, to make confession nightly, to mourn over the exile of Israel and the destruction of the Temple and to pray for the Return and the rebuilding of the Sanctuary, to fast one day in the month and if one be unable to fast to give two peshutim to charity, to do good deeds in humility(120,121).

The second set of principles are 132 in number of which the following are indicative of the teachings of the author: Man should avoid haughtiness, flattery, lying, deception, mockery, slander, wrath, he should see to it that his vows do not prove a stumbling block, he should not call his neighbor by a nickname, he should not sit in the company of scoffers, or idlers or of the uneducated, he should not gaze upon forbidden women, he should not converse during Kiddush or the reciting of the Hallel or the reading of the Torah, he should receive the Sabbath while it is still early, he should forsake his business when the time arrives for the three daily prayers, he should not speak between the blessings for washing the hands and the blessing over the bread, he should praise God for the food that he eats, he should not be too hasty to contend with his neighbor, he should keep from sneering and being ill-tempered, he should believe with perfect faith in God's Unity and Providence

he should rebuke his Yetzer Harah for enticing him to do evil, he should be true to his word and should not speak before weighing his words carefully in his mind, he should constantly remember the day of death and keep the two ways that are open to him, Gehennah and the Garden of Eden, ever before him, he should associate with the pious and avoid the company of the sinner, he should pray with devotion, he should put Tzitzith on the four corners of his garment, he should be pious even in the lavatory, he should not reveal that which has been told him in secret, even to his wife, he should eat and drink and do all things in accordance with the golden mean, he should consider the result of his deeds before committing them, he should neither do Mitzvoth for the sake of reward nor abstain from sin for fear of punishment, he should honor his parents, he should provide for the poor and comfort them, he should not speak profanely, he should be pleased with whatever God has allotted to him be it great or small, he should always give to the poor as well as to the needy of one's own flesh and blood, he should be quick to prepare a meal for the hungry, he should not embarrass his neighbor in public, he should not pursue after glory, he should not depend upon the charity of his relatives but should work for his own sustenance, he should not be carnally excited by the beauty of any woman but he may praise her good deeds, he should make many friends and do all that is possible to keep them and not loose them, he should not trust in his wealth, he should not behave obstinately,

to his fellowmen but should resign his will to the will of others, he should not eat in a non-Jewish home in the company of others for such a repast is unconsecrated, he should not become intoxicated, he should honor his wife, he should never fail to greet any man etc.(121-129).

The ethical rules which Elijah Hacoheh presents to the reader, the pursuit of and adherence to which lead to the Godly life are thus an elaborate Ten Commandments, dealing with every phase of the religious and daily life of the Jew or Jewess. In reading them one is reminded of the Book of Proverbs with all its many injunctions and ordinances. However, there is no effort made to organize these rules into any system or classification. There is repetition after repetition - a characteristic of his style as we have indicated previously.

CHAPTER XIV

The reader is given another set of ethical rules, twenty six in all as an additional guide to conduct. Essentially these moral principles contain the same ideas as were incorporated in the teachings of the previous chapters. They differ as a group, however, in that each of these rules is supported by a Biblical verse, exegetically developed. The chapter is chiefly interesting to the student of the work from the point of view of understanding another aspect of the style of the author, to which reference has been made in Chapter II of this essay, namely, his teaching by the technique of exegesis known as remez.

Man, he says, should reflect upon the punishments that befall the sinner for in this way he will be forced to admit God's Providence (129). He should keep his mind pure and avoid evil thoughts (129). Man should eat only to become healthy and thus serve God longer and more adequately and not to flatter himself (129). He should consider the unfortunate lot of the transgressor, for such thoughts will keep him from sinning (130). He should behave in a way that proves that he fears God more than man. (130). He should believe in the justice of God even though those whom he regards as righteous suffer (131). He should reflect upon his past sins for thinking about them will restrain him from sinning again (131). He should do all in his power to remove the evil that lies within him for only by completely uprooting this evil will he be able to repent (131). He should keep from thinking evil thoughts at the time of marriage lest these evil thoughts result in his having evil offspring "for the character of the offspring is determined by the thoughts of the father in the hour of marriage" (132, cf. also XI:110, XVI:160). He should constantly observe the shameful conduct of the fool for then he will learn to do otherwise (132). He should consider the great kindness that God has shown to him at all times for then he will not anger Him (132). He should do Mitzvoth without thought of receiving a reward for them in this world, for the reward of performing Mitzvoth is obtained in the world to come (132). He should be satisfied with the little that he has and with the bare necessities of

life and not its luxuries for striving after the latter will only lead him to sin(133).

Furthermore, says the author, man should never forget that the life of the sinner is cut short whereas the days that are taken from the lives of the sinners are added to those of the righteous that they might study Torah the more (133). He should not endeavor to invalidate the Hiddushim of the Torah that are explained to him but rather should do everything to support their validity(133). He should not be concerned about what may or may not happen to him in the course of the day for such concern indicates a lack of faith in God (134). He should know that the performance of Mitzvot purifies the organs of his body (134). He should keep from becoming idle for idleness results in keeping one from doing the work of God (135). He should confess the shamefulfulness of his deeds, for such an admission will prevent the Metzer Harah from overwhelming him (135). He should reflect how God is so greatly distressed when man sins and if he knows this how can he possibly sin?(135). He should understand that when he sins he not only harms himself but his children as well (135,136). He should know that God rewards him multifold for helping the poor for "through Zedakah he is blessed with the power of resurrection and bringing near the Redemption of Israel"(136). He should train his children in their youth to follow God's ways and they will never depart from them, even when they are old (136). He should

examine his ways if he be greatly smitten and strive eagerly to repent (137). He should never envy the prosperity of the wicked for it is but ephemeral and such thinking will only cause him to sin (137). And finally man should ever recall the misfortunes that will befall the wicked as a result of the transmigrations of their souls and in this way he shall not sin (138).

It is also important to note that in this chapter we learn much about the subject of transmigration of soul, the Kabbalistic and mystic doctrine. The author quotes at length from Isaac Lurya's book Kavanoth and from another work called Nishmath Hayim . *if the body is not pure*

CHAPTER XV

The wise man is counselled to stir up his soul and to speak to his body and his **body** to his soul and Yetzer Harah (139). The chapter is thus for the most part composed of a series of dialogues between these elements with man.

The soul speaking to the sinful body urges it to forsake its evil ways , since its end will inevitably be a severe one. The soul declares to the body that its bed will be a wormy one; it berates the body for providing itself through its sins with chambers for the serpents and snakes, for offering its blood as drink to all manner of crawling things, for making its limbs a habitation for the locusts and its ears niches for gnats. Why, the soul asks the body, does it bring all these things upon itself(139).

Thereupon the body speaks to the Yetzer Harah , the cause of its evil end and urges it to cease its harmful designs upon it, to desist from contending with it, stating that it has nought to gain by winning a victory over such a weak opponent and that it can only be disgraced if it should prevail. And finally, the body advises the Yetzer Harah, for its own good, to make peace with its Yetzer Hatov, and dwell together with it as brothers serving God, the Creator and Redeemer(140).

After a few words to man telling him to become humble and reverent toward God(141,142), the author offers man a prayer to recite daily, one of the many in the book of apenitential character. In this particular prayer, man asks the Merciful God to render the strength to contend against Satan, his adversary and to permit the melitze yosher, the righteous intercessors to speak in his behalf (142).

Then follows a most interesting imaginative debate between the earth and man. Let us quote parts of this debate to illustrate Elijah Hacoheh's style: Man questions the earth saying : "Why do you change from being merciful to being cruel at the death of a great man, or prince or satrap or bride or groom, and why do you not take mercy upon them, when they are lodged within you in the shadow of your walls? Your bright countenance is darkened, the skin of the beautifully adorned bride and groom is shrivelled away as if it had been heated by a stove, they have a foul odor where once they were scented with rose water, their beautiful raiment is soiled...(142,143). And the earth answers

the rebuke of man saying: "I am holy, for old and ragged holy books are stored away within me, yea the sanctuary vessels and the Ark were deposited within me on the day of the destruction of the Sanctuary. My Creator appointed me as a steadfast overseer of the dead bodies and to return them at whatever time He desires to restore them to life and to bring them up out of Sheol... Since you have brought about your own cruel end and the destruction of your body, why do you murmur against me? Go the way of the righteous so that when you come within me you will return to the days of your youth as the groom lying upon a lovely bed pleasantly sleeping and dreaming. Therefore, O man, accept my council and purify your ways so that when you are called to die you will dwell peacefully within me" (143, 144).

The chapter closes with the conclusion of the above dialogue, which offers a pleasant relief from the numerous rules and sets of principles of the preceding portions of the Shevet Musar.

CHAPTER XVI

Because Elijah Hacoen was so greatly impressed with the "will" of Rabbi Eliezer Hagaddol to his son Hyrcan, the words of which he considered "sweeter than honey and more precious than pearls or any delightful thing" (XV:145), he decided as was stated in Chapter II where we discussed the message of the Shevet Musar, to devote a whole chapter to it for the ethi-

cal instruction of the reader. And a thorough reading of it convinces one that the decision of the author was a wise one for even the modern reader can learn much from it. Practically every aspect of life is contained in it from the treatment that one should accord the poor to the proper etiquette at the dinner table. Because practically every line of every page of the chapter expresses some detailed ethical principle it will be impossible within the scope of a brief summary to include all or even a large part of these ethical teachings. However, this writer shall endeavor to include the basic principles and interesting highlights of the ethical will.

Rabbi Eliezer being deathly ill and bedridden urges his son to heed the following instructions in the days and years to come: not to be too self-confident for illness and death befall all people(146), to be strict about the recitation of the Shema(146), to speak in a sanctified manner(147), to be careful to purify the body at all times (147), to pronounce the blessings properly when washing the hands etc(147), to wrap himself with Talith and to put on Tefillin (148), to be among the first ten in the Synagogue(148), to visit the sick and escort the dead and comfort the mourning(149), to assist the bride and groom that are in need of money, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked (149), to keep from worrying the members of his household unnecessarily (150), to avoid having intercourse with his wife when she is a menstruant(151), to expose his ignorance in the Beth Hamidrash even though others shame him for it (152), not to praise his good qualities to his

friend's wife lest she come to despise her husband(153), to answer his friend's wife with a loud voice in the absence of her husband lest he suspect that there be an affair between him and her (153,154), not to look upon the face or body of a deformed person while speaking to him (154), not to enter the home of his friend at meal time lest he become a burden to him (155), to keep from speaking too much when in the company of others(155), to be of use to others more than to himself (156), to think of his wife's youthful appearance when she becomes old and of the children that she has begotten him (158), to keep from kissing his wife or fondling her in the presence of his children even though they be infants for whatever they see as children is greatly impressed upon their minds and they remember it to the day of their death(158), to act kindly to everyone in the world, be he Jew or Christian(159), to always have at least one perutah in his pocket, if he has as much as that, when he goes out to the market place for one perutah can save him from a murderer or can keep a poor man from starving to death (159), to permit his wife to visit the home of her parents and relatives for refusal to do so is the root of much domestic strife(160), to give his money to charity while alive instead of leaving it behind after death for his wife to enjoy with another man(162).

This is but a small fragment of the many commands of Rabbi Eliezer to his son, but enough of his teachings have been given,

the writer of this essay believes, to illustrate the diversity of subjects discussed in this chapter. The will that has been cited is a small musar book in itself.

CHAPTER XVII

The content of this chapter, which might properly be called "The Education of the Young" and the Need for Humility" is not original with the author. True to his usual way of writing, when Elijah Hacohen finds material in a certain book that is pleasing to him and with which he thoroughly agrees he quotes or paraphrases at great length from it. The material for this chapter is taken from the book Orech Yamim, a book "small in quantity but huge in quality"(162). The Orech Yamim is divided into three chapters:(1) the education of the young (2) haughtiness and (3) humility;and the Shevet Musar quotes from these three parts.

(1) The education of the young: The author of the Orech Yamim declares that frequently he has observed children grow-up in evil ways. These children,however, are not to be blamed for their stubbornness of heart, rather, he says, their parents are to be severely reproached for it (162). For example, he says:"There are those who give their children holy books to play with which they tear to pieces...The child sits at the table with his parents and stretches out his hand to eat before others and thereby grows up to be ignorant, undisciplined, and ill-mannered. When the child has already reached the age

of eight or nine his parents seek to correct that which they have already instilled in him but they are unable to do so for the child seeks to do that which he has become accustomed to do and if they deny him his way he will curse them"(162). The author constantly emphasizes the thought expressed in this quotation, namely, train the child properly when it is very young for the habits that it develops at this early age will determine his future adult behavior. For the child is not evil by nature (163), he has merely to be taught the correct way of life. "Thus habit and not nature is the governing factor"(164).

But to train the child well, the parents are also in need of proper educational techniques, says the author. Thus we see that Adult Education is not such a novel subject as so many modern educators would have us believe! Indeed, the parent should be considerate in moulding the child's character and not wrathful with him (164). However, consideration for the welfare of the child does not mean that the child should not be smitten if necessary. "It is very wrong of parents to forbid the school teacher to smite the child, for in observing that the teacher has no power over him he will become more arrogant than ever"(165). It is the duty of the teacher, and the parent should see to it that this duty is fulfilled, "to find out if the child hearkens to the voices of his parents, washes his hands for religious functions, recites the Hamotzi and grace after meals and is satisfied with the food that is set before

him ; he should accustom him to pray in the Synagogue and refrain from speaking therein and to answer Amen; he should likewise train the child to do Mitzvoth and to accept discipline and be well-mannered"(165). Failure to train the child in this way will result in his becoming haughty of spirit(165).

(2) Haughtiness and its evils: Haughtiness is the beginning of all evil traits(165). The haughty person does not do Mitvoth for the sake of Heaven but only for the exaltation of himself(165). His soul aim in life is the achievement of power even as Korach(165). He steals and robs if he be without money(165). He will never admit the truth but will devise every possible means of making what he believes and says appear as the truth(166). As a result of such haughtiness, we are in ~~Exile~~ exile(167). Despite the evil ways of the haughty, they are still able to choose humility if they but will to do so(168).

(3) Humility: The author of the Orech Yamim then enumerates six true indices of the humble man(168,169):~~The~~ humble man (1) forgives those who have humiliated him (2) accepts misfortune with love (3) will not be flattered by the praise that is given him for the performance of goodly deeds but rather will look upon his goodly deeds as but a small part of what it is his duty to perform(4) will humble himself before the poor and the afflicted if God has favored him with good fortune (5) will beg forgiveness of him whom he has wronged (6) will speak kindly to all men and will be honest in his business affairs.

CHAPTER XVIII

Elijah Hacoheh offers the sinner another of his penitential prayers wherewith he might supplicate the Merciful God and obtain forgiveness for the evil of his ways (176-182). There is nothing that is novel about the prayer. It repeats ideas expressed in previous chapters, God's attributes of Mercy and Love, It speaks again of God's readiness to pardon those who repent sincerely and who humble themselves with contriteness of spirit before Him. It is essentially a prayer wherein the individual contrasts his own lowliness and frailties to the greatness and might and glory of God. The sinner asks God to save him from the hands of the Mashhith, the Destroyer and the accusing angels (175). He exonerates the angel appointed over him at the time of conception and the midwife who brought him into the world of any responsibility for his sins and places the whole blame upon himself (176). Only God alone can save him and forgive him. Yea, the sinner cries: "I have sought out all possible ways of saving myself and have found that the only way is to continually call unto Thee. For Thou art my Creator and Redeemer, Thou art the only one who is able to pardon and show mercy, for Thou art the Lord of all souls" (176).

The latter part of the chapter is devoted to a further description of the changes or gilgulim that the sinner must undergo in punishment for his evil ways in order that man might thereby learn to do good and become humble of heart (177-179).

He cites the book Shalsheth Hakabbalah, the Zohar, the Midrash, the Talmud, and the Sefer Hacharedim as evidence that the sinner undergoes all manner of transformations after death. The Spanish story of the man who was changed into an ox and who was about to be slain and who appears to his son in a dream begging him to kill him and feed him to the poor and thus free his soul from its animal prison is a typical illustration of Kabbalistic ideology (178). That the author, Elijah Hachohen, believed in the truth of this story and in the validity of the doctrine of transmigration of souls is proven by his own words : "Many other incidents of the same character (namely similar to the Spanish story) have happened among the Jewish people. Ask your parents about them and they will verify them"(178). Indeed, Elijah Hachohen was of the "believing" nature. The writer of this essay does not recall an instance where the author challenges current beliefs and superstitions.

CHAPTER XIX

This is another typical chapter in the book, wherein the author lists one set of rules after the other for healing the sick soul and for strengthening the penitent etc. As usual, he quotes from many sources, the Sefer Hacharedim, Mussar Heskeli, Shaare Teshuvah, Sefer Hayashar and others, but makes no effort whatsoever to organize the material into a coherent whole. Indeed, the chapter is a most disjointed one.

He begins by giving the reader six remedies for the sick or sinful soul (179-181). They are as follows: (1) The sinner should say yehe sheme rabbah etc. with devotion and his sins will be forgiven. (2) The sinner should observe the Sabbath in all its details. (3) The sinner should read the az yashir daily with devotion. (4) The sinner should forgive all retaliations against him. (5) The sinner should sit alone and look up to God. (6) The sinner should rejoice in hearing expositions of the Law and the Agaddah.

The author states that the sinner must constantly be on guard against stealing, slander, envy, voluptuousness, and desire for honor (181-183). It is unnecessary to go into any great detail with respect to these evils for they are buttressed with many biblical verses. Here we have an excellent example of Elijah Hacoheh's use of the kakasuv method of proof to which reference has been made in Chapter II where the writer of this essay described the nature of Elijah Hacoheh's style. Moreover, the method of remez is also used frequently.

Skipping to the subject of the penitent, about which much has already been written, the author cites twenty more principles of repentance gleaned from the book Shaare Teshuvah (183-185). These urge the penitent to regret his past ways, to ~~now~~ never to sin again, to grieve deeply for having provoked God to wrath, to weep and fast, to cloak himself with shame, to be distressed about the punishment that may come upon him, to put aside all corporeal desires, to make **right** all that he

has done perversely, to regard minor transgressions as seriously as important ones, to ever keep his sins before him etc.

However, should the sinner have committed major transgressions there are certain other more grave requirements made upon him (185-188): for indulging in homosexuality, one shall wash oneself and fast two hundred and thirty three times according to the numerical value of the word zachar(185), if one has had intercourse with another man's wife, one shall fast three hundred and twenty five times and bathe and be lashed as many times as he can endure it(185), if one has talked in the Synagogue, one shall fast forty days (186), if one has been the cause of another man's losing his money, one shall beg his forgiveness publicly and shall confess his sins every day of his life and fast for two years, if one has embarrassed another publicly one shall be denied a portion in the world to come and must fast many days (187), one who has stolen from another shall pay the money back to him and ask forgiveness of him and fast forty days and be lashed (if the punishment of the court be that of excommunication or death, one shall fast eighty days) (187), one who has taken excessive interest from his fellow Jew shall return it to him or his heirs and shall be lashed (187). From the nature of these punishments-lashing, excommunication, fasting-we get a clear picture of Jewish mediaeval practice. Indeed, it was not an easy matter to sin and be discovered. The detailed manner with which the author describes

these penalties seems to indicate that they were carried out to the nth degree.

The discussion of sin and punishments that ensue from it is suddenly broken by a bit of council given by Mattatron, the chief of the angels to man. The angel warns man not to sin with any part of his body lest he be denied a portion in the world to come (188).

The chapter concludes with quotations from the Sefer Hacharedim, wherein the author of this book advises that penitence be made to appear easy to the penitent lest he rebel against it(189) and from the Sefer Hayashar wherein the penitent is counselled to rid himself of his sins gradually by doing simple righteous tasks so that he will grow accustomed to doing and enjoy doing it as for example, visiting the sick and escorting the dead to the grave etc.(190).

CHAPTER XX

Emphasizing a point which has previously been expressed but not as forcefully, the author states: "The most basic and fundamental principle for man to remember in the attainment of a perfect soul is that he should consider the end result of his actions; for the end of all earthly things is vanity, for everything being of earth returns to the earth" (190). Elijah Hachohen never ceases speaking of the ephemerality of worldly possessions, for "man can only take his Tachrichin along with him when he dies"(191). There is only

one goal that is worth striving for and that is the world to come, where all manner of pleasures of eternal nature awaits him (191).

The Shevet Musar then prescribes thirty six rules taken from the book Azharoth Hakodesh which will enable man to attain this reward by traversing the way of the way of the righteous, of which the following are illustrative (193-199): They adjure man to perform all the Mitzvot with joy (193), to pray with kavanah or devotion (193), to know how to pray, that is to say, the individual should "first confess his sins both generally and specifically and say: 'I have sinned' etc. (193), to pray for his children and his children's children that he have good offspring (193), to pray alone on Rosh Hashana (194), to pray toward the Holy of Holies (194), to declare the Unity of God whenever "he gives a perutah to the poor for the perutah is like the yad of the Divine Name ויחיד (194), to daily examine his deeds (194), to guard his speech when he prays so as to speak with reverence toward God (195), to avoid slander and insult (195), to be humble and avoid pride (196, 197), to regard even a small blessing as a great one (197), to find new points in the Law (197), to do all in his power to cause his neighbor to repent (198), to fast to the best of his ability (198).

True, says the author, many of these principles will seem to be difficult to follow, but one can learn them by accustoming oneself to them so that they become second nature (200).

And in this connection, he quotes Leviticus 24:2 which reads: "Pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn eternally"; and he says: "Even as the oil cannot be improved except by pounding (the olives) so too man must pound himself and accustom himself to doing Mitzvoth in order that his soul may give forth light before the Lord"(200). I have cited this interpretation of Scripture to illustrate Elijah Hacohen's homiletics, the art of which he had mastered and of which many excellent examples are to found in the Shevet Musar.

CHAPTER XXI

Unquestionably the author felt that if all the rules and principles that he has given the reader proved of no avail in instilling the fear of God in him and in leading him to observe Mitzvoth and conducting himself in a spiritual way then certainly the fear of death could do so. Else it would be difficult to explain the many references to death and the frequent words of council given man to conjure up imaginary pictures of death in his mind. At times, the repeated emphasis placed on death and all its gruesome characteristics leave even the modern reader with a most eery feeling. Thus, Elijah Hacohen urges man to keep the day of death and the day of burial ever in mind and to imagine himself lying on the ground clothed with Tachrichin and his wife and children and friends standing by weeping and wailing over him (201). Such thoughts,

the Shevet Musar states, keep man from heeding the council of his Yetzer Harah(202).

Elijah Hacohen once again offers the reader another of his prayers, this one being of a confessional and supplicational character, to elevate the soul and to obtain forgiveness for it while praising God for His many goodly and holy attributes(202-206). It is a long prayer wherein man testifies by every organ and member of his body, by his body and soul, that God is exalted and sanctified, merciful and forgiving. Man commits his spirit to Him and humbly asks pardon for all his many iniquities, he asks that He receive him in the opening which is hewn out in His Throne of Glory. He confesses that he has followed the will of his Yetzer Harah. He begs God to shorten his days and add them to the righteous, if it be His will that he die as a wicked one, but that He should increase his life-span and bless him with children if he is destined to die as a righteous person that both he and his children might serve Him for many additional days and do His Mitzvoth and be worthy of beholding the coming of the Messiah and the restoration of the Sanctuary.

Following this lengthy prayer, the Shevet Musar concerns itself with the problem of wrath and the ways of overcoming it. The individual is advised to do the following that he might avoid becoming ill-tempered, for ill-temper keeps man from becoming humble(206): he should consider the true nature of what has been said and the character of the person who

does the speaking, whether the latter be a fool or a Sage (206), he should respect the individual who comments on his unfit ways or words for only in this way will he learn to correct his ways (206), he should be patient with and humble toward an unworthy member of a business transaction even if the latter humiliates him, for only in this way will he keep from becoming angry(206), he should think of the changes that will take place within him at death for then he will become humble(206), he should reflect upon the many Mitzvoth that he has left undone(206), he should consider the harm that results from wrath(207), he should imagine his children lying dead before him, if he be a married man, and if he be a single man, he should imagine a slain person before him and then he will cease being angry(207). Finally, one can mend one's ways by establishing new interpretations of the Law and by studying Torah and by encouraging his children to do likewise(208).

CHAPTER XXII

The world of Nature, says the Shevet Musar, vegetative, mineral, and animal, can teach man many lessons for living the goodly life, for the perfection of the soul. The chapter is full of examples taken from the realm of nature illustrating proper ethical conduct.

"Man's ways should be opposite those of the tree, that is whereas the tree in summer time clothes itself with branches

and leaves and fruits, man should strip himself of every delightful thing and of every sin and iniquity; whereas in winter time (that is to say after middle age), the tree strips itself of every fruit and leaf, man should at that ^{time} endeavor to clothe himself with the knowledge of the Torah to the best of his ability...Man should understand that when he sins in the winter of life, his punishment is two-fold for despite the fact that there may be no inclination to sin, he has incited the Yetzer Harah against him"(209).

If man would escape the power of the Yetzer Harah, "he should liken himself to one of the species of precious stones, which has the power of bringing good fortune to the individual; for the soul has a power like that of the precious stone to obtain a goodly reward for the individual if he but purify it"(210).

Man should likewise observe the ways of the animal to keep from transgression. He should obtain instruction from that species of animal which, at the time that it knows that it will die, places itself on the highway in order that man might derive benefit from its skin after death; in a similar manner, man should see to it that others derive benefit from him while he is alive and when he is dead(211). Even as the bird sings continually without thought of reward, man should sing God's praises all the more for he knows that by doing so he will be greatly rewarded in the world to come(211). Even as the fox is clever in obtaining its food and keeping alive by cunningly escaping from the trapper, man should devise ways

of doing Mitzvoth that he might also keep alive and escape the snare of the Angel of Death(212). Even as the bee converts the flower into honey, so too man can convert the decree of judgement into a sweet decree of mercy for the benefit of the entire world (212). And certainly there is no better way of helping oneself and the world than through bring new interpretations of the Law to light (Hiddushin); indeed, he should write whatever new interpretations he has discovered in a book immediately that ~~they~~ might be permanently recorded (213). From every animal, indeed, one can learn something whereby to achieve perfection: discretion from the camel, industry from the ant(214), purification after intercourse from the stork(217) etc.

In a word, says the author, Nature's lessons are innumerable. Hence there is no reason for doing evil if man will but be observant of God's creatures and creations and reflect upon that which he has seen and heard.

CHAPTER XXIII

Elijah Hacoen has in the preceding chapters stressed the importance of doing Mitzvoth as the means whereby man can cleanse his soul of its impurities and thus merit the reward that is store for the righteous in the world to come; and he has mentioned the various types of Mitzvoth in detail. The beginning of this "perek" discusses the seventeen requirements

necessary for the correct performance of these divine commandments, for which he declares he is indebted to the already muchly quoted book Sefer Hacharedim: They are as follows(218-219):(1) Man should perform every Mitzvah with kavanah, (2 and 3) man should perform every Mitzvah with reverence and love , (4) man should perform every Mitzvah with joy, (5) man should perform the whole Mitzvah and not a part of it, (6) man should perform the Mitzvah in accordance with the regulations appertaining to it, (7) man should perform the Mitzvah by himself if he be able and not by some intermediary, (8) man should perform that Mitzvah with eagerness, (9) Man should perform that Mitzvah which first comes to his attention and not leave it to do another, (10) man should not perform two Mitzvoth at the same time for then he will not be able to do either well, (11) man should show the proper respect for Mitzvoth, (12) man should not postpone doing a Mitzvah but should do it immediately, (13) man should do all in his power to perform the Mitzvah in the most beautiful and aesthetic way possible, (14) man should consider it a privilege to perform Mitzvoth, (15) man should perform the Mitzvah with great zeal (16) man should perform the Mitzvah in public and not privately for the reward is greater thereby, (17) man should pay for the privilege of doing Mitzvoth.

The author then quotes from the introduction to the Sefer Rokeach (210-224), wherein man is adjured to reverence

God and love Him, to be humble, to reprove the sinner, to be charitable, to avoid slander, mockery, and flattery, to respect the scholar, to subdue the Yetzer Harah, to spend morning and night in the Synagogue, and to ~~spend~~, to avoid ambitious desires etc. One need not mention any more of these injunctions to man for they have already been discussed in detail previously.

The chapter concludes urging man again to escape the snare of his Yetzer Harah(224,225) and acquire humility and to remember that if the soul desires to do one Mitzvah in preference to another it is because " you have discredited(or "blemished") it in a previous existence and thus God has sent you again into the world to do it perfectly and therefore you must do it perfectly in all its details and keep it ever in mind"(226). In this latter bit of council we are again presented with the Kabbalistic doctrine of the "previous existence or gilgul sheavar."

With these last words of Chapter XXIII we conclude the first volume of the Shevet Muser.

CHAPTER XXIV

This chapter has a very detailed discussion about marriage, the relation of man and woman to each other, the rules that women should observe that they might become chaste and good wives, pregnancy etc. in a word the married life and the pro-

blems connected with it. Previous references to women have been more or less of a derogatory character, wherein the author told us that they were haughty, that the husband should not reveal secrets to them etc., even though they are to be respected. Here we are given a more detailed study of woman with all her frailties as well as her good points. It might be called "The Woman's Page" of the Shevet Musar.

First of all, Elijah Hacoen states that man should marry as soon as possible but in marrying should be sure to select a goodly woman for a wife, for "indeed a woman of valor is a crown to her husband"(3). When a woman is pious and chaste she is equal in merit to her husband even though she be exempt from doing the Mitzvoth asch shehazeman geramah, the positive commands the observance of which depends upon certain times of the day or seasons of the year(3).

The Shevet Musar then lists a number of rules that a pious woman should observe in order that her husband may love her and keep from thinking about other women: she should be spotless in her attire(3), she should speak pleasantly to her husband. (4), she should keep from making too many pecuniary demands upon her husband if he be a man of poor means(4), she should comfort her husband if some misfortune has come upon him (5), she should manage her household duties efficiently and not be lazy about her household work(5), she should ever have a pleasant picture of her husband in her mind so that should he become impoverished he will still appear as a prince

in her eyes(6), she should not speak too much in the presence of her husband(6), she should not speak too praisingly of another man to her husband, lest he become suspicious of her or lest she think of murdering him for the other man(7), she should take good care of her fingernails and not let her nose drip ; and should she have some blemish she should conceal it from her husband(7), she should be kindly towards all the members of her household and to the poor(7), she should not be jealous of her husband for "jealousy is the cause of marital conflict" (8), she should visit the Mikveh at regular intervals(8).

The author then offers prayers for women to recite on certain occasions: a prayer upon giving birth to a child wherein she implores God to grant that the child be circumcized and that the circumcisional act be performed properly and that he ever serve God well(12); a prayer for midwives to recite at which time they beg help of God to enable the conceiving women to bear without misfortune and to cleanse them of their iniquities in the midst of their grievous pains (15).

Thus if women follow these rules carefully they will be a joy to their husbands by reason of their piety and chastity. And if she trains her children properly and inspire them to study Torah she will indeed have happiness in the world and in the world to come(13).

CHAPTER XXV

Observing the sad state of affairs of his own day, where the scholar is slandered and the ignorant wealthy regard themselves as Sages and are esteemed as such by the unenlightened, Elijah Hacoheh, showing that he has a caustic pen when he wants to make use of it, directs his biting message to the wealthy in the hope that by paying heed to his words they will mend their ways and become humble(17).

He does not spare words in speaking of them. He calls them "a bell within an empty vessel which rings because of the emptiness therein"(17), he caustically speaks of their "abundance of flesh", he assures them that were fleshiness the criterion of wisdom than the camel and the ox would be exceedingly wise(17). He pleads with the wealthy to see the vast difference, between the scholar, the dnacham, and himself, "a difference like that between day and night"(18). He cautions the reader to beware of judging the value of a man by his riches, rather man, he says, should "magnify the glory of the Sages and hearken to their words which give life to those who hear them both in this world and in the world to come; for what profit is it to the individual to flatter and honor the possessor of wealth more than the possessor of wisdom? For though the Sage one obtains perfection in this world and the world to come, whereas one wastes one's time with the rich man"(18). Such rich people, lacking in reverence for God ,

are truly wicked. Man however can learn a lesson from the wicked: Whatever the wicked do, one should do the opposite (19). And by following this general rule, man will do that which is pleasing in the sight of God for then he will be doing His Mitzvoth with joy and willingness and thus obtain the blessed pleasures of the future reward in the world to come(20).

The pleasures of the world to come are real and assured to the righteous and because they are so glorious man should keep the picture of it constantly in mind that he might perform Mitzvoth with joy(21). The author then gives us a detailed picture of Gan Eden, the Garden of Eden(21,22), to which the writer of this essay has referred in Chapter II of this essay, even as he has done with respect to the nether-world, Gehennah(VIII:8): "There are gates of chalcedony in the Garden of Eden and over them are six hundred thousand angels and the countenance of each of them shines as brilliantly as the radiance of the firmament"(21). When the righteous arrive there, the angels strip them of their worldly robes and cloak them "with garments of the clouds of glory"(21). Then they escort them into chambers ornamented with gold and precious stones within each of which there is a table studded with jewels(21). The angels that stand by the righteous tell them to eat of the honey and to drink of the wine as their reward for having busied themselves with Torah while

on earth (21). The righteous are made young again and rejoice with the joy of youth and later they are made old and rejoice with the joy of old men(21,22). Within the Garden of Eden there are eight hundred thousand trees of every manner of species and in the middle of them is the Tree of Life upon which there are hundreds of thousands of species of fruits of all tastes and colors: above it the seven clouds of glory and the four winds blow over it and under it sit the scholars explaining the Torah(22) etc. Indeed, it is a most lovely picture to conjure up in one's mind, a strong contrast to the tortures of Gehennah.

But as has been said before, only those who live the good life and "afflict themselves in this world" attain these pleasures of the life to come(23).

CHAPTER XXVI

Citing materials culled from many sources, among them the Avkath Rochel, the Nishmath Hayim of Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel, the Sefer Hacharedim, Hovoth Halevavoth, the Kabbalists, and Scriptures, Elijah Hachohen amplifies his discussion of the nature of Gehennah which was described in Chapter VIII. There is also some further explanation of the Garden of Eden incorporated in the chapter. All this, in order that man might become humble and repent unto God and thus inherit a portion in the world to come (23,24).

Thus, we learn that the individual is punished in Gehennah in proportion to the gravity of his sins- the righteous, that is to say those who have sinned but two or ³three times, merely need to be washed in Gehennah and they quickly pass through it(25). However, those who are half good and half wicked are cleansed and scoured and are delayed a while in Gehennah, whereas those who are very wicked must be purified by fire(25). Those who have damaged their souls for whom the fire of Gehennah is not a sufficient cleansing agent are destroyed after having received their punishment(26).

And interesting concept, developed in this chapter with respect to the punishments of Gehennah, is that of the individual creating clean and unclean bodies by his deeds in this world. We are told that " even as man creates a heavenly body through the performance of Mitzvoth into which the soul enters after its separation from its earthly body, so too man creates an unclean body by his sins into which the soul of the wicked enters after death and both of them are punished for their evil deeds. Indeed, the unclean body is like the body that lies in the grave and when trouble befalls the unclean body it likewise befalls the body of the wicked that lies buried in the grave"(26). When the unclean body is consumed after having been properly punished the soul then ascends to heaven and is washed in the fictitious river N'har Dinur or Fire-River and enters the body which the individual may have created through the performance of Mitzvoth(26).

One enters Gehennah, the fire of which is sixty times as intense as that of earthly fire(27), through one of three entrances, through the sea, through the wilderness, or through inhabitable land, the individual entering one or the other of these passages in accordance with the nature of his iniquities(27).

But there are two kinds of Gehennah, Gehinnom shel matah, the earthly Gehennah, and the Gehinnom shel maalah, the heavenly Gehennah, the latter being the N'har¹¹ Dinur to which referenced has been made above. "And even as there is an earthly Gehennah, so too there is an earthly Garden of Eden(Gan Eden lematah) in a hidden place in the world"(28). In the earthly Garden of Eden, the soul enjoys all manner of pleasure and here life enters the body; here, too, "the righteous feed upon spiritual foods, the like of which the mind cannot comprehend. And this food is the food of exalted concepts, as for example, discernment of the Unity of God and understanding of the secrets of the Torah"(28). The soul that enters the heavenly Garden of Eden(Gan Eden shel maalah) has first been purified in the earthly Garden of Eden(29).

Thus, declares the Shevet Musar, since man is aware of the two abodes before him, the Garden of Eden and Gehennah, and the joys and the hardships of these respective places, he should choose life and not death- the choice being within his power(30).

CHAPTER XXVII

This chapter attempts to analyze the reasons for sin and why man is kept from repenting. Moreover, it offers ways of counteracting the destroying influence of the Yetzer Harah, while studying Torah and doing Mitzvoth, and also presents original prayers of the author to annul certain iniquities that he may have committed. The kakasuv method of proof is used throughout.

Causes for sin: According to Elijah Hacohen they are three: (1) a light attitude toward sin(31), (2) an ego-centric feeling of "being wise in one's own eyes"(31), (3) a passionate desire for the pleasures of the world(31). Again we hear the refrain: "Repent today and not tomorrow in order that you may have a portion in the world to come"(32).

However, there are certain reasons that keep man from repenting and about which he should ever be on his guard to avoid: (1) the feeling that though one repents one will not regain one's former exalted state prior to sinning; but this is answered by the prophet when he said "Shuvah Yisrael", meaning "return and merit the name Israel that was your b^efore sinning"(32,33), (2) the feeling "that altho^ugh one may merit the world to come, one will not merit the exalted station which is accorded the righteous(33), (3) that one is unable to endure fasting and affliction(33), (4) that one may be too embarrassed to ask a Sage the way of repentance(33), (5) the fear

that one will be unable to counterbalance his sins with an equal number of good deeds(33),(6) that one must offer sacrifices to negate the evil of one's sins(33). All these ideas and feelings are, says the author^{are} erroneous and truly, what has been said in previous chapters would thoroughly answer these misconceptions.

That one may keep the Yetzer Harah from enticing man while studying Torah, the author suggests that man select an unpretentious room, where the windows are not open to the beauties of nature ; that he may be free of any distractions(35).

To keep the Yetzer Harah from causing one not to do Mitzvot, man should do the Mitzvah immediately and without thinking about it for "if you delay it but a moment by thinking about it, you are providing the Yetzer Harah with an opportunity to confuse you with ideas and advise you not to perform it"(37); he should arise in the morning without thinking about rising for to do otherwise will enable the Yetzer Harah to council man to continue sleeping(37)etc. In this way, man will be able to overcome the evil inclination within him.

The chapter concludes with several prayers, among them being a Modaah or declaration prayer in which the penitent reaffirms his faith in God and in the cardinal principles of Judaism(41,42), and a prayer which the baal kerí or one who has had a nocturnal emission should recite upon awaken-

ing and discovering his transgression (45).

CHAPTER XXVIII

Since it is the theory of the author, expressed in this chapter and in previous chapters (cf. e.g. XXVII:38) that repetition through variation is an effective technique for instruction (46), he divides the book of Rabbi Solomon, Sefer Hatapuach into two chapters (XXVIII and XXIX) and quotes directly from it, even though the ideas expressed in the book have already for the most part been mentioned by the Shevet Musar.

Briefly, the Sefer Hatapuach contains the following ethical concepts: Man, be he rich or poor, should proclaim the Unity of God immediately upon arising in the morning (46). He should at all times speak of God's greatness and glory (46). When he is praying, his entire thoughts should be only upon Him alone and he should be assured that God will hear his requests (46). When man has finished praying, he should go about his daily tasks and remember that "God is besides him in all that he performs" (46). Man must rid himself of envy, pride, and the desire to slander and mock (47), for the punishment for such sins will be a grievous one (48). Indeed, such a sinner will be hated by the members of his own household (48), he will be "cast into the pit and will be forgotten and no one will know the whereabouts of his grave, his ~~omitings~~ will be beyond the power of healing, worms will

crawl up and down him, he will tremble in the thick darkness and deep places..."(48). Whereas the reward of the righteous will be such that they will dwell by the side of the Divine Presence and their names will be recorded in the Book of the Righteous(48). Man should devise every means possible to do Mitzvoth and to do God's will(48). If he be wealthy, he should reflect that God has bestowed these riches upon him in order that he might do goodly acts of a charity with them(48). For "charity blesses his soul with life"(48). Moreover, man should ever remember, says the Sefer Hatapuach, that "truth and faith and honesty and uprightness are more to be cherished than gold and they are more desirable than fine gold. They should never leave the House of Israel. They were given to Israel as an inheritance from one generation to the next, indeed, they identify the individual as a Jew..."(49). God judges every man in accordance with his deeds(49). Further, man must seek the way of peace in his relations to others for the reward of a peaceful nature after death is a great one(50). Man should be honest in dealing with his neighbors and never steal from them, for were he to rob his fellow or do injury to his property it would be as if he were to rob God(51).

The chapter, page after page, is a constant repetition of what Elijah Hacoen has said and hence the writer of this essay has mentioned only the basic ideas incorporated in the Sefer Hatapuach.

As the writer of this essay has stated in the introduction to the summary of Chapter XXVIII, Elijah Hacoheh devoted this chapter to a continuation of the message of the Sefer Hatapuach.

And the Sefer Hatapuach continuing with its injunctions to man speaks directly to the sinner and reproaches him for being more concerned with physical pleasures than with the pleasures and joys of the spirit(55). He reproves him for not having shown the proper respect for God, for having robbed and busied himself with idolatrous things(53). He counsels the transgressor to forsake the evil of his ways and discern that evil can result only in harming him(54). Keep far from the Yetzer Harah , he warns, and rebuke Satan severely for enticing you, despite the fact that he is a powerful contender and every ready to overwhelm you (56).

After having urged man to follow these instructions and to mend his ways, the author of the Sefer Hatapuach declares¹ that man should speak to his soul in the following manner that he might rid it of its filth: "Bless the Lord, God, oh my soul and forget not all His benefits. Remember that He has brought you forth from a holy place and that He created you for a purpose, that He set before you life and goodness and death and evil, yea also light and darkness. Choose the day, purify yourself and shine and cleanse yourself immediately. Change your garments and cast off your vain desires, remove your drunkenness from yourself, let not the Yetzer Harah of your plagued body entice you. Forsake it before it forsakes you, put it to shame before it puts you to shame..."(56). The

author troubles himself to council man against the Yetzer Ha-Harah in order that hemight acquire the goodly portion in the world to come(58).

Repeating again and again his warning to man to do Mitzvoth and act rightly, he advises the sinner not to be concerned about the so-called prosperity of the wicked: "Even if you know that you are wholly righteous, whereas your neighbor who prospers is wholly wicked, do not regard this circumstance evilly, [^]but on the contrary consider that it is possible that your neighbor might have done some Mitzvah and as a result God prospers him by rewarding him in this world in order to keep him from the world to come because of his sins"(59).

The teachings of the Sefer Hatapuach conclude with the statement that man provide provisions for the ways to the world to come, repent of apostacy, cleanse himself of cruelty, guard his tongue, forgive him who has done evil to him, and abstain from hate and be holy.

While it is our purpose to discuss the Shevet Musar in all its aspects, therefore it might not be amiss to say a few words about the Sefer Hatapuach. There is no question that it formed a strong basis for the philosophy and teachings of the author of the Shevet Musar. The language, the style, the content are so similar to that of the Shevet Musar that one almost feels that is an integral part of the book. Both books have a close kinship to the spirit of the Book of Proverbs; however, the Sefer Hatapuach resembles the latter more.

For example, such statements as "Speech is silver and silence is golden(61), "better is a fool who is silent than a Sage who speaks overmuch(61), " a secret is your prisoner but if you reveal it you will be its prisoner"-such statements as these are characteristic of the Sefer Hatapuach.

CHAPTER XXX

This chapter is devoted wholly to a discussion of the Mitzvoth and the religio-ethical obligations incumbent upon man to fulfill them.

The author begins the chapter with an analysis of the reasons why man may not be able to fulfill all the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth and they are four in number: (1) ~~There~~ are certain commands which can be executed by certain people alone. For example, there are certain commands which the priests or Levites or Israelites can only perform (62). (2) Unless one has a son he cannot fulfill the Mitzvah of the berith milah (62), (3) Certain Mitzvoth require the existence of the Temple or that one live in Palestine in order that one can perform them(62). However, while man may not be able to perform all of the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth, he should do as many of them as he is physically and spiritually and mentally able

to do(63). At any rate, they will be performed by all Israel together, by the priests, the Levites, and the Israelites (62). Furthermore, when one member of the House of Israel performs a Mitzvah it is as if all Israel has done it, even as when one Israelite sins all Israel suffers. "All Israel is one in body and soul"(63).

If the individual is unable to perform the Mitzvoth, he should at least think of the desirability of doing them and he will be rewarded for the good intention that he has shown. "Therefore, when man says to himself: 'If I were a king or a priest or a Levite, I would be able to fulfill the Mitzvoth which they are dutybound to perform as well as the other Mitzvoth of Yibbum and Chalitzah'-it is accounted unto him as if he had fulfilled them"(64).

The author, in illustrating the necessity of performing the Mitzvoth, carries the analogy of a business partnership to the partnership of God and man to some length (shutfuth im Hakedosh Baruch Hu). In this regard he relates the following parable: "A certain man went into partnership with a rich man. The rich man put six hundred and thirteen golden darics into the business, whereas the other put one hundred silver zuzim into it. But even though the latter is called a partner he is actually not so since the shares are not equal. Moreover, the profits which will accrue to the latter will be small in accordance with the amount that he put into the fund; but if he should add more to the fund the closer will he approach

to becoming a partner"(65). In a similar way, says the Shevet Musar, God fullfills the six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth and puts it into the fund. When man performs one Mitzvah he becomes a partner with God. The shares are unequal and hence it is only when man fullfills all these Mitzvoth that he becomes a true partner of God. Man should strive to become equal to God in deeds and derive a greater reward thereby(65). I have cited this parable in full not only for the ideas expressed in connection with the subject of this chapter but also to illustrate Elijah Hacoheh's characteristic use of the mashal to give instruction.

Hence as a partner of God in order that he might make his share therein equal to that of God's it is his duty to lead the goodly life. He should observe the Mitzvah of the berith milah(66) for in fullfilling this command "it is as if he had fullfilled all six hundred and thirteen Mitzvoth". He should be exceedingly charitable and generous, for when God makes him His ambassador, he is honored in heaven and on the earth, for the heavenly angels will protect and honor him (66). Indeed, "so important is charity that man may defile himself to bury the dead who are without relatives so that that they may not be eaten by the beasts of the field and the fowl of the heaven"(68). Therefore, the chapter says to man: Become a true partner of God and reap the great profits of that spiritual partnership.

CHAPTER XXXI

The chapter is really to be divided into two parts:

(1) ways of avoiding misfortune and mishap and (2) ways of improving the body and the soul that man's prayer be found acceptable in the sight of God. The discussion of these two subjects is full of superstition and folk-lore, which to the unchallenging Mediaeval mind of the author are taken as truth itself.

(1) Ways of avoiding misfortune: If the individual is about to embark on a long journey, he must first recite certain Biblical formulae and adhere to certain established customs. He should recite certain Biblical verses; e.g. "he should recite the Biblical portions dealing with the binding up of Isaac after which he should say: 'Even as the kindly Abraham strongly bound his son Isaac so may God bind up all my enemies and adversaries both for my sake and for the sake of all Israel' (70). After this recitation, he should recite Exodus 11:8 and then offer a prayer asking for a safe journey and then make a circle about him with his staff or with his hand and should pray again that the Lord help and save him from every danger and adversary" (70).

There are certain duties imposed upon those who escort the one who is to make a journey which illustrate the superstitious Mediaeval mind referred to above: "the laws of escort

require that he who escorts another should escort him outside the gates of the city or at least four cubits. Before he who does the escorting returns to his home, he should say: Sadeh. He should face in all directions and say Sadeh a second time. He should not turn around to look at him who has departed...."(71). If one would be free of all dangers and ill-fortune, he should also recite Psalm 4:1 at sunrise(73).

(2) Ways of improving the body and the soul: Man should wear Talith and put on Tefillin and recite the proper prayers before and after these practices(73), he should recite the Viddui or confession daily (73). When he "recites the vehu rachum on Mondays and Thursdays, he should do so with his feet close together as during the Shemone esreh; when one recites the erech apayim on Mondays and Thursdays, one should do so in a standing position"(73). When man goes up to the Ark or kisses the Torah or lifts it up, he should recite the proper prayers for these acts(74,75). There are certain Biblical verses which one can say after eating before, the birkath hamazon(Psalms 78:38,94;12 et al). Indeed, that man might improve his body and soul there are certain prayers that must be recited. Every act, therefore, in the truly ethical life is a sanctified one. Godliness means sanctified daily conduct and religious observance. Being free of misfortune means that one has lived in accordance with religious ordinances and practice. Hence Elijah Hacoen

states that when "man is healthy and free of all the troubles and great misfortunes of the day, then he is prepared to attain perfection of soul wherewith he acquires everlasting life"(79).

CHAPTER XXXII

The author again concerns himself with the subject of Reward and Punishment. He seeks to prove his oft-repeated contention that the righteous who perform Mitzvoth enjoy a good portion of "sweetness and pleasure" and the wicked one of "grief and worry"(79) through the words of Scripture employing his favorite method of deriving the true meanings of these words through "implication" or remez. The blessings and curses accorded the righteous and wicked respectively have been previously mentioned, and thus the importance of the chapter in the opinion of the writer of this essay is the Biblical exegetical treatment of the parashiyoth bechukothai and ki savo.

The blessing of the righteous(79-81): "Thus God hinted to man(in the parasha bechukothai) that when he will observe His commandments he will merit a reward of prosperity in this world, that when he is buried his body will be free of decay and worms, that he will die by a kiss and not through the Angel of Death, that the adversaries (on the Day of Judgement)

will be powerless against him, that he will merit eating Leviathan and wine preserved in its grapes from the six days of Creation, that He will set him in His Sanctuary in the Garden of Eden, that He will dwell with him and he shall not be afraid, that he will enjoy the splendor of the Divine Presence and be unharmed"(81). Indeed, the righteous(as stated in the parasha ki savoh) will overpower their earthly enemies (81), they shall be blessed both in the city and in the field (81), they shall enjoy great prosperity(82), whatsoever they put their hands to shall be blessed (82), they shall be equal to God in doing Mitzvoth if they lead the goodly life(82), they will prevail over the Evil Eye(82).

The punishments of the wicked: The wicked who heed the council of their Yetzer Harah will be blotted out of the Book of Life(83), "their flesh will become ashen with disease and fever-ridden and consumed by fire"(83), their cattle will be consumed by wild beasts(83), their cities and sanctuaries will be destroyed(84), the curses mentioned in the Book of Deuteronomy will be laid upon them and fulfilled(84), their souls will be punished doubly after death(85).

Truly, says the author, the blessings of the righteous are great when they perform the daily commandments in accordance with the detailed requirements; when they recite the hamotzi(85), when they adorn the head of the bride to make her lovely in the eyes of the groom(86), when they wear Tzitzith and place the Mezuzah upon the doors of their homes

(86), when their gold and silver is used for charitable purposes (87)etc.

Thus says the Shevet Musar, man's countenance should be covered with shame when he compares the blessings that he could enjoy with the curses that he will inevitably suffer if he does evil. There should then be only one course open to him: Chose life and not death.

CHAPTER XXXIII

The Shevet Musar devotes this very brief chapter(90-93) to the words of the book Kol Negidim by Rabbi Abraham Galanti from which he quotes directly. This is further evidence of the belief of the author that the effectiveness of teaching depends upon repetition through variation, that is to say, varying one's own teachings with those of another.

Rabbi Abraham Galanti declares in essence that through the sins of man, much harm is wrought not only to himself but to others, yea his whole people Israel. "The arrogance which man displays by sinning causes him much suffering...For he shall be chastized and his little children shall die whom he loves so dearly...Woe to him who compels himself and others to be guilty of sin. Indeed, because of a sinful generation the walls of the Temple and the altar were destroyed, the holy vessels and cherubim and the Ark were carried off, the blood of the pious ones was shed, harsh decrees were enacted and the

righteous taken captive"(90).

Because of the sins of man, the living do suffer, for the rivers dry up and thus there is neither grass nor herbs for man or beast(91). Through iniquity, man weakens the power of the angels, the hayoth, and the heavenly creatures called ratzim; for it their task to protect Israel and do good unto it, but when Israel sins their power is destroyed and as a consequence they are kept from doing good(91,92). Since man can enjoy all that is good and pleasant, for he has "the power of free will" to do so, therefore, why, the author asks should he do evil. "God has not made you (man) as one of the heavenly host, as a star or an angel but rather He created you with the power of free will, so that you might become more exalted and more powerful than they and that you might be rewarded for your goodly deeds, that your compartment might be more inward than that of the ministering angels"(92,93). But if man turns from the path of righteousness, he is no more than an animal, for man is only on a higher plane than the beast when his soul is pure. This chapter closes with an appeal to man to lift himself above the brute level, an endeavor that is within his power to accomplish..

CHAPTER XXXIV

This chapter is a "Manual of Rules for Qazanim". It goes into great detail in discussing the nature of the religious

function of chazanuth. It states what the chazanim may and may not do, it berates those who violate their office with lashing words. And inspeaking about this sacred duty, we are given many indications of the conditions that existed in the Synagogue during the Mediaeval Ages as well as of the character of the men who presided there in this capacity. And thus from an historical point of view, Chapter XXXIV is an excellent source for an understanding of Jewish Synagogual life of those times. Much of the council that is given the chazanim is directly applicable to the Synagogue and the Rabbinate and laity of today.

Elijah Hacoheh tells us that good family lineage is not a necessary requirement for become a chazan. One's family may even happen to be unrighteous but this circumstance can still not disqualify the applicant so long as he himself is righteous; however "the prayer of one who is descended from a righteous family is more pleasing than the prayer of a righteous man who is descended from an unrighteous family" (94).

Before taking office the individual should recite a prayer which the author suggests wherein the former implores God to grant him the power and strength and character to serve the congregation well that his prayers might be found acceptable(101,102).

The following are illustative of the rules that the chazan must observe in the performance of his sacred office:

he should (1) pray slowly and with understanding and with devotion(94), (2) not prolong the chanting of the Amen longer than is necessary, (3) realize that he ^{is} like a prophet (the author plays on the word chazan declaring that it is an abbreviation of the word chozeh, i.e. he reads chazan as /^{ch}) for like a prophet he informs them whether or not their prayers have been found acceptable "for if his words run fluently their prayer is acceptable but if they do not run so it is a sign that it is unacceptable and hence they must repent"(95), (4) be indulgent and unconcerned about financial matters and quick to forgive, (5) pray in behalf of the members of the congregation regardless of their economic status, a rule, the author observes, that is not always heeded by the chazanim of his own time for they are often given to praying more beautifully for the rich than for the poor(96), (5) arouse the disturbing elements in the congregation who either converse or fall asleep to behaving in a religious manner (97), not to pray at too great length if he is cognizant that his voice is unpleasant to the ear(98), (6) avoid pride in his gift of voice and "should neither read Torah to impress the people with his skillful chanting nor with the sweetness of his reading, but should rather chant for the honor of God (98), (7) select those piyyutim to be chanted on the festivals and Holy Days that will instill fear of God into the congregation; moreover, these piyyutim should be chanted in a reverent way, else the members of the congregation will be

lead into frivolity and gaily(98), (8) remember that his prayer in behalf of the congregation is the means whereby they shall be free of misfortune and shall obtain forgiveness, that his prayer in behalf of the congregation is a substitute for the sacrifices offered in times of old and that as a consequence he occupies the position formerly held by the priest in the days of the Temple(102).

CHAPTER XXXV

Elijah Hacoen introduces a new concept into his ethical teachings, that of the halevush haelyon, "the heavenly garment" (of the soul). For the understanding of this concept, he is indebted principally to the Mikrah Kodesh of Rabbi Obadiah of Bertinoro, to the Zohar, the Sages and Scripture. Any original contribution to the explanation of this idea on the part of the author lies in his clever proofs of the concept through exegetical interpretation of many verses of Scripture, the art of which we have explained previously as one in which Elijah Hacoen was most adept.

We are told that ^{when} ~~man~~ performs Mitzvoth, a heavenly garment is woven for his soul, that "when the soul leaves the world naked of its corporeal garment it hovers about until it discerns its nudity; then it clothes itself with this lighted garment which it has fashioned in this world through the study of Torah and the fulfillment of Mitzvoth.

Clothed in this spiritual garment the righteous are made ambassadors of God to carry out His messages to man even as the ministering angels (103,106). Thus we read: "At the time that God desires to send a message to man through the souls of the righteous, He clothes them with an ethereal garment like unto the form of the body. After they have performed their mission they strip it from off themselves and remain as naked as before"(104).

The world derives great benefit from these spiritual garments(105) and "without this garment the soul cannot pray and pour forth abundance upon the world"(105).

Interestingly, the soul cannot depart from its fleshly body until it clothes itself with this ethereal body. Moreover not only must the individual have performed Mitzvoth to merit this garment, but he must have fulfilled the Mitzvoth of periah and reviah, for "he who has a partner in marriage is perfect in heaven and earth and a garment is prepared for him as is proper;but if he be unmarried, his days are imperfect on earth, for he has not fulfilled the Mitzvoth of periah and reviah and as a consequence he is deprived of a heavenly garment"(105,107).

Elijah Hacohen states, however, that there is a difference of opinion as to the number of garments that the soul has with which to carry out the message of God to the world, that there are some who maintain that the soul has but one such garment but the Zohar and Rashbi maintain that there are three. The

Zohar declares that there is one garment for the ruach which it wears in the terrestrial Garden of Ed en, a second garment which is the most precious of all for the neshamah or inner soul "when it is among the bundle of the living in the circle of the King", and there is a third or outer garment for the vital soul or nefesh and which appears and disappears(108).

Since these spiritual garments depend upon the fulfillment of Mitzvoth , the more Mitzvoth one performs in this world the more brilliantly it will shine(109).

As illustrating Elijah ["]acohen's Biblical exegesis to prove the existence of the heavenly garment that is woven by the Mitzvoth which one performs, we might cite the following as an example; wherein he comments on the Biblical verse (Isaiah 59:17): וְהָיָה כְּבִדָּה לְבָשׁוֹתָּ . He writes:

"Of the righteousness which one performs in this world, a heavenly garment is wrought. One wears this righteousness as a coat of mail- that is to say, even as a coat of mail has many holes in it, so too the garment is not perfect, for but one righteous act was performed(וְהָיָה being singular in the Biblical verse) and as a result the garment is made in accordance with this measure; but when our righteous acts are manifold, then the heavenly garment becomes an ornamented garment that is wholly perfect"(111).

CHAPTER XXXVI

After quoting from the Sefer Hakaneh which speaks of the

necessity of eating clean or kosher meats, "flesh which has a sign or seal upon it"(116), the author directs his attention to the main subject of the chapter, shechitah or ritual slaughtering and the shochet or ritual slaughterer. He lays down certain rules that the shochet must follow, even as he prescribed certain requirements and duties for the chasan. We shall now speak of these rules which the shochet must observe.

The ritual slaughterer must be especially careful to perform this rite correctly and efficiently, for it is possible, says the Shevet Musar that there may be a transmigrated soul within it(gilgul lanefesh); for when the animal is slaughtered properly it can return to the level of man again and the holy spark (nitzutz shel kedushah) may also be made fit(117). Great emphasis is laid upon the need for respecting the soul within the animal (cf.120ff).

The shochet must examine his knife carefully to see that it is fit for slaughtering(118). He must not converse with standersby while examining it(119). He who slaughters with a defective knife will surely die a sudden death (119). Further, as respects the slaughtering knife, he is warned not to put it near his pillow at night for being accustomed to kill with it during the day, he might out of force of habit kill him or her who lies near him(121).

Further, he must not pray with his slaughtering garments upon him, lest he appear despicable not only to others in the congregation but also to his own wife (122).

However "greatly exalted is the shochet who fears God and turns aside from sin, who enables Israel to eat pure food, which purifies the soul and enables it to rejoice on Sabbaths and Holy Days-indeed, the merit of the community depends upon him, but if he should do otherwise the sin of the community will rest upon him"(123). Thus the responsibility of the shochet is a great one and hence he must observe these rules most carefully and religiously.

The above is, in short, the teaching of the Shevet Musar with respect to the subject of shechitah.

CHAPTER XXXVII

In a day when nations are tearing at each other's throats, when the fear of war is present in the minds and hearts of every man woman and child, when the horrible memories of the "Great War" are still fresh in the minds of millions of people everywhere, the blessings of peace seem far removed from reality and many are those who even despair of it entirely. Yet Judaism, like all other enlightened religions of all ages has ever looked forward to the time when reason will rule the mind and peace the day, when brotherhood and justice will prevail everywhere. Judaism has not and never will lose this faith. The importance of this ideal in Judaism is certainly evident to the reader of this chapter. Reading the references to the blessings of peace from the Holy Bible, from the Sages of the Talmud,

the Zohar, and the Rabbinic sources of the author's own day, we are convinced of Judaism's sincere love of peace and the central place that it has always played in the religious philosophy of the Jew. The chapter is a veritable storehouse of quotations on the subject of peace. It is filled with all manner of homiletical interpretations and Biblical exegesis on the word shalom. It is the best Jewish collection of peace sayings that the writer of this essay has come upon and to which he is greatly indebted for much valuable homiletical material. Since the chapter is one long series of quotations, perhaps all that one can do in a summary is to select some of the choice sayings and ideas and expressions for the benefit of the reader.

The theme of the "perek" is best expressed in the words of the Psalmist: "Seek peace and pursue it" (Ps. 34:15). "No vessel contains blessing but peace", says the Sage Rabbi Simon ben Halaftah (126). Peace is something great for it is made the equivalent of all things; thus we say: "He maketh peace and createth all things" (126). Peace is something real for it is given as a reward for the observance of the Torah and its Mitzvoth; thus Scripture says: "And I will give peace in the land" (Lev. 26:6) (127). Peace is something great for the heavenly angels are in need of peace, even as Scripture says: (Job: 25:2): "He makes peace in His High Places" (126). "Seek peace and pursue it" are the words of the psalmist to whom reference has already been made. Indeed, says Eli-

jah Hacoheh, "seek to establish it with your friend and pursue it in other places; seek it with your body and pursue it with your wealth; seek it for yourself and pursue it for others; seek it today and pursue it tomorrow; seek it by day and pursue it by night; seek it when you are wealthy and pursue it when you are poor; seek it in joy and pursue it in grief..."(127). Consider, says the Shevet Musar, how great is peace for all goodly attributes are included in it(128). When the individual loves peace he rids himself of all envy, desire, and ambition for "since he loves peace with all the desire of his soul, he is neither envious of that which is not his nor does he pursue ambitiously after prestige for these are the cause of the cessation of peace and as consequence they bring about strife"(129).

The author plays on the word shalom at great length deriving clever meanings and interpretations from it. For example, he says: "Consider that the letters of the word ^pi^se form the word ^pi^se, namely, 'recompense' (for the good deeds that have been done) for God rewards man because of peace"(129).

Peace brings life and strife death, Truly, when Korah and his congregation were at peace with Moses, our Master, they kept alive but when they contended with him they died(130).

Peace is not something to be merely exalted it must be practiced daily in one's relations with one's fellow man. And certainly a most excellent way of showing one's love of peace, says the Shevet Musar, is to greet one's neighbor with it. He quotes the Sages who said: "He who is accustomed to greet his

neighbor with peace and has failed to do so one day has sinned"(133). One could go on page after page citing the innumerable references to the subject of peace. The reader of this essay would derive much profit by reading the chapter itself.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

There is nothing that is particularly new in this chapter. The basic ideas are contained elsewhere in the Shevet Musar, namely, of the need for the avoidance of sin and the Yetzer Harah, and the duty of doing Mitzvoth as the means of attaining bodily and spiritual perfection. The seven levels of repentance based on material gleaned from the book Menorath Hamaor systemizes thoughts previously developed.

Again, the author cautions the individual who would keep from sinning to examine the ways of the animals both the clean and the unclean, to observe how they crawl upon all fours and wallow in the filth and the slime, for in this way, he says, man will remember the sad state that may possibly befall him were his soul to inhabit the body of the animal through the process of transmigration(137). He should also look upon one man smiting another and then reflect whether or not his soul would be able to endure the punishments that are meted out to it for sinning (138).

If man has sinned, he should repent. For the way of re-

penitence is a pleasant way free of all stumbling-blocks, it is the way which was created at the founding of the world, "it is the treasured way whereon man may become a new being, even an old man becomes as young as a new born child, it is a way whereon sweetness and abundance are obtained in a moment, for when one repents one's iniquities become merits in a moment"(138). Repent, O man, and do Mitavoth and turn aside from the ways of the Yetzer Harah, says the Shevet Musar, for then the world will enjoy abundance because of your righteous acts(139).

After urging man to pursue the goodly way and repent (139-142), the author discusses the seven levels of repentance (143) mentioned above. They are as follows: the first level is the highest level of all and this refers to repentance that is made immediately upon the commission of sin. The second level refers to one who has sinned many days and years but has seen the perversity of his ways and repents in his youth. The third level also refers to the repentance which one makes in one's youth but because of the shame which his sins have brought upon him. The fourth level has reference to one who repents because of the fear of punishment or because of reproof. The fifth level refers to one who repents after having suffered grievously. And the sixth level is the lowest level of repentance and refers to the repentance which the individual makes because of the realization that the day of death is approaching but whose whole life has been spent in evil.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Elijah Hacohen devotes this chapter to the holy names (cf. also XLI:165) given to the righteous who do Mitsvoth and to an explanation of each based on Scriptural and Rabbinic proof and interpretation. He cites these various names to make known to the reader the "glorious position of the righteous" that he might also become humble and goodly.

The righteous man is called "sweet light" for he busies himself with the Torah which is called light(144). He is called "builder of the world" for he who busies himself with Torah establishes the world and "builds worlds every day by deeds"(145). He is called "greatness" because he bestows greatness upon others. Indeed, when one is near to a righteous person, he too learns to do goodly deeds(145). He is called "judge" because God makes the righteous as judge over all the earth(145). He is called "clear insight" because of his knowledge of the secrets of the Torah(145). He is called "glory and splendor" because he is the glory and the splendor of the world. Indeed, says the Shevet Musar, "when a righteous man is in a city it is glorious and beautiful but when he departs from the city the glory and beauty depart from it also (145,146). He is called "old age" because by reason of his great wisdom he knows all that has taken place from the day of Creation to his own day, as if here a zaken(146). He is "wisdom because all the secrets are revealed by God to him(146). He is called "purity" because he teaches people the

difference between the clean and unclean things on earth and hence "he is the purity which purifies others"(146). He is called "uprightness" for he teaches man to be upright and to correct the erring ways of man with wonderful proofs (146). He is called "honor" for "the righteous man makes a gift of his honor, for he honors every man" and as the Sages have said: "He who honors others is himself honored" (147). He is called "soldier" for he battles every day and night in the war of the Torah and hence it is that they are also called "shieldbearers"(147). He is called "sanctuary" because by reason of his righteousness he makes atonement for the sins of Israel and hence corresponds to the atonement sacrifices offered up in the days of the Temple (147). He is called "one who compels the angels" for by reason of his holy names he is able to force the angels in heaven to do his will(147). He is called "one who annuls decrees" for by his prayers he can annul the harsh decrees placed upon Israel(147). He is called "one who converts decrees" for "should God decree death unto a man, he can convert this decree of death to one of life"(147). He is called "one who preserves the world" for the world exists by reason of three things: Torah, service and charity, and the righteous man fulfills each of these(147). He is called "one who restores life and takes it away" and such power is proven by the examples of Rabbi Hiyya, who restored the life of his servant Antigonus and others(148). He is called "one who admonishes" for he admonishes the wicked when they sin and they

pay heed to him out of respect(148). He is called a "ruler" even as Scripture says: "The righteous man ruleth in the fear of God." Moreover, he is called "ruler" because he prevails over his Yetzer Harah and does not give ear to it(148). He is called "one who crowns the Torah" for by his performance of Mitsvot he makes the Torah beloved in the hearts of others and hence he "crowns the Torah". He is called "one who makes the angels to rejoice" for as the Sages have said: "God desired to remove Jerobaam from the world but the angels did not permit him to do so because they rejoiced in his Torah"(148). He is called "one who saves lives" for by his righteousness he prevents the plague and other destructive forces from coming upon the world(148). Indeed, the righteous man is called by many names. Due to the necessary brevity of this summary we shall mention the additional names without the above comments. He is called "one who stirs up the slumbering", "one who purifies the unclean", "one who guides the penitent", "a pure candlestick", "one who causes abundance", "one who closes the door to Divine visitation", "a scroll of the Law", "scribe", "prop of the world", "help in time of adversity", "redeemer of souls", "charity", "holiness", "Mikveh", "willing observance", "a guard", "perfection", and "God" (148-151).

However, the wicked are given names but they are as disgraceful as their actions: they are called "destroyers", "murderers", "abominations" et al(151).

Man, concludes the Shevet Musar, has the choice before

him of choosing either the names of the wicked or those of the holy and the righteous. But the former means death, the latter blessing and life and honor.

CHAPTER XL

The purpose of this chapter is clearly set forth by the words of the author himself: "I shall discuss diverse subjects and include therein many matters which will be of help to body and soul, particularly that which will enable the dead to redeem their souls from the punishments of Gehennah"(152). The source material for this discussion include chiefly the Yesh Nocholim, the Sefer Hacharedim, the Zohar, the Rokeach, the words of the Sages Rabbenu Bechai and Rabbi Joshua ben Chananya et al, the Otzar Hakavod by Rabbi Todroth Halevi, whom the author calls "the great Kabbalist". The chapter, in short, is a loose compilation of the sayings of these books and these Sages. The following statements illustrate the diversity of subjects discussed:

The author declares that there are certain duties incumbent upon children: they must honor their parents and especially observe the commands concerning shivah and sheloshim if they have died, for in this way they will free their parents from the afflictions and judgements of Gehennah(152). The Zohar states that "there is no greater honor in this world

which is comparable to the honor which one shows to his own parents"(153).

Man should recite the blessings with understanding and not by rote(153). Before imploring God for a certain request he must first examine and then correct his ways(154). He should recite the parasha Haman daily if he would be assured of his daily sustenance(154). When man performs the Mitavoth of Tefillin and Tzitzith he should first see whether he has cleansed himself of the sins which he may have committed with his hands(154).

"The general conclusion", says the Shevet Musar, "that is reached from what the Sages have explained to us is as follows: he who fulfills a certain command or does a certain good deed receives a reward fitting thereto, that when he transgresses a certain command his penalty corresponds thereto. Moreover, they say, if God sees fit He will punish man in this world"(156). However, even the transgressor may have intercessors to plead in his behalf "that is to say he may have a certain merit which suspends his punishment for one or two years as we have learned in Sotah , or he may have a merit which enables him to be forgiven half-way for his sins and as a consequence he is punished less severely"(156).

The test of wisdom is the ability to see the results of actions before they are committed. Indeed, it is possible that because of sin, one can become as "silent as a stone or an

ugly vessel". Thus the wise man will daily thank God for having given him the health to serve Him at all times(157,159).

It is the duty of the individual when he visits the sick to urge them to mend their ways and ask forgiveness of those whom they may have wronged(158).

Elijah Hacohen quotes the words of the Gaon Rabbi Sheftil who instructed his daughters and daughters-in-law to pray to God during their pregnancy that they have God-fearing children.

It is the duty of man to acquire as many friends as possible that they might counsel them in the goodly way, for to be without a friend is like having a left hand but not a right hand(159). Man should not be too hasty about revealing information to his neighbor until he has proven him to be a true friend, for should he become his enemy he will reveal these secrets(159).

If man has acquired great riches, he should not become overconfident about his security, for it is possible that he might one day have financial reverses(160). Indeed, man should know that wealth and power, even if they be as great as that of Solomon are but of "transitory value and that the only important thing is the service of God"(161).

In order that man may keep healthy and thus have a longer life in which to serve God he should take heed of the following warnings:he should not wash his hands in the morning with water that has lain uncovered during the night, how much the

less should he not rinse his mouth with such water, he should not extinguish the candle with his mouth, he should wipe his hands between the eating of fish and meat, he should not drink any beverage which haslain uncovered during the day(162).

To prevent one from the disease of drunkenness one should tell the drunkard when he is sober of that which he has said and done in order that he may realize the shame that he has brought upon himself and the evil of his words and deeds and thus abstain from drinking overmuch in the future(163).

These and many more subjects are discussed at length in this chapter covering basically much of that which has been said previously.

CHAPTER XLI

A concept old in Rabbinic thought but new to the discussion of the Shevet Musar is introduced into this chapter, namely that each individual has been given a portion to study on Mount Sinai, be it Scripture, Mishnah, Talmud or Maaseh Merka-Vah(the latter is "thework of the Chariot", the lore concerning the heavenly Throne Chariot with especial reference to Ezekiel I and X) or more than one portion of these or even all of them depending upon the ability of the individual and that every individual must busy himself with these respective portions for in accordance with the "pain" with which he studies them and in accordance with his making the most of the

opportunities open to him to study them(169,170,172). The entire perek is built around this idea and is especially interesting for showing Elijah Hacoheh's fondness for the mystic idea of the Maaseh Merkavah as is evidenced by the frequent mention of it and the joys of its study(165,166,167,168,170, 171).

Man is pictured as appearing before God on the Day of Judgement at which time He questions him as to whether or not he has fulfilled the portion assigned to him on Mount Sinai, and as being very grieved if he has failed to do so (171); indeed, "God turns his countenance from him and he is cast into Gehennah"(165). If it was man's portion to have studied the profound subject of Maaseh Merkavah, God is especially pleased(165). The reward for studying these portions is according to the Mishnah determined by the degree of pain that man has exhibited in doing them: "According to the pain (in studying) is the reward"- that is to say, says the author, "man's reward is dependent upon the pain that he suffers in studying, even though he may not perceive all the portions of Torah, Scriptures, Mishnah, Halacha, Maaseh Merkavah etc.

A very interesting aspect of this subject is the way of man's determining the exact portion that was assigned to him to learn. If man has a yearning for a particular study than that is the study that has been given him on Mount Sinai "That which he desires to learn and understand is the portion

which he has been given on Mount Sinai. And should man understand all these subjects it may truly be said that he was given all these studies on Sinai as his portion; however should he abandon the study thereof and not busy himself therewith he is destined to be punished"(167).

The answer^{to} the question why one individual was given one portion and another individual a different portion is to be found in the fact that each one receives that portion which is in accordance with the root of his soul at the moment and through transmigration he merits all of them"(167). By the "root of his soul at the moment" is meant the ability of the individual at the time when these portions were parcelled out to man. This meaning is evident from the frequent references to the capacity or talent of the individual, as for example, such expressions as "if one has the mind to comprehend Scriptures or Mishnah and does not occupy himself therewith..." etc.(168,172).

Typical of Elijah Hachohen's powers of interpretation and understanding of hidden meanings is the following, with respect to the Mishnaic statement : "The world stands on three things: on Torah, on work, and on charity". Thus the author declares: "The meaning of this statement is as follows: 'the worlds stands on Torah'- namely, Scriptures, the written Torah; 'on work'- this statement hints at Maaseh Merkavah which requires hard work to comprehend it; 'on charity'- this phrase hints at

Agaddah for through its tales we learn the necessity of being charitable" (168).

CHAPTER XLII

Elijah Hacoen in this chapter throws much light upon the conditions of his own day as he himself observed them. And hence this chapter is of importance to us not only for an understanding of the author's own negative reactions to what he saw but for a knowledge of the times.

The author cites three basic evils of the day: (1) preoccupation with things other than the study of Torah (2) idle flattering and slanderous talk and thoughts of evil (3) a cruel treatment of landlords toward the scholar. Reference to these ideas have been mentioned in Chapter II with respect to the importance of the Shevet Musar. We shall speak of each of these briefly:

(1) Preoccupation with things other than the study of Torah: The author rebukes the people who spend their time wastefully "on things of nought and on chess" (*ל'קט'ו'ל*) which the Judeo-German translation which the writer of this essay used renders as "chess" or Shachspiel, cf. p. 174; the writer of this essay was unable to find this Hebrew (??) word in any of the reliable dictionaries) instead of busying themselves with Torah on the grounds that they are sharpening their

minds thereby(173); however, by so doing they prove that they despise the Torah for if it were their intention to sharpen their minds, as they say, says the author, then they would busy themselves with Torah "for there is no wisdom comparable to the study of the Torah and there is nothing sharper than it"(174). From the frequent references to the playing of chess on the part of the people it is evident that it was a most popular game in the day of the author in far-off Turkey(173,174).

(2) Idle flattering and slanderous talk and thoughts of evil: Elijah Hacoheh tells us that it oftentimes happens on Sabbaths and holidays that there are people who after the Mitchah service "sit in the doorways of their courts one on one side and one on the other and cause pain to their additional soul with words of jest and flattery"(175). Moreover, should some righteous person pass by they speak slanderously about him (175). Or if some beautiful woman, be she respectable or promiscuous, should walk by they gaze upon her and think sexual thoughts about her or actually indulge in a flirtation with her with the result that they have nocturnal pollutions during the night and thus commit a transgression (179).

(3) Cruel treatment of landlords toward the scholar(reference has been made to this subject in Chapter II); Elijah Hacoheh dwells at great length on the unrighteous atti-

tude of the landlords of his own day toward the learned students of the Law, a condition which he says that he himself had observed(177). Indeed, says the author, they refuse to rent their houses to them because ~~the~~ latter refuse to spend their evenings with them telling them stories to pass away their time at night(176), forgetting that it is the duty of the scholar to spend day and night studying the Law(176) or because they fear that they will not be able to pay the rent to them (175,176), not remembering that "paying a creditor is a religious obligation"(176), that "He who gave him (his wealth and riches) will also give it to the scholar" (176), and that they themselves might suffer financial reverses(176), or because they are afraid that the scholars will discern the evil of their ways; whereas they should make it a point to rent their dwellings to scholars for that very reason, if for not any other, in order that they might correct them and thus become righteous(177). In fact, says the author, these landlords should "seek out scholars as tenants" and "pay them to teach them the Torah at night, and goodly conduct and the way wherein they should go that they might merit the world to come"(179).

The latter part of the chapter speaks of the need of repentance, if one has spent his time idly, in order that one might obtain a portion in the world to come(179,180). And he quotes a prayer of confession which he says he gleaned from the book Tzedah Laderech, wherein the sinner implores God to

forgive him of his sins and speaks of his lowliness(181,182).

CHAPTER XLIII

The sin of evil talk mentioned in some detail in Chapter XLII is discussed at greater length in this chapter. The author concerns himself here with the "effect of speaking idle words and particularly obscene words"(183).

Before speaking of those who speak obscenely he rebukes those people in his own day who indulge in scoffing to make others laugh with the result that the eyes of those listen "drip with tears because of the joy which the scoffer has provided them"(184). However, both the speaker and the listener will be punished severely(184).

As for obscene talk, Elijah Hacohen declare that the sin thereof is very grievous and the punishment very great for "the name of the Lord is affixed to the unclean talk that is spoken"(184). He quotes the Sages who said:"For him who speaks obscenely Gehennah will be made very deep etc."(184). Indeed, it is a worse evil than an evil deed (184). Like him who indulges in falsehood, flattery, mockery or slander, he will undergo great punishment."The general principle to be deduced", says the author, "from all the above is that when one speaks idle words and particularly obscene words one causes holiness to enter uncleanness for thereby

the name ו)ן is joined to that which is of nought"(184).

He then lists the reasons for speaking overmuch and idly: envy desire and the desire to be honored. "He who is envious will slander unceasingly everyone who is wiser or richer or more respected than he or who has a certain good quality. He who is full of desire will be forced to speak thousands and tens of thousands of words with all men in the hope that he might find favor in their eyes and obtain through them that which his heart desires. Similarly, with regard to honor- he who is desirous of being honored does not speak in praise of anyone in order that he might be regarded as greater than everyone and be more respected, being alone in wisdom" (185) But when one is eager to be honored, he loses it whereas if he were unconcerned about it he would gain it(186).

Elijah Hacoheh then give a word of warning to those who are envious and desirous, telling them that they should know that they cannot attain anything no matter how hard they may try that God wills that they should not attain(186,187). Rather, he says in concluding this chapter, man should be joyous in the portion that has been allotted to him and strive to attain only the "good in the world that is all-good, the world to come(187).

CHAPTER XLIV

Reference has already been made in Chapter XXVII to the

sin of one who has had a nocturnal pollution and in that discussion Elijah Hacohen offers the baal kerí a prayer to recite upon awakening, gleaned from the book Chuke Chayim. In this chapter, the author discusses the subject further and also presents the reader with other such prayers not only for nocturnal pollutions but also for "spilling seed for naught". It is the feeling of the writer of this essay that the phrase "to spill seed for nought" has reference to masturbation. This conjecture is based on such statements in the text as the following: "If one be a scholar, he should study more of the Torah and put his mind seriously to producing new interpretations of the Law as a substitute for thinking evil thoughts by which he caused his seed to be spilt and thereby killed his offspring with his own hand (188).

Elijah Hacohen expresses his indebtedness to the author of the book Avodath Haboreh for knowledge of the ways of "correcting the sin of spilling seed", which the latter states to be through the medium of prayer (187). He cites the prayers which the Avodath Haboreh offers for one who has spilt seed for nought or who has had a nocturnal pollution (187, 188). In these prayers, the individual confesses his iniquities and transgressions which he has committed and declares that he is righteously convicted by the Heavenly Beth Din of excommunication (nezifah); he asks God that He enable him to repent that he sin no more and that after repenting that He

find his repentance acceptable.

Elijah Hacohen then says that the individual who has been found guilty of these sins should do the following in order that he be forgiven: if he be a scholar, he should (as stated above) produce new interpretations of the Law(188); if he be an ignorant person, he should make a great effort to do Mitzvot to give charity, to educate his children in the knowledge of the Torah, and to support the scholar to the best of his ability(189).

But that man might be kept from sinning in this manner, he should follow the prescription given by Rabbi Moses Kardiviri, who wrote that man should make a concoction of three kinds of ingredients that he might become humble(189,190). These three ingredients are: (1) accustoming himself to "flee from honor as best he can for if he should get used to people honoring him he will become haughty and it will be pleasing to him"- a disease most difficult to cure (2) thinking constantly of himself as despicable and as lacking in knowledge and power and (3) thinking of his iniquities and accepting chastizements and ways of self-purification.

Furthermore, says Elijah Hacohen, he should in making repentance for his sins accept the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven upon himself and thus he offers man a prayer which he also gleaned from the Avodath Haboreh wherein the penitent daily makes a declaration of his faith in God and in all

His powers and attributes.

And finally, to forsake his evil ways, he should consider that he causes harm to himself and to others through slander and levity and laughter, that the honor and pleasure that he enjoys by taking pride in his intellect is ephemeral, and that the future is uncertain and that he may die before his time(191).

CHAPTER XLV

The book Avodath Haboreh must have made a great impression upon the mind of Elijah Hacohen for not only did he cite much of its material in Chapter XLIV but he also bases most of Chapter XLV upon it.

The Avodath Haboreh, says the author, lists twenty two rules which man must heed "in order that he merit the good that is stored up for the righteous"(192). These twenty two points are as follows(192-194):(1) man should declare when he goes to the Synagogue in the morning that he goes "for the sake of the Unity of the Holy One Blessed Be He and His Divine Presence(2)man should recite every blessing distinctly (3) man should recite every blessing with devotion (4) man should first develop within himself a feeling of devotion in the Synagogue before praying- that is to say, he should wait a while before engaging in prayer(5) man should keep

from speaking profanely either before or after prayer (6) man should abstain from ^sspitting in the Synagogue but if he has to spit against his will he should do it in his Talith (7) man should keep from putting his finger to his nose or ear while praying and if he should do so he must wash his hands (8) man should avoid praying from memory (9) man should pray with feelings of joy and not sadness but when he recalls the many iniquities he has committed he should weep greatly (10) man should show his humility in the presence of God by praying with a soft and pleasant voice (11) man should go to the Synagogue in a throng (12) man should not enter the Synagogue needlessly but if he must call for someone in the Synagogue he should sit a while there and recite a psalm and then he may go out (13) man should make every effort to pray early in the morning in the Synagogue so that he might pray with the congregation (14) man should have a fixed place in the Synagogue but this place must be neither too high nor too low for to sit too low is as bad as sitting too high since "extreme humility is pride" (15) man should strive to be a ⁷ by reciting Amen ninety times (the numerical value of the letter '3) the Kedusha four times (4), ten Kadeshim (7) and a hundred blessings (100) (16) man should shut his eyes while reciting the shemone esre and should conjure up in his mind the picture of a great fire which would burn him immediately were he to gaze upon it (17) man's right thumb should be

in his left hand and his left thumb in his right hand(18) man should give charity before praying (19) man should respond to an Amen with devotion (20) man should not recite the blessing netilath yadayim twice, that is to say, once at home and once in the Synagogue(21) man should study Torah with Talith and Tefillin according to the Shulchan Aruch of ARI (22) man should labor over PARDES(Peshat, Remez, Derash and Sod) according to the Shulchan Aruch of ARI

Man should strive to fulfill these rules, all of them, but if he be unable to follow all of them he should at least do some of them (194,195), for in this way he will save himself from Gehennah(195). Besides when one performs a certain Mitzvah or observes a preventative measure he keeps the Yetzer Hara from driving him from this world and causing him to undergo a transmigration in other existence in order to fulfill that which he left undone in a previous existence (gilgul rishon)(195). And if man cannot do them at all, he should at least think about doing them and yearn to do them for, as the author has stated many times, "the merit of a (good)intention does the Lord(in rewarding) add to that of a(good) deed" (195).

CHAPTER XLVI

The concept of man as a miniature universe or microcosm

is developed throughout the chapter. Indeed, says the author, it is the duty of man "to understand the nature of man" and to realize "that God combined within the image and likeness of man the heavenly and earthly creation"(197). And further on he writes: "the work of creation is hinted at in man and thus it is that man is called a olam katan, a small world(200) etc. The chapter is also important for showing the author's familiarity with the detailed structure of the body.

Elijah Hacoen goes on to prove these statements by showing the similarity of the structure of man's body to the structure of the Universe. "He made the skull", he says, "over his(man's) head even as the firmament of the heavens is over this firmament. He made the upper roof of the mouth wherein the teeth and molars are set even as the heaven is over us (197)...Even as the world is established and maintained by the power of the One God, so the whole body is maintained by the one spirit of life which the Blessed God has given to it...Even as God has set two luminaries and five plants in the firmament of the heavens so too He created seven servants in the head of man, two eyes, two ears, and two nostrils and a mouth(197)...Even as the earth covers the waters so the flesh covers the kidney, the belly, the intestines and the spleen(198)...Even as God made the abyss and dirt and filth under the earth so too God created in man the

upper intestines and the bowels to receive food and drink (198). Even as there are crawling things according to their species which crawl upon the filth and crawl up from the water, so too by reason of the filth of the food and drink crawling things and worms, long and short, large and small, swarm into the intestines of man... Even as there are planets and stargazers by which and by whom the future is made known, so too there signs on man when he has sores (198)... Even as He created in the world stones and hard rocks, so He created in man teeth and jaws which are as hard as iron (199)! These few quotations are sufficient to illustrate the manner with which Elijah Haohen seeks to prove the truth that the heavenly and earthly worlds are hinted at in man and that within him is included all of creation.

Because man resembles God's creation and God himself slightly (201, cf. also LI:208, 209), he should rejoice in doing Mitzvoth for by the fulfillment of them he likens himself even more to his Creator, for the Sages have said that God fulfills the Mitzvoth first (201) and receives a great reward for doing them (200). Indeed, says the Shevet Musar "there is no greater reward than that which one receives by likening himself to God through the performance of Mitzvoth (201).

We have mentioned the frequency with which Elijah Hacohen makes use of the animal to illustrate certain of his ethical teachings (cf. XXII, 211ff, XXV:19, XXX:66, XXXIII:137, et al). As evidence of the importance that the author gives to the animal as a guide to man's moral and religious education, we cite the present chapter which is devoted entirely to the ape and the lessons that one can learn from observing its behavior. This very brief chapter is a continuation of the discussion of Chapter XLVII wherein the author dealt with man's resemblance to God. He states that it is his purpose in this chapter "to answer the question: 'Why God created a creature such as the ape which has some of the features of man as is known and which strives to be like him'(201) by showing that "God did not create such a creature without a purpose in mind but rather He did so that man might learn from him"(201).

Indeed, the ape, says the author, has much to teach man if he would but pay heed to its ways. For the ape observes the similarity between many of the parts of its body to those of man and even though it finally discovers that it cannot attain its goal of becoming entirely like man, it nevertheless continues to do whatever man does(201,202). The lesson, says Elijah Hacohen is quite obvious: if the ape, an animal on a much lower level than man strives to raise itself above its brute level in this way "how much the more then should man in whom there is that which re-

sembls God slightly strive with all his power to spend all of his days and nights to liken himself in all his ways to his Creator and do all that he does(201,202). That is to say, even as God is gracious man should strive to be righteous, even as He is merciful in all His ways, man should seek to cultivate the attribute of mercy(201). He can attain to the level of God by his actions having the power of choice in his hands(202). Moreover, man must make use of his wisdom and inner council to guide his ways in the ways of goodness that he may attain to the Godly level of existence. He should appoint wisdom and council as judges and officers over his ways that he may not sin against His Creator(202).

CHAPTER XLVIII

Not only can man learn to perfect his soul by a study of the imitative habits of the ape(XLVII) but man can also learn self-perfection by even observing the ways of the child, the adulterer and the thief.

The child, says Elijah Hacohen, takes nothing into account when it desires to satisfy the desires of his body (203). It will satisfy its bodily needs, even in the presence of esteemed persons without fear of embarrassment; if he be sleepy "he will make his bed even in dirt and filth"(203). Thus man should

strive to emulate this characteristic of the child's personality by fullfulling the desires of his soul to serve God to the best of his ability despite the fact that in doing he may be despised and put to shame(203). If he hesitates to become like a child because of his greater wisdom and knowledge then he should reflect that in old age he is destined to become even as an infant , that at that time he will eat ~~he will eat~~ soft foods being toothless even as the latter (203). Therefore, realizing that he will one day undergo this transformation, he should seek to serve God unashamedly and with great desire that he may save his soul from the horrors of Gehennah and "bring it under the wings of the Throne of Glory where the souls of the righteous dwell"(203).

Yes, says the Shevet Musar, we can learn much from the ways of the adulterer and the thief "for behold should a man's beloved say to him that it is her desire to do a certain thing he will do it immediately to satisfy her desire and feel no manner of shame thereby, yea he will bear all manner of disgrace and shame so long as he can have intercourse with her. Similarly, when the thief desires to satisfy his desire he has no regard for the shame which will be his if he be found out"(203,204).

Thus if the thief and the adulterer are unashamed to

fulfill their desire how much the more than should man totally disregard the reproach that others may give him for serving his Creator(204). Be assured, Elijah Hacoen says to the reader that the mockers will suffer for their ways, whereas the goodly man, he who does Mitzvoth will have a goodly reward of honor and glory(204). Finally, man should not be discouraged if the performance of Mitzvoth seem difficult at first, for as soon as he does them he will be aided from on high(204).

CHAPTER XLIX

Chapters XLIX and L, and LI deal with the Geulah or Redemption, an idea that has ever played a most significant role in Jewish history from the days of the destruction of the Temple down to the present. And knowing the difficult life of the Jew in the Mediaeval Ages, we can understand why Elijah Hacoen devotes three chapters to this hope. This chapter, which no doubt reflects the hardships of Israel in the days of the author concerns itself with "the evils which the sinner brings upon all creation by preventing thereby the bringing in of the Redemption for at the time of the Redemption all goodly things and blessings and salvations are established but the sinner prevents their re-

alization"(206). He states further that in the following chapter he will discuss "the goodly things which the sinful man withholds from himself by delaying the Redemption"(206).

What are these evils that the sinner brings upon the world by preventing the arrival of the day of Redemption? They are many: he prolongs the exile of the Divine Presence (204), he causes Israel to wander aimlessly "from people to people and to be pushed around and despised"(205)., he prevents the dead from being resurrected and the barren men and women from having offspring(205), he causes Israel to obtain sustenance with difficulty whereas at the time of the Redemption "God will cause bread to come forth from the earth"(205), he delays the "revenge of the very pious ones and all the holy persons who while on earth gave their lives for the sanctification of the Divine Name(kiddush hashem)(205), he prevents the Kingship of God from being proclaimed over all the earth(205), he keeps the infants from expounding new interpretations of the secrets of the Torah(205), he withholds laughter from the grieved and the sad(206), The sinner should take cognizance of the evils of his ways and should daily repent for the harm that he has brought upon the world by preventing the coming of the Redemption(206).

CHAPTER L

As stated in the previous chapter, the author continues with the subject of the Geulah and discusses "the goodly things which the sinful man withholds from himself by delaying the Redemption"(206).

By the sinfulness of man he prevents his head "from being a chariot to the Divine Presence" and his forehead from being inscribed with the Divine Name יהוה (206), his ears from hearing the voice of the harbinger of good tidings announcing the salvation(206), his eyes from beholding "the light which is stored up for the righteous from the six days of Creation and which God is destined to bring forth" (206) and the sight of the dead being resurrected, of women daily bearing children without undergoing any pain whatsoever, of children being born that are able to stand up unaided and speak "wondrous things", of trees that bear fruits that are of medicinal value to the soul and which have powers of healing, of peace filling the world, of the lame walking and the dumb being endowed with the power of speech, of Temple in Jerusalem being rebuilt out of its ruins, of the mountains dripping wine(207). Truly, the sinner keeps himself from enjoying all these pleasures, and even more than these, for he keeps his mouth from tasting the Leviathan at the meal of

the righteous and the wine preserved in grapes from the six days of Creation(207), his tongue from song and rejoicing and his neck from wearing the chains made of the new interpretations of the Law which will be made known at that time(207), and his feet from daily ascending to the House of God where he may greet the Divine Presence(207).

The author urges man to consider then these many blessings and joys which could be his on the day of the Redemption, if he were to change his ways and repent(207). He should reflect upon the gravity of his iniquities for because of them he has detained "the Redemption of the Divine Presence and the well-being of heaven and earth and the restoration of the land and the fullness thereof, the world and the inhabitants therein, and that which will effect his limbs"(207).

CHAPTER LI

As the writer of this essay stated in Chapter II (pp. 15,16): "When we consider that Elijah Haohen lived in that section of the world where the Sabbatian influence and the idea of the Messiah appearing on certain fixed dates had played, and no doubt continued to play, a dominant role in the lives of the Mediaeval Jew, then we can understand not only the amount of space given by the author to the Geulah or Redemption(XLIX,L, and LI) but also the warning given in LI:208 to the effect 'that man should not spend his time

seeking intimations as to the time of the coming of the Redemption to say that on such and such a day the Redemption will take place, for he but wastes his time and will obtain nought from it, since the matter is concealed. Moreover, ruin can result therefrom for ignorant people hearing that it is to come at a set time will rebel when it does not take place at that time and they will say: The day of redemption will not come'. One should recall in this connection, that the dates 1648 and 1666 were looked upon by many Mediaeval Jews as those on which the Redemption would take place. And it is very possible that Elijah Hacoheh as a very young man had at least witnessed the evil effects of setting the date 1666 as the time on which the Messiah was to appear."

Instead of such thoughts, the individual should rather think only of the truth that the Redeemer will one day come, a cardinal point in the thirteen principles of faith(208) and of the goodly pleasures that will be his and the world's at that time(208,209). His main desire and only thought should be to perfect his soul and body and become like His Creator whom as the author has already stated he resembles slightly (208, cf. XLVI:201 and LI:208,209), for only by man's perfection will the Redemption take place.

The latter part of the chapter offers reasons for the prolongation of the exile. The author declares that man should

not "grumble about the length of the Exile for in proportion to the goodly things which even the smallest of the small will obtain, not even the greatest has obtained in this world" (210). God, he says, has prolonged the exile firstly because He desired to test our great affection for Him and His Torah for when the Lord observes that man still has faith in Him even though he endures great suffering for an extended time then He knows that man loves Him(210); secondly, (and this reason Elijah Hacoen states he heard from another person) because "God decreed that every day be a sad one and that it be for a thousand years and that these days be exceedingly sad without quiet and rest at all but in His compassion upon us in observing that we would not be able to endure it, He prolonged the exile in order to apportion the trouble and oppression over many years and thus lighten our burden; thus the exile will continue until the grief of the thousand sad years will be completed and only God alone knows when this measure (of a thousand years) will come to an end; therefore no one can ascertain when the day of Salvation will arrive for no one has the power to determine the exact number of years necessary for the completion of those thousand sad years or how many years need to be endured because of it"(210).

CHAPTER LII

This chapter, the last of the second volume, and of the book Shevet Musar summarizes the main teaching of this ethical work, namely that man should strive attain perfection of body and soul and fullfill the Mitzvoth as given in the Torah through becoming humble and abstaining from haughtiness. And as the writer of this essay pointed out in Chapter II, where we discussed the message of the book, it ends with a positive optimistic note, characteristic of the author's philosophy.

Man is urged to become humble as has been said above and to learn humility from God, who "forsook the Heavens of the Heavens to cause His Divine Presence to dwell with those who live in clay houses"(212). Humility is the cause of peace, for when man is humble he never becomes angry with anyone(212). And peace is such an important goal to achieve for the Redemption itself depends upon it(212). Truly, "the end result of humility is honor in the eyes of God and man and the end result of haughtiness is loathesomeness and bloodshed and humiliation(213). The humble man accepts reproof and thereby gains life whereas the haughty person in despising reproof despises life(124). Moreover, the nature of man's character is determined by the acceptance or

rejection of reproof (214). If his Yetzer Harah would ~~con-~~cil him to be haughty he should conjure up before him a picture of himself as a decrepit old man and he will then assuredly turn aside from it and become humble(215). The author then presents the legendary and miraculous story of the birth and life of Abraham and of his strivings with the unrighteous King Nimrod who was worshipped as a God but who later admitted the supremacy of the One God because of the efforts of our Patriarch(215-228). The story seeks to show that despite the great suffering that Abraham was forced to endure because of King Nimrod that he always had faith in him and served Him with humility; thus says the author , if our great Patriarch Abraham who was called the beloved of God did not become **haughty** how much the more than should an ordinary man aspire to **humility**(215,228].

The latter ~~part~~ of the chapter introduces a new concept into the book- that of the Ibbur or impregnation of souls(229). It is through an understanding of the Ibbur, says Elijah Hacoen, that we are able to discern why there are the righteous who prosper, the righteous who suffer, the wicked who enjoy well-being and the wicked who are chastized. "There are souls unto whom it has been decreed", writes the author, "that they may not return to their own particular bodies in order that they may not taste the taste of death and the other punishments such as lying in the grave and the like. Consequently

God decrees that this Soul clothe itself with a living body and dwell therein until it has been wholly purified through the chastizements and grief which it endures at the time of its impregnation in the body. When it has become perfect it departs from this body and ascends on high to inherit its place in the Garden of Eden"(229). Thus there are righteous people who have not sinned but by reason of the fact that certain souls have impregnated themselves within them in order to be chastized they suffer; but because of this suffering , they shall have a greater reward in the world to come(229). Then, too, there are the righteous in whom souls have not impregnated themselves and as a result they enjoy peace all their days(229). As for the wicked person who enjoys well-being- this refers to one in whom the soul has impregnated itself in order that it might suffer greatly by being therein. For the body of the wicked person does evil things which are opposed to its will; for when it was in this world, it loathed these evil ways and had not accustomed itself to the ways of the Forah whose ways are pleasant. But now it is the decree of God that this soul impregnate itself in the body of this wicked person because of its stain which is upon it that it may become purified through grief, and when it is cleansed ascend on high. And because it has been made perfect by means of this wicked person ,

God rewards the latter in this world(229). And finally, there are the wicked persons who undergo suffering and grief in this world "for the reason that the souls have not impregnated themselves in them"(229).

The remainder of the chapter (229-231) is a further development of this concept, concluding with God's forgiveness and reward of him who had turned a deaf ear to his Yetzer Harah and had repented of his evil ways(231-232). And with that optimistic note, we conclude the book Shevet Musar.

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