

GRADUATION THESIS

MOSES CHAIM LUZZATTO'S "MESSILATH YESHARIM"

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Prefatory Note

It was my intention originally to devote my thesis to a translation of Moses Chaim Luzzatto's **מעלות ישרים** with a fitting introduction. But Doctor Neumark discouraged me from devoting my effort to a translation and suggested the mode of procedure which I adopted here. In view of this fact, I had to reject the original title, "Moses Chaim Luzzatto's "Messilath Yesharim" Analysis and Translation", and give it the general title of Moses Chaim Luzzatto's "Messilath Yesharim."

W. B. S.

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Chapter I

THE LIFE OF MOSES CHAIM LUZZATTO ⁽¹⁾

"A decree has gone forth from the Rabbinical Councils (of Germany, Poland, Holland and Denmark) unto all the members of the House of Israel to the effect that no Jew or Jewess, wherever they be found, shall be permitted to encourage the baneful activity of the above mentioned heretic, (Moses Chaim b. Jacob Luzzatto), either by publishing any of his books or letters, or by showing kindness to any of his followers, or disciples, and he who fails to abide by this decree shall be put under the ban of ex-communication. Furthermore, all his (Luzzatto's) books, letters, poems and Psalms,² published and unpublished, shall be regarded as heretical, fit for the flames. Accordingly let all his writings be delivered to the fire, to the end that a stumbling block be removed from the House of Israel for all time." (Kerem Chemed III, 157).

The document, of which the above is only an extract, was published in 1735 in Luzzatto's twenty-seventh year. It has been the experience of practically every honest teacher of men to receive no honor in his own day. It has been the sad reward of nearly every servant of mankind to be denounced as a lunatic and a heretic by his contemporaries. Luzzatto did not escape this fate. Let us briefly trace the collisions and calamities, woes and wanderings of the poet, mystic and saint.

Almanzi in

1 The chief source for the biography of Luzzatto is Kerem Chemed III, p. 112 f.

2 Luzzatto wrote a book of Psalms, imitating faithfully the Biblical Psalter. It was later adduced as evidence for his Messianic aspirations.

Moses Chaim Luzzatto's birthplace was Padua in Italy;¹ there he was born in the year 1707. His father, a wealthy merchant, recognized early his son's literary and poetical proclivities and furnished him the means of furthering them. Luzzatto's education was not limited to Bible and Talmud: he studied Italian and its cognate Latin. Luzzatto soon came under the influence of his teacher Isaiah Bassan, who remained his lifelong friend. Bassan took a deep interest in the boy and permitted him to browse among his books in his private library, where the boy no doubt found a large collection of Cabbalistic works. Luzzatto's literary powers began to unfold rather early. At the age of seventeen he wrote a rhetoric לשון למורים² which he dedicated to his favorite teacher, Isaiah Bassan.

We learn that at this time Luzzatto attended regularly the sessions of the secret mystic society מרבקשי where he was initiated into the doctrines of the Cabbalist. This mystic circle brought him into contact with the prominent "students" of the Cabbalah of his day, among them being Isaiah Trevis, Moses David Vali and Jacob Hasak (later Rabbi in Padua). These lights of the Cabbalah kindled in the youth the yearning for the mystical. A few years later we learn that Luzzatto became the outstanding figure in the society, which transferred its sessions to his home.

1 He is the descendant of a long line of celebrated ancestors. For family history see J.E. Delitsch in Gesch d. Jud. Poesia p. 90.

2 לשון למורים a book in three parts dealing with (1) rhetoric in general (2) Poetics, or the laws of versification; (3) On poetic license in Hebrew poetry. To part three is appended the drama "Samson and the Philistine". In this work Luzzatto shows a thorough knowledge of classical rhetoric. Of the works the first part only was published. Mantua 1727; Lemberg 1810; Grodno 1836. cf. Jost in Isr. Annalen 1839.no.5.

Luzzatto being of a swift and fiery temperament, was captivated by the fascinations of the "true science" and he began to indulge in its extravagances. He saw visions, and angels communicated to him important Cabbalistic mysteries. He persisted in his illusion that he had a "mentor-angel" (maggid)¹ who favored him with visions. He had interviews with the Prophet Elijah, Adam and the Patriarchs. In a letter addressed to a friend of his, Emanuel Calbo of Livorno, he wrote in the year 1730, "It is true that in the year 1727 God sent me a saint from Heaven, who revealed to me daily great secrets, which I wrote down every day. He then gave me many precepts (תיקונים) and told me that Elijah and God could converse with me, and so it happened".²

Under this intoxicating influence he completed in 1727 a book of 150 Psalms patterned after the Biblical Psalter.³ He wrote a large number of mystical works to which we shall allude later.⁴

But in his mystical reveries he did not forget his poetical muse. In 1728 he began his dramatic work **מגדל צדק** "Tower of Strength", a drama inspired and influenced by Guarini's, "Pastor Fido".⁴

1 Joseph Caro and Isaac Luria also received revelations from a "maggid". See Schechter Studies, second series, essay on "Safed".

2 See Isaacs p. 26-27; Jost in Isr. Annalen 1839 no. 6; Graetz (English) Vol. V. p. 234f.

3 The book of 150 Psalms, imitating faithfully the Biblical Psalms; they are of considerable literary merit. Only two of the Psalms have been published in **מגדל צדק** 5586, 5587. See Delitsch Gesch d. Jud. Poesie p. 90. The book of Psalms was later adduced by his opponents as evidence of his messianic aspirations; they claimed he meant to displace the Biblical Psalter.

4 While adhering closely to the content and form of Guarini's "Pastor Fido", it is unfair to describe this work as "ein grosses Plagiat", as did Dr. Fleischer. I have not investigated the two works closely, but a cursory reading of them brought home the fact even to me that Luzzatto breathed into the "Faithful Shepherd" a Jewish soul. He invested the characters with virtues never dreamed of by Guarini. The young poet certainly refashioned and recast Guarini's theme in such a way as to deserve credit for some originality. For more information on this matter see Abraham, By-Paths in Hebrew Bookland p. 122f; Slouschz, The Renaissance of Hebrew Literature, p. 11. Isaacs, *ibid* Appendix. Graetz (Eng) Vol. V. p. 234f.

Up to the year 1729 Luzzatto's mystical activity was unknown to anybody. He pursued his work peaceably and humbly and in privacy. But our author was destined to become embroiled in contention and strife. A number of striking co-incidents conspired to hurl Luzzatto into the depths of misery.

A Palestinian scholar, Raphael Israel Kimhi, who passed through Padua, learned of Luzzatto's mystical activity and made it known to the rabbis of Venice. A little later, in the summer of 1729, a friend and devoted disciple of Luzzatto's, Jekuthiel Gordon of Wilna¹, wrote to friends in Wilna and Venice an exuberant letter of praise touching his great master and miracle worker, Moses Chaim Luzzatto, (enclosing leaves from a mystical work of Luzzatto's "Zohar Tinyana") who initiated him in the science of the Cabbalah. The letters were well intentioned, but short sighted. One of the letters fell into the hands of the court agent Mordecai Jaffe of Vienna. The opponents of the Cabbalah, embittered by the ugly outcome of the Shabbethai Zevi affair, now cast suspicion upon the new messianic aspirant. The matter even came to the attention of Moses Chages², who now resided in Altona. Added to these indirect reports touching the activity of Luzzatto, his opponents soon came upon direct evidence. At about this time there appeared from the pen of

184f. To this period also belongs his ספר נתיבות an imitation of the Zohar.

1 Jekuthiel ben Lëb Gordon of Wilna, a student of medicine at the University in Padua. See Dr. Kauffman in R. E. J. Vol. 33, p. 253 f.

2 Moses Chages (1671-1750) Talmudic scholar and advocate of secular learning. He was instrumental in unmasking the impostor Nehemiah Hayyun. He is the author of many books and responsa. (See Kauffman, R. E. J. 33, p. 252).

Luzzatto an attack upon and refutation of Leon de Modena's¹ anti-Cabbalistic work **ארי נהם**. The book was entitled **חוקר ומקובל**. The book now gave substance to the rumors and the rabbis of Italy and Germany were weaponed to deal the blow. And the war was on.

Let us pause here for a moment to locate the environment, social and religious, with which Luzzatto came in conflict and which was responsible for the violence and hostility toward him and the Cabbalah. Luzzatto lived in a time when the Shabbettai Zevi affair was still fresh in the minds of the people. Cabbalah's fate was sealed with the fall of the last messianic pretender and impostor. It was but natural that the ugly outcome of the affair should have a paralyzing effect upon mysticism². Most people felt that it was harmful and menacing to the cause of Judaism to allow indiscriminate mystical study. The rabbis especially now set their faces hard as flint against the Caballah.

It is well to note in this connection that it is not the content of the Caballah which evoked antagonism, but the adulteration of its principles by immature persons, or by scheming impostors. The Cabbalah, the rabbis said, is not for all sorts and conditions of men; it is for the favored few who are especially endowed with the faculty to grasp its mysteries.³

Now, we can easily understand that the rabbis of the time who were bent on weeding out all Sabbathian influences, detected in Luzat-

1 Leon Modena (1571-1648) rabbi and poet in Venice. He demonstrates in this anti-Cabbalistic work **ארי נהם** that Cabbalah is not a true science and shows that the Zohar is a modern composition.

2 See Deutsch, Philosophy of Jewish History, p. 70 f.

3 This is clearly shown by Deutsch ibid, p. 72-73.

to a rebirth of the pseudo-messiah movement. They set out to lay him low. They spared no effort, nor trickery in doing so.

Luzzatto became aware of the precariousness of his position. He wrote at once a submissive, but honest letter, to explain matters away. He denied the charge that he was a Sabbatian. He remonstrated and resisted. He declared that it was not his intention to become a notoriety. He asserted his inalienable right to teach privately what he knew to be the truth. In concluding he remarked significantly: "And now, let happen what may, even if bound at the altar, I will never renounce my pious sense, and through fear of men forsake ^{the} commands of God."

The letter at once gives us an insight into the soul of the mystic. He is not a man of strife. He is modest and would live in solitude. His goal is to catch a glimpse of the Infinite. He is quite chary about attacking irreverently the rabbis in authority, but he will not hold his peace when his motives are questioned. We can not help but feel that we are in the presence of a distinguished and heroic man.

At the same time, Luzzatto endeavored to enlist the co-operation of the rabbis of Livorno, upon whom he looked as friends of the Caballah. He forwarded a strong letter, together with a leaf from his "Zohar Tingona" to Emanuel Calbo¹, but the message only excited the Livorno rabbis. They felt that his claim to prophecy was not well established and they urged him to supply them with more acceptable evidence, or they would denounce him as a quack and impostor.

In the meantime, Moses Chages, the violent foe of Caballah, was agitating against Luzzatto, and finally prevailed upon the rabbis of Germany to pronounce a ban against him. The ban against Luzzatto was launched in 1730.

1 An extract of the letter was given above.

To counteract the hostility against his beloved pupil, Bassan went to Venice and made a strong plea before the Venitian council for Luzzatto, but the rabbis suspected Bassan of partiality and would not let matters drop. To clear up the situation Bassan was appointed member of an investigation committee, authorized to summon Luzzatto and extract from him a confession or retraction. Summoned before the committee, Luzzatto broke down and recanted. He promised to put away all Cabbalistic speculation from his heart, and agreed to store away all his Cabbalistic writings in hiding. The recantation was received with much joy by the rabbis, who acquitted him and conferred upon him the Rabbinical degree. (סמיכה).

But Luzzatto, in satisfying the Venitian rabbis violated his own nature by suppressing his inner yearnings. He tried to silence his mystical cravings, but in vain. He could not contain himself; it was in his bones "like a raging fire" and he had to yield to the call of the **חכמת האמת** "true science"¹. He returned to his heresy and soon produced another Cabbalistic work: **כללים וראשונים לחכמת האמת** "Truth".

His relapse reached the discerning ears of the Venitian zealots. They immediately despatched "secret service" agents to keep an eye on the infidel. Reports were spread that instruments of conjuration were found in his home; that he practiced all forms of magic and necromancy. Everywhere vulgar lies were invented to bring upon the young poet shame and degradation.²

1 Graetz, who speaks disparagingly of Luzzatto's Cabbalistic temperament, assigns his relapse to business reverses and domestic infelicity. Ibid p. 236.

2 Jacob Haden in his **תורת הקבאות** accounts for the violent and unmerciful dealings of the rabbis, to Luzzatto's loss of for-

But this time Luzatto was firm and unyielding. He did not desert his cause. He remained inflexible and unbending. He declared that the rabbis of Venice had no jurisdiction in Padua. His obstinacy led the rabbis to pronounce the edict of ex-communication of 1735, an extract of which appears at the beginning of this brief sketch. The ban not only condemned his writings to the flames, but condemned the young poet of twenty-seven to a life of woe and wandering.

Luzzatto could not remain in Padua. He left home and all and started for the "City of Refuge", Amsterdam. But he did not go to Amsterdam directly. He stopped at Frankfort-on-the-main in the early part of 1735, to visit Rabbi Jacob Cohen Poppers¹ of Prague. But R. Jacob Cohen was not disposed to show any hospitality to the outlaw and Cabbalist. He dealt with him most severely and searchingly; he was not inclined to spare him. ^{Luzzatto} was arraigned before the Rabbinical Council in Frankfort and indicted. The weary refugee was crushed. Luzatto was physically and mentally too weak to resist and for the second time gave out and recanted. He was compelled to take an oath, promising to abandon the study or publication of the Cabbalistic works up to his fortieth year, and then only in Palestine. He also promised to deliver all of his Cabbalistic manuscripts to the rabbis of Frankfort. Luzatto failed. Humiliated and scorned, he left Frankfort and repaired to Amsterdam, the haven of refuge.

tune. They were more forbearing when he was wealthy. See Graetz (German) X 378.

1. Friend of Luzzatto's father-in-law David Finzi. See Kauffman ibid. p. 328.

Luzzatto was accorded a warm welcome in Amsterdam. He found his surroundings congenial and soon moved his family to the Dutch capital. To earn his livelihood he engaged in polishing optical lenses - "as Spinoza had done". In a short time he earned the admiration of the entire community and apparently lived in happiness.

In 1739 he learned, to his very real regret, that the mystical academy in Padua was disintegrating. He wrote letters of encouragement, and when some members of his family determined to return to Padua, he sent through them a long letter, urging his pupils to be strong and to continue to study the "True Science". He no doubt pursued secretly mystical investigations. Mysticism was more powerful than his Frankfort oath.

In 1740 he published in Amsterdam his "Messilath Yesharim", the book which forms the study of this thesis, and in 1743 he published **דרך תבונות** an introduction to the Talmud. His chief work **לישרים תהלה** appeared also in 1743.

Luzzatto was awaiting the expiration of his spiritual exile, the happy moment when he will be released publicly from his oath and then he would go to Palestine where he could revel in the mysteries of the Cabbalah unhampered. In 1746, in his fortieth year, he took his wife and son and left Amsterdam for Palestine. But as he reached the threshold of the Holy Land he was smitten by the plague and died (1747) in St. Jean d'Acre. He was buried in Tiberias at the side of the grave of Rabbi Akiba - the martyr.

Chapter II

Plan, Purpose And Scope Of The "Messilath Yesharim"

I The "Messilath Yesharim" is a brief ethical tract¹ comprising 26 chapters פ'רקים, the thirteenth chapter being the dividing line between the first twelve and the last thirteen.² Luzzatto takes as the framework of his book the well known "Table of Virtues", contained in the Essene Beritha of R. Phineas b. Jair,³ והנה על פי הברייתא הזאת העכמתי לחבר חיבורי זה ללמד לעצמי ולהזכיר לאחרים תנאי הצבודה השלמה למדרגותיהם

as it occurs in Aboda Zara 20b, which reads: אמר רבי פינחס

בן יאיר תורה מביאה לידי זהירות זהירות מביאה לידי זריזות זריזות מביאה לידי נקיות נקיות מביאה לידי פרישות פרישות מביאה לידי טהרה טהרה מביאה לידי חסידות חסידות מביאה לידי ענוה ענוה מביאה לידי יראת חטא יראת חטא מביאה לידי קדושה

1 The popularity of the book can be measured by the large number of editions it has passed thru since 1740. See Ben Jacob פאנור הספרים 345-6. In the East there are "Messilath Yesharim" Societies devoted to special study of the book. See Schechter Studies; Vol. II. p. 282.

2 The first twelve chapters deal with the virtues leading to the grade of the צדיק; the last thirteen chapters cover the additional virtues making for the קדוש יחידים. Chapter thirteen deals with the pivotal virtue פרישות.

3 R. Phineas Ben Jair, Tanna of the fourth generation, son-in-law of R. Johai, (the supposed author of the Zohar). He is known, not only for his scholarship, but for his piety and scrupulous honesty; (Jo. Tannai 1:3; Hullin 7b). In many passages he deplores the lack of piety in his day. (Sotah 49a; Midr. Teh. to Ps. XCII:15). Very little of Hekhalah came down in his name; he is always pictured as a model of holiness. He is a favorite of all the later mystics. It is not

"Torah conduces to Watchfulness; Watchfulness leads to Zeal; Zeal to Purity (in action); Purity leads to Abstinence; Abstinence to Sincerity (purity of motive); Sincerity to Saintliness; Saintliness to Meekness; Meekness to Fear of Sin; Fear of Sin to Holiness; Holiness leads to the Holy Spirit."¹

strange therefore, that Luzatto should also have selected him as a prototype of piety. It has been shown by Frankel that R. Phineas b. Jair was an Essene. See Monatsschrift II, 40; Zeitschrift, 1846, p. 441 f. cf Epstein **מקדמוניות היהודים** p. IX f. Bacher, Agad. d. Tan. Vol. II p. 497 f. Hirsch in "Moses Hayim, Luzatto's 'Path of the Righteous'", p. 6, points to the fact that Phineas Ben Jair traced Evil back to the Yetzer Hara (Midr. Teh. 32, Jer. Tasnith, 65 c) as our author does.

It is worthy to note in this connection that Luzatto in his book, draws all his illustrations of piety, not from scholars, but from characters who became popular because of their saintliness.

1 There are many versions of this famous Beraitha. This "Chain of Virtues" is found also in Mishna Sotah IX (end), with some interesting variants. Let us quote it. **ר' פנחס בן יאיר אומר זריזות**

מביאה לזריזות נקיות נקיות מביאה לזריזות טהרה וטהרה מביאה לזריזות פרישות ופרישות מביאה לזריזות קדושה וקדושה מביאה לזריזות צנוה וצנוה מביאה לזריזות יראת חטא ויראת חטא מביאה לזריזות חסירות וחסירות מביאה לזריזות רוח הקדש.

חסירות in this version is only a preparatory virtue, while **קדושה** ranks highest and is close to **רוח הקדש**. Parallels to the version of the Mishnah are found in Jer. Shekalim 47 c; Jer. Shabbath 2 c; midr. Prov. 15; Shir Hashirim, 1. The versions in the Jerushalmi, as well as the Midrash, follow the version in Mishnah Sotah, except that **פרישות** is omitted from the "Table" altogether, thus reading **טהרה מביאה לזריזות קדושה**. However, both the Mishnah and the Jerushalmi agree in placing **חסירות** highest and close to **רוח הקדש**. The version in M. J. Abodah Zara 30 b, which our author prefers, is the only one which enumerates **קדושה** as the highest and close to **רוח הקדש**. See Josefoth Yom Tov to Sotah IX (end). See also Neumark in Vol. 6, p. 442f.

Our author is not the first to allude to the Beraitha of R. Phineas b. Jair, most of the mediaeval and later moralists quote one or another link of the "chain" in support of their exhortations to a pious life.¹ But so far as I could ascertain, our author is the only one to adopt the "catalogue of ten Virtues" as the framework of his book and to carry it through its uninterrupted sequence.

Our author's division of the book into 26 chapters requires an explanation. Chapter I is introductory, dealing with man's destiny in the World. In the following chapters he deals with each of the ten virtues from several aspects: (a) an exposition of the virtue proper; (b) a detailed analysis of the virtue **בפרט** or **בהלכ**; (c) the methods of acquiring the virtue; (d) the hindering circumstances. To some of the virtues he devotes four chapters, corresponding to the forementioned divisions, while in dealing with others he combines the four into three or two chapters (except Kedushah in one)²

The "Messilath Yesharim" is a systematic book, dealing with theoretical, as well as with practical ethics. The "Messilath Yesharim" to my mind, has its legitimate place with Bachya's **חובות הלבבות** and Ibn Gabirol's **תקון מדות הנפש**.³

Luzzatto does not aim to register all the practices and regulation of good conduct; his aim is to record the principles of Ethical behavior.. He introduces these principles by **וזו הכלל**. The

¹ Note, however, that in most cases the version of Mishnah Sotah is cited by most moralists and not Abodah Zara 20 b. which our author prefers.

² See part II of thesis.

³ It is interesting to note that these three books, though written by mystics are comparatively free from mysticism. Note also that the phrase **תקון המדות** is a common phrase with Luzzatto.

application he leaves to the discretion of the individual, as well as to circumstances.

It is refreshing to pick up the "Messilath Yesharim" after a perusal of some of the other prominent devotional books. Most of the "Musal" books are painfully unsystematic and discursive, presenting a medley of ideas, a conglomeration of Ethics and mysticism, sense and superstition, loosely arranged and poorly assorted. Luzzatto writing a systematic book on Ethics in the middle of the eighteenth century had an enormous task before him. He had to select out of the whole confused and fluid mass of Musar Literature, the essential and outstanding elements and reduce them to **כללים**, principles of conduct.

The whole book is interspersed with Biblical and Rabbinic quotations. In fact, Luzzatto stands on the ground entirely of Rabbinic Ethics, and upon tradition. He selects largely, however, for illustration, those Haggadic portions which deal with the saintly practices of the ancient Hassidim (Essenes).

Strange, as it may appear at first blush, there is not a single allusion to the Zohar, the "Bible of the Cabalists." This feature becomes more striking in view of the fact that most of the "musar" books are replete with passages from the Zohar. (See Elijah de Vidas **ראשית חכמה** or the **קב הישר** etc.) Luzzatto, the great mystic, and imitator of the Zohar, studiously avoids reference to it. This fact is not a mere accident to my mind. The explanation, I believe, is to be found in the external circumstances of Luzzatto's life. It will be recalled that in the year 1735 Luzzatto was forced to renounce the study of the Kabbalah, to discontinue all writing on the subject up to his fortieth year, and then only in Palestine. The

"Messilath Yescharim" published in Amsterdam in 1740 was no doubt written during the author's spiritual exile. It is clear that Luzatto would not dare allude to the Zahar in his published works during that period. The book, as a whole, however, is strongly tinged with a mystical atmosphere.

II The Purpose of the "Messilath Yescharim" as our author himself tells us, in the introduction, is not to teach anything new or unfamiliar, but rather to give new emphasis to the most familiar of all familiar words. And even in this humble task he acknowledges his limitations in these words: "I have not covered in my book all the rules of saintliness, nor have I exhausted this theme, for the matter is inexhaustible ----- I have only commented in a fragmentary manner upon the Berantha of R. Phineas b. Jair, upon which I based my tract. The matter is plain. Every man, according to his occupation and according to his bent of mind, must choose his own path of righteous conduct. Not all men are alike in this respect - the piety of the saint is not the piety of the laborer, etc."

Thus the author reveals the two-fold purpose in writing the book. (1) an Ethical guide for the masses of men, who are prevented by their pre-occupations, as well as by their intellectual limitations, from attaining the highest degree of Spirituality קדושה. Those must content themselves with the degree of Tsaddik as outlined in the first twelve chapters of the book. (2) The other purpose of the book is to furnish a manual for the חירי אלוהים the "Students" the "elect", who are especially gifted - the man who wishes to give himself completely to the life of the Spirituality.

אמרו These must go beyond the virtues enumerated in the first twelve chapters; they must gain a close grip of all preliminary virtues, from **זהירות** to **רוח הקדש**. Saintliness, according to Luzzatto, is not for all sorts and conditions of men; it is for the favored few, and through their piety all of the people will benefit.¹

At this point Luzzatto takes the opportunity to correct the popular notion touching piety. In the minds of most people, he declares, piety is identified with fasts and vigils and penances and the recital of long prayers and confessions; the saintly life with many is synonymous with a sour and stern asceticism, including the taking of snow and ice baths, and the like. Most people mistake the mechanical practice for true piety. Against such a conception our author rebels. To translate saintliness in terms of external practice is to strip it of its very soul. **ואים אלא גולמי חסירות**; it is to loiter in the outer halls without ever attempting to enter the palace. It is sheer ignorance of the real moving spiritual forces which dictates that sort of piety. Saintliness, as Luzzatto understands it, is service and right living; the love of God and the love of our fellow man. It sucks its nutriment not from the husk (ritual practice), but from God, the heart of all things. Luzzatto does not fail to add that a certain amount of physical self-discipline is essential to the pious life, but to identify excessive asceticism with **חסירות** is dangerous.

The "Messilath Yesharim" is to serve, then, as a corrective in this respect. It will be recalled that Bachya in his "Duties of the

¹ Luzzatto maintains that just as there are variations in the physical abilities of men, so there are corresponding variations in their souls; hence there are souls of great power, and also of weaker capacity. This accounts for the "Election Theory" set forth by Luzzatto.

Heart" set before him the same task.¹ In his day the same conditions prevailed. People were scrupulous in fulfilling the **חובות האברים** the "duties of the limbs", the outward expression of the religious life, but were deficient in **חובות הלבבות** "the duties of the heart", the inward intention and attitude. Luzzatto's division is not identical with Bachya's, but there is a striking similarity of ideas worthy of notice - especially since Luzzatto, throughout the book, shows considerable dependence upon **ח"ה**

III The Scope of the "Messilath Yesharim" is to teach by means of the "ten graduated virtues" how to cleanse oneself of every vestige of self seeking and self appreciation and rise to the heights of morality and holiness. Everything that savours of evil and sin must vanish through a process of self purification. Luzzatto aims to guide the average man to the grade of Tsaddik and the "initiate" to the grade of which is the highest achievement in which even the earthly desires are capitalized for that mystical elation which leads to communion with the Holy Spirit. (**רוח הקדש**).

The condition of attaining holiness is the persistent and diligent application of painful effort. Holiness is not a high imposing ideal; it is a desperate and continuous campaign. God's grace is indispensable, but He will supplement ^{only} our efforts if we have exercised ourselves to the utmost in unceasing and restless service and toil in behalf of God and humanity.

1 See Introduction to

Chapter III

The Fundamental Ethical Conceptions of the "Messilath
Yesharim".

In this chapter, devoted to a brief general survey of the book, I shall not dwell upon details, since I have presented in Part II of this thesis a complete and detailed summary in analytical fashion. My object in this brief chapter is to record the salient features, Ethical and Philosophical, contained in the book.

1 Lezarus in his "Ethics of Judaism" (Part I, p. 110) says: "In
its origin Jewish Ethics is Theologic For man's
will and conduct there are standards - that is, moral laws to be
obeyed, and God is the law-giver. Judaism regards what is morally
good and pleasing to God, moral law and divine regulation as inseparable concepts."

Luzzatto's "Messilath Yeshareim" conforms in an eminent degree to Lazarus' characterization of Jewish Ethics: Luzzatto, too, derives the sanction for his ethical teaching from God. But Luzzatto

[illegible]

1. Lazarus, however, does not adhere consistently to his definition as set forth in the cited passage. In his eagerness to save Judaism from the attack of Von Hartman, who condemned Jewish Ethics as "heteronomous", Lazarus resorted to "midrashic" and pilpulistic argumentation to establish a "categorical imperative" (a la Kant) without reference to God. (autonomy) See Lazarus *ibid* part 1, p. 111-112. Neumark has convincingly overthrown the compromising position of Lazarus and established the fact beyond any doubt that Judaism knows of no other ground or sanction outside of God.

cf. the articles of D. Neumark in this matter in the **השכלה** Vol. 6
p. 35 f., p. 347 f. cf. Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 477 f.

the mystic goes even a step further. The divine regulations for him are not an end in themselves; they are only a means **אמצעים** to unlock the mysteries of the universe and to attain thereby the higher life: i. e. absorption in God.¹

II The motive for action plays an important part in Luzzatto's **מצי.**

~~Purity of motive~~ **טהרת המוטיב** in the sense of **טהרת הכונה** constitutes for Luzzatto the highest incentive to action. And by **טהרה** Luzzatto does not mean mere formal sincerity, but sincere and intense Love of God, and Humanity, without any reference to selfish ends.

Luzzatto speaks rather disapprovingly of the external motives - the hope of reward and fear of punishment - as befitting only the ignorant crowd who live on ^{the} ardid plane of do et das, even in matters religious. These are incapable of annihilating self. To induce obedience in those people the sages at all times had to use the motive **יראת ה'.**

But the profounder view is that which looks beyond self, beyond reward and punishment - the view which seeks to honor the Name of God and to glorify Him through deeds of loving kindness and justice, and mystic contemplation. This motive **יראת ה' ומוטיו** is Reverence rather than Fear.

At first blush, it would appear that Luzzatto in his eloquent plea for disinterested piety, rejects entirely reward and punishment in any manner or form, (except for the crowd), but closer investigation will disclose the fact that he only rejects **שכר וצנס** as an immediate motive for a particular action, but not as a remote and ultimate

¹ cf. Sohar (Ed. Sulzbach) on Numbers, column 251.

1. Let us quote from the introduction: ומקום צשיית המצות הוא

רק הצולם הזה. על כן הושם האדם בזה הצולם בתחלה, כדי שצד ירי האמצעים האלה המוחזקים לו כאן יוכל להגניז אל המקום אשר הוכן לו שהוא הצולם הבא לרוות שם בסוב אשר קנה לו צד ירי אמצעים אלה.

Luzzatto approaches Kant's Good Will pretty closely, but does not touch it. It is withal distinctly Jewish. Kant's Good Will is a mere abstraction, while with Luzzatto, (and Jewish ethics in general), the Good Will is rooted in God. The motive of reward, though highly attenuated and sublimated, is nevertheless the very foundation of Luzzatto's Ethics.

III The Yetzer Hara and Free Will. The question of motive is closely linked up with the question of Yetzer Hara and Free Will. This question, however, is inter related with the problem of Soul. In these questions Luzzatto betrays his mystical leanings. In the question of soul and world Luzzatto stands in part upon the ground of Plato and Aristotle and wholly upon Kober. He does not share the Platonic dualism of soul and world entirely. (The soul is foreign to the world's nature, and even hostile to it.) His view is the Platonic dualism Judaized.

Let us quote: כי אין הנשמה אוהבת ופועלת הזה כלל אלא אדרבא נאצלת בו
..... ועל כן ניתנה בו נשמה זאת כי לה ראוי לעבוד ובה יוכל האדם לקבל

השכר במקומו וממנו, שלא יהיה דבר נמצא אל נשמתו בעולם הזה אלא אדרבא נאהב ונחמד ממנו.

1 Here again I was helped by the observations of Neumark. He calls attention to the difference between a motive for a particular reward and a שכר כללי a general and ultimate reward. Neumark in this matter corrects the view of Lazarus, who attempts to show that Judaism is in agreement with Kant who says that an act performed out of שכר is not moral. Neumark shows in (ibid in השכר Vol. 6) that (1) the dominant motive of Judaism is שכר וצניט (2) that שכר וצניט in a broader sense, is not a mean motive.

It is interesting to note that Luzzatto does not allude to the classic passage of Antigones of Socho על תהיו כצבדים המשמשים את הרב וגו

The last phrase gives the thought a Jewish coloring. The soul is a stranger on earth, but it must make the best of its earthly journey by trying to accommodate itself to its conditions¹. The resulting ethics is also Jewish. The complete subjugation of the body is not taught. Physical and spiritual self discipline are recommended, but an unhealthy and stern asceticism is according to our author, non-Jewish.

Matter, by its very nature, is resistant to the good. These resistances are represented^{ed} by the Yetzer Hara which is a strong impulse to sin. The Yetzer Hara in our book is not objectified or hypostatized. It is a shadowy, cloudy figure, more of a tendency than a personality.² This evil impulse is accosting man constantly, counselling the easiest way, advocating wrong doing. In a word, the Yetzer Hara is responsible for every display of unholy passion or emotion. The abode of the Evil One is the heart, which is the sovereign ruler of the human body. God Himself implanted the Yetzer in man in order to make it possible for him to struggle and work out his own salvation.³

The conquest of Yetzer Hara is tremendously difficult, but it is possible because of man's moral freedom, and especially because^{of} Israel's possession of the Torah plus God's grace. Lunzatto does not speak specifically of Free Will, but the whole thesis of the book is based on the assumption that man is free to follow his coarse instincts and

1 Compare with above the passage from the Zohar quoted by Abelson p. 141: "If thou inquirest why it (i.e. the soul) cometh down into the world from so exalted a place and putteth itself at such a distance from its source, I reply thus: It may be likened to an earthly monarch to whom a son is born. The monarch takes the son to the countryside, there to be nourished and trained until such a time as he is old enough to accustom himself to the palace of his father. When the father is told that the education of his son is completed, what does he do out of his love for him? Is not his order to celebrate his home-coming he sends for the queen, the mother of the lad. He brings her into the palace and rejoices with her the whole day long."

2 See Hirsch ibid p. 11

3 See Introduction to קל"ה בתי חכמה. For the Rabbinic conception

hurl his soul into sin, or subdue his passions and espouse the good and attach himself to God.¹

But the Torah² is the most efficacious cure for the malady in our natures (**יֵצֶר הָרָע**). The heart filled with Torah is immune from the wiles and guiles of the Yetzer Hara. Our author quotes the famous rabbinic passage: "If I have created the Yetzer Hara, I have also created the Torah as an antidote". To ignore the Torah is to allow "the disease" to develop, causing death. It is like a patient who ignores the expert counsel of the physician and follows his own untrained judgment and drugs himself to death. To appropriate the Ethical³ standards of the Torah requires a tremendous amount of effort and energetic attention. Man is by nature indolent and reluctant. Man also has certain resistances to work. But he is the master of his own fate. He can turn every obstacle into an opportunity. (We are all, like Parsifal, heir to the glories we ride forth to seek.)

But how can man modify his instincts and rectify his moral tastes?² Here Luzzatto attests his genius as a psychologist. Living in an age when psychology was yet among the unborn sciences, he displays an amazing insight into psychologic processes. He saw far into the secret springs of human conduct. Luzzatto stands wholly on Jewish, as well as

of the Yetzer Hara. See Ber. 60-61; Succah 51b.-52a; Kidd 30b; 61. Baba Bathra 15a, Yoma 69b-70b; Sanhed. 20a. Gen. Rabba 22-24.

1 Viewer in this manner Jewish Ethics is autonomous, as Neumark points out.

2 Torah for Luzzatto is not ^{alone} above the Law, but he employs it in the sense of instruction, knowledge, especially the implicit and veiled secrets of the Law. Torah is used in the mystical **חֵסֶד הַרְיָאָה** sense.

3 As a matter of fact, theology and Ethics, or religion and Ethics, can not be dissociated in Judaism. The Jew never divorced the thought of duty to men from the thought of its relations to God. He always emphasized its rootage in the Infinite. Judaism is a religion, not a philosophy. But for the sake of convenience and clarification, writers have separated Ethics from Religion proper. See Neumark in **הַשָּׁמַיִם** Vol. 6 p. 150

modern ground, when he maintains that instincts can be modified and inhibited by acquired habits, that new moral tastes can be developed. Man is not a fatal automaton, or a helpless creature predestined to sin, morally blemished beyond redemption (except through God's Grace alone), as Calvinism teaches, but rather that man's reason and will and energy can effect a complete transformation in his conduct and character.

Habit and reflection **הרגילות והחבון** are for Luzzatto, as also for modern psychology, the two great forces making for good. Luzzatto formulates the law of moral habit in a number of passages (see Part II). Let us paraphrase his conclusions. A virtue observed at first makes the same easier later. Constant physical and spiritual self discipline end by fashioning a man completely over again. Habit is second nature, hence its power for good as well as for evil. To gain a close grip of the higher life we must make automatic and habitual those actions which lead to the perfected moral life and guard against growing into ways that are likely to impair our moral mechanism. . . Man has traps and enemies, allurements and besetments all along the way, but he can triumph over them in the acquisition of new moral habits. Repetition is an invaluable aid, it must fortify the habit to such a degree as to enable it to cope with the Yetzer Hara under any circumstances.

Luzzatto's psychologic insight is further attested by his successful formulation of what is now called the James-Lange theory of the emotions. I have in Part II of the thesis shown that Luzzatto foreshadowed the theory with striking scientific acumen, and demonstrated its pedagogic value for moral instruction. Furthermore, the manner of treatment of the ten virtues by our author shows his knowledge of

psychologic processes.

Refelection is another illuminating moral guide. Ignorance is the enemy of perfection. But with Luzzatto, the mystic, ההתבונן is more than mere logical, syllogistic reasoning. It is mystic contemplation and meditative research. Let man bethink himself of his crude and lowly origin and his end; let him contrast the transiency and vanity of the material with the persistency and reality of the Divine, and his heart will be stirred into thanksgiving, adoration and homage. Let man speak this in his heart and he will rise humbler and more lowly. Habit is only the tool in the hand of reason, the fellowship of the two makes for true morality.

But man's effort, indispensable as it is for the moral life, must be supplemented by God's grace. This thought is already found in the Talmud. Let it not be misunderstood. The doctrine of God's grace, as expounded by Luzzatto and the Talmud, is not identical with the church doctrine. Luzzatto's is a highly moral conception. Man acknowledging his dependence upon the creator and Fountain of Strength, must after all is said and done, turn to his God for re-inforcement in life's battle with Evil.

It is worthy of notice in connection with the remedies against the Yetzer Hara, that Luzzatto does not recommend stern ascetic practices, or complete withdrawal and retirement from the world. He urges a healthy asceticism. To reduce life's enjoyments to a minimum is commended, not as an end in itself, but rather as a means to holiness. Castigation of the flesh and self torture are disparaged and branded as unJewish. The body is the shelter of the immortal soul; hence it must be kept clean and in good health. Mystic, though he is, he stands entirely on Jewish ground.

As to withdrawal from life, it is sinful. Remoteness and aloof-

ness from life's defiling influences is recommended, but flight from society is unJewish. To be in the world and yet to rise above it, is the Jewish ideal. Fight and not flight sums up Luzzatto's, as well as ^{the} Jewish attitude. Perfection can be achieved even among the voluminous currents and provocations of life. It is not necessary to hide behind a fence which shuts the world out of sight. To live in a world of temptation and sin and yet to remain untainted, should be the mission of every Jew, Luzzatto declares.

Finally, the Yetzer Hara can be employed as the servant of the good. This is the highest stage in the moral life. To capitalize the natural propensities for good is the radiant distinction of the

^{וירק} the holy men. Better than repression is subordination and sanctification. To elevate even the animal functions to the plane of holiness is the most glorious attainment. The aim of the book is to lead the reader or student by means of the "ten virtues" from one stage to the other, each stage being considered the cause of its successor. In ^{the} last stage ^{נשק} the student will be able to subordinate the Evil One to his spiritual welfare.

PART II

A DETAILED SUMMARY OF THE "MESSILATH YESHARIM" WITH NOTES
AND PARALLELS, ANALYTICALLY CONSIDERED, CHAPTER BY CHAPTER
FOLLOWING OUR AUTHOR'S MAIN DIVISIONS.

Chapter I	Treating of Man's Destiny on Earth.
Chapters II - VI	Treating of the Virtue of Watchfulness.
Chapters VI - X	Treating of the Virtue of Zeal.
Chapters X - XIII	Treating of the Virtue of Purity.
Chapters XIII - XVI	Treating of the Virtue of Abstinence.
Chapters XVI - XVIII	Treating of the Virtue of Sincerity.
Chapters XVIII - XXII	Treating of the Virtue of Saintliness.
Chapters XXIV - XXVI	Treating of the Fear of Sin.
Chapter XXVI	Treating of the Virtue of Holiness.

B Appendix

Translations of Makdamah, Chapters I and II.

Chapter I

Treating of Man's Destiny in the World.ביאור חובת האדם בעולמו

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The first chapter, dealing with the *Summum bonum* is seemingly influenced by Luzatto's Cabbalistic views. The mystical note is here dominant. Our author sets forth his conception of the highest good in the following manner: "Man was not created for any other purpose save that of finding delight in God, and to share in the radiance of His presence; for this alone constitutes the highest possible form of joy. The true source of this delight is the other world, which was created to serve this end." To support his view Luzatto cites the passage from Aboth: "This world is only the ante-chamber for the next."

The Mitzvoth are instrumental in the service of this end. Through the exercise of the commandments in this world, the other world will be acquired and man will be enabled to attach himself to God. But the Almighty has placed man in a world where the hindrances to pious activity are many. The earthly passions and fleshly desires tend to carry him further and further away from the real good. Man is the center of a mighty struggle; for, everything on this earth, adversity and prosperity alike, are arrayed against him to obscure his ultimate purpose. And only he who emerges unconquered is worthy of entering into communion with his God. He is prepared to leave the ante-chamber and to enter into the inner palace "to bathe in the light of life". לאור באור ה' ימים. His reward will be determined by the amount of effort invested in overcoming his passions.

The perfection of the world depends in large measure upon man's perfection. The world was created to serve man. It follows, therefore, that if he pursues worldly pleasures and withdraws from his maker, he corrupts his own soul, and contributes to the moral decay of the world. But,

if on the other hand, he triumphs over his baser self, and unites with his God, and utilizes this world for the enlargement of his soul, he is exalted and the world is ennobled thereby. For, the worldly forces attain a greater distinction when they are made to serve the high purpose of the perfect and holy man.

This world is only preparatory to a higher existence in the world to come. This can not be the be-all and end-all. Consider the pain and suffering and fretfulness on earth - and then death. At this point Luzatto posits the dualism of world and soul. The soul and the world are two distinct and disparate entities. The soul's pleasures are not earthly. The soul is a creature of a higher world. The earth is not the suitable habitat

כי צין הנשמה צוהבת העולם הזה כלל אלא אדרבא מוצאת

בו But God breathed it into man in order that through it, he may receive his reward in the world of reality. The soul must, for this reason, be tolerant of its environment, and learn to like its temporary home.¹

שלא יהיה דבר נמצא אל נשמתו בעולם הזה אלא

אדרבא נאהב ונחמד ממנה

Luzatto warns us not to disparage the nobility of human life in order to magnify the superiority of the soul.

The function of the Mitzvoth is now clear. The commandments are the means through which perfection can be attained. Hence the Mitzvoth require our utmost care and punctiliousness. "The conclusion of the matter is this", says our author, "that the purpose of man's existence is the observance of the commandments and his capacity to endure in trial and temptation." The worldly enjoyments have their value, only in so far as they furnish him with that mental and spiritual discipline and composure

¹ Hirsch detects in this phrase a protest against the asceticism of church quietism. This conception of the soul's superiority is Platonic. The Zohar has taken it over and all the mystics followed. See Ableson Jew. Mysticism, p. 161f.

which enable him to devote himself whole heartedly to the service of his Maker. In fact, God should be ^{man's} ~~the~~ only concern. All his doings must lead to that end. He must endeavor to break through all the partitions which separate him from his God. **ולשבור כל המחיצות המפסיקות בינו לבין**

קונו He must so cast off everything earthly, so that he will voluntarily and unconsciously be attracted to the divine, even as iron is attracted to the magnet.

To realize the divine purpose, as set forth here, the author urges us to rise through a persistent application of effort in the ascending gradients of conduct, outlined by R. Phinehas B. Jair mentioned above; the first step being **זהירות** watchfulness.

CHAPTERS II - V.

Treating of the Virtue of Watchfulness

Man must exercise vigilance and circumspection in all his doings. He should consider carefully his ways to discover whether they lead to rectitude, lest he expose himself to destruction and be tempted to follow ~~it~~ and stumble, even as a blind man in the darkness. Common sense and reason will dictate the right course. **הנה זה דבר שהשכל**

יח"ב **והוא** He who trudges this earth without foresight or ^{close} reflection is like unto a blind man who walks to the shore, indifferent to the impending calamity. And after all, negligence, whether it be found in the man who is physically blind, or in him who voluntarily blinds his mind, is one and the same thing. The Prophet Jeremiah deploras the blindness of the people of his day who hurried to their work and pleasures without pausing to consider whither they were tending. (Jer. 8:6) In fact, this is just the clever device of the Yetzer Hara (Evil one) who seduces man into temptation and sin by fettering him in the chains of care and toil, thus

making it impossible for him to halt and consider his ways. The evil one knows full well that reflection and reason are his greatest antagonists, and being skilled in the strategy and subtleties of spiritual warfare, he knows how to take advantage of this fact to gain dominion over man. It is therefore needful that man should arm himself against his enemy, and should exercise great vigilance and circumspection and wisdom to meet the stratagems of the devil. Luzzatto adds, however, that even watchfulness is not sufficient to defeat the Yetzer Hara. God's aid must be invoked; He must endow us with

strength.¹ **ופשוט הוא שאפילו אם יפקח האדם על עצמו אין בכח להנצל**
אצול' הקב"ה עוזרו. כי היצר הרע תקיף מאד..... אך אם האדם מפקח
עצמו אז הקב"ה ^{עזרו} ויגדל מן היצר הרע.

But God will not intervene unless man takes the initiative, as the sage said: "If I am not for myself who will?" (Aboth. 1:14).

The author now deals with the elements that make up watchfulness, and here he displays a deep psychological insight. Watchfulness consists of (a) a knowledge of evil; (b) rejection of the evil; (c) knowledge of the good; (d) pursuit of the good. He emphasizes the importance of habit formation as a factor in character building. Modern psychology is making a great deal of this fact. "The gist of the matter is this, he says, that man should reflect upon all his doings and be circumspect in all his ways, in order that he should not form bad habits or wrong standards".

conform to himself

¹ The doctrine of grace is also found in Judaism, Biblical as well as Rabbinic. (Cf. Isa. 43:25; Ex. R. 19:2; Midr. Teh. (Ed. Buber 119:10) Ex. 13:17a) But let it be observed that the Jewish conception is radically different from the Augustinian teaching, which declares "those who will be saved whom God has gratuitously predestined from all eternity." Judaism teaches that man is born with a spark of the divine and is free to do good or evil, but man is frail, hence God's aid must be sought.

The real moral act is the one which proceeds from choice and reflection. It is interesting to note that Aristotle presents the same idea in almost the same form: "A man, says Aristotle, is not said to act justly or temperately if what he does merely be of a certain sort, he must also be in a certain state of mind when he does it: i. e., first of all he must know what he is doing; secondly, he must choose it for himself, and thirdly, his act must be the expression of a formed and stable character." ✓

Luzzatto makes the interesting observation that people under the influence of the passions are incapable of self examination or reflection. This is a law of the soul. Sensuality tends to eclipse the vision and blunt the finer susceptibilities. A life of pleasure impairs one's sensitiveness to the true and beautiful and the good. Passion blinds the eyes and causes man to stumble in the darkness. The darkness of the night exposes one to two forms of danger, one is caused by his inability to see the object ahead of him; the other danger takes the form of an illusion, causing one to mistake a post for a person, for example. Even so are the propensities of man. They expose him to two errors of judgment. Of the former we have already spoken. A word now remains to be said of the latter: i. e., moral illusion.

Sensuality distorts the vision **שחטט צה ראייתם** and perverts the moral standards of judgment, so that he calls good evil, and evil good. (Is. 5:20). He denies the validity of moral distinctions. Furthermore, he not only lacks the sense of moral discernment, but he will argue and excuse and defend the wrong doing. The Prophet Isaiah exclaims: "The heart of the people is dull and their ears are heavy and their eyes clastered". Their hearts are dull be-

cause their eyes are scaled and they can not distinguish the right from the wrong. They were under the dominion of the Yetzer Hara.

It is therefore essential that we cast off the control of the natural propensities and consult our reason in order to discover the right path and to direct all activity in the proper channels.

Watchfulness can be acquired through the study of the Torah, as R. Phineas B. Jair says: "Torah conduces to watchfulness". This is only a general suggestion, but more especially watchfulness can be acquired by careful attention to our duties and obligations, plus an intimate acquaintance with, and contemplation of the Scriptures and Rabbinic and Talmudic Literature. But not all people are susceptible of the same appeal. Luzzatto divides people into three classes, according to their intellectual endowments: (a) the intellectually mature;¹ (b) the less mature;² (c) the masses.³ Each of these groups will be moved to the good by a different motive.

The first group שלמי הרצות being the highest in the scale of intelligence, will be governed by a sense of respect for the good for its own sake. For them perfection is the only worthy and desirable goal. They will not have to be driven by the hope of reward. This fact, once rooted in their consciousness, as well as the realization that its attainment is conditioned upon good deeds and right living, they will not dare minimize the importance of good deeds. They will be very scrupulous and vigilant in their doings. They will be on their guard all the time for every opportunity to enhance and improve their conduct. This motive may be termed disinterestedness.

1 שלמי הרצות

2 פחותים

3 ההמון

The next class פרוצים being less intelligent, is governed by a less lofty motive. The appeal to them must be of a more materialistic sort. They are motivated by a desire for a better seat in heaven. The attention of these must be called to the fact that the other world is divided into compartments, each enjoying a different degree of importance, according to the merits of the person's life on earth. It stands to reason, therefore, that the man who is sensible and ambitious will try to gain entrance to the highest possible place. This competitive impulse will drive this class to do the good. Our author here warns the person who will pretend to be modest, and say that he is content with Eden's second-best, and hence grow lax in his conduct and reduce his good deeds to a minimum; he will in the end regret his assumed modesty. Such people are without imagination; in the proper time they will discover their folly; for, competition in the other-world is as keen as it is here and no one wishes to be outranked. Let it also be remembered that good deeds can only be acquired here and now. It is too late to mend beyond the grave.¹

And finally, the masses may be exhorted to piety by a consideration of reward and punishment. This principle of retribution will act as a control over their impulses and desires. For God is immanent. He watches over every act of man's life, and who can stand before him in judgment? God takes account of the flimsiest trifle of our doings. Let no man be seduced by the belief that God overlooks the minor sins. (Yeb. 111b). He overlooks nothing and he is severe in judgment. The Almighty will not be bribed or propitiated. Let man bethink himself touching this matter. It will evoke dread in the heart of the average man. ² Luzatto masters many Rabbinic passages in support of his remarks.

¹ Note that throughout the discussion in this chapter Luzatto stresses the thought that the passport to Heaven is not grace but good deeds.

Our author at this point anticipates an objection: "If you are tempted to ask, 'if God operates with strict and rigid justice, what becomes of the attribute of mercy?' The answer our author makes is as follows: "Most assuredly the principle of mercy is the very foundation of the world. It permeates the whole of the universe. Were mercy taken out of the world, the very existence of this earth would be threatened. ^{sentencing left out} Strict justice would require that punishment should follow immediately upon the commission of the evil, especially in the case of irrevocable sins, but as a matter of fact it is not so. The evil doer is given another chance. God waits for a change of heart, which is tantamount to a change of conduct, and if that is achieved the Almighty will blot out the past and forgive." "And thy sin is taken away, and thy sin is expiated". (Is. 6:7) Repentance, our author emphasizes, is efficacious at all times and whatever be the sin.¹ In view of the above, no one can complain of God's strict judgment.

ועה חסד ורחמי שאינה משורת הדין

But God's love and mercy do not push aside justice altogether. The sinner in the act of repentance experiences a sense of disgrace and pain. The extension of time granted to the sinner must not be construed as a deliberate oversight on the part of God, but rather as a manifestation of God's love and patience with the sinner, in order to give him an opportunity to rectify his mistakes. But this outpouring of God's love does not mean that rigid Justice is entirely abolished. If man fails to avail himself of the opportunity to repent, justice will take its course.

¹ See Schechter Aspects ch. 18.

² Missing ref. to older Jewish authorities

The hindrances of Watchfulness are: (a)¹ absorption in business; (b)² the frivolous mood; (c)³ exposure to bad company.

It is obvious that the daily cares and anxieties of business will distract the individual in a thousand ways. If he is held in the bondage of toil and trade and trouble, he can not devote himself properly to the religious service. The rabbis have anticipated this in their remark: "Lessen thy toil in worldly affairs and busy thyself with the Torah". (Aboth 4:12) Business is only a means to an end; hence, it is unwise to devote oneself to business at the expense of Torah. It is wise to fix certain hours for study and meditation. The ignorant can not be pious. God has created the Yetzer Hara, but he has also created the Torah as an antidote.

(Kidd 30 b)

בראתי יצר הרע בראתי לו תורה תבלין לו

Hence no man can cure himself from the worldly temptations without this remedy. Torah can ward off the dominion of the Evil one. He who ignores this remedy will in the end discover his folly. For the Evil One is deep seated in man, and its influence is ever increasing and unless man takes to the Torah, his heart will become numb and dull and stupefied and unresponsive to the good. He will die in his sin and his soul will perish. This thought Luzzatto illustrates by a *lashal*. Such a man may be likened to a sick person who ignores the expert counsel of the physician and follows his own untrained judgment and drugs himself to death. Even so is the man who abandons himself to the power of the Yetzer Hara. This is the most fearful penalty which the sinner pays for yielding to temptation; he loses the power to distinguish the good from the bad. The Torah, however, would stir him

האחד הוא הטיפול והטרדה העלמית

השחוק והלצון
החברה הרעה

into restlessness and lead him to the good. In this emphatic and penetrating manner, our author drives home to the reader the need of appointing hours for study, and of reducing business activity to a minimum.

The second obstacle is more subtle and hence more difficult of mastery: i.e., the frivolous mood, **השחוק והלצון** or the scorning and cynical attitude of mind. The scoffing mood makes men unresponsive to the appeal of sense or reason, as the rabbis have said: "Merriment and lightness of disposition accustom a man to lewdness". (Aboth. 11:19). Levity in its very nature and activity is diametrically opposed to watchfulness. Levity tends to dissipate and scatter the energies, making meditation impossible, while watchfulness aims to collect and concentrate all forces for a common purpose: i.e. God. The flippancy mood has the same effect as the arrow on an oiled shield, which will glide off, (or roll off) without even as much as injuring the surface. The cynical and scoffing mood has a similar effect. It prevents admonition and counsel from penetrating the heart of the individual.¹ Frequently a mere pleasantry or joke will divert the attention from more serious reflection and block up the road to the higher life. The person of "light disposition" must be awakened to his duty through the medium of suffering and pain.

The third obstacle is exposure to bad company; **החברה**

דהיינו חברת הטפשים והחוטאים

Our author warns us against evil associates. He urges social intercourse, but we are advised to choose our friends. An evil or lighthearted companion is bound to quench our pious yearnings. Many sincere and pious people often refrain from religious exercise for fear of evoking laughter in the heart of a wicked associate. Against those "friends" we must set our faces like flint, as we should say: "It will roll off like water off a duck's back."

as flint.

Chapters VI - IX

בבאור מרת הזריות

Treating Of The Virtue Of Zeal, Or Promptness.

Watchfulness is defensive or negative. Zeal is the positive, or offensive aspect of the virtue. It is a quality which calls us to actively and vigorously lay hold upon Righteousness. Man is by nature lazy and indolent.¹ The common man is not uncommonly active, mentally, physically, or otherwise. Man has certain natural resistances to work. But these very obstacles are also his opportunities. Every resistance is a challenge. In spite of himself he must endeavor to overcome his inertia and take possession of the ideal of life.

The Yetzer Hara encourages man to persist in his indolence and heedlessness. The Evil One approaches the soul in some sophistry, in twisted excuse and in some winding compromise, ~~aiming~~ to persuade the soul that ease and carelessness are its legitimate pursuits. The lazy person will always find justification for his laziness and ^{laxity} leniency, forgetting that his very argumentation reveals his pre-disposition. The author lays down a law of piety: **כי זה כלל גדול מנוסה**

במלאכת הפרישות שכל קולא צריכה בדיקה
Every inclination toward lax and lenient practice must be thoroughly investigated and scrutinized, for there is always the danger that the inclination has its origin in some charming seduction of the Yetzer Hara. Every such inclination should be tested by reflection, which will reveal the real motive.

¹ The sariz is the opposite of lazy or shafal. See Yeb. IV:8

² cf. Grathoth Zaddikim, sec. צריקות - 7

Zeal is born of reflection and recognition of the significance of the commandments. "The end of the matter is this: man must employ all his zeal to shake off laziness. This, once achieved, is a radiant distinction worthy of the angels, as it is written: "Bless the Lord, ye angels, ye mighty in strength, that fulfill his word" (Ps. 103:20).

Zeal and promptness should be applied (a) at the beginning of the act, (b) at the end of the act. First, resolution must be followed by doing. Do not delay. "Strike while the iron is hot". Delay will multiply obstacles. Second, the act once begun pursue it to its conclusion. Do not relax. The moral quality of the Mitzvah resides in its result, in the attainment of the proposed end.¹

אין המצוה

נקרצת אלץ על שם גומרה

The means of carrying this out is enthusiasm.

Physical alertness and buoyancy will communicate joy to the soul. For after all it is the soul and the heart which God requires, as well as the act itself. A sluggish body leads to a sluggish spirit. Because there is such a close connection between the body and the soul, it is wise to stimulate the activity of the body in order to arouse the activity of the soul.

Here I should like to pause and dwell upon this idea at greater length. To my mind, Luzzatto here foreshadows the James-Lange theory of the emotions. (See James Psychology). Luzzatto's precise formulation of that idea is so striking that it deserves comment. Let me place in paral-

long

1 Utilitarian, Good will is not enough.

2

התלהטות
התלהבות

connected with this the later form coined

by Luzzatto

bel columns our author's remarks and James' exposition.¹

Luzzatto (Ch. 7)

James (Psychology, p. 382)

He who performs a commandment with physical alertness and swiftness of bodily movement, he thereby also generates a spiritual warmth and enthusiasm, and imparts energy to the will. If, on the other hand, he manipulates his limbs with heaviness, the movement of his spirit will grow dull and will droop and fade out. Experience will convince you of the truth of the matter. For the outward (bodily movement) stirs the inner emotions.

התנועה החיצונית
מצוררת הפנימית

"If we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the outward movements of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate. The reward of persistency will infallibly come, in the fading out of the sullenness or depression, and the advent of real cheerfulness and kindliness in their stead. Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal, rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment, and your heart must be frigid indeed if it do not gradually thaw. 2

The means of acquiring zeal are the same as those which are needed in the acquisition of watchfulness: namely, the consciousness of obligations and duties. This realization will stir in the heart the desire for service. This yearning for piety can be further stimulated by constant and unceasing rehearsal of God's merciful and miraculous dealings with man. A consideration of God's unfailing kindness will awaken a sense of sacred obligation. For after all, the rich and the poor, the well and the sick, must recognize their dependence upon a gracious and merciful God. Even the poverty stricken should gratefully rejoice in the thought that God did not abandon them to absolute privation. In short, there is not a single person who will not acknowledge his indebtedness to God. Our author is not consistent in upholding his views, but it is significant, nevertheless.

התנועה החיצונית גורמת לתנועה הפנימית ("thawing").

the Almighty for His bounty. This thought once fixed in the mind, will banish all laziness and conduce to a life of saintliness.

But here too, as in the case of watchfulness, the motive for action will vary with the type of individual in question and upon his intellectual development.

The hindering circumstances of zeal, or scrupulousness, are: first, Love of ease and pleasure. Man must become aware of his true destiny. He must realize that life is not an idle sport, a careless revel, but rather that it is an earnest and mighty business - a battle. Like the soldier, he must be on his guard and ready to meet the besetting enemy. We must prepare ourselves before hand to meet those temptations and moral antagonisms. Restraint and moderation are therefore invaluable aids in overcoming the stormy passions.

The second obstacle is extreme fear and excessive sensitiveness to changing conditions and climate. A man should develop a certain hardness and resistance to change of climate. Of course, let no one expose himself deliberately to danger and calamity and foolishly brave inevitable collision. It is our duty to protect our bodies, but we must not be over delicate and in constant dread of disease. Exercise discretion. Let not ungrounded fear become an excuse for our indolence. For, it is not fear that produces laziness, but rather fear is born of laziness.

The logical pre-requisite for zeal is watchfulness. Without it zeal is of no avail. After watch has been set over the passions and restrained them, the positive pursuit of righteousness becomes possible.

Treating of the Virtue of Purity, or Cleanliness.

The next degree in the "Hierarchy of Virtues" is cleanliness, or purity. He who has freed himself from all manner of lust and sin, including lust of the heart, is the true Naki. For, evil-doing has its root in evil thinking. The rabbis describe the נקי as one who is "pure in thought".¹ Luzatto would have us grasp the radical distinction between the "watchful" and the "pure". The watchful person will avoid the cardinal sins. He will guard himself against the well defined and universally accepted spheres of vice, but he is unable to cope with the more subtle seductions of the passions. And this is to be expected. The process of repression is a difficult one. It must begin in the abandonment of the universally condemned sins, until vigilance followed by zeal will pave the way to "purity". David rejoices in the achievement of this degree of virtue when he exclaims: "I will wash my hands in purity (*בנקי*) and then will encompass thy altar, O God." (Ps. 26:6). After all it is the pure man who can face his Maker unblushingly.

Luzatto reminds the reader that the attainment of this quality involves much diligent labor and ceaseless effort. *והנה וראי כי מלאכה רבה היא לאדם להגיע אל שלימות המצוה הזאת* For, the subtleties of the passions are many and intricate and mortal man is frail and fragile. But he who has achieved *נקיות* has indeed risen upon a high level of piety.

נקי — Not quite the thought of the author. The sentence "He will - passions" is the thought the author means. *שלימות המצוה* does not mean "pure in thought", but "particularly careful".

The practical applications¹ of this virtue (נִיפּוֹ) are as numerous and intricate as the 365 prohibitive commandments. To be pure means to purge all the highways and by ways of life from sin. The Yetzer Hara is constantly on the alert, advocating wrong doing; we should, therefore, be adequately prepared to combat the wiles of the Evil One, and to attain a strong and fervent purity.

The rabbis said that the sins to which man is most vulnerable are robbery and sexual immorality.² To be sure, most people do not rob in the literal sense of the word, but very few are free from some form of stealing and deception and cunning in the conduct of their affairs. Do not people take advantage of their competitor's weaknesses in business? And do they not seek to profit by the inexperience of their fellow merchants? That is also stealing. It is not enough to merely be inside the law, to run close to the border of transgression. The rabbis have anticipated all this when they exempted the workman from many a religious duty, in order not to rob the employer of his stipulated working day. Here the author pauses to consider a bit of the Ethics of labor. Let us quote: "The sum of the matter is this. He who is employed in any work whatsoever, all his contracted time belongs to the employer, and any attempt to cheat the employer of his time is

על פי חז"ל
2

outright robbery and can not be atoned for except by restitution."¹ The term **גזל** must be extended to cover the theft of time, as well as the theft of property.

Our author now considers the matter of deception in business. It is easy even for an honest merchant to hurl his soul into sin. Let him, therefore, exercise great caution. Let him not forget that it is also prohibited to deceive a non-Jew. It is prohibited to sell revarnished articles as new. Let him remember that cheating in business, even to the amount of a Perutah, is considered by our rabbis as murder.²

But, Luzzatto would not be misunderstood.³ It is perfectly proper for a merchant to display and to praise his wares in order to get a market for them, provided he does not deliberately over rate the intrinsic value and quality of the commodity. Any attempt to camouflage the value of the article is prohibited.⁴

As to false weights and measures, little need be said. It constitutes a grave sin. The matter of usury and its abominations is familiar to every member of the House of Israel. The sum of the matter is ^{this} that one must make a great effort to overmaster the love of money. This passion, once checked, purity will be attained.

¹ Fabian Sabotage would be a breach of Jewish Ethics. cf. Morris Joseph, Judaism as Creed and Life. pg. 314. cf. Maimuni, Hilchoth Sechiroth XIII:7.

²

B. K. 119a הגזל מחברו צמילן שזה פרוטה כאלו נוטל נפשו ממנו

³ Legitimate and fair competition is permitted. The Halakah encourages it also. See Lauferbach, Ethics of the Halakah. Pg. 28.

⁴

וזזה כלל גדול באמונת המשיח והמתן

Another universal evil proceeds from the sex appetite. (B.E.165a). To conquer and subdue this passion is not an easy task.¹ The author would have us understand that unchastity includes not only the illicit act itself, but all other acts, which tend to arouse or stimulate the passions such as kissing and flitting of any variety. Adultery includes every unchaste action, or unchaste thought, or unchaste look.² It means to avoid every contact with women. For these minor intimacies are bound to lead to the graver sins.

The third of the cardinal sins is connected with forbidden foods. The reason given by our author for abstaining from "trefa" and other prohibited foods, is because the impurities contained in those foods are literally absorbed by the body and become part and parcel of it. שהם

וכנסין בגופו של האדם חמץ ונעשים בשר מבשרו

He who fills himself with such food impairs his holiness and causes the Divine Presence to depart. A man in his right sense will avoid forbidden food as one avoids poison.³ This is a primitive conception, found among many tribes.⁴ I was able, following the suggestion of Hirsch, to

1 והנה מי שירצה להנקות מזגו החטא לו תצטרך חלאכה לא מועפת דא לא תנאף

2 See Lev. R. 23:11; cf. Mechilta of R. Simon 111 cf. also N.T. Matt. 5:27, 28.

3 cf. the statement in Abodah Z. 31 כל השרצים יטלהם ארס

4 This notion forms part of the system of sympathetic, or homeopathic magic. Among the Creeks, Cherokee, and kindred tribes of North American Indians, there is a widespread belief that "Nature is possess of such a property as to transfuse into men and animals the qualities either of the food they use, or of those objects that are presented to the senses, This is the reason that several of their old men recommend, and say, that formerly their greatest chieftains observed a constant rule in their diet and seldom ate of any animal of gross quality, or heavy motion of body, fancying it conveyed a dullness through the whole system, and disabled them from exerting themselves with proper vigor in their martial, civil, and religious duties." Jas. Adair, Hist. of the Amer. Indians, (London 1775) pg. 133. quoted by Frazer in Golden Bough, Vol. II. pg. 139 f.

trace our author's thought on this matter a little further. Elijah de Vidas in his **תשית חכמה** commenting on Lev. 11:16, says as follows:

**וְפִי בָזָהוּ פִי עֵינִן זֶה כִּי הַמֵּאֲכִלִים הַטְּמֵאִים
שֶׁהִזְהִירָה לָנוּ הַתּוֹרָה מֵהֶם שׁוֹרָה עֲלֵיהֶם רוּחַ
חִיצוֹנִי וְטֵמֵא וְלֹכֵן אוֹכֵל מֵאוֹתָם הַדְּבָרִים מְטֵמֵא
נַפְשׁוֹ וּמֵרָצָה עַל עַצְמוֹ שֶׁאֵין לֹא חֵלֶק בְּקִדּוּשָׁה וְלֹא
בְּאַלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי דָבָר הַטְּמֵא נֶעֱשֶׂה חֵלֶק אִגֵּר בַּעֲצָם הָאֲדָמָה**

"The Zohar in commenting upon the verse in Lev. 11:16 says that the forbidden foods against which the Torah warned us, contain unclean and ^{unholy} foreign ~~substances~~, (spirits) so that he who partakes of it defiles his soul and gives evidence of the fact that he has no share in holiness, nor in the God of Israel; for the unclean substances become ^{bone} of man's bone." Luzzatto, no doubt, drew his explanation from the Zohar. ¹

There are also sins incidental to social intercourse, which our author considers briefly. They are: (a) dispensing misleading counsel, **הַכְשֵׁלֶת הָעֵצָה בַּעֲצָה**. (b) slander and backbiting, **רְכִילוּת**. (c) wounding one's feelings, **הַנֶּגַת דְּבָרִים**. (d) hatred and revenge, **דָּבָר שֶׁקֶר**. (e) perjury, **שְׁוָעָה וְנִקְיָמָה**. (f) lying, **שְׁבוּעָה**. (g) the desecration of God's name, **חִלּוּל הַשֵּׁם**. These are existing evils. Who can say I have not been guilty of any of these?

commenting on Lev. 17:11, says **מִן הַדָּוָה עַד כִּי הֵנָּכֵל יִשָּׁע
בְּגוֹף הָאָדָם וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד.**

Ibn Ezra commenting on Lev. 11:43 says "Do not defile your souls with
....." **כִּי יֵחֶב כִּי הַגּוֹף הֵנָּכֵל יִשָּׁב בְּשָׂר בְּגוֹף הָאָדָם**

In connection with the eating of blood, Nachmani ^{does} quotes Maimuni to the effect that the Babylonians abstained from blood because they regarded it unclean, and only those who sought intercourse with demons partook of the blood of animals.

! רכילות ומחלוקת 13 & where I. really means to say

Wounding one's feelings by means of words is a graver sin than that of imposing a pecuniary wrong. (B. Mez. 58b). This sin includes any form of embarrassment inflicted upon a person privately or publicly. It also includes any attempt to deceive, confuse, misguide, or misrepresent our fellow men. The rabbis regard **הונאת דברים** as a grave transgression (B. Mez. 59a).

To give misleading counsel to our neighbors is also a great evil. It is a breach of the commandment, "Thou shalt not put a stumbling block in the path of the blind". (Lev. 19:14). If one seeks our honest advice, let us not defraud him. We must not betray the confidence put in us by our neighbors. All selfish gain must be excluded from our recommendations. "This is the duty of every upright man, when a man seeks his advice, he must suggest to him the way which he would choose for himself ^{no equivalent in text} under similar circumstances, excluding all ulterior motives." The cause of Truth compels such a course of action.

Slander, or backbiting. Of all the abominations these are the most pernicious. To slander and gossip means to misuse God's implement, (the tongue). It is reprehensible. Here is the rule to be guided by in this respect: "Any word, or statement, which might inflict damage or shame upon our neighbor ^{words omitted} is backbiting, and abhorrent to God." Malicious gossip is irreligious. We are required to guard and respect the reputation of our fellow men.

Hatred and Revenge. In these evils most men are vincible and no one is exempt from these. Revenge is sweet, **הנקמה** and to overcome it requires much effort and labor. A few practical suggestions, by our author, may be extremely helpful. Do not nurse your wrath. Obliterate all past grievances from your memory. The Evil One is constantly accosting man, urging him to retain his anger,

but we must free ourselves from his grasp. The Torah categorically commands: "and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself -----" as thyself - without reservations - literally as thyself.¹ ואהבת לרעך כמוך, כמין בלי שום הפרש, כמין בלי חילוקים בלי ההבדלת והזמנות, כמין כמין.

Lying

There are three different kinds of liars; (a) there is the professional liar, who lies in order to create sensations and to call attention to himself. He is a despicable person. He is excluded, according to the rabbis, from the Divine Presence.² (b) There is also the less serious liar: i.e., the fabricator. He loves to invent stories in order to spice his conversation. This form of lying is also bad, since it settles into a habit and becomes "second nature". This species of liar inspires absolutely no confidence. The fearfullest penalty the liar pays is that even when he speaks the truth, people will not believe him. (Sanhed 9b). כך הוא צונטן טעל בראי שאצי'ו אומר.

אמת אין שומעין לו.

And again, there is the man who is not a liar by habit, but who will upon occasion utter an untruth. It is often unintentional and only by way of joking. But one must shrink from that also. God, whose seal is truth, despises even the ghost of a lie. And Luzzatto here adds: "Truth is the pillar of society. (Aboth. 1:18). To lie is to subvert the very foundations of the world, and will defeat its purpose." *no equivalent in text*

1 This counsel is all the more remarkable, coming as it does, from one who suffered without cause at the hands of others. The story of his life, his woes and wanderings, his maltreatment at the hands of others, could have embittered anybody, but he rose above these things.

2 Eotah 42a; cf Sanhedrin 102b, 103a; Pesikta R. Kahana (Ed. Buber) 1a.

Lying is at no time admissible. Reason tells us categorically that it is wrong.¹

והציון שכל אדם לפי מדרגתו ולפי מה שהוא
חשב בעצו הדר צדק שיתבון לבלי עשות דבר בלתי הגון לאיש כמוהו

Hillul Hashem, or the desecration of God's name.² This is the opposite of קדוש השם, or the desire to invest the name of God with honor. The quality of our conduct may be such as will reflect honor and glory upon our Maker, or such as will profane His name. Every act of Evil doing ^{in public} is construed as a profanation of God's Holy name. This must act as a check upon our conduct; and the fact of the matter is this; that every man must refrain from violating the dignity of his station.

He implies that every class has its standards. Naturally more is expected of the scholar, than of the laborer. Let each man, according to his endowments, protect his honor, and thereby he will protect God's glory. But Hillul Hashem is to be extended to neglect in matters of ritual as well. The punctilious observance of the Sabbath is essential. Especially does our author deplore the prevailing custom to converse and plan about business transactions on the Sabbath. "It is even prohibited to say on the Sabbath: 'I shall do so and so tomorrow, or I shall buy certain merchandise' and the like."

The author admits that he has not exhausted in the above list, all the weaknesses of mankind. He only enumerates the prominent ones. The

1 Kant in his Critique of Practical Reason maintains this position with much vigor. *You find it also in Kant's religious writings.*

2 cf. Kohler Jewish Theology pg. 348 f.

reader is now prepared, however, to deal with any others of the same species. The "Naki", Luzzatto reiterates, must rid himself of all the above mentioned sins.

But "purity" extends beyond the deed itself. It requires also "purity" of disposition, or character **נקיות במדות**. Or, to put it more tersely, conduct must go hand in hand with character. For character determines conduct. Luzzatto insists, and rightly so, that the basis for every act lies in some inner disposition, which is responsible for the consequent action, that he calls **מדות**

והנה המדות הן רבות כי כפי כל הפעולות
ששייכים לאדם בעלמו כמו כן מדותיהן
שאחריהן הוא נמשך בפעולותיו

The dispositions enumerated are : (a) Pride, or self esteem³ (b) Anger⁴ (c) Envy⁵ (d) natural appetites⁶ (e) Jealousy⁷. All these tendencies, and their evil consequences, are not unfamiliar to most people.

I Pride, or Self-Esteem. This vice assumes different forms in different people. Some there are who esteem themselves wise, others esteem themselves handsome and others distinguished, etc. Any of these forms is

3 הגאווה

4 הכעס

5 הקנאה

6 התאווה

7

nothing in the text

to be condemned, however, no good can come of haughtiness. The author now enters into greater detail in describing the different forms of **גאווה**. There is the individual who endeavors to give evidence of his dignity by his bombastic and boastful bearing and gait. He surrounds himself with certain reserves. His movements are weighed and balanced. He poses. Everything about him is stilted and affected.

Another, will display his conceit by inspiring fear in the hearts of his neighbors. In others, pride disguises itself as humility and democracy. They deign to consort with the poor and the outcasts; they refuse all honors, but in their hearts they say "There is none like unto me". This masked self esteem is also harmful. This in itself is also a species of pride. He wants people to account his assumed lowliness as a virtue. The pride which is portend only as a tendency, is also undesirable.¹ All of these varieties are forms of self delusion. "Pride is nothing but blindness of the mind, which veils and conceals one's faults and limitations."

**אין הגאווה אלג צורין
ממש אשר אין שכל האדם רואה חסרונותו ומכיר פחיתותו**

II Luzatto in the next few paragraphs deals in a similarly searching manner with Anger. He speaks of the different intensities of that passion, ranging from violent rage to the more rational and mild forms. Of course, to attain a fervent purity **נקיות** we must divest ourselves even of the more reasonable and excusable variety of anger. Hillel is cited as the ideal example of moderation and temperance in this respect. He was "pure from anger" and hence worthy of emulation.

וימצאו גאים אחרים, שהשאר גאווה לא יוציאוה אל המצטק אבל יחטבו
בשבבם שכבר הם חכמים גדולים

Envy is the result of ignorance and stupidity. The one who envies does not profit by indulging ⁱⁿ his envy and the person envied does not lose by it. Envy always generates a perilous influence. There are people who grieve over their neighbor's prosperity and success. This is sheer folly. The way to overcome this ugly quality is to resign ^{ourselves} to our lot and find contentment in our own portion, independent of other people's circumstances. (But the author makes his analysis more searching. He diagnoses the cause of this evil. "You will observe, he says, that the offshoot of envy is the desire for gain and pleasure, -----, and the root of pleasure is twofold; (a) the love of ^{honor}, (b) the love of ^{power}".) The love of money fetters man in the claims of worldly affairs and enthralls him in the shackles of toil and trade. This absorption in business leads to the neglect of the religious duty. It exposes him to worries and cares which drain his vitality. Every new acquisition and expansion multiplies his anxieties.

But, the desire for honor is even more stubborn. It is easier to subdue the money evil than to overpower the passion for applause. Many have fallen by the wayside because of this ugly desire. This false and hollow ambition is at the root of all longings and inclinations. Were it not for the desire of fame man would content himself with but little. The bare necessities of life would have served his purpose. No one would dream of amassing large fortunes. But the ambition to outdo his neighbor drags him into the whirl of trade and worry. The rabbis have wisely remarked that "Envy, lust and ^{ambition drive man from the world} ~~honor~~ cause premature death". (aboth).

The person who wishes to attain and retain purity must cleanse himself of that quality. The task is not an easy one. It will take much diligent labor. But it is not beyond our control. The frame of mind is not ~~not~~ thought as a transition; but the writer ought to have started a new paragraph so as to make it clear that he deals here with the IV virtue: Passion (not: Desire - too weak)

even more difficult of achievement than the act. והמחשבה בוצר קשה מן המצוה. As soon as the mind is properly attuned it will impart its energy to the will, until repetition will habituate him to the right conduct.¹ הנה במצט הרגל שירגיל עצמו בזה תשוב לוקשה.

The surest way of attaining purity is by constant and increasing reflection and reading of Rabbinic and Ethical literature. At this stage the reader will have been impressed with the desirability of the quality of נקיות. But that desire must be re-inforced by a knowledge of the details of piety. To know is to love. He must constantly review the different aspects and ramifications of the mitzvah². The disposition must also be kept in good working order. A study of Ethical treatises will be exceedingly helpful.

וכן בענין המדות מוכרחת לו קריאת מאמרי החסד לקטמונים או לאחרונים. The devotional literature will act as a memoranda in many instances. They will suggest further reflections and new ideas. The important thing is to be steeped in pious and religious matters. The chief hindrance to "purity" is ignorance.²

1 Compare with this the lines from Hamlet, conveying a similar idea:

"Refrain to might, And that shall lend a kind of easiness to the next abstinence, (the next more easy). Use, almost can change the stamp of nature". Hamlet, Act. III, Sc. IV.

cf Dewey and Tufts Ethics, p. 342: "A habit of reflection is as easy and natural to follow as an organic appetite."

2 Luzzatto is a mystic of the legalistic type. The fulfillment of the law is indispensable to a life of חסידות.

ביאור מדת הפריונות

Treating Of The Virtue Of Abstinence (Temperance)

פריונות or temperance, is for our author a pivotal quality.

The possession of this quality distinguishes the **חסיד** from the **צדיק**.¹ Temperance is the beginning of saintliness. He who has ascended through

watchfulness and zeal to purity is the **צדיק** (Tzadik). But this is not the end of the journey. ~~and this is not the end of the journey.~~

Higher than the Tzadik is the chassid, and he can not stop at purity.¹

The **צדיק** still moves within the limits of the law - the **חסיד** rises above the law. The quality of temperance, or abstinence is summarized in the Talmudic formula: "Sanctify thyself even in that which is permitted to thee."

(Yeb. 1a). Here a new domain of virtuous activity is thrown open. It means to push through the letter to the spirit of the law. The **פרוש** must not only abide by all the commandments and prohibitions, Biblical and Rabbinic, but he must surround himself with additional "fences" to shield himself from temptation.

ובונה גדרים לעצמו, דהיינו להניח מן ההיתרים עצמם שלא נאסרו לכל ישראל ולפרוש מהם, כדי שיהיה מרוחק מן הרצ הרחק גדול.

He who aspires after saintliness must practice a certain amount of asceticism and self-discipline. Luzzatto adduces a great deal of Rabbinic evidence to prove his assertion.²

¹ Hirsch finds in this differentiation a kabbalistic motive. "The reflection of kabbalistic speculation is clearly patent in this differentiating of the Chassid from the Tzadik." Our author approximates the cloistered saint of the Catholic Church and was influenced by it, Hirsch maintains. Ibid p. 4.

² Introduction to **רוקח**: מי שהוא חסיד צוטה לעולם משירת הדין

cf. B. Men. 30b. See also Morris Joseph Judaism as creed and life. p. 294.

³ Yer. Kid 69a 1; Yer Kidd 84:12

Every legitimate enjoyment may become harmful if carried to excess. Thus, desire for food may be converted into gluttony. The desire for drink if not restrained, will lead to inebriety. Immoderation makes it illicit and turns it into lust. (The consequences of lust are here set forth with penetrating, psychological insight by our author). And once the individual becomes addicted to those forms of over-indulgence, his constitution will develop a craving for it, and will be compelled to obey its call at the cost of whatever crime. Failure to satisfy the full range of the desire will prove uncomfortable and will arouse feelings of ^{deprivation} ~~invitation~~ and lack.¹

כל שכן שבהיות האדם מראי' עצמו לשבוע מאכילה ושתיה,

הנה אם נצמם אחד יחדר לו ראיונותו יכאב לו ויראי' ש מאי

Such a person always lives above his means and to gratify his passions, he must resort to crime. Hence the need of moderation in the organic appetites.² Restraint will secure for the individual a high moral resistance which will stand him in good stead when the Evil One appears at his door to infect him. He will then be able to cast off the defiling influence.

The author returns to further illustrate the possible evils set forth upon over indulgence. Thus, for instance, the Torah allowed intercourse between man and his wife, yet the Torah has imposed certain restric-

1 This formulation of the law of habit is almost modern. See Dewey and Tufts Ethics. page 343.

2 This conception of *mitzvot* is old. The locus classicus of this idea is found in Nachmani in his commentary on Leviticus XIX:2, "As I am separated so be ye separated." (Cited by Schechter in Aspects of Rabbinic Theology page 211) A careful comparison of the passage in Nachmani and the passage in our book, will reveal a striking similarity. Let us put them side by side.

Luzzatto

כי הנה אין כל תענוג צולמי אשר לא ימשוך אחריו איזה חשק בעצמו, דרך משל, והמשתה כשניקומם איסורי האכילה הנבחרים הם, אמנם מי' הכרם משך אחריו פריקת הצול, ומשתה הין מושך אחריו הפקת ואר מינים רעים..... אמנם כבר תקנו טבילה לבצ' קרין שא לא יהיו תלמידי חכמים מצויים אל נשים כתרנגולים, ופי' שאם לא ישתה צולמו מותר.

Nachmanides

והחזק כי התורה הזהירה בעריות ובמאכלים אסורים והתירה הביאה איש באשרו ואכילת בשר והיין א"כ ימצא בכל התאווה מקום להיות ששוק בזמנה אשרו אונשו הרבות..... וידבר כרצונו בכל הנבלות שנה הוזכר אסור בתורה..... שפי' כל בא הכתוב... וצוה שנהיה פרושים מן המותרות ונצט במשגל כענין שאמרנו שא היות תלמידי חכמים מצויים אל נשים כתרנגולים.

tions in this regard. Similarly the wearing of jewels and finery is allowed. The Torah contains no laws concerning dress except *zizith* and *shatnez*). Yet we all know how many vices result from a passionate love of jewelry. The evil One is after the man of pomp and vanity. In fact every worldly object may become a menace to the individual if abused. The law of abstinence, therefore, dictates that we should make no concessions to extravagance or pleasure, but to partake only of the things ^{necessary} necessi-
tious to man's maintenance. **שֵׁשׁ לֹאִם לְפָרוֹשׁ מִכָּל מַה שֶׁהוּא**

תַּעֲגוּא צוֹלָמִי

But our author is aware of the stringency of the rule which he lays down, while also anticipating the objections which some legalistic Jews might raise: namely, that it is presumptuous on any individual's part to modify and improve upon the rabbinical codes. "And if you will ask if those restrictions are so imperative for man's moral welfare, why ~~would~~ not the sages (rabbis) ~~have~~ enacted them even as they enacted "fences" and ordinances?" To this objection our author replies as follows: The rabbis in ~~certain cases~~ made concessions to the weakness of the average ~~man~~ (or ~~masses of~~ men) and therefore did not establish such prohibitions as would overtax the endurance of the majority of people.² Clearly, then the rabbinical laws must not be taken as the supreme law of conduct.³

מה שגם אוכל יותר מקיום הנפש הוא תַּעֲגוּא : **וְאִשִּׁית חֲכָמָה** 1 of

כי לא גזרו חכמים גזרה אלא אם כן רוב הציבור יכולים לעמוד בה, ואין רוב הציבור יכולים לעמוד בה

כי אצל שאלו מצוות מדבריהם עיקר **הכתוב בכיפא בזה יזהיר שנה"ה נקיים וטהורים ופרושים מהמון בני אדם שהם מלכלכים עצמם במותרות** 3 pure Nachmani's statement (ibid)

Here our author betrays his aristocratic leanings. There is an aristocracy of sainthood. For, after all, saintliness is not for all sorts and conditions of men. It would be well if the average man achieved the degree of the Tsaddik. It is sufficient that a minority should mount to the heights of holiness. The rigorous practices included in פרישות are for those who would scale the heights. The Almighty has in his wisdom created men with different degrees of susceptibility. כי יש בצם מריאות

מריאות איש לפי שכלו, הנה נדחת יחיד לאוּלָה ימאן אִךְ יִכְנוּ אֶת עַצְמָם הַכְנָה אִמּוּרָה

Therefore, the Almighty endowed a small circle with a peculiar spiritual power and charged them with the task of developing themselves into חסידים. The holiness and piety and merits of this group יחיד סגולה will be charged to the account of all of the House of Israel.¹ ועל יד המוכנים יזכו

אם הבלתי מוכנים אל אהבתו יתברך והשראת שכינתו

Their merit is distributed among all the members in Israel. These chosen ones must practice abstinence.

But there is an undesirable and repugnant form of abstinence. There are many foolish ascetics who not only renounce the absolute necessities of life, but they torture themselves and castigate their flesh and inflict upon themselves bruises and other strange punishments, which are displeasing to God.

On the contrary the rabbis have warned us against self-torture. (Taanith 23b)

¹ This power of transferring merits to others is to my mind an aspect of the doctrine of זכות. The rabbis have also the notion that a pious contemporary can condone for the imperfections of the people. God judges the world by taking an average. Mankind is judged in accordance with the number of righteous and wicked men it contains. See Schechter, Aspects p. 189 - 90

of Kidushin 40b; Eccles. R 10.

It is sinful to distort the body which gives shelter to the soul. (Taan 20b.11a) Hillel said: "See what care they bestow upon the Emperor's statue; they keep it clean and bright: ought we not to keep God's image, our body, clean and free from every stain and blemish".¹ (Lev. R. 34:3). This is the rule: "A man should avoid those worldly pleasures which are superfluous to his well being; but those needs which he requires/sustenance, it is sinful to renounce." **הרי לך הכלל האמתי שכל מה שאינו**

מוכרח לאדם בצניני הצלם הזה ראוי לו שיפירט מהם, וכל מה שחוג

מזכרח לו מאיזה טעם שהוא מוכרח לו, אם הוא צורך כמזון הרי זה חוטא, הוה זה כלל נאמן

This is the principle. The application is left to the individual's own discretion.

Temperance and stringency must be exercised in (1) the appetites. (2) in legal injunctions. (3) in customary practice. The abstinence in appetites was treated above. By stringency in legal injunctions, **פרישות**

ברייני Luzatto means, that one should always impose upon himself the decision of the most rigorous codifiers, and even if the decision is supported by only one authority; and in all cases to rise above the letter of the law. This is illustrated by the case of Mar Ukba, who describes his own lenient practice as "vinegar descended from wine", his father refusing to eat cheese after meat only after a lapse of twenty four hours. (Shulin 105a).

The **צרוץ** must also avoid too much social intercourse if he would give himself completely to the service of God. But here too, one runs the danger of being driven into extreme isolation and withdrawal from life.

¹ Compare with this conception the church doctrine that "Cleanliness of the body is the pollution of the soul."

un-jewish

Flight is an un-jewish principle. Man is an organic member of the larger whole, and he must mingle among men. Let him look to others as a means of furthering his ends of piety. In the earning of a livelihood, one should associate with good people, but the rest of the time should be devoted to meditation and the achievement of true piety. This principle implies that one should not multiply words and be watchful in all matters of conduct until ~~custom and habit will communicate buoyancy to the bodily movements.~~ ^{they become habitual in his}

שהאדם מראוי את עצמו בהם צד שנשארים לו

בטבע אל תנוצותיו

The quality of abstinence is best acquired by reflecting upon the cheap and transient character of the worldly enjoyments, as well as upon the elusiveness of desire. Consider that life can not be measured by transitory sensations. Our appetites are called forth by the charming fascination of the eye, which is but of the moment. Is there any desire more elusive than eating? Once the food is swallowed the taste disappears. Think of this fact and ~~restraint~~ ^{abstinence} will come easy. Furthermore, intemperate eating is the cause of many ills; it produces a certain dullness, and produces certain gases which mount into the brain, causing mental confusion.¹ In the light of these facts we may assume that people will not hazard danger in order to satisfy a passing desire. A knowledge and recognition of these matters will inspire caution and temperance. It is also recommended that we should move in circles of modest and chaste persons. Association with pompous and voluptuous people is contagious and is bound to inflame the passions. Finally, our author recommends alcoholism as the most invulnerable fortification against the devil. Keep away from lustful things and the turbulent passions will be silenced. This, i. e. retirement, was

¹ Gabirol assigns the same effects to inactivity.

the highest ideal of Israel's sages and seers. But let every man be cautious in the search of this goal. It can not be achieved by a single leap. Let him retire bit by bit **אֵלָא יִהְיֶה כִּי יִרְשֶׁה וְהוֹלֵךְ מִצִּטְהָיִים יִקְנֶה קִצְתָּהּ** and every step will lend an easiness to the next step until it will settle into second nature.

Chapters XVI - XVIII XVIII

Treating of the Virtue of Sincerity.¹

בְּיָצוֹר מִדַּת הַטְהָרָה

By **טְהָרָה** our author means the cleansing and improvement of the heart,² and the thoughts and disposition. All our deeds must be free from the base alloy of sin or passion. Even the man who practices temperance and partakes only of the bare necessities of life, must also purify his motives so that the minimum should not be defiled by bad motives. But let all action be born of love and for its own sake. **לְשֵׁמָה** Many a lovely and good act is frequently dictated by impure and inferior motives **שֶׁלֹא** **לְשֵׁמָה** Many pious acts are performed from self seeking desires, the hope of reward,³ or other selfish ends.

These **foremen-** selfish motives are familiar to all and are easily guarded against. But the real difficulty in the matter of **טְהָרָה**

¹ I found it most accurate to render **טְהָרָה** by sincerity. We have rendered **נִקְיֻת** "purity". Furthermore, sense requires such a rendering. It means purity of motive.

² This term (heart) stood for the voluntary disposition, especially in its inner springs of emotion and sentiment, affections and passions". Dewey & Tufts Ethics p. 105.

³ The rabbis do not discourage action proceeding from this motive, on the ground that **שֶׁלֹא לְשֵׁמָה בָּא לְשֵׁמָה** Pesachim 50b; cf. Schechter, Aspects 161-162.

lies in detecting the "black spot" *האֵלֶּסֶר*, the *שִׁמְץ הַטֵּמֶה* (mixed motives), the inconspicuous "speck" of impurity which so frequently creeps into an act. Here is a man who starts out to perform an act for its own sake *לְשֵׁמֶה* but unconsciously and involuntarily a desire for applause or approval will enter into the act. Or the desire for a plause will not enter directly into the act, but only indirectly, as a stimulus to greater effort, thus increasing his enthusiasm. *וְלִפְעָמִים אֲפִלּוּ אִם לֹא יִהְיֶה מִתְכוּיִן מִמֶּנּוּ לְשִׁיבְחוֹתָן בְּשִׂמְחָה לְבֹו צֶל הַשְּׂבִיחַ יִרְבֶּה מִקִּדְקִידָה*
 This increment of enthusiasm is produced by an impure motive; (i.e., self esteem) and is sinful.¹ *הִרִי הַתְּיוֹסֻפוֹת הַזֶּה לֹו לֹר מִכַּח הַשְּׂבִיחַ שִׁיבְחוֹתָהּ*
 In short, every worldly intention must be excluded from the act. The moral worth of an act lies in its disinterestedness.

Our author does not fail to add, however, that it is humanly impossible to erase every "speck" of the desire for approval, but it must be reduced to a negligible quantity. And in the measure in which the pious man succeeds in banishing impure motives, he will attain to holiness. A man's saintliness can be tested by this quality of *כְּוֹהֶרֶת*. The rabbis have said that God wants the heart *רַחֲמָנָא לֵבָא בְּצִי*. The heart must be purged of all blemish before one can enlist ⁱⁿ the service of the divine.² The heart is the sovereign of the human body, having dominion over all the other limbs, and if the heart fails to function in the right direction, the other members of the body can not function properly. As the verse in Proverbs says: "My son give me thy heart". (Prov. 23:26).

The condition of the achievement of the quality of sincerity is the perfection of the innermost feelings. This will follow as a natural sequel if the virtues already enumerated in the previous chapters have been

¹ Our author's conception of Purity of Motive resembles Kant's Good Will.

² Bachye in his *חובות הלבבות* dwells at great length on sincere motives, as the title of the book indicates, "duties of the heart".

as have referred explicitly to Kant's series of...

appropriated. Luzzatto briefly summarizes the conclusions of the foregoing chapters and re-emphasizes the need of reflection in the casting^{off} of the natural propensities. As to the virtue of sincerity, he reflects that the inner feelings of the heart must be cleansed of all irrelevant motives, both in dealing with material and spiritual affairs. **האחר במעשים**

האופנים והאחר במעשי הצבורה

All efforts must lead to piety. All extraneous thoughts should be barred. The author urges the reader not to enter upon his religious obligations too suddenly. Let him spend some time in getting into the proper frame of mind and in the desired mood, as the ancient saints used to do. (Berachoth 30b) They would spend one hour in preparation for prayer, shaking off all foreign and irrelevant thoughts and refilling their souls with love and reverence.

The hindrances to sincerity are ⁽¹⁾ ignorance of the transiency of material things (2) inadequate preparation prior to the execution of religious duties.

Chapters XVIII - ~~XXI~~ XX/

בריאות החסידות

Treating of the Quality of Saintliness

The next quality in the "chain of virtues" is **חסידות** saintliness. Luzzatto takes the opportunity in this chapter to correct the popular view of saintliness. Many things, he declares, pass for piety among the majority of people. There are those who give the impression that piety consists in fasts, vigils, the recital of long and many prayers, confessions of sin, loud wailing, reverent postures, and ascetic practices, such as the taking of snow and ice baths, and the like.¹ This is not true piety. This is piety with the soul taken out of it. It is only a corpse **חסידות** and the essential things are lacking. Some of the practices may be of some

¹ See **ראשית חסידות** Chapters on Holiness and Repentance where ice baths are recommended. cf. Introduction to **רוקח** of Eliezer of Worms.

value to penitents,¹ but the saintliness is conditioned upon service and righteous living.

The **חל"י** does not wait for a distinct commandment. He is not satisfied with fulfilling the universally known duties, but like a devoted son, who studies his father's will, inferring from the inarticulately expressed wishes of the father, the direction in which he is likely to give him joy.² The son anticipates the father's desires and comforts

ואף על פי שלא אמרו אבין אלא פעם אחת ובה' ריבוי. הנה רי לאותו הבין

In fact, wherever a mighty love binds two people, this relation obtains. Hence we must deal with our Maker in the same manner. We must not wait for clear, definite and explicit commands. But every man according to his conception of God's will, and according to his particular bent of mind, must devote himself single-heartedly to a certain bit of service and deal with it from all possible aspects. In this wise we afford our Maker pleasure.³ **וזו הנקרא עושה נחת רוח ליוצרו**

The ideal of Chasiduth is just the fulfilling of the commandments in every detail and to anticipate every possible condition.

Chasiduth is the positive aspect of Merishuth, "the latter abstaining from the permitted, while the former goes beyond the commanded."⁴

1. cf. **חובות הלבבות** section **תשובה**; **sanhed. 25a. Tar Orach** **Sanhed. 602, 603.**

2. cf. **Lebechter, Aspects p. 209.**

3. cf. **Bebe Kama Son** where different rabbis record their various religious ideas.

4. cf. **Hirsh p. 11**

The quality of saintliness may be viewed in a threefold manner:

(I) Saintliness in connection with the act itself. (II) In the method of executing the act. (III) In the intention.

(I) The first falls into two subdivisions: (a) ~~g~~ duty toward God. (b) ~~g~~ duty toward our neighbors.

(Ia) Concerning our duty toward God, our author re-emphasizes the importance of observing all the minute details of the law as far as is humanly possible. The rabbis commend highly those who fulfill the maximum of the legal requirements. (Succah 38a) ¹

(Ib) The duties regulating the affairs between man and his neighbor, rest upon the principle that man should always exercise himself in helpful service² and kindly thoughts, in order that our needy neighbors may find rest and comfort.³ Luzzatto takes up the conception of helpful service under three headings: (1) personal service; (2) monetary assistance; (3) sympathy.

תלך Help your fellow men in whatever manner possible and share his burdens. Avoid anything that might result in injury to him. למנוח
The principle to be observed in connection with monetary assistance is: "Let the property of your neighbor be as sacred and inviolable to you as his own." (Aboth 2:17). תלך Seize every opportunity to do some kindly act for your neighbor in anything whatever. Spare him all heart-sake; contribute always to your neighbor's happiness. This is the law of Chesseduth, and this is known as gemiluth chasadim. This includes not only

¹ דברים "the leavings of the commandments."

² למנוח במנוח במנוח במנוח

³ Jewish Ethics always emphasizes the altruistic motive, a regard for the weak and helpless.

almsgiving, but spiritual help of any variety. It is a wider beneficence.¹ This attitude is a very essential requisite to saintliness. The word **ר'ח** is derived from **רח** pointing to its radical significance for the saint. Furthermore, gemiluth chesadim is one of the pillars of society. (Aboth 1:42). This virtue looks beyond mere charity; it is larger and more inclusive. It is the gift, plus the giver, which makes liberality a true virtue.² In the end the exercise of this virtue pays. God, who metes out measure for measure, **כמה שיתן ככה יתן**, will re-imburse the benefactor, (and will punish the ungenerous). "He who deals kindly will be rewarded with kindness." We receive in proportion to the amount we give. The principle of kindness and sympathy must be extended to all creatures, even to the sub-human. **והחיות והעופות והבהמות**

Luzzatto cites a number of examples of rabbis who devoted themselves to the law of chesiduth and for which they were rewarded with happiness and length of days.³

(II) The Method of Carrying Out an Act, **איך לעשות**,

is further subdivided into (a) Fear (Reverence), (b) Love, (which is further analyzable into the three components, Joy, Communion and ~~Jealousy~~ (zeal).⁴

1. **רחמי** includes the act of nursing the sick and the dying, hospitality to transients, dowering the bride, (**נשואין**) comforting the mourners and tending the dead. cf. Sabbath 104a. See also Morris Joseph's Judaism as Creed and Life. p. 248.

2 In three things the rabbis say **רחמי** excels mere charity. No gift is needed for it, but the giving of one's self; it may be done to the rich as well as the poor. It may be done not only to the living, but to the dead also. cf. Succah 49b.

3 These illustrations bear out the principle that the **ר'ח** selects a special group of laws to which he devotes himself with great zeal and scrupulousness. The special group becomes a hobby with a particular rabbi, his conception of **רחמי**. Thus Rabbi Zakkai made it his business to fulfill all the ritual and ceremonial requirements with the utmost care. (Ket. 27b). Ze'ere had a special group of laws to which he gave absolute precedence (mixture of ceremonial and moral). Rab is said to have observed

II(a) Fear, as our author understands it, **יראה** is a sensitiveness to the Divine Presence. Of course, it is not easy to cultivate that sense, in as much as it is difficult to perceive or conceive the invisible or unseen. It lies outside of the scope of sense perception. **עין** But it is not beyond one's reach. Reflection will make one aware of the reality of the unseen. Let man contrast God's infinite greatness and majesty and wisdom with man's worthlessness and crudeness, and he is bound to shrivel and shrink and become little. This will inspire **יראה** reverence in his soul. Let this fear take possession of the heart first, and then the body will assume the corresponding attitude: i. e., the attitude of lowliness; hanging the head low, deep bowing, lowering the eyes, the attitude a servant assumes in the presence of the Emperor. (Sabbath 10a) ¹.

כבוד המצוות But it is not enough to be meek and humble. It is fitting to glorify, not ourselves, but our Maker. We can do it by fulfilling the commandments in the choicest and most beautiful manner possible. It is not enough to merely discharge a religious obligation, but it should be discharged with a certain delicacy and beauty: that is known in Rabbinic literature as **הירור מצות** the embellishment of the mitzvah. This obligation is derived by our rabbis from the verse in Exodus 15:2, "This is my God and I shall glorify him".

[X] which the rabbis paraphrase: "And I will beautify Him in the ~~the~~ exercise of the mitzvah, by using beautiful Zizith, beautiful phylacteries, a beautiful Lulab, etc."² But the **הירור** has its limits,

the things of Chasiduth. See *Sefer Ha-Ora* Ed. Buber pg. 3 and 4.

1 This contradicts the ideo-motor theory expounded earlier.

2 See Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim par. 656

**ש צריך לחדור אחרי
הירור מצוה בקניית אחריו**

to one third ^{וְשֵׁשׁ רִשְׁוֹ} of his property¹ (B.K.9b; Kethuboth 50a). And let no one attempt to excuse his negligence in this matter of by saying that God is above such things: that He is not affected, or bribed by ^{וְיִרְחֹק} of the Mitzvah. While it is true that God is not in need of our adornments and adorations, we owe Him our very best and choicest, and he who minimizes its importance is a transgressor.² Rabbinical literature is replete with illustrations in which the rabbis took special care to beautify the different ritual acts, thereby enhancing the quality of it. Among others, Luzzatto mentions the ancient practice which obtained among many, of conveying the first fruits ^{בְּכֹרֵי} in baskets of gold. Another illustration is the case of Esau, who took particular care in appearing well clad in the presence of his father. (B.R.27:15) How much more care should one take when appearing before our Father in Heaven. Hence the Sabbath and the Festivals should receive special and generous recognition in this regard. The rule to be observed in this matter is as follows: we should do all we possibly can to magnify the nobility and dignity of the Sabbath. This time honored rule induced many a rabbi to participate actively in the ushering in of the Sabbath.² Luzzatto is not content with mere Ethics. He emphasizes the need of religious etiquette and delicacy as a means of cultivating the attitude of reverence.

II(b) Love, ^{אַהֲבָה}. Its components are (1) Joy (2) Communion³ (3) ~~Isolation~~ ^{אֶלֶּיָּהוּ} ~~Seal~~⁴

"The meaning of this Love is that man should be longing and yearning after the nearness of God, blessed be he, and striving to reach his

1 See the commentaries on B. K. 9b, discussing the meaning of ^{וְשֵׁשׁ רִשְׁוֹ}

2 רבי אביו היה יתיר אהבתקא רשינא ומנשב נורא, רב ספרא מחרין רישא, יא

3 ^{בְּרִי} is I believe, best rendered by our term communion.

4 ^{אֶלֶּיָּהוּ}

holiness in same manner, as he would pursue the object of his passion and affection. He should feel that joy and delight in mentioning His name, in uttering His praises and in occupying himself with the words of the Torah, which a lover feels toward the wife of his youth, or the father toward his only son, finding delight in merely holding converse about them The man who loves his mother with a real love requires no persuasion and inducement for his service, on the contrary, his heart will - on its own account - attract him to it now. This is indeed the degree (in the service of God) to which our earlier saints, the saints of the Most High attained to. As King David said, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, the loving God', and as the prophet said, 'The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of Thee' (Is. 26:8). This love must not be a love 'depending on something', that is that man should not love God as his benefactor, making him rich and prosperous, but it must be like the love of a son to his father, a real natural love As it is said, 'Is he not thy father who has bought thee.' " ¹

The real test of this love appears in the time of distress and affliction. At such a time let him who is trembling in uncertainty, keep at readiness two explanations. One by which all will benefit, and the other - which only the wise will understand and appreciate. First, let it be remembered that "everything which is decreed from heaven is intended to serve a good purpose." ² Even the apparent evil and misfortune are servants of some greater good. Luzzatto illustrates this with a mashal: the surgeon, while engaged in an apparently brutal act of amputating his patient's

1. cf. Bachya חובות הלבבות Section חובות par. 10. See Schechter, Aspects p. 69-70.

2. כל מאי דעברין כן שמי

limb, is really actuated by a good and noble purpose: i.e., to save the patient's life. The patient will not bear any hatred against the physician: on the contrary he will love him the more for it. Thus let man view his own calamities, as messengers of God's love and mercy. God is only cruel to be kind.

This explanation of Evil will satisfy and console the masses of the people, but the "Elect" and saintly ones need not resort even to that explanation. The saintly person effaces the self from all his religious duties. His ardent prayer is to exalt God's perfection, and the greater the resistances, the happier he is, since every obstacle is also another opportunity for self-surrender. Even as the great soldier will select the hardest position in the battle in order to give evidence of his strength and endurance, or as the lover will rejoice in the opportunity of some daring and chivalrous service for the sake of his beloved.

So much for the general scope of love. The offshoots of this love are Communion, Joy and ~~Jealousy~~ (Zeal). Let us briefly deal with each:

III. 27 Communion with God. Man should give himself completely and preservedly to his Maker, especially while engaged in his religiousations. He will, if he loves God, exclude every possibility of intrusion and interruption. Communion is not merely contact, it means utter withdrawal from extraneous or disquieting matters. It means complete absorption in divine service. The real saint will not be disturbed, or distracted by anything. It is told of R. Hanina b. Dosa,¹ that once while he was engaged in his devotions, a lizard bit him, but he did not interrupt his prayers. When asked by his disciples how he did it, he answered that he had been so preoccupied in prayer, as not even to feel the bite. (Yer. Ber. 79b). (Another version of the same story is found in the Babylonian Gemara

¹ Scholar and miracle worker of the first century, a favorite of all the sages. He is known for his saintliness and Thaumaturgic powers. See J.E. Vol. 1, p. 214f.

Ber. 53a). The truly pious man is not conscious of any interruptions. We must all achieve this quality, which is an offshoot of love. The Bible over and over again enjoins detachment from the worldly affairs and attachment to God.¹ (Deut. 30:20; Ps. 63:9).

שמחה Joy is the second offshoot of the love of God. It is an essential element in worship, as well as in any other form of religious service. The Psalms urge us to rejoice in the Lord. As it is said: (Ps. 100:20) "Serve the Lord with joy, come before Him with gladness". The rabbis have indicated the joy accompanying a commandment constitutes the essential part.² שמחה שבת The fulfilling of a law must be attended by exuberance and enthusiasm befitting the dignity of the Torah. The whole book of Psalms vibrates with joy. That sentiment we must appropriate.³ "The Divine Spirit, the rabbis say, cometh not at the back of useless grief, but at the call of joy - Joy sanctified by religion" (Sabbath 30b; of Mishnah IV:15). This is the dominant note in all of Rabbinic and devotional literature.

קנאה Jealousy (Zeal). Man should be jealous, but only for God. He must hate those who hate Him, to the end that the Glory of God be magnified and exalted. We should emulate in this regard the prophet Elijah, who said: "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts". (I K. 19:10). He should be moved to defend the name of God, even as we are prompted to protect the good name of a dearly beloved one. Hence, he who

1 See introduction to the Rokeach.

2 Cf. Bachya חובות הלבבות section 1 par. 3; cf. Bachya in Chul'ah קד הקדמות ch. 1100 cf. Orchath Tsaddikim Section 1. See also Toseftah Pesah. 3: Sifre 52b; Yoma 72b.

3 This emphasis upon joy of the Law is significant. It repudiates again the idea that Judaism is a matter of external authority; that the Jew is a slave to the law; that ours is a religion of law, rather than love. The chapters in our book under discussion evidence just the opposite tendency. See Schechter, Aspects ch. 11. Kohler, Theology p. 490.

truly loves God will shrink back from all evil, as it is written: "They who love the Lord, hate evil". Ps. 97:10).

So much for the matter and manner of saintliness. But there is yet another factor to be considered: i.e., the motive, or intention. כבוד
The hope of reward as a motive for action is not to be condemned, our author declares לא נוכח לאמר שתהיה כונה זו רצה

But hope of reward and fear of punishment are not the highest and most desirable motives. לא נוכח לאמר גם כן שתהיה היתר פיובה

The most worthy incentive is his who serves God for the sake of magnifying His Majesty and Name. He who annihilates self altogether and serves without reference to personal ends or self aggrandizement, is the true חסיד. Such a person will deplore the sordid motives by which others are actuated to duty. He will be deeply concerned with God's honor and Israel's plight. He will bewail the destruction of the temple and will pray for the reconstruction of Israel in Palestine.¹ In short, the disinterested piety never aims at self; it is dominated by a large purpose and seeks a sovereign end: i.e., to establish God's Kingdom on earth. (Tanna debe Elishu - Ed. Friedmann - P. 19). "And if you are tempted to say, 'Who am I, that my prayers should effect the redemption of Israel?'" The answer given by our rabbis is that man was created single, that he might know that he forms a world for himself and the whole creation must aid him in unfolding the Divine image within himself". (Sanh. IV 5b T.B. Sanh. 37a). God delights in the prayers of the individual, even though he does not always see fit to grant his petitions.² Let no one exempt himself from prayer and yield to idleness under the pretense that he

¹ In praying for the restoration of the Jews in the Holy Land, one also prays for the restoration of God's Divine Presence in Palestine; the prevailing notion among the rabbis being that the Shechinah is also in exile with Israel.

² Judaism emphasizes the value of the individual apart from the social context. See Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 482, cf. Felix Adler, Ethical Phil. of Life.

is single handed, and hence powerless. Remember that the sages said: "It is not for thee to finish^{ish} the work, nor art thee free to desist from it". (Aboth 2:21). Each man is to contribute his share to the best of his ability.¹ This is one aspect of **כונה**.

Another aspect of **כונה** is that every pious man should be actuated by a desire to transfer his merits to his less pious and less fortunate contemporaries.

It is the will of God that the saintly ones should atone for the imperfections of the lower (ethical) strata of the people. God does not desire the destruction of the wicked. He rejoices when the pious, by their good deeds, exercise a protective influence over the transgressors. The **זון** is more acceptable to God when he imputes his righteousness to the account of the sinner.² Every **זון** possesses the power of obtaining God's pardon for the wicked. (cf Ex. XXXII:10), and he must utilize that power.

The Standards of Saintliness **מקדמות המצוות**

The most difficult matter in leading a saintly life is the proper "weighing of one's acts". Luzzatto employs the word **מקדמות** in the sense of weighing and investigating into all the possible consequences and results of an act. The conditions of a pious act are three: (1) Sincerity, or disinterestedness **התמדות**. (2) Scrupulous investigation to ascertain whether or not the act will lead to the desired end **מקדמות**. (3) Implicit faith in God's justice **אמונה**. To be in the line of saintly conduct all of these three conditions must be satisfied. These will act as guards against the Yetzer Hara, who is always ready to entrap

1 Our author uses the same passage and the same argument in answer to those who ignore the study of Cabbalah, on the ground that it is beyond their grasp. See **מקדמות המצוות**.

2 This conception is connected with the idea of **זון**. This matter is treated at great length by Schechter, Aspects, ch. XII, compare John 1:29. The conception of vicarious atonement is related to this notion.

us.

Saintly conduct is the result of reflection and insight and caution. A saintly deed can not be recognized at first sight סך מראה
 it is based on reason and deliberate reflection.¹ The good motive can not be divorced from good consequences. The ends must be taken into consideration. "It happens frequently that we perceive an act as good at first blush; further investigation would reveal undesirable consequences." Such an act can not be said to be good. This case is illustrated by the story of Gedaliah ben Ahikam, who because of his over confidence in Ishmael caused the death of his followers. (Mid'ah 61a; comp. Jer. 41:9). This is a clear example of misdirected and uncalculated virtue deflected to evil. The element of calculation must always enter into an act. Another instance of misguided zeal is the case of R. Zechariah ben Abkibus², who refused to accept the blemished calf which the emperor sent as a sacrifice, thereby causing the downfall of Jerusalem. Concerning him, R. Johanan said that his humility בטח (in refraining to vote) brought about the destruction of the temple.³ (Git. 56a, Josefta Shabb. XVI:6; Lam. R. IV:2). By all this our author means to show that it is absurd to cling to the strict letter of the law, independent of circumstances, or obvious, overt results.⁴

There are times when it is nobler to leave a commandment undone than to fulfill it. Wherever the fulfillment of a law is apt to give birth to strife or contention it is best to omit it. (the very purpose of the law would in that case be defeated). This is further borne out by

1 Dr. as we would say, good conduct is not intuitional. See Dewey / Tufts Ethics. p. 317-25.

2 One of the leaders of the Zealots in the time of the destruction of the second temple.

3 cf. J. S. Vol. XII p. 647.

4 Jewish Ethics is utilitarian, as well as formalistic.

the story of the Ark (B.R. ch.5).

Luzzatto goes a little further. There are occasions when certain saintly practices (of minor significance) should be suspended, as for example, if the practice in question is liable to provoke scorn and levity, thus exposing the scorners to sin. Of course, this applies only to such practices as are not confirmed duties.

כי אינם חובה מוחלטת
תוספות חסידות¹ It applies only to the "after-courses of saintliness."

Our author sums up the matter thus: the piety of an act is dependent upon the time, the place, and the person. In every case, let the consequences, as well as the motive, determine the desirability of an act.²

הכל הוֹךְ אֵת הַחִיתִּים וְהַתּוֹלָרָה שֶׁהִיא צִדִּי הַמַּצִּיחַ בְּאֵמֶת

The methods of acquiring saintliness, the auxiliaries to pious activity, are (1) An acknowledgement of the insuperable distance between the finite and the infinite, and (2) a consciousness of God's loving kindness. These facts will inspire enthusiasm and yearning after the communion with the Divine.

To become aware of these are inspiring facts, one needs privacy and retirement, which are conducive to meditation and concentration. The psalms of David, as well as the exemplary lives of Israel's saints, will also prove helpful.

The hindering circumstances of saintliness are absorption in worldly worries and worldly enjoyments. They are negative forces drawing man away from the goal. The remedy for worry is faith בְּטוֹחַ. Remember that God fixes in advance the amount of each individual's income. But

כִּלְכֵּל שֶׁל צָרָה כִּלְכֵּל שֶׁהוּא צָרָה בַּמַּצִּיחַ וְכִלְכֵּל שֶׁהוּא צָרָה וְהוּא
אֶרֶם שֶׁחֹק וְהִתּוֹלָל לֹא יִשְׁתָּה.

² Our author already in his day rose above the controversies of motive and consequent as the object of moral judgment. This attests to his psychological insight. His view is modern.

Benvenuto feels the difficulty here. One is tempted to ask, if so, man need not exert himself at all: God's judgment will abide, even if we spend our days in idleness. But as a matter of fact, our author declares it is not so. Each person's allotment, though determined, is conditioned upon toil and labor. Only he who labors will receive the appropriation. Work is the inescapable law of the Universe. The amount of work, however, need not effect God's appointments; a minimum will suffice to fulfill the conditions. Hence it is absurd to pass all the time in business activity. We should rather devote the larger part to Torah, as the early Hasidim tried to do. They assigned to Torah a primary portion and made business subsidiary to it, on account of which they were successful in both.

Chapters XXII - ~~XXIV~~ XXIII

Treating of the Quality of Meekness¹

בבית מדרש הצנוה

From the dispraise of the quality of pride (above), the praise of its opposite, humility, can be inferred. The essential characteristic of meekness צנוה is self effacement. בלתי מחשיב עצמו

Humility must have its roots in thought as well as in action. Meekness must first exist as an attitude of mind, as a posture of the soul. To pose as meek is sheer hypocrisy, and is despicable. Meekness as an attitude of mind consists in the conviction that all men are equal. There is no reason for aloofness on the part of any individual.

Let us remember that no person is without blemish or defect. Deceptiveness may be congenital, adventitious or hereditary. The wisest of men is often compelled to seek the counsel of his fellow men. No mortal is omniscient. The ideal saints of Israel practiced humility. (Hullin 89a)

¹ cf. Bachya חזו"ה section הכניעה Par. 8-10 cf. Gabriel תקן מדות הנפש part. I שבלות cf. אמונה רמה section צנוה

How much more should we suppress our pride, we who are as infants compared with the ideal characters of ancient times.¹ Be mindful of the fact that our understanding is frail and fragile; that we are as babes who know nothing. What reason has dust-born man to boast?

So far we have dealt with humility as a mental attitude. Now let us treat of תורה as reflected in action. This aspect of the virtue is analysable into four elements: (1) Self abasement in conduct in general. (2) humility, as reflected in the ability to tolerate insult, (3) the rejection of lordship and honor, (4) the bestowing of honor upon others.

Self Abasement in Conduct includes modesty in speech, demeanour and dress. Speak gently at all times. Take your place among the lowly. Avoid notoriety. Humility is ~~an~~ⁱⁿ imitatio Dei.²

To tolerate humiliation is also a symptom of meekness, as illustrated in the life of Baba b. Buta³ and Hillel. Self abasement is always praiseworthy.

The rejection of lordship and fame is commended in the Mishnah: "Love work and hate lordship" (Aboth 1:10). Lordship and dignity mean great responsibility. Joseph is brought to an early grave because of his responsibility. (Peruchin 35a compare Pes. 57 b: Plato's Republic 347 D, Prov. XXVII:2). As to fame and applause, they are vanity of vanities, acting as an opiate upon the conscience. Applause becomes a burden the moment we become conscious of our limitations.

The bestowing of honor upon others is praiseworthy. As the rabbis have said: "Who is honored? He that honors mankind". (Aboth 4:1) (cf. Ber 19b.) Greet everybody with courtesy, as Matthiah b. Charash said: "Be be-

¹ Our author is moved by the same sort of idealism which prevails in every period of history, an idealism which places the golden age in the past.

² cf. Shabbath 133b.

³ Baba b. Buta was a teacher at the time of Herod, the only one spared by Herod (B.E. 3b) He is known for his piety and humility (Cit. 57a, Ned 66b) See J.E. Vol. 2, p. 392.

forehand in saluting every man". R. Jahanan b. Zakkai was wont to salute every man he met, even a non-Jew.

Our author concludes the first chapter on aniv most beautifully. Meekness and modesty are ^{able} envious possessions. Its offshoots are peace and fellowship. The meek are in a position to press through the semblances of life, to catch a glimpse of reality. Happy are they who have cultivated it.

The methods of acquiring the beautiful quality of humility are two:

- (1) Habit רגילות (2) Knowledge and reflection התבוננות

(1) Habit. In our demeanour we must assume the physical attitudes characteristic of meekness. Dress modestly, take a back seat, move in the circle of plain people and humility will make its home in your heart.

(2) Reflection is another aid to meekness. Let man bethink himself of his crude and humble origin, as it is written: "Know whence thou comest: from a fetid drop; and whither art thou going: to worm and maggot (Job XXV:6); and before whom thou art about to give account and reckoning: before the King of the Kings, blessed be He" (Aboth 3:1). If a man reflects thus he can not but rise humbler and lowly.

Let us also remember that everything earthly changes. The material things are transient and do not abide. Even the wealth we have so painfully accumulated "takes wing and flies away". Honor, fame and fortune change hands rapidly. The rich man of today may be the beggar of tomorrow. These facts come within the purview of every man's experience. In the face of these things who dare strut about in haughtiness.

The obstacles to meekness are excessive luxury and prosperity. We know that in many cases adversity would have drawn out a man's nobler qualities, while abundance leads to corruption and display. This accounts for the ascetic practices indulged in by many pious persons. It aimed to

/the deadening influence of luxury.

Ignorance is another obstacle. It is the chief hindrance to humility. It is sad, but true, that the unenlightened person is the most haughty. On the other hand, meekness is characteristic of the distinguished and great men. Is it not said concerning Moses, that he was the humblest of men? Knowledge is therefore, an aid to the acquisition of this virtue.

And, finally, association with flatterers and hypocrites is a hindering circumstance in the exercise of meekness. To be exposed to people who lavish praise indiscriminately and unstintingly is a curse. The unfortunate part in this matter is that we ultimately induce ourselves into believing the extravagant praises. Most men are frail and hence gullible. We have a clear illustration of this in the story of Joash who succumbed to flattery, thus falling into error and corruption. In fact, the corruption in all royal courts is to be ascribed to the insincere adulation of idle and parasitic nobles.¹

Chapters XXIV - ~~XXVI~~ XXX

Treating of the Fear of Sin.²

בראור יראת חטא

This disposition rightly appears toward the end of the "chain of virtues". It is not easy to cultivate this disposition.

The disposition of "Fear of Sin" has two aspects: (1) Fear of punishment, יראת העונש (2) Fear of God's greatness (Reverence). Let us differentiate the two.

(1) Fear of Punishment is not an uncommon motive for action, but it is not the highest motive. If a man will refrain from doing evil because of the evil consequences which will ensue, in the form of physical or spiritual

1 An observation which history bears out faithfully.

2 Treated in part under

gain, he is acting from self-love. This motive is not a commendable incentive to action. It will satisfy the ignorant and the women who are light of disposition.

For the superior mind this sort of "fear" is unnecessary and cheap. Their motive must be more exalted. For them "Reverence" must constitute the rule of conduct. The desire to know the Name of God will be their guide. Duty for duty's sake will be their maxim. This matter has already been treated at greater length above.

Our author distinguishes, however, between the "fear of God" **יראת ה' ויראת חטא** and "fear of Sin". The former includes the latter. Both aim at the sanctification of God's name. But, "fear of God"

יראת ה' ויראת חטא is an attitude, or a mood which manifests itself on special occasions only, as for example during prayer, or prior to the committal of a sin; in which cases the "fear of God's majesty" acts as a preventive influence. "Fear of sin", however, is not a spasmodic mood, but a constant attitude of mind, in which the individual habitually dwells among the highest things. It is a delicate sensitiveness to the "faintest rumor of sin"

איזה שמץ חטא It is in this spirit that the Book of Proverbs says: "Happy is the man who fears always." (Prov. XVIII:14).

"Fear of Sin" is related to the present past and future. In its relation to the past, its function is to search out diligently the sins unintentionally committed, as illustrated by the life of Baba b. Buta, who brought a free will offering every day, for fear that he might have committed sin requiring atonement. (Ketuboth 25a). Similarly, Job would rise up in the morning and offer burnt offerings for fear that his children might have turned away their hearts from God in the midst of their social engagements. (Job. 1:5). These are examples of Chassiduth. Abraham and Moses also furnish excellent illustrations of the "Fear of Sin". (Horayoth 12a; B.R. 44:4; Tanna debe Eliahu 25; Ber 33b)

"Fear of Sin" is not easy of attainment. It was easy for Moses to achieve it, because of his strong attachment to God, but ordinary mortals are hindered by their earthly, corporeal matter.¹ **כי הגזרים והאי**
שהחומר כחוצה גדול העולם But the matter can be overcome.

The modes of attaining "Fear of Sin" are (1) reflection on God's greatness and man's unworthiness. (2) Consciousness of God's providence and omnipresence. God's footprints can be traced everywhere and nothing is hidden from his sight. A recognition of these things will inspire "reverence" and caution in us at all times. As the sages said: "Consider three things, and thou shalt not fall into the hands of transgression: know what is above thee - a seeing eye and a hearing ear, and all thy deeds written in a book." (Aboth. II:1). Reason and reflection alone will bring one to grasp the reality of God. Sense perception can not help us to see God.² Conception is needed. Persistent application to Torah and unceasing meditation are the only conditions of the attainment of this virtue. Worldly distractions and annoyances are the enemies of virtue, this our author never tires of repeating.

Chapter XXVI.

ביאור מדר קדושה

Treating of Holiness.

Holiness is the noblest achievement of man.³ It begins with service, **עבודה** (on the part of man); and finishes with reward (from

1 This is one of the principles of Neo Platonism.

2 כי כיון שהגבר רחוק מחושינו לא יזרח השכל אלא אחר רוב העין וההשקפה

3 Kedushah, which for our author is the highest rung in the ladder, is not so regarded by other mystics. Chassiduth seems to be the highest achievement, while Kedushah ranks as a preparatory virtue. See the remark in Aboda 2. 20 b. whence our author draws his framework for the book.

והעצמות גדולה מכל (Based on Ps. 89:20)

heaven); it begins with effort (on the part of man) and finishes with a gift (from heaven as an act of grace); it begins with man's self purification and finishes with his purification from heaven. As the rabbis have said: "If man purifies himself a little below, heaven will send him a complete purification from above". (Yoma 39 a).

Man's efforts are involved in withdrawing from everything material and defiling and to cleave to God at all times. But the **קדוש** must go even beyond the point of withdrawal. He must elevate even the animal functions of man to the plane of holiness. **והנה האיש המתקדש בקדושת**

בראו אצילו מעשיו הגשמיים חוזרים להיות צניני קדושה כמחש.

In this crowning achievement, which is beyond mere human attainment, God will assist him. This is God's reward, which comes to him who labours in His vineyard. As it is written: "God will not withhold His good from those who walk uprightly". (Ps. 84:12).

Now, we are prepared to differentiate between the **קדוש** and the **טהור**. The Tohar looks upon the corporeal things as necessary evil, while the Madosh is not hampered in his spiritual cultivation even by the earthly things. He capitalizes the very fleshly desires for his holiness, and he can walk this earth as if this were the land of the Eternal. Such a person is a veritable sanctuary, a shrine, an altar - his body has become the indwelling of God's glory - his food a sacrifice.

One can not, however, attain to **קדושה** without appropriating the preliminary virtues from **זהירות** to **יראת חטא**. He must go from round to round until **קדושה** will be achieved. God's holiness will not descend upon any one who has not learned the virtue of temperance and stripped ^{off} all manner of temptation, and who has not endeavored to penetrate the veil of mystery **מצפוני הבראה**. The "initiate" will then rise to the degree of an angel; he will be worthy of communing with

the Divine Spirit **רוח הקדוש**, a state of existence transcending that of the human. As R. Phineas b. Jair said: "Holiness leads to communion with the Divine Spirit". To the **קדוש** God will deliver "the key to the Resurrection" **מפתח של תחיית המתים** even as he did with Elijah and Elisha.¹

¹ Lazarus in dealing with the concept Kedushah again attempts to harmonize Judaism with Kant. But as Neumark pointed out (Haschiloach Vol.6-Page 442 f.) Lazarus gets into much difficulty and confusion. Holiness for Kant is not the same as it is for Judaism. Judaism teaches that holiness is within the reach of man (it is a stage in which the Yetzer Hara ceases to function) while with Kant "holy" can only be applied to God. Luzzato presents the Jewish view of Kedushah with great clearness.

Translation of Chapter I

Concerning Man's Destiny in the World

<The foundation of piety and the root of all religious service is that man should define for himself and choose his mission in the world, ^{and so what he should direct his attention to} to the end that he might know how to give direction and purpose ^{his} to life's weary journey. *(free)*

Our sages teach that man was not created for any other purpose save that of delighting in God and to revel in the radiance of His Presence. This alone is the only true form of Joy, and the intensest of all possible pleasure. The true ^{place} source of this ineffable felicity is the other-world which is furnished with all the equipment making for eternal bliss. But the path leading to the object of our desire is this world, as the Rabbis said: "This world is the vestibule to the next". (Aboth 1:31). And the "means" for the attainment of this end are the commandments which God (blessed be His Name) enjoined upon us. The ~~commandments can be fulfilled in~~ ^{place} this world only; therefore, man ^{through}

been placed in this world first, in order that these "means" (commandments) he might acquire the other world where he will be able to feed in the good which he will have ~~learned~~ ^{earned} by means of these (commandments). As our sages said (Erubin 22a): "They are to be fulfilled today in order that the reward come tomorrow". Upon further investigation in the matter you will discover that absolute perfection can be achieved only through an attachment to God, as it is written concerning David (Ps. LXXIII:28) "But it is good for me to draw near to God", and as it is ^{also} written (Ps. XXVII:4) "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to

enquire in His temple". This alone is the real good, while everything else which man esteems desirable is sheer vanity and delusion. In order to become worthy of this good, however, man must toil ceaselessly for it: i. e., he must strive to attach himself to God through good deeds - the commandments.

The Almighty has placed man in a world where the hindrances to piety are many. The world is full of sensuous cravings, and if man should yield to them, he is bound to stray from the real good. Man is the scene and center of a mighty struggle, for everything in the world - good, as well as evil, are arrayed against him to test his endurance. On the one side is adversity, on the other prosperity; peace and pain are besetting him; and he who emerges victorious from the conflict is the perfect man; he is worthy of entering into close communion with his Creator; he is prepared to leave the ante-chamber and to enter the inner palace, to bathe in the "Light of Life". And in the measure in which he conquers his evil inclinations and evades the hindrances to the good, and seeks the union with God, he will receive his reward and joy.

< If you will reflect deliberately in the matter, you will find that the world was created to serve man's needs. Consequently, the fate of the world depends upon him. If he pursues worldly matters and withdraws from his Maker, he ^{in his own} comforts his own soul and contributes to the moral decay of the world. If, on the other hand, he triumphs over his baser self, and attaches himself to his Creator, and ^{uses} capitalizes the world for his perfection in God, he is exalted and the world is sanctified thereby. For, the worldly forces assume a great distinction when they are employed in the service of the perfect and holy man: as our

sages said concerning the light which God (blessed be He) stored away for the righteous (Hag. 12a): "When the light became aware of the purpose it was going to serve (i. e. as a reward for the Tsaddikin) it rejoiced", as it is written (Prov. 13:9): "The light of the righteous shall rejoice". > Furthermore, R. Isaac said, concerning the stones which Jacob used as pillows (Gen. 28:11): "All the stones assembled in one place and each stone pleaded: 'let the righteous man lay his head upon me'" (Hullin 91b). In connection with this important teaching, our sages, commenting on Eccles. VII:13: "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he made crooked", said: (Koheleth Rabba ch. 7): "When God created Adam, He showed him all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him: 'See how beautiful and lovely my works are: everything I have created is for thy good, beware of corrupting or destroying my world'".

The sum total of the matter is this: man's destiny is not this world, but the Hereafter: This world is only preparatory to his ultimate existence in the world to come. You will find, therefore, that many rabbinic passages speak of this world as a preparatory stage for the other-world, while the Hereafter is pictured as the place of rest and true gratification. (We have cited above the statement: "This world is like unto a vestibule"). The rabbis also have such statements as: "He who toils before Sabbath, he will eat on the Sabbath". (Abodah. Sara 3 a): "This world is like the dry land, while the next is like the ocean, and unless man prepare himself on ~~the~~ land, he will go hungry when he launches upon the vast sea". And you will find that no human being can regard this worldly existence as the end-all and be-all. For what is man's life on earth? Who is he that enjoys true happiness here? "The days of our years are threescore years and ten: and if by

reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength, labor and sorrow" (Ps. 90:10). Consider all the sorrow and suffering and pain and fretfulness - and then death! Not one in a thousand knows unalloyed happiness: and even those few, at the age of a hundred, droop and die.

Furthermore, if man's destiny were confined to this earth, he would have no need of such an exalted and superior soul - surpassing even the angels, and more especially since it (i. e. the soul) can derive no pleasure from the worldly enjoyments. As our sages taught in commenting on Eccles. 6:7: "And yet the soul is not filled": "It may be likened to the villager who marries a princess and even if he should supply her with all conceivable things, she would not be satisfied, because she is a princess": even so it is with the soul: no worldly pleasures can fill her needs because she is a member of the higher world. The sages also taught (Aboth 64:32) "For without thy consent wast thou created and born into the world". For the soul does not find this world congenial: nay she despises it, consequently God would not have called into being a creature whose inner nature is not attuned to the environment, ~~may which is repelled by it~~. Clearly, then, man's objective is the world to come, and to that end he was endowed with this soul, worthy of rendering homage, and, through which man will receive his reward in the right place and at the proper time. Viewed in this light, nothing worldly should be repugnant to this soul: on the contrary, everything should appear lovely and desirable.

Having realized this, we are prepared to grasp the significance of the commandments. These (commandments) are the indispensable "means" through which man may attain real perfection. Verily, it is well known that the goal can only be reached through the collective strength of all these "instrumentalities". The attainment of the goal will be conditioned upon the effectiveness and serviceability of these "means". And

every error committed in the "means" will appear with absolute certainty in the result. Hence it is clear that the mitzvot require our utmost care and punctiliousness. We must observe the same delicate accuracy as the diamond merchant exercises in the weighing of precious stones. For, their offshoots are true perfection and unsurpassed glory.

This leads us to the conclusion that the purpose of man's existence is the fulfillment of the commandments and the capacity to endure in trial and temptation. The function of the worldly enjoyments is merely to further these ends. They are to furnish him with that mental and spiritual discipline and composure to enable him to concentrate upon his obligations. In fact, man's sole concern should be God. In whatsoever he does, he must have no other end in view save that of drawing nigh to his Creator and to break through the barriers which separate him from his Maker. He must so rid himself of the fleshly desires that he will unconsciously be attracted to his God even as iron is attracted to the magnet. He must, therefore, seize upon every conceivable thing which may aid him in drawing closer to his "Object" and he must intercept everything which might hinder the realization of this purpose, as it is written: (Ps. 63:9): "My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me". Man's mission on earth is just this: to achieve the nearness of God by evading all the hindering circumstances.

> < Now, having established the ~~general~~ truth of this principle, it is for us to investigate into its details in their ^{different degrees} gradient relations, from the beginning to the end, as R. Phineas b. Jair arranged them in his statement (mentioned above) as follows: Watchfulness; Energetic Attention (Zeal); Purity; Discrepancy; Sincerity (Purity of motive); Saintliness; Meekness; Fear of Sin; Holiness. We shall ^{expound them} deal with these one by one (with the aid of God).>

Chapter II

Treating of the Quality of Watchfulness.

> The matter of watchfulness is this: that man should be vigilant in his ²affairs and ¹actions, i.e. he should consider carefully and guard all his ways to discover whether they are good or not, lest he expose his soul to destruction (Heaven forbid) and be tempted to follow blind habit, even as a blind man in the darkness. Indeed, reason dictates wide-awakeedness. Since man is endowed with the instinct and wisdom of spiritual self preservation, is it not reasonable to assume that he will seek to save himself? To do other would be the height of folly.> The person committing such a folly is to be classed lower than the animal; for the animal exercises the instinct of (physical) self preservation, and evades every obstacle to its existence. He who walks this earth without foresight and discrimination is like unto the blind man who walks close to the shore (where calamity is imminent) without giving any thought to the danger involved. And after all negligence, whether it reside in the man who is physically blind, or in the person who voluntarily blinds his mind, is one and the same thing. Behold Jeremiah deplored the wicked conduct of the people of his day, who were afflicted with this ugly quality of mental blindness. They never paused to consider whither they were tending. Concerning them, Jeremiah said (Jer.6:6): "No man repented him of his wickedness, saying what have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle": i.e. they followed the course of their habits without allotting any time to reflection or self examination, with the result that they unconsciously drifted into evil.

In fact, one of the wiles of the Yetzer Hara, and his way of beguiling man, is to make man's burden heavy in order to deprive him of the opportunity to bethink himself. For the Evil Yetzer knows that if man were permitted to reflect, even for a moment, he would rectify his ways at once, and his remorse would grow in intensity until he would abandon his evil doings completely. This was indeed, the clever device of Pharaoh, the wicked, when he commanded (Ex.5:9): "Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour there in, and let them not regard vain words". His intention was to deprive the people of every opportunity to think, or take counsel, but he tried to divert their attention from self, by imposing upon them unceasing labor. Such is also the scheme of the Yetzer Hara: for he is a man of war, skilled in trickery, and it is impossible to evade his cunning except through the exercise of wisdom and circumspection. As the prophet said (Haggai 1:5): "Consider your ways", and Solomon in his wisdom said (Prov. 6:4): "Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids. Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler." And our sages said: (Moed Katan 5a): "He who considers his ways in this world will be worthy of God's salvation". And the matter is plain; even if man is watchful he will not be saved without God's aid. For the Evil one is very stubborn, as it is written (Ps. 37:32): "The Wicked One watcheth the righteous and seeketh to slay him, the Lord will not leave him in his hand." But if man watches himself, then God will help him and he will be delivered from the power of the Yetzer Hara. (If, however, he does not watch himself, God will not look after him. If man does not pity himself who will? As the sages said (Ber. 33a): "He who does not exercise his reason is not worthy of sympathy", or as it is

written (Aboth. 1:14): "If I am not for myself who will"?