

in God's paternal love and mercy, which educates all the children of men, through trial and suffering, for their high destiny.

6. Judaism denies most emphatically the right of Christianity or any other religion to arrogate to itself the title of "the absolute religion" or to claim to be "the finest blossom and the ripest fruit of religious development." As if any mortal man at any time or under any condition could say without presumption: "I am the Truth" or "No one cometh unto the Father but by me."¹ "When man was to proceed from the hands of his Maker," says the Midrash, "the Holy One, Blessed be His name, cast truth down to the earth, saying, 'Let truth spring forth from the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven.'"² The full unfolding of the religious and moral life of mankind is the work of countless generations yet to come, and many divine heralds of truth and righteousness have yet to contribute their share. In this work of untold ages, Judaism claims that it has achieved and is still achieving its full part as the prophetic world-religion. Its law of righteousness, which takes for its scope the whole of human life, in its political and social relations as well as its personal aspects, forms the foundation of its ethics for all time; while its hope for a future realization of the Kingdom of God has actually become the aim of human history. As a matter of fact, when the true object of religion is the hallowing of life rather than the salvation of the soul, there is little room left for sectarian exclusiveness, or for a heaven for believers and a hell for unbelievers. With this broad outlook upon life, Judaism lays claim, not to perfection, but to perfectibility; it has supreme capacity for growing toward the highest ideals of mankind, as beheld by the prophets in their Messianic visions.

¹ John XIV, 6. Comp. Dorner, l. c., 173; and his *Grundprobleme d. Religionsphilosophie*; Orelli: *Religionsgeschichte*, 276 f.

² Gen. R. VIII, 5.

CHAPTER IV

THE JEWISH ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. In order to reach a clear opinion, whether or not Judaism has articles of faith in the sense of Church dogmas, a question so much discussed since the days of Moses Mendelssohn, it seems necessary first to ascertain what faith in general means to the Jew.¹ Now the word used in Jewish literature for faith is *Emunah*, from the root *Aman*, to be firm; this denotes firm reliance upon God, and likewise firm adherence to him, hence both *faith* and *faithfulness*. Both Scripture and the Rabbis demanded confiding trust in God, His messengers, and His words, not the formal acceptance of a prescribed belief.² Only when contact with the non-Jewish world emphasized the need for a clear expression of the belief in the unity of God, such as was found in the Shema,³ and when the proselyte was expected to declare in some definite form the fundamentals of the faith he espoused, was the importance of a concrete *confession* felt.⁴ Accordingly we find the beginnings of a formulated belief in the synagogal liturgy, in the *Emeth we*

¹ See Schechter: *Studies*, 147-181 and notes 351 f.; Mendelssohn: *Ges. Schr.*, III, 321. Comp. Schlesinger: *Buch Ikkarim*, 630-632; Bousset: *Religion d. Judenthums*, 170 f., 175, and thereto Perles: *Bousset*, 112 f.; Martin Schreiner: l. c., 35 f.; J. E., art. Faith and Articles of Faith (E. G. Hirsch); Felsenthal, Margolis, and Kohler, in Y. B. C. C. A. R., 1897, p. 54; 1903, p. 188-193; 1905, p. 83; Neumark: art. Ikkarim in *Ozar ha Yehuduth*; D. Fr. Strauss: *D. christl. Glaubenslehre*, I, 25.

² See Gen. XV, 6; Mek. to Ex. XIV; J. E., art. Faith.

³ Deut. VI, 1-6; XI, 13-21; Num. XV, 37-41.

⁴ See Bousset, II, 224 f. The term *Pistis* = faith, assumes a new meaning in Hellenistic literature.

*Yatzib*¹ and the *Alenu*,² while in the Haggadah Abraham is represented both as the exemplar of a hero of faith and as the type of a missionary, wandering about to lead the heathen world towards the pure monotheistic faith.³ While the Jewish concept of faith underwent a certain transformation, influenced by other systems of belief, and the formulation of Jewish doctrines appeared necessary, particularly in opposition to the Christian and Mohammedan creeds, still belief never became the essential part of religion, conditioning salvation, as in the Church founded by Paul. For, as pointed out above, Judaism lays all stress upon conduct, not confession; upon a hallowed life, not a hollow creed.

2. There is no Biblical nor Rabbinical precept, "Thou shalt believe!" Jewish thinkers felt all the more the need to point out as fundamentals or roots of Judaism those doctrines upon which it rests, and from which it derives its vital force. To the rabbis, the "root" of faith is the recognition of a divine Judge to whom we owe account for all our doings.⁴ The recital of the *Shema*, which is called in the Mishnah "accepting the yoke of God's sovereignty," and which is followed by the solemn affirmation, "True and firm belief is this for us"⁵ (*Emeth we Yatzib* or *Emeth we Emunah*), is, in fact, the earliest form of the confession of faith.⁶ In the course of time this confession of belief in the unity of God was no longer deemed sufficient to serve as basis for the whole structure of Judaism; so the various schools and authorities endeavored to work out in detail a series of fundamental doctrines.

3. The Mishnah, in Sanhedrin, X, 1, which seems to date back to the beginnings of Pharisaism, declares the following

¹ See J. E., art. *Emeth we Yatzib*.

² See J. E., art. *Alenu*.

³ See J. E., art. Abraham in Apocryphical and Rabbinical Lit.

⁴ *Sifra* Behukothai, III, 6; *Sanh.* 38 b; *Targ. Y.* to Gen. IV, 8.

⁵ Ber. II, 2; see Kohler: *Monatschrift*, 1883, p. 445. ⁶ Kohler, l. c.

three to have no share in the world to come: he who denies the resurrection of the dead; he who says that the Torah — both the written and the oral Law — is not divinely revealed; and the Epicurean, who does not believe in the moral government of the world.¹ We find here (in reverse order, owing to historical conditions), the beliefs in Revelation, Retribution, and the Hereafter singled out as the three fundamentals of Rabbinical Judaism. Rabbi Hananel, the great North African Talmudist, about the middle of the tenth century, seems to have been under the influence of Mohammedan and Karaite doctrines, when he speaks of four fundamentals of the faith: God, the prophets, the future reward and punishment, and the Messiah.²

4. The doctrine of the One and Only God stands, as a matter of course, in the foreground. Philo of Alexandria, at the end of his treatise on Creation, singles out five principles which are bound up with it, viz.: 1, God's existence and His government of the world; 2, His unity; 3, the world as His creation; 4, the harmonious plan by which it was established; and 5, His Providence. Josephus, too, in his apology for Judaism written against Apion,³ emphasizes the belief in God's all-encompassing Providence, His incorporeality, and His self-sufficiency as the Creator of the universe.

¹ The Mishnaic *Apicoros* corresponded to the Greek, *Epicoureios*, and was no longer understood by the Talmudists; see Schechter: *Studies in Judaism*, I, 157. It is defined by Josephus: *Antiquities*, X, 11, 7: "The Epicureans . . . are in a state of error, who cast Providence out of life, and do not believe that God takes care of the affairs of the world, nor that the universe is governed by a Being which outlives all things in everlasting self-sufficiency and bliss, but declare it to be self-sustaining and void of a ruler and protector . . . like a ship without a helmsman and like a chariot without a driver." Comp. also Oppenheim in *Monatschr.*, 1864, p. 149.

² See Rappaport: "Biography of R. Hananel," in *Bikkure ha Ittim*, 1842.

³ *Contra Apionem*, II, 22. See J. G. Mueller: *Josephus' Schrift gegen Apion*, 311-313.

The example of Islam, which had very early formulated a confession of faith of speculative character for daily recitation,¹ influenced first Karaite and then Rabbanite teachers to elaborate the Jewish doctrine of One Only God into a philosophic creed. The Karaites modeled their creed after the Mohammedan pattern, which gave them ten articles of faith; of these the first three dwelt on: 1, creation out of nothing; 2, the existence of God, the Creator; 3, the unity and incorporeality of God.²

Abraham ben David (*Ibn Daud*) of Toledo sets forth in his "Sublime Faith" six essentials of the Jewish faith: 1, the existence; 2, the unity; 3, the incorporeality; 4, the omnipotence of God (to this he subjoins the existence of angelic beings); 5, revelation and the immutability of the Law; and 6, divine Providence.³ Maimonides, the greatest of all medieval thinkers, propounded thirteen articles of faith, which took the place of a creed in the Synagogue for the following centuries, as they were incorporated in the liturgy both in the form of a credo (*Ani Maamin*) and in a poetic version. His first five articles were: 1, the existence; 2, the unity; 3, the incorporeality; 4, the eternity of God; and 5, that He alone should be the object of worship; to which we must add his 10th, divine Providence.⁴ Others, not satisfied with the purely metaphysical form of the Maimonidean creed, accentuated the doctrines of creation out of nothing and special Providence.⁵

¹ See Alfred v. Kremer: *Gesch. d. hersch. Ideen d. Islam*, 39-41; Goldziher, *D. M. L. Z.*, XLIV, p. 168 f.; XLI, p. 72 f., which passages cast much light upon the Jewish *Ani Maamin*.

² See Jost: *Gesch. d. Jud.*, II, 330 f.; Frankl: art. Karaites in *Ersch und Gruber's Encyclopaedie*; Loew: *Juedische Dogmen*, Ges. s. I, 154; Schechter, l. c.

³ J. Guttman: *D. Religionsphil. v. Abraham Ibn Daud*; David Kaufmann, *Gesch. d. Attributenlehre*; Neumark: *Gesch. d. juedisch. Phil.* vols. I and II.

⁴ Maimonides: *Commentary on Mishnah, Sanh.*, X, 1; Schechter, l. c., 163; Holzer: *Gesch. d. Dogmenlehre*, Berlin, 1901.

⁵ See Loew, l. c., 156; Schechter, l. c., 165.

This speculative form of faith, however, has been most severely denounced by Samuel David Luzzatto (1800-1865) as "Atticism"¹; that is, the Hellenistic or philosophic tendency to consider religion as a purely intellectual system, instead of the great dynamic force for man's moral and spiritual elevation. He holds that Judaism, as the faith transmitted to us from Abraham, our ancestor, must be considered, not as a mere speculative mode of reasoning, but as a moral life force, manifested in the practice of righteousness and brotherly love. Indeed, this view is supported by modern Biblical research, which brings out as the salient point in Biblical teaching the ethical character of the God taught by the prophets, and shows that the essential truth of revelation is not to be found in a metaphysical but in an ethical monotheism. At the same time, the fact must not be overlooked that the Jewish doctrine of God's unity was strengthened in the contest with the dualistic and trinitarian beliefs of other religions, and that this unity gave Jewish thought both lucidity and sublimity, so that it has surpassed other faiths in intellectual power and in passion for truth. The Jewish conception of God thus makes *truth*, as well as *righteousness* and *love*, both a moral duty for man and a historical task comprising all humanity.

5. The second fundamental article of the Jewish faith is divine revelation, or, as the Mishnah expresses it, the belief that the Torah emanates from God (*min ha shamayim*). In the Maimonidean thirteen articles, this is divided into four: his 6th, belief in the prophets; 7, in the prophecy of Moses as the greatest of all; 8, in the divine origin of the Torah, both the written and the oral Law; and 9, its immutability. The fundamental character of these, however, was contested

¹ See P. Bloch: "Luzzatto als Religionsphilosoph" in *Samuel David Luzzatto*, p. 49-71. Comp. Hochmuth: *Gotteskenntniss und Gottesverehrung*, Einleitung.

by Hisdai Crescas and his disciples, Simon Duran and Joseph Albo.¹ As a matter of fact, they are based not so much upon Rabbinical teaching as upon the prevailing views of Mohammedan theology,² and were undoubtedly dictated by the desire to dispute the claims of Christianity and Islam that they represented a higher revelation. Our modern historical view, however, includes all human thought and belief; it therefore rejects altogether the assumption of a supernatural origin of either the written or the oral Torah, and insists that the subject of prophecy, revelation, and inspiration in general be studied in the light of psychology and ethnology, of general history and comparative religion.

6. The third fundamental article of the Jewish faith is the belief in a moral government of the world, which manifests itself in the reward of good and the punishment of evil, either here or hereafter. Maimonides divides this into two articles, which really belong together, his 10th, God's knowledge of all human acts and motives, and 11, reward and punishment. The latter includes the hereafter and the last Day of Judgment, which, of course, applies to all human beings.

7. Closely connected with retribution is the belief in the resurrection of the dead, which is last among the thirteen articles. This belief, which originally among the Pharisees had a national and political character, and was therefore connected especially with the Holy Land (as will be seen in Chapter LIV below), received in the Rabbinical schools more and more a universal form. Maimonides went so far as to follow the Platonic view rather than that of the Bible or the Talmud, and thus transformed it into a belief in the continuity of the soul after death. In this form, however, it is actually a postulate, or corollary, of the belief in retribution.

¹ See Schechter, l. c., 167 and the notes.

² See Horowitz: *D. Psychologie u. d. jued. Religionsphilosophie*, 1883.

8. The old hope for the national resurrection of Israel took in the Maimonidean system the form of a belief in the coming of the Messiah (article 12), to which, in the commentary on the Mishnah, he gives the character of a belief in the restoration of the Davidic dynasty. Joseph Albo, with others, disputes strongly the fundamental character of this belief; he shows the untenability of Maimonides' position by referring to many Talmudic passages, and at the same time he casts polemical side glances upon the Christian Church, which is really founded on Messianism in the special form of its Christology.¹ Jehuda ha Levi, in his *Cuzari*, substitutes for this as a fundamental doctrine the belief in the election of Israel for its world-mission.² It certainly redounds to the credit of the leaders of the modern Reform movement that they took the election of Israel rather than the Messiah as their cardinal doctrine, again bringing it home to the religious consciousness of the Jew, and placing it at the very center of their system. In this way they reclaimed for the Messianic hope the universal character which was originally given it by the great seer of the Exile.³

9. The thirteen articles of Maimonides, in setting forth a Jewish *Credo*, formed a vigorous opposition to the Christian and Mohammedan creeds; they therefore met almost universal acceptance among the Jewish people, and were given a place in the common prayerbook, in spite of their deficiencies, as shown by Crescas and his school. Nevertheless, we must admit that Crescas shows the deeper insight into the nature of religion when he observes that the main fallacy of the Maimonidean system lies in founding the Jewish faith on *speculative knowledge*, which is a matter of the intellect, rather than *love* which flows from the heart, and which alone leads to piety and goodness. True love, he says, requires

¹ See J. E., art. Albo by E. G. Hirsch, and the bibliography there.

² See Schechter, l. c., p. 162.

³ Isa. XLIX, 9, and elsewhere.

the belief neither in retribution nor in immortality. Moreover, in striking contrast to the insistence of Maimonides on the immutability of the Mosaic Law, Crescas maintains the possibility of its continuous progress in accordance with the intellectual and spiritual needs of the time, or, what amounts to the same thing, the continuous perfectibility of the revealed Law itself.¹ Thus the criticism of Crescas leads at once to a radically different theology than that of Maimonides, and one which appeals far more to our own religious thought.

10. Another doctrine of Judaism, which was greatly underrated by medieval scholars, and which has been emphasized in modern times only in contrast to the Christian theory of original sin, is that man was created in the image of God. Judaism holds that the soul of man came forth pure from the hand of its Maker, endowed with freedom, unsullied by any inherent evil or inherited sin. Thus man is, through the exercise of his own free will, capable of attaining an ever greater perfection by unfolding and developing to an ever higher degree his mental, moral, and spiritual powers in the course of history. This is the Biblical idea of God's spirit as immanent in man; all prophetic truth is based upon it; and though it was often obscured, this theory was voiced by many of the masters of Rabbinical lore, such as R. Akiba and others.²

11. Every attempt to formulate the doctrines or articles of faith of Judaism was made, in order to guard the Jewish faith from the intrusion of foreign beliefs, never to impose disputed beliefs upon the Jewish community itself. Many, indeed, challenged the fundamental character of the thirteen articles of Maimonides. Albo reduced them to three, viz.: the belief in God, in revelation, and retribution; others, with more arbitrariness than judgment, singled out three, five, six, or even more as principal doctrines;³ while rigid conservatives,

¹ See Schechter, l. c., p. 169. ² Aboth, III, 1; Gen. R. XXI, 5.
³ See Schechter, l. c.

such as Isaac Abravanel and David ben Zimra, altogether disapproved the attempt to formulate articles of faith. The former maintained that every word in the Torah is, in fact, a principle of faith, and the latter¹ pointed in the same way to the 613 commandments of the Torah, spoken of by R. Simlai the Haggadist in the third century.²

The present age of historical research imposes the same necessity of restatement or reformulation upon us. We must do as Maimonides did, — as Jews have always done, — point out anew the really fundamental doctrines, and discard those which have lost their holdup on the modern Jew, or which conflict directly with his religious consciousness. If Judaism is to retain its prominent position among the powers of thought, and to be clearly understood by the modern world, it must again reshape its religious truths in harmony with the dominant ideas of the age.

Many attempts of this character have been made by modern rabbis and teachers, most of them founded upon Albo's three articles. Those who penetrated somewhat more deeply into the essence of Judaism added a fourth article, the belief in Israel's priestly mission, and at the same time, instead of the belief in retribution, included the doctrine of man's kinship with God, or, if one may coin the word, his *God-childship*.³ Few, however, have succeeded in working out the entire content of the Jewish faith from a modern viewpoint, which must include historical, critical, and psychological research, as well as the study of comparative religion.

12. The following tripartite plan is that of the present attempt to present the doctrines of Judaism systematically along the lines of historical development:

¹ See Loew, l. c., 157, and his "*Mafteah*," p. 331; Schechter, l. c.

² Makk. 23 b.

³ See J. E., art. Catechism by E. Schreiber.

I. GOD

- a. Man's consciousness of God, and divine revelation.
- b. God's spirituality, His unity, His holiness, His perfection.
- c. His relation to the world: Creation and Providence.
- d. His relation to man: His justice, His love and mercy.

II. MAN

- a. Man's God-childship; his moral freedom and yearning for God.
- b. Sin and repentance; prayer and worship; immortality, reward and punishment.
- c. Man and humanity: the moral factors in history.

III. ISRAEL AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

- a. The priest-mission of Israel, its destiny as teacher and martyr among the nations, and its Messianic hope.
- b. The Kingdom of God: the nations and religions of the world in a divine plan of universal salvation.
- c. The Synagogue and its institutions.
- d. The ethics of Judaism and the Kingdom of God.

PART I. GOD

A. GOD AS HE MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO MAN

CHAPTER V

MAN'S CONSCIOUSNESS OF GOD AND BELIEF IN GOD

1. Holy Writ employs two terms for religion, both of which lay stress upon its moral and spiritual nature: *Yirath Elohim* — "fear of God" — and *Daath Elohim* — "knowledge or consciousness of God." Whatever the fear of God may have meant in the lower stages of primitive religion, in the Biblical and Rabbinical conceptions it exercises a wholesome moral effect; it stirs up the conscience and keeps man from wrongdoing. Where fear of God is lacking, violence and vice are rife;¹ it keeps society in order and prompts the individual to walk in the path of duty. Hence it is called "the beginning of wisdom."² The divine revelation of Sinai accentuates as its main purpose "to put the fear of God into the hearts of the people, lest they sin."³

2. God-consciousness, or "knowledge of God," signifies an inner experience which impels man to practice the right and to shun evil, the recognition of God as the moral power of life. "Because there is no knowledge of God," therefore do the people heap iniquity upon iniquity, says Hosea, and he hopes to see the broken covenant with the Lord renewed through

¹ Gen. XX, 11.² Ps. CXI, 10; Prov. IX, 10; Job XXVIII, 28.³ Ex. XX, 20.