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English translation by Claude of Gerson Lasch, senior teacher at the Israelite school in Halberstadt: Darke Noam ("Ways of Pleasantness," Prov. 3:17): A Guide to Religious Doctrine for Israelite Schools, with Constant Reference to the Handbook "Torat Adonai, or the Divine Laws" (Leipzig: Heinrich Hunger, 1861). The book is arranged by the Ten Commandments in short numbered statements. Each statement is followed by Hebrew proof-texts with Lasch's German rendering, translated here, and by references ("Law NNN") to the numbered laws of his Handbook. Hymn verses are printed as running text and appear here stanza by stanza. The Hebrew follows the standard Masoretic text, with Lasch's abbreviations of the divine name kept. Where Lasch's printed reference is wrong, it is kept and corrected in a note. Lasch's Ashkenazi forms of names (Moshe, Mizraim) are kept. The errata page is translated at the end. Notes beginning "Translator:" are the translator's; the others are Lasch's.

[p. —] דרכי נעם

(Darké Noam)

A Guide

to

Religious Doctrine

for

Israelite Schools,

with Constant Reference to the Handbook

"פקודי ה׳ or the Divine Laws."[1]

By

Gerson Lasch,

Senior Teacher at the Israelite School in Halberstadt.

Leipzig, 1861.

Published by Heinrich Hunger.

[p. —] ב״ה[2]

Preface.

Having been urged by many friends of the "פקודי ה׳ or the Divine Laws" (a handbook for religious instruction, etc.), which I published in the year 1857, to publish the Guide held out in prospect there, I venture with this דרכי נעם to offer such a guide most modestly to the highly esteemed school boards, as well as to my valued colleagues, for the youth entrusted to them. The present little work has come out of the schoolroom; it is a dictation that my pupils, boys and girls between 11 and 14 years of age, have learned by heart with pleasure, and in doing so have delighted me with their apt and confident answers. I submitted the manuscript to Dr. *Schwarz*, Rabbi in Cologne,

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[1] Translator: *Pikkude H'* ("The precepts of the Lord," Ps. 19:9) is Lasch's earlier handbook, *Pikkude H' oder die göttlichen Gesetze* (1857), described in the Preface below.

[2] Translator: *B"H*, abbreviation of *be-ezrat ha-Shem* (or *barukh ha-Shem*), "with God's help," customarily placed at the head of a text.

who particularly encouraged me to publish it, as well as to Dr. *Meyer*, Chief Rabbi of the Land in Hanover,[3] and have made use of their kind remarks as far as possible.

The approving opinions of the gentlemen named, as well as that of our local reverend Rabbinical College, and no less that of my colleagues here, allow me [p. IV] to hope that my Guide will prove itself the equal of its admittedly considerable number of predecessors, and may make its way into such schools where religious instruction is given for the purpose that the children should be brought up and educated *through and in the divine Law* into right-minded citizens of the world and into pious Israelites.[4]

Indeed, it has already been suggested in many quarters that children should be educated in school to *lawfulness*, and that the feeling for *law and right* should be awakened in them early. Well then! The holy Law is surely, beyond dispute, also the foundation of every civil right, and it has the further advantage that it always lifts mind and heart to the highest Lawgiver. Therefore I have attempted always to develop the teachings of virtue and morality from the Law. "For the Law is the lamp, and instruction the light."[5]

If, in condensed brevity, I have often attached a rich content to a single word, my colleagues will excuse this; for in doing so I had in view the method of entrusting the Guide entirely to the pupils' memory, and this therefore ought not to be overloaded with unnecessary phrases. The brevity of the doctrinal statements, however, gives the teacher a point of departure from which to expound himself before the children in lively oral delivery, after he has satisfied himself that statement and verse have been committed to memory. In this way memory and intellectual stimulation join hands to enliven the instruction and make it fruitful.

[p. V] The constant reference to the handbook פקודי ה׳ offers the teacher rich material for carrying the instruction from the Guide further, when the ability of his pupils requires it, and enables him to set before his pupils the inner connection of each chapter, should this not be sufficiently visible in the Guide because of its condensed brevity.

In some places I have added a few hymn verses from the hymnal of *Johlson*[6] and others, and to the first chapters questions for review, assuming that every thinking teacher can himself increase the material in this field as needed. For the same reason other scriptural passages are always noted as well.

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[3]Translator: Probably Dr. Israel Schwarz (1828–1875), rabbi in Cologne, and Dr. Samuel Meyer (1819–1882), *Landrabbiner* (chief rabbi of the Land rabbinate) in Hanover.

[4]The price of this book is 12 Ngr. The publisher supplies 25 copies for only 8 Thaler cash. Letters or money are to be sent *post-paid*. [Translator: Ngr. = *Neugroschen*, 30 of which made one Thaler.]

[5]Translator: After Prov. 6:23, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching (*torah*) is light."

[6]Translator: Joseph Johlson (1777–1851), teacher at the Philanthropin in Frankfurt am Main, compiler of an Israelite hymnal (*Gesangbuch für Israeliten*) much used in Jewish schools and synagogues.

In order to make it easier for my colleagues to purchase the handbook mentioned in this Guide, under the title "פקודי ה׳, the Divine Laws Developed from the Ten Commandments and Conceived in Their Spirit," etc., 33 sheets, large octavo, stitched,[7] I have induced the publishing house of *Heinrich Hunger* in Leipzig to reduce the shop price of 2⅓ Thaler *for an indefinite time*, and to supply the copy for *only one Thaler cash*, at which price it may be obtained through *all bookshops* as well as *from the author*.

I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the many friends who, through their esteemed letters, granted me their recognition and support after the publication of the aforementioned פקודי ה׳. I shall gladly make use of their remarks and follow their instructive directions, should I have the good fortune of being able to bring about a second edition of it.—

[p. VI] May this Guide too, under the name דרכי נעם, find a favorable reception, and contribute to awakening love for our holy religion in the youthful heart, so that at all times it may be recognized in full truth *that all her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths—peace*.

דרכיה דרכי נעם וכל נתיבותיה שלום

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. (Prov. 3:17)

Halberstadt, in Elul 5620.[8]

The Author.

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[7]Translator: That is, 33 printer's sheets (*Bogen*) in large octavo format, issued in paper wrappers.

[8]Translator: Elul 5620 corresponds to August–September 1860.

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[p. —] Introduction.

1) After the space of the heavens with shining and glittering stars, and land and water with organic and inorganic plants and animals, had been created into a world, God last of all formed man as the most excellent creature.

He distinguished him above the other living beings in that He bestowed on him an upright gait, a well-formed shape, and on his limbs an ingenious structure which makes them capable of the most varied uses. He strengthened him for endurance in all zones of the earth, and granted him the faculty of speech.

(Psalm 8.)

2) Besides these bodily advantages, it is above all the invisible soul, which God breathed into man, that enables him to rule over many creatures and to subject them to his service.

ויברך אתם אלהים ויאמר להם א׳ פרו ורבו ומלאו את הארץ וכבשה ורדו בדגת הים ובעוף השמים ובכל חיה הרמשת על הארץ

> And God blessed them and said: Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, etc. (Gen. 1:28)

3) The activity of this soul shows itself first in the *understanding*, through which man can form representations of things, distinguish their essential marks from the inessential, form *concepts* from them, *judge* concerning them and *draw conclusions* from them, as well as recall to *memory* representations he has had. It shows itself further in *wit*, through which we compare things with one another, and in *acuity*, through which we can distinguish things from one another; further in the *power of judgment*, through which we are able to distinguish good from evil, the true from the false. Then in *self-consciousness*, in that man remains conscious of his thoughts, feelings and dispositions; and finally [p. X] in *reason*, through which he infers from the connection of things the existence of supersensible beings (soul, God), and can carry out the will of God and remain in spiritual communion with God.

ואני קרבת א׳ לי טוב

> But I—to hold fast to God is my good. (Ps. 73:28)

4) Since man, however, is formed from the dust of the earth, he has, like the animals, *sensual drives* which he must seek to satisfy; but in these sensual drives too he differs from other living beings. He is not compelled, as they are, to follow his natural drives blindly; he can, *with free will*,

master *sensuality*, or the *desire* for what is sensually pleasant, when it would keep him from carrying out a good resolution or an action commanded by God.

5) This strength of will in the fulfillment of duties is called *virtue*. Through it he becomes able to live according to the will of God, whose Law commands him to practice virtue on earth. Virtues are: *temperance* and *abstinence*, *justice* and *peaceableness*, *faithfulness* and *sincerity*, *magnanimity* and *charity*, and the like.

6) When man follows the sensual desires unreasonably, he puts himself on a level with the animal, commits a *sin* and deserves punishment. (Adam and Chava [Eve] in Paradise.)

Through a continuing sluggishness of the will in the struggle against sensuality, man grows accustomed to evil, despises the Law and falls into *vice*. (*Drunkenness*, *gluttony*, *idleness*, *mendacity* and *avarice* are vices.)

7) The vicious man removes himself ever further from God, whose holy will he despises. The virtuous man, however, exercises the strength of his will in fulfilling the higher divine will.

(Psalm 1.)

8) This higher will marks out the way which man has to walk in order to remain near to God, and on which he partakes ever more of *happiness*.

9) This happiness consists in this: that man lives glad and content in the consciousness of duty fulfilled, and that the possession of *virtue* and *wisdom* prepares him for the promised bliss after death.

[p. XI] **10)** The knowledge of that higher will which God has graciously made known to us, and the disposition to follow it in order to remain in communion with God, we call *religion* (from *religare*), re-binding; to it corresponds the expression אמונה [*emunah*], *holding fast, remaining faithful*; for it aims to ensure that the soul of man, which God gave over to him in heavenly purity, remain pure and untroubled throughout its earthly course of life, resist the alluring temptations to sin, and one day, perfected through wisdom and virtue, be able to return to God. Prayer אלהי נשמה [*Elohai neshamah*, "My God, the soul …"].[9] (See page 59–61.)

11) *Religious doctrine* must therefore instruct us about the will of God and stir our disposition to comply with it in a pious spirit, by endeavoring to show us how in the fulfillment of this divine will *solely and only our own earthly and otherworldly well-being* is founded.

12) God Himself revealed His will to the whole people of Israel in ten commandments. (Exod. 20.) To these are joined another 603 laws, which God had proclaimed to the people of Israel through Moshe.

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[9] Translator: The morning prayer beginning "My God, the soul which You have placed within me is pure," treated in the chapter on the immortality of the soul.

14)[10] In those 613 laws, of which 248 are commandments and 365 prohibitions, guidance is given us:

A. In the *doctrine of faith*: that we should believe and hold fast:

a. to the knowledge of one single God and of His attributes, which He revealed to us and which come to light in the history of Israel as well as in the history of the nations;

b. to His holy will revealed in the Torah, which would lead us on the way of salvation to happiness;

c. to reward and punishment, which we are to expect from God's justice in the earthly and the eternal life;

B. In the *doctrine of duties*: what we should do or refrain from:

a. in order to praise and honor Him in love of God;

b. in order, in love of ourselves, to find contentment as moral human beings, and to gain the goodwill of God and the respect of our fellow men;

c. in order, in love of our fellow men, to be able to be beneficent and useful to them.

[p. XII] **14)** To know all these laws is our holiest duty, although, through the dispersion of the Israelite people among the nations as well as through the loss of the Sanctuary and of the Promised Land, we are no longer able to carry out 244 laws which relate to the Sanctuary and its priests, to the Promised Land and its produce.

15) In order to fulfill this duty better and to be able to survey and retain the laws more easily, we attach all the laws to the Ten Commandments, insofar as their content allows them to be joined to one or another of these commandments as elaborations and extensions.

16) In the Torah these laws are comprised under the concepts עדות, חקים, משפטים.

a. עדות [*edot*] are *testimonies*, through which we bear witness to the wondrous deeds of the Lord;

b. משפטים [*mishpatim*] are *rights* and *duties* for the welfare of human beings;

c. חקים [*chukkim*] are laws which we are obliged to observe as *commands of God*, even if we do not recognize their purpose. But even these laws contribute *to guiding us to good dispositions*.

17) We would not know how to fulfill many laws—for example, how the signs of remembrance (page 4) or the fringes (page 5) are to be made, which fruit is to be taken at the Festival of Booths (page 56), or at which place the animal (page 10) is to be slaughtered—if God had not revealed the explanations of every law to our teacher Moshe.

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[10]Translator: Thus in the original; the numbering skips 13, and 14 appears twice.

18) This oral instruction, תורה שבעל פה [*Torah she-be'al peh*, the Oral Torah], was communicated by our teacher Moshe to his contemporaries for further transmission from generation to generation, so that the *written* and the *oral instruction* form for us Israelites one undivided whole.

משה קבל תורה מסיני ומסרה ליהושע ויהושע לזקנים וזקנים לנביאים ונביאים מסרוה לאנשי כנסת הגדולה —

> Moshe received the Torah from Sinai and handed it on to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets handed it on to the men of the Great Assembly— (Avot, chap. 1, mishnah 1)

[p. —] First Commandment.

אנכי ה׳ אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים

> *I am the Eternal, your God, who brought you out of the land of Mizraim, out of the house of bondage.* (Exod. 20:2)

First Chapter. The Knowledge of God.

(See Handbook pp. 1–6.)

1. We recognize that everything around us cannot have brought itself forth, but must have been created by an *almighty being* out of *free will*, and we designate this being with the term "*God*."

שאו מרום עיניכם וראו מי ברא אלה המוציא במספר צבאם לכלם בשם יקרא מרב אונים ואמיץ כח איש לא נעדר

> Lift up your eyes on high and see: who has created these? He who brings out their host by number, calls them all by name. Before the fullness of His might and the One mighty in power, not one is missing. (Isa. 40:12.) (Isa. 40:26)

2. We recognize the same from contemplating the wondrous constitution of our body and the powers of our soul.

אודך על כי נוראות נפליתי נפלאים מעשיך ונפשי ידעת מאד

> I praise You, that I am so wondrously distinguished; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it well. (Ps. 139:14)

3. This knowledge of God, as it had already been known to the first generations of men, was lost again to later generations through idolatry. Only Abraham recognized the nothingness of idol worship and held fast to the knowledge of God. As a reward for this he was given the assurance that this knowledge should henceforth always be preserved for the human race through his descendants. God revealed [p. 2] to these descendants His omnipotence in Mizraim [Egypt] and His will on Mount Sinai.

אנכי ה׳ אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים

I am the Eternal, your God, who brought you out of the land of Mizraim, out of the house of bondage. (Exod. 20:2)

4. The miracles which God performed for the liberation and preservation of the Israelite people in Mizraim, at the sea and in the wilderness, were at that time known to all the world.

שמעו עמים ירגזון חיל אחז ישבי פלשת וכו׳

The peoples hear it, they tremble; trembling seizes the inhabitants of Peleshet. (Exod. 18:10 and 11. Josh. 2:10 and 11.) (Exod. 15:14, 15)

5. The revelations of His might and His will are recorded in the holy Torah. This was handed over through our teacher Moshe to our forefathers, who had seen and heard those revelations, and has thus been transmitted to us from generation to generation.

זכר ימות עולם בינו שנות דור ודור שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך

Remember the days of old, consider the years of past generations; ask your father, that he may tell you, your elders, that they may declare it to you. (Avot 1:1.) (Deut. 32:7)

6. God calls Himself the Eternal, and revealed Himself as the benefactor of the good and at the same time as the righteous judge of the wicked.

ויאמר אלהים אל משה אהיה אשר אהיה ויאמר כה תאמר לבני ישראל אהיה שלחני אליכם

Then God said to Moshe: I will be who I am; and He said: Thus shall you say to the children of Israel: *Ehyeh* (that is, "I who am eternal") has sent me to you. (Exod. 34:5, 6, 7.) (Exod. 3:14, 15)

7. It is our duty to remain always conscious that God is one and unique.

שמע ישראל ה׳ אלהינו ה׳ אחד

Hear, Israel, the Eternal our God is eternal and unique. (Isa. 45:6, 7, 22, 23.) (Law 417.)[11] (Deut. 6:4)

8. He is *incorporeal*; we can therefore approach Him only through spiritual elevation and holy action.

ונשמרתם מאד לנפשתיכם כי לא ראיתם כל תמונה ביום דבר ה׳ אליכם בחרב מתוך האש

And take great heed for your souls' sake, for you saw no image of any kind on the day the Eternal spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire. (Isa. 40:18.) (Deut. 4:15)

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[11] Translator: "Law" (*Gesetz*) with a number refers throughout to the numbered laws (of the 613) in Lasch's handbook *Pikkude H'*.

[p. 3] **9.** He is omnipresent, and no one anywhere can withdraw from His power.

אנה אלך מרוחך ואנה מפניך אברח אם אסק שמים שם אתה ואציעה שאול הנך

> Where shall I go from Your spirit, and where shall I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make the netherworld my bed, You are there too. (Ps. 139:7, 9)[12]

Hymn Verse.

> Omnipresent, His all-embracing eye looks round about; and whoever only trusts in Him, Him He protects, Him He provides for! He hears the ravens' cry, has gifts for the whole world, for the very worm, and adornment for vale and field.
>
> How then can you, evildoers, escape Him who is so near to you? Can you imagine: He, the Avenger, will not see your dark deeds? Even before thoughts come to be, He sees them from afar, and all the nights on earth will never hide you from Him.

10. In the governance of divine providence, as it shows itself in the history of Israel and in the development of the nations, we recognize the wisdom, justice and grace of God; and these the Lord revealed to Moshe when he prayed to God:

הודעני נא את דרכך ואדעך למען אמצא חן בעיניך

> Make Your ways known to me, that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your eyes. (Exod. 33:13)

Then the revelation came to him: (Exod. 33:19.)

ה׳ ה׳ אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב חסד ואמת נצר חסד לאלפים נשא עון ופשע וחטאה ונקה לא ינקה

> Eternal, Eternal God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abounding in lovingkindness and faithfulness, keeping lovingkindness to the thousandth (generation), forgiving guilt, transgression and sin; yet He does not let go unpunished. (Exod. 34:6, 7)

11. The knowledge of His wisdom leads us to the modesty not to find fault with His works, even if they are not to our liking, and to resignation in all that He ordains for us.

גדלים מעשי ה׳ דרושים לכל חפציהם

> Sublime are the works of God, suited to all their purposes. (Ps. 111:2)

כי את אשר יאהב ה׳ יוכיח וכאב את בן ירצה

> For whom the Eternal loves He chastises, as a father the son in whom he delights. (Prov. 3:12)

12. The knowledge of God's justice comforts and calms us in misfortune, since it surely serves our betterment.

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[12] Translator: The verses quoted are Ps. 139:7–8.

ואתה צדיק על כל הבא עלינו כי אמת עשית ואנחנו הרשענו

Yet You are just in all that has come upon us, for You have acted according to truth, but we have done wickedly. (Neh. 9:33)

[p. 4] **13.** The knowledge of God's grace leads us to love God and to practice His Law with joyful obedience.

עבדו את ה׳ בשמחה באו לפניו ברננה — — — הודו לו ברכו שמו כי טוב ה׳ לעולם חסדו ועד דר ודר אמונתו

Serve the Eternal with joy, come before Him with jubilant song. — — — Give thanks to Him, praise His name, for the Eternal is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting, and His faithfulness for everlasting generations. (Ps. 100:2–5)

Hymn 8.

1. Upward, upward to those heights rise up, my song of praise! The Father hears His children's pleading, hears their praise, hears their thanks. Upward, you hearts! Let our stammering rise upward, let it surge heavenward. Here, where the angels' songs resound, man's praise too may draw near.

7. You strew life's joys below with overflowing, generous hand; You lay about our body's limbs the sheltering, warming garment; You build us houses, gardens, huts, You grant us rest and work; You are the hearer of our prayers, the furtherer and blesser of our deeds.

Questions for Review of the First Chapter.

1) From what do we recognize the existence of God? 2) What are the Bible verses for this? 3) Where and how has God revealed Himself? 4) W. i. t. B. v.?[13] 5) How do we know this? 6) W. i. t. B. v.? 7) What does God call Himself? 8) What attributes can we ascribe to Him? 9) Where does the knowledge of these attributes lead us?

Second Chapter. The Holy Signs of Remembrance.

(See Handbook pp. 7–14.)

1. We Israelites must always remain mindful of this knowledge of God and of His attributes, which He revealed to us (Law 421, 422).

וקשרתם לאות על ידך והיו לטטפת בין עיניך

And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as a frontlet between your eyes. (Ps. 111:4.) (Deut. 6:8)

[13] Translator: The abbreviation "W. l. d. B. d.?" (*Wie lautet der Bibelvers dazu?*), "What is the Bible verse for this?", is rendered here and below as "W. i. t. B. v.?"

2. God made a covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai, that they should remain a holy people to Him and keep His laws. This covenant is indissoluble, and we may not forsake it.

ולא אתכם לבדכם אנכי כרת את הברית הזאת ואת האלה הזאת כי את אשר ישנו פה עמנו עמד היום לפני ה׳ אלהינו ואת אשר איננו פה עמנו היום

> [p. 5] Not with you alone do I make this covenant, this oath-bound curse, but with him who stands here with us today before the Eternal, our God, as well as with him who is not here with us today. (Deut. 29:13, 14)

3. These signs of remembrance (*Tefillin* [phylacteries]) therefore contain four passages from the Torah: 1) the two sections *Kaddesh* (קדש) and *Wehojo ki jewiacho* (והיה כי יביאך), Exod. 13:1–16, which [admonish] to the duty of remembering the wondrous liberation from Mizraim; 2) the section *Shema* (שמע), Deut. 6:4–9, which [admonishes] to the duty of believing in the unity of God; 3) the section *Wehojoh im shamoa* (והיה אם שמע), Deut. 11:13–21, which admonishes to the duty of believing in reward and punishment.

4. The Israelite shall affix at the entrance to his dwelling the *Mezuzah* (מזוזה) [doorpost scroll] as a sign of remembrance of God's omnipresence. (Law 423.)

וכתבתם על מזזות ביתך ובשעריך

> And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Job 34:21, 22.) (Deut. 6:9)

The Mezuzah contains a copy 1) of the section שמע, Deut. 6:4–9, and 2) of the section והיה אם שמע, Deut. 11:13–21.

5. The Israelite shall in all his actions strive only after the purest morality and resist sensuality (Law 386, 387); of this the fringes (*Tzitzit*) on his garment are to remind him.

ואמרת אלהם ועשו להם ציצת על כנפי בגדיהם … והיה לכם לציצת וראיתם אתו וזכרתם את כל מצות ה׳ ועשיתם אתם ולא תתרו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם אשר אתם זנים אחריהם

> Speak to them, that they make themselves fringes on the corners of their garments, and it shall be to you as fringes, that when you look upon them you remember all the commandments of the Eternal, and do them, and do not go spying about after your heart and after your eyes, after which you go astray. (Eccl. 9:8. Mic. 6:8.) (Num. 16:38, 39)[14]

[14]Translator: Correctly Num. 15:38–39. Lasch's Hebrew omits the words between "garments" and "and it shall be to you" (the end of v. 38 and the verse break), marked here with an ellipsis.

6. For the people Israel is called to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, in order to spread the knowledge of God among the other nations through teaching and example, so that they may one day say:

בית יעקב לכו ונלכה באור ה׳

House of Jacob, go (on ahead!), and let us walk in the light of the Eternal. (Isa. 2:5)

ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש

And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (Exod. 19:6)

Questions for Review of the Second Chapter.

1) Of what should the Israelite be mindful? 2) W. i. t. B. v.? 3) To what does the covenant oblige us? 4) W. i. t. B. v.? [p. 6] 5) What are the signs of remembrance of the covenant? 6) What do the Tefillin contain, and of what are they to remind us? 7) What is the Mezuzah? 8) What does the Mezuzah contain? 9) Of what are the Tzitzit to remind us? 10) W. i. t. B. v.? 11) Why is the Israelite especially obliged to morality? 12) W. i. t. B. v.?

Third Chapter. Knowledge of the Torah, or of the Teaching of God.

(See Handbook pp. 14–22.)

1. We are obliged at all times to cultivate the knowledge of the Torah among us, to spread it, and to instruct the young in it. (Law 419, 420.)

ושננתם לבניך ודברת בם בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך בדרך ובשכבך ובקומך

And you shall impress them upon your children and speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up. (Deut. 4:9; 11:19. Josh. 1:8. Mal. 3:22.) (Deut. 6:7)

2. The teacher, to whom the father entrusts this holy duty, shall administer his office with faithfulness and circumspection to the best success; great reward will one day be his for it.

והמשכלים יזהרו כזהר הרקיע ומצדיקי הרבים ככוכבים לעולם ועד

But the wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who led many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. (Jer. 48:10.) (Dan. 12:3)

3. The head of the people shall in person read from it to the people every leap year.[15] (Law 612.)

[15]Translator: Thus the original (*jedes Schaltjahr*). Deut. 31:10–12 prescribes this public reading (*Hakhel*) at the end of every seventh year, the year of release.

הקהל את העם האנשים והנשים והטף וגרך אשר בשעריך למען ישמעו ולמען ילמדו ויראו את ה׳ אלהיכם ושמרו לעשות את כל דברי התורה הזאת

> Assemble the people, the men and the women and the children, and your stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn and fear the Eternal your God, and observe to do all the words of this Teaching. (Deut. 31:12)

4. He shall devote his care to the instruction of the people. (2 Chron. 17:7–9.)

5. The Book of the Teaching shall be multiplied and be in everyone's hands.

ועתה כתבו לכם את השירה הזאת ולמדה את בני ישראל

> And now, write down for yourselves this song, and teach it to the children of Israel. (Law 613.) (Deut. 31:19)

[p. 7] **6.** The holy Scriptures consist 1) of the 5 books of the Torah: בראשית, שמות, ויקרא, במדבר, דברים; [2)][16] of the books of the Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel I and II, Kings I and II; of the Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Yechezkel [Ezekiel]; of the 12 Minor Prophets, counted as one volume: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; 3) of the Holy Writings: Psalms, תהלים; Proverbs, משלי; Job, איוב; the five *Megillos* [Scrolls] (Song of Songs, שיר השירים; Ruth; Lamentations, איכה; Koheleth and Esther); Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah; and Chronicles, דברי הימים I and II; altogether 24. The Apocrypha are not regarded as holy.

7. The necessary explanation of the divine laws, transmitted orally, is contained in the 6 volumes [orders] of the Mishnah: *Seroim*, *Moed*, *Noshim*, *Nesikim*, *Kodoshim*, *Taharos*, and its further elaboration in the 36 volumes of the Talmud Bavli as well as in the Yerushalmi; these were later arranged in clear order in the four volumes of the Shulchan Aruch: *Orach Chaim*, *Yore Deo*, *Choshen Mishpat* and *Even ha-Eser*.[17]

Review Questions on the Third Chapter.

1) What should be spread among us? 2) Verse? 3) Who should be concerned with this spreading? 4) Verses? 5) Which are the books of Holy Scripture and of the transmitted explanation?

Fourth Chapter. Love of God.

(See Handbook pp. 23–34.)

1. The knowledge of God's all-goodness should and must move us to love God.

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[16] Translator: The numeral "2)" is missing in the original.

[17] Translator: Lasch's Ashkenazi forms are kept for the six orders of the Mishnah (Zera'im, Mo'ed, Nashim, Nezikin, Kodashim, Tohorot) and for the four parts of the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayyim, Yoreh De'ah, Choshen Mishpat, Even ha-Ezer).

ואהבת את ה׳ אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך ובכל מאדך

> And you shall love the Eternal your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your means. (Ps. 106:1, 2.) (Law 418.) (Deut. 6:5)

2. God is good to all the beings He has created.

עיני כל אליך ישברו ואתה נותן להם את אכלם בעתו

> The eyes of all look up to You, and You give them food in due season. (Ps. 145:15, 16)

3. God is especially good to human beings.

מה אנוש כי תזכרנו ובן אדם כי תפקדנו ותחסרהו מעט מאלהים תמשילהו במעשי ידיך כל שתה תחת רגליו

> [p. 8] What is man, that You are mindful of him, and the son of man, that You look upon him? And You let him fall but little short of God. You make him lord over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet. (Ps. 5:6, 7)[18]

4. As a reward for our patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob having trusted in God, He chose their descendants and made known to them His holy will and His grace.

מגיד דבריו ליעקב חקיו ומשפטיו לישראל לא עשה כן לכל גוי ומשפטים בל ידעום

> He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and judgments to Israel. He has not done so for any other nation, and the judgments they do not know. (Ps. 147:19, 20)

וירם קרן לעמו תהלה לכל חסידיו לבני ישראל עם קרבו

> And He exalts the horn of His people, a glory for all His pious ones, for the children of Israel, the people near to Him. (Ps. 148:14)

5. We should seek to further the love of God in ourselves through association with wise and pious men. (Law 434.)

ובו תדבק

> And cleave to Him. (Deut. 10:20)

יהי ביתך בית ועד לחכמים

> Let your house be a meeting place for the wise. (Avot 1:4)

6. It should express itself in a joyful walking in the ways of God. (Law 611.)

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[18] Translator: Correctly Ps. 8:5–7. Lasch's Hebrew and German omit the end of v. 6 ("and crowned him with glory and honor").

יקימך ה׳ לו לעם קדוש כאשר נשבע לך כי תשמר את מצות ה׳ אלהיך והלכת בדרכיו

> The Eternal will establish you for Himself as a holy people, as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of your God and walk in His ways. (Ps. 73:28.) (Deut. 28:9)

7. God's ways are *love* and *justice*.

כי אם בזאת יתהלל המתהלל השכל וידע אותי כי אני ה׳ עשה חסד משפט וצדקה בארץ כי באלה חפצתי נאם ה׳

> But let him who would glory glory in this: that he understands and knows Me, that I the Eternal practice love, justice and righteousness on earth, that in these I take delight, says the Eternal. (Jer. 9:23)

8. The love of God should lead us to love toward our fellow men, who like us are created in the image of God (Law 243), and should not exclude even the enemy.

לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך ואהבת לרעך כמוך

> [p. 9] You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor (thus also the one who offends you) as yourself; I am the Eternal. (Prov. 24:17. Mal. 2:10.)

9. We should make a friend of our enemy through acts of kindness.

כי תפגע שור איבך או חמרו תעה השב תשיבנו לו

> If you come upon the ox of your enemy, or his ass, going astray, you shall bring it back to him. (Exod. 23:5)[19]

10. This love we should turn especially toward the stranger. (Law 431.)

ואהבתם את הגר כי גרים הייתם בארץ מצרים

> Love, then, the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Mizraim. (Deut. 10:19)

11. Love for one's relatives releases even the priest from the duties of his office. (Law 264.)

ולאחתו הבתולה הקרובה אליו אשר לא היתה לאיש לה יטמא

> And for his sister, the virgin, who is near to him, who has not belonged to any man, for her he may defile himself. (Lev. 21:3) (Prov. 3:17.)

12. But we should seek to promote not only the bodily welfare but also the spiritual well-being of our fellow men. (Law 239.)

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[19] Translator: The verse quoted is Exod. 23:4.

לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך ולא תשא עליו חטא

You shall not hate your brother in your heart; you shall rebuke your neighbor, so that you do not bear sin on his account. (Lev. 19:17) (Prov. 16:29; 28:23.)

13. Love of God and the endeavor to walk in His ways oblige us to remain always gentle and mildly disposed even toward irrational animals.

כי טוב ה׳ לכל ורחמיו על כל מעשיו

For the Eternal is good to all, and His mercy is over all His works. (Ps. 145:9. 15. 16.)

14. We must spare their maternal feeling. (Laws 544. 545.)

כי יקרא קן צפור לפניך בדרך בכל עץ או על הארץ אפרחים או ביצים והאם רבצת על האפרחים או על הביצים לא תקח האם על הבנים שלח תשלח את האם ואת הבנים תקח לך למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים

If a bird's nest chances before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground, chicks or eggs, and the mother is sitting on the chicks or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. Let the mother fly away, and take the young for yourself, that it may go well with you and that you may live long. (Deut. 22:6. 7.)

[p. 10] **15.** We may not disturb them in their drive for food (Law 596); likewise we should grant them rest and recovery on our own day of rest.

לא תחסם שור בדישו

Do not muzzle the ox while it is threshing. (Deut. 25:4)

ויום השביעי שבת — לא תעשה כל מלאכה — ושורך וחמרך וכל בהמתך

But the seventh day is a day of rest … on it you shall do no work of any kind … and your ox and your ass, and all your cattle … (Deut. 5:14) (Prov. 12:10. Gen. 33:13.)

16. Although the flesh of animals is permitted to man as food (Gen. 9:3), no one may cut flesh from an animal that is still alive, nor may anything so cut out be eaten. (Law 452.)

אך בשר בנפשו דמו לא תאכלו

Only the flesh with its life, its blood, you shall not eat. (Gen. 9:3)[20]

רק חזק לבלתי אכל הדם כי הדם הוא הנפש ולא תאכל הנפש עם הבשר

Only hold fast to this, that you do not eat the blood, for the blood is the soul, and you shall not eat the soul with the flesh. (Deut. 12:23)

[20]Translator: The verse quoted is Gen. 9:4.

17. Warm-blooded animals that we Israelites are permitted to eat must first be slaughtered as painlessly as possible. (Law 451.)

כי ירחק ממך המקום — וזבחת מבקרך ומצאנך — כאשר צויתך

> If it is too far from you … then you may slaughter of your cattle and your sheep … *as I have commanded you* … (that is, in the oral explanation, to apply the most painless procedure in killing them). (Deut. 12:21)

18. Although we may kill animals for their flesh, everything must be avoided in doing so that would show unfeelingness and cruelty toward them. (Laws 187. 294.)

ואיש איש מבני ישראל — אשר יצוד ציד חיה או עוף אשר יאכל ושפך את דמו וכסהו בעפר

> And any man of the children of Israel … who hunts game, a beast or a bird that may be eaten, shall pour out its blood and *cover* it with earth. (Lev. 17:13)

ושור או שה אתו ואת בנו לא תשחטו ביום אחד

> And ox or sheep, it and its young, you shall not slaughter on *one* day. (Lev. 22:28)

[p. 11] **19.** The flesh of mammals (מדרבנן [*mi-de-rabbanan*, by rabbinic ordinance] also that of birds) may not be cooked in milk. Such a mixture of meat and milk may neither be eaten nor put to any use whatsoever. It is forbidden three times in the Law, and we may well find in this an earnest admonition to gentle dispositions toward animals. Such a mixture is hard-hearted and cruel, because for the tasty preparation of a slaughtered animal it uses the milk which nature is always at pains to prepare solely for the sustenance of the young animal.

לא תבשל גדי בחלב אמו

> You shall not cook the kid in its mother's milk. (Exod. 23:19) Exod. 34:26. Deut. 14:21.

Fifth Chapter. Reverence for God.

(See Handbook pp. 35–40.)

1. Knowledge of God's omnipotence and omniscience leads to reverence for God. (Law 432.)

את ה׳ אלהיך תירא

> You shall revere the Eternal your God. (Deut. 10:20)

האותי לא תיראו נאם ה׳ אם מפני לא תחילו אשר שמתי חול גבול לים חק עולם ולא יעברנהו ויתגעשו ולא יוכלו והמו גליו ולא יעברנהו

> Will you not fear Me? says the Eternal. Will you not tremble before Me, who made the sand a bound for the sea, an everlasting barrier which it does not pass; and they storm, but can do nothing, and its waves roar but do not pass over it. (Jer. 5:22) (Jer. 10:10.)

2. In reverence we should honor all divine dispensations as the outflow of His all-wisdom, and all events as the work of His omnipotence. (Ps. 111:10. Job 28:28. Eccl. 12:13.)

מי זה אמר ותהי ה׳ לא צוה — מפי עליון לא תצא הרעות והטוב

> Who is it that speaks and it comes to pass, if the Lord has not commanded it? — that evil and good should not proceed from the mouth of the Most High? (Lam. 3:31. 38.)[21]

3. Piety (*Frömmigkeit*) consists in the dispositions of reverence and love, and it leads us to a self-sacrificing *obedience*, which esteems the will of God more highly than the joys of life and keeps His Law inviolably, [p. 12] even when it does not comprehend the purpose of the Lawgiver with human understanding. (Song 8:6. 7.)

ועתה ישראל מה ה׳ שאל מעמך — לשמר מצות ה׳ אלהיך — לטוב לך

> And now, Israel, what does the Eternal your God require of you but … that you observe the commandments of the Eternal and His statutes, which I command you this day for your good. (Deut. 10:12)

4. Piety leads to *gratitude* toward God, in which we ascribe all the good that befalls us to God alone.

השמר לך פן תשכח את ה׳ אלהיך — פן תאכל ושבעת ובתים טבים תבנה וישבת — ורם לבבך — ואמרת בלבבך כחי ועצם ידי עשה לי את החיל הזה וזכרת את ה׳ אלהיך כי הוא הנתן לך כח לעשות חיל

> Beware lest you forget your God … lest, when you eat and are full, and build fine houses and dwell in them … your heart be lifted up … and you say in your heart … My strength and the might of my hand have gotten me all this wealth. For remember the Eternal your God, for it is He who gives you strength to get wealth. (Deut. 8:11–18)

5. It leads us to firm *trust* in a just and wise providence, in which we never call into doubt whether God has the will and the power to help us. (Law 424.)

לא תנסו את ה׳ אלהיכם כאשר נסיתם במסה

> You shall not tempt the Eternal your God, as you tempted Him at Massah. (Deut. 6:16) (Gen. 15:6. Jer. 17:5–7.)

6. It leads us to *resignation*, in which we recognize even suffering as a trial from God, as a path to our salvation.

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[21] Translator: The verse quoted is Lam. 3:37–38.

וידעת כי כאשר ייסר איש את בנו ה׳ אלהיך מיסרך

> And you shall know in your heart that, as a man chastens his son, so the Eternal your God chastens you. (Deut. 8:5) (Job 2:10. Prov. 3:11. 12.)

7. It leads us to the *sanctification* of the divine Name, in which we refrain from actions that could profane His Name, which is called upon us. (Law 296.)

ולא תחללו את שם קדשי ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל אני ה׳ מקדשכם

> And do not profane My holy Name, that I may be sanctified among the children of Israel; I am the Eternal who sanctifies you. (Lev. 22:34)[22]

8. In this sanctification the favor of God must be our highest joy in life, and no danger of death may be able to force us into idolatry, immorality or murder.

[p. 13]

אלהים אלי אתה צמאה לך נפשי כי טוב חסדך מחיים — כן אברכך בחיי בשמך אשא כפי

> God, You are my God, I seek You, my soul thirsts for You. For Your grace is better than life … so will I praise You all my life long; in Your Name I lift up my hands. (Ps. 63:2–5)

Sixth Chapter. Prayer.

(See Handb. pp. 40–47.)

1. We should give proper expression to our pious dispositions toward God through the daily morning, evening and additional prayers. (Law 433.)

והיה אם שמע תשמעו אל מצותי — לאהבה את ה׳ אלהיכם ולעבדו בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם

> And it shall come to pass, if you hearken to My commandments … to love the Eternal your God and *to serve Him with all your heart* and all your soul. (Deut. 11:13) (Deut. 10:20. Ps. 145:18. 19.)

2. Prayer at the appointed times keeps us continually in spiritual communion with God, and will preserve us from the enticement of sin. It corresponds to the times of sacrifice in the Sanctuary.

טוב להדות לה׳ ולזמר לשמך עליון להגיד בבקר חסדך ואמונתך בלילות

> It is good to give thanks to the Eternal and to sing praise to Your Name, Most High, to proclaim Your goodness in the morning, Your faithfulness in the evening. (Ps. 92:2. 3.) (Dan. 6:11.)

3. Praying together with those of like mind furthers devotion. (Ps. 68:27. 26:12.) Praying according to set forms of prayer directs the content of prayer toward what is truly salutary for body and soul. (Gen. 28:20. Prov. 30:7, 8.)

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[22] Translator: The verse quoted is Lev. 22:32.

לב טהור ברא לי אלהים ורוח נכון חדש בקרבי

> Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Ps. 51:12)

4. We should make known our gratitude toward God through benedictions (by ordinance of our teachers of the Law) even before every enjoyment of a bodily or spiritual gift of God; but *after* the enjoyment of a meal of which we have eaten our fill, we are obliged to thank the Lord with a threefold benediction.

[p. 14]

ואכלת ושבעת וברכת את ה׳ אלהיך על הארץ הטבה אשר נתן לך

> And you will eat and be satisfied, and you shall bless the Eternal your God for the good land which He has given you. (Deut. 8:10) (Law 430.) (Hos. 13:6.)

5. Prayer for others is pleasing to God the Lord, for it is the most heartfelt expression of love of neighbor and of fellow-feeling for their suffering. Our Sages teach: Whoever asks for something on behalf of others which he himself actually needs as well will be answered for himself all the sooner. — The Lord commanded the sons of Aaron, who were consecrated to Him, to bless the people at all times, that is, to pray to God on its behalf. (Law 378.)

דבר אל אהרן ואל בניו לאמר כה תברכו את בני ישראל אמור להם יברכך ה׳ וישמרך יאר ה׳ פניו אליך ויחנך ישא ה׳ פניו אליך וישם לך שלום

> Speak to Aaron and to his sons and say: Thus shall you bless the children of Israel: The Eternal bless you and keep you; the Eternal make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Eternal turn His face toward you and give you peace; and they shall put My Name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them. (Num. 6:23–29)[23]

6. Likewise our own *prayer* should not be confined to our own needs, but should be all-embracing (1 Kings 8:41. 43) and should not exclude even the enemy. (Gen. 20:17. 18. Exod. 8:26.)

7. Prayer requires outward purity, inner composure of mind, a preparation that rouses the spirit, a penitent disposition, and devotion.

הכון לקראת אלהיך ישראל

> Prepare to meet your God, Israel! (Amos 4:12)

[23] Translator: The passage quoted is Num. 6:23–27.

ובפרשכם כפיכם אעלים עיני מכם גם כי תרבו תפלה איננני שמע ידיכם דמים מלאו הסירו רע מעלליכם מנגד עיני

And when you spread forth your hands, I hide My eyes from you; even when you multiply prayers, I do not hear. Your hands are full of blood; put away your evil deeds from before My eyes. (Isa. 1:15. 16.) (Job 16:17.)

יען כי נגש העם הזה בפיו ובשפתיו כבדוני ולבו רחק ממני

Because this people draws near with its mouth, and honors Me with its lips, but keeps its heart far from Me. (Isa. 29:13)

[p. 15] Seventh Chapter. On Divine Worship in the Sanctuary.

(See Handbook pp. 48–65.)

1. God will indeed hear us wherever we pray to Him.

בכל המקום אשר אזכיר את שמי אבוא אליך וברכתיך

In every place where I cause My Name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you. (Exod. 20:21)

2. But people gladly unite at a specially consecrated place, in order to offer their sacrificial gifts and prayers to the Father of all in common devotion.

מה ידידות משכנותיך ה׳ צבאות נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי לחצרות ה׳ — גם צפור מצאה בית ודרור קן לה — מזבחותיך ה׳ צבאות מלכי ואלהי אשרי יושבי ביתך עוד יהללוך סלה

How lovely are Your dwellings, Eternal of hosts! My soul longed and languished for the courts of the Eternal … Even the bird has found a house, and the swallow builds herself a nest … Your altars, Eternal of hosts, my King and my God. Happy are they who dwell in Your house; they praise You evermore. Selah! (Ps. 84:2) (Prayer: *Mah tovu*.)[24]

3. The Lord gladly inclines Himself toward such communal striving upward.

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם

And let them make Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. (Exod. 25:8) (Law 95.)

4. The glory of God twice consecrated such spaces through the revelation of wondrous manifestations: once the Tabernacle during the wandering through the wilderness, and later the Sanctuary built by Solomon on Mount Moriah.

[24]Translator: The words quoted are Ps. 84:2–5. *Mah tovu* ("How goodly") is the opening prayer of the morning service on entering the synagogue, into which verses of this psalm are woven.

ותצא אש מלפני ה׳ ותאכל על המזבח את העלה ואת החלבים וירא כל העם וירנו ויפלו על פניהם

> And a flame of fire went forth from the Eternal and consumed upon the altar the whole-offering and the fat portions; and all the people saw, and they shouted for joy and fell on their faces. (Lev. 9:24)

ולא יכלו הכהנים לעמד לשרת מפני הענן כי מלא כבוד ה׳ את בית ה׳

> And the priests could not stand to perform their service before the people; for the glory of the Eternal had filled the house of the Eternal. (1 Kings 8:12)[25]

4.[26] Mount Moriah had been sanctified to the Lord from the very beginning, especially through the consecration of Yitzchok [Isaac] as a sacrifice.

> [p. 16] And Abraham called the name of this place (ה׳ יראה) *the Eternal will see*; as it is said to this day: (בהר ה׳ יראה) *On the mount of the Eternal one appears.* Gen. 22:14. (2 Sam. 24:16.)

6. Therefore the Sanctuary burned by Nebuzaradan was rebuilt on the same spot by Ezra and Nehemiah, and there the Sanctuary promised by the prophets will one day be erected again. (Ezek. chs. 40–48.)

7. The spaces of the Tabernacle, as of the Sanctuary on Moriah, were divided, in ascending degree of their holiness, into the *forecourt*, the *Sanctuary* (*Hechal*) and the *Holy of Holies*. (Exod. 26:1–33, ch. 27:9.)

8. In the *forecourt* stood the altar, on which the offerings of continuing grateful love and of remorseful guilt were brought to the Lord. No iron may be wielded upon it, for iron can be misused as a weapon of enmity. (Law 40.)

אש תמיד תוקד על המזבח לא תכבה

> A perpetual fire shall be kept burning upon the altar; it shall not go out. (Lev. 6:6) (Laws 132. 133.)

ואם מזבח אבנים תעשה לי לא תבנה אתהן גזית כי חרבך הנפת עליה ותחללה

> And if you make Me an altar of stones, do not build it of hewn stones; for you have wielded your iron over it, and so you have profaned it. (Exod. 20:22) (Prov. 10:12. Ps. 11:5.)

9. In the *Hechal* the showbread lay on the golden table, to awaken trust that the Lord grants us our daily bread. (Ps. 111:5.) There the 7 lamps on the golden lampstand burned every night.

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[25]Translator: The verse quoted is 1 Kings 8:11; Lasch's rendering has "before the people" where the Hebrew reads "because of the cloud."

[26]Translator: Misnumbered in the original; it should be 5 (the next statement is numbered 6).

הוא גלא עמיקתא ומסתרתא ידע מה בחשוכא ונהורא עמה שרא

> He reveals the deep and the hidden; He knows what is in the darkness, for the light dwells with Him. (Dan. 2:22)

10. There, morning and evening, incense rose up to God on the golden altar as a sign of veneration, and one day all peoples will venerate Him thus.

כי ממזרח שמש ועד מבואו גדול שמי בגוים ובכל מקום מקטר מגש לשמי ומנחה טהורה

> For from the rising of the sun to its setting My Name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is burned and offered to My Name, and indeed a pure offering. (Mal. 1:11) (Laws 103, 104, 110, 98.)

11. In the *Holy of Holies* stood the Ark of the Covenant; it contained the Tablets of the Law and the Book of the Covenant, the pledge of Israel's continued existence in its calling to preserve the Law and to hold it up as a light before the nations, until one day the knowledge of God and obedience to His will shall be spread everywhere.

[p. 17]

בטבעת הארן יהיו הבדים לא יסרו ממנו

> In the rings of the Ark the *carrying-poles* shall remain; they shall not *come out*. (A reminder that Israel remains called to wander among the nations, to carry the word of God out to all the ends of the world, until one day the goal of its wandering is reached and the teaching goes forth again from Zion and the word of God from Yerushalayim.) (Laws 96. 379.) (Num. 10:35. 36. Prov. 6:23. Isa. 52:11. 12.) (Exod. 25:15)

12. For common prayer and for hearing the divine word, in place of that Sanctuary on Moriah lost through our sinfulness, the congregations of Israel erect houses of God (מקדש מעט [*mikdash me'at*, "a small sanctuary"]), to which reverence and holy regard are due. These houses of God, intended for common prayer and for the reading of the Torah, we should hold holy, and not enter them frivolously and without decorum; for in them we bring to our consciousness the feelings and reflections which the Sanctuary on Moriah was formerly meant to inspire. (Laws 254. 184.)

Eighth Chapter. On the Priests.

(See Handbook pp. 65–72.)

1. The service in the Sanctuary was performed by the priests, the descendants of Aaron, and at their head the High Priest. He was to be a model to the people of drawing near to God through virtue and piety, and of entreating God's grace.

כי שפתי כהן ישמרו דעת ותורה יבקשו מפיהו כי מלאך ה׳ צבאות הוא

> For the lips of the priest should guard knowledge, and teaching should be sought from his mouth, for he is a messenger of the Eternal of hosts. (Mal. 2:7)

2. To this holy calling corresponded also the outward attire, among which especially the holy frontlet and the breastplate of judgment point to sanctifying the spirit and loving justice.

ואלה הבגדים אשר יעשו חשן ואפוד ומעיל וכתנת תשבץ מצנפת ואבנט — לכהנו לי

> And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate and an ephod, and a robe, and a quilted tunic, a headdress and a sash … to consecrate him to Me as priest. (Exod. 28:4)

3. The garments of the priests and of the High Priest had to be carefully made, worn and maintained. (Exod. 28:5–43. Laws 100. 101.)

[p. 18] **4.** They may not express grief over the death of a relative by rending their garments and letting the hair of the head grow wild. (Lev. 10:6. Laws 149. 150.) Although these signs of mourning are found as an ancient custom already among the patriarchs, and no one may withhold himself from them in giving expression to his grief, priests may not give themselves over to such outbursts of mourning during the exercise of their office; they are to show that their office fills them, more than anyone else, with the consoling thought:

כי לא תעזב נפשי לשאול לא תתן חסידך לראות שחת

> For You will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, You will not suffer Your pious one to see destruction. (Ps. 16:10)

5. Every act of service by the priests in the Sanctuary had to be preceded by an outward cleansing.

ורחצו אהרן ובניו ממנו את ידיהם ואת רגליהם

> And Aaron and his sons shall wash from it their hands and feet. (Exod. 30:19)

6. But this cleansing can also serve them as an admonition to a holy disposition.

ארחץ בנקיון כפי ואסבבה את מזבחך ה׳

> I wash my hands in purity, and I encircle Your altar, O Eternal! (Ps. 26:6)

רחצו הזכו הסירו רע מעלליכם מנגד עיני

> Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean, put away your evil deeds from before My eyes. (Isa. 1:16)

7. The example of the priests of old should still hover before us now, when we wish to lay our feelings and wishes before the Lord of the universe in prayer: to enter the house of God in seemly clothing, with cleanliness of body and composure of spirit. For a clean garment points to a clean mind, and is often used in Holy Scripture as its symbol.

בכל עת יהיו בגדיך לבנים ושמן על ראשך אל יחסר

> At all times let your garments be white, and let oil not be lacking on your head. (Eccl. 9:8)

Likewise it says in the prophetic vision:

ויהושע היה לבש בגדים צואים ועמד לפני המלאך ויען ויאמר אל העמדים לפניו לאמר הסירו הבגדים הצאים מעליו ויאמר אליו ראה העברתי מעליך עונך והלבש אתך מחלצות

> And Jehoshua was clothed in filthy garments and stood before the angel; and he began and spoke to those standing before him thus: Take [p. 19] the filthy garments off him! And he said to him: See, I take your guilt from you, and clothe you in festive garments. (Zech. 3:4–5)[27]

כי זאת אעשה לך הכון לקראת אלהיך ישראל

> Because I do thus to you — prepare to meet your God, Israel! (Amos 4:12)

Ninth Chapter. On the Sacrifices.

(See Handb. pp. 72–110.)[28]

1. For as long as the first and second Sanctuaries stood, the priests, the descendants of Aaron, offered sacrifices for the people, which were to serve the sanctification of man and his *drawing near* to God, in order *to thank* Him or *to cleanse oneself of sin* before Him.

וקדשתו כי את לחם אלהיך הוא מקריב קדש יהיה לך כי קדוש אני ה׳ מקדשכם

> And you shall hold him holy, for he offers the bread of your God; holy shall he be to you, for holy am I, the Eternal, who sanctifies you. (Lev. 21:8)

2. The effort of bringing a sacrifice out of gratitude or in atonement for a transgression will keep this love or remorse awake for a long time, and will work with particular lasting effect so that the sinner remains thenceforth in humility and devotion before God.

זבחי אלהים רוח נשברה לב נשבר ונדכה אלהים לא תבזה

> The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You do not despise. (Ps. 51:19)

3. Toward the cost of the fixed sacrifices of the people for every day, as well as of the additional sacrifices on days of rest and festivals, every adult Israelite contributed half a shekel yearly; these were gifts of homage and the tokens of the people's devotion. (Exod. 30:14. 15.)

4. Every morning and evening a perpetual fire-offering (תמיד [*tamid*]), and on days of rest and festivals various additional offerings (מוסף [*musaf*]) were brought, through which the people made known its faithful devotion to the will of God. (Num. chs. 28 and 29.)

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[27] Translator: The words quoted are Zech. 3:3–4.

[28] It must be left to the teacher to make more or less use of this, according to the level of his pupils.

היטיבה ברצונך את ציון תבנה חומות ירושלם אז תחפץ זבחי צדק עולה וכליל — —

[p. 20] Do good to Zion in Your grace, build up the walls of Yerushalayim; then You will delight in sacrifices of righteousness, burnt- and whole-offerings. (Ps. 51:20. 21.)

5. The sacrifices that the individual offered were: a) the whole- or fire-offering (עולה [*olah*]), b) the thank- or joy-offering (שלמים [*shelamim*]), c) the firstborn (בכור [*bekhor*]), d) the tithe (מעשר [*ma'aser*]) and e) the Passover offering (פסח [*pesach*]), in order to draw near to God in love and gratitude; f) the sin-offering (חטאת [*chatat*]) and g) the guilt-offering (אשם [*asham*]), in order to cleanse oneself of sin before Him.

6. To every animal sacrifice, for which only cattle, sheep and goats, and the dove were suitable, there belonged also meal-offerings (מנחה [*minchah*]) of flour, oil and frankincense, and further wine for the drink-offering (נסכים [*nesakhim*]). Besides these there were also special flour- or meal-offerings.

7. The sacrifices achieved their purpose only when they were offered with the right dispositions, according to the legal regulations regarding time and place.

כל אשר בו מום לא תקריבו כי לא לרצון יהיה לכם

Whatever has a blemish you shall not offer, for it will not be acceptable for you. (Lev. 22:20)

וכי תגשון עור לזבח אין רע וכי תגישו פסח וחלה אין רע הקריבהו נא לפחתך הירצך או הישא פניך אמר ה׳ צבאות

And when you offer a blind animal for sacrifice, is that no evil? and when you offer a lame or sick one, is that no evil? Present it, pray, to your governor: will he receive you graciously, or will he welcome you kindly? says the Eternal of hosts. (Mal. 1:8)

8. Outside the Sanctuary no sacrifice may be offered anywhere.

השמר לך פן תעלה עלתיך בכל מקום אשר תראה

Beware lest you offer your sacrifices in any place that you see fit. (Deut. 12:13)

9. We can therefore now express our feelings of love and gratitude before God only through the morning, evening and additional prayers instituted in place of the sacrifices.

כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח ודעת אלהים מעלות

For I desire love and not sacrifice, and knowledge more than whole-offerings. (Hos. 6:6)

10. But atonement we obtain through genuine repentance and amendment, which can be brought about only through recognition and remorseful confession of sin.

והתודו את חטאתם אשר עשו — —

They shall confess their sin which they have committed. (Num. 5:7)

[p. 21]

חטאתי אודיעך ועוני לא כסיתי אמרתי אודה עלי פשעי ליהוה ואתה נשאת עון חטאתי סלה

My sin I make known to You and my guilt I do not cover; then I say: I will confess my transgressions to the Eternal, and You have forgiven the guilt of my sin. (Ps. 32:5) (Hos. 14:2. Prov. 15:8. 1 Sam. 15:22. 23.)

11. Just as the sacrificial meals of former times were sanctified by the instructive word of the priests and Levites who took part in them, and consecrated by the needy who shared in them, so should we likewise sanctify our festive meals by the word of instruction and by inviting the poor. (Avot ch. 3, Mishnah 4.)

12. At the daily sacrifices, and especially at the sacrificial rites on festivals, the Levites, who were assigned to the priests for service and for guarding the Sanctuary, struck up songs of praise and thanksgiving for the sanctification of the day. (Num. 18:2. 3. 5. 1 Chron. 9:23–30 and ch. 25.)

13. They also had to keep away from the Sanctuary all who were physically or mentally incapable of following the holy rite with devotion. (Num. 5:2. 3.)

14. In a state of drunkenness neither priests nor representatives of the people were permitted to attend the sacrifice.

יין ושכר אל תשת — — בבאכם אל אהל מועד — — ולהבדיל בין הקדש ובין החל ובין הטמא ובין הטהור ולהורת את בני ישראל את כל החקים אשר דבר ה׳ אליהם ביד משה

Wine and strong drink you shall not drink when you go into the Tent of Meeting … and that you may distinguish between the holy and the unholy, and between the unclean and the clean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Eternal has spoken to them through Moshe. (Lev. 10:9. 10.)[29]

[p. 22] Second Commandment.

לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים על פני לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ מתחת ואשר במים מתחת לארץ לא תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם כי אנכי ה׳ אלהיך אל קנא פקד עון אבת על בנים על שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי ועשה חסד לאלפים לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי

You shall have no strange gods before Me; you shall not make for yourself any image, any likeness of what is in heaven above, and what is on the earth here below, and what is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down before them and not serve them; for I, the Eternal

[29] Translator: The words quoted are Lev. 10:9–11.

your God, am a zealous God, who visits the guilt of the fathers upon children, upon the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, — but who shows grace to the thousandth generation of those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exod. 20:3. 4. 5.)[30]

First Chapter. The Delusion of Idolatry.

(See Handbook pp. 113–116.)

1. Whoever does not believe in and trust the providence and omnipotence of a single God, but turns with his prayer or with any sign of veneration and worship to some created being, as though it could help or harm him without the will of God, lives in the delusion of idolatry.

לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים על פני

You shall have no strange gods before Me. (Exod. 20:3)

[p. 23]

ופן תשא עיניך השמימה וראית את השמש וכו׳

And lest you lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun, etc. (Deut. 4:19. 20.) (Lev. 19:4. Ps. 118:6–9.)

2. Above all, *the Israelite* sins thereby, to whom God revealed Himself in Mizraim and at Sinai as a single Being.

אתה הראת לדעת כי ה׳ הוא האלהים אין עוד מלבדו

To you it was shown, that you might know that the Eternal is God; there is none else besides Him. (Deut. 4:35)

3. Whoever venerates any created being as divine must be limited in mind, because he venerates a *creature* instead of the *Creator*.

אתה הוא ה׳ לבדך אתה עשית את השמים — —

You alone are the Eternal; You have made the heavens. (Neh. 9:6)

היש בהבלי הגוים מגשמים ואם השמים יתנו רביבים הלא אתה הוא ה׳ אלהינו ונקוה לך כי אתה עשית את כל אלה

Are there any among the idol-nonsense of the nations that grant rain, or can the heavens send showers? Is it not You, Eternal our God? And we hope in You, for You do all these things. (Jer. 14:22) (Jer. 10:11–12.)

4. Only he keeps himself far from the veneration of God who has the will to do evil and will acknowledge no judge over himself.

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[30] Translator: The passage quoted is Exod. 20:3–6.

רשע כגבה אפו בל ידרש אין אלהים כל מזמותיו

The wicked man, in the arrogance of his anger (thinks): He does not punish; there is no God — are all his thoughts. (Ps. 10:4)

5. The idolater debases himself, for he worships objects that were created and appointed for his service.

ולא ישיב אל לבו ולא דעת ולא תבונה לאמר חציו שרפתי במו אש ואף אפיתי על גחליו לחם אצלה בשר ואכל ויתרו לתועבה אעשה לבול עץ אסגוד

And he does not take it to heart, and has neither knowledge nor understanding to say: Half of it I have burned, and I have also baked bread upon its coals; now I roast meat, that I may eat it, and the rest I will make into an abomination; I will kneel before a block of wood. (Isa. 44:19)

[p. 24] Second Chapter. We May Form No Sensory Image of God.

(See Handbook pages 117–122.)

1. The clarity and purity of our thought of God must not be distorted and profaned by a sensory representation of His being and His attributes.

לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה אשר בשמים ממעל ואשר בארץ מתחת ואשר במים מתחת לארץ

You shall not make for yourself any image, any likeness of what is in heaven above and what is on the earth and what is in the water under the earth. (Exod. 20:4)

2. To no created being may the power be ascribed to direct the destinies of man of its own will or of its own sovereign power; for whatever helps or harms us is determined by providence alone.

לא תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם וכו׳

You shall not bow down before them and not serve them. (Exod. 20:5)

3. God's Law is zealous against idolatry not because His glory could thereby be impaired, but because idolatry indulges unreason, cruelty and lust, and these vices are passed on by parents to their descendants.

כי אנכי ה׳ אלהיך אל קנא פקד עון אבת על בנים על שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי

For I, the Eternal your God, am a zealous God, who visits the guilt of the fathers upon children, upon the third and fourth generation, among those who hate Me. (Exod. 20:5)

ובנו במות התפת אשר בגיא בן הנם לשרף את בניהם ואת בנתיהם באש אשר לא צויתי ולא עלתה על לבי

> They built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of Ben Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters in the fire, which I did not command and which did not come into My mind. (Jer. 7:31) (Jer. 7:30.)

4. Sensuality almost always led to the veneration of self-made idols, because people attributed to them vices in which they themselves liked to indulge, whereas the veneration of God demands spotless moral purity, a sanctified way of life.

[p. 25]

ויאמר יהושע אל העם לא תוכלו לעבד את ה׳ כי אלהים קדשים הוא אל קנוא הוא לא ישא לפשעכם ולחטאותיכם

> And Jehoshua said to the people: You will not be able to serve the Eternal; for He is a holy God, He is a zealous God; He will not be indulgent toward your transgressions and your sins. (Josh. 24:19)

5. To erect statues to a human being in order to secure him the veneration of posterity is sinful; for it can easily lead posterity to pay him worship instead of emulation. But no one should be venerated as a *higher* being on account of his virtue, much less on account of his wealth.

לא תעשון אתי אלהי כסף ואלהי זהב לא תעשו לכם

> You shall not make beside Me gods of silver, and gods of gold you shall not make either. (Exod. 20:20) (Law 39. Isa. 2:7–8.)

6. Israel was formerly obliged to wipe out of its land every reminder of idolatry, and likewise to renounce every profit gained from the purchase or sale of such venerated objects.

אבד תאבדון את כל המקמות אשר עבדו שם הגוים אשר אתם ירשים אתם את אלהיהם על ההרים הרמים ועל הגבעות

> You shall destroy all the places where the nations whom you have dispossessed served their gods, upon the high mountains and upon the hills. (Deut. 12:2)

פסילי אלהיהם תשרפון באש לא תחמד כסף וזהב עליהם ולקחת לך פן תוקש בו כי תועבת ה׳ אלהיך הוא ולא תביא תועבה אל ביתך והיית חרם כמהו שקץ תשקצנו ותעב תתעבנו כי חרם הוא

> Burn their idols in the fire; have no desire for the silver and gold upon them, that you should take it for yourself, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the Eternal your God. And you shall bring no abomination into your house, lest you become banned like it; you shall detest it and treat it as an abomination, for it is banned. (Deut. 7:25. 26.) (Laws 428. 429. 436.)

Third Chapter. Enticement to Idolatry.

(See Handbook pp. 123–135.)

1. Whoever robs us of firm trust in God by enticing us to venerate a created being as the director of human destiny sins grievously against our spiritual welfare and deserves the severest punishment. (Deut. 13:4–9.)

[p. 26]

לא תשמע אל דברי הנביא ההוא או אל חולם החלום ההוא כי מנסה ה׳ אלהיכם אתכם לדעת הישכם אהבים את ה׳ אלהיכם בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם

> Do not listen to the words of this prophet, or of the one who has dreams, for the Eternal your God is testing you, whether you love the Eternal your God with all your heart and all your soul. (Deut. 13:4) (Laws 456–462.)

2. While the Israelite people held independent possession of Palestine, it was not permitted that seduction to idolatry should gain ground in a city in the midst of the land. Deut. 13:17. עיר הנדחת [*ir ha-niddachat*, the city led astray]. (Laws 464–466.)

3. But if the seduction has already seized more than one city, its punishment is to be left to God, in the confidence that God has promised to uphold His covenant with Israel for all time.

חי אני נאם ה׳ אם לא ביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה — אמלוך עליכם

> As I live, says God the Lord, with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm … I will rule over you. (Ezek. 20:33)

4. We, however, should pray that the Lord may cause not the sinners, but the desire for sin to vanish from the earth, and everyone should contribute to this through good example, instruction and education.

> Eternal our God, therefore we hope soon to behold the glory of Your omnipotence, that abominations may be banished from the earth and the idols rooted out, that the earth may be perfected through the kingdom of the Almighty, that all children of flesh may call upon Your Name, and all the wicked of the earth may turn of themselves to You. (*Alenu* prayer.)

5. Toward the peoples of other faiths the Israelite is obliged to maintain gentleness and friendliness, and especially to show brotherly love and gratitude toward those peoples in whose land we dwell.

ודרשו את שלום העיר אשר הגליתי אתכם שמה והתפללו בעדה אל ה׳ כי בשלומה יהיה לכם שלום

> And seek the welfare of the city to which I have carried you away, and pray for it to the Eternal, for in its welfare you shall fare well. (Jer. 29:7)

6. Our Sages teach: The pious and righteous of all the peoples of the earth, even if they worship God in another way, yet strive after virtue out of this worship, have a share in the happiness of the future life. (Sanhedrin p. 105a.)

ישובו רשעים לשאולה כל גוים שכחי אלהים

Back to the netherworld must the wicked go, all the nations that are *forgetful of God*. (Ps. 9:18)

[p. 27] **7.** Yet the Israelite must take care not to be led away from the revealed Law in his dealings with other peoples. (Laws 262. 111.)

השמר לך פן תנקש אחריהם — — לאמר איכה יעבדו הגוים האלה את אלהיהם ואעשה כן גם אני —

So beware lest you let yourself be ensnared into following them … and say: As these nations serve their gods, so will I also do. (Deut. 12:30) (Exod. 34:15. 16.)

8. In the Holy Land even heathens were permitted residence and domicile with equal rights, provided they were willing to live by the seven Noachide laws.

תורה אחת ומשפט אחד יהיה לכם ולגר הגר אתכם

One teaching and one law shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns among you. (Num. 15:16)

9. The seven Noachide laws are: 1) the duty to administer justice, 2) the prohibition of blaspheming God, 3) the prohibition of serving idols, 4) the prohibition of adultery and of marriage between the closest relatives, 5) the prohibition of murder, 6) the prohibition of robbery, 7) the prohibition of eating the flesh of an animal before it is dead. (Sanhedrin p. 56b.)

10. Only insofar as the former Canaanite possessors of the Holy Land would not desist from their abominable Moloch sacrifices and unbridled atrocities were they not permitted to remain in the land, so that they should not become a snare for Israel.

גפן ממצרים תסיע תגרש גוים ותטעה

A vine You brought out of Mizraim; You drove out nations and planted it. (Ps. 80:9)

לא תכרת להם ולאלהיהם ברית לא ישבו בארצך פן יחטיאו אתך לי כי תעבד את אלהיהם כי יהיה לך למוקש

Make no covenant with them and their gods; they shall not dwell in your land, lest they lead you into sin against Me; for you might serve their gods, for they could become a snare to you. (Exod. 23:32. 33.) (Laws 93. 94.)

[p. 28] Fourth Chapter. Idolatry Leads to Cruelty and to Superstition.

(See Handbook pp. 135–144.)

1. The heathens did not believe in a just and kindly God who, in His governance of the world, turns even evil to good; rather they lived in the delusion that good gods are opposed and hindered in their working by evil ones. These evil powers they sought to appease even with human sacrifices, and they consecrated themselves to them through disfigurement and mutilation.

ומזרעך לא תתן להעביר למלך אני ה׳

And of your children you shall not give any to make them pass (through the fire) to Molech (in his honor); I am the Eternal. (Lev. 18:21) (Law 208.)

לא תקפו פאת ראשכם ולא תשחית את פאת זקנך

You shall not round off the side-edges of the hair of your head, nor destroy the edges of your beard. (Lev. 19:27)

ושרט לנפש לא תתנו בבשרכם וכתבת קעקע לא תתנו בכם

And incisions for a dead person … and etched writing you shall not make upon yourselves; I am the Eternal. (Lev. 19:28) (Laws 251–253.)

2. The Israelite, however, should accept with resignation everything that God decrees as the wise dispositions of an all-good Father.

בנים אתם לה׳ אלהיכם לא תתגדדו ולא תשימו קרחה בין עיניכם למת

Children you are of the Eternal your God; make no cuts on yourselves, and shave no baldness between your eyes for a dead person. (Deut. 14:1) (Laws 467. 468.)

3. With trust in a wise providence we should also despise the arts of soothsaying and sorcery by which the heathens sought to protect themselves in advance against the threatening doom of evil powers.

לא תאכלו על הדם לא תנחשו ולא תעוננו

You shall not eat with the blood … not divine from serpents and not from clouds. (Lev. 19:26) (Laws 249, 250.)

כי תועבת ה׳ כל עשה אלה ובגלל התועבת האלה ה׳ אלהיך מוריש אותם מפניך תמים תהיה עם ה׳ אלהיך

[p. 29] For an abomination to the Eternal is everyone who does these things, and because of these abominations the Eternal your God drives them out before you. You shall be blameless (that is, full of trust) toward the Eternal your God. (Deut. 18:12–13)

כה אמר ה׳: אל דרך הגוים אל תלמדו, ומאתות השמים אל תחתו, כי יחתו הגוים מהמה

Thus says the Eternal: Do not accustom yourselves to the way of the nations, and do not be dismayed at the signs of the heavens, even though the nations are dismayed at them. (Jer. 10:2)

Fifth Chapter. The Avoidance of *Tumoh*

(See Handbook pp. 144–163.)

1. In contrast to the heathens, who strove to maintain a gloomy connection with the realm of death, the Israelite is to raise himself beyond death to the eternal primal source of all life.

נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי לחצרות ה׳, לבי ובשרי ירננו אל אל חי

> My soul longed and pined for the courts of the Eternal; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the *living* God. (Ps. 84:3)

ואני ידעתי גאלי חי, ואחרון על עפר יקום

> I know that my Redeemer lives, and he will raise up the last one from the dust. (Job 19:25)

2. Touching a dead animal, and still more being near the corpse of a human being, can have a bewildering and saddening influence on our spirit, and this may be what Holy Scripture means by the expression *Tumoh* [טומאה, ritual impurity]. The Israelite first had to let this *Tumoh* pass away before he was permitted to partake of holy things or to enter the sanctuary, because for that he needs a cheerful frame of mind.

עבדו את ה׳ בשמחה באו לפניו ברננה

> Serve the Eternal with gladness, come before him with jubilant song. (Ps. 100:2)

(Deut. 12:12, 18. Ps. 122:1. Lev. 23:40.)

כל הנגע במת בנפש האדם אשר ימות ולא יתחטא, את משכן ה׳ טמא — —

> Everyone who touches a dead person, the body of a human being who has died, and does not have himself purified, has defiled the dwelling of the Eternal. (Num. 19:13)

3. One distinguishes a) the *Tumoh* caused by touching a dead animal, whose influence lasts only *one* day and which is removed by a bath in spring water [i.e. immersion in a *mikveh*] (Lev. 11:23–39); b) the [p. 30] *Tumoh* caused by nearness to the corpse of a human being, whose influence lasts *seven days* and had to be removed solely by sprinkling with the ash-water of the burnt red heifer before the immersion bath could be taken, so that one might be permitted to enter the sanctuary. (Num. 19:2–19.)

4. At the sight of what is decaying, man needs a comfort and the thought that death is only a transition to a better life, for which everyone should prepare himself through repentance and amendment.

טוב ללכת אל בית אבל מלכת אל בית משתה, באשר הוא סוף כל האדם, והחי יתן אל לבו

> It is better to go into the house of mourning than to go into the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men, and the living will take it to heart. (Eccl. 7:2)

5. One further distinguishes c) a *Tumoh* that already issues from a human being during life; it is partly inseparable from the frailty of his body, and partly it befalls him as a consequence of intemperance and dissoluteness. The Israelite then had to consider himself unclean, and only after

seven days of complete recovery was he permitted, by an immersion bath, to prepare his approach to holy things. Then he had to seek to regain the goodwill of God by an atonement offering.

ונהמת באחריתך, בכלות בשרך ושארך, ואמרת איך שנאתי מוסר ותוכחת נאץ לבי ולא שמעתי בקול מורי ולמלמדי לא הטיתי אזני, כמעט הייתי בכל רע בתוך קהל ועדה

> And you will groan in your latter days, when your body and your flesh come to an end, and you will say: How could I have hated discipline, and my heart have spurned reproof! How could I not have listened to the voice of my guides, nor inclined my ear to my teachers! I very nearly came into every evil in the midst of the assembly and the congregation. (Prov. 5:11–14)

6. Finally, d) leprosy is counted as *Tumoh*; in Holy Scripture it is named as a divine punishment for pride, envy and slander. Until he is completely healed, the one afflicted with it must consider himself unclean, avoid the company of people, and seek healing from the priests and servants of God, through whom he can at the same time be healed of the injury to his soul.

הקנאה והתאוה והכבוד מוציאין את האדם מן העולם

> Envy, passion and ambition drive a man out of the world (Jer. 9:7). Examples: Gehazi, Uzziah, Miriam. (Avot 4:28)[31]

7. Although the laws of *Tumoh* contained in the Third Book of Moses, chapters 12, 13, 14, 15, can find no [p. 31] application for us as long as the sanctuary is destroyed, we can nevertheless take their spirit to heart by regarding sufferings and infirmities, whether they are rooted in human nature or brought on by one's own fault, as dispensations of divine providence. Through them providence means to point us to the dangers of sinfulness, so that the spirit may summon up its strength anew to overcome dissoluteness and turn to God for help.

ה׳ אל בקצפך תוכיחני ובחמתך תיסרני: כי חציך נחתו בי, ותנחת עלי ידך: אין מתם בבשרי מפני זעמך, אין שלום בעצמי מפני חטאתי — — אל תעזבני ה׳ אלהי אל תרחק ממני: חושה לעזרתי א׳ תשועתי

> Eternal, rebuke me not in Thy wrath, and chasten me not in Thy fury; for Thine arrows have pierced me and Thy hand presses down upon me. There is no soundness in my flesh because of Thine indignation, no peace in my bones because of my sin. — — Forsake me not, O Eternal, my God; be not far from me; make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation. (Ps. 38:2–5, 22–23) (Exod. 15:26.)

Sixth Chapter. The Forbidden Foods

(See Handbook pp. 164–173.)

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[31] Translator: Mishnah Avot 4:21 in the standard numbering (4:28 in the numbering of some prayer books). The examples are those struck with leprosy in Scripture: Gehazi (2 Kings 5:20–27), King Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:16–21) and Miriam (Num. 12:1–10).

1. The Israelite is to love God with his whole heart; that is, he is not at the same time to indulge in sensual desire, so that his heart may not be divided between love for God and love for his sensual pleasure. Whoever obeys his sensual drives pays homage to an inward idolatry; therefore it says in the Second Commandment (Exod. 20:3): "You shall have no other gods before me (that is, not in your heart either)."

ולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם, אשר אתם זנים אחריהם

> That you do not go spying about after your heart and after your eyes, after which you go astray. (Num. 15:39)

2. So that we Israelites may be better preserved from such inward idolatry, we must seek to keep sensuality down within us; then it will not be able to rule over us.

כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעוריו

> The devising of the human heart is evil from its youth. (Gen. 8:21)

3. In the holy Law, therefore, the All-Wise has forbidden us to eat the flesh of those animals of which He knows that they arouse in us such inclinations as might work against the [p. 32] calling of Israel to remain a holy people.

אשכילך ואורך בדרך זו תלך — אל תהיו כסוס כפרד אין הבין במתג ורסן עדיו לבלום, בל קרב אליך

> I will instruct you and show you the way in which you should go. … Be not like the horse, like the mule, which has no understanding, whose ornament is bit and bridle to curb it, lest it come near you. (Ps. 32:8–9)

4. Of the mammals, only those kinds are permitted to us which chew the cud and have cloven hoofs, and which are therefore purely plant-eating. Of the birds, only those kinds that tear apart no living animal. Of the fish, only those that have fins and scales. (Lev. ch. 11; Deut. ch. 14.)

5. Of the permitted warm-blooded animals we may not consume the blood; it must be removed from the pieces of meat by sprinkling with salt and then by rinsing. The suet of slaughtered domestic animals, as well as the flesh of animals that have died of themselves or been torn, may not be eaten. (Lev. 7:23, 25–27. Deut. 14:21.)

ואנשי קדש תהיון לי, ובשר בשדה טרפה לא תאכלו לכלב תשלכון אתו

> And *holy men* shall you be to me, and an animal torn in the field you shall not eat; you shall throw it *to the dog*.[32] (Exod. 22:30)

6. The Israelite, obedient to the will of God, is to content himself with the foods permitted him by the Law of God. He may not reach for everything to which desire entices him, but must also subject

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[32]The *dog*, which seeks even the most loathsome things for its perpetual hunger, stands here as the starkest contrast to holy men, who choose only the most select.

the animal in himself to the will of God. Those who consecrated themselves wholly to the Lord sought to consume the food they needed, as gifts of God, in the greatest purity; this was meant to make it easy for them always to follow the Lord with a joyful heart as consecrated servants, even on the hardest path of duty.

[p. 33] Third Commandment

לא תשא את שם ה׳ אלהיך לשוא, כי לא ינקה ה׳ את אשר ישא את שמו לשוא

You shall not utter the name of the Eternal your God in falsehood, for the Eternal will not leave unpunished him who utters his name in falsehood. (Exod. 20:7)

First Chapter. The Sanctity of the Oath

(See Handbook pp. 176–182.)

1. Not only in prayer, but at all times, the name of God must remain for us the designation of the very essence of the Infinite, the Most Exalted and the Most Holy. It should never be uttered by us thoughtlessly, without devotion; rather, everything that relates to God must fill us with reverence.

ויאמר, אני אעביר כל טובי על פניך, וקראתי בשם ה׳ לפניך, וחנתי את אשר אחן, ורחמתי את אשר ארחם

And he said: I will make all my goodness pass before your face, and will proclaim before you the name "Eternal," and how I am gracious to whom I am gracious. (Exod. 33:19) (Exod. 34:5–7.)

כי שם ה׳ אקרא הבו גדל לאלהינו

For I call upon the name of the Eternal: give glory to our God. (Deut. 32:3–4)

2. Only in a spirit of the deepest reverence for God may the Israelite take an oath; that is, in order to attest the truth of his statement he may utter the name of God, with the appeal that the All-Knowing may punish him should he say anything untrue.

את ה׳ אלהיך תירא, אתו תעבד, ובשמו תשבע

[p. 34] The Eternal your God you shall fear, him you shall serve, and to him you shall cleave, and by his name you shall swear. (Deut. 10:20) (Law 435.)[33]

3. Whoever has the right to demand an oath of us must be able to presuppose that the mention of the divine name will suffice to tear us free from the captivity of sensual desire; that the divine

[33] Translator: "Law" (*Gesetz*) with a number refers throughout to the numbered laws of Lasch's handbook "… or the Divine Laws." The printed Hebrew omits the words "and to him you shall cleave," which the German renders.

name will sufficiently admonish us to confess the truth, since God is just and brings to shame the lie to which sensuality and self-interest might move us.

לא תשא את שם ה׳ אלהיך לשוא, כי לא ינקה ה׳ את אשר ישא את שמו לשוא

> You shall not utter the name of the Eternal your God in falsehood, for the Eternal will not leave unpunished him who utters his name in falsehood. (Exod. 20:7) (Law 30, 227.)

4. Unbidden, we should at no time utter any designation of the Divine in order to use it as a filler word in our speech or to give our speech emphasis. We should accustom ourselves always to speak the truth; then people will gladly take us at our word.

הן שלך צדק ולאו שלך צדק שלא ידבר אחת בפה ואחת בלב

> Let your yes be just and your no be just; that is, one should not say one thing with the heart and another with the mouth. (Talmud [Bava] Metzia 49a)

ה׳ מי יגור באהלך, מי ישכן בהר קדשך: הולך תמים ופעל צדק ודבר אמת בלבבו

> Eternal, who may sojourn in Thy tent and who may dwell on Thy holy mountain? He who walks blamelessly and does right and speaks truth in his heart. (Ps. 15:2–3)[34]

5. Whoever uttered the name of God in order to deceive the judge and so to appropriate unjust gain had, at the time when the Israelite people formed an independent state, to bring a guilt offering and to add a fifth of the wrongfully appropriated property as a penalty, if he wished to repent of his own accord. If, however, he first had to be convicted, he incurred the punishment of flogging. No convicted liar was any longer admissible as a witness.

לא תגנבו ולא תכחשו ולא תשקרו איש בעמיתו — ולא תשבעו בשמי לשקר, וחללת את שם אלהיך אני ה׳

> You shall not steal, and you shall not deny falsely, and you shall not lie to one another. And you shall not swear by my name falsely, so that you profane the name of your God. (Lev. 19:11–12) (Law 225, 226.)

6. Besides the punishment of the judge and the contempt of all honest people, the curse of God strikes the perjurer [p. 35] who has sworn a false oath; for he commits one of the gravest crimes: he undermines the existence of human society and brings ruin upon himself and upon the land where perjury goes unpunished.

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[34] Translator: The verses quoted are Ps. 15:1–2.

הוצאתיה נאם ה׳ צבאות ובאה אל בית הגנב ואל בית הנשבע בשמי לשקר ולנה בתוך ביתו וכלתו ואת עציו ואת אבניו

I send it (the curse) forth, says the Eternal of hosts, that it may come into the house of the thief and into the house of him who swears falsely by my name, and remain in his house and destroy it together with its timber and its stones. (Zech. 5:4)

אלה וכחש — — — פרצו, ודמים בדמים נגעו: על כן תאבל הארץ ואמלל כל יושב בה

Swearing falsely and lying … they break out, and blood touches blood; therefore the land mourns and its inhabitants languish. (Hos. 4:2–3)

Second Chapter. The Fulfilment of Promises

(See Handbook pp. 182–192.)

1. Whoever binds himself by a vow to do or to refrain from something permitted must faithfully fulfil it; for the word of the Israelite, even without an oath, should at all times be the truthful expression of the free will of the soul he has received from God.

איש כי ידר נדר לה׳ או השבע שבעה לאסר אסר על נפשו, לא יחל דברו ככל היצא מפיו יעשה

If anyone makes a vow or swears an oath to the Eternal, thereby binding his soul, he shall not profane his word; but everything that goes out of his mouth he shall do. (Num. 30:3) (Law 406, 407.)

2. Whoever has made a vow rashly, or if a circumstance arises that prevents him from fulfilling the vow, should ask a council of three men to release him from his vow. — A wife can be released from her vow by her husband, a daughter by her father. (Num. 30:4–17.)

מוצא שפתיך תשמר, ועשית כאשר נדרת לה׳ אלהיך

What goes out of your lips, observe and do, as you have vowed to the Eternal your God. (Deut. 23:24) (Law 575.)

טוב אשר לא תדר משתדור ולא תשלם

It is better that you do not vow than that you vow and do not pay. (Eccl. 5:4–5)[35]

[p. 36] **3.** The Israelite should therefore accustom himself to watch over his words with anxious care; for even an *unconsidered word* would lead him into the sin of breaking his word and of lying, were he not to seek, by a public declaration made in advance, to prevent his *rash words* from acquiring

[35]Translator: The printed Hebrew reads טוב שלא תדור for the Masoretic טוב אשר לא תדר (Eccl. 5:4).

for him the binding force of a vow. This declaration he should make before the beginning of the year in the הפרת נדרים [*hafarat nedarim*, the annulment of vows] and in the כל נדרי [*Kol Nidrei*].[36]

4. All the more sacred will he then hold the promises given with forethought, and above all the oaths sworn by the name of the All-Knowing, since he cannot guard himself against these, and they are *demanded of him or imposed on him by others*.

5. One therefore warns the person taking an oath to remain mindful of the great and far-reaching punishments that strike the perjurer and his house. — But the Lord will also punish those who do not keep their *word*, as He punished the godless through the Flood and the dispersion.[37]

ויהי רעב בימי דוד שלש שנים, שנה אחרי שנה ויבקש דוד את פני ה׳ — ויאמר ה׳, אל שאול ואל בית הדמים על אשר המית את הגבענים

> And there was a famine in the days of David, three years, year after year, and David prayed before the face of the Eternal; then the Eternal said: Because of Saul and because of the house of blood-guilt, because he killed the Gibeonites (broke the protection he had sworn). (2 Sam. 21:1)

6. Pledged gifts of charity must be given without delay or evasion. The fixed gifts of the tithe מעשר [*ma'aser*] and of the heave-offering תרומה [*terumah*] formerly had to be distributed at the appointed time and in the appointed order.

כי תדר נדר לה׳ אלהיך לא תאחר לשלמו, כי דרש ידרשנו ה׳ אלהיך מעמך, והיה בך חטא

> When you make a vow to the Eternal your God, do not delay to fulfil it, for the Eternal your God will require it of you, and it will be a sin in you. (Deut. 23:22)

מלאתך ודמעך לא תאחר

> With your grain and your measure do not delay. (Exod. 22:28) (Law 574, 72.)

7. Whoever pledges any object to the sanctuary, it remains consecrated to the Lord or belongs to the priests. Whoever consecrates the value of a person shall pay its amount to the sanctuary according to a fixed valuation, which varies with age. Lev. ch. 27.

[p. 37] Third Chapter. The Nazirite Vow, an Aid to Virtue

(See Handbook pp. 193–198.)

[36] Translator: The formula for the annulment of vows recited on the eve of the New Year, and the *Kol Nidrei* declaration that opens the eve of the Day of Atonement.

[37] Translator: The dispersion of the builders of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:8–9).

1. By the vow to be a Nazir (one consecrated to God), the Israelite can sanctify himself and dedicate himself to the Lord. As such he may not have his hair cut during the pledged period, may drink no wine, and must keep away from every corpse, even that of his nearest relatives. Num. ch. 6.

2. Such *Nazirim* were notably Samson, Samuel and Absalom; they had taken their vow for all time. The shortest period, however, was thirty days.

3. Although outside Palestine we are not to take such a vow, because we can no longer bring the sacrifices of the fulfilled or interrupted Nazirite vow, the intention of the Nazir should nevertheless be a model for us: to dedicate ourselves to God with our whole heart out of love for him, to do his will, and not to depart from it, neither when need presses upon us nor when prosperity spoils us into luxury.

רק חזק ואמץ מאד לשמר לעשות ככל התורה אשר צוך משה עבדי, אל תסור ממנו ימין ושמאול למען תשכיל בכל אשר תלך

> Only be *very strong and firm*, to observe, to do according to all the Teaching which Moshe my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it, neither to the right nor to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. (Josh. 1:7)

4. It is true that we are often held back from this, because the craving for what is sensually pleasant rules us; but man has *free will*, and he can therefore subdue the drive to evil and do what reason and religion command him.

לפתח חטאת רבץ, ואליך תשוקתו, ואתה תמשל בו

> Sin lies in wait at the door, and its desire is toward you, but you can become its master. (Gen. 4:7)

החיים והמות נתתי לפניך הברכה והקללה, ובחרת בחיים למען תחיה אתה וזרעך

> Life and death have I set before you, the blessing and the curse; but you shall choose life, so that you may live, you and your descendants. (Deut. 30:19)

טוב ארך אפים מגבור, ומשל ברוחו מלכד עיר

> Better one who is slow to anger than a hero, and one who rules his spirit than a conqueror of cities. (Prov. 16:32)

[p. 38] **5.** To lend this will victorious strength against sensuality, the divine Law places aids in our hands. Just as formerly the Nazir, by his vow, voluntarily made a special sanctity his duty, so even now we can work our way out of sloth and dullness and, by an oath, strengthen our will to follow the divine Law unwaveringly.

נשבעתי ואקימה לשמר משפטי צדקך

> I swear and will fulfil it, to observe Thy righteous ordinances. (Ps. 119:106)

6. Like the Nazir, the Israelite can accustom himself to abstinence by a vow, and guard himself especially against gluttony, which easily leads to lust.

כי נפת תטפנה שפתי זרה וחלק משמן חכה ואחריתה מרה כלענה חדה כחרב פיות, שאול צעדיה יתמכו, — — הרחק מעליה דרכך, ואל תקרב אל פתח ביתה

> For the lips of the strange woman (lust) drip with honeycomb, and her palate is smoother than oil; but afterwards they are bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword; her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on the netherworld. … Keep your way far from her and do not come near the door of her house. (Prov. 5:3–8)

7. Like the Nazir, the Israelite should rather deprive himself of finery if it could lead him into vanity or ambition. (Nedarim 9b.)

8. As the Nazir had to abstain from wine in order to be kept from agitation, so the hot-tempered and the arrogant should master themselves, so as to grant this passion no power over them.

לץ היין, המה שכר, וכל שגה בו, לא יחכם

> Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is given over to it will not become wise. (Prov. 20:1) (Lev. 10:8–11.)

9. As the Nazir had to keep away from the influence of *Tumoh*, so he who is tormented by the gloomy passion of melancholy and ill humour should not indulge these painful feelings, but should take heart and press forward to study and to practise the Law of God. That will gladden his heart and lift up his spirit.

פקודי ה׳ ישרים משמחי לב, מצות ה׳ ברה מאירת עינים

> The precepts of God are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Eternal is pure, enlightening the eyes. (Ps. 19:9)

10. Through such continued habituation and strict practice the Israelite can strengthen himself in self-mastery and invigorate the freedom of his will.

אם תבקשנה ככסף וכמטמונים תחפשנה, אז תבין יראת ה׳ ודעת אלהים תמצא

> If you seek it like silver and search for it as for treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Eternal and attain the knowledge of God. (Prov. 2:4–5)

Fourth Chapter. The Divine Name May Not Be Profaned or Misused

(See Handbook pp. 199–206.)

1. The name of God is for us the designation of the Supreme Being, the Creator and Ruler of the world, and we Israelites are called to proclaim to the nations his will, the Law revealed to us at

Sinai. By seeking ever more to recognize the perfection of this Being and to follow his will, we *glorify* his name before all the nations.

וראו כל עמי הארץ כי שם ה׳ נקרא עליך ויראו ממך

> And all the peoples of the earth will see that the name of the Eternal is called upon you, and they will fear you. (Deut. 28:10) (Ps. 22:24, 26. Jer. 9:22–23.)

2. So that this glorification and sanctification of his name might endure, the Lord granted his people the distinction of choosing men, and often women too, from its midst to be prophets, when by spirit and feeling they were suited and fitted for it. To them He had revealed his will in wondrous ways, in order to strengthen Israel in its calling to preserve and to spread the teaching of God.

נביא מקרבך מאחיך כמני יקים לך ה׳ אלהיך אליו תשמעון

> A prophet from your midst, from your brethren, *like me*, will the Eternal your God raise up for you; to him you shall listen. (Deut. 18:15)

3. These prophets had to proclaim the will of the Lord fearlessly before kings and princes and to admonish the guilty (as Nathan admonished David, as Elijah admonished Ahab).

בטרם אצורך בבטן ידעתיך ובטרם תצא מרחם הקדשתיך נביא לגוים נתתיך — — — על כל אשר אשלחך תלך ואת כל אשר אצוך תדבר אל תירא מפניהם כי אתך אני להצלך נאם ה׳

> [p. 40] Before I created you, I consecrated you; I set you as a prophet to the nations, — — — wherever I send you, go, and whatever I command you, speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to protect you, says the Eternal. (Jer. 1:5–8)

4. But whoever thinks himself entitled to proclaim as divine inspiration what he has devised in his own mind or what he feels in his heart, in order thereby to gain greater standing for himself and a better hearing among the people for his words, misuses the name of God and incurs the punishment of a false prophet.

אך הנביא אשר יזיד לדבר דבר בשמי, את אשר לא צויתיו לדבר ואשר ידבר בשם אלהים אחרים, ומת הנביא ההוא

> But the prophet who presumes to speak something in my name which I did not command him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. (Deut. 18:20) (Law 517, 518.)

5. Likewise the seducer of the people profanes the name of God, who granted him gifts of mind and standing, when he uses these to turn people away from the Law and toward sin.

כה אמר א׳ ה׳, הנני אל הרעים, ודרשתי את צאני מידם, והשבתים מרעות צאן, ולא ירעו עוד הרעים אותם — —

> Thus says God the Lord: Behold, I am against the shepherds (leaders of the people), and I will require my sheep from their hand, and put an end to their feeding of the sheep, so that the shepherds shall no longer feed themselves, etc. (Ezek. 34:10)

6. Further, that teacher of the people and scholar of the Law profanes the name of God who damages his standing among the people through immoral conduct; likewise every Israelite who degrades his religion before the adherents of another faith through dishonesty; likewise the hypocrite and the sanctimonious one, who seeks to hide his immorality under the cloak of religion. (Balaam.)

ואתם בית ישראל, כה אמר א׳ ה׳, איש גלוליו לכו עבדו, ואחר אם אינכם שמעים אלי, ואת קדשי לא תחללו עוד במתנותיכם ובגלוליכם

> And you, house of Israel, thus says God the Lord: Go, serve every one his idol, if you will not listen to me; only do not profane my holy name any more with your gifts together with your idols. (Ezek. 20:39) (Law 295.)

7. Reverence for the holy name also forbids us to hold the holy books in low esteem, and above all to erase the names of the Most High that occur in them.

לא תעשון כן לה׳ אלהיכם

> Do not do so to the Eternal your God (that is, do not destroy anything consecrated to him). (Deut. 12:4) (Law 437.)

[p. 41] **8.** The blasphemer was stoned, for such a man, at odds with himself, does not acknowledge the glory of God in the governance of the world and seeks to destroy the love of God in his fellow men; he thus becomes a source of corruption in human society.

ונקב שם ה׳ מות יומת, רגום ירגמו בו כל העדה כגר כאזרח בנקבו שם יומת

> But whoever utters the name of the Eternal (blasphemously) shall surely be put to death; the whole congregation shall stone him. … The stranger as well as the native, when he utters the Name (blasphemously), shall be put to death. (Lev. 24:16)

9. It is presumption and disrespect to believe that the All-Good would let himself be induced, according to our wish and will, to do evil to those whom we curse in hatred, when they do not deserve it. It is therefore a gross misuse of the divine name to utter it in cursing worthy men, for example judges and the authorities.

אלהים לא תקלל, ונשיא בעמך לא תאר

Judges you shall not revile, and a prince among your people you shall not curse. (Exod. 22:27) (Law 69–71.)

10. It is punishable to curse someone who is deaf or absent, since he has no opportunity to placate the one who hates him.

לא תקלל חרש ולפני עור לא תתן מכשל ויראת מאלהיך, אני ה׳

Do not curse a deaf man, and before a blind man do not put a stumbling block, and fear your God. I am the Eternal! (Lev. 19:14) (Law 231.)

11. Further, he profanes the name of God who, without submission to the will of God, in the gloomy passion of melancholy or in the frenzy of despair, wishes some evil upon himself or curses himself. This sin is alluded to in the verse:

רק השמר לך ושמר נפשך מאד

Only take heed to yourself and guard your soul diligently! (Deut. 4:9)

Fifth Chapter. Misuse of the Word

(See Handbook pp. 206–209.)

1. The Israelite is to guard himself against every lie and distortion of the truth; for the lie is an abomination to the Eternal.

[p. 42]

שש הנה שנא ה׳, ושבע תועבות נפשו — — יפיח כזבים, עד שקר ומשלח מדנים בין אחים

Six things there are which the Eternal hates, and seven are an abomination to his soul. … One who breathes out lies, a false witness, and one who sows strife among brothers. (Prov. 6:16, 19) (Ps. 101:7.)

2. The judge in particular must take care not to lend his ear to slander or to a one-sided presentation of an accusation.

לא תשא שמע שוא — —

Do not take up an empty report. (Exod. 23:1) (Prov. 18:17. Law 74.)

3. The slanderer sows hatred and discord. He sins against God, who desires only concord and peace; against people, whom he wounds with his words (Prov. 12:18); against himself, since like the slanderous serpent he draws upon himself the hatred of men. The slanderer is most often struck by the punishment of leprosy, which keeps him away from every social gathering.

מי האיש החפץ חיים, אהב ימים לראות טוב, נצר לשונך מרע, ושפתיך מדבר מרמה

Who is the man who desires life, who wishes for days to see good? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. (Ps. 34:13–14)

4. The Israelite should listen to insults with composure and silence, for it is better to be the one insulted than the one who insults. To do good to one's enemies remains the noblest revenge.

ולא תונו איש את עמיתו, ויראת מאלהיך כי אני ה׳ אלהיכם

You shall not wound one another (with words), but fear your God, for I the Eternal am your God. (Lev. 25:17) (Law 338.)

ארך אפים רב תבונה וקצר רוח מרים אולת

Patience is (a sign of) great understanding, but the hot-tempered man puts folly on display. (Prov. 14:29)

אם רעב שנאך, האכלהו לחם, ואם צמא השקהו מים, כי גחלים אתה חתה על ראשו וה׳ ישלם לך

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for you heap coals upon his head, and the Eternal will repay you. (Prov. 25:21–22)

5. Above all, every insult must be kept far from strangers.

וגר לא תונה ולא תלחצנו כי גרים הייתם בארץ מצרים

[p. 43] And a stranger you shall not wound nor oppress, for you were strangers in the land of Mizraim. (Exod. 22:20) (Law 63, 64.)

6. The heathen slave who fled to the Holy Land had to remain unharmed and could not be handed over to his master; but he had to reimburse the latter for the purchase price as soon as he was able.

לא תסגיר עבד אל אדניו, אשר ינצל אליך מעם אדניו עמך ישב, בקרבך, לא תוננו

You shall not hand over a servant to his master who seeks to escape to you from his master. With you he shall dwell, in your midst; you must not wound him. (Deut. 23:16–17) (Law 569.)

Hymn 245

1. The tongue that speaks so audibly was given you by your God. What a gift — do not misuse it! It brings death and life; it plunges into misfortune and helps in need; it curses and blesses, implores and threatens; it can heal and wound.

4. O woe to the reckless mouth that does not shrink from curse and oath! How soon its levity is revealed; how often repented too late! Ah, cursing brings curse and distress, and draws one ever farther from God! Lord, teach me to consider it!

6. O give me, God, a pure heart, and let me shun with pious zeal mockery and impudent, indecent jesting! Thou gavest me the power of speech, yet one day I must also give account of my words.

[p. 44] Fourth Commandment

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו: ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך: ויום השביעי שבת לה׳ אלהיך לא תעשה כל מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך עבדך ואמתך ובהמתך וגרך אשר בשעריך: כי ששת ימים עשה ה׳ את השמים ואת הארץ את הים ואת כל אשר בם וינח ביום השביעי על כן ברך ה׳ את יום השבת ויקדשהו

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you may labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest to the Eternal your God; on it you shall do no work of any kind, you and your son and your daughter, your manservant and your maidservant and your cattle and your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Eternal made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in it, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Eternal blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. (Exod. 20:8–12)[38]

First Chapter. The Sanctification of the Seventh Day

(See Handbook pp. 213–224.)

1. With his perishable body man belongs to fleeting time, and with his immortal soul he belongs to what is abiding and eternal; for the animal, however, there is neither past nor future. Therefore man was to fix days for himself out of rolling time and to sanctify them, in order to collect himself on them for the eternal life of the soul, by remembering the past and thinking of the future.

[p. 45]

לכל זמן ועת לכל חפץ תחת השמים: — — את הכל עשה יפה בעתו, גם את העלם נתן בלבם

Everything has its appointed time, and every matter under heaven has its time. … He (God) has made everything beautiful in its time; yet he has also set eternity in the heart of man (to think of it). (Eccl. 3:1, 11)

2. To this collecting of oneself belongs, first, that the immortal soul, which God breathed into man and which alone on earth is capable of perceiving and praising the workings of divine providence, should sanctify each time the day on which creation was completed and received from God the blessing of continuance and of undisturbed order.

[38] Translator: The commandment comprises Exod. 20:8–11. In its last clause the printed Hebrew reads את יום השביעי ("the seventh day") for the Masoretic את יום השבת, which the German renders ("den Sabbattag").

ויכלו השמים והארץ וכל צבאם: — — ויברך אלהים את יום השביעי ויקדש אתו כי בו שבת מכל מלאכתו אשר ברא אלהים לעשות

> Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host … and God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, for on it he rested from all his work. (Gen. 2:1–3)

3. The Israelite people, whom God bound to his service in Mizraim, must therefore receive the Sabbath as a holy day at its very entrance on the eve of the seventh day (*Kiddush* קדוש) and accompany it with blessings at its departure (הבדלה [*Havdalah*]), and through this ever-recurring day of remembrance bear witness to the fact of creation, so that it may not again be forgotten or denied in the delusion of heathenism.

זכר עשה לנפלאתיו, חנון ורחום ה׳

> He has made a memorial for his wonders; gracious and merciful is the Eternal. (Ps. 111:4)

מזמור שיר ליום השבת — כי שמחתני ה׳ בפעלך, במעשי ידיך ארנן — מה גדלו מעשיך ה׳, מאד עמקו מחשבתיך

> A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day. For Thou, O Eternal, hast gladdened me by Thy deeds; at the works of Thy hands I rejoice. — — How great are Thy works, O Eternal! How very deep are Thy thoughts! (Ps. 92:1, 5–6) (Law 31.)

4. Further, by keeping the Sabbath the Israelite is to testify and confess that he has received from God alone all the excellences of the human mind, and with them also the power to rule in the realm of nature and to make everything serve him. He must therefore refrain from exercising this power on the day on which God has forbidden him this dominion.

ששת ימים תעשה מעשיך וביום השביעי תשבת למען ינוח שורך וחמרך וינפש בן אמתך והגר

> [p. 46] Six days you may do your business, but on the seventh rest, so that your ox and your ass may rest, and the son of your maidservant and the stranger may be refreshed. (Exod. 23:12)

5. Each time the day returns on which God had handed over all the creatures of the earth to man, the Israelite should first seek anew to make himself worthy of this privilege, by worshipping God and by preparing his soul to use this power only for good.

אם תשיב משבת רגלך עשות חפצך ביום קדשי וקראת לשבת ענג לקדוש ה׳ מכבד וכבדתו מעשות דרכיך ממצוא חפצך ודבר דבר, אז תתענג על ה׳ והרכבתיך על במותי ארץ …

> If you hold back your foot for the sake of the Sabbath, from doing your business on a holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, honoured by the Eternal, and honour it by not doing your own ways, not pursuing your business and not speaking (idle) words: then you will delight in the Eternal, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth, etc. (Isa. 58:13–14)

6. The Sabbath cannot be moved by the Israelites to some other day as a day of rest, for it was marked out for them for forty years in the wilderness by the fact that no manna fell on the Sabbath and a double portion fell on the day before.

ראו כי ה׳ נתן לכם השבת על כן הוא נתן לכם ביום הששי לחם יומים, שבו איש תחתיו

> See that the Eternal has given you the Sabbath; therefore he gives you on the sixth day bread for two days; let each man remain in his place, etc. (Exod. 16:29)

ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת לעשות את השבת לדרתם ברית עולם ביני ובין בני ישראל אות הוא לעלם כי ששת ימים עשה ה׳ את השמים ואת הארץ

> And the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations as an everlasting covenant; between me and the children of Israel it shall be a sign for ever, that the Eternal made heaven and earth, etc. (Exod. 31:16–17)

7. Since not even in the making of the Tabernacle was any work permitted on the Sabbath, all the less may such work be done for our own needs.

A. There are 8 kinds of work in agriculture, e.g. ploughing and the like.

B. 3 kinds of work in the preparation of foodstuffs, e.g. grinding and the like.

C. 13 kinds of work in the preparation of fibre, e.g. shearing and the like.

D. 6 kinds of work in the preparation of animal hides, e.g. tanning and the like.

[p. 47] E. 3 kinds of work for recording what is thought: writing, erasing, ruling lines.

F. 2 kinds of work in building: building, tearing down.

G. 2 kinds of work with fire: kindling, extinguishing.

H. The last hammer-blow after a piece of work is completed, or giving it its finishing touch.

I. Carrying from open into enclosed spaces.[39]

ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי יהיה לכם קדש, שבת שבתון לה׳ כל העשה בו מלאכה יומת

> Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath for a holy rest to the Eternal; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. (Exod. 35:2)

לא תבערו אש בכל משבתיכם ביום השבת

> You shall kindle no fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day. (Exod. 35:3) (Num. 15:32–36. Ezek. 20:20–21. Neh. 13:16–17.)

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[39] Translator: Lasch's groups add up to the thirty-nine principal categories of work (אבות מלאכות) forbidden on the Sabbath (Mishnah Shabbat 7:2). By "carrying from open into enclosed spaces" he means transferring objects between the public and the private domain.

8. These kinds of work, and others like them, we may not have anyone else do for us at our bidding either, unless health requires it. Where danger to life threatens, it would be a great sin not to do on the Sabbath everything that could avert the danger.

ויאמר אלהם: הוא אשר דבר ה׳, שבתון שבת קדש לה׳ מחר את אשר תאפו אפו, ואת אשר תבשלו בשלו, ואת כל העדף הניחו לכם למשמרת עד הבקר

> And he said to them: This is what the Eternal has spoken. A day of rest, a holy rest to the Eternal is tomorrow; what you would bake, bake, and what you would cook, cook, and all that is left over lay aside for yourselves to keep until the next morning. (Exod. 16:23) (Law 85, 32, 24.)

9. Finally, through his joy on the Sabbath day the Israelite confesses his *trust* in the All-Good, who will bless his diligence on the six weekdays, so that the Sabbath may be kept as a festival with better food and in finer clothing. In the feeling of greater ease, even the neediest in Israel can feel within himself on this day the higher dignity of man (נשמה יתרה [*neshamah yeterah*, the "additional soul"]).

10. To strengthen this trust, fresh showbread was laid on the golden table in the sanctuary every Sabbath, as a token of remembrance that we shall receive our daily bread from God and that he will never forsake us.

טרף נתן ליראיו יזכר לעולם בריתו

> He gives food to those who fear him; he remembers his covenant for ever. (Ps. 111:5) (Law 402, 97.)

[p. 48] **11.** Desecration of the Sabbath, however, undermines faith in God and trust in God. With it begins also the rejection of other divine laws. Therefore the prophets foretold from the desecration of the Sabbath the downfall of the kingdom and of the glory of Israel.

ואם לא תשמעו אלי לקדש את יום השבת — והצתי אש בשעריה, ואכלה ארמנות ירושלם ולא תכבה

> But if you do not listen to me, to hallow the Sabbath day — — then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and shall not be quenched. (Jer. 17:27)

12. On the other hand, the observance of the Sabbath rest will always remain the cornerstone of our holy doctrine of faith; it leads us from the everyday to the holy and will bring the blessing of God upon us.

והתענג על ה׳ ויתן לך משאלת לבך

> And take your delight in the Eternal, and He will give you your heart's desires. (Ps. 37:4)

Second Chapter. a. The Festival of Pesach

(See Handbook pp. 224–241.)

1. As the Sabbath is for us a day of remembrance of creation, so the festivals are days of remembrance of the wondrous benefits that God showed the Israelite people, and which bear witness to how God ever rescues, raises up and preserves it.

זכרו נפלאותיו אשר עשה מפתיו ומשפטי פיו

> Remember his wonders that he has done, his signs and the judgments of his mouth. (Ps. 105:5)

2. As the Sabbath on its fixed day, so must Pesach as the spring festival and Sukkot as the harvest festival be celebrated in the corresponding seasons; therefore the Israelite needs a careful reckoning of time.

שמור את חדש האביב ועשית פסח לה׳ אלהיך כי בחדש האביב הוציאך ה׳ אלהיך ממצרים לילה

> Observe the month of ripening ears, that you may offer the Pesach to the Eternal your God, for in the month of ripening ears the Eternal your God brought you out of Mizraim by night. (Deut. 16:1) (Exod. 23:16.)

[p. 49] **3.** In reckoning time we are directed first of all to the moon, the visible regulator of the seasons, which completes its revolution around the earth in 29 days 12 793/1080 hours, in four lunar phases. The crescent of the moon, once it had become visible, was sanctified by the court as the *beginning of the month*, and this was reported by messengers to all parts of the land for the determination of the festivals. Those living abroad therefore always had to keep 2 festival days, so as not to miss the right one, and these must be retained even now.

עשה ירח למועדים שמש ידע מבואו

> He made the moon for seasons; the sun knows its going down. (Psalm 104:19) (Law 403.)

4. The year reckoned at 12 moons, which numbers only 354 to 355 days, requires a further 10–11 days to be brought into line with the solar year, which numbers about 365¼ days; these, collected over a cycle of 19 years, are added in seven leap years (of 384 to 385 days) as a 13th month. In this way the Passover festival is always kept after the spring equinox as a festival of thanksgiving for the returning spring, for which thank-offerings and offerings of joy were brought in the Sanctuary to the Lord of the world, who has loosed the bonds of the frost and brought on the lovely spring.

כי הנה הסתיו עבר, הגשם חלף הלך לו, הנצנים נראו בארץ, עת הזמיר הגיע

> For lo, the winter is past, the rain hastens away; the blossoms appear on the ground, the time of song has come. (Song of Songs 2:11–12)

5. The 15th of Nissan at the same time reminds us of the redemption of our ancestors from the bonds of slavery in Mizraim [Egypt]. We keep this festival for seven days because of the wondrous week of that redemption, which was completed only with the passage through the sea. Of these days the first (outside Palestine also the second) and the seventh (outside Palestine also the eighth) are kept as holy days of festive assembly, by ceasing from work, by prayers and festive meals; on the intermediate days only the most urgent occupational work is permitted.

ביום הראשון מקרא קדש יהיה לכם, כל מלאכת עבדה לא תעשו: והקרבתם אשה להי׳ שבעת ימים, ביום השביעי מקרא קדש, כל מלאכת עבדה לא תעשו

> On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no manner of servile work. And you shall bring an offering made by fire to the Eternal seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall do no manner of servile work. (Lev. 23:7–8) (Neh. 8:10. Law 297–301.)

[p. 50] **6.** On the eve of the 15th every Israelite must remember that redemption with praise and thanksgiving over the wine of rejoicing, and eat of the unleavened bread, in remembrance of how the people, so long enslaved, were urged to a free departure, because the Egyptians feared their complete destruction as a divine punishment.

בראשן בארבעה עשר יום לחדש בערב תאכלו מצות עד יום האחד ועשרים לחדש בערב

> In the first month, on the 14th day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, etc. (Exod. 12:18)

והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר, בעבור זה עשה ה׳ לי בצאתי ממצרים

> And you shall tell your son on that day, saying, etc. (Exod. 13:8) (Law 10. 21.)

7. For this wondrous deliverance Israel took upon itself the calling of combating idolatry from then on, and began it in Mizraim by offering to the Lord, as a Passover-offering [literally "offering of passing-over"], the ram, which was worshipped there as a god in the spring month. In remembrance of that visible providence and of the revelation of the divine power, which spared the houses of the Israelites and at the appointed hour caused the firstborn of the Egyptians to die. (Exod. 12:3 ff. Law 5–8.)

8. The yearly repetition of this Passover festival is to recall to the memory of every Israelite the burning love with which Israel took up its calling in that night of wonders, and he is to remain mindful of this love even at the time when the duties of this calling should demand the greatest sacrifices. (Exod. 12:14.)

ויוצא עמו בששון, ברנה את בחיריו — בעבור ישמרו חקיו ותורתיו ינצרו הללו יה

> And he brought forth his people with joy, his chosen ones with jubilation … That they might keep his statutes and observe his teachings. Hallelujah! (Psalm 105:43, 45)

9. The prohibition against eating leavened food during the Passover festival recalls the miracles crowding upon one another in the week of deliverance, which did not allow the people the time to prepare leavened food.

את חג המצות תשמר שבעת ימים תאכל מצות, אשר צויתך למועד חדש האביב

> The feast of unleavened bread you shall keep! Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I have commanded you, at the time of the month of the ripening ears. (Exod. 34:18) (Law 9. 11. 12. 20.)

[p. 51] **10.** Israel had taken upon itself the service of the Lord, and had to begin it by contenting itself with the food of poverty and of moderation; for the enlightenment of the mind and of the heart was to stand higher for it than a comfortable life of ease in spiritual bondage.

לא תאכל עליו חמץ, שבעת ימים תאכל עליו מצות, לחם עני, כי בחפזון יצאת מארץ מצרים, — — למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך

> You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, the bread of poverty. For in haste you went out of Mizraim — that you may remember the day of your going out of the land of Mizraim all the days of your life. (Deut. 16:3) (Law 485.)

Third Chapter. The Feast of Weeks.

^(See Handbook pp. 242–247.)

1. This festival belongs with the earlier one as the close of the wheat harvest, in that it is celebrated on the 50th day, or seven weeks, after the 2nd day of Passover, when the barley harvest began, for which the Omer had been brought as an offering of barley. (Law 302. 306.)

והבאתם את עמר ראשית קצירכם אל הכהן — — וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת מיום הביאכם את עמר התנופה שבע שבתות תמימת תהיינה

> Bring an Omer of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest … And you shall count from the day after the festival, from the day that you brought the Omer of waving, seven full weeks (that) they shall be. (Lev. 23:10, 15)

2. Those fifty days, as the joyful season of the continuing ingathering of the harvest and of the selection of the produce for the tithe, for the heave-offering and for the gifts of firstfruits, were the days of preparation for the Festival of Firstfruits, on which thank-offerings and offerings of joy were brought, together with the firstfruits-offering of wheat.

וביום הבכורים בהקריבכם מנחה חדשה לה׳ בשבעתיכם

> And on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new meal-offering to the Eternal after your weeks. (Num. 28:26)

ממושבתיכם תביאו לחם תנופה שתים — —

And out of your dwellings you shall bring bread for waving, etc. (Lev. 23:17) (Law 307–309.)

[p. 52] **3.** For Israel, scattered among the nations, the Feast of Weeks has now remained only a remembrance of the revelation on Sinai, through which, after a consecration of 7 weeks, the former nation of slaves was raised to a kingdom of priests, which received the mission of proclaiming the knowledge of the One God to the nations. (Exod. 19:4.)

מגיד דבריו ליעקב חקיו ומשפטיו לישראל: לא עשה כן לכל גוי ומשפטים בל ידעום

He declares his works to Jacob, his statutes and ordinances to Israel. He has not done so to any nation, and the ordinances they do not know. (Psalm 147:19–20)

4. In remembrance of that blessed preparation these days are still to be counted even now with a benediction of thanks to God.

וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת — עד ממחרת השבת השביעת תספרו חמשים יום

And you shall count from the day after the festival. — — Unto the day after the seventh week you shall count fifty days. (Lev. 23:15–16)

Fourth Chapter. The Day of the Shofar-Blast and the New Year Festival.

^(See Handbook pp. 247–251.)

1. This festival is celebrated on the 1st of Tishri for two days, in Palestine as well. With it, as the day on which the first man was created, the civil year begins, since nature, in the ripeness of autumn, was handed over to man. For the consecration of this festival, additional offerings were brought in the Sanctuary besides the offerings of the New Moon.

כל מלאכת עבדה לא תעשו, והקרבתם אשה להי׳

You shall do no manner of servile work, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to the Eternal. (Lev. 23:25) (Law 310–312.)

2. So that man should not, through the length of time, sink wholly and beyond rescue into sin, the Lord of the world has chosen the beginning of each year to examine the deeds of mortals with the eye of justice, in order to determine their future accordingly. The blaring sound of the Shofar [ram's horn] is then to admonish them to repentance and amendment.

בחדש השביעי באחד לחדש יהיה לכם שבתון זכרון תרועה מקרא קדש

[p. 53] In the 7th month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a day of rest, a memorial (day) of the trumpet-blast, a holy convocation. (Lev. 23:24)

תקעו בחדש שופר בכסה ליום חגנו כי חק לישראל הוא משפט לאלהי יעקב

> Blow the horn at the new moon, at the beginning of the month, for our festival day; for it is fixed for Israel, a (day of) judgment of the God of Jaakow. (Psalm 81:4) (Job 1:6–12; 2:1–7. Law 405.)[40]

3. Joined with the sound of the Shofar, our prayer rises to heaven on this festival, that the time may soon be brought about in which all the inhabitants of the earth, in harmony and brotherly love, will revere the All-One as *King* of the world (מלכיות [Malkhuyot, "Kingship verses"]).

כי מלאה הארץ דעה את ה׳ כמים לים מכסים

> For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Eternal, as the waters cover the depth of the sea. (Hab. 2:14)[41]

4. The sound of the Shofar calls on us to think of the transitoriness of our life, but the prayer comforts us that the deeds of the pious are *remembered* before the Lord (זכרונת [Zikhronot, "Remembrance verses"]).

אשרי העם יודעי תרועה ה׳ באור פניך יהלכון

> Happy the people that knows the sound of the trumpet; Eternal, in the light of Your countenance they walk. (Psalm 89:16)

5. The blaring blast of the Shofar is to call to sinners to awaken from the intoxication of sensuality and to become mindful of the account that man must one day give in the hereafter for his doings; and the prayer links with these sounds the remembrance of the *Shofar* of Sinai (שפרות [Shofarot, "Shofar verses"]) and awakens the longing for the sounds of the Shofar at the promised ingathering of Israel.

והיה ביום ההוא יתקע בשופר גדול, ובאו האבדים בארץ אשור והנדחים בארץ מצרים, והשתחוו לה׳ בהר הקדש בירושלם

> And it shall come to pass on that day, the great horn shall be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Ashur shall come, and the outcasts in the land of Mizraim, and they shall bow down before the Eternal on the holy mountain in Jerushalaim. (Isa. 27:13)

Fifth Chapter. The Day of Atonement and Repentance.

^(See Handbook pp. 251–256.)

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[40] Translator: The quotation comprises Ps. 81:4–5. In the Hebrew the printer set בכסא and חגינו; the standard text (בכסה, חגנו) is given here.

[41] Translator: The Hebrew printed here is in fact Isa. 11:9 ("For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Eternal, as the waters cover the sea"); the German rendering ("to know the glory of the Eternal") follows the near-identical Hab. 2:14, which is the reference given.

1. This day of repentance and festival is celebrated on the 10th of Tishri, together with the rest of the Sabbath, as a high holy day, because [p. 54] on it God frees the penitent soul from the stain of sin and grants it atonement.

ברכי נפשי את ה׳ ואל תשכחי כל גמוליו הסלח לכל עונכי הרפא לכל תחלואיכי

> Bless the Eternal, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases. (Psalm 103:2–3)

2. He commits a sin who transgresses the law of God. Punishment follows sin without fail; it consists in the torment of conscience and in earthly sufferings, which are meant to improve us; — for the laws of God are meant to further our bodily and spiritual welfare. We would have to obey them for our own good alone, apart from the fact that gratitude toward God and reverence for God oblige us to obedience.

חטאים תרדף רעה, ואת צדיקים ישלם טוב

> In the wicked man's crime itself lies misfortune; but the pious may be glad and joyful. (Prov. 13:21)

3. Divine mercy, however, has shown the sinner the means of freeing himself, through conversion, from the burden and punishment of sin.

ומל ה׳ אלהיך את לבבך — לאהבה את ה׳ אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך למען חייך

> And the Eternal your God will circumcise your heart — — to love the Eternal your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. (Deut. 30:6)

4. The Israelite, once he has recognized his sin, should not put off this conversion for a single day, because he does not know how long he will yet live. But since on the 10th of Tishri pardon for the grievous sin of the golden calf was proclaimed to the people, this day has been appointed for a general conversion from all the sins of the year. On this day one is to be stirred to true repentance by another.

כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם, לטהר אתכם מכל חטאתיכם לפני ה׳ תטהרו

> For on this day he shall make atonement for you, that you may become clean; from all your sins you shall become clean before the Eternal. (Lev. 16:30)

5. True repentance requires that the sinner recognize how he has transgressed and regret it with his whole heart; to this the prayers and meditations of the ten days of repentance (from the 1st to the 10th of Tishri), as the days of self-examination, are meant to stir us.

כי פשעי אני אדע וחטאתי נגדי תמיד

> For I know my transgression, and my sin is ever before my eyes. (Psalm 51:5)

[p. 55]

ואמרה: אלהי בשתי ונכלמתי להרים אלהי פני אליך, כי עונתינו רבו למעלה ראש, ואשמתנו גדלה עד לשמים

> And I said: My God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have grown over our head, and our guilt has risen up to heaven. (Ezra 9:6)

6. The sinner must further confess his sins before himself and before God, and not conceal them; he must set his sinfulness before his eyes and implore God for pardon and grace. Therefore the Day of Atonement is a day of confession of sins and of prayer.

מכסה פשעיו לא יצליח, ומודה ועזב ירחם

> He who conceals his transgressions shall not prosper; but whoever confesses and forsakes them shall find mercy. (Prov. 28:13) (Ps. 32:3, 5.)

שובה ישראל עד ה׳ אלהיך כי כשלת בעונך: קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אל ה׳ אמרו אליו כל תשא עון וקח טוב, ונשלמה פרים שפתינו

> Return, Israel, to the Eternal your God, for you have stumbled through sin. Take words with you and return to the Eternal; say to him: Forgive all guilt and bring forth the good, so that we may pay with our lips the (vowed) bullocks. (Hosea 14:2–3)

7. The repentant sinner must have the firm will to become better, and begin on the Day of Atonement to combat his sensuality by fasting, to be reconciled with the one he has offended, to restore unlawful gain, to practise virtue and justice (Law 316, 317).

השליכו מעליכם את כל פשעיכם אשר פשעתם בם ועשו לכם לב חדש ורוח חדשה, ולמה תמתו בית ישראל: כי לא אחפץ במות המת נאם א׳ ה׳ והשיבו וחיו

> Cast away from you all your transgressions by which you have transgressed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit …; for I have no pleasure in the death of the one who dies, says the Lord God; so turn and live. (Ezek. 18:31–32) (Lev. 5:23. Isa. 1:16–19.)

8. In the Sanctuary, the High Priest, the representative of the people, as the model of the pure and holy, had on this day to stir to repentance through meaningful sacrificial rites, so that everyone might strive one day to enter the mysterious hereafter pure of sin. (Lev. 16. Law 185. 314.)

אחת שאלתי מאת ה׳ אותה אבקש, שבתי בבית ה׳ כל ימי חיי לחזות בנעם ה׳ ולבקר בהיכלו

> One thing I wish of the Eternal, that I ask: that I may dwell in the house of the Eternal all the days of my life, to behold the graciousness of the Eternal, and to seek him in his temple. (Ps. 27:4)

[p. 56] **Sixth Chapter. The Feast of Tabernacles and the Concluding Festival.**

^(See Handbook pp. 256–262.)

1. The Feast of Tabernacles is celebrated from the 15th of Tishri for 7 days, the first (and outside Palestine also the second) with abstention from all work, and the other days with its restriction to what is most necessary (Law 318, 319), in thanksgiving for the completed harvest of produce.

וחג האסף בצאת השנה באספך את מעשיך מן השדה

> And the feast of ingathering at the going out of the year — when you gather in your labour from the field. (Exod. 23:16)

2. With the four plant-parts — the Etrog fruit [citron] and the branch of the *shady* palm, the twigs of the *fragrant* myrtle and the *useful* brook-willow — we rejoice before the Lord in these gifts of his grace.

ולקחתם לכם ביום הראשון פרי עץ הדר, כפת תמרים וענף עץ עבת וערבי נחל ושמחתם לפני ה׳ אלהיכם שבעת ימים

> And take for yourselves on the first day a fruit of the tree Hadar, palm branches and boughs of the tree Abot, and brook-willows, and rejoice before the Eternal your God seven days. (Lev. 23:40) (Law 324.)

3. In the Sanctuary numerous thank-offerings blazed upon the altar at this festival. Besides the daily wine-offering, water too was poured with jubilant rejoicing into the corners of the altar, to consecrate this fructifying element (שמחת בית השואבה [Simchat Beit ha-Sho'evah, "the rejoicing of the place of water-drawing"]); corresponding to this, we now close the festival with a prayer for timely rain and for the blessing of the water.

ושאבתם מים בששון ממעיני הישועה: ואמרתם ביום ההוא הודו לה׳ קראו בשמו —

> And you shall draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation, and shall say: Sing thanks to the Lord, etc. (Isaiah 12:3–4) (Amos 9:6.)

4. In remembrance of the gracious preservation of Israel on the march through the Arabian desert, we are to dwell in booths for seven days at this festival. This remembrance at the same time teaches us, at the beginning of the year, how well sheltered we are under God's protection when we follow him trustfully.

בסכת תשבו שבעת ימים כל האזרח בישראל ישבו בסכת

> In booths you shall dwell seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall dwell in booths. (Lev. 23:42) (Law 325. Nehemiah 8:16–17.)

[p. 57]

ה׳ שמרך ה׳ צלך על יד ימינך: יומם השמש לא יככה וירח בלילה: ה׳ ישמרך מכל רע ישמר את נפשך

> The Eternal is your keeper, the Eternal your shade at your right hand. By day the sun shall not strike you, nor the moon by night. The Eternal will keep you from all evil, he will keep your soul. (Psalm 121:5–7)

4.[42] On the 8th (and outside Palestine also on the 9th) festival day the Concluding Festival is kept as a simple festival of joy, for the spiritual gathering-up of all the lessons for reflection of the preceding festivals, and at the same time as the conclusion of the Sidra-readings [weekly Torah portions] read every Sabbath. (Lev. 23:26.[43] Law 321. 322. 323.)

5. For the three principal festivals of the year, Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot, all male Israelites formerly had to be assembled in Jerusalem, and to keep the festival days of the Lord with festive gifts before God, in close brotherhood and general joy. (Law 489. 490.)

שלוש פעמים בשנה יראה כל זכורך את פני ה׳ אלהיך במקום אשר יבחר — ולא יראה פני ריקם: איש כמתנת ידו כברכת ה׳ אלהיך אשר נתן לך

> Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the face of the Eternal your God, in the place which he will choose — — and none shall appear empty-handed — each according to what his hand can give. (Deut. 16:16–17)

6. Now we replace the offerings of appearance [at the Sanctuary] with gifts to the needy, so that they too may rejoice at the festivals of the Lord, as Nehemiah had enjoined upon the people at the Festival of the Shofar.

ויאמר להם: לכו אכלו משמנים ושתו ממתקים, ושלחו מנות לאין נכון לו, כי קדוש היום לאדנינו

> And he said to them: Go, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send gifts to *him* for whom nothing has been prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord. (Nehemiah 8:10)

Seventh Chapter. The Year of Release and the Jubilee Year.

^(See Handbook pp. 262–270.)

1. Like the seventh day, so every seventh year too was to be celebrated in honour of the Eternal. The soil is to lie fallow, and the produce of field and tree is to be given free to everyone. The owner had first to invite others to take of it as they pleased, before he himself was allowed to bring anything [p. 58] home. (Exod. 34:21; 23:11. Lev. 25:4–5.) (Law 326–329. 112.)

2. The seventh year, as a year of release, was to remind the former inhabitants of the Holy Land that they had received the land from God only as a fief, and that in this year they had to refrain from exercising their right of possession. They are further to recognize that the yield of the soil is not merely the fruit of their diligence but of God's blessing, which would flow to them all the more abundantly the more they shared it with others.

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[42] Translator: Thus in the original; the number 4 is used twice in this chapter (this paragraph would be 5, and the following ones 6 and 7).

[43] Translator: Presumably Lev. 23:36 is meant.

וכי תאמרו מה נאכל בשנה השביעת? הן לא נזרע ולא נאסף את תבואתנו: וצויתי את ברכתי לכם בשנה הששית ועשת את התבואה לשלש השנים

> And if you say: What shall we eat in the seventh year? Behold, we may not sow, and cannot gather in our produce. But I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, so that it shall bring forth produce for three years, etc. (Lev. 25:20–21)

3. One had to remit the debts of the needy brother in the seventh year, since in the year of release he could earn nothing with which to pay his debts.

לא יגש את רעהו ואת אחיו, כי קרא שמטה לה׳: את הנכרי תגש ואשר יהיה לך את אחיך תשמט ידך

> He shall not press his neighbour; for a release from the Eternal has been proclaimed. The foreigner (who does not observe the year of release) you may dun (for payment), but what you have with your brother your hand shall release. (Deut. 15:2–3) (Law 475–477.)

4. After the passing of seven years of release came the year of freedom, or Jubilee. The Shofar sounded on the Day of Atonement and proclaimed universal freedom. Fields that had been sold reverted to their first owner; menservants and maidservants left their masters. Everyone regained possession of his sold *property* and his lost *freedom*, and could begin the new age with better experience, so as not to lose these two precious goods again. (Lev. 25:8, 10, 11. Law 330–335.)

5. The keeping holy of the Sabbath, of the festivals, and of the year of release and the Jubilee year thus formed a ladder by which the Israelite people could raise itself to the spiritual height for which God destined it.

מי יעלה בהר ה׳ ומי יקום במקום קדשו: נקי כפים ובר לבב, אשר לא נשא לשוא נפשו ולא נשבע למרמה

> Who goes up the mountain of the Eternal, and who stands in his holy place? He who is clean of hands and pure of heart, whose soul does not long for vanity, and who does not swear deceitfully. (Psalm 24:3–5)

[p. 59] **6.** Thus the Israelite, through such *sanctification of the times*, already prepares himself here below for the eternal life, to which earthly life is only an antechamber. (Avot, ch. 4, Mishnah 21.)

Eighth Chapter. The Immortality of the Soul.

^(See Handbook pp. 271–277.)

1. We recognize this from all the laws that guide us to raise the spiritual above the earthly, so that here below we may prepare ourselves for an eternal happiness.

2. The pious man is often called home early to this world of eternal happiness.

יבוא שלום, ינוחו על משכבותם הלך נכחו

He enters into peace, (where) they rest upon their beds, he who walks in his uprightness. (Isaiah 57:2)

אז יבקע כשחר אורך וארכתך מהרה תצמח והלך לפניך צדקך כבוד ה׳ יאספך

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall speedily flourish, and your piety shall go before you; the glory of the Eternal shall close your train. (Isaiah 58:8) (Psalm 16:10–11.)

ויתהלך חנוך את האלהים ואיננו, כי לקח אתו אלהים

And Chanoch [Enoch] walked with God, and he was not, for God had taken him. (Gen. 5:24)

ואנשי חסד נאספים באין מבין כי מפני הרעה נאסף הצדיק

Pious men are snatched away while no one notices that the righteous is snatched away from before the evil. (Isaiah 57:1) (Moses and Aaron died before they had seen the promised land.)

3. The sinner who is not punished here awaits punishment in that life; this punishment is designated by the term כרת [karet, "being cut off"]. (Lev. 20:2–3. 1 Sam. 25:29.)

שאול מתחת רגזה לך לקראת בואך

Hell beneath trembles for you, to meet your coming. (Isaiah 14:9)

כי ערוך מאתמול תפתה גם הוא למלך הוכן, העמיק הרחב, מדרתה אש ועצים הרבה, נשמת ה׳ כנחל גפרית בערה בה

For Tophet is prepared since yesterday. This too is made ready for the king, deep, wide. Its pyre has fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the Eternal, like a stream of brimstone, blazes in it. (Isaiah 30:33)

[p. 60] **4.** With the death of the body the soul cannot cease, as the wicked man might wish in order to escape punishment; for God is almighty, and his power over us cannot be interrupted by death.

ואל יבטיחך יצרך שהשאול בית מנוס לך כי בעל כרחך אתה נוצר ובע״כ אתה נולד ובע״כ אתה חי ובע״כ אתה מת, ובע״כ אתה עתיד ליתן דין וחשבון לפני ממ״ה הקב״ה

Let not your evil desire reassure you that the grave is a refuge for you; for without your will you were created and born, without your will you live and you die, and without your will you must one day render account before the King of all kings. (Avot 4:29)[44]

[44]Translator: In current editions Mishnah Avot 4:22. The Hebrew abbreviations stand for בעל כרחך ("against your will") and מלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא ("the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He").

5. The soul of man, which is the breath and spirit of God that animates him (Job 33:4), lives on after death as an indivisible being, where, according to God's justice and all-goodness, recompense and compensation are granted to it.

וישב העפר על הארץ כשהיה, והרוח תשוב אל האלהים אשר נתנה

> And the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. (Eccl. 12:7) (Proverbs 23:18.)

6. Belief in immortality is one of the most important doctrines of faith of our holy religion. It is alluded to in many places of Holy Scripture, especially in the promises of the prophets. This belief is meant to take from us our pride in earthly possessions. — It summons us to be always ready to give account of the use of all the goods and powers that have been granted us by God. (Psalm 49:18. 2 Kings 20:3.)

7. One day the dusty shell of the human soul too will rise again. This promise the Lord has revealed to us through his prophets.

ורבים מישני אדמת עפר יקיצו אלה לחיי עולם ואלה לחרפות לדראון עולם

> And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, these to everlasting life, and those to shame, to everlasting abhorrence. (Daniel 12:2) (Prayer: *Attah Gibbor*.)[45]

8. Death will then cease, and the pious and righteous will delight, in lasting strength of spirit, in the reflected splendour of the glory of God.

בלע המות לנצח ומחה א׳ ה׳ דמעה מעל כל פנים, וחרפת עמו יסיר מעל כל הארץ כי ה׳ דבר

> He makes death vanish for ever, and the Lord God wipes away the tears from every face, and the reproach of his people from all the earth; for the Eternal has spoken. (Isaiah 25:8)

[p. 61] **Hymn 102.**

1. I am born for eternity, destined for a better world; my life is not lost, though the grave should take its shell. Too great am I for this time; my goal is immortality.

2. What is the world, what fortune and honour? Were all its riches mine, they would, if there were no heaven, still be far too small for my wish. Dust gives the spirit no rest; it hastens toward loftier goods.

3. Did not my God's love create me for higher happiness, for greater joy, and did He not Himself plant the yearnings for it so strongly, so deeply in my breast? He who fills the spirit with longing will surely not leave it unstilled.

[45] Translator: The second benediction of the Amidah ("You are mighty"), which praises God as the one who revives the dead.

4. He will awaken me from my grave — this my heart hopes, this His word says; and since I have this as a pledge, all doubts flee away. How joyfully my spirit rises, since God indeed calls it immortal.

Fifth Commandment.

כבד את אביך ואת אמך למען יארכון ימיך על האדמה אשר ה׳ אלהיך נתן לך

Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Eternal your God gives you. (Exod. 20:12)

First Chapter. Duties toward Parents.

^(See Handbook pp. 281–288.)

1. With this commandment begin the duties toward our fellow men. By being active in furthering the welfare of our fellow men, we sanctify before God our deeds, for which He gives us strength and means.

עשה צדקה ומשפט נבחר לה׳ מזבח

To do right and what is due is more acceptable to the Eternal than sacrifice. (Prov. 21:3)

כה אמר ה׳ צבאות לאמר, משפט אמת שפטו וחסד ורחמים עשו איש את אחיו

Thus says the Eternal of hosts: Execute true judgment, and show love and mercy one to another. (Zech. 7:9)

[p. 62] **2.** This love is due first of all to our parents, to whom we owe life and upbringing, and who are our most faithful friends. We must show them every possible work of love with self-sacrificing gladness. To parents is due reverence during their life, through high regard for their instruction and their wishes; likewise after their death, through honouring their memory and by removing everything that could leave a stain upon their good name.

נצר בני מצות אביך ואל תטש תורת אמך

Keep, my son, the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother. (Prov. 6:20) (Law 33. 212. Prov. 23:22; 17:21; 19:26.)

3. Whoever abandons his parents in their need, despises them, brings disgrace upon them and does not obey them, sins grievously against them. (Prov. 20:20.)

עין תלעג לאב ותבז ליקהת אם, יקרוה ערבי נחל, ויאכלוה בני נשר

The eye that mocks the father and scorns obedience to the mother, the ravens of the valley shall peck it out, and the young eagles shall devour it. (Proverbs 30:17) (Exod. 21:15. Lev. 20:9. Law 47, 260.)

4. The boy who did not heed his parents' discipline and became depraved had formerly to be condemned by the court to death by stoning, so that he should not grow up into a dangerous criminal. (Deut. 21:18–21.)

5. We should also be devoted to our relatives with love and respect (Ps. 133). The remembrance of our patriarchs and of the events of their lives must remain a sacred duty for us. (Gen. 32:33. Law 3.) To children who honour and love their parents God has promised a long and happy life as reward; for whoever loves his parents honours God, who has granted him life through such parents.

Hymn 358.

3. Parents' love is without bounds. Children, you can never repay it; but you can thank, thank your parents for their love and toil, thank them for many a long night watched through in care for you.

4. To love them from a pure heart, to be faithful and obedient to them, never to grieve them on purpose, quickly to repent every hurt, to trust them without quibbling, and to watch for their every sign.

5. To strive that the faithful ones' care be not lost on you; that you walk the path of virtue, true to your high calling, defying every vice, until one day you stand at the goal.

6. To lend your strength to your parents when they are strengthless and weak; to gladden them with comfort and help in the troubles of old age: this is a child's thanks and duty. Children, do not forget this!

[p. 63] Second Chapter. Reverence for Age and for the Learned.

^(See Handbook pp. 288–300.)

1. Our love is to extend in ever wider circles; above all we should revere venerable old age; then this beneficent respect will one day be shown to us too.

תפארת בחורים כחם, והדר זקנים שיבה

The ornament of young men is their strength, and the adornment of the old is the grey head. (Proverbs 20:29)

מפני שיבה תקום, והדרת פני זקן, ויראת מאלהיך

Rise up before a grey head and honour the old man, and fear your God. (Lev. 19:32) (Law 257.)

2. Whoever does not listen to experience and does not respect old age will not prosper; and such ill manners were prophesied to the Israelite people as the greatest misfortune and as the downfall of the kingdom.

ירהבו הנער בזקן, והנקלה בנכבד

The boy behaves insolently against the old man, and the base against the honoured. (Isaiah 3:5)

3. Reverence is due above all to the learned and to teachers, through whose education we first learn to recognize the true worth of life.

הולך את חכמים יחכם, ורעה כסילים ירוע

He who keeps company with the wise becomes wise, and he who joins himself to fools comes to grief. (Proverbs 13:20) (Proverbs 15:12. Avot 1:4.)

4. This reverence for parents, teachers and the aged should also show itself outwardly, in that we rise before them, do not contradict them, and do not speak with them in a familiar tone. Our respect for the teachers of the Law, to whom we owe the tradition — that is, the explanations and inferences of the divine law according to the oral transmission (תורה שבעל פה [Torah she-be'al peh, "the Oral Torah"]) from Sinai (Avot 1:1) — we must demonstrate by holding fast to their pronouncements.

על פי התורה אשר יורוך ועל המשפט אשר יאמרו לך תעשה, לא תסור מן הדבר אשר יגידו לך ימין ושמאל

According to the instruction that they give you, and according to the judgment that they tell you, you shall do; do not turn aside from the pronouncement that they declare to you, either to the right or to the left. (Deut. 17:11) (Law 495. 496.)

[p. 64]

יהי כבוד תלמידך חביב עליך כשלך — ומורא רבך כמורא שמים

Hold the honour of your pupil as dear as your own — — and respect for your teacher as dear as reverence for Heaven. (Avot 4:15)[46]

5. Whoever formerly opposed the pronouncement of the supreme judicial authority, the court of the Seventy-One sitting on Moriah, and taught otherwise, incurred the death penalty (זקן ממרא [zaken mamre, "the rebellious elder"]), so that no discord might creep into the interpretation of the Torah and cause schisms among the people.

ראש דברך אמת ולעולם כל משפט צדקך

The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances holds for ever. (Psalm 119:160)

6. But no teacher of the Law may take anything away from the law of the Torah or add anything to it, neither in the number of its subject-matter nor in the duration of a law's observance; for this Torah, which God has handed down to us through Moshe our teacher, will never be changed nor

[46]Translator: In current editions Mishnah Avot 4:12.

exchanged for any other Torah (8th and 9th articles of faith according to Maimonides. (Law 454 and 455. Deut. 13:1.)

פלאות עדותיך על כן נצרתם נפשי — צדקתך צדק לעולם ותורתך אמת —

> Your testimonies (Lord!) are wonderful, therefore my soul keeps them. — — Your righteousness remains right for ever, and Your teaching true. (Psalm 119:129, 142) (Isaiah 46:10.)

Third Chapter. Reverence for the Prophets.

^(See Handbook pp. 295–301.)

1. The prophets were God's messengers to Israel, *to keep them faithful to His teaching*; their promises we must therefore revere and believe as *pronouncements of God*.

נביא מקרבך מאחיך כמני יקים לך ה׳ אלהיך אליו תשמעון

> A prophet from your midst, from your brothers, *like me*, will the Eternal your God raise up for you; to him you shall listen. (Deut. 18:15)

2. All the sorrowful fates that have befallen the Israelite people as divine punishments were foretold many hundreds of years in advance in the books of the prophets, and have always faithfully proved true.

[p. 65]

ואתכם אזרה בגוים

> And you I will scatter among the nations. (Lev. 26:33) (Deut. 28:64.) (Zech. 7:14.)

3. How much more may we look forward with full confidence to all the gracious promises in which all the prophets, from Moshe, the greatest, to Malachi, the last in the line of prophets, agree: that a better future will one day come for Israel, which is designated as the *time of the Moshiach* (Anointed).

ושב ה׳ אלהיך את שבותך ורחמך ושב וקבצך מכל העמים אשר הפיצך ה׳ אלהיך שמה

> Then your God will bring back all your captives and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the peoples among whom the Eternal your God has scattered you. (Deut. 30:3)

מקים דבר עבדו ועצת מלאכיו ישלים, האמר לירושלם תושב — וחרבותיה אקומם

> He confirms the word of his servant and fulfils the counsel of his messengers; who says to Jerushalaim: It shall be inhabited … and its ruins I will raise up. (Isaiah 44:26)

וערבה לה׳ מנחת יהודה וירושלם כימי עולם וכשנים קדמניות

> And the offering of Jehudah and Jerushalaim shall be pleasing to the Eternal, as in the days of old and in former years. (Malachi 3:4)

4. In Israel there will no longer be any discord in matters of belief.

זכרו תורת משה עבדי — הנה אנכי שלח לכם את אליה הנביא — והשיב לב אבות על בנים ולב בנים על אבותם — —

> Remember the teaching of Moshe, my servant. — Behold, I send you Eliahu the prophet … and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers. (Malachi 3:22, 24, 25)[47]

5. All nations, united with Israel, will then turn in harmony and brotherly love to the one God. (Zech. 14:9.)

כי אז אהפך אל עמים שפה ברורה, לקרוא כלם בשם ה׳ לעבדו שכם אחד —

> Yes, then I will turn to the nations a pure lip, that they may all call upon the name of the Eternal, that they may serve Him with one accord. (Zephaniah 3:9) (Zech. 14:16.)

6. They will at last acknowledge Israel as the servant of God who has remained faithful, as the much-tried messenger of divine truth. Joined with it in brotherhood they will [p. 66] rebuild the Sanctuary in Jerushalaim as a house of God for all nations.

ובנו בני נכר חמתיך — — ופתחו שעריך תמיד, יומם ולילה לא יסגרו

> And the sons of the foreigner shall build your walls … and your gates shall stand open continually … (Isaiah 60:10–11) (Isa. 53:3–4; 56:7.)

7. True knowledge and holy morality will then wrest the sword of war from the nations and change it into ploughshares, which will transform even the deserts into a pleasant dwelling-place of happy people.

והיה באחרית הימים יהיה הר בית ה׳ נכון בראש ההרים ונשא הוא מגבעות ונהרו עליו עמים: והלכו גוים רבים ואמרו לכו ונעלה אל הר ה׳ ואל בית אלהי יעקב ויורנו מדרכיו — — וכתתו חרבתיהם לאתים, וחניתתיהם למזמרות, לא ישאו גוי אל גוי חרב, ולא ילמדון עוד מלחמה: וישבו איש תחת גפנו ותחת תאנתו ואין מחריד, כי פי ה׳ צבאות דבר

> And it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Eternal shall be established above the mountains, and it shall tower above the hills, and nations shall stream to it; and many peoples shall go and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Eternal and to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us of his ways. And they shall blunt their swords into sickles and their spears into pruning-knives. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. And everyone shall sit under his vine and under

[47] Translator: The verses quoted are Mal. 3:22–24 in the Hebrew numbering (4:4–6 in the Christian numbering); there is no verse 3:25.

his fig trees, and none shall disturb him; for the mouth of the Eternal of hosts has spoken. (Micah 4:1–4)

8. To await this time with confidence, however long it may yet tarry for us, is one of the most important doctrines of faith (Maimonides[48]) [p. 67] and contains for everyone the duty of helping to bring it about through piety and virtue.

— — כי ישוב ה׳ לשוש עליך לטוב כאשר שש על אבתיך: כי תשמע בקול ה׳ אלהיך לשמר מצותיו וחקתיו הכתובה בספר התורה הזה — —

For the Eternal your God will again rejoice over you for good, as He rejoiced over your fathers; if you will obey the voice of the Eternal your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the Teaching. (Deut. 30:9–10)

Fourth Chapter. Reverence for the Head of State.

^(See Handbook pp. 301–308.)

1. We long for the time of the Moshiach because mankind still greatly needs such a time. — We wish that all the divided nations may one day unite into one great harmonious family, that they may live in an abundance of good and serve the Lord through virtue and wisdom. But we are not permitted to pave the way to this by undertaking the rebuilding of the Sanctuary on our own initiative; rather we must persevere until Providence one day finds the time right to bring about such a deed in the development of the world.

השבעתי אתכם בנות ירושלם — — אם תעירו ואם תעוררו את האהבה עד שתחפץ

I adjure you, daughters of Jerushalaim, — — that you do not waken nor stir up love until it pleases. — (Song of Songs 2:7)

2. It is rather our sacred duty to love as our fatherland that country in which the Father of all has called us into existence, whose law protects us, whose glory honours us, and to further its welfare.

בטח בה׳ ועשה טוב שכן ארץ, ורעה אמונה

Trust in the Eternal and do good; dwell in the land and cherish faithfulness. (Psalm 37:3)

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[48]The 13 articles of faith of R. M[oses] ben Maimon read: 1) I believe with perfect conviction in a free Creator and Ruler of the world; 2) 3) 4) I believe w[ith] p[erfect] c[onviction] in one, spiritual and eternal God; 5) I believe w. p. c. that worship is due to God alone and to no being besides Him; 6) 7) I believe w. p. c. that all the pronouncements of the prophets are true, and that Moshe was the greatest of all prophets before and after him; 8) 9) I believe w. p. c. that the Teaching which is still in our hands is unchanged the same, and will remain unchanged the same, as God gave it; 10) I believe w. p. c. that the Creator of the human heart knows its thoughts; 11) I believe w. p. c. that God does good to those who keep His commandments and punishes those who transgress His laws; 12) I believe w. p. c. in the coming of the Moshiach (Anointed). However long he may tarry, nevertheless I wait every day for him to come; 13) I believe w. p. c. in the revival of the dead, when it shall one day be the will of the Creator, whose remembrance be highly praised for all eternity! — These 13 Ikkarim [principles] are put together in metrical form for synagogue use in the prayer יגדל [Yigdal].

3. Jeremiah wrote to the Jewish captives in Babylon, whose peoples were cruel toward them and whose kings were self-deifying tyrants:

ודרשו את שלום העיר אשר הגליתי אתכם שמה, והתפללו בעדה אל ה׳, כי בשלומה יהיה לכם שלום

—

> And seek the welfare of the city to which I have carried you away, and pray for it to the Eternal; for in its welfare you shall fare well. (Jer. 29:7)

[p. 68] **4.** How much more is this our duty in those states where no oppression and no disgrace weigh upon us any longer, in which we enjoy freedom of faith and of conscience. In these we must be the most loyal citizens. Daniel and Mordechai, Zerubbabel and many later ones were always the most loyal servants of the princes who trusted them. (Daniel 6:23. Esther 2:21–23. Nehemiah 2:1 ff.)

5. The princes of the state should be the fathers of their peoples, and go before them in obeying the laws of religion and of moral teaching. The holy Law therefore made it a strict duty for the Jewish kings that the king should be a model of simplicity and morality to his people.

ולא ירבה לו נשים, ולא יסור לבבו, וכסף וזהב לא ירבה לו מאד

> Nor shall he take many wives for himself, that his heart turn not away, and silver and gold he shall not acquire for himself in abundance. (Deut. 17:17)

אל למלכים למואל אל למלכים שתו יין ולרוזנים או שכר: פן ישתה וישכח מחקק

> It is not for kings (it befits them not), Lemuel, not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink, lest he drink and forget the law. (Proverbs 31:4–5)

6. We owe reverence and obedience to the authorities of the land and should not join with rebels.

ירא את ה׳ בני ומלך, עם שונים אל תתערב

> Fear the Eternal, my son, and the king; do not meddle with those given to change. (Proverbs 24:21) (Eccl. 10:20.)[49]

7. We should strive to pay homage to the prince in every way, and in doing so praise God, who has imparted of His glory to the king (שחלק מכבודו לבשר ודם ["who has given of His glory to flesh and blood"])[50], and whose will guides the heart of kings so as to bring blessing and prosperity to the land.

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[49]Translator: Printed "Kohel. 10, 29"; Ecclesiastes 10 has only 20 verses, and 10:20 ("Do not curse the king, even in your thought") is evidently meant.

[50]Translator: The words of the blessing recited on seeing a king.

פלגי מים לב מלך ביד ה׳, על כל אשר יחפץ יטנו

Like streams of water is the heart of the king in the hand of the Eternal; wherever He wishes, He turns it. (Proverbs 21:1)

8. Our sages teach:

הוי מתפלל בשלומה של מלכות, שאלמלא מוראה איש את רעהו חיים בלעו —

Pray for the welfare of the government, for were there no fear of it, one would swallow the other alive. (Avot 3:2)

Hymn 346.

1. Preserve, Lord, the government! You gave it to us, on earth with [p. 69] prosperity and to be made happy in security through it, grant it wisdom,
zeal and strength carefully to attend to what creates the true welfare of the land. — 2. Grant that it, of one mind with Thee, may govern us like a father; that every citizen under it may lead a quiet life. Let it be a refuge to innocence, gladden the upright in the land, and vigorously restrain injustice.

Sixth Commandment

לא תרצח:

You shall not murder. (Exod. 20:13)

First Chapter. The Sparing of Life

(See Handbook pp. 311–328.)

1. The foundation of our duties toward others rests on this: that we are to love them as ourselves. What you do not want done to you, do not do to another either. For this reason alone we must seek to preserve their life and health, the most excellent of earthly goods. But whoever robs his fellow man of life, or shortens it, is struck by the curse of Cain; the admonishing call of God pursues him in his conscience:

— מה עשית קול דמי אחיך צעקים אלי מן האדמה ועתה ארור אתה מן האדמה אשר פצתה את פיה לקחת את דמי אחיך מידך:

… What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground; and now cursed be you by the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. (Gen. 4:10)

2. We may therefore neglect no sick person, and may not commit a corpse to the earth before we are certain of death. Suicide, too, belongs under this prohibition; for it God will call the surviving soul to strict account.

ואך את דמכם לנפשתיכם אדרש מיד כל חיה (from חָיָה) אדרשנו:

> Surely your blood of your persons will I require; from everything that lives will I require it (thus also from the surviving soul). (Gen. 9:5)[51]

[p. 70] **3.** Sinful, therefore, is every self-inflicted neglect of health through intemperate living, through fretting and worrying, through rushing into dangers without a higher duty demanding it.

אל תבהל ברוחך לכעוס כי כעס בחיק כסילים ינוח:

> Be not hasty in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools. (Eccl. 7:9)

כי לאויל יהרג כעש ופתה תמית קנאה:

> Vexation would bring the fool to ruin, and zeal would kill the babbler. (Prov. 27:3, 4.) (Job 5:2)

4. The punishment of murder is an urgent duty for the welfare of mankind; but only a court of 23 judges is permitted to sentence the murderer to death, and even then only if he committed the crime in spite of a warning from the two witnesses accusing him. — He is to be executed by the sword, even if the slain man was his bondman, a heathen slave. (Law 50. Exod. 21:20.)

ולא תחניפו את הארץ אשר אתם בה כי הדם הוא יחניף את הארץ ולארץ לא יכפר לדם אשר שפך בה כי אם בדם שפכו:

> And you shall not defile the land in which you are, for blood, that defiles the land; and no atonement is made for the land for the blood that has been shed in it, except by the blood of him who shed it. (Num. 35:33)

5. Upon the criminal who has forfeited his life, this punishment is to be carried out without unnecessary torment and without disgrace for the surviving relatives, as atonement for his crime. Whoever could not be punished by the court will surely be overtaken by the punishment of God, measure for measure.

כי את כל מעשה האלהים יבא במשפט על כל נעלם אם טוב ואם רע:

> For God will bring every deed into judgment, concerning everything hidden, whether it be good or evil. (Exod. 21:20. Lev. 20:14. Deut. 21:21, 23. Avot ch. 2, Mishnah 7.) (Eccl. 12:14)

6. To forestall blood vengeance by the relatives in a case of unintentional killing, the accused had to keep himself hidden in one of the 6 cities of refuge (ערי מקלט, *arei miklat*); well-kept and safe highways led to them.

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[51] Translator: Lasch's parenthesis "(von חָיָה)" indicates that he reads חיה ("beast") here as חָיָה, "the living one," i.e. the soul that survives death, so that the verse becomes a proof-text against suicide; the traditional reading (Gen. Rabbah 34:13; Bava Kamma 91b) likewise derives the prohibition of suicide from this verse.

והצילו העדה את הרצח מיד גאל הדם והשיבו אתו אל עיר מקלטו:

> And the congregation shall rescue the slayer from the hand of the blood avenger, and the congregation shall bring him back to his city of refuge, etc. (Num. 35:25)

[p. 71] **7.** In these cities of refuge the pursued man who had been received had to live penitently and in seclusion, because a human life had been destroyed through him. (Law 408, 410, 413, 520.)

כאשר יאמר משל הקדמני מרשעים יצא רשע:

> As the proverb of the ancients says: From the wicked comes wickedness. (1 Sam. 24:14)

לא יאנה לצדיק כל און ורשעים מלאו רע:

> No mischief befalls the righteous, but the wicked are full of evil. (Prov. 12:21)

8. The inhabitants of these cities, who were priests and Levites, would by their kindliness exert an improving influence on the protégé and a soothing influence on the blood avenger.

— ורבים השיב מעון: כי שפתי כהן ישמרו דעת ותורה יבקשו מפיהו —

> … And many did he turn back from sin; for the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge … (Lev. 25:34. Num. 35:2. Law 505, 520.) (Mal. 2:6, 7)

9. In the case of a murder whose perpetrator remained undiscovered, the nearest town formerly had to bring, on account of the insecurity of its territory, a heifer as a public atonement, whose neck was broken (עגלה ערופה, *eglah arufah*) (Deut. 21:1–4). But the murderer will surely be seized by anguish of conscience and tormented to death.

כל ימי רשע הוא מתחולל — קול פחדים באזניו — — לא יאמין שוב מני חשך וצפו הוא אלי חרב — וכו׳:

> All the days of his life the wicked man is in anguish … a sound of terrors is in his ears … He has no hope of returning out of the darkness, and he is marked out for the sword. (Law 530, 531.) (Job 15:20, 21, 22)

Second Chapter. Prevent Your Neighbor's Pain and Danger

(See Handbook pp. 328–341.)

1. If someone falsely accuses a person and seeks to bring a punishment upon his body and goods, and it is proven that the witness was in a distant place and could have had no knowledge of that of which he accuses the other, then this witness is to be subjected to the same punishment to [p. 72] which he wanted to bring the other. — The judges are to subject the credibility of the witnesses to a very careful examination, and to pronounce the verdict *guilty* only by a preponderant majority of votes.

ועשיתם לו כאשר זמם לעשות לאחיו ובערת הרע מקרבך:

> Then you shall do to him as he schemed to do to his brother, and you shall root out the evil from your midst. (Law 524, 76, 77, 463.) (Deut. 19:19)

2. The judge's sword is not to be a sword of vengeance. — Neither crucifixion nor torture may be inflicted on the guilty beyond the modes of death determined by the Law; for even the fallen man does not cease to be your fellow man. The punishment he is to suffer is meant to preserve him from damnation in the future life.

3. Likewise, the penalty of flogging, which the court carried out on someone who wantonly committed a forbidden act, was not to dishonor him and estrange him from us, but only to keep him in future from indulging sensual lust and falling prey to spiritual ruin.

יסר בנך כי יש תקוה ואל המיתו אל תשא נפשך:

> Chasten your son while there is still hope, and you will not long to kill him. (Law 594 and 595. Deut. 25:2, 3.) (Prov. 19:18)

4. But whoever strikes and wounds a person must atone for such brute violence and humiliation by a fivefold compensation. (Law 49. Exod. 21:18–28.)[52]

5. Whatever might harm our fellow man in life or health we are to seek to remove from our domain. We may never hold back, so long as help is possible for us, when any danger threatens him from man or beast or from a snare.

הצל לקחים למות ומטים להרג אם תחשוך: כי תאמר הן לא ידענו זה הלא תכן לבות הוא יבין ונצר נפשך הוא ידע והשיב לאדם כפעלו:

> Rescue those who are led away to death and those who have fallen to the slayer, if you can prevent it. If you say, Behold, we did not know him! will not he who weighs hearts perceive it? and he who watches over your soul, he knows it, and will repay a man according to his deed! (Law 600, 601. Deut. 25:11, 12. Law 237. Lev. 19:16. Law 52. Exod. 21:28. Law 546, 547. Deut. 22:8. Law 232. Lev. 19:14.) (Prov. 24:11, 12)

[p. 73] Third Chapter. Prevent Your Neighbor's Hurt and Distress

(See Handbook pp. 346–350.)

1. To the honorable person a good name counts for no less than life and health; therefore we are not to injure this either by evil talk or slander. (Lev. 19:16.) לא תלך רכיל בעמך, Do not go about as a spy (talebearer) among your people. (Law 236.)

[52] Translator: The five heads of damages of rabbinic law (Mishnah Bava Kamma 8:1): injury, pain, medical cost, loss of time, and humiliation.

הולך רכיל מגלה סוד ונאמן רוח מכסה דבר:

He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, but a faithful spirit conceals the matter. (Prov. 11:13)

2. The slanderer does much harm with his tongue and has often brought about murder. (Like Doeg at Nob. 1 Samuel 22:9–20.)

אנשי רכיל היו בך למען שפך דם — —

Talebearers were in you, to shed blood … (Ps. 12:3, 4.) (Ezek. 22:9)

3. Only the proud and haughty can take pleasure in slander, who wishes to flatter his selfishness with the faults of others; but the noble-minded will rather keep silent about them.

מכסה פשע מבקש אהבה ושנה בדבר מפריד אלוף:

He who covers a transgression seeks love; but he who brings up a matter again separates intimate friends. (Prov. 17:9)

4. It is indeed our duty to call to account someone who commits a wrong, so that he may excuse himself and improve; but it is a sin in doing so to put him publicly to shame. Shame is a sensation that makes the blood freeze for moments; therefore our sages teach:

המלבין פני חברו ברבים כאלו שופך דמים:

He who makes his neighbor's face turn pale in public is like one who sheds blood. (Bava Metzia 58a)[53]

הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך ולא תשא עליו חטא:

You shall call your neighbor to account, so that you do not bear sin because of him. (Law 240.) (Lev. 19:17)

5. We are to guard ourselves against unfeeling hardheartedness, and rather seek to alleviate need and suffering as far as we can, for these can easily endanger not only a person's welfare but also his life. (Law 65.)

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כל אלמנה ויתום לא תענון: — —

You shall not oppress any widow or orphan … (Exod. 22:21)

וערפכם לא תקשו עוד — כי ה׳ אלהיכם הוא אלהי האלהים — — עשה משפט יתום ואלמנה:

And be no longer stiff-necked … for the Eternal your God is the God of gods … who executes justice for the widow and the orphan. (Deut. 10:16–18)

[53]Translator: The saying stands in BT Bava Metzia 58b.

6. Such helpless people we must counsel and help, standing by the orphan as guardian and by the widow as supporter.

שפטו דל ויתום עני ורש הצדיקו:

> Do justice to the poor and the orphan; do right to the afflicted and the needy. (Exod. 22:21–23.) (Ps. 82:3)

7. We are not to assert even our own right with severity when this could be ruinous to our fellow man; equity should always accompany right. (Law 583.)

לא יחבל רחים ורכב כי נפש הוא חבל:

> One shall not take the mill or the millstone in pledge, for he takes life in pledge. (Deut. 24:6)

ועשית הישר והטוב בעיני ה׳ למען ייטב לך:

> You shall do what is right, but also what is good before the Eternal, that it may go well with you. (Deut. 6:18)

Fourth Chapter. The Means of Avoiding Such Offenses

(See Handbook pp. 341–346.)

1. Do not indulge in intemperance; then you will remain content and will always secure for yourself a calm mind and mature deliberation. (Law 248.)

לא תאכלו על הדם:

> You shall not eat with the blood. (Lev. 19:26)

אין שריד לאכלו על כן לא יחיל טובו:

> Nothing escaped his greed; therefore his prosperity will not thrive. (Job 20:21)

2. Beware of selfishness and of overestimating your own worth; then you will more easily acknowledge the rights of your neighbor, and will not hate him when he wishes to assert them against you. (Law 238.)

לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך:

> You shall not hate your brother in your heart. (Lev. 19:17)

אנשי דמים ישנאו תם וישרים יבקשו נפשו:

> Bloodthirsty men hate the blameless, and the upright — they seek their life. (Prov. 29:10)

3. Renounce the pernicious desire to avenge yourself; do not wish to become like your enemy, who was only the rod of chastisement in the hand of God to inflict sorrow upon you. (Law 241, 242.)

לא תקם ולא תטר את בני עמך ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ה׳:

> You shall not take vengeance nor bear any grudge against the children of your people (with whom you live together), but you shall love your neighbor (even if he is at enmity with you) as yourself: I am the Eternal. (Lev. 19:18)

4. Strive to make your enemy your friend again through acts of kindness. (Law 80, 540, 541.)

כי תראה חמור שנאך רבץ תחת משאו וחדלת מעזב לו עזב תעזב עמו:

> If you see the donkey of him who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from making it lighter for him … you shall surely make it lighter (for him) together with him. (Deut. 22:4.) (Exod. 23:5)

אם רעב שנאך האכלהו לחם ואם צמא השקהו מים:

> If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. (Prov. 25:21)

5. Through such good habituation you will keep yourself from becoming cruel and hardhearted toward your fellow man, and from sinking lower than the beast, robbing a person of life and welfare out of lust for plunder or out of revenge, or ruining him.

[p. 76] Seventh Commandment

לא תנאף:

> You shall not commit adultery. (Exod. 20:13)

First Chapter. The Marriage Covenant

(See Handbook pp. 353–359.)

1. The Israelite who enters into marriage with his wife concludes a covenant which God has sanctified. Man is dependent on family life both because of the helplessness of childhood and because of the frailty of old age.

ויאמר ה׳ אלהים לא טוב היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר כנגדו:

> Then the Eternal God said: It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helpmate, as befits him. (Gen. 2:18)

2. This covenant must be founded on mutual love and fidelity if it is to be a happy one and pleasing to God; whoever does not shrink from disturbing this harmony causes great calamity and can often bring about murder.

נאף אשה חסר לב משחית נפשו הוא יעשנה — כי קנאה חמת גבר ולא יחמול ביום נקם:

> He who commits adultery with a woman is senseless; he who is his own destroyer does it … for jealousy, that is the rage of the husband, who will not spare on the day of vengeance. (Prov. 6:32, 34)

3. By the marriage covenant the wife is obligated to remain faithful to her husband; whoever turns her away from this seduces her to adultery. According to the law of the Torah, the seducer and the seduced were punished with death.

ואיש אשר ינאף — את אשת רעהו מות יומת הנאף והנאפת:

> And a man who commits adultery … with the wife of his neighbor, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (Lev. 20:10)

4. The husband who behaves unlovingly toward his wife will be punished by God.

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וזאת שנית תעשו כסות דמעה את מזבח ה׳ בכי ואנקה — — ואמרתם על מה על כי ה׳ העיד בינך ובין אשת נעוריך אשר אתה בגדתה בה והיא חברתך ואשת בריתך:

> And this you do secondly: you cover the altar of the Eternal with tears, with weeping and lamenting … and you say: Why? Because the Eternal is witness between you and the wife of your youth, toward whom you were faithless, though she is your companion and the wife of your covenant. (Mal. 2:13, 14)

5. Outside the married state, intimate association between the sexes is forbidden by the holy Law, because it could corrupt discipline and morals.

ונהמת באחריתך בכלות בשרך ושארך: ואמרת איך שנאתי מוסר ותוכחת נאץ לבי:

> And you would lament in your latter days, when your body and your flesh come to an end. And you will say: How could I hate discipline, and my heart spurn reproof! (Law 570. Deut. 23:18. Prov. 7:5–27.) (Prov. 5:11, 12)

6. Since the two sexes follow quite different directions — the youth to develop mind and strength for vigorous action, the maiden to develop heart and feeling for the domestic circle — they are also to remain separate from each other in occupation, dress, and social intercourse. (Law 542, 543.)

לא יהיה כלי גבר על אשה ולא ילבש גבר שמלת אשה כי תועבת ה׳ אלהיך כל עשה אלה:

> The gear of a man shall not be upon a woman, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whoever does any such thing is an abomination to the Eternal your God. (Law 252. Lev. 19:27.) (Deut. 22:5)

Second Chapter. The Duties of the Marriage Covenant

(See Handbook pp. 359–372.)

1. Only when the man possesses the means to found a household in which he can maintain his wife decently should he conclude a marriage covenant; only then can it become a blessing to both. (Law 46.)

שארה כסותה ועונתה לא יגרע׃

> He shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her dwelling. (Exod. 21:10)

2. The Israelite binds his wife to himself by handing her, under the wedding canopy (*chuppah*), a ring as a gift of [p. 78] value, with the declaration that by it she shall remain consecrated to him.

מצא אשה מצא טוב ויפק רצון מה׳׃

> He who has found a wife has found a good thing and obtained favor from the Eternal. (Prov. 18:22)

3. The marriage covenant is to be concluded with benedictions and thanksgiving to God, so that the blessing of the Lord may remain with the covenant when husband and wife share all the circumstances of life with one another in harmony.

בית והון נחלת אבות ומה׳ אשה משכלת׃

> House and wealth are the inheritance of fathers, but from the Eternal comes an understanding wife. (Prov. 19:14)

4. The wife is to become her husband's faithful helpmate and life companion, to attend to the household with care, and to maintain order and propriety in it.

בטח בה לב בעלה ושלל לא יחסר׃

> The heart of her husband trusts in her, and his gain does not diminish. (Prov. 31:11)

5. But should the husband have been unfortunate in his choice, in that she only feigned fidelity to him, or if discord has already destroyed the happiness of the family, then the marriage covenant can be dissolved again by the *bill of divorce*, which the husband has drawn up by the court for his wife and hands to her. (Law 579, 580.)

וכתב לה ספר כריתת ונתן בידה — לא יוכל בעלה הראשון אשר שלחה לשוב לקחתה׃

> Then he shall write her a bill of divorce and put it in her hand … her first husband, who sent her away, may not take her again. (Deut. 24:1–4)

ומוצא אני מר ממות את האשה אשר היא מצודים וחרמים לבה אסורים ידיה טוב לפני האלהים ימלט ממנה וחוטא ילכד בה:

> I also found more bitter than death the woman who is herself a snare, and her heart nets, her hands fetters; he who is pleasing before God escapes her, but the sinner is caught by her. (Eccl. 7:26)

6. After the husband's death the wife is to be maintained from his estate in accordance with the document issued to her, the כתובה (*ketubbah*). The childless widow may leave her husband's family and marry another man only when the brother-in-law has released her from himself through חליצה (*chalitzah*). (Law 597–599. Deut. 25:5–9.)

[p. 79] Third Chapter. The Choice of a Wife

(See Handbook pp. 372–384.)

1. The Israelite is not to choose his wife from among his nearest relatives, but from other good families, so that families standing farther apart, joining together, may strengthen and ennoble one another, and families do not seal themselves off into castes. The heathen bad custom of taking a wife from one's nearest kin is forbidden to the heathens too, as a Noachide law, and brings the death penalty upon the transgressor.

ושמרתם את כל חקתי ואת כל משפטי ועשיתם אתם ולא תקיא אתכם הארץ אשר אני מביא אתכם שמה לשבת בה:

> And observe all my statutes and ordinances and do them, that the land into which I bring you to dwell may not spew you out. (Lev. 20:22)

2. For the founding of a harmonious household pleasing to God, the two spouses must not be opposed to each other in their convictions; therefore no marriage should be concluded in Israel in which one partner is not devoted to the religion of the other.

ולא תתחתן בם בתך לא תתן לבנו ובתו לא תקח לבנך: כי יסיר את בנך מאחרי ועבדו אלהים אחרים וחרה אף ה׳ בכם והשמידך מהר:

> You shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughter to his son, nor take his daughter for your son. For he will turn away your son (the child of your daughter) from Me, and they will serve strange gods, and the anger of the Eternal will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you. (Deut. 7:3, 4)

(Law 427. — Delilah brought Samson to ruin. Judges 16:4–21. Lev. 24:10, 11, 12, 23.)

3. The descendants of Aaron are to be still more careful in choosing their life companions, and are also to exclude from that choice women whose family and character have not remained without

blemish, so as not to harm the dignity and distinction that are still due to the former priestly tribe. (Law 266–268. Lev. 21:7.)

4. The high priest was not permitted to marry even a widow. His life companion had to join herself with undivided heart to his convictions and to stand worthily at his side on the heights of his calling. — Then she would not disturb him in his holiness, but would seek to raise him ever higher. (Law 272, 273. Lev. 21:13, 14.)

5. The Israelite husband is to value and honor his wife as the life companion consecrated to him, as he [p. 80] must also promise her in the marriage contract (כתובה). Our sages (Bava Metzia 59a) teach: אוקירו נשייכו כי היכי דתתעתרו, Honor your wives, that it may go well with you.

Her wise counsel can be beneficial to the husband; for women, too, shine in the history of Israel through wisdom, devotion to God, and joyful self-sacrifice: the wives of our patriarchs, the sister of Moses, the prophetess Deborah, the mother of Samuel, Abigail, the wise woman of Tekoa, the prophetess Huldah, Queen Esther, the martyr Hannah.[54]

חכמות נשים בנתה ביתה ואולת בידיה תהרסנו׃

> A wise woman builds her house, but folly tears it down. (Prov. 14:1)

השם גבולך שלום חלב חטים ישביעך׃

> He who has set peace in your borders satisfies you with the fat of wheat. (Ps. 147:14)

6. Discipline and morality are to dwell in the families of Israel, so that it may fulfill its task of remaining a holy people, and so that the children, too, may be brought up in strict morality.

בניך כשתלי זיתים סביב לשלחנך׃ הנה כי כן יברך גבר ירא ה׳׃

> Your children like olive shoots around your table. Behold, thus is the man blessed who fears the Eternal. (Ps. 128:3, 4)

7. Through the sign of the covenant of circumcision the boys, too, are to be preserved from moral savagery and to grow up as worthy descendants of Abraham, to whom God had commanded this sign of the covenant for his descendants and to whom He had said: אני אל שדי התהלך לפני והיה תמים… "I am the Almighty; walk before me and be blameless, and I will establish a covenant between me and you, and multiply you exceedingly." (Gen. 17:12.)[55]

8. When the Israelite father has his son initiated into this covenant of God with Abraham, he at the same time takes on the duty of preparing his child's mind, too, to receive the sanctifying refinement that comes through the Torah.

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[54]Translator: Hannah is the name given in Jewish tradition to the mother of the seven martyred sons (2 Macc. 7; BT Gittin 57b).

[55]Translator: The words quoted are Gen. 17:1–2; verse 12 gives the commandment of circumcision on the eighth day.

אשרי תבחר ותקרב ישכן חצריך נשבעה בטוב ביתך קדש היכלך:

Happy the one whom You choose and bring near, that he may dwell in Your courts … (Ps. 65:5)

[p. 81] Eighth Commandment

לא תגנב:

You shall not steal. (Exod. 20:13)

First Chapter. Infringement of Personal Freedom

(See Handbook pp. 388–395.)

1. We are to rob no one of what belongs to him as his property or his right. Such robbery, when carried out secretly and with cunning, is called theft, and is a punishable violation of the love of one's neighbor as well as of public security, and is forbidden to all nations (as a Noachide law); for the Israelite, however, the holy Law determines the just measure of punishment according to the gravity of the crime.

הוצאתיה נאם ה׳ צבאות ובאה אל בית הגנב — ולנה בתוך ביתו וכלתו ואת עציו ואת אבניו:

I send it (the curse) forth, says the Eternal of hosts, that it may come into the house of the thief … and remain in his house and consume it together with its timber and its stones. (Zech. 5:4)

הגנב רצח — — ובאתם ועמדתם לפני בבית הזה אשר נקרא שמי עליו — — ואמרתם נצלנו למען עשות את כל התועבות האלה:

What: steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely … and (yet) you come and stand before my face … and say: We are saved! — so that you may do all these abominations. (Jer. 7:9, 10)

משפטי ה׳ אמת צדקו יחדו:

The judgments of the Eternal are true, righteous altogether. (Ps. 19:10)

2. A person's most precious possession is his personal freedom; whoever, therefore, sells him into slavery forfeits his life by strangulation.

וגנב איש ומכרו ונמצא בידו מות יומת:

And whoever steals a man and sells him, and he was found in his hand, shall surely be put to death. (Exod. 21:16)

[p. 82] **3.** Whoever sells himself out of poverty, or loses his freedom in order to make restitution for what he has stolen, may remain in this state of service for at most 6 years, but must be treated in it with consideration and gentleness, and be released with gifts. (Law 344–46, 481, 482. Lev. 25:39–43.)

4. An Israelite who has fallen into a foreign, harsh service is to be bought free by his relatives; the rich man would be hardhearted and would be punished by God, of whom it is said:

אח לא פדה יפדה איש לא יתן לאלהים כפרו:

> No one would redeem the brother, nor give God a ransom for him. (Ps. 49:8)

5. But everyone is to be devoted to his master with faithfulness and zeal (like Eliezer, Jacob); the master, however, is to meet them with kindness, because such dependence can befall anyone, and we shall one day stand equal with our servants,

קטן וגדול שם הוא ועבד חפשי מאדניו:

> There, where the small is equal to the great, and the servant free from his master. (Job 3:19)

6. The heathen slave who has sold himself to the Israelite as a bondman is likewise to be treated lovingly as a member of the family. The Law protects him from mistreatment and from being handed over. (Law 568, 569. Deut. 23:17.)

אם אמאס משפט עבדי ואמתי בריבם עמדי: ומה אעשה כי יקום אל וכי יפקד מה אשיבנו:

> If I despised the right of my manservant and my maidservant in their dispute with me, what would I do if God rose up, and if He called me to account, what would I answer Him? (Job 31:13, 14)

Second Chapter. Infringement of Another's Property

(See Handbook pp. 395–402.)

1. Whoever secretly takes away another's property, even if it be of small value, must pay double, fourfold, or fivefold; the receiver of stolen goods must give up the thing without compensation, so that no one may enjoy his unjust gain. (Law 224, 54. Lev. 19:11. Exod. 21:37.)

[p. 83]

קרא דגר ולא ילד עשה עשר ולא במשפט בחצי ימיו יעזבנו ובאחריתו יהיה נבל:

> A cuckoo that broods and has not laid — such is he who acquires riches, and not by right; in the midst of his days he will leave them, and at his end he is a despised man. (Jer. 17:11)

חולק עם גנב שונא נפשו אלה ישמע ולא יגיד:

> He who shares with thieves hates his own soul; he hears the curse and may not report it. (Zech. 5:4.) (Prov. 29:24)

2. Whoever does not pay debts or earned wages at the proper time impairs his fellow man's property in order to obtain unjust gain for himself.

הוי בנה ביתו בלא צדק ועליותיו בלא משפט ברעהו יעבד חנם ופעלו לא יתן לו:

> Woe! to him who builds his house by injustice, and his chambers by impropriety; who makes his neighbor work for nothing, and does not give him his wages. (Jer. 22:13)

3. Whoever, violently and without regard for the Law, lays hands on another's property commits brazen robbery; he will be heaped with contempt and tormented by his conscience; he will not escape the punishment of God, even if his power should protect him from human punishment.

הוי המרבה לא לו עד מתי — הלוא פתע יקומו נשכיך ויקצו מזעזיך — הוי בצע בצע רע לביתו — יעצת בשת לביתך — כי אבן מקיר תזעק וכפיס מעץ יעננה: הוי בנה עיר בדמים וכונן קריה בעולה:

> Woe to him who heaps up what in the end does not belong to him … Will not your tormentors suddenly rise up, and those who torment you awake? … Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house … You have counseled shame for your house … For the stone cries out from the wall, and the rafter from the timberwork answers: Woe to him who builds his house with blood and founds the fortress with iniquity. (Hab. 2:6, 7, 9–12)

4. The Israelite must hold fast to fidelity and honesty toward everyone, still more toward a non-Israelite, so as not to profane the name of God, who wishes to be sanctified only through an upright people (*Jeshurun*).

כי צדיק ה׳ צדקות אהב ישר יחזו פנימו:

> For the Eternal is righteous, He loves righteousness; His countenance beholds the upright. (Ps. 11:7)

5. The Israelite is to return what he has found to its owner once ascertained, and to despise every fraud in measure and weight as dishonest gain. [p. 84] The word given and the contract concluded are to be meant faithfully and carried out inviolably. (Law 258, 602, 336, 337.)

שארית ישראל לא יעשו עולה ולא ידברו כזב ולא ימצא בפיהם לשון תרמית כי המה ירעו ורבצו ואין מחריד:

> The remnant of Israel shall speak no wrong and no lie, and no deceitful tongue shall be found in their mouth; then they shall feed and lie down, and no one shall frighten them. (Zeph. 3:13)

6. The profit in buying and selling may not exceed the 6th part of the value. Especially sinful is profiteering in the most necessary needs of life, through which dearth, even famine, arise.

מנע בר יקבהו לאום וברכה לראש משביר:

> He who withholds grain, the people curse him; but blessing comes upon the head of him who sells food. (Amos 8:5–10.) (Prov. 11:26)

Third Chapter. Care for Another's Property

(See Handbook pp. 406–411.)

1. Our fellow man's property that has been entrusted to us demands our care to preserve it for him, whether it was handed to us for safekeeping or for temporary use. We must make it good in proportion to the manner in which it was handed over to us.

יהי ממון חברך חביב עליך כשלך:

Regard your companion's property as your own. (Law 59, 60.) (Avot 2:17)[56]

כה אמר ה׳ שמרו משפט ועשו צדקה כי קרובה ישועתי לבוא וצדקתי להגלות:

Thus says the Eternal: keep justice and do righteousness, for My help is near to come, and My salvation to be revealed. (Isa. 56:1)

2. During the harvest in fields and gardens the day laborer may refresh himself for his work by eating of the ripe fruit, but may take none of it home. (Law 576–578. Deut. 23:25, 26.)

3. We must be very watchful over everything that belongs to us or is handled by us, so that it cannot become dan- [p. 85] gerous to anyone, and we are obligated to make good, according to law and justice, any damage arising from it. (Law 51, 53, 55, 56.)

Hymn 317.

Whoever has done harm to others, and can in any way make it good, yet refuses to do so, finds no mercy before Thee in judgment. — On the penance he imagines he performs Thy good pleasure can never rest, unless he willingly makes good that by which he violates the rights of others.

Fourth Chapter. Charity and Kindness

(See Handbook pp. 411–422.)

1. In the duty of love for mankind it is not enough that we do not harm our fellow men's property; rather we are obligated to promote it, in that the well-to-do person supports the needy according to his means.

סור מרע ועשה טוב בקש שלום ורדפהו:

Depart from evil, do good, seek peace and pursue it. (Ps. 34:15)

וכי ימוך אחיך ומטה ידו עמך והחזקת בו גר ותושב וחי עמך:

And if your brother becomes poor, and his hand falters, then support him, stranger as well as sojourner, that he may live with you. (Lev. 25:35)

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[56] Translator: Avot 2:12 in most modern editions.

2. The best support consists in kindly offering or granting him loans, and leaving them unclaimed until he succeeds through his own industry in raising himself to prosperity again.

טוב איש חונן ומלוה יכלכל דבריו במשפט:

It goes well with the man who is charitable and lends; he orders his affairs with propriety. (Law 66, 67.) (Ps. 112:5)

אם כסף תלוה — — לא תהיה לו כנשה:

If you lend money … do not be to him like a creditor. (Exod. 22:24)

3. Anyone may secure his loan by a written bond or a pledge, and the court is to assist him in compelling the ungrateful debtor to repay the loan.

על כל דבר פשע — — — עד האלהים יבא דבר שניהם אשר ירשיען אלהים ישלם — —

In every matter of breach of trust … let the matter come before the judges; whom the judges declare guilty, let him pay … (Exod. 22:8)

[p. 86]

לוה רשע ולא ישלם וצדיק חונן ונותן:

The wicked borrows and does not repay, but the righteous is charitable and gives. (Ps. 37:21)

4. If the poor man has brought his creditor, for example, an axe or a bed as a pledge until his debt is paid, the creditor must return them to him for each use, until he sells them for the debt. (Law 585–587. Deut. 24:12, 13.)

כי היא כסותה לבדה היא שמלתו לערו במה ישכב והיה כי יצעק אלי ושמעתי כי חנון אני:

For that is his only covering, this his wrapping for his body; on what should he sleep? And it shall come to pass, when he cries to Me, that I will hear, for I am merciful. (Exod. 22:26)

5. Charity is one of the foremost duties of the Israelite; it preserves from hardhearted self-interest and from dishonesty, averts ruin, bestows the purest joys here below, and lays up a lasting treasure for the hereafter. (Law 478, 479.)

כי יהיה בך אביון — לא תאמץ את לבבך ולא תקפץ את ידך מאחיך האביון:

If there is a needy person among you … do not harden your heart, and do not shut your hand against your needy brother … (Deut. 15:7, 8)

לא יועילו אוצרות רשע וצדקה תציל ממות:

For unjust treasures profit nothing, but well-doing delivers from death. (Prov. 10:2)

ברכת אבד עלי תבא ולב אלמנה ארנן:

> The blessing of the wanderer came upon me, and I made the heart of the widow rejoice. (Job 29:13)

6. Kindness removes all humiliation from the good deed and, through friendly words, gives it true flourishing, as the sunbeam does to the dewy meadows.

ותפק לרעב נפשך ונפש נענה תשביע וזרח בחשך אורך ואפלתך כצהרים:

> And if you give out *your soul* to the hungry and refresh the bowed spirit, then your light shall shine in the darkness, and your gloom be like the brightness of noon. (Isa. 58:10)

7. The gift should come to the needy not as a favor, but rather as a *right* (צדקה, *tzedakah*). Formerly it was the legal share in God's blessing which the well-to-do had to leave to the poor as the *field's edge* (פאה, *pe'ah*), the *forgotten sheaf* (שכחה, *shikchah*), the *gleanings* (לקט, *leket*), and the *single fallen grapes* (פרט, *peret*), and in every third [p. 87] year as the *tithe* (מעשר עני, *ma'aser ani*, the poor man's tithe). (Law 216–223, 592, 593, 474. Lev. 19:9, 10. Deut. 14:28; 24:19. Ruth 2:14–18.)

8. But everyone who can in any way, through diligence, expect God's blessing on the work of his own hands should keep away from these gifts.

יגיע כפיך כי תאכל אשריך וטוב לך:

> When you enjoy the labor of your hands, happy are you! and it is well with you. (Ps. 128:2)

עבד אדמתו ישבע לחם ומרדף רקים ישבע ריש:

> He who tills his field has bread in plenty, but he who chases after empty things has want in plenty. (Prov. 27:23–27.) (Prov. 28:19)

9. The Israelite people is everywhere directed by the holy Law toward agriculture. Many sages, to whom we owe the holy tradition, were themselves craftsmen, and laid down the principle:

> Not to teach one's son a trade is as much as to bring him up to robbery (fraud).[57]

Hymn 273.

2. Thou feedest the birds in the air, and even the wild beast in its cleft. Me too, O Lord, Thou never forgettest; for I am more, far more than they. Only Thou willest that I, true to Thee, be as a noble man also *active*.

3. I am, O God, at Thy command, through pious, unwearied diligence, to strive for Thy gifts, and ever to glow with earnest zeal to hinder what increases my misery and makes my duties hard for me.

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[57] Translator: BT Kiddushin 29a: "Whoever does not teach his son a trade teaches him robbery."

[p. 88] Ninth Commandment

לא תענה ברעך עד שקר:

You shall not bear witness against your neighbor as a false witness. (Exod. 20:13)

First Chapter. Furtherance of Justice and Truth

(See Handbook pp. 425–436.)

1. The moral world rests on three pillars: on truth, justice, and peace. Everyone should seek to further these.

אלה הדברים אשר תעשו דברו אמת איש את רעהו אמת ומשפט שלום שפטו בשעריכם:

These things you shall do: speak truth one with another, truthfully and for peace; render judgment in your gates. (Zech. 8:16)

2. But justice can be exercised only when no one, out of self-interest, keeps silent about the truth or distorts it by lying testimony. Through lying testimony the sword becomes a murderer's blade in the hand of the judge. (The death of Naboth, 1 Kings 21:10 ff.)

עד שקרים לא ינקה ויפיח כזבים לא ימלט:

A false witness does not go unpunished, and he who utters lies will not escape. (Prov. 19:5)

פעל אצרות בלשון שקר הבל נדף מבקשי מות:

The getting of treasures by a false tongue is a vapor driven away; they seek death (they seek it). (Law 37, 122. Exod. 20:13. Lev. 5:1.) (Prov. 21:6)

3. The judge is to warn the witnesses and examine their statements, for only the entirely concordant testimony of two irreproachable men, strangers to each other and without interest in the case, may count before the court as a declaration of the truth. (Law 75, 411, 523.)

[p. 89] יפיח אמונה יגיד צדק, ועד שקרים מרמה: He who speaks truth declares what is right; but a lying witness, deceit. (Prov. 12:17)

4. Only such men may be chosen as judges as are distinguished by wisdom, affability and patience, as well as by steadfastness and firmness.

אב אנכי לאביונים, וריב לא ידעתי אחקרהו: ואשברה מתלעות עול, ומשניו אשליך טרף: A father was I to the needy, and the cause of the stranger I searched out; and I shattered the jaws of the unrighteous, and from his teeth I tore the prey. (Job 29:16–17) (Law 491. Deut. 16:18.)

5. Three judges form a court for civil and penal decisions, twenty-three for capital cases, and seventy-one the supreme judicial authority. They decide by majority vote, and pronounce judgment in the name of God without respect of persons. (Law 78, 79, 233–235.)

ויאמר אל השפטים ראו מה אתם עשים כי לא לאדם תשפטו כי לה׳, ועמכם בדבר משפט: — שמרו ועשו כי אין עם ה׳ אלהינו עולה ומשא פנים ומקח שחד: And he said to the judges: Consider what you do, for you judge not for man's sake but for the Eternal's, and He is with you in the giving of judgment … Take heed in what you do, for with the Eternal our God there is no unrighteousness, no respect of persons and no taking of bribes. (2 Chron. 19:6–7)

6. The judge shall pronounce no sentence when he sees through the web of lies of the parties and the witnesses and has not the power to administer justice freely; for by injustice he estranges the people from the divine law and withdraws from them the protection of the Lord. (Law 414, 415, 81, 83. Deut. 1:17. Exod. 23:6, 8.)

אמר לרשע צדיק אתה יקבהו עמים יזעמוהו לאמים: ולמוכיחים ינעם ועליהם תבוא ברכת טוב: Whoever says to the guilty, "You are righteous," him peoples curse, nations execrate; but those who judge rightly fare well, upon them comes the blessing of good. (Prov. 24:24)[58]

7. To protect right and truth there is still everywhere need of a firm and armed power to combat their enemies. The historical development of the Israelite people, too, like that of all peoples, did not remain free of such struggle. (Law 603–605.) (The festivals of Chanuko and Purim.) This struggle will cease entirely only when one day all nations unite as brothers, in true tolerance and love, to bring about the kingdom of God on earth.

[p. 90] ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון לשפט את הר עשו, והיתה לה׳ המלוכה: And victors shall go up on Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Eternal's. (Obad. 1:21)

Chapter Two

The Law of War

^(See Handbook, pp. 436–446.)

1. The law calls upon every Israelite from his twentieth year to follow the levy into war when he is summoned, in order to protect law and right and to defend the welfare of the fatherland, after the enemy has refused to heed a summons to peace. (Law 527.)

כי תקרב אל העיר להלחם עליה, וקראת אליה לשלום: When you draw near to a city to fight against it, call upon it to make peace. (Deut. 20:10–18)

2. In war the Israelite shall guard against blind rage. Neither in war nor in peace shall he destroy plantings as long as they can still be useful. (Law 529. Deut. 20:19.)

טוב ארך אפים מגבור ומשל ברוחו מלכד עיר: Better one slow to anger than a hero, and one who rules his spirit than one who takes a city. (Prov. 16:32)

[58] Translator: The quotation also includes the following verse, Prov. 24:25.

3. He shall spare women and children and treat them magnanimously when they have fallen to him as booty. He must not let himself be carried away by aroused sensuality, but must always first allow calm deliberation to take hold. (Law 532–534. Deut. 21:11–14.)

> אל ישט אל דרכיה לבך אל תתע בנתיבותיה: — כי רבים חללים הפילה ועצמים כל הרגיה: Let not your heart stray to her (sensuality's) ways, and do not wander in her paths! For many has she cast down slain, and numerous are all those she has killed. (Prov. 7:25–26)

4. The priest of war called upon everyone to leave the camp who longed for home in order to dedicate a vineyard or a house or to celebrate a wedding, or who through cowardice might bring about the flight and ruin of others. (Law 525, 526. Deut. 20:2–7.)

> [p. 91] ארור עשה מלאכת ה׳ רמיה, וארור מנע חרבו מדם: Cursed be he who does the work of the Eternal negligently! Cursed be he who keeps back his sword from blood. (Jer. 48:10)

5. The war camp shall (Deut. 23:10–15), in outward cleanliness and inward purity, resemble a sanctuary in which noble and courageous heroic souls stand together to dedicate themselves to the Lord, in order to advance truth, protect right and bring about peace, until one day the promise is fulfilled:

> ושפט בין עמים — וכתתו חרבתיהם לאתים וחניתתיהם למזמרות, לא ישאו גוי אל גוי חרב ולא ילמדון עוד מלחמה: And He (God) shall judge between the peoples … and they shall beat their swords into sickles and their spears into pruning knives. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall learn war no more. (Isa. 2:4.) (Mic. 4:3)

Tenth Commandment

לא תחמד בית רעך לא תחמד אשת רעך ועבדו ואמתו ושורו וחמורו וכל אשר לרעך:

You shall not covet the house of your neighbor. You shall not covet the wife of your neighbor, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbor's. (Law 38.) (Exod. 20:14)

Chapter One

Envy

^(See Handbook, pp. 449–459.)

1. Envy is a spawn of pride and a dark source of many sins; it destroys contentment in the heart, leads us to hate others, and annihilates trust in a just providence. (Law 416. Deut. 5:18.)

> [p. 92] חיי בשרים לב מרפא ורקב עצמות קנאה: A tranquil heart is the life of the body, but envy is rot of the bones. (Prov. 14:30)

2. In his insatiable craving for wealth and honor the envious man will easily commit even murder and spread confusion and ruin in order to grasp at sham goods that do not make him happy, like Cain, Korach, Absalom, Gachasi, King Usiyahu and Haman.

> דור מה רמו עיניו ועפעפיו ינשאו: דור חרבות שניו ומאכלות מתלעתיו לאכל עניים מארץ ואביונים מאדם:
> A generation — how high it carries its eyes, how its glances are lifted up. A generation — swords are its teeth and knives its jaws, to devour the poor from the land, the needy from among men. (Prov. 30:13–14)

3. The envious man seeks by *secret ways* to harm his neighbor in house and field, because he does not want to lose even the appearance of honesty. But he shrinks from the toil and diligence of emulating the more industrious man. (Law 522. Deut. 19:14.)

> הוי מגיעי בית בבית שדה בשדה יקריבו עד אפס מקום, והושבתם לבדכם בקרב הארץ: Woe to those who push house against house, join field to field, until there is no more room, and you alone remain the inhabitants in the land! (Isa. 5:8)

4. For the Israelite it should remain a touchstone of the strength of his faith whether he knows how to be content with what providence has allotted him. He must begin by seeking happiness within himself and in his own house; then it will become easy for him to be content with what his own house contains.

> לא תחמד בית רעך: You shall have no desire for the house of your neighbor. (Exod. 20:14)

5. He will then gladly lend his abundance in order to help others too to prosperity and domestic happiness, and in doing so guard against the sin of gnawing away their earnings and gains by *usurious interest*. (Law 68, 343. Exod. 22:24. Deut. 25:27.)[59]

> מלוה ה׳ חונן דל, וגמלו ישלם לו: He lends to the Eternal who is generous to the poor, and his reward He will pay him. (Prov. 19:17)[60]

> מרבה הונו בנשך ובתרבית לחונן דלים יקבצנו: He who increases his wealth by interest and usury gathers it for those who are generous to the poor. (Prov. 28:8)

[p. 93] **6.** Even from the interest customary in the country, which capital everywhere earns, he shall refrain in dealing with his fellow believer, and make a charitable gift of it to his brother, since the latter is obliged to turn to him in need.

> כל אחי רש שנאהו אף כי מרעהו רחקו ממנו: All the brothers of the impoverished man hate him; *how much more* do his companions keep far from him. (Law 572, 573. Deut. 23:20–21.) (Prov. 19:7)

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[59] Translator: Deut. 25 has only nineteen verses; probably Lev. 25:37 (on lending at interest) is meant.

[60] Translator: The Hebrew is printed חונן דלים, ושכרו ישלם לו; given here in the Masoretic text.

7. The Israelite shall not cling excessively to any desire for riches; he must consider that wealth is transient, and that man does not take earthly goods with him into the hereafter but leaves them behind here.

> כי לא במותו יקח הכל לא ירד אחריו כבודו: For at his death he takes nothing of it all with him; his wealth does not descend after him. (Ps. 49:18)

8. In former times the Israelite was at the same time reminded by the law of the Jubilee that man should not indulge greed, since he could possess land he had bought up only for a measured time and then had to give it back. (Law 339. Lev. 25:10.)

> אל תיגע להעשיר — כי עשה יעשה לו כנפים כנשר ועיף השמים: Do not toil to become rich … for it (wealth) will make itself wings and fly like an eagle toward heaven. (Prov. 23:4–5)

9. The rich man should rather use his fortune to help his needy relatives regain possession of property sold out of need, so that the gulf between rich and poor not widen too far. (Law 341. Lev. 25:29.)

> הבטחים על חילם וברב עשרם יתהללו: אח לא פדה יפדה איש, לא יתן לאלהים כפרו: Those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches — none of them would redeem a brother, nor give God a ransom for him. (Ps. 49:7–8)

10. No less should the thought of death still now set before avarice and envy how transient wealth is, and how foolish the craving for what belongs to others.

> אך בצלם יתהלך איש אך הבל יהמיון יצבר ולא ידע מי אספם: As a shadow-image man walks about; indeed, over vanity they clamor. He heaps up, and knows not who will gather it in. (Eccl. 4:9.) (Ps. 39:7)

11. With death, however, the right of ownership over one's fortune ceases, for it then belongs to the heirs [p. 94] appointed to it by the law. Whoever out of grudging or hatred defrauds his heirs of the estate commits a wrong, for he can never deprive them of their right of inheritance.

> טוב ינחיל בני בנים, וצפון לצדיק חיל חוטא: The good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, and the wealth of the sinner remains stored up for the righteous. (Law 400. Num. 27:8–11.) (Prov. 13:22)

Chapter Two

Grudging

^(See Handbook, pp. 459–472.)

1. As formerly the tithe and the gifts had to be given to the priests and Levites without grudging, so now too everyone should contribute to provide a life free from care for the teachers of the people and those learned in the law. (Law 504, 395. Deut. 18:1–8. Num. 18:8–32.)

2. They are to be compensated for being kept by their holy calling from devoting themselves to another gainful occupation. (Law 450. Deut. 12:19.)

3. Those men also richly repay the contributions due to them through wise teachings and good counsel, as well as through spreading true fear of God, which is the purest source of divine blessing.

> הביאו את המעשר אל בית האוצר — ובחנוני נא בזאת אם לא אפתח לכם את ארבות השמים והריקתי לכם ברכה עד בלי די: Bring the tithes into the storehouse … and only test Me by this, whether I will not in return open the floodgates of heaven for you and pour out blessing upon you without end. (Mal. 3:10)

> יהי ביתך בית ועד לחכמים והוי שותה בצמא את דבריהם: Let your house be a meeting house for wise men, and drink their words thirstily. (Avot 1:4)

4. To the descendants of Aaron the privileges of the former priestly tribe that are still possible today are to be granted without grudging, and they themselves must at least still avoid *tumah* (ritual impurity) through corpses, in order to preserve themselves in such holiness as is still possible today. (Law 263, 269–271. Lev. 21:8–11.)

[p. 95] **5.** Of the twenty-four gifts formerly due to them, *challah* has remained as a remembrance; it is taken from the dough, but is now burned as a holy gift that has become impure. This gift, entrusted as a duty to the Israelite housewife,[61] may always remind her to preserve God's blessing for her house by refreshing the needy with the food she has prepared.

> טוב עין הוא יברך, כי נתן מלחמו לדל — He who is of a benevolent eye is refreshed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. (Law 506–508. Deut. 18:3–4.) (Prov. 22:9)

> ראשית ערסתכם חלה תרימו תרומה: As the first of your kneading troughs set aside a cake as a heave offering. (Law 385.) (Num. 15:20)

6. No one should presume to encroach upon an office for which he is no longer fit, or to which another has been called, because he begrudges him his position. Let everyone be content with his own calling and work beneficially in it. Thus formerly it was forbidden to the layman as a mortal sin to encroach upon the priestly office and to arrogate it to himself. (Law 279–283. Lev. 22:10. Num. 18:4. Usiyahu, 2 Kings 15:5.)

Chapter Three

Contentment

^(See Handbook, pp. 473–476.)

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[61] Translator: The words "entrusted … to" (German *anvertraut*) follow the author's list of misprints; the body text omits the word.

1. The surest means of guarding oneself against the soul-sickness of envy and grudging is the joyful practice of charity, best of all by *tithing*; this makes it possible for poor and rich alike to enjoy this joy in proportion to their means. (Law 360.)

> :העשירי יהיה קדש לה׳ The tenth shall be holy to the Eternal. (Law 473.) (Lev. 27:32)
>
> :עשר תעשר את כל תבואת זרעך You shall tithe the yield of your grain. (Deut. 14:22)

2. The value of our own possessions is doubled for us and gives us joy when we see how it suffices to do good to others who still need our help.

> [p. 96] :כי אזן שמעה ותאשרני ועין ראתה ותעידני: כי אמלט עני משוע ויתום ולא עזר לו For whatever ear heard me called me happy, and whatever eye saw it bore witness for me; for I rescued the poor man who cried out, and the helpless orphan. (Job 29:11–12)

3. The more often we obtain this conviction for ourselves at an appointed time, the more we arrive at a lasting contentment; therefore even the poorest should not let the smallness of his gift keep him from being charitable.

^Hymn 332.

> 6. O God, what blessed gain is mine already here on earth when I in loving mind and heart learn to become like You.
>
> 7. Your approval then is sure to me, and under Your blessing I go — Your word has promised this to me — rejoicing toward that world.

4. Intimate association with learned men of intellect lets us recognize their worth more and more, and removes base grudging toward the higher position accorded them. Formerly the people always remained in contact with the more highly educated Levites, who came to collect the first tithe from them; likewise with the intellectually gifted inhabitants of Jerusalem, among whom they or their children had to consume the second tithe. (Law 473, 442–444. Deut. 12:17 ff.)

> :והוי מתאבק בעפר רגליהם Let yourself be covered with the dust of their feet. (Avot 1:4)

5. The gifts of the Lord remain a true blessing only when their possessor knows how to use them rightly to relieve the need of the poor. Our sages had the proverb מלח, ממון, חסר [*melaḥ mamon ḥaser*], "The salt of money is the right diminishing (spending)"[62] — or also: "Whoever salts his money away spoils it." Against such hard-hearted people the prophet threatens:

> לכן אשוב ולקחתי דגני בעתו ותירושי במועדו — Therefore will I take back My grain in its time and My new wine in its season. (Hos. 2:11)

[62]Translator: BT Ketubot 66b, "the salt (i.e., the preservative) of money is diminishing it," understood of charitable giving.

6. The rich man shall guard himself against discontent and against surfeit by seeking out the joys of doing good and striving to further the life of the mind. For this reason the one who brought the first fruits formerly had to confess publicly (Law 609, 610):

> לא אכלתי באני ממנו — ולא נתתי ממנו למת: I have not eaten of it in my mourning … and have not given of it for the dead. (This may also include the meaning: I rejoiced to enjoy it and to let others share in the enjoyment, and I used it to promote well-being among the living.) (Deut. 26:13–14)

> יש רעה חולה ראיתי תחת השמש, עשר שמור לבעליו לרעתו: [p. 97] There is a grievous evil I have seen under the sun: wealth guarded by its owner to his own harm. (Eccl. 5:18; 6:2–3.) (Eccl. 5:12)

Chapter Four

Moderation

^(See Handbook, pp. 477–484.)

1. God has distinguished man by His richest blessing above all the creatures of the earth, and has subjected to him not only what is lifeless but also everything that has life, to nourish and clothe himself from it and make it serve him.

> ותחסרהו מעט מאלהים וכבוד והדר תעטרהו: תמשילהו במעשי ידיך, כל שתה תחת רגליו: And You let him fall but little short of God, and crown him with honor and glory; You make him lord over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet. (Ps. 8:6–7)

2. But man, as a thinking spirit, must seek to remain worthy of this distinction through wise restraint. Even in satisfying the needs of natural instinct he must not, like the beast, follow momentary desire. In doing so he shall ruin no plant and no animal in its first development, neither destroying its growth nor opposing its natural instinct. (Isa. 28:4.)

> צדיק ה׳ בכל דרכיו, וחסיד בכל מעשיו: Righteous is the Lord in all His ways and loving in all His works. (Ps. 145:17)

3. From this unbridled covetousness we Israelites are to be restrained by the holy law, since we are forbidden to enjoy the fruits of plantings in their first three years; we must let them (as ערלה [*orlah*, "uncircumcised" fruit]) develop entirely unhindered, without a destroying hand, and only in the fourth year may they be eaten, after (in the time of the Temple) this fruit of the fourth year had been offered as a thanksgiving and first-fruits offering. (Law 246, 247. Lev. 19:23–24.)

4. By permitting ourselves enjoyment only after we have thanked God for it, this enjoyment is truly consecrated. We thereby guard ourselves against intemperance, because through thinking of God we also remain [p. 98] mindful of our spiritual pre-eminence. We will then not degrade

ourselves through gluttony and drunkenness and will not create for ourselves sufferings that only spoil life.

> דבש מצאת אכל דיך פן תשבענו והקאתו: Have you found honey? Eat your fill, lest you be sated with it and vomit it up. (Prov. 25:16)

5. Therefore of the new barley one might eat only after the first offering of barley meal had been brought on the second day of Pessach, and of the new wheat only after the first offering of wheat meal had been brought on the Feast of Weeks. Although these laws cannot be carried out to their full extent in the dispersion of Israel, the ordinances of the teachers of the law still rest upon them today: to enjoy nothing without praising the Lord for it, and especially when we await it with longing as something new. (Law 303–305. Lev. 23:14.)

> כל הנהנה מן העולם הזה בלא ברכה כאלו גוזל הקב״ה וכנסת ישראל שנאמר גוזל אביו ואמו וכו׳ — חבר הוא לאיש משחית — חבר הוא לירבעם בן נבט, שהשחית את ישראל לאביהם שבשמים: Whoever enjoys anything here below without thanking God for it has, as it were, stolen this enjoyment; he leads others too into ingratitude and, like Jeroboam, impairs the worship of God. (BT Berakhot 35b)

6. Man shall not misuse his spiritual dominion over plants and animals and presume to join unnaturally those that are separated by kind and species, when by their nature they were created to repel one another.

> הן אל ישגיב בכחו מי כמהו מורה: — מי פקד עליו דרכו ומי אמר פעלת עולה: זכר כי תשגיא פעלו, אשר שררו אנשים: Behold, God is high, exalted in His power; who is like Him, that he should instruct Him? Who prescribes His way to Him, and who says, "You have done wrong"? Remember to extol His work, as far as men behold it. (Job 36:22–24)

7. Such cravings would be a presumption to intrude upon the mysteries of generative nature and to disturb it in its working. We may therefore not seek to fuse different species of plants and animals with one another. (Law 244, 245, 548, 549. Lev. 19:19. Deut. 22:9.)

> ידעת כי כל תוכל ולא יבצר ממך מזמה — לכן הגדתי ולא אבין, נפלאות ממני ולא אדע: I know that You can do all things, for no purpose is beyond Your reach … Therefore I confess that I know nothing; it is hidden from me, and I do not understand it. (Job 42:2–3)

[p. 99] **8.** Animals that we subject to our service we may not force to draw our plough or wagon side by side if they belong to different species; in a state of freedom they would avoid one another by their nature, and man shall not oppose the all-goodness of God, with which He has allotted to every animal, too, its inclinations and instincts, so that it may rejoice in its life. (Law 550. Deut. 22:19.)[63]

[63] Translator: The law against ploughing with an ox and an ass together is Deut. 22:10.

מי שלח פרא חפשי ומסרות ערוד מי פתח: אשר שמתי ערבה ביתו ומשכנותיו מלחה: Who has set the forest ass free, and the bonds of the wild ass, who has loosed them — to whom I have made the steppe a home and the wilderness his dwellings? (Job 39:56)[64]

התתן לסוס גבורה — התרעישנו כארבה — יחפרו בעמק וישיש בכח, יצא לקראת נשק: Do You give the horse strength? … Do You make it leap like the locust? … They search about in the valley, but it neighs with power; it goes out to meet the armed men. (Job 39:19–21)

9. In the choice of clothing and apparel the Israelite should not follow love of finery without restraint, nor desire to gather from all the kingdoms of nature the material for satisfying his vanity. Of this we may be reminded by the law not to spin or weave together any material of wool and linen, whereas such a fabric was commanded for the hangings and garments in the sanctuary. (Law 551. Deut. 22:11.)

10. Everyone should dress simply in the products of his own trade. The wool of his sheep, as it were, should suffice the shepherd, and the flax of his field the farmer; or the wool should suffice for the winter garment and the linen for the summer garment.

כבשים ללבושך ומחיר שדה עתודים: ודי חלב עזים ללחמך ללחם ביתך: Sheep give you clothing, and the price of a field, he-goats, and enough goats' milk for your food, for the food of your household. (Prov. 27:26–27)

^Hymn 278.

2. Learn to temper your desiring, set a limit to your wants; learn to relish, learn to do without, if you would be truly happy. All your joys and all your sorrows flow to you out of your heart.

4. Gladly enjoy what God has granted, gladly forgo what you have not! Every station has its peace, every station has its burden. Bear your sufferings steadfastly, rejoice in your joys with thanks.

5. God divides His blessing ever with a wise and fatherly hand; not the way we tend to wish it, always as He found it good. You too He has not forgotten, but has measured out your share.

[p. 100]

Chapter Five

Conclusion

1. In attempting to survey the total number of all the divine laws that God revealed through Moshe to our ancestors during their long sojourn in the wilderness, we have found that they can be arranged as consequences and extensions of the Ten Commandments, which were revealed on Sinai before the whole people. (Exod. 24:12 and 34:27.)

[64] Translator: Read Job 39:5–6.

2. Through all those laws God wished to keep the people of Israel at all times at the height of moral civilization and to educate it into a holy people, as the blessing spoken over all such commanded acts also runs: "Blessed be the Eternal, who has sanctified us through His commandments." (Exod. 19:6.)

> קדשים תהיו כי קדוש אני ה׳ אלהיכם: You shall be holy, for I, the Eternal your God, am holy. (Lev. 19:2)

3. Through such sanctification we are to remain worthy of having been created in the image of God, and to seek to strive after the example of God, the All-Holy, by holding fast at all times to the will of God.

> ואני קרבת אלהים לי טוב, שתי באדני ה׳ מחסי, לספר כל מלאכותיך: But I — to hold fast to God is my good; I have set my trust in God the Lord, to tell of all Your works. (Ps. 73:28)

4. Let our *thinking* be sanctified by unclouded faith in the one, eternal, all-just God, as the first *commandment* enjoins; and this sanctification shall keep the Israelite from the desecration of thought — as a sin against God under the second prohibition, when he serves idols, and as a sin against his fellow men under the tenth prohibition, when he envies them.

> ויאמר לאדם: הן יראת אדני היא חכמה, וסור מרע בינה: And to man He said: Behold! the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding. (Job 28:28)

5. The distinction of *word* and *speech* conferred upon us we are to sanctify by using them to praise the wonders of God on earth and to perpetuate them through the corresponding days of rest and festivals; to this the [p. 101] fourth *commandment* is to guide us. — We are to guard against the desecration of the word, as against a sin against God under the third prohibition, through the false oath, and as against a sin against our fellow men under the ninth prohibition, through false testimony.

> ולשוני תהגה צדקך, כל היום תהלתך: And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness, all the day of Your praise. (Ps. 35:28)[65]

> ה׳ הצילה נפשי משפת שקר, מלשון רמיה: Eternal One, deliver my soul from the lip of falsehood, from a deceitful tongue. (Ps. 120:2)

6. Let our *deed*, finally, be sanctified through love and justice toward our fellow men. To this sanctification the fifth commandment exhorts us. But our deed is desecrated by the sins against our fellow men against which the sixth, seventh and eighth prohibitions warn us.

By our deeds, however, we can only further or endanger our own welfare and that of our fellow men, for of God it is said:

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[65] Translator: The last word is printed תפארתך; given here in the Masoretic text.

אם חטאת מה תפעל בו, — אם צדקת מה תתן לו, או מה מידך יקח: If you sin, what do you effect upon Him … and if you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He take from your hand? (Job 35:6–7)

7. Thus shall sanctification through the law wholly *permeate the moral human being* and fill everything that distinguishes him above all creatures: his *thinking*, his *speaking* and his *doing*.

סוף דבר הכל נשמע — את האלהים ירא ואת מצותיו שמור כי זה כל האדם: At the end of the discourse the whole is understood: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole of man. (Eccl. 12:13)

[p. —] **Appendix**

Although nothing may be added to the provisions of the divine law and nothing taken away from them, the teachers of the law nevertheless considered it necessary to make further ordinances (דרבנן [*de-rabbanan*, "of the rabbis"]), which according to Deut. 17:10–11 must have strict validity, though their transgression is not as punishable as the transgression of a prohibition in the divine law (דאוריתא [*de-oraita*, "of the Torah"]).

To these ordinances belong:

1) ברכת הנהנין [*birkat ha-nehenin*, blessings over enjoyments]: We are to express thanks to the Eternal, our God, the Lord of the world, before every bodily and spiritual enjoyment; this ordinance follows from the law Deut. 8:10.

2) נטילת ידים [*netilat yadayim*, washing of the hands]: Before every meal at which we eat bread we are to wash our hands, in order to touch these gifts of the Lord with clean hands, similar to Law 106 (Exod. 30:19).

3) ערובי חצרות ושתופי מבואות [*eruvei ḥatzerot* and *shittufei mevo'ot*, "mixings" of courtyards and "partnerships" of alleys]: In order to be permitted on the Sabbath to carry something from the house of one person into the house of another within a courtyard or in the streets of a town (Jer. 17:21–22), the teachers of the law made the relaxation that all the inhabitants of such an area join together through a common food kept in one place, and for as long as the שבת [Sabbath] lasts they renounce their exclusive right of ownership over their dwellings.

ערוב תבשילין [*eruv tavshilin*, "mixing of dishes"] is food set aside before a festival for the Sabbath falling on the following day; otherwise nothing might be prepared on the festival for the Sabbath.

ערוב תחומין [*eruv teḥumin*, "mixing of boundaries"]: Whoever on the Sabbath or a festival must, for the sake of a pious act, walk farther than 2,000 cubits may, before the onset of that day, extend his way in one direction by a further 2,000 cubits by depositing a supply of food (ערוב [*eruv*]) even at the end of these 2,000 cubits.

[p. 103] **4)** נר שבת [*ner Shabbat*, the Sabbath light]: It is made a duty for Israelites to kindle at least two lights at the onset of the Sabbath and of a festival, and this duty is especially commended to women.

5) הלל [*Hallel*]: On the Feast of Weeks, Tabernacles and the Concluding Festival, on Chanuko, and on the first two days of Pessach, Psalms 113–118 are added to the morning prayer. On the remaining festival days (on the Day of the Shofar and the Day of Atonement the הלל is omitted entirely) and on the days of the New Moon it is added to the prayer only with omissions.

6) פורים [*Purim*], the 14th of Adar, is celebrated as a festival with the reading of the Book of Esther in remembrance of the event narrated in it.

7) חנוכה [*Chanuko*]: from the 25th of Kislev, for eight days, the remembrance of the restoration of divine worship in the sanctuary is celebrated by the kindling of the dedication lights.

For all of these, too, the customary appropriate blessing is spoken before these ordinances of the teachers of the law, as though they were commanded in the Torah itself.

On the days commemorating the sufferings of Israel, fasts were appointed by the prophets and the teachers of the law, in order to use these days, through fasting, for repentance and amendment, because we have still not deserved that those lost goods be restored to us.

To the fast days belong:

1) שבעה עשר בתמוז [the Seventeenth of Tammuz], because of the many sad calamities that befell Israel on this day at various times.

2) תשעה באב [the Ninth of Av], because on this day, under Nevuseraddon and under Titus, the holy Temple was laid in ashes.

3) צום גדליהו [the Fast of Gedaliah], because of the murder of Gedalyahu, through which the dispersion of Israel by King Nebuchadnezzar was completed. (Jer. 41:2.)

4) עשרה בטבת [the Tenth of Tevet], because of the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar.

> כה אמר ה׳ צבאות צום הרביעי וצום החמישי וצום השביעי וצום העשירי יהיה לבית יהודה לששון ולשמחה ולמעדים טובים, והאמת והשלום אהבו: Thus says the Eternal of hosts: The fast of the fourth month and the fast of the fifth and the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth shall become for the house of Judah joy and gladness and cheerful seasons; but love truth and peace. (Zech. 8:19)

[p. 104] **5)** תענית אסתר [the Fast of Esther], in remembrance of the fast of Queen Esther.

The teachers of the law have, moreover, also ordained fences (גדרים וסיגים [*gedarim ve-siyagim*]) for the sure observance of the divine laws, which are to protect each law itself, like a precious planting, from transgression.

מנהגים [*minhagim*] are customs that have become venerable in the congregations of Israel through their age, and that were based on what was once a pressing occasion.

Our teachers of the law have further marked out for us, as the guiding line of Israelite life, the striving for honest gainful work and for charity, which must also show itself in caring for the sick, burying the dead and comforting the suffering. (BT Bava Metzia 30b.)

> והודעת להם את הדרך ילכו בה ואת המעשה אשר יעשון: You shall make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the deed that they are to do. (Exod. 18:20)[66]

^ת׳ ו׳ ש׳ ל׳ ב׳ ע׳ [*Tam ve-nishlam, shevaḥ la-El bore olam*: "Finished and completed; praise to God, Creator of the world."]

[p. —] School Prayers

I.

Almighty Lord of the world! On the first day of creation You called heaven and earth into being for Your praise and for Your glory. You spread light over this earth and drove away the darkness. Let light spread in our minds, too, through the word of instruction that we hear in school. Enlighten our understanding, that in the wonders of Your creation which meet us in the heavens and on the earth we may recognize Your greatness and omnipotence. Open our hearts, that through wisdom and the fear of God we may draw near to You and gain Your favor. Amen.

> כי עמך מקור חיים באורך נראה אור: For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light. (Ps. 36:10)

II.

All-gracious Father! You have gathered us here again, for Your grace has let us live to see this day in health and well-being. All our senses, which sleep had closed, are opened to us again. Newly strengthened, we breathe the refreshing air that You spread out in the expanse of the universe on the second day of creation. O let us, gracious Father, grow up in health and strength, so that we may learn and practice here what man needs in order to fulfill Your will here on earth. Preserve our parents and teachers for us in health and strength, so that they may continue to further our welfare and our [p. 106] education. Strengthen in us the good will, so that we may give full attention to the instruction given us here, so that they may rejoice in our progress. Amen.

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[66]Translator: Lasch quotes freely (והודעתם את הדרך אשר ילכו ואת המעשה אשר יעשון); given here in the Masoretic text.

בן חכם ישמח אב, ובן כסיל תוגת אמו: A wise son gladdens his father, but a foolish son is his mother's grief. (Prov. 10:1)

III.

O Father of mercy! You who graciously accept the prayers of men, let our childlike prayer, too, be pleasing to You. On this day of creation You formed land and sea. You adorned the land with the most glorious vegetation, and the plants bear useful wood, juicy foliage, fragrant blossoms and precious fruits to refresh and revive man and beast. All this You called forth, and man shall praise and extol You for it. For this You granted him insight and understanding. Give us too, all-gracious Father, a firm will to make right use of these school hours, so that our insight may be ever more broadened by knowledge and our understanding formed, that we may see ever more clearly how great Your goodness is, and recognize ever more that our salvation and happiness consist only in walking in Your ways. Then we too shall grow up in virtue and wisdom and praise You evermore through a pious way of life. Amen.

לֵב טהור ברא לי אלהים ורוח נכון חדש בקרבי: Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Ps. 51:12)

IV.

All-wise, all-gracious Father! Your providence guides the heavenly bodies and directs the destinies of men. On this day of creation You called into being the sun to rule by day and the moon to rule by night. Shining heavenly bodies move in countless hosts and call upon the human spirit to marvel at Your glory, which these brilliant stars reflect. In undisturbed order they move along those unmeasured paths and praise their Creator. On earth, however, You called Your people Israel [p. 107] to proclaim Your name and to preserve for the nations the teaching that You *alone* are the Creator in heaven and on earth, that all these heavenly bodies are only Your servants. O Father of all! We thank You that we, as the offspring of this ancient people, are called to sanctify You on earth as those hosts above praise You in their circuits. We thank You that we are instructed for this here in Your Torah; grant that we keep these teachings in our hearts and never depart from it through frivolity and false belief. Amen.

עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה ותמכיה מאשר: It is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it, and those who grasp it are called blessed. (Prov. 8:18)[67]

V.

Gracious and holy God! On the fifth day of creation You filled the floods of the seas and the wide space of the air with myriads of creatures; they rejoice in their existence, for You open Your hand and satisfy every living thing with favor. You will, O All-gracious One, that man too should

[67] Translator: The verse is Prov. 3:18.

emulate You in benevolence and goodness; O strengthen our hearts and lead us to gentleness toward all creatures, and above all to love toward our fellow men. Guard our youthful hearts against outbursts of coarseness, anger and vengefulness; turn first the hearts of our fellow pupils toward us in love, so that already in school we may grow accustomed to love one another in the future, too, as brothers and sisters; only then do we truly walk in Your ways. — For Your prophets have revealed Your word to us:

> כי אני ה׳ עשה חסד משפט וצדקה בארץ כי באלה חפצתי נאם ה׳: I, the Eternal, practice love, justice and righteousness, for in these I delight, says the Eternal. (Jer. 9:23)

VI.

Eternal, unchangeable God! As the capstone of Your creation You formed man from dust and breathed into him the immortal soul; it shall one day return to You [p. 108] when its shell crumbles into dust. This life is an antechamber to eternal life. In the same way our youth is a time of sowing for the life here and there; therefore we will use our school years *conscientiously*, and no week shall pass without our having grown in knowledge and good dispositions. Help us in this, O Omnipresent One, that we may become worthy of Your love and of the esteem of all good people. Amen.

> הורני ה׳ דרכך אהלך באמתך יחד לבבי ליראה שמך: Lead me, Eternal One, in Your way; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. (Ps. 86:11)

^Printed by A. M. Colditz in Leipzig.

[p. —] Errata[68]

Page III, line 4 from the bottom, read: *benützt* ("used").

Page V, line 7 from the bottom, read: *benütze* ("use").

Page IX, lines 3 and 4 from the top, read: *unorganischen Körpern, mit Mineralien, Pflanzen* ("inorganic bodies, with minerals, plants").

Page 2, line 4 from the bottom, read: אליכם.

Page 3, line 20 from the bottom, read: *Ewiger, Gott,* ("Eternal One, God,").

Page 5, line 22 from the bottom, read: 15, 38.

Page 7, line 19 from the top, read: *Deah … Haeser*.

Page 11, line 18 from the bottom, read: לים.

[68] Translator: The corrections listed refer to the German text and its pagination; they have been applied silently in this translation where they affect the sense. Corrected German words are given in italics with an English gloss.

Page 12, line 4 from the top, missing: את.

Page 12, line 29 from the top, read: *in Massah*.

Page 16, line 17 from the top, read: לא.

Page 20, line 7 from the top, read: *Pessachopfer* ("Passover offering").

Page 37, line 12 from the top, read: *beträgt* ("amounts to").

Page 42, line 17 from the top, read: *traf.* ("struck").

Page 42, line 24 from the top, read: *Trug reden* ("speak deceit").

Page 46, line 14 from the top, read: *an meinem* ("on my").

Page 54, line 12 from the top, read: *geistiges* ("spiritual").

Page 58, line 14 from the bottom, read: *Felder* ("fields").

Page 64, line 5 from the bottom, read: *Dir* ("to You").

Page 79, line 15 from the top, read: *ausspeie* ("spit out").

Page 80, line 15 from the bottom, delete: *auch* ("also").

Page 81, line 15 from the bottom, read: נקרא.

Page 89, line 24 from the top, read: *richtet ihr* ("you judge").

Page 95, line 5 from the top, read: *Hausfrau anvertraut* ("entrusted to the housewife").

Page 102, line 9 from the bottom, read: *für den Tags darauf* ("for the [Sabbath] on the day after").

Page 104, line 9 from the top, read: *gelegen hat.* ("has lain").