

ימים נוראים

YAMIM NORAIM
DAYS OF AWE

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

AND ANALYSIS OF SOURCES

by B. S. JACOBSON

Translated into English by Avner Tomaschoff

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This work is dedicated to the memory of the author's
father מהורר שלמה בן הח' ר' יששכר יאקאבסאן זצ"ל

The publication of *Yamim Noraim* in English follows,
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Hermann Cohen, *The Religion of Reason*, tr. Simon Kaplan, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., New York, 1972.

Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Horeb*, tr. I. Grunfeld, The Soncino Press, London, 1962.

Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, tr. from 2nd ed. by William W. Hallo, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1971.

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I. DESIGNATION AND MEANING

“What polytheism calls fate and doom, monotheism calls judgement and redemption. There is no judgement before God without redemption, which is the final end of judgement. But there is also no redemption without the process of judgement. The connection between justice and love in God is the secret of God’s essence...It is, therefore, possible to designate these days as the holidays of the idea of the unity of love and justice in God. This unity is the unity of God...” (Hermann Cohen, *The Religion of Reason*, pp. 221-2.)

“Thus the Days of Awe, New Year’s Day and the Day of Atonement, place the eternity of redemption into time... The judgement usually thought of as at the end of time is here placed in the immediate present. And so it cannot be the world that is being judged — for where could the world be at this very present! It is the individual who faces judgement. Every individual is meted out his destiny according to his actions... The year becomes the representative of eternity, in complete representation. In the annual return of this judgement, eternity is stripped of every trace of the beyond, of every vestige of remoteness; it is actually there, within the grasp of every individual and holding every individual close in its strong grasp. He is no longer part of the eternal history of the eternal people, nor is he part of the eternally changing history of the world. There is no more waiting, no more hiding behind history. The individual confronts judgement without any

intermediary factor. He stands in the congregation. He says 'We'. But the 'We' of this day are not the 'We' of the people in history; the sin for which we crave forgiveness is not the sin of transgression of laws which separates this people from the other peoples of the world. On these days, the individual in all his naked individuality stands immediately before God..." (Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, pp. 324-5.)

Allowing these two interpretations of *Yamim Noraim* to seep through our mind, we gain a clear view of the essence of this festive season. To complement the festivals bearing a national religious character — historical memories and goals (*Pessah*, *Shavu'ot* and *Sukkot*), Judaism offers us the source of the religious-ethical restoration of the individual through the institution of *Rosh haShanah* and *Yom haKippurim* (cf. S. R. Hirsch, *Horeb*, ch. 23: *Yamin Noraim* — "Examination of life and realization of the individual life." *Regalim* — "Perpetuations of the active Divine manifestations which occurred at the creation of the nation of Israel").

Let us in the first place note the names and statements in the Torah in regard to *Rosh haShanah*. We find in Leviticus 23:24 the expression *Zichron Teru'ah* and in Numbers 29:1 *Yom Teru'ah*, the latter translated by S. R. Hirsch as "a day of shaking-up tones." What is missing in the Biblical text is any mention of the fact that the festival occurring on the "first of the seventh month" constitutes the beginning of a new year as well as any hint of its character as a day of Judgement. David Z. Hoffmann's account of the reasons for this deficiency being of basic significance is worth adducing here at greater length: "Holy Scripture refers to our *Rosh haShanah* merely as *Zichron Teru'ah* (remembrance through blowing the trumpets), and *Yom Teru'ah* (a day of blowing the trumpets). Only when we come to the period of the

Mishnah do we find our Sages using everywhere the name *Rosh haShanah* with the sole exception of the prayers where the Biblical names *Yom haZikaron* and *Yom Teru'ah* are retained. To be sure, the Mishnah (*Rosh haShanah* 1:1) lists other days than the first of Tishri as signifying the beginning of the year in certain respects; nevertheless it is the 'Day of Blowing the Trumpets' that has since times immemorial acquired the character of the New Year's Day, of being *Rosh haShanah par excellence*. This is likewise attested by most contracts affecting civil life reckoning the beginning of the year as from the first of Tishri. This date for the beginning of the year cannot be ascribed to the arbitrary choice of the latterday Sages of the Mishnah, but must rather be seen, as in the case of the institution of the leap year or determining the beginning of a new month upon sighting the new moon, as being anchored in an oral tradition that was contemporary with and equal in authority to the written Torah. It is on the basis of this tradition, which determined the first day of the seventh month to be the beginning of a new year, that Holy Scripture chose this day as a festival upon which the *shofar* was to be sounded, without deeming it necessary to state explicitly that this Sounding Feast was at the same time a new year festival.

"Furthermore, it was unnecessary to explain that the first of Tishri marked the beginning of a new year for the simple reason that it was customary for the ancient Israelites since times immemorial, even before the giving of the Torah, to begin the new year on this month. However, the more precise definition of the validity of this custom, originating in the pre-Sinaitic era, was left to the very tradition whose role it was to furnish a closer definition of other laws as well. Judging by Targum Jonathan on I Kings 8:2 (Hebrew: *Yerah haEitanim* — Aramaic: *Yarha Kadmaa*) we reach the inescapable

conclusion that the ancients referred to what is now reckoned to be the seventh month as the first month. Our sages were of the opinion that it was the month of Tishri which opened the new year before the giving of the Torah, and that accordingly it was with this month that the year of the *Mabul* began, the Deluge itself being unleashed upon the seventeenth of Marheshvan in the account of Genesis 7:11. Similarly we find in Josephus (*Antiquities* I, 3:3, that the month that brought on the Deluge was called Marsonan (Marheshvan)... Furthermore, when God spoke to Moses (Exodus 12:2): 'This month (that of the exodus from Egypt) shall be unto you the beginning of months,' we are safe in concluding that heretofore the Israelite calendar began with a different month. Further proof of this is afforded by such passages as Exodus 16:1 and 19:1, where the expression 'the second (third) month' is complemented by the reference 'since the exodus from Egypt,' this elucidation being necessary inasmuch as heretofore it was the month of Marheshvan that figured as the second month. As soon as we take it for granted that even in antiquity, before the giving of the Torah, the first of Tishri marked the beginning of the new year, we shall easily understand that this fact being presupposed in the Torah text dealing with the regulations of the festivals, no further definition is called for. Evidently it was only in certain respects defined by Tradition that the month of the exodus from Egypt was to be regarded as the first month, whereas in other respects the ancient custom was allowed to continue."

(Leviticus, Second Half-Volume, pp. 242-3.)

Following is the method whereby an Amora (Sage of the Gemara) is led on the basis of Biblical verses to regard *Rosh haShanah* as the Day of Divine Judgement. In the Mishnah (*Rosh haShanah* 1:1) we read that: "On the first

of Tishri is New Year for Years." In the Gemara the question is asked: "What legal bearing has this"? The answer given by R. Nahman b. Isaac is that the Mishnah referred "to the Divine judgement, as it is written, 'from the beginning of the year to the end of the year' (Deuteronomy 11:12), which means, From the beginning of the year sentence is passed as to what shall be up to the end of it. How do we know that this takes place in Tishri? — Because it is written 'Blow the horn at the new moon, at the covered time (*keseh*)' (Psalms 81:4). Which is the feast on which the moon is covered over (*mittkaseh*)? You must say that this is New Year; and it is written in this connection, 'For it is a statute for Israel, and ordinance for the God of Jacob' (*Ibid.* 5)" (*Rosh haShanah* 8a and b).

During the *Ma'ariv* prayer on both evenings of *Rosh haShanah* these two verses (Psalms 81:4 and 5) are recited before the *Amidah* prayer, whereas on *Shabbat*, the *Regalim* (*Pessach*, *Shavu'ot* and *Sukkot*), and on *Yom haKippurim*, verses from the Bible are introduced (Exodus 31:16-17, Leviticus 23:44, and 16:30 respectively). This is so inasmuch as there is no clear reference in the Torah to the character of *Rosh haShanah* as a day of Divine judgement. The introduction of the above verses is first met with in Sa'adia Gaon's order of prayer (cf. Baer: *Avodat Yisrael*, p. 186).

The expression *Rosh haShanah* is found in the Bible once only and may be taken to refer either to the whole month or to the jubilee year which begins on *Yom haKippurim*. In Ezekiel 40:1 we read: "In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month..."

The basic character of *Rosh haShanah* for all times is expressed in comment by the Aggadah. In the regulations dealing with sacrifices (Numbers, Ch. 28 and 29) we read in connection with *Rosh haShanah* the exceptional expres-

sion *va'asitem*, "and ye shall offer" (*ibid.* 29:2), instead of the customary *vehikravtem*, a specific reference to sacrifice. This is interpreted by R. Jose in the following manner: "God says to Israel: When you appear before Me on *Rosh haShanah* for judgement and are dismissed in peace, then I shall credit it to you as though you have reconstituted yourselves into new beings" (Yerushalmi, *Rosh haShanah* 4:8). We are given the task as well as the necessary power to recreate ourselves. We can and ought to become new human beings.

The purpose and message of *Yom haKippurim*, the Day of Atonement, is made clear in the following Biblical verses: "And this shall be a statute forever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you. For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be cleansed from all your sins before the Lord" (Leviticus 16:29—30).

Next we read: "And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God" (*ibid.*, 23:28). Cleansing and atonement are thus the dominant themes and aims of *Yom haKippurim*. According to S. R. Hirsch it is "the day which should bring atonement for past life, *i.e.*, the removal of the effects of our sins. *Kapparah* really refers to our outward life and means protection. *Taharah*, purity, concerns our inward life and means undimmed capacity for doing what is good" (*Horeb*, Ch. 22).

In the Biblical verses following Hirsch's explanation of the meaning of *Yom haKippurim*, the Hebrew text, *Ki Yom Kippurim hu lechaper aleichem*, is rendered as: "For *Yom Kippurim* it is, a protecting wall against the consequences of your sins." In one of his glosses, Hirsch writes the fol-

lowing: "I have no word for *kaper*. Common usage associates it with the appeasement of an angry being. However, judging by the construction and derivation of this term, no such meaning can be imputed to it. All the extant meanings of this root rather seem to point to the double aspect of: 1. Protection of a thing from outside effects, or 2. towards the outside." Buber and Rosenzweig render *Yom haKippurim* in a similar vein as a "Day of Covering." A Biblical verse actually found in the context of sacrifice is repeated three times by the praying congregation before the advent of *Yom haKippurim*. The notion expressed in this verse is that Divine forgiveness can be granted only because at the deepest level all human transgression is rooted in "inadvertency" and "error" — *shegagah*, rather than being the result of conscious spite: "And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel and the stranger that sojourneth among them, seeing all the people were in ignorance" (Numbers 15:26).

Hermann Cohen interprets this as follows: "Thus the two main elements of atonement, its beginning and its end, were laid down for the Day of Atonement — *shegagah* and forgiveness. There is no forgiveness without satisfying the provision of *shegagah*. Frivolous violation of the law precludes the possibility of forgiveness. But also, there is no *shegagah* without forgiveness as the final result..." (*Op. Cit.*, p. 217).

Side by side with its lofty religious message, the tenth of Tishri had in Biblical times also a social significance of the highest order: "And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years: and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou send abroad the sounding trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the Day of Atonement shall ye send abroad the trumpet

throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: It shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family" (Leviticus 25:8—10).

The term "jubilee" is rendered by S. R. Hirsch as "home bringer" and by Buber as "home fetcher." Concerning the connection between the Day of Atonement and the beginning of the festive proclamation of a jubilee year, we refer to the following comment by Hoffmann: "This day, upon which man hopes to have restored his relationship with God, that had been impaired by sin and crime, was found most fitting for proclaiming, with the aid of a resounding blowing of the trumpet, the great Restitution. This was meant to restore the original relationship reigning amongst the members of the Divinely chosen people, personal freedom and equality of possession, thus channelling the wealth of newly freed strength into the service of the conciliated, only and unique Lord" (*Op. Cit.*, p. 269).

Beside the name *Yom haKippurim* we find this day referred to in the Bible as *Tzom* (cf. Isaiah 58:5). In the Talmud Yerushalmi we find the Day of Atonement likewise designated as *Tzoma Rabba*, i.e. the Great Fast (cf. *Peah* 1:1 and *Ta'anit* 4:1). The Talmudic tractate dealing with *Yom haKippurim* bears the name *Yoma*, i.e. "The Day."

For what reason was the tenth of Tishri appointed to become the Day of Atonement for all generations? This question is answered at length by the *Midrash*: "Said R. Judah b. Shalom: One hundred and twenty days Moses spent with God. On the sixth of Sivan he ascended to God and stayed there for forty days (twentyfour during Sivan and sixteen during Tammuz). On the seventeenth of Tammuz he saw the Golden Calf and broke the Tablets. On the eighteenth and nineteenth he punished the sinners.

On the twentieth he once again ascended to God... and stayed there until the first of Ellul. Then he went up once again to God on the first of Ellul in order to receive the second Tablets, descending on the tenth of Tishri. On that day Moses found the people immersed in prayer and fasting. On this day he was told by God: 'I have pardoned according to thy word' (Numbers 14:20). This is the day appointed by God as the day of forgiveness and absolution for all times" (*Tanhuma* on *Ki Tissa*, s.v. *pesol lecha*, cf. Rashi to Exodus 18:13 and 31:18). On the basis of the *Midrash* just cited we understand the Divine statement of Numbers 14:20 as a message of forgiveness uttered before the Day of Atonement (cf. *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, end of ch. 46).

The conditions and presuppositions for the efficacy of the Day of Atonement have been elucidated by two interpretations found in the Talmud. In Leviticus 23:27 the law concerning the Day of Atonement is introduced with the Hebrew term *ach*. Now, there is a Talmudical rule, expounded by R. Akiba, according to which this term denotes restriction — a narrowing of the limits of the respective law: *Achin verakin mi'utin* (Yerushalmi, *Berachot* 9 and *Rosh haShanah* 17b). Applied to the Biblical passage reviewed, this Talmudical rule yields the following result: "It was taught: I might think that the Day of Atonement should atone for those who repent and for those who do not repent; and although an analogy might be adduced to the contrary thus: since sin-offering and guilt-offering atone, and the Day of Atonement atones, we might therefore say, just as the sin-offering and guilt-offering atone only for those who repent, so the Day of Atonement atones only for those who repent, yet we could argue, sin-offering and guilt-offering do not atone for wilful transgression as for the unwitting, therefore they atone only for those who repent, but the Day of Atonement

atones for wilful as for unwitting transgression, therefore let us say, just as it atones for wilful as for unwitting transgression, so let it atone for those who repent and for those who do not repent — therefore Scripture says ‘Howbeit’ — *ach* (Leviticus 23:27) — this limits the power of the Day of Atonement” (*Shavu’ot* 13a).

To be sure, although the Talmud in this passage also brings the opinion of *Rabbi* (R. Judah haNassi), according to which *Yom haKippurim* — the day as such — has an expiatory effect even without penitence, the rabbis have decided to accept the view as presented here in the precise wording of the *Shulchan Aruch*: “*Yom haKippurim* affords expiation only to those who repent and believe in the expiatory effect of repentance. However, anyone who despises this day, thinking to himself: ‘Of what avail can *Yom haKippurim* be to me,’ to such it does not accord forgiveness” (607 No. 6, glosses of the Rema).

The efficacy of *Yom haKippurim* is thus conditioned by man’s attitude to penitence. In the Mishnah we read of further preconditions that must obtain, for *Yom haKippurim* to be efficacious: “If one says: ‘I shall sin and repent, sin and repent,’ no opportunity will be given to him to repent. If one says: ‘I shall sin and the Day of Atonement will procure atonement for me,’ the Day of Atonement procures for him no atonement. For transgressions between man and the Omnipresent, the Day of Atonement procures atonement, but for transgressions as between man and his fellow, the Day of Atonement does not procure any atonement, until he has pacified his fellow. This was expounded by R. Eleazar b. Azariah: ‘Before the Lord shall ye be cleaned’ (Leviticus 16:30), i.e., for transgressions between man and the Omnipresent the Day of Atonement procures atonement, but for transgressions as between man and his fellow, the Day of Atonement does not procure atonement until he has

pacified his fellow” (*Yoma* 8:9).

For a proper understanding of the Biblical passage just quoted, it is worthwhile citing the interpretation adduced by Rabbi E. H. Epstein in his *Torah Temimah*. Actually, he explains, this Biblical sentence should have read: “For on that day shall He make an atonement for you, that ye may be cleaned from all your sins.” Since, however, the expression “before the Lord” is made to precede the words “from all your sins,” it is necessary to deduce from this particular construction of the sentence that the efficacy of penitence is accordingly qualified.

We may aptly conclude this comment on the significance of *Yom haKippurim* by quoting a few sentences from the relevant passage in the *Sefer haChinuch* by R. Aharon haLevi (13th century): “It is in keeping with the Divine Grace conferred upon His creatures that He has appointed one day in the year for atonement, once repentance has taken place. If human sins were allowed to mount from one year to another, then it could happen that after the passage of two or three years their measure would become filled to the brim, and this could result in the annihilation of the world. Accordingly, God in His wisdom and prescience appointed one day in the year for the atonement of the sins of those who have been penitent... Since God has appointed this day for the absolution of sins it was rendered holy, having received from God the power of cleansing; that this day as such participate in effecting atonement” (from passage No. 185).

II. FESTIVAL REGULATIONS AND CUSTOMS

a) PREPARING FOR YAMIM NORAIM IN THE MONTH OF ELLUL

1. WHY DOES ONE BEGIN BLOWING THE SHOFAR ALREADY IN THE MONTH OF ELLUL

In the Midrashic work *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* we read the following comment: "And on the New Moon of Ellul the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him (i.e., Moses) 'Come up to me into the mount' (Exodus 24:12), and let them sound the *shofar* (trumpet) throughout the camp... so that they do not go astray again after the worship of idols. The Holy One, blessed be He, was exalted (uplifted) with that *shofar*, as it is said: 'God is gone up with a shout (*teru'ah*), the Lord with the sound of a trumpet (*shofar*)' (Psalms 47:6). Therefore the Sages instituted that the *shofar* be sounded on the New Moon of Ellul every year" (Ch. 46). In R. Ya'akov B. Asher's legal work entitled *Tur*, paragraph No. 581, this comment is supplemented by the remark that it is not only on *Rosh Chodesh* that the *shofar* is to be blown, but that this custom be continued throughout the whole month of Ellul, so as to induce penitence, as it is written: "Shall a trumpet (*shofar*) be blown in the city and the people not be afraid"? (Amos 3:6). One begins to blow the *shofar* on the second day of *Rosh Chodesh* Ellul; however, on *Rosh haShanah* eve this is discontinued in order to differentiate between *teki'ot*

reshut — blowing introduced by optional custom, and *teki'ot mitzvah* — shofar blowing which is mandatory.

The entire month of Ellul is designed to prepare us for the *Yamim Noraim*. The rabbis have sought to elicit from the name of the month a hint as to its message. This method of interpreting names will be more readily understood in the light of the following introductory remarks. It is common knowledge that throughout the Torah and most of the books constituting the Bible, the months are referred to either by numbers or by names other than those customary in our own days. The names in current use have been brought into the Jewish calendar by the Jews who returned home from the Babylonian exile. It is worth citing the relevant Talmudic passage verbatim: "R. Hanina said: The names of the months came with them from Babylonia; in ancient times one said, 'in the month Ethanim' (I Kings 8:2)... 'in the month Bul' (*ibid.*, 6:38)... 'in the month Zif' (*ibid.*, 6:1)... Later, however, it is said, 'And it came to pass in the month Nissan' (Nehemiah, 2:1), 'And it came to pass in the month Chislev' (*ibid.*, 1:1), 'In the tenth month which is the month Tebeth' (Esther 2:16)..." (*Yerushalmi, Rosh haShanah* 1:2).

The designation *Ellul*, brought along by the Babylonian exiles, is found in the Bible. Thus we read: "So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Ellul, in fifty and two days" (Nehemiah 6:15). Such is the creative power of the Hebrew genius, that even words derived from a foreign origin were given indigenous interpretations. Such was also the treatment given to the month Ellul by the method known as *notaricon*, whereby each letter is considered as an abbreviation to form an acronym.

The famous dean of Jewish mystic law — Kabbala — during the 16th century, R. Isaac Luria, is credited with the following comment: It is written: "And if a man lie not

in wait but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee" (Exodus 21:13). This passage, understood in the plain sense, teaches us the law of asylum. There is, however, in this verse, a sequence of four words whose first letters yield the name *Ellul: Inah leyado vesamti lecha* (Aleph, lamed, vav, lamed). Accordingly, these words can be understood in the sense of: "He — God — has so disposed, He will appoint you (an asylum)." In other words, God grants you, frail and sinful man, the opportunity of finding asylum in your own conscience and thus find the way to God. Such indeed is the meaning and role of the month of Ellul (cf. *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 128, No. 1).

Amongst several interpretations of this type, one has gained particular popularity. In it reference is made to the Song of Songs (6:3): "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine." The Hebrew words of this quotation, *Ani ledodi vedodi li* (Aleph, lamed, vav, lamed), also yield the name *Ellul* (cf. *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, loc. cit.).

2. SELICHOT DAYS (SHELOSH ESREI MIDDOT — ZECHOR BERIT)

The *shofar* blowing as a preparatory stage for the *Yamim Noraim* is augmented by the *Selichot* days. *Selichot* are pleas for forgiveness. In the book Nehemiah, the Almighty is referred to as "A God (of *selichot*) ready to pardon" (9:17). It is from this Biblical passage that the type of prayer discussed herein has received its designation. There are three different opinions amongst the *Poskim* (codists) as to the number of days upon which *selichot* are said:

- I. Mordechai b. Hillel (13th century, a pupil of Maharam Rotenburg) writes in his legal work, *Sefer Mordechai*: "It is our custom to fast six days before *Rosh haShanah*, even on Sabbath, since our Sages

have declared: 'Before *Rosh haShanah*, the leading personalities of the generation — *gedolei hador* — begin to fast, whereupon God already then forgives a third of the sins...' (*Yoma*, opening passage No. 723).

- II. Joseph Karo, in his *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 581, gives us the following ruling: "It is customary to get up early in the morning as from *Rosh Chodesh Ellul* until *Yom haKippurim*, in order to recite *Selichot* and pleas." This regulation has its source in Ya'akov b. Asher's Turim, quoting in turn the opinion of the *Gaon* R. Hai. Such indeed is the custom of the Sephardi community.

- III. R. Moshe Isserles, in his glosses to the *Shulchan Aruch*, 581, writes as follows: "The custom of *Benei Ashkenaz* is not so... one begins with the recital of *Selichot* on the first day of the week in which *Rosh haShanah* falls. Only when *Rosh haShanah* happens to fall on the second or third day of the week, does one begin on the first day of the previous week."

It follows, that there are at least four days preceding *Rosh haShanah* upon which *Selichot* must be recited. In the commentary to the *Shulchan Aruch* entitled *Ateret Zekeinim*, the appointment of this number is associated with an homiletic interpretation of a striking passage in the torah: In a section dealing with the rules and regulations of the order of sacrifices on the Festivals (Numbers, 28 and 29), we constantly meet with the expression *vehikravtem* (and ye shall sacrifice), with the sole exception of *Rosh haShanah*, (*ibid.*, 29:2) when it says *va'assitem* (and ye shall make). The Midrash treats this irregularity as constituting an admonition to man that he might offer his own person as a sacrifice to God on *Rosh haShanah*. In this sense the meaning of *va'assitem olah* is, as it were, "you should render yourselves as an holocaust." And just as a sacrifice has to undergo examination for a possible dis-

qualifying physical blemish four days before being offered, man, too, must intensify the search of his conscience four days before *Rosh haShanah*.

The origin of the *Selichah* as an especially arranged form of worship is dealt with in the homiletic work *Tana de Bey Eliyahu Zuta*: "King David was worried as to how Israel would continue to receive pardon for their sins. Thereupon the Holy One, blessed be He, said to David: When the Jews will suffer retribution for their sins, then they should, united, present themselves before Me for prayer, acknowledge their guilt and recite the order of prayer ordained for the remission of sins, *Seder Selichah*; then shall I listen to them. Upon which occasion did God reveal this to Israel? R. Johanan associated it with the verse: 'And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord, mighty merciful and gracious...' (Exodus 34:6—7). This is to say that God descended from the thick of the cloud in the manner of a cantor who wraps himself in a *tallith* and makes ready to offer prayer before the holy *Bimah*. This is how God revealed to our master *Moshe* the order of prayer for forgiveness — *Seder selichah...*" (from ch. 23).

From this comment we learn, that the recital of the Thirteen Attributes of Divine Grace and Mercy, referred to as *Shelosh Esrei Middot*, constitutes the starting point and core of all *Selichot*. To arrive at a total of thirteen Attributes of Mercy on the basis of the just quoted Biblical passage, we may not, in verse 7, connect the word *venakeh* in accordance with the plain construction of the sentence, with the following *lo yenakeh*, since this would mean that God will not "clear the guilty." Consequently, to fit into the context of Divine mercy, the word *venakeh*, severed from the following *lo yenakeh*, has been rendered as "He will cleanse." This interpretation of our rabbis has elicited the following remark from Hermann Cohen: "This change

may, without exaggeration, be called an act of the most ardent love of man..." (*The Religion of Reason*, p. 222).

The Talmudic source for this revised rendering of the word *venakeh* is found in the tractate *Yoma* 86a: "Rabbi Eleazar said: It is impossible to say, 'He will clear the guilt' (Exodus 34:7), since it says: 'He will not clear the guilt'; nor is it possible to say: 'He will not clear the guilt,' since it is said: 'He will clear the guilt'; how is that to be explained? 'He clears the guilt' of those who repent and does not 'clear the guilt' of those who do not repent. *Shelosh Esrei Middot* will be dealt with in greater detail in section III, pp. 85-9 of this book.

At this point let us briefly consider the sources and forms of the *Selichah* in its general constitution. Following are references to some Biblical passages containing pleas for Divine indulgence:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Exodus 32:11—13 | 5. I Kings 8:36 |
| 2. <i>Ibid.</i> , 34:9 | 6. Amos 7:2 |
| 3. Numbers 14:13—19 | 7. Daniel 9:4—9 |
| 4. Psalms 25:11 | 8. Nehemiah 9:31—37 |

Some of these Biblical passages have been put to manifold use by the poets who composed the *Selichot*. The reader ought to consult *Ta'anit* 1:3—4 in order to learn how the various prayer formulae listed herein have found their place in the *Selichot*.

With the exception of the older parts and the petitions known as *Techinot*, the actual *Selichot* are poetic compositions similar to the *Piyutim* found in the festival prayer-book. "Characteristic features of the *Piyut* are its structure of verse, use of rhyme, search for accurate expression, close correspondence to the *Midrash* and resultant didactic presentation" (Ismar Elbogen, *Der juedische Gotesdienst...* p. 281). Some *Selichot* are known by a special name whose significance is not generally known.

The following explanation follows Elbogen, pp. 228—9: There is a set pattern of prayers couched in plain language which form the basic frame of the service on all days when *Selichot* are recited. Into this framework the actual *Selichot*, complicated poetic constructions, are introduced. The collection of *Selichot* following the Polish rite consists of 140 poetic *Selichot*.

There are seven categories of *Selichot*:

1. *Petichah* preamble *Selichah*
2. *Pizmon* *Selichah* with refrain
3. *Sheniyah* two-line *Selichah* (cf. Nos. 29, 30—33, 88, 103, 111, 113—116)
4. *Shelishiyah* three-line *Selichah* (cf. Nos. 34—35, 46, 56, 65, 83, 105, 122, 138)
5. *Shalmonit* complete, i.e. four-line *Selichah* (cf. Nos. 36, 47, 58, 64, 73, 82, 89, 104, 121, 137)
6. *Akeidah* commemorating the binding of Isaac (cf. Nos. 39, 49, 67, 76, 86, 108, 124, 140)
7. *Techinah* prayer for grace. Contributing to the choice of this name is the position of this *Selichah* which is always associated with the *Tachanun*, the supplication that concludes the penitential liturgy (cf. Nos. 41, 50, 59, 68, 77, 87)

A particularly large number of *Selichot* is recited on *Rosh haShanah* eve (Nos. 24—41 according to the Polish rite). The entire morning service on that day is called *Zechor Berit*, being the name of a *Pizmon* composed by R. Gershon b. Yehudah, known as the Luminary of the Exile. This *Pizmon* opens with the following words: "O remember the covenant with Abraham and the binding of Isaac and lead back the captivity of the tents of Jacob (the

exiled Jewish people). O help us for the sake of Thy name." Some of the expressions in this poetic composition have acquired general currency, e.g. *Golah achar golah galtah Yehudah* — "Judah has suffered one exile after another," and *ein lanu shiyur, rak haTorah hazot* — "We are left with naught but with this Torah."

The significant weight carried by the very mention of the Patriarchs is set forth by our sages in the Talmud relating that when Israel succumbed to sin in the wilderness, Moses interceded on their behalf with the Holy One, blessed be He. He did so by uttering several prayers and pleas, but was not heard. No sooner, however, than he said: "Remember thy servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel," his prayer was immediately accepted (Exodus 32:13, cf. *Shabbat* 30a).

b) FESTIVAL RULES AND REGULATIONS AT THE TIME OF THE TEMPLE

1. BIBLICAL REPORT OF ROSH HASHANAH

The narrative portions of the Bible do not contain reports on the carrying out of Biblical precepts, except when there is a necessary lesson to be taught by the relating of an episode. The sparse references to the festivals in the Biblical text are therefore not to be taken as a sign that the festivals were only seldom celebrated. The sole detailed report of *Rosh haShanah* in the Bible presents us with one of the most significant scenes in Jewish history. We listen to Ezra reading to the people from the Torah. His words, indeed, made a tremendous impression upon his audience who were stunned by the contents of the message. This led to renewed efforts at shaping life in accordance with Divine law: "And all the

people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and all those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law... And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people: This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not nor weep (i.e., it is *Rosh haShanah*, so Rashi). For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord: Neither be sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. So the Levites stilled all the people saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be grieved" (Nehemiah 8: 1—3, 9—11).

As is indicated in this Biblical report quite clearly, *Rosh haShanah*, a Divinely hallowed day, was meant to elicit a state of mind associated with penitence. Nevertheless, our source of strength remained joy in the Lord; and this meant that *Rosh haShanah* was to retain its basic character as a day filled with festive joy. It is interesting to note how our Talmudic sages interpreted the expression *Chedvat haShem hee ma'uzchem*. Thus we read: "What means 'for the joy of the Lord is your strength' (Nehemiah 8:10)? — R. Johanan said in the name of R. Eleazar son of R. Simeon, The Holy One, blessed be He, said unto Israel: My children, borrow on My account and celebrate

the holiness of the day, and trust in Me and I will pay" (*Bezah* 15b).

Beside the passage quoted from Nehemiah 8, *Rosh haShanah* is only once more mentioned in the Bible. It was on the first day of the seventh month that sacrifices were once again offered in the Temple by the repatriates of the Babylonian exile (Ezra 3:6).

2. ANNOUNCING THE JUBILEE YEAR ON YOM HAKIPPURIM

As explained in Section I of this book, the Day of Atonement, beside its religious character, also had a social aspect, that of the jubilee year announced on this day by sounding the *shofar*: "Then shalt thou cause the horn of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the horn sound throughout all your land" (Leviticus 25:9). In the words of S. R. Hirsch: "It is a *shofar* call from God which goes forth... in His name...that calls everybody and everything to Him, as their Lord and Owner... bids them undo the shackles of social lack of freedom and inequality... and so to bring everybody and everything back into the pure and undisturbed social condition... which is really what God allots to it as its innate possession."

What inner connection is there between *Rosh haShanah*, the Day of Judgement, and the jubilee institution heralded by the Biblical precept of *teki'at shofar*? We shall once again consult Hoffmann: "It is at the beginning of the civilian year, when there is a general preoccupation with the ingathering of the fruit of the land, with their secure storage, and just as the tiller of the soil is about to sow the seeds for the coming year, at that very moment... on the first day of the New Year, the *shofar* is sounded. This

represents the voice of God summoning man, immersed in his earthly pursuits, to the Divine. It is a reminder that man must first come to terms with his Creator, before he may consider the joys of this world. The voice of God calls for man's return in penitence. It is a voice resembling the sound of the jubilee *shofar*. The latter is a tone signaling the restoration of all men and goods to their original Divinely granted freedom and destiny, having been released from alien subjection. But whereas the *teru'ah shel yovel* affects the social and economic sway of man over man, the *teru'ah shel Rosh haShanah* is meant to affect the moral attitude of man to God" (*Leviticus*, Second Half-Volume, p. 253).

In order to gain a clear picture as to the manner in which the jubilee was celebrated and gain familiarity with the most important precepts of the jubilee, we shall quote at length from the relevant passage of the *Mishneh Torah* of Maimonides: "It is a Biblical precept to count seven times seven years and sanctify the fiftieth year... It was the Great Sanhedrin alone (consisting of 71 members) that was charged with carrying out both these precepts. When was the counting begun? Only 14 years after they came into the land. Seven years were needed for conquering the land and seven years for apportioning it, until everyone became familiar with his plot (cf. *Arachin* 12b). That is to say, they began to count in the year 2503 after Creation and in 2510 they kept the first *shemittah* year and counted seven *shemittah* periods to sanctify (as jubilee) the fiftieth year, i.e. the sixty-fourth after conquering the land. Seventeen jubilee years were counted by Israel as from their entry into the land until their exile. The year upon which the first Temple was destroyed and Israel was driven out, was the sixty-third year of a jubilee period and the expiry of a *shemittah* year. With the destruction of the Temple the reckoning (of the jubilee year) was discontinued. Presently

the Second Temple was built lasting 420 years. On the seventh year of its existence, Ezra made his way to *Eretz Yisrael*... and upon this year began another counting (i.e. the counting of jubilee periods was resumed). The thirteenth year after rebuilding the Second Temple was again a *shemittah* year. They counted seven *shemittah* periods and sanctified the fiftieth year. Although the precept concerning the jubilee was not in force during the period of the Second Temple, it was yet counted in order to establish the *shemittah* period. It follows, therefore, that the Second Temple... was destroyed on the expiry of a *shemittah* year upon the fiftieth year of the ninth jubilee period." (There follows an account of the year during which Maimonides wrote this work, as well as a lengthy discussion of the question whether it was now necessary to count jubilee years, or whether the counting was limited to *shemittah* years alone.) "The jubilee year is not included in the reckoning of a *shemittah* period, but the forty-ninth year is *shemittah*, the fiftieth is jubilee and upon the fifty-first there begins a new *shemittah* period... With the dispersion of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh (cf. II Kings 15:29), the ordinance of the jubilee was set aside since it is written, '...and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof' (*Leviticus* 25:10), i.e. as long as all the inhabitants are found dwelling according to their tribal divisions and are not intermingled (cf. *Arachin* 32b). At the time when the jubilee precept was in force throughout the Holy Land it was likewise mandatory abroad (cf. *Rosh haShanah* 9b). As long as the jubilee precept was in force the laws concerning Jewish slaves, the sale of city dwellings, were likewise applicable... Only then did one accept *geirei toshav* (i.e. men committed to the upkeep of the Noahite precepts alone), and it was obligatory to leave the fields fallow in *Eretz Yisrael* and observe the remission of debts

everywhere. If there is no *yovel*, then the *shemittah* ordinances have rabbinical force only (cf. *Arachin* 29a)...

"It is a precept to blow the *shofar* on the tenth of Tishri on a jubilee year. This precept is in the first place the duty of the *Sanhedrin*... but each individual too must blow... One blows nine sounds, as on *Rosh haShanah*. Throughout the entire confines of *Eretz Yisrael* the tones are sounded..."

The fulfilment of the jubilee year ordinance depends upon three conditions (*me'akvin beyovel*): It is necessary to blow (the *shofar*), the slaves must be released, and the fields must be restored to their original owners...

"In the period between *Rosh haShanah* of a jubilee year and *Yom haKippurim* the slaves were neither released nor were they obliged to serve their masters, and the fields too were not yet returned. It was thus: the slaves ate, drank, and were merry enjoying themselves, wearing wreaths on their heads. As the Day of Atonement approached, the *Sanhedrin* ordered the sounding of the *shofar*, whereupon the slaves were released to their homes and the fields reverted to their original owners (cf. *Rosh haShanah* 8b)." (Rambam, *Sefer Zera'im, Hilchot Shemittah veYovel*, from ch. 10.)

Beside the Torah, the jubilee year is specifically mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel (46:17) as "the year of liberty" — *shenat hadror*. The prophet Isaiah (61:1—2) is charged with delivering a Divine message, "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim an acceptable year of the Lord (*shenat ratzon*)..." In this context the concept of the jubilee year emerges as the prototype of redemption. The counting in accordance with the jubilee period system is found in the caption to the book of Ezekiel (1:1; cf. Rashi, Kimhi, Gemara *Arachin* 12a, Hoffmann *Leviticus* II, pp. 262—3).

3. THE AVODAH — SACRIFICIAL TEMPLE SERVICE

Detailed instructions are found in the Torah concerning the order of sacrifices on the Day of Atonement — in Leviticus 16 and Numbers 29:7—11, in the sections dealing with the sacrifices to be offered on special days. A major portion of the tractate *Yoma* is devoted to a discussion and description of the sacrificial service. In Leviticus 16, verses 3—23, we first read of the sacrificial ritual which the High Priest is to carry out in the highly sanctified white robes — *bigdei lavan* — alone. This is followed (verses 24 ff) by regulations of the service which the High Priest rendered in his ordinary service vestments, referred to in the Mishnah as *bigdei zahav*. The "golden" vestments consisted of tunic, drawers, turban, girdle, breast-plate, the *ephod* (i.e. apron), upper garment and frontlet (the so-called "white vestments" consisted of the first four items only). Seeing that the report of the temple service performed by the High Priest still constitutes a major element of *Yom Kippur* service, we have seen fit to present the reader with a detailed systematic sketch of this ritual. Our survey is patterned on the presentation by Maimonides and avails itself of the arrangement suggested by S. R. Hirsch. We have added our own captions, as well as furnishing the relevant Biblical references. The division into five parts is based on the regulations concerning the service robes to be worn on each occasion.

Schematic Presentation of the *Avodah*

First Part (*Bigdei Zahav*). *Shacharit* and *Mussaf* —
sacrificial service as on all the other festivals

Weekday vestments removed. — Ritual bath taken. —

“Golden” vestments put on. — Hands and feet washed. — Continual offering (*Tamid*) slaughtered (Numbers 28:3—7). — Blood received and sprinkled upon the altar. — Morning incense offered up (Exodus 30:7). — Lamps of candlestick inside the sanctuary (*heichal*) dressed (Exodus 27:21). — Limbs of the *Tamid* incinerated. — The daily prescribed *chavitei Cohen Gadol*, baked cakes of the High Priest, offered up (Leviticus 6:13—16; Mishnah *Tamid* 1:3). — Drink offering poured out (Numbers 28:7). — *Mussaf* additional sacrifice offered up (one bullock and seven lambs — Numbers 29:8).

Second Part (*Bigdei Lavan*). Service in the Holiest of Holies and preparatory actions

Hands and feet washed. — “Golden” vestments removed. — Ritual bath taken. — “White” vestments put on (Leviticus 16:4). — Hands and feet washed. — Confession of sins by the High Priest concerning himself and his family with hands placed on the head of the bullock (Leviticus 16:6). — Lots cast for the two he-goats (Leviticus 16:8). — Strip of crimson wool tied on the head of the scapegoat. — Second confession of sins over bullock for the entire priesthood. — Slaughtering of bullock. — Blood of the bullock received (a common priest stirs the blood continuously so as to prevent congealing). — Pan filled with glowing coals taken from the west side of the altar. — Vessel filled with two handfuls of finest beaten incense. — Holy of Holies is entered. — Censer with coals placed before the staves of the Ark. — Incense container emptied into the hands of the High Priest who thereupon scatters the incense upon the coals (Leviticus 16:12—13). — High Priest leaves Holy of Holies with his face turned towards the Ark and his back towards the court. — Short prayer offered by High Priest in front of

the curtain separating the Holy of Holies. Following is the text of the prayer: “May it be acceptable in Thy presence, O Lord our God, and God of our fathers, that this approaching year may be in respect to us and all Thy people Israel wherever they are, a prosperous year, whether it be hot or rainy. Let not the prayer concerning rain, offered by the wayfarer, be accepted by Thee, when the world is in need of it. May not Thy people, the House of Israel, be necessitated to crave assistance for their sustenance of each other, nor of any other people. O may it be a year that no woman suffer abortion, and that the fruit trees give forth the fruits; and may not the rulership be removed from the House of Judah.”

Sprinkling of the bullock’s blood eight times before the Ark (Leviticus 16:14). — Slaughtering of the goat set aside for God. — Reception of its blood and eightfold sprinkling of the blood in the Holiest of Holies. — Eightfold sprinkling of the blood of the bullock in the direction of the curtain of the Ark. — Similar sprinkling of the blood of the he-goat, blood of bullock and he-goat mixed and applied to the horns of the altar followed by sevenfold sprinkling on part of the surface of the Golden Altar cleaned of the coals. — Remaining blood poured out on the western foundation of the outer altar (Leviticus 16:15—19). — Confession made on behalf of the entire people by High Priest sustaining his hands on the goat. — Scapegoat led away to the wilderness (Leviticus 16:21). — Fat portions of bullock and goat, whose blood had been sprinkled, placed in a vessel. Remaining parts of these animals led out for burning at the place of incineration (Leviticus 16:27—28). — High Priest reads out, in Women’s Court, Torah portions relevant to this day.

Third Part (*Bigdei Zahav*). Sacrificial ritual performed on the Great Altar in the forecourt

Washing of hands and feet. — Discarding of "white" vestments, ritual immersion, putting on of "golden" vestments. — He-goat, set aside for *Mussaf* category of sacrifices, offered up (Numbers 29:11). — Ram, set aside for High Priest and people, offered up (Leviticus 16:3—5 and 24), "and come forth and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people." — Incineration of entrails of bullock and he-goat whose flesh had already been burnt outside the Temple (Leviticus 16:25). — Performing the Continual Offering of the afternoon.

Fourth Part (*Bigdei Lavan*). Conclusion of the Service in the Holiest of Holies

Hands and feet washed. — "Golden" vestments laid aside. — Ritual immersion. — "White" vestments put on. — Hands and feet washed. — Holiest of Holies entered to retrieve the receptacles of the coals and frankincense.

Fifth Part (*Bigdei Zahav*). Conclusion of Daily Temple Service

Hands and feet washed. — "Golden" vestments put on. — Hands and feet washed. — Evening frankincense burnt. — Candlestick made ready for lighting. — Hands and feet washed. — "Golden" vestments laid aside. — High Priest puts on his own clothes.

(Schematic extract from Rambam, *Sefer haAvodah*, *Hilchot Yom haKippurim*, Ch. IV.)

This sketch is meant to serve as a didactic aid for the comprehension of *massechet Yoma* and for an analysis of

the relevant *Mussaf* chapter on *Yom haKippurim*. It is suggested to focus attention on the *Avodah* and give it more thorough consideration, whether at school, seminar or private study.

It is not enough to familiarize oneself with the external procedure of the service on this holiest of days, as performed in days gone by; this ought to be followed by a profound examination of the series of ritual acts presented herein. The meaning of the sacrificial act becomes clear when conceived as a palpable expression of an inner truth. The following suggestions for a more thorough grasp of the *Avodah* are meant to prompt a further scrutiny of this subject.

On the Symbolism of the Avodah

I. The "White" Vestments

In the Midrash we read: "R. Joshua said: For what reason did the High Priest not enter the Holy of Holies in his golden garments? (Answer:) Because the accuser cannot act as a defender. It was in order that no opportunity might be given to Satan of bringing accusations and saying: 'The other day they made for themselves a god of gold and to-day they seek to officiate in garments of gold.'" (*Vayikra Rabbah*, Ch. 21, No. 10, towards the end, also cf. *Rosh haShanah* 26a.)

According to S. R. Hirsch, the "golden" vestments were "meant to be in realisation of the ideal moral perfection which is innate in the conception of the Jewish Nation." White is the symbol of the preparatory state of cleansing. By having the High Priest enter the Holy of Holies, "the supreme ideal of law," in his white vestments, he is, as it were, called upon to harness all the faculties of his mind towards the attainment of purity.

II. The Two He-Goats as Symbol of Moral Decision

“Quite clearly we have here the representation of two creatures originally completely identical, who, at the threshold of the Sanctuary, part, and proceed on two entirely contrasting paths...

“Each of us is a *Sa'ir*. Each one of us has the power to resist, to be obstinate, the ability to oppose with firmness demands made on our willpower...

“We can use it in attachment to God, in resisting all internal and external temptation and consideration which would lure us away from God and His Holy Will, in being a *Sa'ir laShem*. Or we can use it in obstinate refusal of all compliant obedience to God, and to the demands of His holy laws of morality, can turn the power of resistance which He has granted us against Him, and give ourselves up without a fight to the power of our senses and their allurements, to fight against which was just the purpose for which God gave us that power of resistance. This sinking into the power of sensuality in contrast to attachment to God, obeying His laws of morality, is here called *la'Azazel*...

“But the conception ‘Freedom’ at once, of course, implies the possibility of setting oneself against the Divine Will... So are all of us, without distinction, placed at the entry to God’s Sanctuary to decide between *haShem* and *Azazel*, between God, and the power of our senses. There, in the Holy of Holies, as the holiest of holies rests the Torah, the Law of His Will for us. Facing this, His Law, has the decision to be made...”

(From S. R. Hirsch, *Commentary on Leviticus 16:10.*)

III. The Eight Sprinklings as a Symbol of the Spiritualization of our Entire life

“*Ahat lema'alah*, towards God, that is the first impulse which is given in the Holy of Holies... But soaring upwards to God, to which every beat of our heart should belong, is not to remain merely an inner exaltation. If the *ahat lema'alah* is a true and genuine and Jewish one, it must be followed by *sheva lemattah*, its fruit must be the penetrating of the whole of our ordinary daily life with spirituality, and rendering it Godly as, in the Divine Torah which reposes under the Wings of Cherubim, is declared to be the Will of God. *Ahat lema'alah* is only worth anything through *sheva lemattah*, has only any value if all our earthly doings and existence (six) join themselves in eternal bond (seven) with this ‘one which is above.’ And ever afresh has every progress, every step forward down on earth to attach itself to devotion to God above. Not: *Ahat veahat, shetayim*, but: *Ahat veahat, ahat ushetayim, ahat veshalosh* etc., are the beats of our hearts to be counted in the whole moral life which, coming from God, is to be lived in continuous progress. And ever deeper and deeper... has the spirit of God to penetrate from the height into everything earthly, until the very lowest, deepest, most earthly phase of human life has entered into attachment to the spiritual and Godly, and under the ‘One’ above the ‘Seven’ below on earth has perfected itself in the bond with God” (S. R. Hirsch, *Commentary on Leviticus 16:14*).

To conclude our interpretation of some of the essential traits of the *Avodah*, we should like to point out the difference between the Sadducean and Pharisaic-Rabbinic tradition regarding the offering of incense. To elucidate the possible reasons for this difference we adduce the following passage from S. R. Hirsch:

“The Sadducees teach that... the *Kohen Gadol* has to put the *ketoreth* on the coals outside the *Kodesh haKodashim* and enter the Holy of Holies with the incense already smoking, whereas according to the tradition of the *Chachamim* he has to carry the coals and the incense together inside, and only there... pour the *ketoreth* on to the coals (*Yoma* 53a). To uphold this erroneous doctrine was so dear to them, that it is recorded that a Sadducee who became High Priest had to make a definite oath on *Erev Yom Kippur* not to adopt the teaching of the Sadducees...

“When we inquire into the motive which drove them to adopt this obvious disagreement with the wording of the Torah, we find a note in *Torath Cohanim* that they gave the demand of ‘etiquette,’ ‘good manners,’ as the ostensible reason... ‘if at human banquets the incense is always brought in already smoking, but not brought in and lit in the presence of the guests, surely good manners demand that we should do no less for God Himself’!...

“The true High Priest of the Jewish Law of God is nothing else but a ministrant of the Will of God, completely subjugating his own ideas to the Divine Torah... All his activities for the Torah are based for him on its laws. But the Sadducean priest makes the Altar fire into his fire... in a way that appeals to him, gives him satisfaction, and that which he imagines is right and good and considers proper, he carries into the Sanctuary of the Law...” (From S. R. Hirsch, *Commentary on Leviticus* 16:13).

The poetic presentation of the *Avodah* has been introduced into the *Mussaf* prayer of *Yom haKippurim*. In the commentary to the *Shulchan Aruch* entitled *Turei Zahav* (Taz), *Orach Chayim*, No. 621, we are told that the reason for this custom is to be found in the fact that the two ‘he-goats’ connected with the *Mussaf* sacrifice on the

Day of Atonement constituted the *Ikar Avodah* — the essential part of the sacrificial service. The copious description of the *Avodah* introduced into the repetition of the *Mussaf* prayer is accounted for in the following comment: “The Mishnah’s report of the Temple service on the Day of Atonement is complemented by a dramatic representation of the ritual. This is preceded by a preface, opening with the creation of the universe, the outstanding elements of Biblical history, culminating in the election of the tribe of the priests which leads us to the service performed by the High Priest. The *Avodah* is followed by a prayer seeking Divine blessing for the New Year, a description of the glory of the temple service, the grandeur of the High Priest and regret that all this splendour was no more. The *Avodah* has received manifold treatment by several poets... each of the major rites has accepted a different author whose work has thereby been saved from oblivion. Even so, the number of works preserved constitute but a minute part of the once extant *Avodah* poetry. Among the manuscripts of the Cairo *Genizah* numerous fragments have been found reflecting the power of attraction this theme must have exercised upon congregations and poets alike” (Ismar Elbogen, *Der juedische Gottesdienst*, p. 217).

The *Avodah* poem introduced into the *Ashkenazi* synagogue service, whose author was R. Meshulam b. Kalonymos, opens with the words *Amitz Koach*. A great scholar, whose tombstone was discovered at the Mainz cemetery, he received the highest praise from R. Gershon Meor haGolah, “The Luminary of the Exile.”

c) CHARACTER AND RULES OF THE FESTIVAL THROUGHOUT HISTORY

1. REGULATIONS AND REASONS FOR THE BLOWING OF THE SHOFAR

ELEMENTS TO BE TREATED:

Derivation of the obligation to sound nine blasts. — Three possibilities of *Teru'ah*. — Graphic representation of the blasts. — *Teki'ot meyushav* and *teki'ot me'umad*, one hundred blasts. Omission of *shofar* blowing on *Shabbat*. — Significance of *shofar* according to Talmud, Midrash, Sa'adia Gaon, Maimonides and S. R. Hirsch.

The Torah only refers to the blowing of the *shofar* on *Rosh haShanah* specifically as: *Shabbaton zichron teru'ah* (Leviticus 23:24) and *yom teru'ah* (Numbers 29:1). We have already explained (cf. p. 21 in this book), that the regulations relating to the blowing on *Rosh haShanah* and *Yom haKippurim* of the jubilee year (Leviticus 25:9) are essentially interconnected. The formal connection between the two is arrived at by applying the hermeneutic principle known as *gezeirah shavah* (literally, 'equal cut'), i.e., the application to one subject of a rule already known to apply to another on the strength of a common expression used in connection with both in the Scriptures, when in both cases the expression appears as superfluous. The identity of words in two different instances is taken to indicate an identity of substance. Seeing that in the Biblical text dealing with the jubilee year the expression *bachodesh hashevi'i* (Leviticus 25:9) appears to be redundant since the date in question is properly specified by *beYom haKippurim*, and since in Leviticus 23:24 too we have the

specification *bachodesh hashevi'i*, the Sages of the Talmud have transferred the *shofar* blowing regulations of the jubilee to *Rosh haShanah*. By joining the two verses we derive several regulations about the number and mode of the sounds. The expression *teru'ah* (tremolo blasts) of the jubilee is preceded by *veha'avarta shofar*. This is interpreted to mean the conveying of a *teki'ah* (plain blast) through the *shofar*. Lastly there is the expression *ha'aviru shofar* (Leviticus 25:9). The *teru'ah* is to be ushered in as well as escorted out by a *teki'ah* blast. Now, since, as indicated, the expression *teru'ah* appears in the text three times (once concerning the jubilee and twice in regard to *Rosh haShanah*) it follows through the analogy of *bachodesh hashevi'i* that each time a *teru'ah* is ordered, this must be preceded and followed by a *teki'ah*. In this manner we arrive at a total of nine mandatory *shofar* blasts on *Rosh haShanah*. After these introductory remarks the reader will find it easier to follow the text of the relevant passages in the Mishnah and Gemara.

Mishnah: "The order of the blasts — *teki'ot* (herein applied generally to all kinds of sound) consists of three sets of three each."

Gemara: "Our rabbis taught: Whence do we know that the blowing on New Year must be with a *shofar*? Because it says: 'Thou shalt make proclamation with a *shofar* of *teru'ah*' (Leviticus 25:9). I know this so far only of the Jubilee; how do I know it of New Year? The text says significantly: 'in the seventh month' (*ibid.*), when there is no real occasion for the expression 'in the seventh month' (because it says immediately after 'on the Day of Atonement'). Why then does it say, 'in the seventh month'? To show that all the *teru'ahs* of the seventh month should be of the same character. How do we know that there must be a plain blast — *teki'ah* — before it (i.e., *teru'ah*)? Because it says 'Thou shalt make proclamation

with a *shofar* of *teru'ah*' (which is taken to mean *shofar*, *teki'ah* and *teru'ah*). How do we know that there must be a plain blast — *teki'ah*— after it? Because it says 'Ye shall make proclamation with the *shofar*' (Leviticus 25:9). I know this only of the Jubilee; how do I learn it of New Year also? It says significantly, 'in the seventh month' (*ibid.*) when there is no real occasion for the expression, 'in the seventh month.' Why then does it say, 'in the seventh month'? To indicate that all the *teru'ahs* of the seventh month should be of the same character. How do we know that there must be three sets of three each? Because it says: 'Thou shalt make proclamation with the *shofar* of *teru'ah*' (Leviticus 25:9), referring to the Jubilee, and again, 'a solemn rest, a memorial of *teru'ah*' (*ibid.*, 23:24), and again, 'a day of *teru'ah* it shall be to you' (Numbers 29:1). And how do we know that we can utilize what is said in connection with one for the purposes of the other and vice versa (i.e. relate the Jubilee to *Rosh haShanah* and vice versa)? The word 'seventh' occurs twice ('in the seventh month' in Leviticus 23:24, in connection with the New Year, and 'in the seventh month' in Leviticus 25:9, in connection with the Jubilee) to provide a *gezeirah shavah*. How then is it carried out? There are three sets which are nine blasts" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:9 and 33b — 34a).

There is a further attempt in this section of the Talmud to derive the regulations of *shofar* blowing on *Rosh haShanah* from the Scriptural verses dealing with the blowing of the *shofar* in the wilderness (Numbers ch. 10). However, the *Shulchan Aruch* considers the above quoted passage of the Talmud as normative (cf. *Orach Chayim* 590 No. 1). The expression *veha'avarta shofar* leaves us in no doubt that the sound in question is the plain blast — *teki'ah* — i.e., an ordinary blowing into the *shofar*; not so the expression *teru'ah*, i.e., broken sound, which is

capable of several interpretations. In Leviticus 23:24 the Hebrew word *teru'ah* is rendered by the Aramaic Targum as *yabava*. It is quite clear from another Biblical passage that the root of the expression *yabava* denotes a sigh or groan. Thus we read in the Song of Deborah: *Vateyabeve em Sisra* (Judges 5:28), describing the sigh sounded by the mother of Sisra upon the death of her son (cf. *Rosh haShanah* 33b).

The broken tone of the *Teru'ah*, meant to represent a groan or a whimper, may thus assume the form of the triple sigh-like *shevarim*, i.e., three short disjointed blasts or, in the more restricted sense, that of the tremolo sound. There is a further possibility, of interpreting *teru'ah* to signify the combination of a sigh and whimper in the form of *shevarim-teru'ah*. It seems, however, to run contrary to the character of a person in mourning to first indulge in a whimper through a succession of short notes and then continue to groan in sounds of longer duration. This would rule out the possibility of equating *teru'ah* with *teru'ah-shevarim*. This is the logic underlying the following passage in the Talmud: "R. Abahu prescribed in Caesarea that there should be a *teki'ah*, three *shevarim*, a *teru'ah* and a *teki'ah* (plain blast, broken sound, tremolo, plain blast). How can this be justified? If the sound of *teru'ah* is a kind of wailing, then there should be *teki'ah*, *teru'ah* (elsewhere called *yebava* and *teki'ah*), and if it is a kind of groaning, there should be *teki'ah*, three *shvarim* and *teki'ah*? He was in doubt whether it was a kind of wailing or a kind of groaning (and had both sounds blown). R. Awira strongly demurred against this procedure, saying, Perhaps it is a kind of wailing and the three *shevarim* make an interruption between the *teru'ah* and the first *teki'ah*? We assume that he afterwards blows *teki'ah*, *teru'ah*, *teki'ah*. Rabina strongly demurred against this, saying, Perhaps it is a kind of sighing and the *teru'ah* makes an interruption between

the *shevarim* and the second *teki'ah*? — We suppose that he afterwards blows *teki'ah, shevarim, teki'ah*. What then is the point of R. Abahu's regulation (if he repeats both *teki'ah, teru'ah, teki'ah* and *teki'ah, shevarim, teru'ah*)? If it is a groaning sound, it has already been made (in *teki'ah, teru'ah, teki'ah*), and if it is a wailing sound it has already been made (in *teki'ah, shevarim, teki'ah*)? — He was in doubt whether it does not include both groaning and wailing. If so, the reverse should also be carried out, namely, *teki'ah, teru'ah*, three *shevarim, teki'ah*, since perhaps it is wailing and groaning? — Ordinarily when a man has a pain he first groans and then wails" (*Rosh haShanah* 34a-b; *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 590, No. 2).

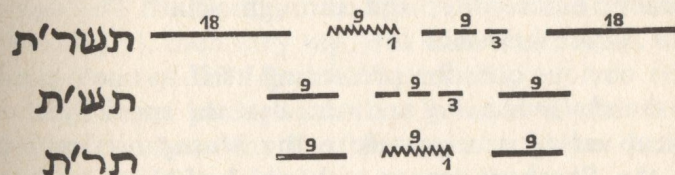
The following order of blowing is based on the three different ways of interpreting the expression *teru'ah*:

I.	<i>Teki'ah</i>	<i>Shevarim-Teru'ah</i>	<i>Teki'ah</i>
II.	<i>Teki'ah</i>	<i>Shevarim</i>	<i>Teki'ah</i>
III.	<i>Teki'ah</i>	<i>Teru'ah</i>	<i>Teki'ah</i>

Each line represents a thrice repeated sequence of sounds, which it is necessary to blow in order to fulfil the nine blasts enjoined. The actual total of thirty blasts is known as the *sheloshim kolot*. The last in this group, an extended blast, is referred to as the *teki'ah gedolah*. The sequence is indicated through the following abbreviations: *Teki'ah* through the letter *tav*, *teru'ah* through *resh* (since the *tav* with which the word begins does not belong to the root), and *shevarim* through the letter *shin*. The first line is thus indicated by TaSHRaT, the second by TaSHaT and the third by TaRaT.

The length of the sound is dealt with in Mishnah *Rosh haShanah* 4:9 and in Gemara 33b, also cf. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 590, No. 3. The *teki'ah* must be sustained long enough to equate the whole length of the intervening

sounds. Accordingly, when we have *shevarim-teru'ah* in the middle, the *teki'ah* sound is twice as long as in the case of *shevarim* or *teru'ah* alone being in the middle. The smallest sound unit, called *trimota* (an expression of Greek origin) in the *Talmud Yerushalmi*, appears in the work of the codists as *koach*. The smallest sound unit is $1/9$ *teru'ah*. Each of the three *shevarim* must produce a minimum sound length of $3/9$ *teru'ot*. In the case of *shevarim-teru'ah* the tone length of the preceding and following *teki'ah* must equal at least 18 units. The following graphic illustration will demonstrate both the manner and length of the blasts. The ordinary extended line depicts a *teki'ah*, the short lines — *shevarim*, and the undulating line a *teru'ah*.



Since the correct manner of blowing entails a great many detailed regulations, it is customary for the local rabbi or a member of the congregation who is a Torah scholar to "announce" the proper sequence.

The *shofar* blowing ritual is incorporated in the *Mussaf* service, to coincide with the Biblical verses dealing the Kingdom of God, the Divine determination of human destiny and the significance of the *shofar* in the past and future (*Malchuyot, Zichronot* and *Shofarot*). The Mishnah contains the explicit instruction that "the manner of sounding (the *shofar*) is three of three each" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:9). Rashi explains that this means three groups each of three notes, for *Malchuyot, Zichronot* and *Shofarot* respectively. In the section dealing with the structure of

the *Mussaf* service we therefore have the following regulation: "One recites the Patriarchs (*Avot*), the Powers (*Gevurot*), the Holiness of God's name (*Kedushat haShem*), and includes with them Sovereignty (*Malchuyot*), but one does not sound the *shofar*; the Holiness of the Day (*Kedushat haYom*), and one does sound; the Remembrances (*zichronot*), and one does sound; the *Shofarot*, and one does sound..." (*Rosh haShanah* 4:5). In a Tamudical passage adducing the reasons given by R. Akiba for different Festival regulations we read: "The Holy one, blessed be He, said... Recite before Me on New Year (texts making mention of) Kingship, Remembrance and *Shofar* — Kingship so that you may proclaim Me king over you; Remembrance, so that remembrance may rise favorably before Me; and through what? Through the *shofar*" (*Rosh haShanah* 16a).

The obvious question presenting itself to one's mind is, why the *shofar* blowing and recital of the specially chosen Biblical verses is relegated to the *Mussaf* service rather than the *Shacharit* prayer with which the service opens. The answer is given in the following passage of the Talmud: "Mishnah: Of those who pass before the Ark on the holy day of New Year, the second (i.e., the one who reads the *Mussaf* service) blows (or causes the blowing of) the *shofar*. On days when *Hallel* is said, the first (i.e., who reads the *Shacharit* service) reads aloud the *Hallel*. Gemara: What special reason is there for the second to blow? You must say, because of the maxim, 'In the multitude of people is the king's glory' (Proverbs 14:28, the implication being that there will be more persons present at the later than at the earlier service). But if that is so, *Hallel* should also be recited by the second because 'In the multitude of people is the king's glory'? Should you say, however, that there is a special reason why *Hallel* is said by the first, because the zealous come early for the

performance of religious duties! — R. Johanan replied: They made this rule at a time when the (Roman) Government had forbidden the blowing of the *shofar* (on the assumption that the contravention of this order would not be noticed during the latter part of the morning)" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:7 and 32b).

In the *Talmud Yerushalmi* we read the following account about the postponement of *shofar* blowing: "R. Jacob b. Acha said in the name of R. Johanan: Once the blowing was carried out on the first (prayer, i.e., *Shacharit*), and so the enemies thought perhaps they intended to rise against us (the *shofar* blowing was understood to be a signal of war), and thus they fell upon Israel. However, when they watch us, as we read the *Shema*, indulge in prayer and read from the Torah, once again pray and only now blow (the *shofar*), then they say, It is with their rituals that they are preoccupied." (*Rosh haShanah* 4:8).

The same passage of the *Yerushalmi* adduces three further reasons why the blowing should be carried out only at the *Mussaf* service:

1. By then the children too are found in the synagogue.
2. Thus we interpret two Biblical verses containing particular references to the relevant prayers, Psalms 17:1—2. The concluding part reads, *milfanecha mishpati yetse* — "Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence."
3. The expression *yom teru'ah* (Numbers 29:1) is followed directly by the rules concerning the *Mussaf* sacrifice.

The second reason in the *Yerushalmi* is reechoed by the following Aggadah: "Said R. Pinehas in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi: Why does one blow only at the *Mussaf* service? So that Israel might blow, having already performed many *mitzvot* (Literally: after being full of *mitzvot* as the pomegranate is full of seeds). They have by then read the

three sections of the *Shema*, prayed and read out from the Torah" (*Pessikta Rabbati* on *Emor*, quoted by *Machzor Vitry* p. 353).

The blowing of the *shofar* on *Mussaf* is referred to as *teki'ot me'umad*, the main prayer being to this day called by the *Sepharadim Amidah*, seeing that it may only be performed whilst standing. Properly speaking, the blowing ought to proceed during the silent prayer when the entire congregation stands. These sounds are accordingly called *teki'ot me'umad* (*Matteh Ephraim*, Siman 585 No. 5, Zalman Margolis, 1762—1828). To this very day it is customary (cf. *Tur*, *Orach Chayim* 592, in the name of the *Aruch*), in many of the Eastern European communities, to blow the *shofar* three times during the silent prayer.

As we have pointed out, the basic duty of blowing the *shofar* is connected with the prayers of *Malchuyot*, *Zichronot* and *Shofarot*. Nevertheless, the general procedure is to blow thirty sounds even before the *teki'ot me'umad*, after the Torah reading, having recited the relevant blessings. This series is known as *teki'ot meyushav*, since the congregation is permitted to listen to them whilst seated, only the person engaged in blowing the *shofar* having to stand (*Matteh Ephraim* 585, No. 5; Rambam, *Hilchot shofar* 3:10). In the Talmud (*Rosh haShanah* 16a) is the repeated blowing explained as a feint "calculated to confuse Satan." Rashi makes the following comment on this: "He (Satan) will desist from accusing, because when he hears how Israel love the *mitzvot* he is perforce stricken with dumbness." Israel's ardent love of the Divine commandments expresses itself in this blowing in anticipation of the mandatory *teki'ot me'umad*, accompanying the *Malchuyot* etc., of the *Mussaf* service. This second series sounded during *Mussaf* ought to have reached a total of thirty blasts, but for the principle of *tircha detzibura*, that of "not unduly troubling the congregation" (*Tur*, *Orach*

Chayim 592, quoting Alfasi).

The custom of sounding one hundred blasts on *Rosh haShanah* is likewise found in the *Tur*, who quotes the *Aruch* (ca. 1000 C.E.). Thus we read: "Those who are strict in the performance of the Law, sound thirty blasts 'while seated,' thirty blasts at the 'silent' prayer, and thirty blasts at the 'order' (of *Malchuyot*, *Zichronot* and *Shofarot*), in order to equate the groans emitted by the mother of Sisera, complementing the remaining ten blasts after the conclusion of the entire service." In the *Ashkenazi* ritual, the custom has been retained to blow one hundred sounds. Their distribution, however, differs insofar as only a total of twelve sounds are emitted during the repetition of the *Mussaf* prayer (cf. the opinion of *Rabeinu Tam* in the *Tossafot* on *Rosh haShanah* 33b s.v. *shi'ur*). The unity and interrelatedness of all the blasts of the *shofar* is vividly underscored by the regulation forbidding us to interrupt the individual blasts by profane chatter, thereby interrupting our *kavanah*, mental concentration (Rambam, *Hilchot Shofar* 3:11).

When *Rosh haShanah* falls on the Sabbath, the blowing of the *shofar* is omitted. This regulation is based on the following ruling in the Talmud: "Mishnah: If the festive day of New Year fell on a Sabbath, they used to blow the *shofar* in the Temple but not in the country... Gemara: Whence (in the Scripture) is this rule (that the *shofar* should not be blown on the Sabbath) derived? — R. Levi b. Lahma said: One verse says, 'A solemn rest, a memorial of blast of horns' (Leviticus 23:24), while another verse says, 'It is a day of blowing the horn unto you' (Numbers 29:1); Yet there is no contradiction, as one refers to a festival which falls on Sabbath (when there is only to be a 'memorial' but no actual blowing) and the other to a festival which falls on a weekday. Raba said: If the prohibition (on Sabbath) is from the written Law, how

comes the *shofar* to be blown in the Temple? And besides, (the blowing) is no work that a text should be needed to except it (from the general prohibition of work on Sabbath). For it was taught in the school of Samuel: When it says, 'Ye shall do no servile work' (on New Year, Numbers 29:1), this excludes the blowing of the *shofar* and the taking of bread from the oven, these being kinds of skill and not work! — No, said Raba. According to the written law it is allowed, and it is the rabbis who prohibited it as a precaution, as stated by Rabbah; for Rabbah said, All are under obligation to blow the *shofar* but not all are skilled in the blowing of *shofar*. Hence there is a danger that perhaps one will take it in his hand (on Sabbath) and go to an expert to learn and carry it four cubits in public domain (this carrying not being forbidden in the Temple). The same reason applies to the *lullav* and the same reason to the *Megillah* (which too, are set aside by the Sabbath)" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:1 and 29b).

In the *Midrash Rabbah* (*Emor*, end of *parashah* 29) the obligation of blowing the *shofar* in the Sanctuary on Sabbath too, is based on the Biblical *yom teru'ah* being related to the sacrifices to be offered in the Sanctuary. The expression *zichron teru'ah* accordingly signifies that one has merely to mention the ordinance of blowing the *shofar*, but not actually sound the instrument.

The rabbinic prerogative of enunciating *gezeirot* — preventive enactments — as a protective wall around the Torah, is derived from the Biblical passage (Leviticus 18:30): "Therefore shall ye keep (*ushemartem*) mine ordinance (*mishmarti*)." The Talmud interprets this passage as meaning: *Asu mishmeret lemishmarti* — make a protective fence for the keeping of my Law (cf. *Mo'ed Katan* 5a and *Yevamot* 21a). The restriction placed on blowing the *shofar* on Sabbath did not apply to the Sanctuary. To re-

tain this preference of the Sanctuary, where the Law was to be adhered to in all strictness and save it from oblivion after the destruction of the Temple, it was ordained by that great educator of his people, R. Johanan b. Zakai, that "They should sound (the *shofar*) wherever there was a Court" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:1). The last time this regulation was put into effect was at the Court of the eminent codist *Alfasi* (Rif, circa 1013—1113, Abudarham, quoted from I. D. Eisenstein, ed., *Otzar Dinim uMinhagim*, p. 406).

The following quotations from the Talmud, medieval and modern literature, are meant to shed a light on the significance of the *shofar* blowing ceremony. The manifold interpretations following the mystical school, notably those of the Shelah, are herein omitted.

A. Talmud and Midrash

"R. Abahu said: Why do we blow on a ram's horn? The Holy One, blessed be He, said: Sound before Me a ram's horn so that I may remember on your behalf the binding of Isaac the son of Abraham (because eventually Abraham offered a ram in place of Isaac), and account it to you as if you had bound yourselves before Me (as a sacrifice)" (*Rosh haShanah* 16a).

The rabbis of the Mishnah were in dispute as to the shape of the *shofar*, whether it was to be straight or curved (cf. *Rosh haShanah* 3:3 and 26b). The decisive opinion is that prescribing a curved *shofar*, to symbolize the bent posture of man facing the Heavenly Court on the New Year's Day.

The designation and shape of the *shofar* have elicited the following rabbinic comment: "It is written: '*Tik'u bachodesh shofar*, blow the horn at the New Moon' (Psalms

81:4)... In this month then you shall turn over a new leaf. (The expressions *chodesh* — month — and *chadesh* — renew — share the same Hebrew root). With the blowing of the horn you shall amend (*shaperu*) your deeds (the expression *shofar* — horn — is likewise related to *shaper* — amend, adorn). It is as if God spoke to Israel: ‘If you amend (i.e. *shaperu*) your deeds, I shall become unto you like a horn (*shofar*). As the horn takes in the breath at one end and sends it out at the other, so will I rise from the Throne of Judgement, and sit upon the Throne of Mercy” (*Midrash Rabbah, Emor, Parashah* 29, No. 6; cf. *ad loc.* similar interpretations on Psalms 47:6 and 89:16).

B. Medieval Religious Philosophy

A comprehensive treatment of the ideas and impressions brought to our mind by the sound of the *shofar*, based on a wealth of Biblical quotations, is found in the writings of Sa’adia Gaon (892 — 942). The ten different reasons adduced by him are hereby presented in abbreviated form:

1. A reminder of Divine creation. By blowing the *shofar* we pay homage to the King of the Universe. Just as earthly kings are ushered in to assume the reins of government to the accompaniment of trumpet blasts, so, too, do we reassert God’s royal prerogative by blowing the *shofar*. One ought to recall to one’s mind Psalm 98:6, “With trumpets and sound of cornet (*kol shofar*) make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.”

2. Beginning of the Ten Days of Penitence. The blowing takes the form of a public proclamation. No longer can anyone excuse himself of not having been warned.

3. A reminder of the giving of the Torah at Sinai. “And it came to pass on the third day when it was

morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a heavy cloud was upon the mount, and the voice of the horn (*kol shofar*) exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled” (Exodus 19:16). The blowing of the *shofar* denotes a renewed commitment to the Law.

4. Reminding Israel of the prophetic admonition. “Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet (*shofar*) and taketh not warning; if the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul” (Ezekiel 33:4—5).

5. Reminder of the destruction of the Temple and consequent supplication for its restoration. “My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet (*shofar*), the alarm of war. Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled and my curtains in a moment” (Jeremiah 4:19—20).

6. Reminder of the *Akeidah*. Just as Isaac was willing to sacrifice his life, so, too, must we be prepared to lay down our lives for the sanctification of the Name of God.

7. The *shofar* sound ought to produce a shock. “Shall a trumpet (*shofar*) be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid”? (Amos 3:6).

8. Reminder of Judgement Day in the Hereafter. “The great day of the Lord is near... a day of the trumpet (*shofar*) and alarm” (Zephaniah 1:14—16).

9. An indication of the ingathering of the Jewish people at the time of redemption. “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet

(*shofar*) shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem" (Isaiah 27:13).

10. Indication of the revival of the dead. "All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye" (Isaiah 18:3). This verse may be taken to indicate the revival of the dead, seeing that all the dwellers of the earth are gathered.

Maimonides (1135—1204) has presented us with an interpretation of the *shofar* blowing ceremony which has gained wide currency, having been reproduced in the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*: "Although the blowing of the *shofar* on *Rosh haShanah* is an unexplained Scriptural command, its connotation is: 'Awake ye that are sleepy, and ye that slumber awake from your slumber, and ponder your deeds, remember your Creator, and go back to Him in penitence. Ye who miss the truth in your hunt after vanities, and waste your years in seeking after vain things that can neither profit nor deliver, look after your own souls, and improve your ways and your deeds. Let everyone of you abandon his evil ways and thoughts and return to God that He may have mercy on you" (Rambam, *Hilchot Teshuvah* 3:4).

C. Modern Era

Jonathan Eybeschuetz, in his homiletic work *Ya'arot Devash*, and after him S. R. Hirsch, believed the sounds of the *shofar* to harbour the message of the precept. Hirsch, following the *Halachic* reasoning of the Talmud (cf. *Rosh haShanah* 34a), establishes an Aggadic connection between the regulations of Numbers Ch. 10 concerning

the camping pattern of the Israelites and the sounding of the *shofar* in general, with that ordered on *Rosh haShanah*: "In order to gather many people together in one place only one plain note was sounded — *teki'ah*. To disband the camp *teki'ah*, *teru'ah*, *teki'ah*, a plain, a broken and a plain note were sounded. Thus the plain note calls different elements into one direction, while the broken one causes an upheaval, a violent shaking, a movement. Thus the note ordering the breaking up of the camp summoned:

"(1) Minds spread over various occupations towards one single thought, by means of the single note; (2) The cessation and 'breaking-up' of this preoccupation, by means of the broken note; (3) A further advance in a definite direction by means of the final plain note.

"These ideas when applied to *Rosh haShanah*... *teki'ah* calls you from your continuous living in outer world and from the dissipation of your powers and energies to introspection and to turning upwards to God. And so it brings you through your innermost self to God. *Teru'ah* bids you let this newly gained conception of God permeate the whole of your present inner and outer life... Immerse your complete self in this rock-shattering 'God-concept'... *Teru'ah* makes you quiver... *Teki'ah*... puts strength into you, gives you courage and lifts you... to a life before God which ever after will be unified, straight, strong" (*Horeb*, Ch. 32).

2. CALENDAR REGULATIONS FOR ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM HAKIPPURIM

In the *Talmud Yerushalmi* (*Sukkah* 4:1) we read: "R. Simeon ordered those engaged in reckoning out the calendar: Be careful not to allow *Rosh haShanah* and *Aravah* (i.e., the day of beating the willow branch — *Hosha'na*

Rabba) to fall on Sabbath. If there is no way out, then let *Rosh haShanah* coincide with the Sabbath and not the Day of the *Aravah*.”

The beating of the willow branch being no more than a custom, could not supersede the Sabbath and would have to be omitted whenever the seventh day of *Sukkot* fell on Sabbath. Moreover, according to *Rosh haShanah* 20a one had to avoid the possibility of Sabbath and *Yom haKippurim* following one another: “Ulla said, On account of the vegetables (which would become stale if kept over two days); R. Acha b. Hanina said, On account of the (unburied) dead (which would commence to decompose if kept over two days).” The incidence of the festivals on certain days of the week was to be ruled out, so as to prevent *Yom haKippurim* or *Hosha’na Rabba* from falling on Sabbath. Thus in the *Shulchan Aruch*: “On the following days it is not allowed to set the festivals: *Rosh haShanah* on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday, and *Yom haKippurim* on Tuesday, Sunday and Friday...” (*Orach Chayim* 428, No. 1; cf. *Tur* and Rambam, *Hilchot Kiddush haChodesh* 3:1).

The days of the week being marked by the Hebrew alphabet, we arrive at the following mnemotechnic rule: *Lo ADU Rosh, velo GEU Yom haKippurim* (*ADU* means *Aleph, Dalet, Vav* — Sunday, Wednesday and Friday; *GEU* means *Gimel, Aleph, Vav* — Tuesday, Sunday and Friday). The general regulations of the calendar are treated in the *Yotzer* for the *hafsakah rishonah* (first break), opening with the words: *Or zaru’a zoreach kevodo*.

3. THE SECOND DAY OF ROSH HASHANAH

In days gone by, the beginning of a new month would be proclaimed by the *Sanhedrin*, on the basis of two witnesses offering evidence that they had sighted the New Moon. In all the outlying localities where it was impossi-

ble for the emissaries of the *Sanhedrin* to arrive on time, it was customary to keep the particular festival for two days instead of just one, as a precautionary measure. This regulation of keeping a second festival day, *Yom Tov Sheni shel Galuyot*, was retained beyond the borders of *Eretz Yisrael*, even after the publication of a regular calendar, which did not depend on visual evidence of the New Moon. The sole exception was *Yom haKippurim* which, being a fast day, was kept as a single day. Even here we find Ya’akov b. Asher, the author of the *Turim*, reporting that “the pious and meritorious in *Ashkenaz* used to keep the Day of Atonement for two days, fasting on both” (*Orach Chayim* 624, No. 3). The significance of this second festival day of the Diaspora ought to be seen within the context of the Jewish people’s spiritual bond with *Eretz Yisrael* at all times, in whatever country they might abide. The importance attached to the second festival day is borne out by the pronouncement of both Rab and Samuel, that one guilty of the desecration of the second festival day kept in the Diaspora was to be put under a ban (*Pessahim* 52a). In the case of *Rosh haShanah*, however, the regulation of keeping two festival days covered *Eretz Yisrael* as well. According to the *Talmud Yerushalmi*, this was an early enactment traceable to the Prophets.

The institution of an additional festival day is treated in the following Talmudic passage: “But now that we are well acquainted with the fixing of the New Moon, why do we observe two days? — Because they sent (word) from there (Palestine): Give heed to the customs of your ancestors which have come down to you; for it might happen that the government might issue a decree (to destroy all sacred writings and prevent the study of the Law and thus all knowledge of fixing the calendar would be lost) and it will cause confusion (in ritual). It was stated: With

respect to the two festival days of the New Year, Rab and Samuel both said: (An egg) laid on the first day is forbidden on the second day. For we have learnt: In early times they (the *Sanhedrin*) admitted the testimony about the new moon throughout the (whole) day (on the 30th Ellul). Once, however, the witnesses were late in arriving and the Levites erred in the chant (they sang the psalm for ordinary days at the eventide sacrifice and it turned out after the arrival of the witnesses that it was actually New Year's Day). In consequence they enacted that they should only receive witnesses until *Minchah*, but if witnesses came from *Minchah* onwards, they observed (the remainder of) that day and the following day as holy" (*Bezah* 4b-5a).

A difference of opinion has arisen amongst the codists, whether both days of *Rosh haShanah* were to be regarded as "one long day," as a single sanctified entity (*kedushah achat*), or not. The principle to be adopted in this case would determine whether it was proper to pronounce the *Shehecheyanu* blessing also on the second day of *Rosh haShanah* at *Kiddush* and the blowing of the *shofar*. We shall quote the normative opinion of Ya'akov b. Asher (*Tur*): "The *Geonim* have written that *Zeman* (the blessing of *Shehecheyanu*) was not to be pronounced either at *Kiddush* or *Shofar*, but my father wrote, it was right to take a new fruit (on the second evening of *Rosh haShanah*) and pronounce the *Shehecheyanu* over it at the same time (as one made the *Kiddush*), and thus be saved from all doubt, and such too was the practice followed by R. Meir of Rothenburg" (*Tur, Orach Chayim* 600).

4. THE LESHANAH TOVAH TIKATEV WISH

In the *Tur, Orach Chayim* 582, No. 12, we read the following: "In *Ashkenaz* it is customary (on *Rosh haShanah*

eve) for the people to visit one another and pronounce the wish, May you be inscribed (in the book of life) for a good year." This custom appears to be related to the following Talmudic observation: "R. Kruspedai said in the name of R. Johanan: Three books are opened (in Heaven) on New Year; one for the thoroughly wicked, one for the thoroughly righteous and one for the intermediate. The thoroughly righteous are forthwith inscribed definitively in the book of life; the thoroughly wicked are forthwith inscribed definitively in the book of death; the doom of the intermediate is suspended from New Year until the Day of Atonement; if they deserve well, they are inscribed in the book of life; if they do not deserve well, they are inscribed in the book of death" (*Rosh haShanah* 16b).

The *leShanah Tovah* wish, expressed on *Rosh haShanah* eve alone, accordingly signifies: We hope and wish that you belong to those who, being regarded as truly pious, are forthwith inscribed in the Divine book of life. According to Maharil (Jacob Moellen haLevi, ca. 1430), it is customary to pronounce this wish already in correspondence conducted during the month of Ellul. (Cf. *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 128, No. 2.)

5. SYMBOLS OF A GOOD YEAR

"Said Abaye: Now that it has been said that omens are of significance — *simana milta hi* — man should make a regular habit of eating, at the beginning of the year, pumpkin, fenugreek, leek, beets and dates (these grow in profusion and are symbolic of prosperity)" (*Horayot* 12a and *Keritot* 6a). In *Machzor Vitry* (compiled by R. Simchah, a pupil of Rashi, we read: "For this reason (basing themselves on the above quoted Talmudical passage) it is the custom of *Benei Tsofat* (French Jews) to eat red apples on *Rosh haShanah*, and it is also customary in

Provence to eat light coloured or white grapes and calf's head..." (p. 362).

Our own custom of eating sweet apples and honey as a good omen is cited by Ya'akov b. Asher (*Tur*): "Each place has its own custom, and thus it is customary in *Ashkenaz* to open the New Year by eating sweet apples with honey and pronounce the following: 'May it be Thy will... to renew unto us a happy and pleasant year' " (*Tur, Orach chayim* 583).

The first authority to mention the custom of eating sweet apples dipped in honey as a propitious omen appears to be Abudarham (circa 1340; cf. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 583, glosses of the Rema).

6. THE TASHLICH RITUAL

The expression *tashlich*, denoting "may you throw," is of Biblical origin: *Vetashlich bimtzulot yam kol hatotam* — "and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19).

The origin and nature of this custom is dealt with in the following passage from *Otzar Dinim uMinhagim*: "*Tashlich* is a prayer recited on the first day of *Rosh haShanah* after *Minchah* at a river or spring before sundown (if the first day should fall on Sabbath, the ritual is postponed to the second day). The prayer comprises the three last verses in the book of Micah: 'Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old' (7:18—20). This is an indica-

tion (*remez*) of one's intention to sin no more. Similarly, we read in another Biblical passage: 'Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house... that performeth not his promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied'... (Nehemiah 5:13)."

There is no mention of the *Tashlich* ritual in the Talmud, *Geonim* or early codists. The first authority to refer to it, Maharil, makes the following observation: "This custom, meant to remind us of the *Akeidah*, is probably traceable to the following *Midrash*: As Abraham and Isaac made their way to perform the *Akeidah*, they were met by Satan (the power opposed to Goodness) in the form of a river threatening to drown them (cf. *Tanhuma* on *Vayeira*). It is customary to go to a river in which there is fish, that we may be reminded of the fate which may overtake us suddenly (cf. Koheleth 9:12), to guide our minds and hearts towards penitence."

A further reason given for this custom is that the vicinity of water, being clean, is accordingly considered an appropriate site for the performance of sacred rites — David Z. Hoffmann, *Jeshurun* II, 1915, p. 591.

Maharil proceeds to warn us not to bring along breadcrumbs with which to feed the fish, as this could lead to the desecration of the Festival through forbidden feeding. We must take special care of this on Sabbath and it might possibly be for this reason that we do not perform the *Tashlich* ritual on Sabbath. Following is the comment made by R. Moshe Isserles in his work *Torat ha'Olah*, part 3, section 6: "The usage of Israel is to be regarded as holy doctrine — *minhag Yisrael Torah*. The water, the whirlpool in the sea, are meant to bring to our minds the creation of the world by God..." (Cf. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 583, No.2, glosses of the Rema, and detailed comment in the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 129, No. 21.)

7. WEARING A KITTEL ON YAMIM NORAIM

The oldest source for the custom to wear white clothes on the *Yamim Noraim* is an Aggadah brought by the *Talmud Yerushalmi*: "It is a general custom for a person called to appear before Court, to don black garments and leave his beard untended, forasmuch as he does not know the kind of sentence he is to receive. It is otherwise with the Jews on *Rosh haShanah*. One puts on white garments and tends one's beard before, one eats, drinks and retains a happy frame of mind in the knowledge that God will surely perform miracles" (*Yerushalmi, Rosh haShanah* 1:3).

In this context the kittel is a sign of blissful optimism and trust in the efficacy of Divine Grace.

Mordechai Yaffe (1530—1612), on the other hand, makes the following comment in his work *Levush*: "Likewise is it (the *kittel*) the shroud of the dead, through which the heart of man is humbled, inducing contrition, so as to achieve perfect penitence" (Siman 610, No. 4). In *Sefer Ta'amei haMitzvot*, quoting the noted Talmudical scholar Maharshal (p. 87), we read of the white colour as denoting the remission of sins: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18).

Franz Rosenzweig has plumbed for us the deeper significance of this custom: "Throughout these days, a wholly visible sign expresses the underlying motif, namely, that for the individual, eternity is here shifted into time. For on these days the worshiper wears his shroud..."

"Here it is not a wedding attire but the true attire of death. Man is utterly alone on the day of his death, when he is clothed in his shroud, and in the prayers of these days he is also alone. They too set him, lonely and naked, straight before the throne of God. In time to come, God will judge him solely by his own deeds and the thoughts of his own heart. God will not ask about those around him

and what they have done to help him or to corrupt him. He will be judged solely according to what he himself has done and thought. On the Days of Awe too, he confronts the eyes of his judge in utter loneliness, as if he were dead in the midst of life, a member of the community of man which, like himself, has placed itself beyond the grave in the very fullness of living..." (*The Star of Redemption*, pp. 325—7).

8. THE CUSTOM OF COVERING THE FLOOR BEFORE KNEELING, INTERPRETED BY FRANZ ROSENZWEIG

On *Rosh haShanah* at the *Aleinu* prayer, and on *Yom haKippurim*, once at *Aleinu* and three times at the *Avodah*, the entire congregation falls on its knees (*Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 61, No. 4, Rema). It is generally accepted to place a spread on the floor before kneeling down (cf. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 131, No. 8, Rema, and *Magen Avraham ad loc., se'if katan* No. 2).

The reason for this rule is set out in the following Talmudical passage: "Rab happened to be in Babylon at a public fast... The whole congregation (subsequently) fell on their faces, but Rab did not fall on his face. Why did not Rab fall on his face? — there was a stone pavement there and it has been taught: 'Neither shall ye place any figured stone in your land — *ve-even maskit lo titnu beartzchem* — to bow down upon it' (Leviticus 26:1) — upon it ye may not bow down in your land, but you may prostrate yourselves upon the stones in the Temple" (*Megillah* 22b). Synagogues may be paved with stones, and so the placing of a spread before kneeling is meant to save us from transgressing against Biblical law. This, rather than any other consideration, underlies this custom.

Franz Rosenzweig, prompted by Hermann Cohen, associates the custom of kneeling down as such with a

highly significant principle of religious psychology. It is worthwhile to quote the thought-provoking elucidation of Rosenzweig at length, and note how philosophic analysis may reveal the deeper layers of a *minhag*: "Kneeling in common before the Lord of all in the world, and 'of the spirits in all flesh,' opens the way for the community, and only for this community and the individual within it, the way to the all-embracing common unity where everyone knows everyone else and greets him wordlessly face-to-face..."

"What distinguishes the Days of Awe from all other festivals is that here and only here does the Jew kneel. Here he does what he refused to do before the king of Persia, and no power on earth can compel him to do, and what he need not do before God on any other day of the year, or in any other situation he may face during his lifetime. And he does not kneel to confess a fault or to pray for forgiveness of sins, acts to which this festival is primarily dedicated. He kneels only in beholding the immediate nearness of God, hence on an occasion which transcends the earthly needs of today. For the same reason, the Prayer of Benedictions said on every Sabbath omits the requests for forgiveness of sins. The Day of Atonement, which climaxes the ten-day period of redemption, is quite properly called the Sabbath of Sabbaths. The congregation now rises to the feeling of God's nearness, as it sees in memory the Temple service of old, and visualizes especially the moment when the priest, this once in all the year, pronounced the ineffable name of God that was expressed by a circumlocution on all other occasions, and the assembled people fell on their knees. And the congregation participates directly in the feeling of God's nearness when it says the prayer that is bound up with the promise of a future time, 'when every knee shall bow before God, when the idols will be utterly cut off, when

the world will be perfected under the kingdom of the Almighty, and all the children of flesh will call upon his name, when he will turn unto himself all the wicked of the earth, and all will accept the yoke of his kingdom.' On the Days of Awe, this prayer mounts beyond the version of the Concluding Prayer of the everyday service. On these Days of Awe the plea for bringing about such a future is already part of the Central Prayer, which — in solemn words — calls for the day when all creatures will prostrate themselves that 'they may all form a single band to do God's will with a whole heart.' But the Concluding Prayer, which utters this cry day after day, silences it on the Days of Awe, and, in complete awareness that this congregation is not yet the 'single band' of all that is created, anticipates the moment of eternal redemption by seizing on it now, in the present. And what the congregation merely expresses in words in the course of the year, is here expressed in action: it prostrates itself before the King of Kings" (*The Star of Redemption*, pp. 323—4).

9. THE FAST OF GEDALIAH

Gedaliah was governor of the remnants of the Jewish people in *Eretz Yisrael* after the destruction of the First Temple. At Mizpah he sought to re-create a centre of Jewish life. Among the tasks he took upon himself was that of educating his people to keep faith, which brought him into conflict with the ruling power. Although he had been warned, he refrained from taking any measures against his enemies. As a result, he was murdered by Ishmael the son of Nethaniah (*Jeremiah*, Ch. 40 and 41; also *II Kings*, 25:22—25). In both Biblical accounts we are informed in general terms that Gedaliah was murdered "in the seventh month." The noted Biblical commentator Redak (David Kimchi, 1160—1235) is of the opinion, that

the expression *chodesh* in this context denotes *rosh chodesh* — the beginning of the month (cf. the statement *Machar chodesh*, in I Samuel 20:18). This would mean that Gedaliah was murdered already on *Rosh haShanah*, the fast having been postponed because of the Festival (Cf. also *Baer Heitev* on *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 549, No. 1).

In the Talmud we find the following statement on the date and significance of this fast: "It has been taught: R. Simeon said: There are four expositions among those written by R. Akiba with which I do not agree. He said... 'The fast of the seventh month' (Zechariah 8:9): This is the third of Tishri on which Gedaliah the son of Ahikam was killed. Who killed him? Ishmael the son of Nethaniah killed him; and the fact that a fast was instituted on this day shows that the death of the righteous is put on a level with the burning of the House of our God..." (*Rosh haShanah* 18b).

The thoughts of S. R. Hirsch on the significance of this fast merit a careful and critical consideration. They provide a fitting occasion for assessing the basic Jewish attitude towards the host nations of the Diaspora. Hirsch believes this fast to denote a warning against misunderstanding the purpose of the *Galuth*: "So against what does *Tzom Gedaliah* warn us?

1. "It warns us against the folly that in the *Galuth* Israel must wrest its independence by its own efforts, as if in its wanderings through its age-old wilderness it was thrown back solely upon itself and therefore had solely of itself to free itself, as far as it could, from the chains of suffering that held it in thrall.
2. "Throughout the many centuries it proclaims to the generations of Israel the warning: 'Remain true to the land which has accepted you, to the Ruler who protects you! It is God who leads you everywhere and is with you everywhere. In this great trek through the

wilderness, too, God goes before you unseen and points out to you where to stay and which places to avoid. Give yourselves up entirely to Him and show this surrender in loyal attachment to your protecting Ruler and Realm and in resigned obedience even to your oppressors. Thus will He incline their hearts to lovingkindness and the length of your suffering will be eased' " (*Horeb*, Ch. 33, p. 145).

The status of *Tzom Gedaliah*, the 17th of Tammuz and the 10th of Tevet as days of fasting, is dealt with in the following Talmudical passage: "Why should they (the witnesses) not also go forth to report Tammuz and Tevet (on account of the fasts of the 17th Tammuz and the 10th Tevet) seeing that R. Hanah b. Bizna has said in the name of R. Simeon the Saint: What is the meaning of the verse, 'Thus said the Lord 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 be to the House of Judah joy and gladness' (Zechariah 8:19)? The prophet calls these days both days of fasting and days of joy, signifying that when there is peace they shall be for joy and gladness, but if there is not peace they shall be fast days! — R. Papa replied: What it means is this: when there is peace they shall be for joy and gladness; if there is persecution, they shall be fast days; if there is no persecution but yet not peace, then those who desire may fast and those who desire need not fast" (*Rosh haShanah* 18b).

Rabeinu Nissim (Ran, ca. 1320—1380) has pointed out that the voluntary character of these fast days, though they are generally accepted as such by the whole community, is expressed in the fact, that with the sole exception of *Tish'ah beAv*, fasting does not begin before the morning.

10. ASSERET YEMEI HATESHUVAH — THE TEN DAYS OF PENITENCE

Those belonging to the mediocre category, who are neither virtuous nor wicked, are given a chance, by Divine grace, to better themselves, especially during the period between *Rosh haShanah* and *Yom haKippurim* (cf. *Rosh haShanah* 16b), before their sentence is ratified in the Heavenly Court (cf. this chapter, No. 4, p. 53).

Referring to the prophetic admonition, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found" (Isaiah 55:6), the Gemara concludes that the ten days between *Rosh haShanah* and *Yom haKippurim* are a period of special grace (*Rosh haShanah* 18a). Concerning Nabal, the hard-hearted spouse of Abigail, we read: "And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal..." (I Samuel 25:38). In the Gemara we read the following comment: "R. Nahman said in the name of Rabbah b. Abbuha: These are the ten days between the New Year and the Day of Atonement" (*Rosh haShanah* 18a).

In the *Yerushalmi* we are advised to be particularly circumspect, during this period, in the fulfilment of the Divine Law: "R. Hiyya the Elder gave this rule to Rab: Should you be able to partake of all your food in complete purity throughout the entire year, then you should do so; if this is not feasible, then at least on seven days in the year." (*Yerushalmi, Shabbat* 1:3. Cf. Commentary of *Korban haEidah* in whose opinion the seven days in question refer to the period intervening between *Rosh haShanah* and *Yom haKippurim*.)

Thus we are told in the *Shulchan Aruch*: "Likewise, whoever is generally not so particular in taking his bread from a non-Jewish baker, ought to refrain from doing so on these days" (*Orach Chayim* 603). We have it on record that there were pious people who, as a sign of humbleness,

would accept alms on these days, although they habitually refused to do so (*Yerushalmi, Peah* 8:8).

11. THE KAPPAROT RITUAL

The custom of rendering *Kapparot* is described in the following passage: "Every head of a household has a fowl killed for himself and for his dependants, for each one separately or for more persons together — possibly on the eve of the Day of Atonement at daybreak, or otherwise on any other of the preceding days of penitence. This is a form of ransom (*kapparah*) for suffering that ought to have been meted out to one's own person. For men one takes a cockerel (the expression *gever* in post-Biblical Hebrew signifies both man and cockerel), and for women a hen. The fowl to be slaughtered (i.e., *kapparah*) is taken in the right hand and one recites the scriptural verses from Psalm 107:10, 14, 17—21 and Job 33:23—24. This is followed by the swinging of the foal around one's head — or that of the person undergoing the ritual. At the same time one pronounces the following: 'This is my (your) exchange, substitution and expiation. This rooster is going to be killed and I (you) shall be admitted and allowed to enter upon a long, happy and peaceful life.' Some people present the slaughtered fowl to the poor; it is preferable however to donate to the needy the cost of the *kapparot*. If roosters are difficult to come by, one may procure other kinds of fowl or animals — geese, ducks or possibly fish — other than animals of the species that could be offered up as sacrifices during the time of the Temple (i.e., no doves, for instance)" (Zobel, *Das Jahr des Juden*, pp. 73—4).

The custom of rendering *kapparot* is not mentioned anywhere in the Talmud, but the *Geonim* already knew of it. The validity of the custom was controversial. The rab-

binic opinion opposed to this custom is best expressed in the decision recorded by the *Shulchan Aruch*: "One ought to refrain from subscribing to the custom of rendering a *kapparah* on the eve of *Yom haKippurim*, i.e., the slaughtering of a rooster for every male person, accompanied by the recitation of Biblical verses..." — thus Joseph Caro. The Rema, however, observes: "Already among the *Geonim* there are some who write of this custom, as well as several of the latter day codists, and also in these lands (the ones following *Ashkenazi* usage) we have accepted this ritual; one ought not to deviate from it, since it is a meritorious custom — *ve-ein leshanot ki hu minhag vatikim*" (*Orach Chayim* 605). Another authority approving this custom is Mordechai b. Hillel *Ashkenazi*, who writes (at the beginning of *Yoma*): "It is laudable thus to proceed, for such is the custom followed by all the Sages of Israel."

An interesting remark is made by Rashi on the opinion of the *Geonim* in regard to this custom. In the Gemara (*Shabbat* 81b) we find a discussion on *Purpissa*, a clod of earth attached to a plant. Rashi, *ad.loc.*, makes the following observation: "This is a perforated flower pot, i.e., one connected with the earth, into which seeds have been inserted. In the rulings of the *Geonim* I have found that one makes baskets out of palm leaves, fills them with earth and animal dung and prepares them for each male and female child of the household fifteen or twenty-two days before *Rosh haShanah*, and sows them with Egyptian beans or other kinds of legume. This is called *Purpissa*. On *Rosh haShanah* Eve each child takes his plant, revolves it seven times around his head, at the same time saying: 'This is for that, this is my surrogate, my exchange.' Thereupon one throws these plants into the river."

12. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EATING ON YOM KIPPUR EVE

The eating of an abundant meal on *Erev Yom haKippurim* is a specific Jewish obligation. The rabbis, however, warn of any over indulgence: "It is best to eat only such kinds of food that are easily digestible on *Erev Yom haKippurim* and refrain from having an over full stomach, lest we be possessed of an overbearing sense of superiority during prayer" (*Orach Chayim* 608, No. 4).

Our rabbis have found a Biblical reference for the duty of eating a proper meal on *Erev Yom haKippurim*: "R. Hiyya b. Rab from Difti learnt 'And ye shall afflict your souls on the ninth day' (Leviticus 23:32). Do we then fast on the ninth day? Is it not on the tenth day that we fast? We do; but the use of this word indicates that if a man eats and drinks on the ninth day, the Scripture accounts this to him as if he fasted on both the ninth and tenth days" (*Rosh haShanah* 9a; *Berachot* 8b, and *Yoma* 81b).

This somewhat strange sounding injunction and formulation of the Talmud has elicited several interpretations. The following three comments were chosen to demonstrate the manifold varieties of meaning embedded in the pronouncements of our Sages.

I. Ya'akov b. Asher: "We are given to understand by the word of Scripture: Prepare yourselves on the ninth for the mortification of the tenth. Eating is in this context referred to by God as 'mortification,' as if God had ordained fasting for both days. This reflects the great love of God for Israel, who for their own good enjoined fasting for the expiation of sins, only on one day. Moreover, God ordained that they eat and drink before, so that the fasting should not harm them. This can be likened to a king who had an only son, for whom he decreed a fast for the duration of a single day, at the same time, however, instructing

his attendants to provide him with ample food and drink, that he should be able to endure it. This is how we must understand our custom of taking ample food on the eve of *Yom Kippur*. In the Midrash we read the following account: A mayor once ordered his attendant to buy fish for him. and gave him a golden coin. A Jewish tailor purchased the sole fish left on the market for five pieces of gold. The attendant told his master what had happened. The mayor then called for the tailor and asked him why he had seen fit to buy a single fish for five pieces of gold, especially when he must have noticed that his servant was endeavouring to procure it. But he (the tailor) retorted: 'Even for ten pieces of gold I would have purchased it, in order to eat it on the day on which God had specifically ordained eating and drinking, a day upon which we are confident that the Holy One, blessed be He, will absolve us of all our sins.' Thereupon the mayor remarked: 'You have acted in the right manner,' and dismissed him in peace" (*Orach Chayim* 604).

II. Baruch haLevi Epstein: "The reasons for the injunction to eat and drink on the ninth of Tishri are not clearly evident in the Torah. We might possibly understand it by reference to a Talmudical passage in *Ta'anit* 27b. Here we read that the delegation of Jewish men present at the rendering of a communal sacrifice as delegates of the whole nation — called *Anshei Ma'amad* — refrained from fasting on Sunday, in contrast to the remaining days of the week. One opinion brought by the Gemara in this connection explains that this was meant to prevent an abrupt transition from the peace and joy of the Sabbath to the pain of fasting. The commentators discussing this reason observed that a fast conducted after a day of ample eating was far more of a strain than fasting after an ordinary day... Accordingly, it makes sense that whoever

eats and drinks on the ninth (of Tishri) is accounted as if he had fasted on the ninth as well as the tenth, inasmuch as fasting on the tenth is made more difficult by the ample food of the ninth. In this sense eating on the ninth is seen as a prelude aggravating the fast. The fast of the tenth may thus be construed as one in two days of fasting" (*Torah Temimah* on Leviticus 23:32, from note 97).

III. Samson Raphael Hirsch: "This prohibition to fast on the ninth, on *Erev Yom Kippur*, may to a very high degree prove the moral Jewish character of our fasting on *Yom Kippur* and allow us to understand the words of our sages: *Kol haochel veshoteh bateshi'i ma'aleh alav hakatuv keilu hit'aneh teshi'i va'asiri* (*Yoma* 81b). If our *Yom Kippur* were the heathenish idea of pacifying a wrathful god, and our fasting a heathenish self-torturing castigation to satisfy its thirst for vengeance, how much greater would the *mitzvah* be, by a two days fast! The law which makes eating and drinking on *Erev Yom Kippur* into just a *mitzvah*, and which forbids fasting on that day, comes to oppose sharply this immoral and un-Jewish way of looking at *Yom Kippur*. Our eating on *Erev Yom Kippur* is a suitable expression for giving our fasting on *Yom Kippur* the true meaning of a *kapparah* promised on *Yom Kippur*, and only on *Yom Kippur* (*ach be'assor*)" (*Commentary on Leviticus, 23:32*).

13. THE INJUNCTION OF PENITENCE ON YOM HAKIPPURIM (WORK PROHIBITION, TOSSEFET YOM AND FIVE INNUYIM)

The work prohibition — *issur melachah* — on *Yom haKippurim* is of the same order of stringency as on Sabbath. Only for these two days do we find the Torah using the expression *Shabbat Shabbaton*, meaning a day of unconditional rest. In regard to Sabbath, we find this expression in Exodus 16:23; 31:15; 35:2 and Leviticus 23:3. In

regard to *Yom haKippurim* the expression is used in Leviticus 16:31 and 23:32. The two days, however, differ in respect of the punishment incurred for transgressing the work prohibition. In the Mishnah we read: "There is no difference between Sabbath and the Day of Atonement save only that the deliberate violation of the one is punished by a human court and the deliberate violation of the other by *Karet* (the hand of heaven)" (*Megillah* 1:5).

Basing itself on the Biblical passage in Leviticus 23:32, the Talmud derives the important Halachic injunction of *Tossefet Yom*, i.e., the duty of beginning the festival somewhat earlier and ending it later. Thus we read: "Whence then does R. Ishmael derive the rule that an addition is to be made from the profane on to the holy? — From what has been taught: 'And ye shall afflict yourselves on the ninth day' (Leviticus 23:32): I might think literally on the ninth day. It therefore says, 'in the evening' (*ibid.*). If in the evening, I might think, after dark? It therefore says, 'on the ninth day' (and after dark would be on the tenth). What then am I to understand? That we begin fasting while it is yet day; which shows that we add from the profane on to the holy. I know this so far only in regard to the inception of the holy day; how do I know it in regard to its termination? Because it says, 'from evening to evening' (*ibid.*). So far I have brought only the Day of Atonement under the rule; how do I know that it applies to Sabbaths also? Because it says, 'ye shall rest' (*ibid.*). How do I know that it applies to festivals? Because it says, 'your Sabbath' (*ibid.*). How am I to understand this? That wherever there is an obligation to rest, we add from the profane on to the holy" (*Rosh haShanah* 9a).

Beside the *melachah* prohibition, we have on the Day of Atonement the injunction of *innui*, i.e., of affliction. S. R. Hirsch renders this expression as "letting someone starve," whereas Buber-Rosenzweig understand it as "bending."

This is how S. R. Hirsch formulates his notion of the prohibition of enjoyment and work on the Day of Atonement: "*Innui nefesh* and *issur melachah* ... are acknowledgements in deeds... of the fate we so deservedly should get, did not God's miraculous Grace grant *kapparah* to our past. Without *kapparah*, which can be hoped for only from God's Grace having absolute power, by our guilt we have forfeited the right to 'exist' (*innui nefesh*) or 'to be productive' (*issur melachah*). As 'creature' and as 'man' we have trifled away all our future. In its whole depth, and to the whole of its extent, we have to recognize and acknowledge this fact" (*Commentary on Leviticus*, 23:27).

What is the meaning of *innui* (affliction), and what does it entail on our part? In the Talmud we read: "Our rabbis taught: 'Ye shall afflict your souls' (Leviticus 16:29). One might assume that one must sit in heat or cold in order to afflict oneself, therefore the text reads: 'And ye shall do no manner of work' (*ibid.*); just as the prohibition of labour means: sit and do nothing, so does the enjoinder of affliction signify: sit and do nothing (the affliction enjoined is negative; deny to yourself certain things, abstain from them. It does not demand self-affliction by a specific activity, such as sitting in the sun on a hot day). But say perhaps: If one sit in the sun and is warm, one may not say to him: Rise and sit in the shade; or, when he sits in the shade and is cool, one may not tell him: Rise and sit in the sun? (In this case affliction would take the negative form of abstaining from comfort, in accord with the proposition suggested). — It is as with labour: just as you have made no distinction with regard to labour, so in connection with the prescribed affliction (labour, in any form, is prohibited. Just as one is not obliged to engage in positive work of affliction, the negative form of abstention from

getting comfort. Hence, just as one need not go out of comfortable shade into the sun for the purpose of afflicting oneself, so need one not abstain from a change into shade in order to be afflicted in the sun) is no distinction to be made" (Yoma 74b).

It will be seen that it is not up to the individual to think out his own forms of affliction. The oral tradition of our rabbis prescribes five specifically defined afflictions — *hamishah innuyim* — thus we read: "On the Day of Atonement it is forbidden to eat, to drink, to wash, to anoint oneself, to put on sandals or to have marital intercourse" (Mishnah, Yoma 8:1). The Talmud relates these prohibitions to the manifold Biblical use of the expression *innui*: "To what do the five afflictions correspond? — R. Hisda said: To the five afflictions mentioned in the Torah: 'And on the tenth day' (Numbers 29:7); howbeit, 'on the tenth day' (Leviticus 23:27); 'a Sabbath of solemn rest' (*ibid.*: 32); 'it is a Sabbath of solemn rest' (*ibid.*, 16:31); 'and it shall be unto you' (*ibid.*: 29). But these are only five, whereas in our Mishnah we learn of six afflictions? — drinking is included in eating. For Resh Lakish said: Whence do we know that drinking is included in eating? Because Scripture said: 'And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God... in the tithe of thy corn, of thy (*tirosh*) wine, and of thine oil' (Deuteronomy 14:23); *tirosh* is wine and yet Scripture reads: 'And thou shalt eat'" (Yoma 76a—b).

The obligation of afflicting oneself on the Day of Atonement being of such great importance, children too are drawn into it for educational reasons. Thus we read: "One should not afflict (children) to deny them food at all on the Day of Atonement but one trains them a year or two before in order that they become used to religious observances" (Yoma 8:4).

However great the stress laid on the regulations

concerning the Day of Atonement, they are yet set aside whenever they might endanger the life of a person. In the words of our rabbis: "A sick person is fed at the word of experts (physicians). And if no experts are there, one feeds him at his own wish until he says: 'Enough' " (Yoma 8:5).

14. STANDING UP ON YOM HAKIPPURIM

In the *shulchan Aruch* we find the following note: "Some people are accustomed to stand (during the prayer service, cf. *Taz ad. loc.*) on *Yom haKippurim* both by night and by day" (*Orach Chayim* 619, No. 5). R. Ya'akov b. Asher in his *Tur* adduces as a source for the custom of pious men in *Ashkenaz* to remain standing, an Aggadah in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* (Ch. 46): "Sammael said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Sovereign of the Universe! Thou hast given me power over all the nations of the world, but over Israel Thou hast not given me power. He answered him, saying: Behold, thou hast power over them on the Day of Atonement if they have any sin, but if not, thou hast no power over them..."

"Sammael saw that sin was not to be found among them on the Day of Atonement. He said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Sovereign of all the universe! Thou hast one people like the ministering angels who are in heaven... Just as the ministering angels have neither food nor drink, so the Israelites have neither food nor drink on the Day of Atonement. Just as the ministering angels have no joints, in like wise the Israelites stand upon their feet... Just as the ministering angels are innocent of all sin on the Day of Atonement, so are the Israelites innocent of all sin on the Day of Atonement."

15. THE TEK'AH MARKING THE CONCLUSION OF YOM
HAKIPPURIM

Several reasons have been given for the ruling to terminate *Yom haKippurim* by a *shofar* blast (cf. *Shulchan Aruch* 623, No. 6, Rema). Following are some of the more important ones:

- A. The blowing of the *shofar* signifies the withdrawal of the Divine Glory which dominates Israel notably on the Day of Atonement — *siman lesilluk haShechinah* — as it is written: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with a sound of a *shofar*" (Psalm 47:6) — so *Turei Zahav* (*Taz*, by David b. Shemuel haLevi, 1586 — 1667) on the *Shulchan Aruch*, *ad. loc.*
- B. The blowing is a reminder of the jubilee year when the *shofar* was sounded as in Leviticus 25:9 — so *Kol Bo* (by Shemiah b. Simchah from Provence, ca. 1300).
- C. "So says Ri as well (a nephew of Rabeinu Tam, a leading Tossafist): Our custom to mark the termination of the Day of Atonement by sounding the *shofar* is based on the need to indicate the advent of nightfall, that it is permitted to give food to the children who fasted, as also that it is now possible to make the necessary preparations for the post-*Yom Kippur* meal which has the status, as it were, of a festive repast-*ke'ein Yom Tov*... It is not, however, for the reason given in the *Machzorim*, that the *shofar* is sounded in memory of the jubilee, for was every year a jubilee year"? (*Tossafot* on *Shabbat* 114b, s.v. *ve'amai*.)

III. THE TEXTS

a) TORAH AND HAFTARAH TEXTS

The Torah and *Haftarah* passages to be read on *Yamim Noraim* are dealt with in the Mishnah, *Megillah* 3:5, and Gemara, *Megillah* 31a.

Torah Texts

First day of Rosh haShanah: Genesis 21:1—34;
VahaShem pakad et sarah.

The reason for the choice of this section of the Torah for the first day of *Rosh haShanah* is given in the following Talmudical comment: "On the New Year Sarah, Rachel and Hannah were visited (i.e., remembered on High)" (*Rosh haShanah* 10b). *Pekidah*, the setting of our fate in accordance with the Divine pattern — is seen by Buber as the cardinal notion of this day upon which all the creatures pass before God to be examined for a verdict of life or death.

Second Day of Rosh haShanah: Genesis 22:1—24;
Akeidah.

For the choice of this section in the Torah on *Rosh haShanah*, we refer to a less known Talmudical passage. In

verse 13 of this chapter, the Hebrew expression *achar* is somewhat problematical. Thus we read: "What is the meaning of *achar*? R. Judah b. Simon says: God spoke to Abraham: After all the generations (i.e., one day) your children will become involved in sin and suffer hardship, to be ultimately redeemed by the horns of this ram, as it is written: 'And the Lord God shall blow the trumpet (*shofar*)' " (Zechariah 9:14; *Yerushalmi Ta'anit* 2:4).

Setting aside any attempt at elucidating the significance of the *Akeidah* within the present framework, we shall quote at length the treatment of this theme by Maimonides: "The account of Abraham our father binding his son, includes two great ideas or principles of our faith. First, it shows us the extent and limit of the fear of God. Abraham is commanded to perform a certain act, which is not equalled by any surrender of property or by any sacrifice of life, for it surpasses everything that can be done, and belongs to the class of actions which are believed to be contrary to human feelings. He had been without child, and had been longing for a child; he had great riches, and was expecting that a nation should spring from his seed. After all hope of a son had already been given up, a son was born unto him. How great must have been his delight in the child! how intensely must he have loved him! And yet because he feared God, and loved to do what God commanded, he thought little of that beloved child, and set aside all his hopes concerning him, and consented to kill him after a journey of three days. If the act by which he showed his readiness to kill his son had taken place immediately when he received the commandment, it might have been the result of confusion and not of consideration. But the fact that he performed it three days after he had received the commandment, proves the presence of thought, proper consideration, and careful examination of what is due to the Divine com-

mand and what is in accordance with the love and fear of God. There is no necessity to look for the presence of any other idea or of anything that might have affected his emotions. For Abraham did not hasten to kill Isaac out of fear that God might slay him or make him poor, but solely because it is man's duty to love and fear God, even without hope of reward or fear of punishment. We have repeatedly explained this. The angel, therefore, says to him, 'For now I know,' etc. (*ibid*, verse 12) that is, from this action, for which you deserve to be truly called a God-fearing man, all people shall learn how far we must go in the fear of God" (*Moreh Nebuchim — The Guide for the Perplexed*, Book 3, Ch. 24, p. 306).

The reading in the second scroll on both days of *Rosh haShanah* is from Numbers 29:1—6.

Yom haKippurim, Shacharit: Leviticus 16:1 — 36; *Avodat haYom*.

The choice of this text is evident, dealing as it does with the sacrificial ceremony peculiar to this day.

Already during the period of the Temple this text was chosen for reciting, however with the addition of Leviticus 23:26—32. The portion Numbers 29:7—11, read out according to the present custom from the second scroll, was recited by heart by the High Priest (cf. *Yoma* 7:1). For the *Shacharit* reading of Leviticus 16:1—36 on *Yom Kippur*, six men are called up to the Torah. Thus "On Mondays and on Thursdays and on Sabbath at *Minchah*, three read from the Torah... On New Moons and on the intermediate days of Festivals four read... This is the general rule: on any day which has a *Mussaf* and is not a Festival four read; on a Festival five read; on the Day of Atonement six read; on Sabbath seven read" (*Megillah* ch. 3, from Mishnahs 1 and

2 — thus in the Gemara; in the Mishnah editions ch. 4:1 — 2). In the Gemara the following reason is given for this rising scale: "For every additional distinguishing mark an additional person reads. Hence on New Moon and the intermediate days, when there is an additional sacrifice, four read; on Festivals when in addition work is prohibited, five read; on the Day of Atonement when in addition there is a penalty of *kareth*, six read; on Sabath when there is a penalty of stoning, seven read" (*Megillah* 22b).

Yom haKippurim, Minchah: Leviticus 18:1—30; *Parashat Arayot* (dealing with intercourse forbidden on moral grounds).

The instruction to read this section of the Torah at the *Minchah* service is found in Gemara, *Megillah* 31a. Following is Rashi's comment on the choice of this passage: "Whoever has sinned, will now keep away from sin, the temptation to sexual offences being particularly strong, forasmuch as man is moved by a strong desire and is overpowered by his urge." Similar to that of Rashi, is the explanation for the choice of this passage given by David b. Shemuel haLevi: "The sensual nature of man makes these sins appear particularly enticing. A warning is therefore issued on *Yom haKippurim*, a day which commands reverence, it (the warning) being likely to inscribe itself in the heart of man more than on any other day" (*Taz, Shulchan Aruch* 622, No. 2).

Tossafot makes the following comment upon the Talmudical text in question, s.v. *BeMinchah korin ba'arayot*: "The women wear their ornaments in honour of this day and the reading of the text is meant as a special warning for them that they should not stray." In the Midrash we read the following: "Israel reads the section dealing with *arayot* hinting thereby to the Holy One Bles-

sed be He that He, too, should not uncover our nakedness (i.e., sinfulness) just as he has commanded us not to uncover... nakedness." A further highly relevant reason for the choice of this reading is given us by Eisenstein: "On the day of Atonement the synagogue is also visited by habitual transgressors who otherwise keep away from it. To them, in particular, a warning is given not to transgress the rules of forbidden intercourse, since on these depends the maintenance of the purity of family"! (*Otzar Dinim uMinhagim* p. 166).

Haftarah Texts

First day of Rosh haShanah: I Samuel 1-2:10.

The choice is in the first place based on the tradition of Hannah being remembered on High on *Rosh haShanah* (*Rosh haShanah* 10b and Rashi on *Megillah* 31a). The basic ideas and sentiments characterizing the New Year festival are reflected in the leit-motiv of the story and hymn, being the relevance of Divine Providence to individual fate — *Hashgachah Peratit*.

The following verses of this hymn potently reflect the shaping of human destiny by God:

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly;
let not arrogancy come out of your mouth;
for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
and by Him actions are weighed.
The bows of the mighty men are broken,
and they that stumbled are girded with strength.
They that were full have hired out themselves for bread;
and they that were hungry ceased:
so that the barren hath borne seven;

and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.
 The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:
 he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.
 The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich;
 he bringeth low and lifteth up.
 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
 and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,
 to set them among princes, and to make them inherit
 the throne of glory:
 for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
 and He hath set the world upon them."

(I Samuel 2:3—8.)

Second Day of Rosh haShanah: Jeremiah 31:1—19
 (2—20).

Whereas the content of the *Haftarah* read on the first day teaches us the lesson of Divine providence for the individual, that of the second day refers to the people as a whole. Following is the explanation for the choice of the *Haftarah* text by Mendel Hirsch: "The choice (of this *Haftarah*), is motivated by the most tender regard for the feeling of profound brotherly love. Those of us who on *Rosh haShanah*... are gathered in the presence of our Father, indeed all those whom for two millennia we recognize as our brothers... are derived from the exiles of the kingdom of Judah. The ten brother-tribes who detached themselves from the bonds of the Law, who indeed never fully accepted it, these have much earlier forsaken their homestead and have disappeared thousands of years ago... One can thus hardly fail to be touched by the solicitous tenderness of those who laid down the rules of Divine worship to recall to those gathered on *Rosh haShanah* in the presence of God — the sons of Judah — the loving memory of the remaining brothers who have disappeared,

after having drawn their attention to the noble images of Abraham and Isaac upon Mount Moriah.... To this end they chose the prophetic words, that so potently proclaim the ultimate return of these, long estranged, children of the House of Jacob... foreshadowed to us by our mother Rachel, weeping for her children...." (translated from *Die Haftorot*, second edition, p. 468).

Rashi on *Megillah* 31a, believes the cardinal message of the *Haftarah* to be contained in the following verse:

"Is Ephraim my dear son?
 Is he a pleasant child?
 For whenever I speak of him,
 I will earnestly remember him further:
 Therefore my bowels are troubled for him;
 I will surely have mercy upon him, says the Lord."
 (Jeremiah 31:20.)

The *Haftarah* is meant to console us that even though God may have many difficulties in store for us, His boundless love nevertheless remains our comfort.

An Aggadah, referred to by Rashi in connection with Jeremiah, ch. 31, might provide the natural link between the *Haftarah* text and the *Akeidah*. The *Akeidah* remains the archetype of self-abnegation. Abraham's achievement is no doubt beyond our reach, but the memory of it can and should prompt us to active emulation. In it we may find the spiritual power to overcome all that is ugly in us. Rachel too offers us an example of silent greatness, evidence of her power of self-mastery. The *Midrash* on *Eichah* describes the Patriarchs beseeching the Lord as the Temple was to be destroyed, but all their supplications were in vain; thereupon Rachel, our mother, sprang up and standing in the Presence of God spoke out: "Lord of the Universe, You know very well how Jacob, your ser-

vant, loved me with an ardent love, having for my sake served my father for seven years. When at last the time was ripe for my marriage, my father planned to exchange me for my sister, yet I was not possessed by jealousy against my sister. Now I — a mortal being of flesh and blood — did not become jealous of her who caused me to suffer; but You, living eternal and loving God, why are you envious of idol worship, which is surely something insubstantial, and yet you intend sending my sons into exile”?

Thereupon God's mercy was roused and He said: “For your sake I shall let Israel come home again”; this is the meaning of:

“Thus says the Lord;
A voice was heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping;
Rachel weeping for her children,
refused to be comforted for her children,
because they were not...”

This is followed by:

“Refrain thy voice from weeping,
and thine eyes from tears:
for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord;
and they shall come again from the land of the
enemy.
And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that
thy children shall come again to their own border.”
(Jeremiah 31:15—17.)

Yom haKippurim, Shacharit: Isaiah 57:14 — 58:14.

The message contained in this prophecy is perhaps best expressed in the following words of Hermann Cohen: “The laws of God lose all sense, unless they strike home and awaken the mind of man; and conversely, all worship of God by man becomes idol worship, unless it issues from man's special disposition of mind.” It is the prophet Isaiah who drives home the lesson of the indissoluble bond between the two Biblical injunctions of “Love your God” and “Love your neighbour.” The pious man must be virtuous as well. It is not only in the performance of good deeds that the effect of *Yom haKippurim* ought to be felt, but in this actual transformation of man. Spiritual as well as social distress requires relief. Thus we read:

“Is not this the fast that I have chosen?
To loose the chains of wickedness,
to undo the bands of the yoke,
and to let the oppressed go free,
and that ye break every yoke?
Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,
and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy
house?
When thou seest the naked,
that thou cover him;
and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?
If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke,
the putting forth of the finger,
and speaking iniquity;
And if thou bring forth that which thou hast prepared
for thyself to the hungry,
and satisfy the afflicted soul.”

(From ch. 58:6—7, 9—10.)

We have been granted the tremendous power of rebuilding *chorvot olam*, "the ruins of the world." The message of Judaism, as expressed in *Yom haKippurim*, cannot be implemented by mere satisfaction of social requirements; the genuine, totally committed Jew, is able to fulfil his vocation only once he has discovered in the Sabbath an everlasting source of rejuvenation for his spiritual powers. Thus:

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath,
from doing thy pleasure on My holy day;
and call the Sabbath a delight,
the holy of the Lord, honourable;
and shalt honour Him,
not doing thine own ways,
nor finding thine own purpose,
nor speaking thine own words:
Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord."
(Isaiah 58:13—14.)

The following interpretation is meant to shed light on the background of this prophetic admonition without detracting from its eternal character: "Sachs in his *Kerem Chemed* 7, p. 124 ff., has rightly noted that this chapter (Isaiah 58), contained an address delivered by the prophet before a popular assembly on the Day of Atonement of the Jubilee Year. This day denoted a double obligation, the first being related to God — fasting and resting, the second to one's fellow man, the release of slaves and restoration of acquired plots of land. Now, whereas the injunction concerning the fast was strictly observed by the people, all the remaining decrees were set aside by the avarice and greed of the affluent. The piercing sound of the *shofar* might re-echo throughout the land, signifying the granting of freedom, yet everywhere oppression and

tyranny continued to reign. Thereupon God bid his annointed prophet to 'proclaim liberty to the captives,' to usher in a *shenat ratzon* — the acceptable year of the Lord (Isaiah 61:1—2). God, as it were, addresses Himself to His chosen prophet thus: 'Even as the very *shofar*, whose sound has reverberated without effect, you must now raise your voice in order to proclaim the wickedness of my people.' Whereupon the prophet proceeds to explain to the confused masses that fasting alone did not denote fulfilment of the Divine Will, that it was thus futile to expect the granting of Divine salvation and redemption. There were additional requirements, besides fasting, which must be carried out on this day..." (Hoffmann, *The Book of Leviticus*, second half-volume, p. 258.)

Yom haKippurim, Minchah: The Book of Jonah.

Machzor Vitry (No.355) informs us that the reason for choosing this prophecy as the *Haftarah* was "the remorse and repentance of the people of Nineveh." Our Sages may have been actuated by a further consideration in choosing this portion, that of protecting the Jewish people from the pitfall of undue national pride. The repentance of a foreign people and its rueful return to God is thus held up as an example.

Nineveh's humble contrition and invocation of the Lord is cited as an example of genuine *teshuvah* on a different occasion as well: "What is the order of service for fast days (for rain)? The Ark is taken out to the open space of the city, wood ashes are placed on the Ark, on the head of the *Nasi* and on the head of the *Av-Beth-Din*. Everyone else puts ashes on his own head; the elder among them addresses them with words of admonition (for repentance) thus: Our brethren, Scripture does not say of the people of Nineveh, 'and God saw their sackcloth' and their fasting,'

but, 'and God saw their works: that they turned from their evil way' (Jonah 3:10); and in the prophets it is said: 'And rend your heart and not your garments' (Joel 2:13)" (*Ta'anit* 2:1).

b) WHY HALLEL IS NOT RECITED ON THE YAMIM NORAIM

The *Shulchan Aruch* brings the following rule without explanation: "One does not recite the *Hallel* on *Rosh haShanah* and *Yom haKippurim*" (584 No. 1). The source for this ruling is found in the following Talmudic passage: "The ministering angels said in the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He: 'Sovereign of the Universe, why should Israel not chant hymns of praise before Thee on New Year and the Day of Atonement'? He replied to them: 'Is it possible that the King should be sitting on the throne of justice with the books of life and Death open before Him, and Israel should chant hymns of praise?'" (*Rosh haShanah* 32b).

c) ON THE PRAYERS

Introductory Note: The limited scope of this book does not allow for a detailed treatment and exposition of the great variety of important prayer texts. The following elucidation will reveal only some of the Talmudic sources in an attempt to shed light on aspects of basic significance.

1. SHELOSH ESREI MIDDOT

In Section II of this book, dealing with the *Selichot*, we have quoted the homiletic work entitled *Tana de Bey Eliyahu*, chapter 23, wherein we learn from an *Aggadah* that the very mention of the Divine Attributes is charged with an expiating quality. Further light is shed on this principle by the following Talmudical passage: "'And the lord passed by before him and proclaimed' (Exodus 34:6). R. Johanan said: Were it not written in the text, it would be impossible for us to say such a thing; this verse teaches us that the Holy One, blessed be He, drew His robe around Him like the reader of a congregation and showed Moses the order for prayer. He said to him: 'Whenever Israel sin, let them carry out this service before Me, and I will forgive them'... R. Judah said: A covenant has been made with the Thirteen Attributes that they will not be turned away empty-handed (i.e., that Israel will not be turned away empty-handed when they recite them), as it says, 'Behold I make a covenant' (*ibid.*, 34:10)" (*Rosh haShanah* 17b).

This section of the Scriptures has been put to many uses: It is the text read out from the Torah on fast days; it forms an ever-recurring refrain during the *Selichot* service, and it is repeated three times by the congregation on the festivals as the Ark is opened for taking out the Torah scrolls.

The enumeration of the Thirteen Attributes of mercy has given rise to a difference of opinion on whether the first mention of the Divine Name is to be counted in, in spite of the Masoretic accent separating it from the following text (cf. *Tossafot*, *Rosh haShanah* 17b, and Maimonides, No. 87 in the Responsa Collection of the noted Leipzig Edition). Should we omit counting the Divine Name at the opening, then, according to

Maimonides, the expression *lo yenakeh* must figure as the thirteenth attribute. In the opinion of those who regard *nakeh lo yenakeh* as belonging together, the last of the Attributes to be counted must be: "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children."

The following elucidation of each word of this text (Exodus 34:6—7) based on various sources — notably the Talmud and S. R. Hirsch — is meant to ensure that the frequent repetition of it during service should remain meaningful, a primary condition for true *kavanah*.

1. *HaShem* ("Merciful God"). Thus we read in *Sifrei* on Deuteronomy 3:24: "Wherever the expression *haShem* appears it denotes the attribute of Divine Love — *kol makom sheneemar haShem zu midat rachamim*" (cf. also Hoffmann, Leviticus, first half-volume, on the interpretation of the Divine Names, p. 96 ff.).

2. *HaShem* ("Merciful God"). S. R. Hirsch translates these two expressions at the beginning as: "God forever remains God." This rendering attempts to re-echo the Talmudic interpretation: "I am the Eternal (i.e., merciful) before a man sins and the same after a man sins and repents" (*Rosh HaShanah* 17b).

3. *El* ("Power wielding"). Goodness can only be effective when associated with power and might.

4. *Rachum* ("Loving His works"). God will not forsake... "a being, once endowed with vitality and movement... forasmuch as it is a child of his creative love" (*rechem*—womb). The love for that which is yet unborn, felt by the mother for the embryo carried beneath her heart, is the most wonderful symbol of selfless love.

5. *VeChanun* ("gracious"). God does not "tire of ever renewing energy forfeited and spent."

6. *Erech Apayim* ("long-suffering"). In the Talmud (*Eruvin* 22a) the question is asked why this expression is used in the plural instead of singular, *Erech Af*. The answer

lies in God being patient towards both the virtuous and the wicked. S. R. Hirsch: "Divine patience... allows for the passage of time to enable the Divinely free in man to work itself up in the struggle with the enticements of the sensual."

7 & 8. *VeRav Chesed veEmet* ("abundant in goodness and truth"). The Talmud discusses the apparent contradiction in the universe being governed by *Chesed* — indulgent grace, and *Emet* — strict justice, at one and the same time: "Ilfi (or, as some report, Ilfa) similarly contrasted two texts: It is written, 'abundant in goodness,' and then it is written 'and in truth.' How is this? — At first 'truth', and at the end, 'abundant in goodness'" (*Rosh haShanah* 17b). B. H. Epstein in his *Torah Temimah* refers us to the following midrash as being complementary to the Talmudic text just quoted: "God saw that the universe was unable to survive on the principle of strict justice, therefore He associated it with the principle of leniency." (*Bereshit Rabbah, Parashah* 12). In a commentary to the *Selichot* (by Shalom haCohen, Altona, 1813), the concept of "truth" is seen in the Divine promise of bliss being kept even when man is not worthy of it. This is how Maimonides defines it: "... but if he (the prophet) promises a blessing, saying it will be thus or thus, and the bliss promised by him does not subsequently materialize, then he is surely a false prophet..." (*Hilchot Yesodei haTorah*, ch. 10, *halachah* 4).

9. *Notzer Chesed laAlafim* ("keeping mercy for thousands"). Here we meet a basic principle of Judaism — *Zechut Avot* — "the merit of the Forefathers." A good deed performed by man, his moral triumph, is herein seen as a source of strength reaching far beyond the scope of a single lifetime, for the blessing of later generations. In the words of S. R. Hirsch: "We dare say that just this insight into the principle of Divine Rule wherein eternity com-

bines with the fleeting existence and momentary works of individual man, brought Moses nearest to the understanding of the ways of God... and accordingly this very 'principle' of Divine Rule might be marked out for our attention by the appearance (in the Biblical text) of an over-sized letter *nun*."

10, 11, & 12. *Nosei Avon vaFesha veChataah* ("Forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin"). The Talmud deals both with the definition of the various types of sin listed in the Biblical text as well as with their peculiar order: "The Sages say: Wrongs (*avonot*) are deliberate misdeeds (*zedonot*), thus also does Scripture say: 'That soul shall be utterly cut off, his wrong (*avon*) shall be upon him' (Numbers 15:31); 'transgressions' (*pesha'im*) are rebellious deeds, as it is said: 'The king of Moab hath transgressed against me' (II Kings 3:7)... 'Sins' (*chataot*) are inadvertent omissions, as it is said: 'If anyone shall sin through error' (Leviticus 4:2)... What is the meaning, then, of Moses' saying: 'Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin' (where the order appears reversed)? Moses said before the Holy One, blessed be He: 'Lord of the Universe, when Israel sin before Thee and then do penance, account their premeditated sins as errors!'" (*Yoma* 36b).

13. *VeNakeh* ("He cleanses" — according to Hermann Cohen). If we accept this rendering, then the expression teaches us the greatness of Divine Mercy enabling man to become a new being through the medium of *teshuvah*. In this sense, *venakeh* belongs to the attributes of Divine Grace (also cf. on this expression, the Talmudic observation in *Yoma* 86a quoted on p.17).

To conclude this theme we shall quote from the Ne'ilah prayer a passage expressing our faith in the efficacy of the very mention of the Divine Attributes: *Tamachti yetedotai bishlosh esrei teivot uvesha'arei dema'ot ki lo nishlavot. Lachein shafachti siach penei bochen libot.*

Batuach ani beeileh uvizchut sheloshet avot — "I rely on the Thirteen Attributes of God, and on the tears of the penitent; therefore have I poured my prayer before Him who searcheth the hearts, for I depend on these, and on the purity of the three patriarchs."

2. STRUCTURE OF THE MUSSAF PRAYER ON ROSH HASHANAH (MALCHUYOT, ZICHRONOT AND SHOFAROT)

The obligation to recite scriptural passages dealing with the kingdom of God, the Divine determination of human destiny and the significance of the *shofar* — *Malchuyot*, *Zichronot* and *Shofarot* — is found explicitly in the following text of *Sifrei* on Numbers 10:10: "R. Nathan said: 'Ye shall blow with the trumpets.' This refers to the *shofar* sound; 'That they may be to you for a memorial,' this denotes the *Zichronot*; 'I am the Lord your God,' this is an indication of *Malchuyot*. If it is from this order of the verse that it is derived, why then did the Sages institute first *Malchuyot* and then *Zichronot* and *Shofarot*? The reason for the order instituted by the Sages is as follows: In the first place you must enthrone God as your King, then entreat Him for mercy, that He may remember you. And whereby may this Divine remembrance be brought about? (Answer:) Through the sound of the *shofar* signifying freedom, as it is written: 'In that day the great *shofar* shall be blown' (Isaiah 27:13)."

Further elucidation of this liturgy is found in *Rosh haShanah* 32a. Each group, we learn, is to entail the recital of ten verses, thus: "There should be recited not less than ten kingship verses, ten remembrance verses, and ten *shofar* verses" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:6). The choice of the number ten is variously explained in the Gemara, thus: "To what do these ten kingship verses correspond? — R. Levi said, to the ten praises that David uttered in the

of Psalms. But there are a large number of praises there? — It means, those among which occurs, 'Praise Him with the blowing of the *shofar*' (Psalm 150:3). R. Joseph said: To the ten commandments that were spoken to Moses on Sinai (because these were prefaced by the blowing of the *shofar*). R. Johanan said: To the ten utterances by means of which the world was created (New Year being the anniversary of the creation)" (*Rosh haShanah* 32a).

From which of the books that comprise the Holy Scriptures are these ten verses to be taken? We are told: "It is proper to begin with the Torah (Pentateuch) and conclude with the Prophets. R. Jose said: If one concludes with the Torah he has fulfilled his obligation" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:6). R. Jose's opinion is clarified by the Gemara in the following manner: "What is meant is this: 'It is proper to commence with the Torah and conclude with the Prophets. R. Jose said: It is proper to conclude with the Torah, but if one concluded with the Prophets, he has fulfilled his obligation.' It has been taught to the same effect: R. Eleazar b. R. Jose said: The *Vethikin* (men of exceptional piety) used to conclude with the Torah'" (*Rosh haShanah* 32b).

On the principle underlying the choice, we find the following significant statement of the Mishnah: "No mention is made of kingship, remembrance and *shofar* verses, that signify punishment" (*Rosh haShanah* 4:6).

Following the guide-lines of *Rosh haShanah* 4:5 we hereby present the outlines and structure of the *Mussaf* prayer on *Rosh haShanah*. Following the method of our Sages in the Mishnah, we shall depict each *berachah* — benediction — briefly, by a characteristic taken from the conclusion or content:

1. *Avot* — concerning the Patriarchs
2. *Gevurot* — the almightiness of God

3. *Kedushat haShem* — sanctification of the Divine Name
4. *Kedushat haYom uMalchuyot* — sanctification of the day and Kingship verses
5. *Zichronot* — remembrance verses
6. *Shofarot* — verses expressing the significance of the *shofar*
7. *Avodah* — the Temple service
8. *Hodaah* — thanksgiving
9. *Birkat Kohanim* — the blessing of the Priests.

The number of *berachot* recited during the *Mussaf* prayer on *Rosh haShanah* differs from that uttered on the other festivals (seven). The significance of these numbers is discussed in the following Talmudical passage (*Berachot* 29a): "To what do the seven blessings said on Sabbath correspond? — R. Halefta b. Saul said: To the seven voices mentioned by David, commencing with 'on the waters' (Ps. 29:3). To what do the nine said on New Year (*Mussaf-tefillah*) correspond? Isaac from Karignin (Carthagenia in Spain) said: To the nine times that Hannah mentioned the Divine Name in her prayer (I Samuel 2:1—10). For a master has said: 'On New Year Sarah, Rachel and Hannah were visited.'"

Our attention is drawn especially to the *Berachot* Nos. 4—6, wherein the groups of Biblical verses are preceded by substantial introductory liturgy and the conclusion is marked by lengthy supplications. According to Talmudic tradition this part of the liturgy has originated in the academy of the renowned Babylonian Amora Rav, and since each section is followed by the blowing of *shofar*, as indicated earlier, it is referred to as *Tekiata debei Rav* (*Yerushalmi, Rosh haShanah* 1:1; *Vayikra Rabbah, Parashah* 29).

So far we have discussed the order of the *berachot*, as laid down in our liturgy in accordance with the normative

decisions of our rabbis. In the Mishnah, however, we read that in the opinion of R. Johanan b. Nuri the section *malchuyot* is to be combined with *Kedushat haShem* (i.e., the third *berachah*, *Rōsh haShanah* 4:5). This opinion has been taken into account in our liturgy by the retention in our *Machzor* of the introduction to *Malchuyot*, opening with: *Uvechein ten pachdechah* — “and therefore extend Thy fear.” (The reader is recommended to consult the highly informative observations made on this point by W. Jawitz, in his work entitled *Mekor haBerachot* p. 28 ff.)

In regard to the introduction to the *Malchuyot*, which opens with the words “*Aleinu leshabeach*,” it is worth noting the following:

I. It was not until the Middle Ages that this prayer has found its place at the conclusion of the daily worship. The first authority to mention this is Rabeinu Shemariah b. Simchah from Provence (ca. 1300), in his work entitled *Kolbo*. Elbogen makes the following comment on the daily recital of *Aleinu*: “It was, from a religious point of view, highly significant that the lofty idea of mankind uniting under the banner of monotheism in the future, was incorporated in the daily prayer service” (*Der juedische Gottesdienst* p. 80).

II. The *Aleinu* prayer has played a significant role in the history of false accusations made against the Jews and their religion: “The incorporation of *Aleinu* into the daily prayer service gave rise to repeated accusations against the Jewish religion that reverberated in Germany throughout centuries. It is due to pressure that changes were introduced in the text contained in the *Ashkenazi* prayerbook. Thus in the present text we read: *She-lo sam chelkeinu kahem... va-anachnu...* whereas in the older manuscripts as well as in *Sephardi* prayerbooks to this very day, the phrase: *vegoraleinu kechol hamonam*, is

followed by *sheheim mishtachavim lehevel varik umitpallelim el-el lo yoshi'a* (‘for they bow down to vanity and void and pray to a god who cannot save’). In the year 1400, a Jew who had converted to Christianity produced the slanderous accusation that the words just quoted referred to Jesus, seeing that *varik* possessed the same numerical value (316) as *Yeshu*. Notwithstanding Lippmann — Muehlhausen’s promptly raised protest in his *nitzachon*, this accusation was time and again repeated. Thus, wherever the censorship actively concerned itself with Jewish books, the phrase *sheheim mishtachavim* was expurgated by intervention varying in force. But this, too, was not enough. The enemies of the Jews persistently sought ground for new accusations, most elaborately framed by Eisenmenger (1654 — 1704). In the year 1702 the Jews of Prussia were the victims of particularly vicious condemnations on account of this prayer.... The edict of 1703 ruled that the *Aleinu* prayer be recited aloud by the reader. Commissioners were appointed and sent to the synagogue to supervise the implementation of this edict. Since there was at no time any cause for intervention, the edict soon fell into desuetude” (Elbogen, p. 81).

III. All the translations of this sublime prayer, which according to tradition originated with Joshua (cf. *Kolbo*, *Siman* 16), hardly do justice to the beauty of this classic text. The following, taken from Singer’s Prayer Book, may nevertheless help the reader to familiarize himself with the sentiments contained therein:

“It is our duty
to praise the Lord of all things,
to ascribe greatness
to him who formed the world in the beginning,
since he hath not made us
like the nations of other lands,

and hath not placed us
 like other families of the earth,
 since he hath not assigned unto us
 a portion as unto them,
 nor a lot
 as unto all their multitude.
 For we
 bend the knee
 and offer worship and thanks
 before the supreme King of Kings,
 the Holy One, blessed be He,
 who stretched forth the heavens
 and laid the foundations of the earth,
 the seat of whose glory
 is in the heavens above,
 and the abode of whose might
 is in the loftiest heights.
 He is our God;
 there is none else;
 in truth he is our King;
 there is none beside him;
 as it is written in his Law,
 And thou shalt know this day,
 and lay it to thine heart,
 that the Lord
 he is God in heaven above
 and upon the earth beneath:
 there is none else.

“We therefore hope in thee,
 O Lord our God,
 that we may speedily behold the glory of thy might,
 when thou wilt remove the abominations from the
 earth,
 and the idols will be utterly cut off,

when the world will be perfected under the kingdom
 of the Almighty,
 and all the children of flesh will call upon thy name,
 when thou wilt turn unto thyself all the wicked of the
 earth.

Let all the inhabitants of the world perceive and know
 that unto thee every knee must bow,
 every tongue must swear.

Before thee, O Lord our God,
 let them bow and fall;
 and unto thy glorious name
 let them give honour;
 let them all accept
 the yoke of thy kingdom,
 and do thou reign over them speedily,
 and for ever and ever.

For the kingdom is thine,
 and to all eternity thou wilt reign in glory,
 as it is written in thy Law,
 ‘The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.’

And it is said,
 ‘And the Lord shall be king over all the earth’:
 in that day
 shall the Lord be One
 and his name One.”

Current prayer books and *machzorim* do not contain
 source references to the collection of Biblical verses con-
 tained in *Malchuyot*, *Zichronot* and *Shofarot*. We have
 therefore decided to remedy this omission in the following
 review, and would recommend to the reader to enter
 these particulars into their own prayer books. Closer at-
 tention to the text reveals a deviation from the customary
 order of *Torah*, *Neviim* and *Ketuvim*. Thus we have *Torah*
 — introduced by the phrase: “As it is written in Your

torah"; *Ketuvim* — introduced by the phrase: "And in Your holy words the following is written"; *Neviim* — introduced by the phrase: "And by Your prophets the following has been written." Rabeinu Asher in his *Halachot* concerning *Rosh hashanah*, IV, No. 3, explains the reversal thus: "David, from whose Psalms all the verses of the *Ketuvim* are taken, preceded the prophets in time." In *Massechet Soferim* 18:3 we are taught as a general rule that: "*Divrei kedushah (Ketuvim)* generally take precedence over *Divrei Kabala*." A further reason is given in the commentary to Rabeinu Asher's *Halachot*, known as *Korban Netanel* (compiled by Netanel Weil of Karlsruhe): "The Psalms are first and foremost hymns praising the Lord, and as such are suited to every period, whereas the utterances quoted from the prophets generally refer to the messianic future."

Review of the Biblical Passages

a. *Malchuyot*

Torah: 1) Exodus 15:18;
2) Numbers 23:31;
3) Deuteronomy 33:5;
Concluding verse: Deuteronomy 6:4.

Ketuvim: 1) Psalm 22:29;
2) Psalm 93:1;
3) Psalm 24:7.

Neviim: 1) Isaiah 44:6;
2) Obadiah 1:21;
3) Zechariah 14:9.

Note: In the present text the concluding verse from the

Torah is placed immediately after the quotation from the Prophets, whereas in the texts grouped under the two following headings the concluding verse is preceded by a supplication ending with a quotation from the Torah. In the case of *Malchuyot*, however, the concluding part is devoted entirely to the theme of *Kedushat haYom*, cf. No. 4 in the above arrangement.

b. *Zichronot*

Torah: 1) Genesis 8:1;
2) Exodus 2:24;
3) Leviticus 26:42.
Concluding verse: Leviticus 26:45.

Ketuvim: 1) Psalm 111:4;
2) Psalm 111:5;
3) Psalm 106:45.

Neviim: 1) Jeremiah 2:2;
2) Ezekiel 16:60;
3) Jeremiah 31:19 (20).

Note: Ya'akov b. Asher in his *Tur, Orach Chayim* 591 No. 8, has already drawn our attention to the fact that the two verses from Jeremiah are interrupted by a quotation from Ezekiel. This, he explains, was dictated by the related content of these passages.

c. *Shofarot*

Torah: 1) Exodus 19:16;
2) Exodus 19:19;
3) Exodus 20:18.
Concluding verse: Numbers 10:10.

- Ketuvim:* 1) Psalm 47:6;
2) Psalm 98:6;
3) Psalm 81:4;
4) Psalm 150.

- Neviim:* 1) Isaiah 18:3;
2) Isaiah 27:13;
3) Zechariah 9:14.

Note: The quotation from Psalms contains Psalm No. 150, since in the opinion adduced in the above quoted Gemara the tenfold recital of Biblical passages is based on the tenfold sequence of Hallelujahs in this psalm.

The following analysis by Hermann Cohen of these three crucially important sections of the *Rosh haShanah* liturgy merits the closest study. In it the youthful reader too may gain an important insight into the basic notions of the Jewish *Weltanschauung*. He writes thus:

"The Bible verses that are united in the *Malkuyot* proclaim the government of the world, those of the *Zikronot* the judgement of the world, and those of the *Shoferot* the redemption of the world.

"The government of the world is fulfilled in the messianic Kingdom of God. Therefore the text of the third introductory benediction of the *Shemoneh Esreh* on the New Year and on the Day of Atonement, which are united under the name 'The Days of Awe,' is as follows: 'Impose Thine awe upon all Thy works, and Thy dread upon all that Thou hast created, that all works may revere Thee and all creatures prostrate themselves before Thee that they may all form a single band.' This band — this one covenant of all men — is the highest achievement of God's government of the world. In this one covenant of all mankind the Kingdom of God is realized on earth.

God's covenant with Noah is completed in this covenant of God with mankind. The covenant of mankind, as the unification of all men, is the covenant of man with God. This covenant is the sign, the guarantee, of God's government of the world.

"The government of the world distinguishes monotheism from pantheism. What is the difference between government and development? To development a goal must be set; it cannot set it by itself. Only government can set a goal for it. Government is providence united with omnipotence. Government is not an attribute. It is, rather, identical with the concept of God as the guarantor of the realization of morality on earth. The government of the world is the setting of an end for the world and the realization of that end for the world in its double meaning, as nature and as the human world.

"The government of the world as the setting of an end for the world, and the realization of it, in the world, is the meaning and content of monotheism. Therefore, the prayer above closes with the 'Hear, O Israel.' And before it, God's eternity is expressed: 'I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God' (Isa. 44:6). In the same way the next benediction invokes God's rule over all the earth: 'Upon all the inhabitants of the world.' All creatures will understand that they are created by God. The Kingdom of God is creation and providence; this is God's government. As the governor of the world he is 'the God of truth.' The government of the world is the moral order of the world. If morality and nature are different methodologically, then the order of the world, as moral order, must be the government of the world, and this establishes the difference between monotheism and pantheism.

"The moral world order of the Kingdom of God, as the kingdom of the world, requires the Judgement of the

World. We know by now how myth is dominated by this idea. Myth makes the end of the world a consequence of the Judgement of the World. Out of the end of the world may emerge, at most, a renewal of the world and an alternation between this renewal and the end of the world. The government of the world must eliminate the end of the world. By the time of Noah God had made a covenant against the recurrence of the flood and as a sign of this covenant, as a remembrance of this covenant, the rainbow is set upon the vault of heaven. Thus the New Year becomes the festival of creation, the 'Day of Remembrance' (*Yom haZikaron*). The *Zikronot* describes God's omniscience in this remembrance. 'All things are manifest and known unto thee, O Eternal our God, who lookest and seest to the end of all generations.' And the remembrance now becomes the Judgement of the World.

"Not only are the works of men judged, but also 'man's... thoughts and schemes, his imaginings and achievements.' Now the remembrance of Noah comes forth and with it is connected the remembrance of the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Finally, the prophet speaks the more intimate words: 'I remember for thee the affection of thy youth, the love of thine espousal; how thou wentest after Me in the wilderness' (Jer. 2:2). 'And I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant' (Ezek. 16:60). Thus the Judgement of the World surprisingly turns into remembrance about the world, about the covenant with the world, which God repeatedly made with his world. The Judge of the world becomes a part to the covenant with man. The Judge of the world becomes an associate in the covenant with man.

"The prayer that follows stresses in the history of the patriarchs the important act of abandoning human sacrifice. That which appears as a commandment to offer Isaac actually represents the abandonment of pagan

sacrifice. The word 'sacrifice' did not become the used name for this act, but rather 'binding' (*akeda*): 'The binding with which Abraham our father bound his son Isaac on the altar.... he overbore his fatherly compassion in order to perform Thy will with a perfect heart.' The name in use is significant: not sacrifice but binding is what this episode is called in the history of the patriarchs, in the history of the sacrifice. This portion of the prayer for the Judgement of the World thus concludes with the remembrance of the binding of Isaac, which manifests the reciprocal effect of Abraham's love for God and God's love for him and his descendants. Thus, the myth of the Judgement of the World unequivocally becomes the judgement of man through God's love.

"The *shofar* is the general musical instrument for every holy day, and also for the New Moon. At the revelation on Sinai, too, the sound of the *shofar* resounded among thunder and lightning. It therefore becomes the foremost instrument in the Hallelujah of the psalms, and therefore it also becomes the 'horn of the Messiah.'

"The New Year celebrates not only the government of the world and the Judgement of the World, but also the messianic redemption of the world. The *shofar* is the symbol of the Messiah. Therefore, the portions of the prayer which refer to the redemption of the world are called *Shoferot*.

"As the trumpet of the redemption of the world the *shofar* transforms the terror of its tone into joy, into eternal joy, into the joy of eternity.

"These messianic prayers are the climax of Jewish prayer. In them the prayer frees itself from all the limitations of national particularism, from all the narrowness of individualism. The individual removes himself from his natural, his empirical individuality, but the congregation, too, rises above its empirical actuality to its task, to its

future in the 'one covenant' of mankind. The Judgement of the World becomes the reconciliation with the world, and only in the latter is the government of the world fulfilled. The Kingdom of God is religion's highest good, and this highest good is the highest content of prayer" (*Religion of Reason*, pp. 395 — 8).

3. AVINU MALKEINU

The prayer sentences beginning with *Avinu Malkeinu*, "Our Father our King," have their source in the following Talmudical passage: "It is further related of R. Eliezer that once he stepped down before the Ark and recited the twenty-four benedictions (which according to *Mishnah Ta'anit* 2:4 ought to be recited on fast days when there is a lack of rain), and his prayer was not answered. R. Akiba stepped down after him and exclaimed: 'Our Father our King, we have no King but Thee; Our Father, our King, for Thy sake have mercy upon us,' and rain fell" (*Ta'anit* 25b). The text of these petitions appears in the collection of all the Talmudical Aggadot compiled by R. Ya'akov b. Shelomo Chaviv (ca. 1460 — 1516), in the work entitled *Eyn Ya'akov*, in the following extended version: "Our Father, our King, You are our Father; Our Father, our King, we have no King but You; Our Father, our King, we have sinned in your presence; Our Father, our King, have mercy upon us; Our Father, our King, deal (kindly) with us for the sake of your Name."

The number of sentences comprising this prayer varies considerably in the different versions of the text. Following is the comment by Elbogen: "The informal character of the liturgy made it easy for anyone to interpose his own contribution and this indeed happened often enough. Already in the prayer book of R. Amram Gaon we find 25 sentences. The same number, even though different in

some respects, is found in the *Sephardi* prayerbook. More is contained in the liturgy current in Italy and the Balkan countries, but the largest number is found in the prayer book used in Germany, where since a few hundred years this prayer also contains a reference to the martyrs who died for their faith" (*Der juedische Gottesdienst*, pp. 147 — 148). Our own usage lists 44 sentences opening with the phrase *Avinu Malkeinu*. In earlier days the *Avinu Malkeinu* must have followed an alphabetic pattern (cf. *Tur, Orach Chayim* 602, No. 1).

In the opinion of Baer, presented in his siddur *Avodat Yisrael*, p. 109, and based on medieval authorities (*Mahari Tirnau, Levush*), the sentences in the *Avinu Malkeinu* prayer correspond to the pleas in the *Shemoneh Esrei* prayer, this in fact being the reason for the omission of *Avinu Malkeinu* on Sabbath. The ruling not to recite *Avinu Malkeinu* on Sabbath is found in *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim* 584, glosses of the Rema). The custom is traced to the opinion of the Rosh in the last chapter of *Rosh haShanah*. An insight into the fundamental significance of the *Avinu Malkeinu* is afforded by the following observation of S. R. Hirsch: "It is the awareness of God being our father and our king, at no time denying us His paternal love, but at the same time demanding our obedience and determining our fate as King, that.... persists in drawing us towards God, to prostrate ourselves at His feet, both as children and as Servants" (*Israel's Gebete*, p. 629).

4. HAYOM HARAT OLAM

"This Day, the world was called into existence; this day He causes all the creatures of the universe to stand in judgement, either as children or as servants. If we are esteemed as children, have mercy upon us, as a father has mercy on his children, and if as servants, our eyes are

attentively fixed on thee, until Thou be gracious unto us and bring forth our judgement as the light, O Thou who art tremendous and holy.”

This prayer is found in all the *Machzorim*, unlike the other poetic insertions which might vary from one rite to another (cf. Elbogen, p. 216). Ya'akov b. Asher in his *Tur* (*Orach Chayim* 591, No. 7) informs us that in *Ashkenaz* this prayer was not recited at the silent rendering of the *Amidah*, but only during the repetition by the reader. *HaYom Harat Olam* constitutes the epilogue to each of the three great texts of *Malchuyot*, *Zichronot* and *Shofarot*. It is said after the blowing of the *shofar* and on the Sabbath as well, though there is no blowing on that day.

Following are the Talmudic-Midrashic sources for the ideas contained in this prayer:

I. “What authority do we follow on saying nowadays on New Year the prayer, ‘This day is the beginning of Thy works, the commemoration of the first day’? R. Eliezer, who said that the world was created in Tishri” (*Rosh haShanah* 27a).

II. The day the universe was created is of great significance in the history and fate of the Jewish people: “It has been taught, R. Eliezer says: In Tishri the world was created, in Tishri the Patriarchs Abraham and Jacob were born; in Tishri the Patriarchs died... and in Tishri they will be redeemed in time to come” (*Rosh haShanah* 10b—11a).

III. A detailed description is given us in *Midrash Rabbah* on *Vayikra*, beginning of *Parashah* 29, of the creation of the first human being, Adam's Fall and punishment by God. All this is seen to have happened on *Rosh haShanah*. Adam received the following consoling message: “This will be a sign for your children. As you stood in judgement before Me this day and came out with a free pardon,

so will your children in the future... come out from My presence with a free pardon.”

In this short poem we get an insight into the influence exercised upon the poet's mind by our classical tradition in both content and form. Without sounding artificial, he contrives to draw on Biblical idiom to achieve the desired effect.

Following are examples of Biblical turns of speech:

Hayom ya'amid bamishpat (“This day He causes... to stand in judgement”): cf. Psalm 119:91 — *lemishpatecha amdu hayom*.

Im kevanim im ka'avadim (“either as children or as servants”): Deuteronomy 14:1 — *banim atem laShem...* and Leviticus 25:55 — *ki li benei Yisrael avadim avadai heim*.

Keracheim av al banim (“as a father has mercy on his children”): quoted verbatim from Psalm 103:13.

Veim ka'avadim eineinu lecha teluyot ad shetechaneinu (“and if as servants, our eyes are attentively fixed on Thee until Thou be gracious unto us”): Psalm 123:2 — *ke'einei avadim el yad adoneihem...ken eineinu el haShem Eloheinu ad sheyechaneinu*.

Vetotzi kaor mishpateinu (“and bring forth our judgement as the light” — i.e., “may our acquittal be as clear as this”): Psalm 37:6 — *vehotzi kaor tzidkecha umishpatecha katzohorayim* (cf. Heidenheim ad. loc., and the *Ofan* recited on the first day, beginning with the words: *Kevodo ichel kehayom...*

5. THE VIDDUY

The confession of sins — *vidduy* — is a Biblical injunction derived from Numbers 5:7 — *vehitvaddu et chatatam* — “then they shall confess their sin.” Maimonides discusses the Halachic significance of this

injunction in a detailed treatise in his Code:

“With regard to all the precepts of the Torah, affirmative or negative, if a person transgressed any one of them, either wilfully or in error, and repents and turns away from his sin, he is under a duty to confess before God, blessed be He, as it is said, ‘When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the Lord, and that person be guilty, then they shall confess their sin which they have done’ (Num. 5:6—7); this means confession in words; and this confession is an affirmative precept. How does one confess? The penitent says ‘I beseech Thee, O Lord, I have sinned, I have acted perversely; I have transgressed before Thee, and have done thus and thus, and lo, I repent and am ashamed of my deeds, and I will never do this again.’ This constitutes the essence of confession. The fuller and more detailed the confession one makes, the more praiseworthy is he. And so, those who were under an obligation to bring sin-offerings and trespass offerings, when they bring their sacrifices for sins committed in error or wilfully, are not forgiven through those offerings, till they have repented and made confession in words, as it is said: ‘He shall confess that wherein he hath sinned’ (Lev. 5:5). So, too, those who incurred the judicial penalty of death or punishment of stripes do not obtain forgiveness by suffering death or receiving stripes unless they repent and confess. Similarly, one who inflicted a wound on another person, or caused him monetary damage, even though he pays what is due to the injured party, does not obtain pardon till he confesses and penitently resolves never to commit the same offence again, as it is said, ‘(When a man or woman) shall commit any sin that men commit.... then they shall confess,’ (Num. 5:6—7)....

“He who confesses in words and has not in his heart resolved to forsake his sin is like one who baptizes himself

and keeps in his hand a creeping thing. Unless he casts it away, his baptism is useless. And thus it is said, ‘but whoso confesseth and forsaketh (them) shall obtain mercy’ (Prov. 28:13). Moreover, it is necessary to specify the sin, as it is said, ‘O, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them a god of gold’ (Ex. 32:31)....

“It is highly praiseworthy in a penitent to make public confession, openly avow his transgressions and discover to others his sins against his fellow-men; he should say to them: ‘Truly, I have sinned against so and so, and did thus and thus to him; and lo, this day, I repent and feel remorse.’ He, however, who is proud and does not publish his trespasses but conceals them, has not achieved complete repentance, as it is said: ‘He who covereth his transgressions shall not prosper’ (Prov. 28:13).

“This only applies to transgressions in matters between man and man. But sins committed against God, the penitent need not publish. Indeed, it is a mark of effrontery on his part if he does so, but he should repent of them before the Almighty, blessed be He, declaring in detail his sins before Him, and make public confession in general terms; and it is well for him that his iniquity has not become known, as it is said, ‘Happy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered’ (Ps. 32:1)” (from *Hilchot Teshuvah*, sections 1 and 2).

An incisive comment upon the efficacy of a verbal confession of sins is given us by R. Aharon haLevi (13th century), in his *Sefer haChinuch*, No. 364: “By putting his confession into words, the sinner gives clear evidence of his conviction that all his deeds are known to God. He does not pretend that God does not see his deeds. Moreover, by giving a detailed account of his transgression and by expressing remorse, he will be more circumspect in the future and be saved from further pitfalls.”

The origin of the custom to beat one's heart at the confession of sins is associated with the following observation found in *Midrash Rabbah* on Koheleth 7:2: " *Vehachai yitein el libo* — 'And the living will lay it to his heart.' R. Manna said: this refers to the pious ones who continuously hold death before their eyes. Why does one beat one's heart? This is to indicate that all (evil) comes from there — *velama kotchim al halev lemeimar decula taman.*" A similar idea is expressed in the idiomatic phrase: *Liba ve'eina terein sirsurim dechataa* — "Heart and eye are the two agents of sin" (*Yerushalmi, Berachot* 1:5).

The form and frequency of the confession of sins on the Day of Atonement is discussed in the following Talmudic passage

"Our Rabbis taught: The obligation of confession of sins comes on the Eve of the Day of Atonement, as it grows dark. But the Sages said: Let one confess before one has eaten and drunk, lest one become upset in the course of the meal. And although one has confessed before eating and drinking, he should confess again after having eaten and drunk, because perchance some wrong has happened in the course of the meal. And although he has confessed during the evening prayer, he should confess again during the morning prayer; (and although he has confessed) during the morning prayer, he should do so again during the *Musaf* (additional prayer). And although he had confessed during the *Musaf*, he should do so again during the afternoon prayer; and although he had done so in the afternoon prayer, he should confess again in the *Ne'ilah* (concluding prayer). And when shall he say (the confession)? The individual after his *Amidah* prayer, the public reader in the middle thereof. What is it (the confession)? — Rab said: 'Thou knowest the secrets of eternity'. Samuel said: 'From the depths of the heart.' Levi said:

'And in thy Torah it is said...' R. Johanan said: 'Lord of the Universe' (etc). R. Judah: 'Our iniquities are too many to count, and our sins are too numerous to be counted.' R. Hamnuna said: 'My God, before I was formed, I was of no worth, and now that I have been formed, it is as if I had not been formed. I am dust in my life, how much more in my death. Behold I am before Thee like a vessel full of shame and reproach. May it be Thy will that I sin no more, and what I have sinned wipe away in Thy mercy, but not through suffering.' That was the confession (of sins) used by Rab all the year round, and by R. Hamnuna the younger, on the Day of Atonement. Mar Zutra said: All that (is necessary only) when he did not say: 'Truly, we have sinned,' but if he had said: 'Truly, we have sinned,' no more is necessary, for Bar Hamdudi said: 'Once I stood before Samuel, who was sitting, and when the public reader came up and said: "Truly, we have sinned," he rose.' Hence he inferred that this was the main confession" (*Yoma* 87b).

Our *Machzor* contains some of the confessions indicated in this Talmudic passage, adding two confessional texts arranged alphabetically: *Ashamnu* in the simple form and *Al Chet* in the double form.

Baer in his commentary to the prayer book, p. 415, lists a variety of opinions on the age and basis of the alphabetically arranged confession of sins. According to the Shelah, (Isaiah Horowitz, 1555 — ca. 1625) the *Ashamnu* is already implied in the view of Mar Zutra, that *Aval Anachnu Chatanu* constitutes the actual confession of sins. According to other opinions *Ashamnu* and *Al Chet* did not originate before the Geonic period. R. Abraham Danzig (1748 — 1820), writing in his *Chayei Adam*, gives the following reason for the alphabetic order of the confession: "Seeing that the sinner has done violence to the

twenty-two letters of the Torah, the Rabbis have arranged the confession to follow the alphabet, that he might enumerate all the sins with these letters, e.g., associate with *Ashamnu* — We have transgressed, *Achalti davar assur* — I have partaken of something that is forbidden, or *Achalti belo berachah lefanav uleacharav* — I have enjoyed food without uttering the preceding and following benedictions" (*Klal* 143). The *Chayei Adam* presents us with a detailed commentary on all the expressions used in the *Ashamnu* text, as also a detailed suggestion of the sins that might be associated with all the letters of the alphabet.

Classifying the sins specified herein, we are struck by the fact that out of the forty-four statements that make up the *Al Chet*, twelve deal with sins rooted in speech (five in *Ashamnu*). Only four statements relate to transgressions committed by man against God in the strict sense (only two in the *Ashamnu* text). Dominating both confessional texts are general expressions of sin (fifteen in *Al Chet* and seventeen in *Ashamnu*). The following quotation from the Gemara sheds light on the character of sinfulness in general and malicious talk in particular in our classical sources:

"R. Amram said in the name of Rab: There are three transgressions which no man escapes for a single day: Sinful (unchaste) thought, calculation on (the results of) prayer (i.e., presuming that God *must* answer prayer of any kind whatsoever), and slander (lit. evil speech)" (*Baba Batra* 164b).

In conclusion we shall try to account for the custom to render the confession of sins in a rather joyful melody. Rabbi Israel ben Gedaliah Lipschuetz (1782 — 1860) writes in his Mishnah Commentary *Tiferet Yisrael* on *Ta'anit* 4:8, note 64: "It is a Jewish custom to render *Ashamnu* tunefully whereas you might expect the melody

to be more like a dirge? This, however, is an indication that our sins are transformed into merits (after *teshuvah*) and therefore this tune can be taken as fitting the text."

6. KOL NIDREI

In the Talmud (*Nedarim* 23b) we are advised, that if anyone desires to void the oaths he has promised during the whole year, he must declare at the beginning of the year that any oath he is about to take is void. Following is the comment made by *Tossafot* on this passage: "It would appear that the recital of *Kol Nidrei* on *Yom haKippurim*, as is customary in some congregations, is related to this passage." This is followed by the significant reservation: "*Davka bishvu'ot unedarim shenishba venadar le'atzmo. Aval mi shehishbi'o chavero o shehidiro, eyn bitul ze mo'il kelum*: To be sure this voiding is only valid with regard to oaths and vows affecting one's own person. However, if someone else has caused him to take an oath or if he has taken a vow in respect of someone else, then this voiding has no validity whatsoever." Accordingly, when reciting the *Kol Nidrei* text contained in our *Machzor*, which opens with an enumeration of various forms of vows, obligations and oaths, we must lay special stress on the expression *Al nafshatana* — "affecting our own person."

Of considerable interest and importance are the observations of Rabeinu Asher in his *Halachot* in *Yoma* VIII, No. 28, from which the following extracts are taken:

I. Although the Gemara in *Nedarim* 23b refers to *Rosh haShanah*, our own ritual is carried on on *Yom haKippurim*, "seeing that on that day the entire city is congregated in the synagogue." Moreover, we find that *Yom haKippurim* too is referred to as *Rosh haShanah* in the book Ezekiel (cf. Ez. 40:1).

II. The threefold repetition of *Kol Nidrei* is accounted

for by the fact that: "Thus we find it always to be the custom of the *chachamim*, that they repeat matters three times." There follows a reference to *Menachot* 10:3, where during the cutting of the first sheaves of corn the ceremony is repeated three times.

III. Following in the footsteps of *tossafot*, Rabeinu Asher too underlines the point that *Kol Nidrei* is restricted to *nidrei atzmo* — vows taken in regard to one's own person. However, in the case of vows resulting from an obligation to one's fellow man or vows required by the court or congregation, the voiding has no validity whatsoever.

IV. Rabeinu Asher quotes the *Kol Nidrei* text used by Rabeinu Sa'adia, which is in Hebrew.

V. The custom of reciting *Kol Nidrei* before nightfall is based on the following Talmudical passage: "Absolution (on the Sabbath) may be granted for vows (only) when these are necessary for the Sabbath" (*Shabbat* 157a, *Nedarim* 76b and 77a).

VI. Sa'adia Gaon has expressed a positive attitude towards the custom of reciting *Kol Nidrei*, but there were other *Geonim* who looked askance at its proliferation, thus: "R. Natronai, however, writes that neither in the two *Yeshivot* (Sura and Pumpedita), nor anywhere else, has it been customary to nullify the vows on *Rosh haShanah* or on *Yom haKippurim*; we have only heard this about other countries that they recite *Kol Nidrei*, but we have neither witnessed it nor learnt it from our teachers, blessed be their memory...." A similar opinion is expressed by R. Hai bar Mar Rab Nachshon: "...We have not learnt this from our teachers and you, too, ought to accept the restrictive view held by us and desist from altering the custom maintained by the two *Yeshivot*."

VII. Both *Tossafot* and Rabeinu Asher deal with the application of the *Kol Nidrei* text, the question being

whether it ought to refer to the previous year, or, as Rabeinu Tam understands it, to the coming year. (A detailed study of the *Kol Nidrei* text is found in the *Heidenheim Machzor*).

The form and language of *Kol Nidrei* has elicited the following comment by Elbogen: "Although in its original form the text dealt with the past, i.e., with the vows taken in the previous year, it was altered in the 12th century at the prompting of R. Jacob Tam and made to refer to the future. In this new form the text is found in the *Machzor* used in Germany, whereas the Balkan and Italian rites have retained the older text. A combination of both is found in the *Sephardi* rite. In both the German and *Sephardi* versions the language of *Kol Nidrei* is Aramaic. The Balkan and Italian versions, however, following the text found in the siddur of Amram Gaon and in all the quotations from the *geonim*, are Hebrew" (*Der juedische Gottesdienst*, p. 154).

Modern Jewish scholarship has been much concerned with the problem of the origin of the *Kol Nidrei* invocation in its present form. S. Krauss of Vienna, in his work entitled *The Problem of Kol Nidrei*, has subjected the various extant views to a critical analysis. Following are some of his significant observations: "So much can nowadays be said with certainty — rather than being a prayer, *Kol Nidrei* is a formula with an Halachic if not juridical basis... It remains to be asked why it was deemed necessary to present the private affairs of an individual whose conscience is troubled by vows as a public, communal affair? This is the great question about which nothing is found in our sources..."

"I believe that a notable contribution to this problem may be found in an idea expressed by the late S. Poznanski, that renowned expert in the field of Karaism... he writes: 'May we not possibly trace the origin of *Kol Nidrei*

to the mockery of the *heter nedarim* (voiding of vows) by the Karaite sect which came into existence during the period of Gaon Yehudai? In the opinion of Poznanski, our *Kol Nidrei* must have arisen in *Eretz Yisrael* as a deliberate reaction against the ideology of Karaism...

"We need not be surprised at the Karaites' choice of the traditional voiding of vows by a scholar or by a three-man court, as the major target of their anti-Rabbinic offensive, seeing that even in the words of Mishnah (*Chagigah* 1:8), '*Heter nedarim porchin baavir* - The rules concerning the release from vows hang in the air'. Indeed no element of the oral tradition is so little anchored in the holy Scriptures as this law, concerning the possibility of voiding vows, unless they concern a daughter who is a minor or one's wife.

"On the other hand, it is not unreasonable to assume that quite apart from the emergence of the Karaite sect, the hour preceding the Day of Atonement was chosen for the ritual of *Heter Nedarim* suggested in *Nedarim* 23a for the New Year, as our expression of faith in the oral tradition, shortly before the commencement of the holiest of days...

"If Babylonia was not the country where *Kol Nidrei* originated.... where then did it arise?... The answer may be found in the general outlines followed by the different versions of the prayer. If we trace the origin to *Eretz Yisrael*, then it was naturally retained in the customs of Italy, France and Germany, countries whose usage drew on *Eretz Yisrael*. Spain, however, (the *Sephardi* rite) taking its cue from Babylonia, indeed refused, or only hesitatingly introduced *Kol Nidrei*.

"The Geonic period in *Eretz Yisrael* saw a bitter encounter between the Rabbanite and Karaite camps, which now and then took a grotesque turn. We may note a kinship between the festive *Kol Nidrei* rite on the eve of

Yom haKippurim, and *Hosha'na Rabba*, the day upon which the Karaites were festively put under ban at the prayer service conducted upon the Mount of Olives. Following is a report by Rabbi Abraham Ibn David (1110 — 1180), author of *Sefer haKabbala* (wherein he strives to prove the unbroken chain of rabbinic tradition in contrast to the Karaite doctrine): 'Celebrating the *Sukkot* feast on the Mount of Olives, the Israelites would encamp in groups on the hill; they loved and blessed one another; the infidels (Karaites) however, encamped opposite them like two little flocks of goats; the Rabbanites then took out the *Sefer Torah* and placed the name of the infidels under ban in their presence. The latter, however, remained silent like dumb dogs, unable to bark'...

"... I am on the target now... The Karaites, as we know, hotly contested the dispensation empowering a Rabbinite board to void oaths and vows, and for this reason their opponents decided to assert their prerogative with great ceremony. Originally a matter of private conscience troubled by vows and oaths, the act of *heter nedarim* now became a communal affair designed to enhance its authority. The consideration requiring this to be done communally, on no lesser a day than *Yom Kippur*, when the congregation is all the more numerous, has been discussed by our authorities on several occasions (cf. Rabeinu Asher, VIII No. 28). The fact was there and now one sought the principle from which to deduce this custom. The historical considerations aimed against the Karaites, had sunk into oblivion... If *Eretz Yisrael* is indeed the homeland of *Kol Nidrei*, then we might rightly assume that originally this ritual text was Hebrew, although Aramaic might well serve a Rabbinic 'act of court' that concerned the people. There are several indications that the original text was Hebrew. The version found in the prayer book of Sa'adia Gaon merits special attention, as

his lifetime could hardly be far removed from the period when the *Kol Nidrei* ritual was instituted" (*Year Book of the Jewish Literary Society* (German), XIX p. 86 ff.).

We have already mentioned the question whether *Kol Nidrei* referred to the past or to the future. An interesting custom bearing on this is reported by A.M. Luncz, *Palestine Almanac* IV, Annual Set 1898, p. 37: "In the Talmud Torah Synagogue belonging to the *Sephardim*, *Kol Nidrei* is recited four times before the *Yom Kippur* evening service, the first three being couched in the past tense, and the fourth in the future."

The *Ashkenazi* custom of prefacing the evening service with a declaration allowing all the transgressors (*avaryanim*) to join the community in prayer, is discussed by R. Ya'akov b. Asher in his *Tur, Orach Chayim* 619. According to him, it is derived from the Talmudic statement in *Keritot* 6a that a fast day prayer service not attended by sinners was not a proper fast day, since the offensive smelling galbanum (*Helbena*, cf. Exodus 30:34) was included by Scriptures in the list of aromatic spices. Thus Rabbi Yoel Serkes (1561 — 1640) in his commentary entitled *Bayit Chadash* (*Bach, ad.loc.*): "The words used in this admission formula: *Al da'at haMakom ve'al da'at hakahal...* warn the sinner that admission to Divine service is not to be mistaken for a remission of sins. Rather is it meant to induce the sinners to choose true repentance." Elbogen writes in the *Jewish Lexicon* (German) under the title *Avaryanim* the following: "This refers especially to people who make light of Jewish religious law, ignoring the decisions of Rabbinic courts and communal enactments. Such people were put under ban which also meant being excluded from communal prayer. At the approach of the Day of Atonement, however, the punishment was temporarily set aside and they were allowed to enter the synagogue service. All other interpretations of these

words associating them with marranos or other types of pseudo-christians are erroneous."

The custom whereby the reader is joined by two worshipers at the Reader's Desk until the beginning of the evening service has, according to *Tur* 619, its origin in the following *Midrash*: "'And Moses said unto Joshua; choose us out men' (Exodus 17:9), sons of pious fathers, powerful, proficient and God fearing men, in order to fight against Amalek. Moses, Aaron and Hur placed themselves on a hill inside the camp, one to the right and the other to the left of Moses. This is to teach us that the reader is not to recite his prayer, unless attended by two men." With us this custom survived only during the beginning of *Yom Kippur* eve. According to *Bach* on 619 it appears that in some communities this regulation has remained in force over the whole of *Yom haKippurim*.

Kol Nidrei was often the occasion of anti-Semitic accusations. In the *Jewish Lexicon* (German), Volume 3, column 765, we read the following: "The release from past or future vows has no validity except in the case of commitments relating to one's own person. The *Kol Nidrei* formula cannot nullify commitments towards others, according to the regulations of Jewish law. This must be underlined, forasmuch as the anti-Semites have chosen this prayer as a basis for hurling countless accusations lacking any justification against Judaism and Jewish oaths of allegiance... The *Kol Nidrei* prayer was affected by Russian legislation since roughly the end of the eighteenth century. It was discussed at the negotiations on the equality of Jews residing in Kurland and remained on the agenda until finally the Ukaz of 25 October 1857.... insisted upon a specially worded Hebrew introduction to the *Kol Nidrei* prayer, whereby release from oaths and vows was feasible in respect of one's own person, but not when relating to the authorities or other people."

The following excerpt illustrates Jewish reaction to this type of denunciation in the Middle Ages. On 20 Tammuz (24 June) 1240, a religious disputation took place in Paris between R. Yechiel of Paris and the apostate Nicholas Dunin, in the presence of King Louis IX and the Queen Mother Blanche. In his defence, R. Yechiel said the following:

“Now you (Dunin) have maliciously turned against the *Kol Nidrei* prayer (alleging that the Jew hereby releases himself on the Day of Atonement from all oaths and vows for the next year and is in consequence able to flaunt all oaths taken towards Christians and may without any scruples take a vow at court). But why do you not consider the conclusion of this utterance: ‘And pardon shall be granted to the whole congregation of Israel, and to the stranger who sojourns among them, when all the people transgresses ignorantly.’ Only the erroneously broken vows are voided, that nobody might commit the sin of wilfully breaking a vow. As for your statement, that laymen are able to void vows and oaths, this applies solely to the person who has taken the oath, and not to vows that affect others. All oaths taken by his fellow person towards man can only be voided in the knowledge and with the assent of the one affected by the oath. Evidence of this is found in the punishment meted out to King Zedekiah and his sons, as it is written: ‘And they slew the sons of Zedekiah, before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah.... and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.’ This fate overtook him only because he dissolved his oath of loyalty to the king without the knowledge of the latter. Furthermore it says: ‘What your lips have uttered, keep, and carry out what you have vowed’! Above all else we have been taught to value the sanctity of an oath, being obliged to keep even such oaths as militate to our own disadvantage. And if such an oath

is not kept, the transgressor is enjoined to bring a sin-offering, as it is written: ‘The oath may have been taken to one’s own disadvantage or advantage.’ Furthermore, in the story of the Gibeonites it says: ‘And the Children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel.’ Actually they might have ignored their oath, forasmuch as the Gibeonites had lied to them, feigning they had come from afar. But the princes would not dissolve the oath against the will of the Gibeonites” (Hoexter, part 3, pp. 94 — 95).

Kol Nidrei is sung three times, the volume of the sound being increased each time. The early origin of this custom emerges from *Machzor Vitry*, which adduces the opinion of Sa’adia Gaon as reported by Rabeinu Nissim: “The first time it is recited in a very low voice, like a person who is too frightened to enter the royal palace.... fearing to approach he speaks in a whisper, restrained by shyness. The second time one ought to raise one’s voice a little more than the first time, but during the third time it is already proper to speak out aloud like a person who is used to be counted amongst those associated with the household of the king, to draw nearer without any qualm, in the certain knowledge that his words will be heard” (p. 388).

In conclusion we shall quote the famous words of Nicholas Lenau on *Kol Nidrei* from the year 1848: “A song draped with the veil of grief, a night song dying away in the innermost recesses of penitent, contrite repentant human hearts. Years ago I heard it in my home. The Day of Atonement had come, I squeezed myself into a corner of the Synagogue in order not to disturb the worshippers. Gigantic wax candles were alight; and the people, crowded together in flowing, snow-white robes, were before me with their bowed heads. Then the Cantor began to chant that profoundly solemn and heart-rending song of

absolution, so fraught with terror, and yet so rich in mercy. I sobbed convulsively while hot tears poured from my eyes. It seems to me that such a song, redolent of a people's suffering, can hardly have been composed by one brain, however much inspired. I would rather say that mysterious songs, such as this wonderful *Kol Nidrei*, have resulted from the composite inspirations of hundreds. Ah! would that my friends might sing it at my death-bed!" (From Joseph Herman Hertz, *A Book of Jewish Thoughts*, rev. ed. Pub. R. Schindler, Cairo, 1943, p. 138.)

7. AVODAH

A schematic presentation of the *Avodah* — the Temple service, observations on some of the underlying ideas and notes on the poetic adaptation of this major element in the *Mussaf* prayer, are found under IIb3 (p. 25 ff). On the significance of the kneeling see IIc8 (p. 57 ff).

8. NE'ILAH — THE SHEMOT (CONCLUDING VERSES)

The expression *Ne'ilah* denotes closure. In the Gemara there is a difference of opinion on whether the closure *Ne'ilah* refers to *Sha'arei heichal* (the Gates of the Sanctuary) or *Sha'arei Shamayim* (the Gates of Heaven). Halachically, the difference between these two interpretations lies in that, according to the first, the prayer ought to be recited before darkness, whereas according to the second it is to be said only with the advent of nightfall (cf. the commentaries of *Penei Moshe* and *Korban Ha'eidah* on *Yerushalmi*). Thus we read in the Talmud: "When or what is *Ne'ilah*? The Sages from Caesarea say that there is a difference of opinion on this between Rav and R. Johanan. Rav says that it is the 'closure of the Gates of Heaven' (this being the meaning of *Ne'ilah*), and R. Johanan on the

other hand is of the opinion that it is 'the closure of the Temple' " (*Yerushalmi*, *Ta'anit* 4:1). *Rambam* makes the following comment on the concept of *Ne'ilah*: "The Gates of Heaven are closed on the sun and she hides herself, i.e., one recites this prayer shortly before sundown" (*Sefer Ahavah*, *Hilchot Tefilah*, chapter 1, *halachah* 9). In the *Shulchan Aruch*, the character of *Ne'ilah* is defined in the following manner: "The time for the *Ne'ilah* prayer is when the sun appears to be about the tree tops — *hachamah berosh hailanot* — so that one might conclude the prayer shortly before sundown" (*Orach Chayim* 623, No. 2).

There were further occasions when this prayer was recited beside *Yom haKippurim*: "On three occasions of the year, on fast days and on *Ma'amadot* and on the Day of Atonement, do the priests lift up their hands to bless the people four times during the day, namely at the *Shacharit* service, at *Mussaf*, at *Minchah* and at the closing of the gates (*Ne'ilah*)" (*Ta'anit* 4:1). On the institution of the *Ma'amadot*, we quote the Mishnah: "The following are the details concerning the *Ma'amadot*. Because it is said, 'Command the Children of Israel and say unto them: My food which is presented unto Me' (Numbers 28:2). Now how can a man's offering be brought on the altar and he is not present? Therefore the earlier prophets (Samuel and David) instituted twenty-four *Mishmarot* (divisions of lay people as well as priests and Levites), and each *Mishmar* was represented at the Temple in Jerusalem by its own *Ma'amad* of Priests, Levites and Israelites" (*Ta'anit* 4:2).

In the *Yerushalmi* (*Ta'anit* 4, *halachah* 1) the question is asked whether there is any scriptural indication for a special *Ne'ilah* prayer. According to one opinion, an indirect reference might be found in Isaiah 1:15: "Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear." Only when Israel is burdened with wrongs, will prayer not be accept-

able; otherwise, however, we follow the principle: "He who prays much, is heard." According to another opinion, we follow the example of Hannah, who "continued praying before the Lord" (I Samuel 1:12). In this sense we must understand the rabbinic institution of the *Ne'ilah* prayer. By our additional appeal for Divine intercession, we render ourselves more worthy in the eyes of God, thus enhancing the likelihood of our prayers being accepted.

In the Talmud there is a difference of opinion as to the significance of *Ne'ilah*: "What is the prayer at 'the closing of the Temple gates'? Rab said: An extra prayer (i.e., an extra *Amidah* consisting of the usual seven benedictions). Samuel said: 'Who are we, What is our life, etc.'.... Ulla b. Rab came down to the reader's desk before Raba commencing the *Ne'ilah* prayer with 'Thou hast chosen us' and concluding with 'What are we, what is our life,' and he praised him. R. Huna b. Nathan said: The individual should say it (i.e., What are we, etc.) after his prayer" (*Yoma* 87b). Our own usage follows the opinion of Rab, but there is also room in our liturgy for the text: "Who are we, what is our life."

Whereas generally we recite *Ashrei* and *uVa leZion* before the *Minchah* prayer, on the Day of Atonement, according to the Rema, it is recited before *Ne'ilah* (cf. *Orach Chayim* 623). *Magen Avraham* explains it thus: "If one said it before *Minchah*, it might become too late." In *Machzor Vitry* p. 394 the following explanation is offered: "Each prayer recited on this day ought to be distinctly separated from the other. *Shacharit* and *Mussaf* are held apart by the Torah reading, and the same applies to *Mussaf* and *Minchah*. However, *tefillat Minchah* and *tefillat Ne'ilah* follow one another without interruption and for this reason we recite on *Yom haKippurim* *Ashrei* and *uVa leZion* before *Ne'ilah* rather than saying it before *Minchah*" (quoted from the Responsa Collection *Bassar al Gabei Gechalim*).

The festive character of the *Ne'ilah* prayer is enhanced by the transformation of the phrase *kotveinu lechayim* — 'Inscribe us into the Book of Life' — now rendered — *chotmeinu* — 'O seal us in the Book of Life'. This version is already found in the Siddur of R. Amram Gaon (cf. *Tur, Orach Chayim* 60).

The concise, clear and uncomplicated text of the *Ne'ilah* prayer yet evokes intense fervour. The religious — philosophical character of this prayer is aptly presented by Hermann Cohen, who stresses the psychological element: "The final prayer of the Day, too, is of a significance as illuminating as it is overwhelming. The main prayer (*Shemoneh Esrei*) of the final prayer (*Ne'ilah*) cannot be praised enough. 'Thou givest a hand to transgressors, and Thy right hand is stretched out to receive the penitent (the returning); Thou hast taught us, O Eternal our God, to make confession unto Thee of all our sins, in order that we may cease from the violence of our hands, that Thou mayest receive us into Thy presence in perfect repentance.' The concluding sentence of this paragraph forms a confession that is taken into the daily morning prayer: 'What are we? What is our life? What is our love? What our righteousness? What our virtue? What our strength? What our heroism?... The pre-eminence of man over the beast is nought, for all is vanity.' But this prayer, just as little as Ecclesiastes, does not end on this skeptical note.

"The new paragraph immediately starts with a correction. 'Thou hast distinguished man from the beginning and hast recognized his privilege that he might stand before Thee.' Thus man is, nevertheless, distinguished from the animal, and therefore not everything is vanity. Man is set apart, is marked out, is acknowledged to stand before God. This standing before God is in fact one of the

technical terms for worship. Man stands before God. Thus, man's independence in the correlation with God is proclaimed. In this standing before God the individual accomplishes his self-purification.

"It is characteristic that in the confession of sins the otherwise customary expression of prostration is not used. The latter, as well as the bending of the knees, might be appropriate to adoration, to the solemn acknowledgement of God; but at the moment of acknowledgement and confession of man's sin, and the related acknowledgement of trust in the good God's forgiveness of sin, in such a moment prostration is much less fitting than an upright posture before God. Otherwise, man's distinction from the animal would not be complete. It consists in his upright posture, and, therefore, man's worthiness for redemption from sin is expressed in his standing upright, albeit humbly before God.

"The day thou stoodest before the Eternal thy God in Horeb' (Deut. 4:10). This is the expression for the posture in which the people received the revelation. Hence the prayer that has its climax in the confession of sin and in the plea for forgiveness, this form of standing before God that distinguishes man from the animals, is a further development of the election constituted by revelation. Thus, the actualization of monotheism is expressed throughout in the rabbinic shaping of the Day of Atonement. It is, therefore, understandable that the Day of Atonement became the distinctive mark of the pious worship of God" (Hermann Cohen, *The Religion of Reason*, pp. 219 — 220).

We should like to draw the reader's attention to a further element in the text meriting the closest attention, since it expresses a fundamental notion in Judaism: "And if He be righteous what can He give thee (God)"? — *Veim yitsdak ma yiten lach* (cf. Job 35:6 — 7 : "If thou sinnest,

what dost thou against him? Or if thy transgression be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous what givest thou him? Or what receives he of thine hand"?). Again and again we meet the erroneous view that our deeds signified action for the sake of God. As against this, the profound message of *Yom haKippurim* teaches us that it is we who are transformed, whose sensations and perceptions are chastened upon experience of the Divine.

The *Ne'ilah* prayer is terminated by the so-called *Shemot*, i.e., the recital of three verses, some of which are repeated several times. They denote recognition of and confession to God.

Before discussing the choice of these verses to mark the conclusion of *Yom haKippurim*, a few general observations might here be in place.

I. *Shema Yisrael, haShem Eloheinu haShem echad* (Deuteronomy 6:4). "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One."

The following, somewhat shortened comment of S. R. Hirsch on this passage, effectively analyzes the notion that has rendered this phrase as the very basis of Judaism, denoting "the acceptance of the yoke of Divine sovereignty" (cf. *Berachot* 13a). Hirsch writes:

"Not out of the phenomena of nature and history is it that each one of us has to come to a conclusion in his mind as to the existence or non-existence of God. Far beyond the convictions which are arrived at from such speculative inferences and deductions, God demonstrated His existence, yea His existence down here in the midst of all earthly conditions, to every one of our fathers, by experiences which settled any possible doubt, for them to testify to their children who came after these events. They saw God with their own eyes breaking their chains in

Egypt, leading and feeding them through the wilderness and bringing them to the Promised Land. They heard Him with their own ears when He imparted the words of His Law to them at Sinai. Our knowledge of God rests on the evidence of this, testified by the whole assembly of the whole of our nation. Not from nature and history have we to deduce a belief in God, but, with the knowledge of God which we have been given in our hands, we are to look into nature and history and try to get an understanding of the phenomena of nature and the events of history...

“But here, the knowledge of God based on our common observation... is condensed into the one word *echad*. For what is laid down here as the very first fundamental truth of our knowledge for us ever to take to heart, the *achdut* of our God, is nothing but the positive denial of all ancient and modern polytheistic ideas and false opinions. In the midst of all the greatest contradictory appearance of the manifold presentations of nature, history and our own inner selves, a contradictory variety which, more than anything else begat — and begets — the polytheistic erroneous conception, this *echad* expresses the fact, the truth: — of the whole of this apparent antagonism — heaven to earth, personal to universal, what one pursues to what one avoids, endures and conquers, constructive forces and materials to destructive ones, all the changes of day and night, of becoming and reverting, of blooming and withering, of living and dying, having and losing, of eating and starving, of rising and falling, loving and hating, of joy and sorrow, the contrasts of freedom and subjection, of spiritual and material, of heavenly and earthly, out of which human beings feel themselves woven — it is One single One, God alone Who created and holds all these contrasts, arranges them and guides them, Who formed all these contrasts about us and in us, from Whom all our joy

and all our sorrow comes, our spirit and our body. He created our bodies and invested them with spirit from His spirit, and personality from His own, and freedom of will from His free-will.

“Polytheistic thinkers who looked at all the occurrences of the world subjectively from their relations to mankind, grouped the whole of these contradictory appearances into two opposing factors, those that were in agreement with the wishes and desires of men and those that were opposed to them, and the whole of the variety of the rest of the world of gods came under the sway of two high godly powers who fought each other for the mastery of the world and men and it was just out of this irreconcilable struggle that the whole contradictory manifestations in the external and internal world of men resulted. For them there was a benign power of goodness to which light and life and good belonged, and a power of evil which to them was the god of night and death and evil. This was the view of the dual nature of the world taken by the old Parseeism...

“But the full Jewish Truth which our saying *Shema* brings home to our minds declares that God’s ‘Oneness’ does not merely mean that what the polytheistic conception regards as the spheres of two opposing god-heads, are really both of them the ways of the One and only God, Whose Love governs every coming breath we draw (*haShem* I.L.), and Whose Judgement watches over every past breath we have drawn (*Eokim* I.L.), but that His Rule only appears to our shortsightedness as dual, and in reality it is one only. His judgement, when it denies or punishes us, is itself only a manifestation of His Love. Not only *haShem Elokeinu Echad*, but *haShem Elokeinu haShem Echad*, even as *Elokim* He is *haShem*”! (From S. R. Hirsch, *Commentary on Deuteronomy*, 6:4.).

II. *Baruch Shem kevod malchuto le'olam va'aed* —
 “Blessed be the name of the glory of his Kingdom for ever
 and ever.”

This sentence is not a Biblical verse. Its origin is dealt with in two distinctive Aggadot. In the first one (*Pessahim* 56a) we read: “And what is the reason that we do recite it (i.e., ‘Blessed be the name’)? Even as R. Shim’on b. Lakish expounded. for R. Shim’on b. Lakish said: ‘And Jacob called unto his sons, and said: Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the end of days’ (Genesis 49:1). Jacob wished to reveal to his sons the ‘end of the days’ (the final universal redemption) whereupon the *Shechinah* departed from him. Said he, ‘Perhaps, Heaven forefend! there is one unfit among my children, like Abraham, from whom there issued Ishmael, or like my father Isaac, from whom there issued Essau! But his sons answered him, ‘Hear O Israel, the Lord our god the Lord is One’! (‘Israel’ referring to their father): ‘just as there is One in thy eart, so is there in our heart only One’! In that moment our father Jacob opened his mouth and exclaimed ‘Blessed be the name of His glorious Kingdom for ever and ever’! Said the rabbis, How shall we act? Shall we recite it — but our Teacher Moses did not say it. Shall we not say it — but Jacob said it! Hence they enacted that it should be recited quietly.”

The second *Midrash* contains an explanation of the custom to recite this sentence, inserted into the *Shema*, aloud on *Yom haKippuim*: “When Moses ascended to Heaven he heard the ministering angels saying to God, ‘Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever.’ This declaration Moses brought down to Israel. And why do not Israel make this declaration publicly (i.e., aloud)? R. Assi replied: This can be compared to a man who stole jewellery from the royal palace which he gave

to his wife, telling her, ‘Do not wear these in public, but only in the house.’ But on the Day of Atonement, when Israel are as pure as the ministering angels, they do recite publicly, ‘Blessed be the name...’” (*Midrash Rabbah*, end of *Vaetchanan*). On the Day of Atonement, as we have just been given to understand, Israel is on an equal footing with the angels and Satan has no power to condemn. Thus we read in the Talmud: “Whence is that derived? — Rami bar Hama said: *HaSaTaN* (the Satan) in numerical value is 364, that means: On 364 days he has permission to act as accuser but on the Day of Atonement he has no permission to act as accuser” (*Yoma* 20a).

An interesting comment on the sentence under discussion is found in an anthology, *On the Meaning of Judaism* (German), published in honour of Nathan Birnbaum. Under the title, *The Root of Aesthetic Sensibility*, Jacob Rosenheim writes: “... What indeed is *Shem Kevod Malchuto*? These three words are here joined into a single concept, although their intrinsic significance would render each a notion apart.

“*Shem*, ‘the Name,’ denotes a conceptual grasp of a thing in terms of pure thought, in our case the logical recognition of God.

“*Malchut*, i.e., ‘Dominion’, (in the Kabala the lowest of the *Sefirot*, associated with worldly activity, under the immediate sway of the Divine) — appeals to one’s conscious will to accept the ‘yoke’ of obligation, *ol malchut shamayim*; the ethical enthronement of God.

“*Kavod*, on the other hand, popularly rendered as ‘splendour,’ seems to me, briefly expressed, nothing but a representation of the third elementary predisposition of the soul towards the universe, i.e., aesthetic perception, in our case the aesthetic experience of Divine splendour.

“An investigation of the context in which the expression *kavod* is found in the Scriptures, notably in passages of

profound significance or in relation to God, shows that on the one hand it is intimately associated with *Shem*, and on the other with *Tiferet*, *Hod* and *Hadar*, the notions of 'Beauty'. Whereas *Shem* denotes sober, rational representation of a thing in its essence, *Kavod* is brought in to add a lively, emotional tone, as will readily be recognized by the perceptive reader of the verses in question.....

"Maimonides, in his *Moreh Nevuchim*, chapter 64, ascribes to the words *kevod haShem* a three-fold meaning. Apart from its particular human meaning, denoting 'eulogy,' it likewise represents Divinely created Light, as well as the Divine Essence itself...

"Malbim (in his commentary on Exodus 33:18) adds to the three basic concepts defined by Maimonides a fourth, that of 'emergent creation.' The hitherto formless and super-sensory universe is hereby transformed into something definite and given to sense perception. This is the primal meaning of *kevod haShem* in this elaboration of the Maimonidean train of thought which at the same time reveals the metaphysical root of aesthetics in Judaism.

"It is through the peculiar inter-relationship of mind and matter in the universe that man is in a position to regard the universe in lively aesthetic terms. This is not a pure mental perception of something very spiritual nor an ethical effort of the will to subdue matter by force, but rather the heart sensing the Divine behind matter.

"Aesthetic sensibility is just as unthinkable in a world made of pure spirit, as it is in a world of mere matter devoid of all spirit. Rather is it the function of matter rendered incandescent by absolute spirit — a balance between mind and the sensitive quality.

"In this descending scale from the absolute to the emergence of a spiritual-sensual world the interpretations of *kevod haShem* by Maimonides and Malbim likewise denote stages in the emergence of aesthetics...."(On the

Meaning of Judaism (German), pp.138, 141 — 142).

III. *HaShem Hu haElokim* — "The Lord, He is (the true) God" (I Kings 18:39).

One of the most gripping scenes of Biblical narrative is hereby conjured up before our eyes. It is the success story of an emissary of God, of a man whose name signifies "My God is the true God" — *Eliyahu*, whose actions led the people to a recognition of the god of Israel.

We have already had occasion to quote above (P. 86) from *Sifrei* on Leviticus 3:24 to the effect that the two Divine names signify *midat harachamim* and *midat hadin*, respectively, the attributes of mercy and unbending justice. We now present to the reader a lengthier passage from Judah Halevi's *Kuzari*, in which the author goes into the significance of the different appellations of the Deity:

"This general term, light, corresponds to what we call *Elokim*, as is now clear. Transparent light corresponds to 'Eternal,' a proper name which describes especially the relation between Him and His earthly creatures, I mean the prophets, whose souls are refined and susceptible to His light, which penetrates them, just as the sunlight penetrates the crystal and ruby. Their souls take their origin and development.....from Adam. Essence and heart (of Adam) reappear in every generation and age, whilst the large mass of mankind are set aside as husks, leaves, mud etc. The God of this essence is only and solely *haShem*, and because He established a connection with man, the name *Elokim* was altered after the creation into *haShem Elokim*. This the Sages express in the words: A 'full name over a full universe' (*Ber. Rabbah*, ch. XI). The world was but completed with the creation of man who forms the heart of all that was created before him. No intelligent person will misunderstand the meaning

conveyed by *Elokim* although this is possible with regard to *haShem* because prophecy is strange and rare in single individuals, and much more so in a multitude...

"The meaning of *Elokim* can be grasped by way of speculation, because a Guide and Manager of the world is a postulate of Reason. Opinions differ on the basis of different speculations, but that of the philosophers is the best on the subject. The meaning of *haShem*, however, cannot be grasped by speculation, but only by that intuition and prophetic vision which separates man, so to speak, from his kind, and brings him in contact with angelic beings, imbuing him with a new spirit...

"Then all previous doubts concerning *Elokim* are removed, and man deprecates those speculations by means of which he had endeavoured to derive the knowledge of God's dominion and unity. It is thus that man becomes a servant, loving the object of his worship, and ready to perish for His sake, because he finds the sweetness of this attachment as great as the distress in the absence thereof. This forms a contrast to the philosophers, who see in the worship of God nothing but extreme refinement, extolling Him in truth above all other beings (just as the sun is placed on a higher level than the other visible things), and that the denial of God's existence is the mark of a low standard of the soul which delights in untruth.

"Al Khazari: Now I understand the difference between *Elokim* and *haShem*, and I see how far the God of Abraham is different from that of Aristotle. Man yearns for *haShem* as a matter of love, taste, and conviction; whilst attachment to *Elokim* is the result of speculation. A feeling for the former kind invites its votaries to give their life for His sake, and to prefer death to His absence. Speculation, however, makes veneration only a necessity as long as it entails no harm, but bears no pain for its sake.

I would, therefore, excuse Aristotle for thinking lightly about the observation of the law, since he doubts whether God has any cognizance of it." (Judah Halevi, *The Kuzari*, tr. H. Hirschfeld, Schocken Books, N.Y., 1964, Part IV, Nos. 14, 15, pp. 220 — 223.)

We may briefly mention Rosenzweig in this context, in whose *Star of Redemption* the name *Elokim* signifies the "God of Creation," whereas *haShem* figures as the "God of Revelation." We should likewise like to draw the reader's attention to Hermann Cohen's observation at the beginning of this book (p. 1) : "We may well define this period (the Days of Awe) as a festival marking the idea of the union of love and justice in God" — *haShem Hu haElokim*.

The range of interpretations, from different periods, highlights the discernment of our *Chachamim* in their choice of three highly significant phrases to mark the finale of this greatest of days.

Our source for this custom may be found in the *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol (SeMaG)* whose author was R. Moshe b. Ya'akov from Coucy (ca. 1250, cf. also *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 623, No. 6).

Tossafot on *Berachot* 34a, s.v. *amar pesukah*, likewise refers to this custom. The *Shema* verse is not to be uttered twice, as our Sages have pointed out (*Berachot* 33a) that to read the *Shema* and to repeat it is reprehensible. The sevenfold repetition of *haShem Hu haElokim*, however, is attributed in the *Tossafot* to the Scriptural verse itself, where it is twice repeated. According to *Baer Heitev* on the above passage in the *Shulchan Aruch*, the sevenfold utterance of *haShem Hu haElokim* denotes "the accompanying of Divine majesty which uplifts itself, as it were, above the seven Heavens."

IV. ON THE MEANING OF TESHUVAH

Introductory Note:

From the extraordinary wealth of *Mussar* literature we present the reader with four short examples, trusting that they will lead to further serious study.

- (a) FROM "HILCHOT TESHUVAH," BY R. MOSHE B. MAIMON (RAMBAM — MAIOMONIDES, 1135 — 1204).

"At the present time, when the Temple no longer exists, and we have no altar for atonement, nothing is left but repentance. Repentance atones for all transgressions. Even if a man was wicked all the days of his life and repented at the end, nothing of his wickedness is recalled to him, as it is said: 'And as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not stumble thereby in the day that he turns from his wickedness' (Ezek. 33:12). The Day of Atonement itself atones for the penitent, as it is said, 'For on this day, shall atonement be made for you (Lev.16:30)' " (Chapter 1:3).

"What is perfect repentance? It is so when an opportunity presents itself for repeating an offence once committed, and the offender, while able to commit the offence, nevertheless refrains from doing so, because he is penitent and not out of fear or failure of vigour...

"If however, a person only repented in old age, at a

time when he is no longer capable of doing what he had done — although this is not an excellent mode of repentance, it nevertheless avails him and he is accepted as a penitent. Even if one transgressed all his life and only repented on the day of his death and dies penitent, all his iniquities are pardoned to him, as it is said, 'Before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain' (Eccles. 12:2) — which is an allusion to the day of death (*Yoma* 86b). Hence the inference that if one remembers his creator and repents before death, he is forgiven (*Shabbat* 151b).

"What is repentance? It consists in this, that the sinner abandon his sin, remove it from his thoughts, and resolve in his heart never to repeat it, as it is said, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the man of iniquity his thoughts' (Is. 55:7); that he regret the past, as it is said, 'Surely after that I turned I repented, after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh' (Jer. 31:18); that he calls Him who knows all secrets to witness that he will never return to this sin again, as it is said, 'neither will we call any more the work of our hands our God, for in Thee, the fatherless findeth mercy' (Hos. 14:4). It is also necessary that he make oral confession and utter the resolutions which he made in his heart" (from Chapter 1 — 2, pp. 81b, 82a, 82b, 83a).

"Some of the modes of manifesting repentance are that the penitent cries continuously before the Lord with tears and supplication; gives charity according to his means; keeps far away from that wherein he sinned; changes his name, as much as to say: 'I am another individual and not the one who committed those deeds'; changes all his activities for a better course, for the righteous way; and exiles himself from his former place of residence, since exile atones for iniquity, inducing as it does, humility, meekness and lowliness of spirit (*Rosh haShanah* 16b).

"Twenty four things hinder repentance..." (Ch. 4:1.

cf. Rif on *Yoma* 8:9. Maimonides changes the order presented therein and divides the twenty four elements on a psychological basis into five groups, setting forth the different types of *Teshuvah* attitudes which invalidate the act).

"Among those twenty four sins, there are five, concerning which it may be assumed that he who commits them will not repent of them; the reason being that they are regarded by most people as trivial, with the result that one sins and imagines that it is no sin. Offenders coming under this category are the following: 1) He who partakes of a meal that is insufficient for its owner. This is a minor (literally — 'dust of robbery') form of robbery, yet the guest imagines that he has not sinned and says (to himself) 'Did I eat aught without the owner's consent'? 2) He who uses a poor man's pledge. A poor man's pledge consists only of such articles as an axe or a plow, and the user says to himself: 'The articles have not been diminished; I have not robbed him.' 3) He who gazes at women whom it would be unlawful for him to marry, thinks that there is nothing wrong in it, and says to himself: 'Have I cohabited with her, or even drawn near to her'? — and does not realize that the (lustful) look is a grave sin, for it leads to actual in chastity, as it is said, 'And that ye seek not after your heart and after your eyes' (Num. 15:39); 4) He who seeks to obtain honour by disparaging another person and thinks to himself that this is no sin, since the other person is not present and has not suffered any shame. Moreover, the speaker did not actually shame him but only compared his own good deeds and wisdom with the other person's deeds or wisdom, so that it might be inferred that he himself is an honourable man, while the other is a contemptible fellow; 5) He who suspects the innocent, thinks to himself that he is not committing a sin, and says 'What have I done to him? Is there on my part anything more than a suspicion as to whether that person has done

something or not? He does not, however, realise that it is an iniquity, to regard a blameless man as possibly a transgressor...

"Belonging to the group are five offences of such a nature that he who commits them will always be addicted to them and will find it hard to break away from them. Hence a person should be on his guard lest he become habituated to them, seeing that they are all exceedingly pernicious habits. They are as follows: 1. Talebearing; 2. Evil speech; 3. Choleric temper; 4. Evil thoughts; 5. Keeping company with a wicked person, for thus one learns his ways which become impressed on the heart. So Solomon said: 'But the companion of fools shall be broken' (Prov. 13:20)"... (Chapter 4:4—5).

"Do not say that one need only repent of sinful deeds such as fornication, robbery and theft. Just as a man needs to repent of these sins involving acts, so he needs to investigate and repent of any evil dispositions that he may have, such as hot temper, hatred, jealousy, quarrelling, scoffing, eager pursuit of wealth or honours, greediness in eating, and so on. Of all these faults one should repent. They are graver than sinful acts; for, when one is addicted to them it is difficult to give them up. And thus it is said. 'Let the wicked forsake his way and the man of iniquity his thoughts'(Is. 55:7)..."

"Let not the penitent suppose that he is kept far away from the degree attained by the righteous, because of the iniquities and sins that he had committed. This is not so. He is beloved by the Creator, desired by Him, as if he had never sinned. Moreover, his reward is great; since though having tasted sin, he renounced it and overcame his evil passions. The sages say, 'Where penitents stand, the completely righteous cannot stand.' This means, that the degree attained by penitents is higher than that of those who had never sinned, the reason being that the former

have had to put forth a greater effort to subdue their passions than the latter...

"All the prophets charged the people concerning repentance. Only through repentance will Israel be redeemed, and the Torah already offered the assurance that Israel will, in the closing period of his exile, finally repent, and thereupon be immediately redeemed, as it is said, 'And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt take it to heart among the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord, thy God, and hearken to His voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have mercy upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee' (Deut. 30:1—3)..."

"Great is repentance for it brings man near to the Divine Presence, as it is said, 'Return O Israel, unto the Lord, thy God' (Hos. 14:2). Again, it is said, 'And ye have not returned unto Me, saith the Lord' (Amos 4:6). Further, 'If thou return, O Israel, to Me shalt thou return' (Jer. 4:1), which means 'If thou returnest in repentance thou wilt cleave to Me.'

"Repentance brings near those who are far away. But yesterday this person was odious before God, abhorred, estranged, an abomination. Today he is beloved, desirable, near (to God), a friend..."

"The right way for penitents is to be exceedingly humble and meek. If fools taunt them with their former deeds and say to them, 'But last night thou didst act thus and thus; last night, thou wast saying this and that,' they should not be unpleasantly affected by them, but should listen and rejoice, realizing that this will be accounted a

merit unto them. For when they are ashamed of their past deeds and humiliated because of them, their merit is increased and their worth enhanced" (Chapter 7:3 — 8).

(Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, The Book of Knowledge*, Notes and English tr. Moses Hyamson, reprinted by Boys Town Jerusalem Pub., 1962.)

(b) FROM A LETTER BY R. MOSHE B. NACHMAN
(RAMBAN — NACHMANIDES, 1195—1270)
WRITTEN TO HIS SON

"Hear, my son, the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the teaching of thy mother (Prov. 1:8)! Accustom thyself to speak in gentleness to all men, at all times. Thus wilt thou be saved from anger, the fertile cause of sin.... If thou indeed takest humility for thy rule in life, holding thyself modestly before the world, a God-fearer and a sin-fearer, — then will there rest upon thee the spirit of the *Shekinah* (*Avot* 3:1) and the radiance of the divine Glory, and thou wilt live the life of the world to come!

"And now, my son! Understand clearly that he who prides himself in his heart over other men is a rebel against the Kingship of Heaven. Such a one presumes to adorn himself in the robe of the Omnipresent. For it is God, enthroned, who wears the mantle of majesty (*Psalms* 93:1). And wherefore shall the heart of man be puffed up? Is it because of wealth? It is God who maketh poor and maketh rich (*I Samuel* 2:7). Or is it because of honour? But honour is of God (*I Chronicles* 29:12). And how shall a man boast in an honor which is his Maker's? Does he glorify himself because of his wisdom? Lo, God 'removeth the speech of men of trust and taketh the sense of the elders' (*Job* 12:20). In a word, all are equal before the Lord. For in His anger He bringeth down the high and in His

good pleasure He elevates the low. Therefore debase thyself and let the Omnipresent raise thee up (*Eruvin* 13b)!

"Accordingly I will explain how thou must habituate thyself to the quality of humility in thy daily practice. Let thy voice be low and thy head bowed; let thine eyes be turned earthwards and thy heart heavenwards. Gaze not in the face of him whom thou dost address. Every man should seem in thine eyes as one greater than thyself. If he be wise or wealthy it is thy duty to show him respect. If he be poor and thou the richer, or if thou be wiser than he, bethink thee in thy heart, that thou art the more guilty, he is more innocent. If he sin, it is from error; if thou sin it is with design!

"In all thy doings, words and thoughts, and at all times, regard thyself as one standing before the Omnipresent, with His *Shekinah* upon thee, for the glory of the Lord filleth the universe (*Kedushah* in *Mussaf* prayer, following *Isaiah* 6:3)...

"Read in the Torah regularly, so that thou mayest be able to fulfil its precepts. When thou risest from the book, think closely over what thou hast learnt, perchance there may be some thing in it for thee to translate into conduct. Examine thine actions at morn and at eve, and by this means all thy days will be passed in repentance.

"And when thou prayest, remove all worldly considerations from thy heart. Set thy heart right before God, cleanse thine inmost thoughts and meditate before uttering thy devotions. Act thus all thy days, in all things, and thou wilt not sin. By this course thy deeds will all be upright, and thy prayer pure and clean, innocent and devout, and acceptable before the Lord.....

"Read this letter once a week, and be as regular in carrying out its injunctions, by its aid walking forever after the Lord, blessed be He; that thou mayest prosper in all thy ways, and be held worthy of all the good which is

treasured up for the righteous"! (From: *Hebrew Ethical Wills*, selected and edited by Israel Abrahams, the Jewish Publication Society of America, pp. 95 — 99.)

(c) FROM "THE EPISTLE ON TESHUVAH" BY R. JONAH B. ABRAHAM GERONDI (13TH CENTURY) — IGERET HATESHUVAH

"Thus shalt thou say to the House of Jacob, and tell the Children of Israel' (Exodus 19:3). At the time, when the Torah was given, Moses our master, peace be upon him, was bidden to address himself first to the House of Jacob, that is to the women. He was to inform them of the basic principles, in short sentences, which they were in a position to grasp.

"And why was he bidden to speak to the women first? Seeing that it is they who send their sons to school; keeping an eye upon their sons that they might occupy themselves with the study of Torah; because they attend to them when they come home from school, moving their hearts with kindly words, to make the Torah the object of their desires, that they might keep it and not walk about in idleness instead of learning Torah; because they teach them the fear of sin from early childhoods as it is written (*Proverbs* 22:6), 'Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it.'

"We likewise find the modest women displaying love towards the Torah and fear of God. Hence the modest women are capable of saving the souls of their husbands. When their husbands come home, each one from his particular occupation, when they are weary and exhausted, failing to remember to devote part of their energies and thoughts to the Torah, then it is the duty of the women to remind them that they might open a book and occupy

themselves with the words of the Torah rather than strive for things that are futile. For greater is the punishment for neglecting the study of Torah than for all the transgressions mentioned in the Torah...."

(d) FROM KAPLAN'S "IN THE WAKE OF YIRAH"

Abraham Eliyahu Kaplan was a leading Talmudic scholar and exponent of the ideology of the Lithuanian based *Mussar* Movement. He displayed considerable poetic gifts, Jewish and general. He succeeded David Hoffmann as lecturer and educator at the Berlin Rabbinical Seminary where he exercised great influence on a rising generation of rabbis. He died suddenly in 1924. The reader is well advised to attune his mind to the highly individual thoughts on *Teshuvah* of this latter day scholar:

"Israel was granted the Torah in the intimate company of both gravity and joy. These joined together in an indissoluble embrace. This is the secret of the Psalmist's allusion to 'jubilation in trembling.' Dance and judgement, song and judgement, became familiar associates: 'raise the song, and strike the timbrel, the pleasant lyre with the harp. Blow the horn on the New Moon, at the beginning of the month, for our day of festival. For it is a statute for Israel, a decree of the God of Jacob....'

"And not only Israel, but the other nations too: 'O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the peoples righteously.'

"And not only humanity, but nature too: 'Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord for He cometh to judge the earth...'

"And not only below, but also above: 'They rejoice in their going forth, and are glad in their returning; they perform with awe the will of their Master' — Joy and fear at

one and the same time.

"And not only in the realm of ideas but also in deed. R. Hanina and R. Joshua said that there was no people like Israel who knew the ways of God. If someone faced a trial he would put on black clothes and completely swathe himself in black. He would let his beard and nails grow since he did not know how the verdict would fall. It was otherwise with Israel. They put on white clothes, cut their beards and fingernails, eat and drink on *Rosh haShanah*, in the knowledge that the Holy One, blessed be He, would surely accord the Jews a miracle...

"We know the wonders of God which accompany us daily, His marvellous good deeds, sustaining us at all times. It is through His Divine favour that we are able to sever the bonds of vanity that envelop man's heart....

"It is accordingly our custom on *Erev Rosh haShanah* to cut our hair, iron our clothes and prepare a festive meal. This is a fitting reply to those who fast on *Rosh haShanah*. Thus wrote the *Tur*.

"It is indeed the right answer to those overcome by melancholy on this great day of true *Yirah*. Let there be fasting on *Erev Rosh haShanah* and let this day spent without food serve as preparation for the ushering in of *Yirah* (one fasts on *Yom Kippur* on the day marking the threshold to a new life, the day of repentance and mercy, which remains undefeated by the fear of judgement) — but not so on the very day of *Yirah*, on the appointed day of judgement. The more upright the posture of man on *Rosh haShanah* he better it is for him! (*Rosh haShanah* 26b.) This is the day when man stands in the presence of the Lord. It is a day of remembrance. Indeed *Yirah* is nothing else but remembrance.

"Maharshal, however, writes: Some have asked the question: if this is so, then one should put on embroidered and purple coloured clothes? But to me it seems that this

would obscure man's trust in God. Perhaps he is altogether unafraid of the Day of Judgement...devoid of any feeling.... However, when man dons white clothes his thoughts remind him of the day of death. Furthermore, such clothing symbolize forgiveness as it is written: 'Even if your sins be as purple, they will become as white as snow.'

"Thus the balance is struck and an incomparable harmony is attained, as a thread of solemn *Yirah* is led through rings of joy. ('Rejoice before God,' says Scripture.) A bolt crossing man's innermost recesses unites the two extremes: untrammelled earthly delight (food, drink, and blessings of this world) and claims of the Hereafter (thoughts of ever impending death).

"Grafted together, these two branches yield the fruits of Eternity." (From an anthology: *On the Meaning of Judaism* (German) Hermon Publishing House, Frankfort-on Main, 1939, pp. 164 — 166).