For Jolene—it just keeps getting better

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I am grateful to the editors and publishers of these articles for cheerfully granting permission to include my revisions of them in this book.

Preface

I would like to explain why I wrote this book, and how I came to write it. In order to do so, I shall tell a story.

I am what may be called an evolved and evolving feminist. When asked to exemplify changes in the world in which I used to live and the world in which I now live, I show people the *bentscher* distributed at the "wedding reception of Mr. and Mrs. Menachem Kellner" a bit more than fifty years ago. I can hardly imagine agreeing to such language today.

As an evolved and evolving feminist, I was very pleased when a group of younger people in my community, led by a halakhically serious young woman, decided to hold a "partnership" *minyan* once a month, on the eve of the Sabbath when the new moon is announced (*Shabbat mevorkhim*). In this service, complete with *mechitzah* (separation between men and women) and male *hazzanim* (cantors), the only feminist innovation was that women would lead that part of the service (from their side of the *mechitzah*) which has no halakhic standing—known as *kabbalat Shabbat*.

The reaction of several rabbis in the community (individuals who serve informally and with great dedication) was immediate and vociferous. The leaders of the feminist initiative then decided to invite Israel Prize Winner Rabbi Professor Daniel Sperber of Bar-Ilan University, a distinguished rabbi and professor with impeccable Orthodox credentials, to come and speak to the community. Rabbi Sperber came and gave a lecture to a large and supportive crowd. His main point was that indeed almost all contemporary Orthodox rabbis (especially in Israel) oppose "partnership" *minyanim* on both halakhic and policy grounds. However, if, despite that opposition, one was interested in finding rabbinic warrant for the initiative, it could be found. Rabbi Sperber showed that halakhah and tradition are not as monolithic as the rabbinic opponents of the "partnership" *minyan* claimed. He further showed that several of the "innovations" to which they objected were not actually as innovative as they thought.

One of the local rabbis (an IDF reserve officer and holder of a PhD in Jewish thought from an Israeli university), a particularly fine individual, attended the lecture, spoke in response to it the following Sabbath, and took the trouble of visiting many of the families (such as ours) to explain his opposition to the initiative and his response to Rabbi Sperber. I thought then and think now that our rabbi, a family friend and someone whom I admire, largely misunderstood what Rabbi Sperber said.

Our rabbi's response was that while Rabbi Sperber might have a point in strictly historical terms, halakhah should be determined by leading authorities (in Haredi-speak, *gedolim*) and not by "outliers." In my eyes, this boils down to an argument for conservatism in religious affairs. (The fact that several of the rabbis he cited are individuals about whom I have serious reservations did not help his cause.) This conservatism may or may not be a good policy (I personally do not think that it is) but it is not a policy that can be refuted as such (since it expresses values, not facts). However, in my eyes, it is conservatism in this case which drives halakhah and policy, not the other way around. (I should point out that my rabbi friend sees the entire story very differently and that the "partnership minyan" continues—the debate about it died down.)

How is this story relevant to this book? I fully admit—sadly, not cheerfully—that in the eyes of many Orthodox and certainly Haredi rabbis, gentiles have no worth and purpose in and of themselves; they are, in effect, only static, background noise to the real business of the universe. For Haredim the business of the universe is the study of (a narrow aspect of) Torah. For many of those rabbis who identify as religious Zionists, the business of the universe often appears to be the study of Torah (somewhat more broadly construed) and the settlement of the whole biblical land of Israel. While these views are widely held by leading rabbinic authorities today, they are not the whole story by any means. The Jewish story contains other voices, some of them quite prominent; one of those voices is that of Moses Maimonides, arguably the most prominent rabbinic authority since the Talmudic era.

It is my *use* of Maimonides that explains what I am trying to do in this book. A reader content with the Judaism ordinarily presented these days in most traditionalist Jewish circles should not read this book—she or he will not like it one bit. However, a reader who wishes to remain within the traditionalist Jewish world—widely or narrowly construed—and who also affirms that all humans are fully created in the image of God, and have intrinsic worth in God's eyes, will find a measure of support for her or his views. Just as Rabbi Sperber pointed us to voices that provide halakhic warrant for our feminist initiative,

I hope to show that a modified Maimonideanism provides a warrant for the Judaism expressed in these pages.[1]

Let me further explain what I am attempting to do. R. Sa'adia Gaon (882–942) wrote his *Beliefs and Doctrines* for those Jews whose faith was troubled by apparent conflicts between that faith and contemporary science. He also addressed fellow Jews who desired to turn their beliefs into reasoned doctrines. He did not address his book to people who had no such problems; persons content with their received faith did not need his book. Similarly, this book is not addressed to people who are content in their Judaism. It is definitely addressed to those Jews made uncomfortable, or even occasionally embarrassed, by so much of what passes for "Torah-true" Judaism today.

I hasten to point out that while Maimonides appears in every chapter of this book, I do not for a moment pretend that the historical Maimonides would be happy with all the conclusions which I reach. However, I would like to think that were he among us *today*, and knew what we know today, he would be willing to sign off on many of my conclusions. Of course, I am not alone in that view. From the Rabbi of Lubavitch to the "Rabbi of Leibowitz" and in between, all contemporary Orthodox spokespersons (well, almost all) claim Maimonides for their own (this even includes the authors of the scandalous *Torat ha-Melekh*, on which see chapter 1 below).

That said, one of the issues addressed tangentially in this book is one with which I am confident the historical Maimonides would agree: that all human

1 Concerning my use of the term "Judaism," I realize that historically Jews have not understood themselves as a religion similar in structure to Christianity and Islam. Leora Batnitzky maintains that arguing over the issue is a mark of Jewish modernity. See her *How Judaism Became a Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). Avraham Melamed has shown that *dat* (religion) is a term applied by Jews to what came to be called "Judaism" from at least the fifteenth century. See Abraham Melamed, *Dat: Me-Hok le-Emunah—Korotav shel Minu'ah Mekhonen* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Me'uhad, 2014). A quick check of the Bar Ilan Global Data Base confirms this (ibn Ezra's usages appear to be ambiguous in this regard). The implications of this are vast, but not our point right now. I have argued that Maimonides may have been the first Jew to use the term *dat* in a way similar to the way in which we use the term "religion" and that he certainly had a notion of what we today would call "Judaism" even if it never occurred to him to use the term. See below, chapter 4 and my other studies cited there. Daniel Boyarin's recent *Judaism: The Genealogy of a Modern Notion* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2018) is relevant and has a long discussion of Judah Halevi but ignores the much more relevant Maimonides. For an important corrective to Boyarin, see Melamed, *Dat*, esp. 41–51. See also Howard Kreisel, "Maimonides on Divine Religion," in *Maimonides after 800 Years: Essays on Maimonides and His Influence*, ed. Jay Harris (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 151–166.

beings are actually and fully created in the image of God. I have addressed that subject in a number of works, among them: *Maimonides on Judaism and the Jewish People* and *Gam Hem Keruyim Adam: ha-Nokhri be-Einei ha-Rambam*. This issue is of crucial importance. Hermann Cohen often pointed out that the doctrine that all human beings are made in the image of God, have a common source in God, makes the notion of *humanity* necessary. No longer are humans defined essentially in terms of tribal affiliation. Translating this ideal into reality is an unfinished project, but an ideal that we must surely pursue.

There are two further and interrelated issues in Maimonides's thought that are not directly addressed in this book, despite their relevance. My friend and colleague David Gillis and I have written a book which addresses two topics, which might well be included in the present volume had we not already written that book. That book is called *Maimonides the Universalist: The Ethical Horizons of Mishneh Torah* (London: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2020). In the context of the book's chapters that analyze the closing paragraphs of each of the fourteen volumes of the *Mishneh Torah*, we address the following question: to whom is the Torah ultimately addressed—all humanity (*kol ba'ei olam*) or just Israel? It is our claim that Maimonides follows the school of R. Yishmael, as opposed to the school of R. Akiva, and holds that ultimately the Torah is addressed to all human beings.

This reading of Maimonides and his understanding of Judaism also subserves the second topic that might have been taken up in this book, namely, Maimonides's intellectualist and universalist account of the messianic era, the topic of chapter 14 in *Maimonides the Universalist*. For Maimonides the Torah will indeed become the patrimony of all humanity by the time the messianic era reaches full fruition.

In chapter 1 below, I show that—again for Maimonides (*Guide* iii.32)—ideal Judaism is the intellectualist, ethical, and universalist Judaism of Abraham, not the particularist and ritualistic Judaism of Moses. That Judaism, according to Maimonides, is a concession to human frailty. Human frailty being what it is, we cannot do without the Torah of Moses, but we can live our lives in pursuit of the Abrahamic ideal. This idea will come up in several of the chapters of this book.

Abrahamic Judaism failed with Abraham's great grandchildren (the grandsons of Jacob/Israel, almost all of whom were idolaters in Egypt), and failed again with their descendants after Marah (Exod. 15) and the golden calf. This is the "Abrahamic" nature of the theology outlined in this book. This issue, too, will be taken up in the chapter 1 below.

The Abrahamic component of Judaism, addressed to the whole world, and anticipating a messianic fulfillment also addressed to the whole world, is under assault. This is hardly surprising only two generations after the Holocaust in a world in which Jew hatred (often disguised as "anti-Zionism") is again on the rise, among ruffians and among the denizens of academic lounges alike. Just as renewed Jew hatred must be resisted, so must the resultant Jewish assault on the Abrahamic ideal be resisted.

A word about my own stance. I think of myself as a classic liberal. In today's "woke" and (allegedly) "progressive" environment that would mean that many would see me as conservative. Be that as it may, a central focus of this book is to present a universalist version of Judaism (whatever that might be) that conceives of all human beings as being fully created in the image of God (whatever that might mean). This version of Judaism refuses to condemn as false or immoral other religions or cultures (so long as they do not advocate or practice violations of natural morality). The Judaism I describe and defend in this book is rationalist and hence pre-postmodern: truth does matter. I admit that there is no such thing as "Judaism"—there are only Judaisms; this book presents one of many competing Judaisms and shows its rootedness in the historical traditions of the Jewish people.

Jews to the right of me, religiously and culturally, will say (and have said) that I am trying to force my liberal notions on a Judaism that is itself not at all liberal. I am tempted here to make a series of ad hominem rebuttals: Talmudic law reflects foreign influences, not just in terminology; Judah Halevi's views on the special nature of the Jewish people have been shown to have roots in Shi'ite thought; Kabbalah is a form of (partially) Judaized Neoplatonism; Jewish "orthodoxy" is a response to modernity; contemporary "Kookian" notions of the special nature and mission of the Jews reflect Romantic notions of people (*volk*) and land; Haredi notions of *da'at Torah* are as much Catholic as they are Jewish (some would argue they not Jewish at all). However, to argue in this fashion—as if to say: "You, too!"—is to bring myself down to the level of a politician.

Instead, I take it as a given that the Jewish tradition contains both universalist and particularist elements, rationalist orientations and mystical spirituality, elite religion and folk religion. Notice what I have just done: universalist/rational/elite versus particularist/mystical/folk. I admit my crime: by nature and upbringing, I gravitate to the liberal end of the spectrum. Does that affect the way I understand the Jewish tradition? Undoubtedly. Does it make my positions Jewishly illegitimate? Only if I cannot reasonably ground them in the historical texts of Judaism. It is the point of this book to show that I can do that.

Moreover, reading Jewish texts through specific lenses has a long history. Talmudic rabbis presented biblical figures as if they were themselves Talmudic rabbis, and some of them may even have believed their own aggadah that the patriarchs obeyed all the 613 commandments (including those laws innovated by the rabbis themselves). Maimonides and other medieval Jewish philosophers treated prophets and Talmudic rabbis as if they taught philosophy. Medieval Kabbalists turned the second-century Rabbi Shim'on Bar-Yohai into a Kabbalist, and even made him the author of the *Zohar*. Hasidim turned Moses (and perhaps Adam) into the first Hasidic rebbes. Contemporary Haredim seems to believe that Jews have always been Haredim (and always dressed like Polish gentry). The difference between what I do in this book, and what has always been done in the Jewish tradition, is that I am self-conscious about it.

That, however, is a very big difference. Being self-conscious about what I am doing in our historical epoch is more than simply being self-reflective—after all, seeking to be aware of ourselves and of what we are doing is hardly a new activity. Nevertheless, our reflexivity is a function of historical self-consciousness. After Marx and Freud among others, we are, or at least can be, aware of ourselves in new ways. This new self-awareness means that we look at our own traditions from the inside and the outside simultaneously. This is characteristic of academic scholars of the Jewish tradition, but of course, not only of them.

Once we look at the Jewish tradition both from the inside out and from the outside in, we become aware of the fact that we keep faith with the tradition out of choice. It is common to call converts to Judaism "Jews by choice" but nowadays all Jews are actually Jews by choice. I am not sure that this is altogether unprecedented in Jewish history. Certainly ceasing to be a Jew without actively converting to another religion may have been impossible between the time of Philo (whose nephew was an officer in the Roman army which destroyed the Second Temple) and of Josephus on the one hand, and the time of Spinoza on the other. Thus, for two millennia, Jews have not been Jews by choice in the sense in which those of us lucky enough to live in our world are.

There is another relevant point that must be raised: Jews whose texts I study in this book largely saw themselves as being in direct communication with God. Even on as simple level as that of Sholom Aleichem's Tevye, Jews felt themselves able to talk *to* God, not *about* God. I am not sure how many Jews today, at least those who live both inside and outside, can achieve that level, or even try to achieve it.

In light of all the above, a difficult question must be raised: Is there any issue in which tradition trumps liberalism? It is of no use to turn the question

towards Jews whose philosophic and cultural tendency is towards conservatism and ask them, is there any issue in which tradition trumps conservatism? Let Jews of a conservative temper wrestle with that one. Trying to look at the matter honestly, I have a hard time finding some area in which Jewish tradition trumps my liberal sentiments. Of course, I regret cases of intermarriage, but do not feel that I have the right to tell people who love each other not to marry.

That does not worry me: I am convinced that my liberal sentiments reflect my Jewish background and studies. In other words, without subjecting myself to the sort of courageous self-analysis of a Freud (and we all know how successful that was) there is really no way that I can disentangle my Judaism from my liberalism. In what follows I hope to present my understanding of what Judaism ought to be and invite others along for the ride. I do so with no pretensions of being an authoritative voice—but I hope to be a convincing one.

Now, a word on how I came to write this book. I did not intend to write it. Over the last few years, I have been invited to contribute articles to journals and collective volumes. I suppose I should not have been surprised that in many cases the articles that I wrote all had something to do with a subject that is often at the front of my mind, and always at the back of it. I refer to the fact that so many Jews—despite all the evidence to the contrary—believe that Jews simply by virtue of their birth are in some intrinsic fashion distinct from and superior to non-Jews. To my mind, this view borders on the irrational, and is fundamentally immoral, not to mention that it contradicts the opening chapters of the Torah. However, it was only while writing the last of these articles (chapter 3 below, on the notion of the chosen people) that I realized that all these articles dealt with aspects of the same issue: how Jews should see themselves and see others.

This book is more than simply a collection of related articles, but less than a book written from scratch, as it were, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. The chapters cohere (and I have worked hard to make them do so) but they can also stand alone (after all, several of them began their lives as independent essays). Together they do make one argument: we the Jews are not alone in God's universe.

CHAPTER 1

Jewish Voices Rejected; A Jewish Voice Affirmed

1. JEWISH VOICES REJECTED

By way of introducing the issues raised in this chapter, I shall quote a close friend who recently wrote to me (about the subject matter of this book). He wrote: "I'm also put in mind of the rabbi whose lessons I have attended for many years, whom I greatly like and respect and who can be truly eye-opening on bible, prayer, Talmud, and anything else, but who has a blind spot about non-Jews, whom he thinks God doesn't care about."

Another telling incident demonstrates this point. When a friend of mine was a scholar in residence at a prominent modern Orthodox American synagogue years ago, he taught the passage at end of "Laws of Slaves" in *Mishneh Torah* in which Maimonides emphasizes that Jews and gentiles are all created equal by God and formed "in the same womb," that is, there is no essential difference between Jews and gentiles.[1] In the synagogue, there was a sophisticated Torah scholar in his twenties who was also the son of a prominent yeshiva head. He protested this purported equality, and stayed with my friend for almost an hour after the Sabbath arguing that Maimonides did not say this because he could not have said it. The belief in Jewish superiority was an essential part of the young scholar's personal sense of Jewish identity. He had formed this identity under the influence of his parents, their peers, and his peers. The text was merely secondary and after the fact. When he saw the text, he was forced either to distort it or to deny its importance. After my friend proved to the young Torah scholar that the universalistic interpretation was correct by citing numerous other Maimonidean texts in the *Mishneh Torah* and in the *Guide of the Perplexed*, this product of the best modern Orthodox

1 On this passage, see Menachem Kellner and David Gillis, *Maimonides the Universalist: The Ethical Horizons of Mishneh Torah* (Liverpool: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2020), chapter 12.

education gave up on Maimonides and said it really didn't matter what Maimonides said because he (and presumably "the Torah world") had decided in accordance with the views of Judah Halevi anyway. His prejudice was so deep that he preferred the opinion of the non-halakhist Halevi to that of the greatest halakhist in Jewish history!

One need not adopt the extreme views to be discussed below to believe, in effect, that we Jews are alone in the eyes of God.[2] It is my point in this book to show that texts and traditions offer us a more universalist alternative.

The voice of Rabbi Shlomo Aviner is heard loudly and clearly in the world of contemporary Orthodox Zionism in Israel (*dati-leumi*), the community in which I live. This is thanks to his many books, lectures, internet activities, and especially the multitude of "Sabbath leaflets" (*alonei Shabbat*) to which he contributes.[3] Although considered a political hawk, R. Aviner broke with many of his rabbinic colleagues, and counseled soldiers to obey orders in connection with the Gaza withdrawal of 2005. This independent stand aroused considerable controversy in the world of Orthodox Zionism, earning R. Aviner many enemies.[4] Aviner's voice is not the only voice heard in the dati-leumi community (for which I am grateful), but it is a voice that echoed widely around the world.

One of the issues to which R. Avner often returns is the special nature of the Jewish people. Thus in the pamphlet *Itturei Kohanim* 174 (Sivan, 5759) we find him writing:

> We are the chosen people, not because we received the Torah, but, rather, we received the Torah because we are the chosen people.[5] This is so since the Torah is so apt to our inner nature. Each nation has a special nature, character, public psychology, unique divine character, and the Master of the Universe formed this special nation, *This people which I formed for*

2 It is no comfort, and in my eyes wholly irrelevant, to point out that many Christians and Muslims believe that they are alone in the eyes of God. But there are some good jokes on the subject.

3 Rabbi Aviner was born in France in 1943 and made aliyah in 1966. He earned degrees in math and engineering and is an officer in the IDF reserves. After his aliyah, Aviner studied at Yeshivat Merkaz Ha-Rav Kook in Jerusalem and is a disciple of the late Rabbi Zvi Yehudah Kook (1891–1982). R. Aviner is the rabbi of the West Bank settlement Bet El and head of the yeshiva Ateret Kohanim in the Muslim quarter of the Old City.

4 On Aviner, see Motti Inbari, *Messianic Religious Zionism Confronts Israeli Territorial Compromises* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), esp. 59–64.

5 Here R. Aviner reflects Judah Halevi's *Kuzari* ii. 56.

> *Myself, they will tell My praise* (Is. 43:21). There are … those who claim against us that we are 'racist'. Our answer to them is … if racism means that we are different from and superior to other nations, and by this bring blessings to other nations,[6] then indeed we admit that we differ from every nation, not by virtue of skin color, but from the aspect of the nature of our souls [ha-teva ha-nishmati shelanu], the Torah describing our inner contents.[7]

In this typical passage, Rabbi Aviner presents his position in the clearest possible fashion and takes issue with his opponents. Let us look more closely at his words. The people of Israel are the chosen people (*am segulah*).[8] Why and how? R. Aviner relates to two possibilities: the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob received the Torah and in consequence became the chosen people, or, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were they only humans capable (*mesugalim*) of receiving the Torah. Receiving the Torah was a consequence of their already having been the chosen people (*am segulah*). In so doing R. Aviner accomplishes several ends: he admits (barely, it seems to me) that there is controversy on the issue (as indeed there is—we shall see below that his view is that of R. Judah Halevi [1075–1141], as opposed to the view of Maimonides [1138–1204]); takes a stand on this controversy; and hints that the opposing view ought not to be taken seriously, since he does not deign to argue against it.

R. Aviner continues and insists that the Torah is appropriate for the inner nature of the Jewish people—"Each nation has a special nature, character, public psychology, unique divine character, and the Master of the Universe formed this special nation—*This people which I formed for Myself, they will tell My praise* (Is. 43:21)." In making this claim he reifies the notion "nation" and establishes that there are nations defined and demarcated one from the other

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6 How does Israel bring blessings to other nations? In his commentary on Halevi's *Kuzari* 4 vols. (Bet El: Sifriyat Hava, n.d.), 1:108, R. Aviner writes: "The Torah is the greatest divine light, and it belongs only to Israel, and from Israel drops of sanctity drip to each and every nation, according to its stature and state [*inyano*]." See also his response to a question on the internet "Why should we be a nation?" See: http://www.havabooks.co.il/article_ID.asp?id=632.

7 My thanks to Rabbi Dr. Ronen Lubitch for bringing this source to my attention. For the Kabbalistic background to this passage, see below, note 18.

8 Based on the Bar Ilan Responsa Project, this expression shows up only 113 times in the entire body of Jewish literature covered by the database. Most date from in the Middle Ages. The term literally means "treasured nation."

by their inner natures.[9] In so doing, he adopts the views of nineteenth-century German Romanticism and foists this ideology on Judaism.[10] The Jewish people, he teaches, have an inner nature unique to it, a nature to which the Torah is particularly appropriate.[11] A number of things follow from this: R. Aviner takes a position in a tannaitic debate over whether the Torah was ultimately intended for all human beings (*kol ba'ei olam*) or just for Israel.[12] He further raises a metaphysical problem with the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism: How can a person whose inner nature is not Jewish receive the

9 It is not surprising that individuals who can be considered part of Aviner's circle are attracted to what used to be known as *voelkerpsychologie*—understood as inquiry into the (so-called) psychological makeup of nations. See, for example, Haggai Stammler, "Psychology of Nations: A Forgotten Field," *Moreshet* 15 (2015): 209–224 (Hebrew).

10 In this, R. Aviner follows in the footsteps of his teacher, R. Zvi Yehudah Kook; R. Zvi Yehudah follows in the footsteps of his father, R. Abraham Isaac Kook (to a great degree), and Rav Kook in turn appears to follow in the footsteps of his teachers, Hegel and other Romantic thinkers. On this intellectual pedigree, see Shlomo Fischer, "Self-Expression and Democracy in Radical Religious Zionist Ideology" (PhD diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007), esp. 66–126, 217–234. For a recent and very useful English-language study of the elder R. Kook, see Yehudah Mirsky, *Rav Kook: Mystic in a Time of Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014). On Rabbi Z. Y. Kook, see Gideon Aran, "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Land: The Spiritual Authorities of Jewish-Zionist Fundamentalism in Israel," in *Spokesmen for the Despised: Fundamentalist Leaders of the Middle East*, ed. R. S. Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 294–327; Shai Held, "What Zvi Yehudah Kook Wrought: The Theopolitical Radicalization of Religious Zionism," in *Rethinking the Messianic Idea in Judaism*, ed. Michael Morgan and Steven Weitzman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 229–55; Motti Inbari, *Messianic Religious Zionism Confronts Israeli Territorial Compromises* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 15–36; Dov Schwartz, *Challenge and Crisis in Rabbi Kook's Circle* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2001; Hebrew); Don Seeman, "God's Honor, Violence and the State," in *From Swords into Plowshares? Reflections on Religion and Violence*, ed. Robert W. Jenson and Eugene Korn (https://www.amazon.com/Plowshares-into-Swords-Reflections-Religion-ebook/dp/B00P11EGOE 2014), Kindle ed.; and Don Seeman, "Violence, Ethics, and Divine Honor in Modern Jewish Thought," *JAAR* 73, no. 4 (2004): 1015–1048. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935) founded what became the Israel Chief Rabbinate and is to this day the revered, dominant figure in Orthodox Religious Zionism, especially that branch which continues to see the creation of the State of Israel as "the first flowering" of messianic redemption.

11 I tried to translate Rabbi Aviner's usages back into rabbinic Hebrew with no success. His ideas, I submit, largely come from outside the Jewish tradition and cannot easily be traced to rabbinic texts.

12 On this debate, see Menachem Hirshman, *Torah Lekhol Ba'ei Olam: Zerem Universali Be-Sifrut Ha-Tana'im Ve-Yahaso Le-Hokhmat He-Amim* (Tel Aviv: Ha-Kibbutz ha-Meuhad, 1999) and "Rabbinic Universalism in the Second and Third Centuries," *Harvard Theological Review* 93 (2000), 101–115.

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