

## THE NATURE OF GOD

AN IMPROVERISHED person thinks that God is an old man with white hair, sitting on a wondrous throne of fire that glitters with countless sparks, as the Bible states: "The Ancient-of-Days sits, the hair on his head like clean fleece, his throne—flames of fire." Imagining this and similar fantasies, the fool corporealizes God. He falls into one of the traps that destroy faith. His awe of God is limited by his imagination.

But if you are enlightened, you know God's oneness; you know that the divine is devoid of bodily categories—these can never be applied to God. Then you wonder, astonished: Who am I? I am a mustard seed in the middle of the sphere of the moon, which itself is a mustard seed within the next sphere. So it is with that sphere and all it contains in relation to the next sphere. So it is with all the spheres—one inside the other—and all of them are a mustard seed within the further expanses. And all of these are a mustard seed within further expanses.

Your awe is invigorated, the love in your soul expands.

## NONDUALITY

THE ESSENCE of divinity is found in every single thing—nothing but it exists. Since it causes every thing to be, no thing can live by anything else. It enlivens them; its existence exists in each existent.

Do not attribute duality to God. Let God be solely God. If you suppose that Ein Sof emanates until a certain point, and that from that point on is outside of it, you have dualized. God forbid! Realize, rather, that Ein Sof exists in each existent. Do not say, "This is a stone and not God." God forbid! Rather, all existence is God, and the stone is a thing pervaded by divinity.

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BEFORE ANYTHING emanated, there was only Ein Sof. Ein Sof was all that existed. Similarly, after it brought into being that which exists, there is nothing but it. You cannot find anything that exists apart from it. There is nothing that is not pervaded by the power of divinity. If there were, Ein Sof would be limited, subject to duality, God forbid! Rather, God is everything that exists, though everything that exists is not God. It is present in everything, and everything comes into being from it. Nothing is devoid of its divinity. Everything is within it; it is within everything and outside of everything. There is nothing but it.

## CONCEALING AND REVEALING

WHEN POWERFUL LIGHT is concealed and clothed in a garment, it is revealed. Though concealed, the light is actually revealed, for were it not concealed, it could not be revealed. This is like wishing to gaze at the dazzling sun. Its dazzle conceals it, for you cannot look at its overwhelming brilliance. Yet when you conceal it—looking at it through screens—you can see and not be harmed. So it is with emanation: by concealing and clothing itself, it reveals itself.

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WITH THE APPEARANCE of the light, the universe expanded. With the concealment of the light, the things that exist were created in all their variety.  
This is the secret of the act of Creation.  
One who understands will understand.

## THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL

THE PURPOSE of the soul entering this body is to display her powers and actions in this world, for she needs an instrument. By descending to this world, she increases the flow of her power to guide the human being through the world. Thereby she perfects herself above and below, attaining a higher state by being fulfilled in all dimensions. If she is not fulfilled both above and below, she is not complete.

Before descending to this world, the soul is emanated from the mystery of the highest level. While in this world, she is completed and fulfilled by this lower world. Departing this world, she is filled with the fullness of all the worlds, the world above and the world below.

At first, before descending to this world, the soul is imperfect; she is lacking something. By descending to this world, she is perfected in every dimension.

## BRINGING FORTH SPARKS

YOU CAN mend the cosmos by anything you do—even eating. Do not imagine that God wants you to eat for mere pleasure or to fill your belly. No, the purpose is mending.

Sparks of holiness intermingle with everything in the world, even inanimate objects. By saying a blessing before you enjoy something, your soul partakes spiritually. This is food for the soul. As the Torah states: “One does not live on bread alone, but rather on all that issues from the mouth of God.” Not just the physical, but the spiritual—the holy sparks, springing from the mouth of God. Like the soul herself, breathed into us by God.

So when you are about to eat bread, say the *motzi*: “Blessed are you, YHVH our God, sovereign of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth.” Then by eating, you bring forth sparks that cleave to your soul.

## TASTING THE SPARKS

WHEN YOU eat and drink, you experience enjoyment and pleasure from the food and drink. Arouse yourself every moment to ask in wonder, “What is this enjoyment and pleasure? What is it that I am tasting?”

Answer yourself, “This is nothing but the holy sparks from the sublime, holy worlds that are within the food and drink.”

## THE GREATEST PATH

WHEN YOU desire to eat or drink, or to fulfill other worldly desires, and you focus your awareness on the love of God, then you elevate that physical desire to spiritual desire. Thereby you draw out the holy spark that dwells within. You bring forth holy sparks from the material world. There is no path greater than this. For wherever you go and whatever you do—even mundane activities—you serve God.

## RIPPLES

THOUGHT REVEALS itself only through contemplating a little without content, contemplating sheer spirit. The contemplation is imperfect: you understand—then you lose what you have understood. Like pondering a thought: the light of that thought suddenly darkens, vanishes; then it returns and shines—and vanishes again. No one can understand the content of that light. It is like the light that appears when water ripples in a bowl: shining here, suddenly disappearing—then reappearing somewhere else. You think that you have grasped the light, when suddenly it escapes, radiating elsewhere. You pursue it, hoping to catch it—but you cannot. Yet you cannot bring yourself to leave. You keep pursuing it.

It is the same with the beginning of emanation. As you begin to contemplate it, it vanishes, then reappears; you understand—and it disappears. Even though you do not grasp it, do not despair. The source is still emanating, spreading.

## SEXUAL HOLINESS

SEXUAL UNION is holy and pure, when performed in the right way, at the right time, and with the right intention. Let no one think that there is anything shameful or ugly in such union. God forbid! The right kind of union is called *knowing*. It isn't called that for nothing. Unless it were very holy, it would not be called *knowing*.

This matter is not as Rabbi Moses Maimonides, of blessed memory, imagined and thought in his *Guide of the Perplexed*, where he praises Aristotle for stating that the sense of touch is shameful. God forbid! This matter is not as that Greek said, what he said smacks of subtle heresy. If that Greek scoundrel believed that the world was created with divine intention, he would not have said what he said. But we, who possess the holy Torah, believe that God created everything as divine wisdom decreed. God created nothing shameful or ugly. If sexual union is shameful, then the genitals are too. Yet God created them! How could God create something blemished, disgraceful, or deficient? After all, the Torah states: "God saw everything that he had made, and behold: very good!"

The evidence is clear. In the account of Creation we read:

"The two of them were naked, the man and his wife, yet they felt no shame." Before they ate from the Tree of Knowledge, they were contemplating the pure forms, and their intention was entirely holy. To them, the genitals were like eyes or hands or other parts of the body.

When sexual union is for the sake of heaven, there is nothing as holy or pure. The union of man and woman, when it is right, is the secret of civilization. Thereby, one becomes a partner with God in the act of Creation. This is the secret meaning of the saying of the sages: "When a man unites with his wife in holiness, the divine presence is between them."

Human thought has the power to expand and ascend to its origin. Attaining the source, she is joined with the upper light from which she emanated. She and he become one. Then, when thought emanates once again, all becomes a single ray: the upper light is drawn down by the power of thought. In this way the divine presence appears on earth. A bright light shines and spreads around the place where the meditator is sitting. Similarly, when a man and a woman unite, and their thought joins the beyond, that thought draws down the upper light.

You should welcome her with words that draw her heart, calm her mind, and bring her joy. Then her mind will be linked with yours, and your intention with hers. Speak with her in words that arouse desire, love, and passionate union—and in words that draw her to the awe of God.