

# God Shall Be One

## Reenvisioning Judaism's Approach to Other Religions





Yakov Nagen  
Sarel Rosenblatt  
Assaf Malach

**GOD**  
*Shall Be*  
**ONE**

Reenvisioning Judaism's Approach to Other Religions

TRANSLATED BY

Daniel Tabak

PREFACE BY

Kenneth Brander

Ohr Torah Interfaith Center  
Maggid Books

*God Shall Be One*

First English Edition, 2024

*Maggid Books*

*An imprint of Koren Publishers Jerusalem Ltd.*

POB 8531, New Milford, CT 06776-8531, USA

& POB 4044, Jerusalem 9104001, Israel

[www.korenpub.com](http://www.korenpub.com)

© Ohr Torah Interfaith Center 2024

Cover design: Afaf Studio

The publication of this book was made possible  
through the generous support of *The Jewish Book Trust*.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by  
any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, or otherwise,  
without the prior permission of the publisher, except in the case  
of brief quotations embedded in critical articles or reviews.

ISBN 978-1-59264-691-3, *hardcover*

Printed and bound in the United States



Dedicated  
in loving memory of  
***Mr. Stewart Harris***  
a great community leader and mentor,  
strategic thinker and beloved family man,  
husband, father, and grandfather.

By the Harris family

Gloria Harris  
Jeff and Jodi Harris  
David Harris  
Rachel and Alan Jacoby





We greatly acknowledge  
the support of  
***Dr. Giti and Jack Bendheim***  
for sponsoring the translation of this book  
from its original Hebrew edition  
*Ushmo Echad* (Maggid 2022)



# Contents

Preface.....	xi
<i>Rabbi Dr. Kenneth Brander</i>	
Introduction	
The Relationship Between Jews and Non-Jews: The Need for a New Source-Based Paradigm .....	xv
<i>Yakov Nagen</i>	
Acknowledgments.....	xxvii

## **PART I FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES**

Four Prophetic Models for the Future of the Jewish People and the Nations.....	3
<i>Sarel Rosenblatt</i>	
World Religions as Fulfilling Biblical Prophecies .....	17
<i>Yakov Nagen</i>	
The Seven Noahide Laws: Prerequisites for Civilization or Religious Identity? .....	25
<i>Yakov Nagen</i>	

## **PART II WORLD RELIGIONS IN MEDIEVAL JEWISH THOUGHT**

Rabbi Nathaniel b. Rabbi Fayyumi: Prophetic Revelation Outside of Judaism.....	41
<i>Yakov Nagen</i>	

Rabbi Judah HaLevi and the *Kuzari*:  
The Importance of World Religions . . . . . 53  
*Assaf Malach*

Rabbi Moses Maimonides:  
Noahide Law as the Exclusive Revelation to the Nations . . . . . 71  
*Yakov Nagen*

Rabbi Menahem Meiri: Moral Behavior and  
Theological Belief as the Basis for Fellowship with Non-Jews. . . . . 91  
*Sarel Rosenblatt*

Rabbi Joseph Albo: A Noahide Law for Every Nation. . . . . 111  
*Yakov Nagen*

**PART III**  
**WORLD RELIGIONS IN MODERN JEWISH THOUGHT**

Rabbi Jacob Emden:  
Christianity as a Positive Force of Noahide Religion. . . . . 121  
*Assaf Malach*

Modern Halakhic Authorities on Christianity as  
a Commendable Religion . . . . . 141  
*Assaf Malach*

Rabbi Elijah Benamozegh: The Role of World Religions in  
Realizing the Torah’s Universalist Vision. . . . . 169  
*Assaf Malach*

Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook: “Divine Religions” and  
the Central Role of the Jewish People . . . . . 187  
*Sarel Rosenblatt*

Rabbi Yehuda Léon Ashkenazi (Manitou): The “Equation of  
Fraternity” and Interfaith Dialogue as Rectification  
of the Primeval Murder . . . . . 211  
*Sarel Rosenblatt*

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks’s Approach to Other Religions. . . . . 231  
*Johnny Solomon*



Religiosity as an Innate Quest for God ..... 239  
*Yakov Nagen*

**PART IV**

**DIVINE SERVICE OF GENTILES:  
TORAH, TEMPLE, AND SABBATH**

Sharing Torah with the World:  
The Jewish People's Responsibility to Non-Jews..... 255  
*Yakov Nagen*

“A House of Prayer for All Peoples”:  
Non-Jews and the Temple..... 285  
*Yakov Nagen*

Shabbat for the Jews and Shabbat for the Nations ..... 293  
*Yakov Nagen*

Afterword

Moving Forward: Interreligious Interaction Today ..... 301  
*Sarel Rosenblatt*

About the Ohr Torah Interfaith Center.....309



# Preface

*Rabbi Dr. Kenneth Brander\**

**F**or the first time in two millennia, the Jewish people are the sovereign power in a state of their own, whose inhabitants and citizens include Arab Christians and Muslims, Druze, Thai and Filipino migrant workers, Sudanese and Eritrean refugees, and other ethnic groups. How can we, and how ought we, make space for their religious identities and practices within our own state? What does the Torah demand of us in terms of our relations with them? Can religion serve as a basis for partnership? The same goes for the ongoing conflict in Israel, along with looming questions regarding Israel's alliances with other countries in the region and the world. Can religion, which has tragically contributed to so much strife in the world, be harnessed as a means toward advancing greater peace and cooperation? The vision of our patriarch Avraham as the ultimate mediator of the Abraham Accords is striking; how else can we use religious symbols to promote a vision of coexistence?

I am certain that some readers will approach this book, which addresses the subject of healing interfaith relations, with great excitement. Some will do so with curiosity, and yet others with hesitation and skepticism.

\* President and Rosh HaYeshiva, Ohr Torah Stone

## Preface

The skeptic will ask: What need is there to talk about the relations between the Jewish people and those of other faiths? When there are overlapping ethical and social concerns with other faith communities, we can simply form political alliances with like-minded partners. Why delve any deeper?

This skeptical approach may be theologically safe, but it misses a religious opportunity – indeed a religious mandate: despite theological differences, there is a greater vision for humanity that can only be realized, as we recite thrice daily in our prayers, when God’s name will become one, “*ushemo ehad*.” We have a divine directive to work toward the global acknowledgment of God’s dominion over the world. As Maimonides states, the purpose of other faiths is to pave the way for the Messianic era through the knowledge of the Divine they bring to the world (*Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot Melakhim* 11:4). Jewish theology therefore requires us to look at other religions and in turn evaluate our engagement with them.

With the Jewish people now inhabiting and governing an autonomous state, we have moved with centripetal force from an exiled people on the periphery, an ineffectual entity, to a nation that is a primary actor on the world stage, a history-making community. That reality should lead even the most hardened cynic to become a dreamer or, at least, to acknowledge that a new reality is possible. Our doctrinal disagreements with the Catholic Church, which caused generations of anti-Semitism and persecution, went through a significant transformation with the *Nostra Aetate* document of 1965. Many Catholics and Christians have become our most trustworthy and impassioned friends. Greater engagement with Muslims, Hindus, and Jains may yet enable us to achieve with other faith systems what emerged from the Second Vatican Council with the Catholic Church.

As the English edition of this groundbreaking volume is published, the need for deep, thorough, thoughtful consideration of how we ought to relate to other faiths and their adherents could not be more clear. At the most superficial level, the alliances and bridges we build with other religious groups require a firm account of what interfaith relations are all about. Religion is about both God and humanity. It is the way people connect with the Divine. *If we fail to acknowledge and appreciate others’ faith, we also fail to recognize their humanity.* This, regrettably, has

been the painful fate of the Jewish people for centuries; we must learn from our own history not to do the same to others. Respect for others requires respect for the *completeness* of the other, including their religion, as well as the recognition that the World to Come is not reserved for the Jewish people alone, but for all the righteous who walk the earth.

The Jewish people, particularly those in the State of Israel, are in dire need of traditional halakhic yet innovative paradigms for approaching these issues and the underlying theological questions upon which they rest. What does Judaism envision as the role of non-Jewish people and non-Jewish faiths here in this world and on the journey to redemption? What is God's vision for humanity? What is our own place, as God's "chosen people," in that vision?

Answers to these questions are remarkably hard to come by. Peruse the shelves of your average Jewish bookstore, or of a yeshiva or shul library, and you'll find a large number of volumes addressing not only traditional topics like Shabbat and *kashrut*, but even books that tackle contemporary issues such as waging war, technological advances and their impact on halakhic observance, how to follow the agricultural laws of the Land of Israel within a modern economy, and much more. Yet you will be hard pressed to find any works in the fields of halakha (Jewish law) or *hashkafa* (Jewish thought) that seriously engage with fundamental questions regarding Judaism and other faiths in our sovereign state of Israel and beyond.

*UShemo Ehad* is an outgrowth of this vision, sharing ancient and contemporary religious sources that speak to the opportunities and challenges born of healing the relations between the Jewish people and those of other faiths. The fellows at Ohr Torah Stone's Beit Midrash for Judaism and Humanity and our Blickle Institute for Interfaith Dialogue are paving the way for a new Judaic legal and philosophical literature in this field. They consider seriously, and sensitively, the best approach to these halakhic issues; create points of reference for future learners and leaders; and offer tools for all those who wish to follow in the way of the Torah (or at least understand it) and engage appropriately with people of other faiths, in Israel and throughout the world.

## *Preface*

I wish to thank the members of the Beit Midrash, particularly Rabbi Dr. Yakov Nagen, Rabbi Sarel Rosenblatt, and Dr. Asaf Malach, for the sacred work they invested into producing this volume, which deals with Judaism's approach to the religious world of the other. With God's will, we will merit to see many more holy books produced by them and the other fellows of the Beit Midrash, publications that enrich and uplift the discourse on the relations between the Jewish people and humanity. This book will yet be translated into other languages and will serve as the basis for further publications addressing even wider audiences in the future.

I also wish to thank Dr. Giti and Mr. Jack Bendheim for their support in helping bring this volume to publication. Giti and Jack bring a clarity of vision and a commitment to action in all their various and important philanthropic activities. Thank you for making this one of them.

This volume is dedicated to the memory of a cherished mentor of mine, Mr. Stuart Harris, Shimon Gedalya ben Pinchas Menachem v'Rachel z"l, by his loving family. Stuart was the kind of person who understood that ensuring a good and fulfilled life requires devoting energy to the great questions of the day. May his insights continue to be the blessing he was during his lifetime, and may his words continue to faithfully guide me, his wife Gloria, their three children – Jeffrey, David, and Rachel – their grandchildren, and their great-grandchildren, along with many, many others who were blessed by his wisdom, sharp mind, and deep sense of vision.

# Introduction

## The Relationship Between Jews and Non-Jews: The Need for a New Source-Based Paradigm

*Yakov Nagen\**

### **JEWES AND THE NATIONS AT THE END OF DAYS**

Over the past few decades, the Jewish people have been experiencing momentous reversals of fortune. Ancient prophecies about the ingathering of exiles and the return to Zion are being realized before our very eyes, and we are fortunate to bear witness to them. God has brought His people back to their homeland from the four corners of the Earth. As we observe and participate in events that are perhaps the most historic since the time of the Bible, we have to pinch ourselves to verify that we are not dreaming.

As history is in the making, what can we expect based on the eschatological prophecies of old? Interestingly, the prophets describe antithetical movements. In one direction, the return to Zion arcs inward;

\* Rabbi Dr. Yakov Nagen is Executive Director of the Ohr Torah Interfaith Center and heads the Blickle Institute for Interfaith Dialogue and its Beit Midrash for Judaism and Humanity. Rabbi Nagen has published ten books that address Jewish spirituality, Talmud, and interfaith relations.

from a Diaspora where they have been mingled among the nations, the Jews separate themselves out and return to their homeland, the Land of Israel. In the other direction, the end of days sees the Jewish people fulfilling their mission to be “a light for the nations” (Is. 46:9), a light that radiates outwards from Zion – “from Zion shall the Torah go forth” (Is. 2:3). Why separate from the global community only to rejoin it?

The answer lies in a profound change of national mindset. In the period of redemption, Jews transform from reactive survivalists to proactive visionaries. In exile, Jews had to avoid at all costs losing their identities either to the domineering culture or to all others in the equalizing melting pot, which required distancing themselves from other peoples. Only when there is center, a national home, where Jewish identity can be safely preserved and reinforced, can Jews assuredly step out into the world and take their places on the world stage.

But as necessary as this metamorphosis is, the means and ends are indistinct. The time has come to reexamine the halakhic and theological issues regarding the relationship between Jews and the rest of humanity with a fresh pair of eyes. Historically, these questions have been tabled or too often decided in favor of cultural isolationism, to throw up what they hoped were insurmountable barriers that would keep foreign influences at bay. To generalize, Tractate Avoda Zara of the Talmud is an extensive guide of how *not* to act in matters involving non-Jews. Yet there is no complementary, positive treatise instructing Jews how to fulfill the mandate of being “a light for the nations” in the granular detail that is the hallmark of halakha. In the same way that we strive to make other eschatological predictions into realities, such as building up the Land and encouraging and making aliya, so should we be determining how to facilitate the ultimate realignment between Jews and non-Jews.

Another urgent reason for reconsidering this question is the accelerating pace of globalization. It is impossible today to ignore the existence of people who live in another hemisphere and speak languages that are alien to us. Everyone is inextricably linked to and affected by one another; the degrees of separation are steadily shrinking. Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook perceptively identified this process as precipitating one of the major transformations of the modern mind. Here is how he describes the premodern state of affairs:



## *The Relationship Between Jews and Non-Jews*

Each and every community was circumscribed; an individual was visibly influenced only by their immediate environment. In their naïveté, every individual and community thought that the wide world was coextensive with their spiritual and physical environs.<sup>1</sup>

By the twentieth century, Rabbi Kook observed a massive change of consciousness:

All individuals feel that they are not alone, that they are not hermetically circumscribed, that they act within and are acted upon by numerous expansive circles, various and even foreign milieux. As such, no one can dismiss any human being by saying, “I have no reason to pay them any mind at all” – even if they are in the farthest reaches.<sup>2</sup>

If a century ago one could not ignore the gravitational pull of cultures near and far on oneself and one’s hometown, it is even more true today. Technological progress and the sense that we all live in the same global village has thickened and solidified the web of interconnection. In this new reality, we must reexamine how Jews should relate to non-Jews. The unavoidable contact can pose a challenge or threat to Jewish identity, but it simultaneously represents an opportunity for realizing the universalist mission of the Jewish people recorded in our prophecies, reinvigorating Jewish existence with a new sense of purpose.

The chapters of this book and their accompanying sources set out to lay the groundwork for a new perspective on one of the many crucial aspects of Jewish-gentile relations: the Torah’s view on the beliefs and religious lives of non-Jews. The literature explicating and debating what God demands of the Jewish people is breathtakingly extensive, but this does not encompass the entirety of God’s designs, which include the rest of humanity: “For from the rising of the sun to its setting My name is great among the nations, and in every place incense and pure grain offering are offered to My name – for My name is great among the nations,

---

1. *Orot HaKodesh* 2:539.

2. *Orot HaKodesh* 2:540.

said the Lord of Hosts” (Mal. 1:11). In a way, this neglect reflects the distorted view for which the book of Jonah is a corrective lens. The prophet shirks his God-given mission to the non-Jewish metropolis because of his ethnocentric view of the world, and God teaches him that he, like Jeremiah, is also “a prophet for the nations” (Jer. 1:5). The word of God extends beyond the chosen people to the entire human population.

The status of the religions practiced by non-Jews is not an incidental one raised by pressing historical circumstances, but an essential one that touches on the spiritual responsibility of the Jewish people to the nations of the world. This was first assumed by Abraham, about whom the Torah says: “Through you will all the clans of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). And it continues all the way to the end of history, when the Jewish people will become a “light for the nations” and spread Torah to them all:

And many peoples shall go and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, that He may instruct us in His ways, and that we may walk in His paths.” For from Zion shall the Torah go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (Is. 2:3)

Jews are not meant to stand on the sidelines but to take to the global field and spread the word of God. How exactly are we to do this and what is the end goal?

#### **THE SHARED ENTERPRISE OF DIVINE CORONATION**

Many sources indicate that the revelation of God’s sovereignty over the world is only possible in collaboration with our fellow human beings. The Jewish liturgy concludes with the *Aleinu* prayer, in which the supplicant yearns for a time when “all the world’s inhabitants will recognize and know that to You must every knee bow, every tongue swear loyalty. [ ... ] And they all will accept the yoke of Your kingdom.” The prophet Zephaniah teaches us that the desire to call out to God and worship Him is universal: “For then I will transform peoples with a pure language, for

them all to call in the name of Lord, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder” (Zeph. 3:9).

Spiritual fellowship does more than bring divergent forms of divine service into accord; it lays the foundation for peaceful relations and genuine cooperation between the separate oceans of humanity. As King David says in the book of Psalms: “I am a friend to all who fear You” (Ps. 119:63). On the surface, the psalmist is saying that there is a spiritual kinship between believers. On a deeper level, though, the verse expresses the idea that religiosity – too often the cause of antagonism – can be the very basis for solid friendship and broad partnership, provided that all worshippers respect one another’s religious expression.

How this religious solidarity is to be achieved is an open question. Who has to change and how much to come closer together? One radical possibility is that spiritual fraternity requires the alteration of religious DNA. If so, one must ask what the new face of religion would look like. At the other extreme is a change in attitude alone. To partner with other nations in revealing God’s kingdom, all that would be needed is acceptance and mutual respect for everyone driving humanity toward that goal.<sup>3</sup> An intermediate position would leave certain religions largely intact but require revising a number of basic tenets of faith. Again, one would need to iron out what precisely those are.

The sources collected and analyzed in this volume are intended to provide a launching point for thinking deeply about these and other issues that pertain to the relationship between Jews and the nations today, especially Judaism’s perspective on non-Jewish religiosity. The medieval and modern authorities cited herein present a gamut of understandings

---

3. My dear friend and colleague Rabbi Professor Alan Brill has collected very important sources on the attitude of Judaism to other religions over the centuries in his *Judaism and Other Religions: Models of Understanding* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). He categorizes Jewish thinkers according to the model of religious truth that they adopt: (1) Exclusivists admit only one truth and one means to redemption and salvation. (2) Inclusivists view the world through their particular religions but are able to acknowledge elements of truth in other faiths. (3) Pluralists posit the existence of multiple truths, so that no one religion can lay exclusive claim to the truth. (4) Universalists maintain that there is a single truth but it has many possible manifestations.

of the importance of non-Jews worshipping God. Some see the spread of monotheistic faiths influenced by Judaism as a giant leap for humankind toward the ultimate redemption of the world. From this historical fact, they even derive significant implications for Judaism's ideal relationship with the global community more generally, and with these monotheistic faiths in particular.

Additionally, Rabbi Kook saw in the return of the Jewish people to their land a basis for renewing our understanding of the Torah and mitzvot. This plumbing of the Torah's depths to bring to light the profound reasons for the mitzvot has a universalist orientation:

The recitation (*keriat*) of the *Shema* at night and in the morning gesture toward the two types of declaration (*keria*) of God's name that are incumbent upon the Jewish people. We must accept the yoke of Heaven on ourselves, and through our declaration of God's unity act so that ultimately all the world's inhabitants will recognize and know that the Lord, the God of Israel, is King, and His dominion extends over all.

In exile, which is comparable to night, our primary activity concerns ourselves alone, so that we can withstand the waves that wash over us, in the name of God. Therefore, faith (*emuna*) pertains to the night: Whoever did not say *Emet VeEmuna* ("True and Faithful") at night did not fulfill their obligation. [...] But at the time of redemption, when the horn of Israel will be lifted, it will consequently be the time for the action of the recitation of the morning *Shema – Ahava Rabba* ("Great Love") – so that all peoples will say that the light of Israel shall be a light for the world. At that time, therefore, the reasons of the Torah will be revealed.... For in order to draw close those who are distant, words of truth (*emet*) must be perfectly clarified and the matter translated according to the superficial

## *The Relationship Between Jews and Non-Jews*

conception of the non-Jews. That is why *Emet VeYatziv* (“True and Firm”) of the morning is translated<sup>4</sup> into Aramaic.<sup>5</sup>

For Jews and non-Jews to coronate God as King at the time of redemption, not only will gentiles make adjustments to their belief systems, but Jews will have to reorient themselves as well to the universal currents in the Torah. The generation of redemption will draw new light from the well of Torah and illuminate the world with it.

### **INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**

The chapters and anthologized sources in this volume are also intended to serve as a springboard for reconsidering the role of interfaith dialogue and cooperation today, in a way that we think better suits the current political situation and spiritual state of the Jewish people, on the one hand, and the revised attitudes and beliefs of the major religions (especially Christianity, as discussed below), on the other. Every generation – and especially ours – ought to make an accounting of its success in fulfilling God’s will in light of contemporary realities.

The motivations for and effects of interfaith dialogue can be various. At the most basic level, bloodletting can be stopped by religious leaders on all sides calling upon their faithful to lay down arms. Peace, or at the very least a truce, allows for additional, more meaningful levels of interaction. Practically, religious leaders can make common cause on social or spiritual matters. But sincere dialogue and deep connection has the potential to be positively transformational, to fundamentally reshape the represented religions and their interfaith postures. Whenever a religion, and this is particularly true of the flagship monotheistic ones, revises its attitude to and relationship with other religions, that change has a ripple effect on its core theology. Inclusive dialogue with other monotheistic

---

4. I.e., the word after *emet* in the morning blessing is *yatziv*, a Biblical Aramaic word from the book of Daniel, whereas the one in the nighttime blessing is *emuna*, which is Biblical Hebrew.

5. *Ein Aya*, Berakhot 1:1.

religions, which recognizes that we and they worship the very same God, is predicated on a more abstract conception of God that centers on His uniqueness and oneness. By the same token, when a religion conceives of itself as part of a panhuman fellowship serving God, the impediments to working together that flow from the delegitimizing of other religions, such as *jihad* and missionization, disappear. A legitimate partner is no enemy, and an attempt to convert a spiritual brother is an insult.

The starkest example of a before-and-after religious transformation is the mid-twentieth-century Catholic Church's reversal of its dim view of Judaism and the Jews. Change commenced in the 1960s when Pope John XXIII, who himself saved Jews in the Holocaust, began reforming the Church's position at Vatican II. *Nostra Aetate* (In Our Time), "the Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions," was promulgated in 1965, absolving the Jews of all blame in the death of Jesus and expressing the Church's reservations about labeling the Jews as rejected or cursed. This positive reappraisal continued to gradually develop until it culminated in a document produced by the Vatican in 2015 titled "The Gifts and the Calling of God are Irrevocable." This officially put an end to missionary activity among the Jews due to the recognition that God's covenant with them remains in force.<sup>6</sup>

With Islam, too, one can see that countries that maintain good relations between members of different faiths tend to interpret *jihad* as a spiritual struggle within the individual, not a violent war to be waged by one people against another. Simply engaging in dialogue and encountering one another, even without coming to any formal resolution or determination, steers world religions onto a more inclusive course toward the Other.

When lines must be drawn, however, Judaism has never been afraid to draw them. It has challenged polytheism and championed unadulterated monotheism. There is room for withering criticism of unacceptable or extremist elements of other religions. Just as Judaism is open to cooperation, it withdraws when necessary. Legitimization of

---

6. See Dina Porat, Karma Ben Johanan, and Ruth Braude, eds., *In Our Time: Documents and Articles on the Catholic Church and the Jewish People in the Wake of the Holocaust* [in Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2015).

other faiths and respectful discourse do not translate into unconditional acceptance of every religious belief, behavior, or phenomenon.

**INTERFAITH ENCOUNTER AS A STRENGTHENER OF  
JEWISH IDENTITY**

To adopt a position of legitimization and respect for other religions – not to mention one of cooperation – can dilute one’s own religious identity. When Rabbi Kook wrote about modern interconnectivity and the tidal pull of groups the world round on every individual, he did not neglect to spell out the danger: the more identity is stretched in every direction, the more likely it cannot hold onto its particularistic contents. This is especially true when identity is contrastive, emerging from a negation of and separation from the Other. Consequently, when one acknowledges the religious identity of the Other, the luminosity of one’s own identity is liable to be dimmed.

However, strengthening connections and cooperation with members of other faiths need not weaken Jewish identity. To the contrary, it can work to solidify it. First, the greatest threat to all religiosity today is from the secular materialism of the West. Standing shoulder to shoulder with other religions against this danger strengthens everyone’s religious identity vis-à-vis secularism. Second, identity erosion from the recognition of other faiths as legitimate is primarily a concern within the isolated communities of the Diaspora, which are enveloped by the more “successful” and “alluring” religion of the majority. In the Jewish State, belonging to the majority minimizes this risk.

Moreover, the post-modern world we live in is allergic to meta-narratives that claim to possess the exclusive truth and to dismiss all others as false. Over a century ago, Rabbi Kook foretold this danger of a relational, rather than substantive, religious identity:

There are others who believe it impossible to genuinely believe in the truth of the Torah unless one also believes that all other faiths are worthless, and that those who adhere to them gain

nothing from them. But this is not true. [...] This ill-conceived line of thinking has many negative repercussions.<sup>7</sup>

Rabbi Kook utterly opposes the notion that to be a true believer entails rejecting all other faiths and dismissing them as valueless. For him, taking this position weakens Jewish belief. The proper approach is to find the value in other belief systems and thereby strengthen one's faith:

The scorn for other faiths deeply ingrained in the masses is also responsible for the wicked and godless treating the pure belief of the Jews in the same way. They claim that they are identical: this is religion and that is religion. Therefore, to save our youngsters from corrosive influences such as these, we must instill the value of other faiths according to the Torah.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, experience – the greatest teacher – indicates that the encounter with other Abrahamic religions, and the resulting understanding of just how central Judaism is to their story and tenets of faith, ought to reinforce Jewish identity and pride. When a Jew meets a Christian who thinks of the Jewish people as his “older brother,” or when a Jew encounters a Muslim who views that person as a member of the “people of the book” (*ahl al-kitāb*) who merited receiving the Torah from Heaven, the eyes of the Other reflect the importance of Judaism back to the Jew and reinforce the sense of collective Jewish responsibility to other peoples and faiths. Large segments of humanity model their lives on that of Abraham and perpetuate his legacy, a fact that should imbue Jewish life with greater, more universal significance.

\* \* \*

## THE STRUCTURE OF THIS BOOK

To reopen the wide-ranging questions, both halakhic and philosophical, that bear on the relationship between Jews and the nations, the Ohr Torah Stone network founded a think tank called the Beit Midrash for Judaism and Humanity. The work before you is the fruit of its intellectual

---

7. *LiNevukhei HaDor* 14:1.

8. *Ibid.*



## *The Relationship Between Jews and Non-Jews*

labors, the result of the joint study of four members: Rabbi Dr. Yakov Nagen, head of the Beit Midrash, Rabbi Sarel Rosenblatt, Dr. Assaf Malach, and Mrs. Gita Hazani-Melchior. Each chapter was authored by a different fellow, but it expresses the collective insights of the group. We are also grateful to Rabbi Johnny Solomon for contributing a chapter about the thought of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

The chapters of this volume all relate to the importance of religiosity and service of God among non-Jews. The book is divided into four parts. Part I addresses fundamental issues. First, it examines the nature of the eschatological relationship between the Jewish people and the nations of the world that emerges from studying the Prophets. Since the various seers describe this relationship differently, there is more than one way to understand the place of world religions in the future. The next chapter analyzes the character of Noahide law in rabbinic thought and concludes that it is a necessary condition for human civilization. Once that condition is met, each nation has a blank canvas on which to paint its own rich religious experience. Part II explores the attitude toward world religions in medieval Jewish thought, and each chapter thereof is dedicated to the thought of one celebrated thinker on the issue. Rabbi Judah HaLevi holds that these religions accord with human reason or morality but are essentially distinct from revealed religion, whereas Rabbi Nathaniel b. Fayyumi stakes the claim that there are revealed religions, having been revealed independently of the giving of the Torah to Moses. Rabbi Menahem Meiri argues that their legitimacy stems from their fundamental ethical decency and theological foundations, and he even allows for interreligious fraternity. Rabbi Joseph Albo spells out the necessary theological foundations for all true religions, while attributing their variability to national character. Against all these thinkers stands Rabbi Moses Maimonides, who grants no legitimacy to world religions and identifies the seven Noahide laws with the proper religion for non-Jews – and only precisely because these mitzvot were revealed at Sinai. Nevertheless, even Maimonides shows appreciation for the divine service of exceptional non-Jews. The third part of the volume moves to the modern period, ranging from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century. It covers dedicated treatments of the topic by Rabbi Elijah Benamozegh, Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook, Rabbi Yehuda Léon Ashkenazi

(Manitou), and Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks. These chapters highlight the modern call to focus on the universal role of the Jewish people and the Torah, and on the important place of world religions – especially Christianity and Islam – in the grand narrative of humanity.

The final section of the book discusses the participation of non-Jews in three core areas of Judaism: Torah study, the Temple service, and Shabbat observance.

Every chapter is an independent essay of variable length that contextualizes and interprets a selection of sources, and then concludes with key points or lessons for reflection. It is followed by a section titled “Sources,” in which texts cited briefly in the chapter are expanded and other relevant sources appear.<sup>9</sup> This format affords readers unmediated access to the source materials so they can form their own impressions, grasp the sources’ full meaning, and – it is our hope – come to a new understanding of Jewish-gentile relations. All sources that appear at the end of the chapter are numbered for ease of reference.

The book sets forth the findings of the Beit Midrash by presenting its interpretations of the sources and charting a cogent course through them. As the general thesis is elaborated chapter after chapter, the reader will come to see that this makes room for inclusive and respectful interfaith dialogue, and even deems other faiths partners in humankind’s all-inclusive service of God – “for them all to call in the name of Lord, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder.” Of course, this should not be taken to mean that Judaism grants legitimacy to any and every religious movement. In another volume, we will treat the relationship between Judaism and polytheism in all its ramifications.

It is our hope that the sources we have woven together in this volume to spur new avenues of thought will not remain theoretical but will find application in the great work of revealing God’s glory in this world, a process that we aspire to advance through connection, cooperation, healing, and interfaith dialogue. As we pray thrice daily: “May all of humanity call out in God’s name, and everyone accept the yoke of His kingdom.”

---

9. In some chapters, the nature of the presentation and argument requires incorporating the relevant sources into the body of the chapter, so that there is no appended “Sources” section.

# Acknowledgments

**T**his book is the inaugural volume of the Beit Midrash for Judaism and Humanity. As part of the Ohr Torah Stone network, we owe its staff a tremendous debt of gratitude. First and foremost, we thank its President, Rabbi Dr. Kenneth Brander, whose vision, initiative, support, and practical guidance keep the Beit Midrash going. From the beginning, Rabbi Brander recognized the urgent need for a think tank dedicated to probing the relationship between Judaism and humanity. Additional thanks go to the Director General, Mr. Yinon Ahiman, for assuring the financial success of the Beit Midrash; Ohr Torah Interfaith Center's managing director Rabbi Dr. Aharon Ariel Lavi for promoting our projects; Deputy Director of Education, Rabbi Yehuda Shtaubert, whose door is always open for the generous dispensation of insightful advice; Rabbi Nehemiah Krakover, for his professional guidance of the Beit Midrash; and Mr. David Katz, for everything he does behind the scenes.

I am grateful to the team of talented people at Maggid Books. At every stage they have given their input with dedication, professionalism and marvelous advice. I thank the publisher Matthew Miller, the chairman of the editorial board Rabbi Reuven Ziegler and the production manager Caryn Meltz.

Thank you to Daniel Tabak, for producing a superb translation and succeeding in the daunting task of making a work of rabbinical

literature of multiple genres readable in English without sacrificing detail. And to Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Sinensky the copy editor, for your fine-tuning of the text. Thank you also Tsofia Harband for the beautiful cover, Estie Dishon for a layout that is pleasing to the eye, and Faigy Badian for your precise proofreading.

We conclude by thanking the Master of the Universe for allowing us to be part of the generation of the redemption, and to personally witness God's favor showered upon His people in the Land. In every generation, the Jewish people face challenges. It is our fortune that ours are bound up with the reconstitution of the Jewish nation in the Holy Land and in the founding of Israeli society on the Torah – on the principles of peace, justice, and righteousness. “Were our mouths as full of song as the sea, and our tongue’s praise like the roar of its waves... we still would not be able to thank you enough, the Lord our God.”

**PART I:**  
**FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES**



# Four Prophetic Models for the Future of the Jewish People and the Nations

*Sarel Rosenblatt\**

## **A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF TANAKH**

Many of the prophecies about the end of days look beyond the internal affairs of the Jewish people to issues that concern the nations of the world. What will be their relationship with the Jewish people? What will their belief system look like? How will they respond when the final redemption is at hand?

Upon closer examination, the prophetic focus on the fate of non-Jews is part of a thematic, historical envelope pattern in Tanakh. Genesis opens with the widest lens possible by following the life of Adam, progenitor of all humankind. When, only a few chapters later, God chooses to make a covenant with Abraham, the frame narrows to a single man and his progeny for the rest of the book. Exodus expands the narrative aperture just enough to capture the entire people descended from Abraham, who make a special covenant with the Creator. If we then fast-forward

\* Rabbi Sarel Rosenblatt is the Rosh Yeshiva of the Ohr Torah Stone network's Robert M. Beren Machanaim Hesder Yeshiva, Co-founder and Senior Fellow at the Ohr Torah Interfaith Center, and the Dr. Monique and Mordecai (z"l) Katz Fellow at its Beit Midrash for Judaism and Humanity.

to prophecies about the end of history, the field of view snaps back to its original setting, taking in all of humanity.

In the biblical narrative, other peoples – typically local inhabitants or foreign invaders – pop in and out of the frame, but the focus remains steadily on the Jewish people. Contrast that with the eschatological prophecies, in which the nations of the world are not side players but have a starring role in the destiny of the Jewish people and the entire human race. Their precise political and religious relationships with the Jewish people and God may vary from prophet to prophet, but one cannot ignore the fact that they are in some way or another integral to the grand scheme of the ultimate redemption.

This very fact seems to gesture toward the revolutionary contribution of the Torah to the world. Where idolaters worship gods associated with a specific topographic feature or geographic region, deities that constantly strive with fellow gods and mere mortals, Jewish Scripture reaches over the horizon to embrace all humankind in its utopian vision of peace and harmony through knowledge of God. This conception of the end of days is the product of monotheistic belief and the view of the human being as fashioned in God's image.

Many scriptural passages relate to the non-Jewish world during the end of days, but the discussion below concentrates on those that deal specifically with the religious angle: the connection of non-Jews to God, the Torah, Jerusalem, and the Temple.

Each prophet envisions the end differently, and this includes the place of the nations. Will Jews and non-Jews enjoy identical stature, or will a hierarchy prevail? Will war precede a lasting peace, or will the nations come to their senses, having been touched by the word of God broadcast from Jerusalem? Will the Jewish Temple be the exclusive cultic site for all peoples, the sole *axis mundi* marked on the globe, or will there be other places of worship as well?

In the proceeding analysis, I plot the trends that emerge from the welter of prophetic statements onto multiple axes: hierarchy versus egalitarianism, centralization versus decentralization, and subjugation versus peaceful enlightenment. I then address the relationship between these prophecies, considering whether they complement or contradict one another.



**HIERARCHY VERSUS EGALITARIANISM**

In the prophecies that foretell of a future hierarchy, the Jewish people are set apart from everyone else. This is expressed in multiple ways. According to Ezekiel, the Temple precincts are off-limits to non-Jews: “No foreigner, uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh, shall enter My sanctuary; no foreigner who is among the Israelites” [8]. In Isaiah’s prophecy, though, the division of physical and spiritual labor creates a harmonious society: “And foreigners shall stand and tend your flocks, and strangers shall be your farmers and your vinedressers” [6]. Isaiah [1] and Zechariah [10] appoint the Jewish people as teachers and disseminators of Torah, as well as judges who rebuke the nations.

Note that none of these prophets severs contact or puts distance between Jews and everyone else. In fact, they unanimously attest to a close connection between them. In their prophecies, everything is oriented around the Land of Israel, so the Jews have a special calling. This disparity in roles is not due to some ingrained racial difference but due to the sanctity of the Jewish people or their intimate knowledge of the Torah. Redemption, in this account, flows from the success of the Jewish people in the global spiritual economy, and from the rest of the nations taking their respective places in this new spiritual-political world order.

The egalitarian prophecies could not be more different. The line separating Jew from non-Jew fades, partly or more fully, with respect to religious service and the relationship with God. This is not a byproduct of the redemption but its central feature. According to Isaiah, God invites the nations to Jerusalem for two reasons: (1) to dissolve this perception of difference – “Let not the foreigner who has attached himself to the Lord say, ‘The Lord will surely separate me from His people’”; and (2) to include them within the holy community that serves Him – “And the foreigners who attach themselves to the Lord to serve Him and to love the Lord’s name, to become His servants...I will bring them to My holy mountain...”<sup>1</sup> Why? “For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples” [5].

---

1. Who are these “foreigners”? Ex. Rabba (19) and Rashi (ad loc.) imply that these are converts. Rabbi Moses Alsheikh, on the other hand, thinks they are non-Jews. I

It goes even further. In Isaiah, non-Jews are welcomed to the Jewish Temple; in Zephaniah, they participate in common worship: “For then I will transform peoples with a pure language, for them all to call in the name of Lord, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder” [9]. The talmudic interpretation of this verse understands that in the future non-Jews will spurn idolatry and associate themselves with the Jews so they can worship God together. Redemption here erases a near-essential differentiator imprinted already in the womb: one’s mother tongue. The instatement of a lingua franca undoes the punishment for the Tower of Babel, the fragmentation of human language into mutually unintelligible families. Recall that that story precedes God’s selection of Abraham from all humankind. In the eschatological era, these markers of difference will have outlived their usefulness, so that all humanity will be reunited through a single language and worship God “shoulder to shoulder.”<sup>2</sup>

#### CENTRALIZATION VERSUS DECENTRALIZATION

The question of centralization does not turn on relations between peoples but on the geopolitical and spiritual centrality of Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Jewish God. The centralized worldview is given voice by Zechariah: “And many peoples and mighty nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the Lord” [10]. In another vision of the prophet, the nations are called to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkot, by which their faith in “the King, the Lord of Hosts” will be tested [11].

---

think that his is the simplest reading of the verse, since the immediately preceding verse speaks of “the man” and “the son of man” (Is. 56:2), and the prophecy ends with a house of prayer for “all peoples.”

2. Thus does the Maharsha explain the verse in Zephaniah. He adds: “The world was first settled due to the activity of the generation of dispersion, which had a single language in the Holy Tongue. They set out to rebel against God, so He confused that Holy Tongue. He says here that when the idolaters return to God’s worship, He will transform a pure language for them, and this is the Holy Tongue, because all the languages that are not ‘pure language’ are called *laaz* (imperfect speech) with respect to the Holy Tongue” (*Hiddushei Aggadot*, Avoda Zara 24a).

With Jerusalem at the heart of everything, the world can be either hierarchical, as in Ezekiel's prophecy [8], or egalitarian, like in Isaiah's [5]. Common to both visions is the relinquishment of non-Jewish hegemony via recognition of the sacred supremacy of Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies. In other words, when Isaiah articulates his universalist and cooperative prophecy in which the Temple is the house of prayer for all nations, there is a flipside to it. If Jerusalem is the epicenter of all that is good and holy in the world, then no other religion can claim that another cultic site on Earth is the exclusive – or even the central – place of worship. A life that does not exclusively revolve around the Temple in Jerusalem is perhaps the most surprising vision of the future found in Tanakh. When Micah writes that people of the world will stream to God's mountain, he does not depict Zephaniah's monolingualism and mono-religiosity [9] but extreme religious diversity: "For all the peoples shall walk, each in the name of its god, but we shall walk in the name of the Lord our God, forever and ever" [2]. The simplest reading of Micah's prophecy is that ascending the Temple Mount is the pinnacle of religious experience, but the nations of the world are not expected to ring Jerusalem with permanent residences and live in its spiritually rarefied atmosphere. They go home and resume their previous religious practices, spiritually recharged and enlightened.<sup>3</sup> Another decentralized version of the future is presented by Isaiah:

---

3. According to Rashi, Radak, and other commentators, Micah refers here to the past. That is, throughout history the nations of the world have followed the path of their respective gods, but now, with the redemption at hand, they reject their idolatry and worship God alone. Rabbi Moses Alsheikh (on Ps. 102:23), however, claims that Micah is speaking of the future redemption entirely. The approach taken in the body of the text here connects these verses with a kabbalistic tradition present in Rabbi Moses Nahmanides's Bible commentary (on Lev. 18:24) and in the Zohar (see *Zohar Hadash, Tikkunim* 97b), that all the nations of the world have supernal figures appointed over them that are ultimately subject to God's will, whereas the Jewish people have a direct, unmediated connection with God. This conception of the existential order may find halakhic expression in the tradition that non-Jews are not cautioned against *shittuf*, associating the name of God with something else (see *Tosafot*, Bekhorot 2b, s.v. *shema*, and Rema, *Orah Hayim* 156).

On that day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border.  
[...]

On that day, Israel shall be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, which the Lord of Hosts conferred saying, “Blessed be My people Egypt, My handiwork Assyria, and Israel My inheritance.”  
(Is. 19:19, 24–25) [3]

At the end of days, according to Isaiah, the nations will worship the Jewish God exclusively, but Jerusalem is not the only acceptable place to do that. Even Egypt will have “an altar of the Lord.” The biblical model of a single chosen nation is modified so that the two mighty empires of the biblical period – Egypt and Assyria – join spiritual forces with Israel. The language here is noteworthy: God calls Egypt “My people” and Assyria “My handiwork.” Previously, God referred exclusively to the Israelites in such loving terms. Like Isaiah, Malachi also envisions a world with altars as far as the eye can see: “in every place incense and pure grain offering” are brought to God’s name. This attests to the fact that God’s name is “great among the nations” [12].<sup>4</sup>

#### **SUBJUGATION VERSUS ENLIGHTENMENT AND PEACE**

Another tension between the many eschatological prophecies surrounds the unfolding of events. One foretelling has it that cataclysmic wars and extraordinary natural disasters will make the nations of the world submit and recognize that the God of Israel reigns supreme and that Jerusalem is His chosen city. For example, Zechariah depicts a world war in which the two forces meet on the battlefield of Jerusalem, where victory is decided by earthquakes, the splitting of the Mount of Olives,

---

4. The verses in Malachi are also significant because Malachi is speaking of his own day and not of the future. We know that during his time nations were not coming to the Temple to offer sacrifices nor to Jerusalem to learn Torah, yet he still considers their religious worship as magnifying God’s name in the world. This is also implied by *Menaḥot* 110a.

and a brilliant light at night. The ranks of the enemy are devastated, and survivors have no choice but to accept that God is King of kings. The threat of plague and drought looms over their continued faithfulness to God. The path to the end of days is therefore lined with bent knees.

Where Ezekiel foresees the illumination of a decimated landscape on a scale we associate with the end of days, Isaiah [1] (and in chapter 11) instead sees a spiritual beacon that illuminates the world with knowledge of God through the teaching of Torah and the pursuit of justice. The divine spirit – imparting wisdom, discernment, understanding, and fear of God – rests on a scion of King David, whose fight for what is good and right is heard round the world. As the Torah goes forth from Zion, the nations embrace it and decide to seek out God in Jerusalem, to study His Torah and be judged by His wisdom. It is not only that no force is applied to make the nations see the light, but that the ensuing enlightenment does more than lead them to coronate God as King. As the divine wisdom is disseminated throughout the world, a new world order arises, in which all weapons of war are irrevocably transformed into tools of peace.

### **THE CHOICE IS OURS**

How the world will ultimately look and how it will get there is the subject of differing prophecies, and we must consider the possible relationship between them. Theoretically, the analysis can go in one of two directions. The first approach harmonizes the incongruities as much as possible to produce a synthetic account. This is theologically advantageous, because it takes a holistic view of God's will. The denouement of history is carefully plotted, and we can discover how all the loose ends will be tied up. What of the glaring incompatibilities? These can be attributed to the fact that every prophet sees what will come to pass through a unique pair of eyes. As R. Yitzhak says in the Talmud, "A single matter may appear to several prophets, but no two prophets express it identically in prophecy."<sup>5</sup> The prophecy beheld is raw data that must be parsed and interpreted through the organs of the prophet's mind and

---

5. Sanhedrin 89a.

spirit. No two minds are alike, so no two prophecies are identical. This approach, however, faces nearly insurmountable interpretive hurdles, because some aspects of the visions are in direct conflict, or are even diametrically opposed.

It is possible to soften this position and argue that each prophet has a different vantage point from which he observes part of the future reality, and so offers us one slice of it. For example, one can describe a person independently, as an isolated being distinct from family, friends, and society, but one can also locate an individual within the great web of humanity. The relationship between the Jewish people and the rest of humanity similarly lends itself to being presented in terms of separation and cooperation, and both can be simultaneously true. One would have to be able to show exactly how each prophecy aligns with some facet of this multifaceted reality.

The second approach fits more smoothly with the language and content of the biblical passages, because the prophets do sound like they are bearing witness to fundamentally distinct worlds. This interpretation accepts the prophecies for what they are: alternative possible futures. Rabbi Moses Maimonides appears to take this approach when he writes:

Regarding all of these and similar matters, nobody knows how they will occur until they do, for these matters are obscure in the Prophets, and the Sages possess no tradition about them. All we have is the most persuasive interpretation of the verses, which is why there is a dispute about them. Be that as it may, neither the order of events nor their details are religious dogma, and a person should never preoccupy oneself with aggadic statements. One should not dwell overmuch on the midrashic homilies about these and similar matters, nor should one treat them as essential, for they do not bring one to fear or love [God]. Similarly, one should not calculate the end; the Sages said, "May those who calculate the end be cursed."<sup>6</sup> *One should*

---

6. Sanhedrin 97b.

*instead wait and have general faith that it will happen, as we have explained.*<sup>7</sup>

Clearly, Maimonides views the sources as contradictory, which is precisely why he discourages spending time to try to work out what will happen. There is no definitive answer to be reached.

According to the Torah, the future is not set in stone; otherwise, we would not have divergent prophecies. It is not pointless to weigh and act upon the possibilities, because the Torah expects us to be active participants in shaping the future, not passive spectators observing the unfolding of God's master plan. By giving us glimpses of how things could be, God has also given us the free will to make one of them a reality. The Sages similarly pin the timing of the ultimate redemption on Jewish activity. In trying to make sense of the prophetic promise that God will "hasten" the end "in its time" (Is. 60:22), the Sages remark: "If they merit it – 'I will hasten it'; if they do not merit it – 'in its time.'"<sup>8</sup> This is more limited because it refers only to the collective merit of the Jewish people accumulated by Torah study and mitzva observance. In the prophecies discussed here, the nations of the world have greater input through their choices and actions, but the Jewish nation still has an effect on whether redemption will be hierarchical or egalitarian, centralized or decentralized, militaristic or didactic.

In considering all these options, we should bear two things in mind: the nations of the world will always be part of the picture, and the utopian reality will only be achieved through a combination of human action and divine orchestration.

## SOURCES

### [1] Isaiah 2:2–4

It shall be at the end of days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established at the top of the mountains and tower above the hills, and all the nations shall flow to it. And many peoples shall go and say,

7. *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot Melakhim* 12:2.

8. Sanhedrin 98a.

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us of His ways and that we may walk in His paths.” For from Zion shall the Torah go forth, and the word of God from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between the nations and arbitrate for many peoples. And they shall grind their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not raise sword against nation, nor shall they learn war anymore.

[2] **Micah 4:1–5**

It shall be at the end of days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established at the top of the mountains and tower above the hills, and peoples shall flow to it. And many nations shall go and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us of His ways and that we may walk in His paths.” For from Zion shall the Torah go forth, and the word of God from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between many peoples and arbitrate for mighty nations from afar. And they shall grind their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not raise sword against nation, nor shall they learn war anymore. But every man shall sit under his grapevine and under his fig tree, with none to make him afraid, for the Lord of Hosts has spoken. For all the peoples shall walk, each in the name of its god, but we shall walk in the name of the Lord our God, forever and ever.

[3] **Isaiah 19:18–25**

On that day, five cities in the land of Egypt shall speak the language of Canaan and swear to the Lord of Hosts. Of one of them it shall be said “the city of destruction.” On that day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. It shall be a sign and witness for the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt, so that when they cry out to the Lord because of oppressors, He will send them a savior and champion who will save them. And the Lord shall make Himself known to Egypt, and Egypt shall know the Lord on that day, and worship with sacrifice and grain offering and make a vow to the Lord and fulfill it. And the Lord shall afflict Egypt, afflicting and healing, and they shall return to the Lord, and He shall hear their



entreaty and heal them. On that day, there shall be a highway from Egypt to Assyria: Assyria shall come into to Egypt and Egypt into Assyria, and Egypt shall worship with Assyria. On that day, Israel shall be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, which the Lord of Hosts conferred saying, “Blessed be My people Egypt, My handiwork Assyria, and Israel My inheritance.”

**[4] Isaiah 42:5–7**

Thus said God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spreads out the earth and its issue, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk on it: I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness and held your hand, and kept you and made you a covenant for peoples, a light of the nations, to open blind eyes, to bring out the confined from prisons, those sitting in darkness from dungeons.

**[5] Isaiah 56:3–8**

Let not the foreigner who has attached himself to the Lord say, “The Lord will surely separate me from His people,” nor let the eunuch say, “See how I am a withered tree.” For thus said the Lord, As for the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, choose what I desire, and hold fast to My covenant, I will give them in My house and within My walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. And the foreigners who attach themselves to the Lord to serve Him and to love the Lord’s name, to become His servants; all who keep the Sabbath from profaning it and hold fast to My covenant – I will bring them to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices shall be welcome on My altar. For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus said the Lord God who gathers the dispersed of Israel, I will gather still more to those already gathered.

**[6] Isaiah 61:5–6, 9**

And foreigners shall stand and tend your flocks, and strangers shall be your farmers and your vinedressers. As for you, you shall be called the Lord’s priests; it shall be said that you are “servants of our God.” You shall consume the wealth of nations and revel in their glory. [...]

And their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them shall recognize that they are the seed the Lord has blessed.

[7] **Isaiah 66:18–23**

As for Me, [I know] their acts and their thoughts. [A time] is coming to gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see My glory. And I will set a sign upon them and send from them survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow; Tubal and Javan; the faraway isles that have not heard tell of Me and have not beheld My glory, and they shall relate My glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, on horses, in chariots and covered wagons, on mules and dromedaries, to My holy mountain in Jerusalem, said the Lord, as the Israelites bring a grain offering in a pure vessel to the house of the Lord. And from them, too, I shall take to be priests and Levites, said the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make stand before Me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name stand. And it shall be, from one month to the next and from one Sabbath to the next, all flesh shall come to bow before Me, said the Lord.

[8] **Ezekiel 44:6–10**

And you shall say to the rebellious, the house of Israel, Thus said the Lord God, All your abominations are enough for you, house of Israel: when you bring foreigners, uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh, to be in My sanctuary, to profane My house, when you offer My food, fat, and blood, and they violate My covenant with all their abominations. And you have not kept the charge of My sacred things, but you have set them for yourselves as keepers of My charge in My sanctuary. Thus said the Lord God, No foreigner, uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh, shall enter My sanctuary; no foreigner who is among the Israelites. Only the Levites, who distanced themselves from Me when Israel strayed, straying from Me after their foul things, and they shall bear their iniquity.

[9] **Zephaniah 3:8–9**

Therefore, wait for Me, said the Lord, for the day I rise as witness, for My judgment is to gather in nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out My wrath upon them – all my blazing anger. For the entire earth shall be consumed by My zealous fire. For then I will transform peoples with a pure language, for them all to call in the name of Lord, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder.

[10] **Zechariah 8:20–23**

Thus said the Lord of Hosts, Peoples and the inhabitants of many cities shall yet come, and the inhabitants of one shall go to another, saying, “Let us go to entreat the Lord and to seek the Lord of Hosts; I will go, too.” And many peoples and mighty nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the Lord.

Thus said the Lord of Hosts, In those days, ten men from nations of every tongue shall grasp – they shall grasp the border of a Jew’s garment, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”

[11] **Zechariah 14:2–3, 9, 12, 16–19**

And I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem for battle. And the city shall be captured, the houses plundered, and the women ravished, and half the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the Lord will go forth and do battle with those nations, as when He fights on the day of battle. [...] And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; on that day the Lord shall be one and His name one. [...]

This shall be the plague with which the Lord shall strike all the people that warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall rot while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall rot in their sockets, and their tongues shall rot in their mouths. [...] It shall be that whoever remains from the nations coming up against Jerusalem shall go up, year after year, to bow to the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to celebrate the festival of Sukkot. And it shall be that whoever of the clans of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to bow to the King, the Lord of Hosts, shall have no rain upon them. And if the clan of Egypt does not go up and does not come, and there is no overflow, there shall be the plague with which the Lord

*Sarel Rosenblatt*

strikes the nations that do not go up to celebrate the festival of Sukkot. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the festival of Sukkot.

**[12] Malachi 1:11**

For from the rising of the sun to its setting My name is great among the nations, and in every place incense and pure grain offering are offered to My name – for My name is great among the nations, said the Lord of Hosts.