

### 1. Rambam, Laws of Chametz and Matzah Chapter 7:4

וְצִדִּיק לְהִתְחִיל בְּגִנוּת וְלִסְיָם בְּשֶׁבַח. כִּי צַדִּיק מִתְחִיל וּמְסַפֵּר שֶׁבִּתְחִלָּה הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְיָמֵי תֵרַח וּמִלְפָּנָיו כּוֹפְרִים וְטוֹעִין אַחַר הַהֶבֶל וְרוֹדְפִין אַחַר עֲבוֹדַת אֱלִילִים. וּמִסִּיָּם בְּדַת הָאֱמֶת שֶׁקִּרְבָנוּ הַמָּקוֹם לוֹ וְהַבְּדִילָנוּ מֵהָאֱמוּנוֹת וְקִרְבָנוּ לְיְחִוּדוֹ. וְכֵן מִתְחִיל וּמוֹדִיעַ שֶׁעֲבָדִים הָייְנוּ לַפְרָעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם וְכָל הַרְעָה שֶׁגָּמְלָנוּ וּמִסִּיָּם בְּנִסִּים וּבִנְפִלְאוֹת שֶׁנַּעֲשׂוּ לָנוּ וּבְחֵרוּתֵנוּ. וְהוּא שֶׁיְדַרֵּשׁ מִ(דְּבָרִים כו ה) "אֲרָמִי אֲבָד אָבִי" עַד שֶׁיִּגְמַר כָּל הַפְּרָשָׁה. וְכָל הַמוֹסִיף וּמֵאָרִיךְ בְּדֵרֶשׁ פְּרָשָׁה זוֹ הָרִי זֶה מְשֻׁבָּח:

And one must begin with disgrace and conclude with praise. How is that? He begins and recounts that in the beginning, our ancestors at the time of Terach and before him, were heretics, erring after emptiness and pursuing idolatry. And he concludes with the true religion that the Omnipresent brought us close to Him, separated us from the nations and brought us close to His unification. And likewise does he begin and lets it be known that we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and all of the evil that he did to us. And he concludes with the miracles and with the wonders that were done for us and with our freedom. And that is that he should expound from "My father was a wandering Aramean" ([Deuteronomy 26:5](#)), until he finishes all of [that] section. And anyone who adds and speaks at length in expounding this section, he is surely praiseworthy.

### 2. Devarim Chapter 26

(א) וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹא אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ נַחֲלָה וּירְשָׁתָהּ וְיִשְׁבַּת בָּהּ. (ב) וְלָקַחְתָּ מֵרֵאשִׁית כָּל פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּבְיֵא מֵאֲרָצְךָ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ וְשָׂמָת בְּטֹנָא וְהִלַּכְתָּ אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לְשֹׁכֵן שָׁמוֹ שָׁם. (ג) וּבָאתָ אֶל הַכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בְיָמֵים הָהֵם וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ כִּי בָאתִי אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע ה' לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ לָתֵת לָנוּ. (ד) וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן הַטֹּנָא מִיָּדְךָ וְהִנִּיחוֹ לִפְנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ. (ה) וְעֲנִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ אֲרָמִי אֲבָד אָבִי וַיֵּרֵד מִצְרַיִם וַיִּגַּר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מַעֲטָ וַיְהִי שָׁם לְגוֹי גָדוֹל עֲצוּם וְרַב. (ו) וַיִּרְעוּ אֶתְנֹו הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה. (ז) וַנִּצְעַק אֶל ה' אֱלֹקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁמַע ה' אֶת קִלְנוּ וַיִּרְא אֶת עַנְיָנוּ וְאֶת עֲמַלְנוּ וְאֶת לַחֲצָנוּ. (ח) וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ ה' מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרַע נְטוּיָה וּבְמִרְאָ גָדֹל וּבְאִתּוֹת וּבְמִפְתִּים. (ט) וַיְבָאֵנוּ אֶל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וַיִּתֵּן לָנוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֲרָץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ. (י) וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הִבַּאתִי אֶת רֵאשִׁית פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לִי ה' וְהִנְחִיתוּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ. (יא) וְשָׂמַחְתָּ בְּכָל הַטוֹב אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְךָ ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ וּלְבִיתְךָ אֶתָּה וְהִלּוּי וְהִגֵּר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ.

1) It shall be, when you have come in to the land which Hashem your God gives you for an inheritance, and possess it, and dwell therein, (2) that you shall take of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you shall bring in from your land that Hashem your God gives you; and you shall put it in a basket, and shall go to the place which Hashem your God shall choose, to cause His name to dwell there. (3) You shall come to the priest who shall be in those days, and tell him, "I profess this day to Hashem your God, that I am come to the land which Hashem swore to our fathers to

give us.” (4) The priest shall take the basket out of your hand, and set it down before the altar of Hashem your God. (5) You shall answer and say before Hashem your God, “A Syrian ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and lived there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. (6) The Egyptians dealt ill with us, and afflicted us, and laid on us hard bondage: (7) and we cried to Hashem, the God of our fathers, and Hashem heard our voice, and saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression; (8) and Hashem brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terror, and with signs, and with wonders; (9) and He has brought us into this place, and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. (10) Now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, Hashem, have given me.” You shall set it down before Hashem your God, and worship before Hashem your God. (11) You shall rejoice in all the good which Hashem your God has given to you, and to your house, you, and the Levite, and the foreigner who is in the midst of you.

### 3. Jeremiah 9:22-23

כֹּה אָמַר ה' אֱלֹהֵי־תְהַלֵּל חֶכְמָם בְּתִכְמֹתוֹ וְאֱלֹהֵי־תְהַלֵּל הַגִּבּוֹר בַּגְּבוּרָתוֹ אֱלֹהֵי־תְהַלֵּל עֲשִׂיר בְּעֲשָׂרוֹ:

כִּגְבִי אִם־בְּזָאֵת יִתְהַלֵּל הַמְתַּהַלֵּל הַשֵּׁפֶל וְיִדַע אוֹתוֹ כִּי אֲנִי ה' עֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד מִשְׁפָּט וְצְדָקָה בְּאָרֶץ כִּי־בְאֵלֶּה חֲפָצָתִי נְאֻם־ה': {ס}

Thus said the LORD:

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom;

Let not the strong man glory in his strength;

Let not the rich man glory in his riches.

But only in this should one glory: In his earnest devotion to Me. For I the LORD act with kindness, Justice, and equity in the world; For in these I delight — declares the LORD.

### 4. Rambam, Guide for the Perplexed, Conclusion

Having stated the sublime ideas contained in that Scriptural passage, and quoted the explanation of our Sages, we will now complete what the remainder of that passage teaches us. The prophet does not content himself with explaining that the knowledge of God is the highest kind of perfection; for if this only had been his intention, he would have said, “But in this let him who glorieth glory, that he understandeth and knoweth me,” and would have stopped there; or he would have said, “that he understandeth and knoweth me that I am One,” or, “that I have not any likeness,” or, “that there is none like me,” or a similar phrase. He says, however, that man can only glory in the knowledge of God and in the knowledge of His ways and attributes, which are His actions, as we have shown (Part 1. liv.) in expounding the passage, “Show me now thy ways” (Exod. 38:13). We are thus told in this passage that the Divine acts which ought to

be known, and ought to serve as a guide for our actions, are, *hesed*, "loving-kindness," *mishpat*, "judgment," and *zedakah*, "righteousness." Another very important lesson is taught by the additional phrase, "in the earth." It implies a fundamental principle of the Law; it rejects the theory of those who boldly assert that God's providence does not extend below the sphere of the moon, and that the earth with its contents is abandoned, that "the Lord hath forsaken the earth" (Ez. 8:12). It teaches, as has been taught by the greatest of all wise men in the words, "The earth is the Lord's" (Exod. 9:29), that His providence extends to the earth in accordance with its nature, in the same manner as it controls the heavens in accordance with their nature. This is expressed in the words, "That I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth." The prophet thus, in conclusion, says, "For in these things I delight, saith the Lord," i.e., My object [in saying this] is that you shall practise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. In a similar manner we have shown (Part I. liv.) that the object of the enumeration of God's thirteen attributes is the lesson that we should acquire similar attributes and act accordingly. The object of the above passage is therefore to declare, that the perfection, in which man can truly glory, is attained by him when he has acquired--as far as this is possible for man--the knowledge of God, the knowledge of His Providence, and of the manner in which it influences His creatures in their production and continued existence. Having acquired this knowledge he will then be determined always to seek loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, and thus to imitate the ways of God. We have explained this many times in this treatise.

This is all that I thought proper to discuss in this treatise, and which I considered useful for men like you. I hope that, by the help of God, you will, after due reflection, comprehend all the things which I have treated here. May He grant us and all Israel with us to attain what He promised us, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isa. 35:5); "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the shadow of death upon them hath the light shined" (ibid. 9:1).

God is near to all who call Him, if they call Him in truth, and turn to Him. He is found by every one who seeks Him, if he always goes towards Him, and never goes astray. AMEN.

##### **5. Rambam, Guide For The Perplexed 3:39**

The reciting of a certain portion of the Law when the first-fruits are brought to the temple, tends also to create humility. For he who brings the first-fruits takes the basket upon his shoulders and proclaims the kindness and goodness of God. This ceremony teaches man that it is essential in the service of God to remember the times of trouble and the history of past distress, in days of comfort. The Law lays stress on this duty in several places; comp. "And thou shalt remember that thou hast been a slave," etc. ([Deut. 5:15](#)). For it is to be feared that those who become great in riches and comfort might, as is generally the case, fall into the vices of insolence and haughtiness, and abandon all good principles. Comp.

"Lest thou eat and be full, etc., and thine heart be lifted up and thou forget the Lord" (ibid. 8:12-14); "And Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked" (ibid. 30:15). On account of this fear the Law commanded us to read each year a certain portion before the Lord and His glory, when we offer the first-fruit. You know how much the Law insists that we shall always remember the plagues that have befallen the Egyptians; comp. "That thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life" (ibid. 16:3); "That thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son what things I have wrought in Egypt" ([Exod. 10:2](#)). Such a law was necessary in order to perpetuate the memory of the departure from Egypt; because such events verify prophecy and the doctrine of reward and punishment. The benefit of every commandment that serves to keep certain miracles in remembrance, or to perpetuate true faith, is therefore obvious.

#### **6. Rambam, Guide For the Perplexed 3:43**

The two festivals, Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles, imply also the teaching of certain truths and certain moral lessons. Passover teaches us to remember the miracles which God wrought in Egypt, and to perpetuate their memory; the Feast of Tabernacles reminds us of the miracles wrought in the wilderness. The moral lessons derived from these feasts is this: man ought to remember his evil days in his days of prosperity. He will thereby be induced to thank God repeatedly, to lead a modest and humble life. We eat, therefore, unleavened bread and bitter herbs on Passover in memory of what has happened unto us, and leave [on Succoth] our houses in order to dwell in tabernacles, as inhabitants of deserts do that are in want of comfort. We shall thereby remember that this has once been our condition; [comp.] "I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths" (Lev. 23:43); although we dwell now in elegant houses, in the best and most fertile land, by the kindness of God, and because of His promises to our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were perfect in their opinions and in their conduct. This idea is likewise an important element in our religion; that whatever good we have received and ever will receive of God, is owing to the merits of the Patriarchs, who "kept the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment" (Gen. 18:19).