

# THE RAV'S RADICAL READING OF THE WORLD'S CREATION

## PART III: THE CHARISMATIC PERSONALITY

### 1. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *The Emergence of Ethical Man*, p. 149

The rift in the human personality we have seen unfold over the first three chapters of Genesis, the deviation from the united ideal of creation engendered by the primeval couple's pursuit of *hedone*, called for a unique type of person who would restore the unity of the ethical and the esthetic. The process of the realization of the charismatic personality is described in the biographies of the three patriarchs and Moses. Let us begin by analysing the figure of Abraham, the first Jew.

### 2. Genesis 12:1

The LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you."

### 2. ספר בראשית פרק יב פסוק א

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם לֵךְ־לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבְּיַת אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרְאֶה:

### 3. Genesis 13:14–15; 17

And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had parted from him, "Raise your eyes and look out from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west, for I give all the land that you see to you and your offspring forever. ... Up, walk about the land, through its length and its breadth, for I give it to you."

### 3. ספר בראשית פרק יג פסוקים יד–טו, יז

וַיְהוָה אָמַר אֶל־אַבְרָם אַחֲרֵי הַפָּרֶד־לוֹט מֵעֲמוֹ שָׂא נְאֻ עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה מִן־הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה שָׁם צָפְנָה וְנִגְבְּהָ וְקִדְמָה וַיְמִינָה: כִּי אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֶה לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה וְלִזְרַעְךָ עַד־עוֹלָם: ... קוּם הִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּאֶרֶץ לְאֶרֶבָּה וּלְרֻחְבָּהּ כִּי לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה:

### 4. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *The Emergence of Ethical Man*, p. 172

The natural ego is assimilated into an individualistic ego who lived at the dawn of history. The nation is unique and as lonely as their father-shepherd Abraham was. The people relive his life, of course in a different environment yet in identical situations. The uniqueness of such a historical existence consists in projecting a present onto a mystical future, and vice-versa in tying it in with a dim past.

### 5. b. Sanh. 90b

From where is the resurrection of the dead derived from the Torah? As it is stated with regard to *teruma* of the tithe: "And you shall give the *teruma* of the Lord to Aaron the priest" (Numbers 18:28). And does Aaron exist forever? But is it not so that Aaron did not enter Eretz Yisrael, the only place where the people would give him *teruma*? Rather, the verse teaches that Aaron is destined to live in the future and the Jewish people will give him *teruma*. From here it is derived that the resurrection of the dead is from the Torah.

### 5. תלמוד בבלי מסכת סנהדרין דף צ עמוד ב

מניין לתחיית המתים מן התורה? שנאמר (במדבר יח, כח) "ונתתם ממנו [את] תרומת ה' לאהרן הכהן." וכי אהרן לעולם קיים והלא לא נכנס לארץ ישראל שנותנין לו תרומה? אלא מלמד שעתיד לחיות וישראל נותנין לו תרומה. מכאן לתחיית המתים מן התורה.

**6. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *The Emergence of Ethical Man*, pp. 176–177**

Our Rabbis singled out the unique Biblical usage of the name of the founder (Aaron or Abraham) for the identification of the group, and concluded from that that the founder is immortal. The argument is comprehensible only when we consider it from the viewpoint of historical perpetuation. The land was promised to Abraham, *terumah* to Aaron. The realization of this promise did not occur in their lifetimes but many years later and yet the word of God came true. Why? Because the founder continues his existence throughout the history of his group. Whatever is realized in the cause of the historical occurrence is to be understood as a personal attainment of the founder.

## Conclusion

Now let us review the different phases through which the emergent human personality passes:

(1) Man as a biological being against his genetic background, animal in all its insinuations and demands: the only difference between man and animal is the extent to which the technical intelligence has progressed. (Man as described in the first chapter of creation.)

(2) Man acquiring personality by experiencing the ethical norm and getting involved in sympathetic coexistence with the thou: man begins to separate from the natural realm and encounters in his subjective capacity an objective world. Ethical solidarity is characteristic of this stage. (Man as described in the second chapter of Genesis.)

(3) Man splitting his existence into an ethico-natural and orgiastic-demonic personality, introducing horror into the world and attempting to deceive his genuine ego (the original sin).

(4) The free, charismatic, anarchic and lonely personality, which revolts against man-made institutions and mores and discovers the moral law, chances later upon the God of morality and becomes acquainted with Him (Abraham).

(5) The historical personality which immortalizes itself through covenant historical reality by continuous self-revealing in the covenant society. At this stage man raises concrete naturalness to historicity.

## THE EMERGENCE OF ETHICAL MAN

(6) The antithetic charismatic personality of the interim period who is captivated and captured by the numinous God (Moses at the burning bush).

(7) The imprisoned charismatic personality freeing itself from numinous horror by retracing the footsteps of historical development or by identifying itself with the charismatic founder. The interim chosen personality reconstructs freedom out of historical necessity.

(8) The apostolic personality tied in by a bond of solidarity and sympathy with the God of the covenant. The apostolic personality is the redeemer who co-participates in the drama of realization. In other words, the man of the miracle appears: the harmonious personality that reconciles the natural with the historical order (Moses through the plagues and the exodus from Egypt).

(9) The theo-political personality, which asserts itself in a state-society that is dedicated to a single objective: to live in comradeship with God and to freely abide by His will. There is not only a covenant between God and man, but a socio-political bond as well. The religious ethos assumes a legal aspect; the subjective ethos becomes an objective moral law (Moses at the revelation at Sinai).