



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

Reel
146

Box
51

Folder
92

Moses Maimonides - the Philosopher, 1921.

LECTURE BY RABBI ABBA H. SILVER, ON
"MOSES MAIMONIDES--THE PHILOSOPHER,"
AT THE TEMPLE, SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY
16, 1921, CLEVELAND, OHIO.

--o--

Our religion was never based on superstition,
on mysticism--on what is known as obscurantism.
Our religion never found refuge in blind dogmatic belief;
the intellect of man always stimulated to research, to the
eternal quest for truth. Already in the Bible we find
evidences of this critical spirit of Israel applied to the
fundamental doctrines of our religion; already in the
Bible we find the mind of man wrestling with religious
convictions, with the dictates of faith.

You will recall Job as an instance, and the
Book of Ecclesiastes as another example of this same
critical, searching, analytical attitude toward the
fundamental doctrines of religion and ethics. And it is,
to my mind, a splendid commentary on the broadness, the
catholicity of the spirit of our people that these two
Books--Job and Koheleth, which seem to call into question
the very fundamentals of religion--were canonized, were
made sacred, and so held by the people down the years.

In the Talmud we find still further a discussion
and exposition of the principles of religion and ethics--
the subjects of free will and God's fore-knowledge, of how

the two may be harmonized; the subject of God's providence, of retribution, of reward and punishment; the question of immortality--even the question of God's existence--unity and incorporeality--are questions discussed by the Rabbis. They did not, of course, have that interest in theoretical speculation that the Greeks had. The Jew of Biblical times and the Jew of Talmudic times was interested in life and in living and in a program for life, and very little concerned in abstract thinking. That is why neither the Bible nor the Talmud developed a systematic philosophy in the sense that the Greeks did develop such a philosophy. But the problems of Greek philosophy were known by the teachers of our religion and wrestled with in early days.

When the Jews left Palestine and ceased to be "a people dwelling by itself," they of necessity came in touch with the great philosophic movements of the peoples about them. Greek thought, as you remember, dominated the civilizations of Asia, Africa and Europe in early days and right through Medieval times. The Jews, always intellectually alert and keen, very readily learned all that the Greeks could teach them concerning logic and physics and metaphysics and speculation.

They did it not only as an intellectual entertainment, but they did it for very vital reasons: they had to adjust their religion to the philosophic ideals of the day, just as we have to do it in this day. They had to defend Judaism against the attacks of Christianity and

Mohammedanism, and they could do it best not with theology but with theosophy. And so from the early centuries the thinkers of our people--the leaders of our people--began to absorb all the learning of the Greeks and use that learning to substantiate, to interpret, to defend, to establish the principles of Judaism.

The Mohammedans were a very intellectual people. Some Christian countries today forget the fact. When Europe was passing through the Dark Ages, when ignorance, superstition and bigotry held sway, the Mohammedans alone were priding themselves upon their universities and their medical schools and their fine cultural atmosphere and their spirit of tolerance and broad-mindedness.

Now the Jews in Egypt, the Jews in Asia Minor and the Jews in Spain lived under the influence, political and cultural, of the Arabs--the Mohammedans, and because the Mohammedans were an intellectual people and loved philosophy, the Jews, too, began to study philosophy with greater zest, even, than they had done before this time.

Already in the Ninth Century we hear of a Jewish philosopher endeavoring to develop a systematic Jewish philosophy--Isaac d'Israeli, born in Egypt around 850. He wrote a book called "A Book of the Elements," in which he tries to incorporate the physics of Aristotle and the Greeks into the theology and the world concept of the Jew.

The first real great Jewish philosopher was Saadia, also of Egypt, but one who lived and died in

Babylonia. Saadia was the first great Jewish philosopher, the first great Jewish grammarian, the first great Jew of Medieval days, and his book--"Faith and Philosophy" or "Belief and Knowledge"--has been a text book of Jewish thought up to this day.

Saadia was followed by the first Jewish philosopher of the Western World, of Spain,--ibn Gabirol, whom I mentioned last week. Ibn Gabirol was not only a poet but a philosopher, and his book, "The Fountain of Life," known best in its Latin translation--"Fons Vitae"--was better known among the Christians than among the Jews. Ibn Gabirol was known among the scholastics of the Medieval Ages as "Avicbron," and he was thought to be Mohammedan or Christian, and it was only in the last one hundred years that it became known that "Avicbron," read and quoted by the Christian scholastics, was the same ibn Gabirol whose hymns are read in our synagogues daily.

Gabirol was followed by another great Jewish philosopher--Bahya, whose book, "The Duties of the Heart," was the ethical manual, the ethical text book throughout the Middle Ages, and has some superb and magnificent ethical teachings.

Bahya was followed by Jehuda Halevi, of whom I spoke last week. I spoke of him last week only as a poet, but there is something very peculiar about the mind of the Jew, something that we seldom find among other peoples: among the Jews you find a poet who is also a philosopher--like

Halevi, like ibn Gabirol; a philosopher who is also a legalist--like Maimonides, of whom I shall speak in a moment. And a legalist, strange to say, is also a mystic--like Joseph Caro, the author of the great Code of Jewish Laws.

Halevi was followed by the two ibn Ezras, who wrote a bit of philosophy, but more especially by Abraham ibn Daud, the forerunner of Maimonides, whose text book "The Exalted Faith," or "The Faith Exalted," foreshadows all the fundamental ideas of Maimonides. And this arc of Jewish learning, of Jewish research, of Jewish thinking is crowned by that immortal name of Moses, the son of Maimon, known as Maimonides.

Concerning Maimonides the people of Israel have long expressed themselves in that famous phrase: "From Moses, the son of Amram (the Moses that brought the Jews out of Egypt) unto Moses, the son of Maimon (Maimonides) there never rose a man like unto Maimonides." In his own day the people called him "the light of our eyes"--the light of the Diaspora. And when he died people mourned for him as if the temple had been destroyed.

It is very difficult to speak in modest terms about the mental capacity of this man Maimonides. He was really a phenomenon; he was undoubtedly the greatest Jew of the Middle Ages--perhaps the greatest Jew since Biblical times. Maimonides was not only a great Talmudist, who knew the whole vast literature of a thousand years intimately, but he was also a great physician--a physician

in ordinary to the Sultan. He wrote a great deal on medicine; he was a great scientist, a great mathematician, a great astronomer; he was a great exegete, a great grammarian; he wrote Hebrew as beautiful and as perfectly as he wrote Arabic; he was as well versed in the philosophy of the Greeks as he was of the Arabs; his mind was encyclopedic; it was colossal--one of the very few titanic minds of humanity. And withal he was a very humble, a very pious, a very observant, a very patient Jew.

Maimonides was born in Cordova in Spain in 1135. When he was but a lad of 13 or 14 his city, Cordova, was conquered by a Mohammedan dynasty that was very intolerant, and those who were not Mohammedans were given the choice of conversion or exile; and so the family of Maimonides--which, by the way, was a very aristocratic family; the father of Maimonides was a great teacher, himself--a great Rabbi, and very learned, and the family of Maimon had given seven generations of rabbis to the city of Cordova.--the family of Maimonides left Spain and went to Fez in Morocco.

There, too, they were persecuted and fled to Palestine. In Palestine they did not feel at home, and so they left Palestine for Egypt and settled in old Cairo, then known as Fostat. In Cairo Maimonides had a brother by the name of David, who was a dealer in precious stones, and David supported Maimonides in his youth and helped him in his studies. Very soon Maimonides' brother David was lost at sea, and Moses was thrown back upon his own resources,

and he began to study seriously medicine in order to prepare himself for his profession.

Maimonides was a very busy man, as he writes; his work as a physician kept him quite busy. He was also Rabbi for the city of Cairo. Questions came to him from all parts of the world on legal matters and he had to answer them, and in spite of the fact that he was such a very busy man, Maimonides had enough energy, will power, application, to write three works, which became monumental in the literature of our people.

The first of these three works he wrote when he was a boy of 23. He was not a precocious lad, who got stale after a certain number of years; he was just a genius. His first work was a commentary written in Arabic, and it is well to comment here on the fact that practically all the philosophic works of the Jews during these three or four hundred years that we are discussing were written in Arabic and not in Hebrew.

Maimonides wrote a commentary on the Mishnah. The Mishnah is a compendium, a collection of the law as developed by the Rabbis in the first two centuries of the common era. The Mishnah is a development of the laws of the Bible by the Rabbis, who were known as the Tanaim--the early Rabbis, the teachers. The Mishnah was compiled about the year 200 A. D. by Jehuda ha-Nasi--Jehuda, the Priest--and this code of laws, or this compendium of rabbinic law became authoritative for the religious life

of the Jew, and was held sacred in a place next to the Bible.

In Maimonides' day--and Maimonides lived some thousand years after the compilation of the Mishnah--the Mishnah was rather difficult to read. People had more or less forgotten it and Maimonides was anxious to elucidate the text so that the people would be able intelligently to read it, and he wrote a most magnificent commentary on it, in which he not only elucidates the text and gives the legal decision where there seems to be a conflict of opinion, but he also wrote a splendid introduction to every section, and a large introduction to the whole of the Mishnah, in which he traces the chain of tradition of the whole system of oral law as distinguished from the written law--the law of the Bible.

When Maimonides finished this great work he set out on his second task. From the time this Mishnah, of which I speak, was compiled, until the time of Maimonides, a period of about a thousand years elapsed; during that thousand years the development of law in Israel did not cease. There were rabbis after the Kairuan; there were schools that discussed the laws of the Mishnah and the laws of the Bible; there were teachers who added a great number of new laws to meet the new requirements of the day--the new conditions of life.

Between the time the Mishnah was codified and the time of Maimonides, the Babylonian Talmud and the

Palestinian Talmud were compiled, containing a vast amount of legal erudition and decision which the people needed for their religious life. But this vast material was unorganized, unsystematized; it was covered over with a great deal of discussions in the school which only a scholar could understand, and the average layman was lost in this vast literature.

And so Maimonides determined upon a very bold plan: he was going to sift and classify and systematize this vast accumulation of Jewish law and lore of a thousand years in such a manner that the average intelligent man could go and find out just what the law is in a certain particular case. So Maimonides wrote that vast code known as the Mishneh-Torah--the second Torah. Concerning this book he said that all that a pious Jew needs is the Bible and the Mishneh-Torah and he will know all that there is to know about Jewish law.

The book is written in magnificent Hebrew. Maimonides is perhaps one of the very few in Medieval days who could write a clear, simple, straightforward, effective Hebrew. Most of the Hebrew of those days is involved, fancy, fantastic, full of quotations, and of course the Hebrew of the Talmud is partly Hebrew and partly Aramaic. The Hebrew of Maimonides is almost perfect, and how he perfected his style is a thing beyond the grasp of literary critics, because he had no models to go by.

When Maimonides had finished with this second

great work--the Mishneh-Torah--he launched upon the third, the greatest of his works, the work which ranks among the great philosophers of the world. I refer to the Moreh Nebukim--"The Guide to the Perplexed." The Moreh Nebukim is in the form of letters written to his pupil, Joseph ibn Aknin. The purpose of the book is not like the purpose of the two preceding works of Maimonides, which were intended for the masses, for every Jew, so as to know how to guide his religious life and familiarize himself with the discipline of Jewish religious life. The Moreh Nebukim was not written for the masses; it was written for the few. He, himself, says, "I am writing this book for the few."

He warns his pupil not to lend his manuscript to anybody unless he is absolutely convinced that that man is ready and qualified intellectually to understand him. He was afraid that the average man, delving into this vast philosophic book, unable to understand it completely, would suffer in his religious observances and in his piety and in his faith. In that he was in keeping with the saying of the Rabbis that one should not teach philosophy to a large group but only to two or three. And one should not teach Maase Merkabah, which Maimonides interprets as metaphysics or mysticism, even to one.

In order to keep away the average man who is not intellectually prepared to read his book, he deliberately makes many of the passages obscure and difficult, full of

hints and allusions that only a scholar, a man acquainted with philosophic thought and philosophic method could understand. He wrote the book, in other words, for the men who, first of all, knew philosophy, and, in the second place, who were religious Jews, and in the third place, who knew the science of the day, and in the fourth place the men who were perplexed because they could not harmonize the philosophy of the Greeks, the wisdom of Aristotle, with the teachings of Judaism; and the main object of the book was to harmonize philosophy and religion.

The real motive of the Moreh Nebukim was to show that the doctrines of Judaism may be established upon pure, rational grounds. Maimonides set out to do this colossal and almost impossible task, to show that Judaism as it was traditionally understood in his day was absolutely true, even when gauged by the syllogisms of Greek philosophy.

Maimonides was the supreme intellectualist of his day. I do not know that in this day any man, any thinker, would dare to lay so much emphasis on the mind of man, on reason, as did Maimonides. Maimonides was the disciple of Aristotle, and I want to say that Aristotle was not only the master but the tyro of Medieval thought. Maimonides says Aristotle was the highest intelligence that the mind of man will ever attain. Aristotle was worshiped not only by Jews but by Christians and Mohammedans as the ultimate perfection of human intelligence.

And so Maimonides, being under the complete sway

and domination of Aristotle, placed mind and thought in the highest place in human life. The ultimate goal of life, says Maimonides in his *Moreh Nebukim*, is philosophic speculation; everything else is only the means toward this end; the highest good is to be able to devote oneself to abstract thinking. No one can know God thoroughly, says Maimonides, unless one is intimately acquainted with physics and logic and metaphysics and astronomy and all the sciences of his day, because only by the knowledge of these things can one preserve the absolute spirituality of God, can one remove from God all the corporeal, the material, the physical ideas that people have of Him.

Maimonides takes a phrase of the Bible from Exodus, chapter 33, and by a very deft twist brings out his idea very clearly, when Moses asks of God to show him His glory; he wants to see God. Moses says, "that I may know Thee; that I have found grace in Thine eyes." And Maimonides makes the sentence to read: "That I may know Thee in order that I may find grace in Thine eyes." In order that one may find favor with God one must know God; and by knowledge he meant philosophic knowledge--speculation.

And so Maimonides, in a word, set out deliberately to use the mind of man, as expressed in the philosophy of Aristotle, to prove not only religion--the fundamental ideas of religion, the existence of God, the unity of God, the incorporeality of God, but to prove religion as found in Judaism and in traditional Judaism.

Now that is a mighty task and a difficult task, and if Maimonides failed in it it was because the task was impossible from the very start. What makes the task difficult? Why, simply this: it is well for Maimonides to speak about pure reason as the guide in human life, but along with pure reason there was another source of authority in human life that Maimonides had to reckon with, and that was the Bible. The Bible was the source of authority in Jewish life; that was revealed truth. The Bible was the Word of God--absolutely binding. Now if the Bible is absolute truth then there appears most glaring discrepancies between the truth as found in the Bible and the truth as found in the speculations of Aristotle.

For example, Aristotle believed that the world was eternal, where the Bible says that God created the world. Aristotle thought of God as the First Cause--the first Unmoved Mover, known throughout the scholastic philosophy of the Middle Ages as the *Primum Movens Immobile*--the First Unmoved Mover. God, according to Aristotle, is just perfect mind, thinking itself all the time, removed from the world, removed from the accidents of the world, unchanged, all-enduring--the same forever.

But the Bible speaks of God walking and sitting; the Bible speaks of God as becoming angry, as becoming appeased, as interfering in the affairs of men; the Bible speaks of God as speaking to men. And so there are hundreds and hundreds of instances where the Bible is in

apparent contradiction, in radical contradiction, to the philosophy of the Greeks.

Maimonides never for a moment doubted the truth of the Bible. The Eight Articles of the Thirteen Articles of Faith which Maimonides lays down as fundamental to Jewish life reads: "I believe in perfect faith"; that the Bible which is now found in our hands was the very thing that was given by God to Moses; that it is the absolute truth; that it cannot be changed; that nothing can be added to or subtracted from it; and, furthermore, that everything in the Bible is of equal value. And so he makes this startling statement: that the sentence in the Bible, "and the sons of Ham are Cush and Mizraim and Phut and Canaan" is of the same import as the sentence, "Hear, oh Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."

Now, a man who believed in the infallibility, in the divinity of the Bible, and at the same time ignored the absolute truth of philosophy had a very difficult task to coordinate, to harmonize the two. But Maimonides sets boldly out to do this almost impossible task. Of course he did not succeed. But we are interested in the man not so much in the things that he achieved as in the superb method and the vast erudition and the brilliancy of mind which he utilizes in trying to make science and religion--philosophy and Judaism--harmonize.

How does he do it? One avenue of approach is this: The Bible is the Word of God--absolute truth.

Philosophy is absolute truth. Therefore the Bible must be philosophic through and through. The fact that the Bible is not written in philosophic terminology, in philosophic form, does not matter; it was done so on purpose, because the Bible was intended for men, women and children, who are ready, all of them, to understand the philosophic meaning of things; and so the Bible has a surface meaning for everyone who reads it, and has an inner, esoteric, hidden meaning which only the philosopher and the thinker may find.

And so Maimonides deliberately takes every word in the Bible which speaks of God's anger, of God's wrath, of God's kindness, of God's wisdom, and applies a certain material concept of God, as when he takes such phrases as "Moses saw God sitting upon a throne," which is a frightfully anthropomorphic, material conception of God. He takes each word and shows each word has one simple meaning for the average man, for the surface mind, but that it also has a deeper spiritual meaning, an allegorical meaning. In other words, every word in the Bible, to Maimonides, is a metaphor, a simile, which has in it a deep spiritual significance.

He, too, finds a key to the Bible. For example, in this very thing I quoted before, God says to Moses, "I will put thee in the cleft of the rock, and I will pass by so thou wilt see my back, but my face thou wilt not see." How can one speak about the back of

God? Maimonides says these words are homonyms; they have two meanings. "Panim" means face, but it also means a living presence; "Akos" means back, but it also means traces, the activities, the evidences of one having been somewhere. And so God says to Moses, "Thou canst only see the traces of my existence, of my activities in the world, but my real presence thou canst not grasp, for no man canst understand the real presence of God and remain a human being and live."

Now that is an ingenious idea. It is thoroughly sincere, however, because you must remember that in those days, seven hundred years ago, the historical knowledge of the Bible was unknown. That is a product of only recent days--of the Nineteenth Century. In those days the theory of evolution was unknown; in those days everybody accepted the word of the Bible axiomatically as truth and did not question it. All they could do was to try to delve into and beneath the surface and find the real meaning of it.

Every problem of philosophy is treated in the Moreh Nebukim. Maimonides was not satisfied with wrestling with one problem; his mind included the whole realm of human thought. The three principal ideas discussed in the book are, of course, God, the unity of God, the incorporeality of God. Maimonides sets out to prove in four ways the existence of God, the unity of God, the fact that God is immaterial; but he also discusses free will, providence, retribution, evil,--why there is evil in the world; the

purpose of evil. And he also sets out to give a rational explanation of every law and commandment found in the Bible; the reason why the 613 commandments were given unto the children of Israel. I have not the time to speak of all these things; each one is a subject for lectures. I want to give you in a few sentences, however, what Maimonides' conception of God was, and I shall be through.

I said that Maimonides was the supreme intellectualist of the Jew. Maimonides conceives of God as of a simple substance, immaterial, composed of no elements, and of pure mind. Maimonides insists throughout his Moreh Nebukim that one must remove from God every attribute; one must remove from God, first of all, material notions that God is a body; that God occupies space; that God is material substance.

In the second place, says Maimonides, one must remove from God the idea of affection--that God can be changed, that God can be angered or appeased, because if you change God it implies someone to change a cause anterior to God, and God is the first cause. Maimonides insists that we must never think of God as potential. God is always active; for a thing to be potential means that it wants something to be actual, and God is always actual; God is always life, always active; he is.

One must remove from the idea of God any resemblance to human life, because for things to resemble one another they must belong to the same species, and God

does not belong in the same species with man. In fact, says Maimonides, you cannot define God. To define a thing you must classify it, and God cannot be classified. You cannot even say that God is one, or wise, or powerful, because these are human concepts based upon human experience. All that you can say of God is that he exists, but even God's existence is different from our idea of existence, because we cannot conceive of existence except as it is caused by something else, and God is not caused by anything else.

All that you can say of God, then, according to Maimonides, is that he exists, and you may describe him negatively; you may say what he is not. He is not many; he is not ignorant of anything; he is not unpowerful. When you say God is one, you mean that he is not many; when you say God is wise, you mean he is not ignorant of anything; when you say God is eternal, you mean he was never created or caused, that he is the first cause.

In other words, Maimonides removes God practically from the realm of human life; God becomes fearfully transcendent; it almost approaches the concept of the agnostic, or the deist, to be more moderate. It is not the Jewish conception of God at its best; it is not the God of whom one can say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." It is not the God of the Psalmist; it is the God of Aristotle, but not of the Jew. The God of the Jew is the near God, the everpresent God, the friend, the kinsman, who

is concerned with the lives and the destinies of his children. He is the God of prayer; and Maimonides had great difficulty in reconciling this metaphysical abstraction which he called God with the Jewish idea of prayer, reward and punishment, and retribution.

Maimonides influenced not only Jewish life but Christian life and Christian thought. The problem which Maimonides faced as a Jew was also faced by Christian philosophers as Christians; they, too, had the task of reconciling philosophy with religion. The greatest thinker among them, Thomas Aquinas, was a mind almost as powerful and vast as that of Maimonides; and Thomas Aquinas had the advantage that Maimonides did not before him, and he was able to use the works of Maimonides and modeled his writings on that of Maimonides. Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus and the whole list of great thinkers of the Middle Ages, almost up to our own day, read and saturated themselves with the reasoning and the thinking of Maimonides.

Maimonides did not go unchallenged. Instinctively, the orthodox Jew, the traditional Jew, saw in the philosophy of Maimonides a destructive influence, and for two generations after the death of Maimonides--and for that matter during his own lifetime--there arose a frightful controversy, first, on the part of those who actually saw that Maimonides had failed to harmonize Greek philosophy with Jewish theology, and that he made Jewish theology suffer in this attempt at harmonization; secondly, by the

fanatic, by the obscurantist, by the narrow legalist, by the men who hated all thinking and all philosophy.

Maimonides' most vicious and determined enemy was Rabbi Solomon Montpelier, known in Hebrew as Shelome min he-hos. Solomon Montpelier was a bigot of the worst sort--the sort of a man who believes superstition is what the other fellow believes in--anything that differs from your own is a menace.

Soloman believed in every orthodox idea--Heaven and hell, and even in the corporeality of God; he believed in spirits, in demons, as fundamental doctrines of Jewish life, and when Maimonides denied their existence he was a heretic. Soloman attempts with every device and means to ex-communicate, to anathematize not only Maimonides and his books, but everybody who read Maimonides; and there ensued a controversy which threatened to split the camp of Israel in the Thirteenth Century. Maimonides had his great champions, and in fact, he, himself, tried to harmonize and make peace between the two conflicting factions, but he failed; and finally this Soloman Montpelier did a most dastardly thing--he invoked the arm of the Inquisition to burn the books of Maimonides.

Gregory IX at that time was stamping down heretics; he had his own troubles. And so Montpelier said, "If you stamp out heretics among your people, why don't you stamp out heretics among our people? There is Maimonides and his books preaching heresy." The Franciscans and all

the other monks were anxious to do that sort of thing, and so in 1213 the books of Maimonides were collected and burned in the public square. Night after night in the city of Paris all his books were collected and made into a bonfire.

From that day on the controversy abated in vigor. Maimonides creates a place, I need not say, of first importance in Jewish life. His contribution to Jewish thought is to be found not so much in what he actually achieved, but the problems he ^{tried to} solve. These problems will never be solved; they are forever the mysteries that the mind of man wrestles with. God--his relation to the world, free will, reward and punishment, evil,--these are the problems with which we are confronted today even as this great mind was seven hundred years ago. No philosophy has given us anything new--any new revelations. Philosophy is only a way of approach, and the method introduced by Maimonides in Jewish life--or if he did not introduce it, perfected it--is one which may be prized to this day.

Maimonides enthroned reason, and Maimonides taught people to use their minds; Maimonides tried to make people see that there is no fundamental gap or chasm between one's faith and God, and one's use of one's intellect. Maimonides tried heroically to harmonize Greek thought and Jewish thought, and while Aristotle today is wrong and his system has been discarded for that of Copernicus and Galileo and the new idea of evolution, the

truth still remains that Maimonides gave unto Jewish life the spirit of research, intellect and investigation, which has helped Jewish life down the ages.

He bequeathed to the Jewish people the legacy of a fine mind and of a fine spirit, wrestling heroically with the problems of Jewish life. And the truth still remains that from Moses ben Amram to Moses, the son of Maimon, there did not arise a man in majesty of soul and greatness of intellect like unto Moses ibn Maimon.

--o--

