

Were Obligatory Beliefs Revealed on Sinai?

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On Shavuot we commemorate the revelation of the Torah which clearly delineates practical obligations; however, neither the Torah nor the Talmud explicitly lists the obligatory beliefs that must be maintained in order to properly worship God.⁵⁵ Even the Ten Commandments, the Torah reading on Shavuot, do not comprehensively articulate the tenets in which a Jew must believe. This caused Jews throughout the ages to question whether one's relationship with God was exclusively emotional and experiential, or intellectual as well.

R. Norman Lamm, in *Faith and Doubt*, explicates a distinction made by Martin Buber⁵⁶ between two types of faith- intellectual and emotional/experiential:

The first, that of acknowledgment, is a cognitive type of faith, in which I intellectually accept certain propositions as true- such as the existence and unity of God- whether or not I can offer convincing logical proof for my conviction. This is a "belief that" type of faith. The second type, that of trust, is not "belief- that", but "belief in." Regardless of the thoughts I entertain about God, regardless of my theology and the dogmas I affirm, I believe in Him: I trust and esteem Him. This is the area not of propositions, but of relationship... Now this second category, that of trust and "belief- in," can be expressed as an emotional investment in another and in action, in the willingness to pursue a certain course of conduct at the behest of the one in whom I have faith-trust.⁵⁷

Since there is no explicit list of dogmas or intellectual beliefs commanded in the Torah, it has been understood that the biblical conception of 'faith' (*emunah*) refers to 'belief in', not to 'belief that'.

⁵⁵ For an extensive discussion on dogma, see M. Kellner, *Dogma in Medieval Jewish Thought*. (NY:Oxford University Press, 1986)

⁵⁶ Buber begins his work by distinguishing between the Old and New Testament:

There are two and, in the end only two, types of faith. To be sure there are many contents of faith, but we only know faith itself in two basic forms. Both can be understood from the simple data of our life: the one from the fact that I trust someone, without being able to offer sufficient reasons for my trust in him; the other from the fact that, likewise without being able to give a sufficient reason, I acknowledge a thing to be true. (M. Buber. Two Types of Faith. Trans. NP Goldhawk (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951) 7.

Buber associates the former with the early period of Judaism and the latter with the early period of Christianity. Seeskin, however, argues that Buber oversimplifies his distinction since there are New Testament references in which faith conveys trust and instances within the Old Testament when faith refers to the acceptance of a proposition. (K. Seeskin, 'Judaism and the Linguistic Interpretation of Jewish Faith,' in N. Samuelson (ed.) *Studies in Jewish Philosophy: Collected Essays of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy 1980-1985* (Md: Univ Press of America, 1987), 215-34.)

⁵⁷ N. Lamm, *Faith and Doubt*. Ktav, 2006.

When used to denote belief in God, the word connotes a confidence and trust in God, a belief in His salvation, or a reliance on His covenant, often expressed by physical obedience of His will.⁵⁸

Even if the Bible can be interpreted as containing implied dogmas, (such as from *Shema* (Dev. 6:4) the existence and unity of God can be derived, and several dogmas can be deduced from the Ten Commandments), the Bible does not convey an exhaustive enumeration of *all* of the fundamental Jewish beliefs. The focus of the Torah is a 'belief in' theology and, therefore, a systematic formulation of its tenets was unnecessary, but rather the acceptance of such intellectual propositions was considered a prerequisite to the obedience of Torah law. Since in Biblical times, the Jew had a steadfast belief that God exists, as He revealed Himself continuously through His miracles, what needed to be conveyed was belief *in* or trust in Him. This attitude influenced post-Biblical Jews in the Rabbinic period as well. Throughout Rabbinic literature, God's presence seems to be so vividly experienced, that the Rabbis of the Talmud had no need to try to prove God's existence, since such beliefs were taken for granted.

If 'belief in' is the focus of Jewish theology, why was there then an effort among medieval Jewish philosophers to delineate a systematic set of dogma? R. Lamm responds to this question:

*The medieval Jewish rationalists were men of profound faith who understood that true faith must mean complete faith, emunah sheleimah, a faith that will grasp and engage man in his totality and not only in selected aspects of his personality and his being. They knew full well that the central core of Jewish emunah is the relation of trust, belief-in. But they realized, probably in response to the new currents of the cultures in which they lived, that with the development of man's rational sophistication, this particular area of human personality had been neglected in Judaism. They therefore saw it as their religious duty to include within the faith-commitment the Jew's philosophical drives and cognitive yearnings as well as his sense of trust and unmediated emotional or affective relation, his belief-that as well as his belief-in... The medieval Jewish philosophers, then undertook to explicate the relational belief-in, in the idiom of propositional belief-that.*⁵⁹

Such medieval philosophers did not merely add this intellectual type of belief, but rather delineated dogma that they felt were implicitly obligatory from Biblical and Rabbinic texts. The Rabbis did consider the rejection of certain theological propositions as precluding an individual from *Olam Habah* and conceived of membership to the Jewish nation as requiring specific articles of faith. Hazal's categorization of *minim*, *mumarim*, *apikorsim*, and other types of heretics demonstrates that there was concern about one's beliefs even in Biblical and Rabbinic times. For instance, the *Mishneh* in *Masechet Sanhedrin* states:

All Jews have a share in the world to come, as it is said, "Your people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land

כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם
הבא שנאמר (ישעיה ס') ועמך
כולם צדיקים לעולם יירשו ארץ

⁵⁸ For instance, Shemot 14:31

וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה, אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם, אֶת-ה'; וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ, בֵּה', וּבְמֹשֶׁה, עַבְדּוֹ.
Belief here (*vayaaminu*) refers to 'belief in', and not 'belief that', since even prior to God's splitting of the sea, Israel did not doubt God's or Moshe's existence, but rather lacked faith in Moshe's leadership and God's salvation. Once Israel witnessed their deliverance and the demise of their pursuing enemies, they believed *in* Moshe and *in* God as their Redeemer.

⁵⁹ Lamm, N., *Faith and Doubt*

forever; the branch of my planting, the work of My hands wherein I glory" (Is. 60:21). But these have no share in the world to come: one who says that the resurrection of the dead is not taught in the Torah; one who says that the Torah is not from heaven; and the atheist. Rabbi Akiva adds: one who reads the apocryphal books or who utters charms over a wound saying, "I will put none of the diseases upon you which I have put upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that heals you" (Ex. 15:26). Abba Saul adds: the one who pronounces the letters of the Tetragrammaton.

Mishna Sanhedrin 10:1

נצר מטעי מעשי ידי להתפאר ואלו שאין להם חלק לעולם הבא האומר אין תחיית המתים מן התורה ואין תורה מן השמים ואפיקורס רבי עקיבא אומר אף הקורא בספרים החיצונים והלווחש על המכה ואומר (שמות ט"ו) כל המחלה אשר שמת במצרים לא אשים עליך כי אני ה' רפאך אבא שאול אומר אף ההוגה את השם באותיותיו:
משנה מסכת סנהדרין יא

It is clear from this *Mishneh*, that there was some focus on obligatory intellectual beliefs in Biblical and Rabbinic times, even if there was no formal list of tenets.

Saadia Gaon (882-942), in *Sefer Emunot v'Deot* [*The Book of Opinions and Beliefs*], an early work of medieval Jewish philosophy, began the medieval shift in focus from a 'belief in' to a 'belief that' theology. He sought to convert the *amanat* of Judaism, those doctrines accepted as an act of religious faith, into *i'tiqadat*, doctrines subject to rational speculation, in order for Jews to base their religious belief on arguments of reason and not solely on religious authority.⁶⁰ Saadia believed it was a religious obligation to provide a rational basis for Torah in order to dispel personal doubts and refute opposing views (which in his day were those of the Muslims and Karaites). Saadia explains this idea in his definition of 'belief':

It behooves us to explain what is meant by i'tiqad (belief). We say that it is a notion that arises in the soul in regard to the actual character of anything that is apprehended. When the cream of investigation emerges [and] is embraced and enfolded by the minds, and through them acquired and digested by the souls, then the person becomes convinced of the truth of the notions he has thus acquired.

Emunot v'Deot, Introduction

אנחנו צריכים לבאר מה היא האמונה? ונאמר כי היא ענין עולה בלב לכל דבר ידוע בתכונה אשר הוא עליה, וכאשר תצא חמאת העיון יקבלנה השכל ויקיפנה ויכניסנה בלבבות ותמזג בהם, ויהיה בהם האדם מאמין בענין אשר הגיע אליו.
אמונות ודעות, הקדמה

Saadia argues that belief starts out as a matter of emotional/experiential 'belief in' due to revelation, *it arises in the soul based on what is apprehended*. Through reason, one then comes to rationally substantiate what was initially apprehended by 'belief in' and, as a result, arrives at a stronger conviction based on the intellectual 'belief that', *When the cream of investigation emerges [and] is embraced and enfolded by the minds... then the person becomes convinced of the truth of the notions he has thus acquired*.

Saadia wanted to impress upon his generation the need for an intellectual understanding of Judaism and respond to critics who claim that rational speculation threatens one's religious

⁶⁰ Saadia's effort reflects the influence of the Mu'tazila, a sect of the Kalam, the Islamic philosophical school of thought which sought to demonstrate that Islam is accessible to rational thought and inquiry.

commitments and leads to heretical views. Saadia argues that the Sages did not prohibit philosophizing about truths of religion altogether, but rather forbade the suspension of religion until one is convinced of its truth based on reason. Saadia articulates the motivations to rationally understand Judaism:

We, the Children of Israel, inquire and speculate in matters of our religion for two reasons: (1) in order that we may find out for ourselves what we know in the way of imparted knowledge from the Prophet of God; (2) in order that we may be able to refute those who attack us on matters connected with our religion.

Emunot v'Deot, Introduction

כי אנהנו חוקרים ומעיינים בעניני תורתנו בשני ענינים. האחד מהם שיתברר אצלנו בפעל מה שידענו מנביאי האלהים במדע, והשני שנשיב על כל מי שטוען עלינו בדבר מדברי תורתנו.
אמונות ודעות, הקדמה

Since he believes that religious truth can be achieved through reason, Saadia goes on to explicate the need for revelation and practical observance based on 'belief in'. He argues that some people may be unable to arrive at religious truth based on their intellect due to their cognitive limitations or lack of patience, and even those who are intellectually inclined will be without religion for some time until they obtain the truth. Thus, God, through revelation, enabled man to experience His Presence and then commanded him to "inquire patiently until the truth of Tradition was brought out by speculation." Saadia explains that one needs to maintain his religious commitment ('belief in' - as a result of revelation) while intellectually pursuing religious truths, which will result in a stronger commitment based on reason. Perhaps this is what was meant by Israel's statement of *naaseh v'nishmah* after receiving the Torah- we will do the physical mitzvot as a result of our experience of Revelation and then we will rationally understand to further strengthen our personal commitment. Saadia illustrates his argument through an analogy:

To make the matter clearer, let us suppose that someone who possesses 1000 dinar distributes 500 of it to various recipients. He wishes to show his friends without delay how much of the money is left in his hands. He, therefore, tells them that the balance left amounts to 500 dinar and proves it by weighing the gold that is left in his hands. After he has weighed it in their presence, and the amount of 500 dinar has been established, his friends are obliged to believe what he told them. They are now at leisure to arrive at the same knowledge by a different method, namely, by working it out arithmetically, each according to his capacity and understanding. (ibid.)

The weighing of the dinar symbolizes 'belief in', counting the money reflects 'belief that', thereby further substantiating, by reason, the 'belief in' that has been experienced.

While Saadia believed that anyone with the capacity must seek to understand God rationally, Bahya Ibn Paquda (11th century) in his work, *Sefer Torat Hovot ha-Levavot* [Duties of the Heart], argues even more emphatically for the obligatory nature of beliefs. Bahya saw that most of the books that were published in his day focused exclusively on the *chovot haevarim* [duties of the limbs], the physical observance of *halakha*, which led him to wonder whether or not *chovot halevavot* [duties of the heart] were obligatory or merely meritorious or supererogatory and therefore, optional. Bahya concludes:

A careful examination, however, by the light of Reason, Scripture and Tradition, of the question whether the Duties of the Heart are obligatory or not, convinced me that they indeed form the foundation of all the Precepts, and that if there is any shortcoming in their observance, no external duties whatever can be properly fulfilled.

Duties of the Heart, Introduction

עד שחפשתי על חובות הלבבות מן השכל ומן הכתוב ומן הקבלה, אם אנהנו חייבים בהם אם לאו, ומצאתים, שהם יסודי כל המצות, ואם יארע בהם שום הפסד, לא תתכן לנו מצוה ממצוות האברים. תורת חובות הלבבות, הקדמה

Bahya felt compelled, due to the paucity of Jewish philosophical literature, to teach his generation that without the proper theological conceptions and intentions- *chovot halevavot* [duties of the heart], one cannot properly observe *halakha*. He went on to write a ten chapter guidebook on how to obtain the proper understanding and love for God. Bahya argues that God created man with both body and soul and therefore, man needs to worship God through both means.⁶¹ Additionally, the Torah commands mitzvot, such as in the *Shema- Vahavta et Hashem Elokecha bchol l'avvcha* (Dev. 6:5)- implying that one must worship God emotionally, spiritually, and perhaps even intellectually, not only physically. Lastly, there are numerous statements by Hazal such as, "Whoever performs a religious duty, but not for the sake of God, receives no reward," which further supports Bahya's claim of the obligatory nature of theological conceptions and intentions.

It was not, however, until the time of Maimonides (1138-1204) that a formal list of Jewish dogma was composed by a philosopher.⁶² Maimonides argues that metaphysical truths about God were originally taught as part of the oral tradition; however, by medieval times, such transmission had been lost and God's presence was no longer as palpable as it had been in the miraculous era of the Bible and Talmud. As a result, Maimonides felt the need to delineate the obligatory dogma that was understood in the earlier ages. From his perspective, he was not innovating anything, but rather compensating for a long period of intellectual decline among Jews. He wanted to ensure that the people of his generation had the appropriate conceptions of God which had been lost through the years. Without the proper conception of God, one could not have the proper belief *in* Him. Maimonides, profoundly influenced by the scientifically established tenets of Aristotelian philosophy, sought to demonstrate a logos of the divine; to articulate the principles necessary to arrive at a metaphysical knowledge of God. Maimonides delineates his Thirteen *Ikkarim* [Principles of Faith]⁶³ in his commentary on the first *Mishneh* of

⁶¹ Bahya's work reflects the influence of Neoplatonists who subscribed to the duality of body and soul and argued that through the practice of moral virtues and philosophical speculation the soul can free itself from the body and rejoin the upper region of its origin.

⁶² Precedent for Maimonides' formulation of Articles of Faith include: Hananel b. Hushi'el's commentary on Exodus 14:31 and Judah Hadassi's Karaite work, *Eshkol haKofer*.

⁶³ Our religion is based on the following thirteen principles: (1) To believe that the Creator exists (2) To believe that God is one (3) To believe that God is incorporeal (4) To believe that God is absolutely eternal; no thing existed before Him (5) To believe that only God is rightfully worshipped (6) To believe that among men are found prophets (7) To believe that Moses was the chief of all other prophets (8) To believe that the Torah came from God (9) To believe that the Torah is authentic (10) To believe that God knows all that men do (11) To believe that God rewards the obedient and punishes sinners (12) To believe that the Messiah will come (13) To believe that the dead will be resurrected

the tenth chapter of Sanhedrin, implying that the *Mishneh* meant to teach these principles and that they are, therefore, included within *Torah She Baal Peh* (the Oral Tradition).⁶⁴

Maimonides concludes his commentary by asserting:

When a man believes in all these fundamental principles, and his faith is thus clarified, he is then part of that "Israel" whom we are to love, pity and treat, as God commanded, with love and fellowship. Even if a Jew should commit every possible sin, out of lust or mastery by his lower nature, he will be punished for his sins but will still have a share in the world to come. He is one of the "sinners in Israel." But if a man gives up any one of these fundamental principles, he has removed himself from the Jewish community. He is an atheist, a heretic, an unbeliever who "cuts among the plantings." We are commanded to hate him and to destroy him. Of him it is said: "Shall I not hate those who hate You, O Lord?" (Ps. 139:21)

Maimonides, Commentary on the Mishneh, Sanhedrin 10:1

וכאשר יהיו קיימים לאדם כל היסודות הללו ואמונתו בהם אמתית, הרי הוא נכנס בכלל ישראל, וחובה לאהבו ולהמול עליו וכל מה שצוה ה' אותנו זה על זה מן האהבה והאחווה, ואפילו עשה מה שיכול להיות מן העבירות מחמת תאוותו והתגברות יצרו הרע, הרי הוא נענש לפי גודל מריו ויש לו חלק, והוא מפושעי ישראל. וכאשר יפקפק אדם ביסוד מאלו היסודות הרי זה יצא מן הכלל וכפר בעיקר ונקרא מין ואפיקורוס וקוצץ בנטיעות, וחובה לשנותו ולהשמידו ועליו הוא אומר הלא משנאיך ה' אשנא וכו'.
רמב"ם, פיה"מ לסנהדרין י:א

Thus, Maimonides conceives of a Jew as an individual who believes specific dogma. For Maimonides, human perfection is reached when one knows as much as is humanly comprehensible about God.⁶⁵ His Thirteen Principles are not an exhaustive, but rather a necessary list from which other beliefs could be derived, that lead the individual to human perfection and immortality in the spiritual/intellectual realm of *Olam Habah*.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ For an explanation of how Maimonides derived his Thirteen Principles from the structure of the *Mishneh*, see: A. Hyman, 'Maimonides' Thirteen Principles' in A. Altman, ed. *Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Cambridge: Harvard Univ Press, 1967, p119-144.

⁶⁵ In the final chapter of the *Guide* (III:54), Maimonides describes the ultimate form of human perfection as intellectual. "The fourth species is the true human perfection; it consists of the acquisition of the rational virtues- I refer to the conception of intelligibles, which teach true opinions concerning the divine things... and it gives him permanent perdurance; through it man is man."

⁶⁶ Accordingly, Maimonides concludes that even if one mistakenly comes to a wrong belief (such as belief in a corporeal God based on a literal reading of Torah), he does not have the intellectual perfection necessary for the afterlife (because even if well-intended, believing in a physical God constitutes idolatry in Maimonides' eyes and would preclude one from *Olam Habah*). This was not a harsh punishment in Maimonides' mind, but rather a matter of cause and effect since he believed that one cannot enter the intellectual and spiritual realm of *Olam Habah* without having the prerequisite intellectual preparation of knowing the dogmas of Judaism which inform a proper conception of the divine. While Maimonides' focus on dogma had, and continues to have, a great influence on Jewish theology, it was not without some controversy, especially with regard to his views on accidental heretics. RABaD [Abraham b. David of Posquieres], one of Maimonides' most well-known critics argued that a person who mistakenly believed in the corporeality of God should not be considered a heretic. In his Commentary on Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, RABaD argues that "many people greater and superior to Maimonides" adhere to a belief in the corporeality of God based on a literal reading of Scripture and *aggadot*. Others, however, agreed with Maimonides' position. Abraham Bibago, in his work, *Derekh Emunah*, criticizes RABaD's statement since he argues that, according to RABaD's logic, all unintentional deniers would be excused, including Christians. Furthermore,

Maimonides illustrates the integral nature of theological beliefs in Judaism in the *Moreh Nevukhim* [*The Guide of the Perplexed*]. He composes a metaphor of a royal palace with numerous groups of people at different distances from the king. Maimonides interprets that the king represents God, while the people at varying distances reflect those of different beliefs and practices. Only individuals who have appropriate actions, as well as proper philosophical beliefs about God, are able to come close to the King. Maimonides differentiates between these various types of people:

As for someone who thinks and frequently mentions God, without knowledge, following a mere imagining or following a belief adopted because of his reliance on the authority of someone else, he is to my mind outside the habitation and far away from it and does not in true reality mention or think about God. If, however, you have apprehended God and His acts in accordance with what is required by the intellect, you should afterwards engage in totally devoting yourself to Him, endeavor to come closer to Him- that is, the intellect. In my opinion it consists of setting thought to work on the first intelligible and in devoting oneself exclusively to this as far as this is within one's capacity.

Guide of the Perplexed III:51

אבל מי שיחשוב בה' וירבה לזכרו מבלי חכמה, אבל הוא נמשך אחר קצת דמיון לבד, או נמשך אחר אמונה שמסרה לו זולתו, הוא אצלי עם היותו חוץ לבית ורחוק ממנו, בלתי זוכר השם באמת ולא חושב בו, כי הדבר ההוא אשר בדמיונו ואשר יזכר בפיו, אינו נאווה לנמצא כלל, אבל הוא דבר בדוי שבדהו דמיונו כמו שבארנו בדברנו על התארים, ואמנם ראוי להתחיל בזה המין מן העבודה אחר הציור השכלי, והיה כאשר תשיג השם ומעשיו כפי מה שישכלהו השכל.

מורה נבוכים ג:נא

Like Bahya, Maimonides explains that the Torah guides man in two ways: in physical commandments and in intellectual beliefs. Maimonides makes clear, however, that such physical commandments (which are often social and moral in nature) are commanded to stabilize society in order to allow one to focus on achieving proper beliefs, which he considers of primary importance.

The Law as a whole aims at two things: the welfare of the soul and the welfare of the body. As for the welfare of the soul, it consists in the multitude's acquiring correct opinions corresponding to their respective capacity. As for the welfare of the body, it comes about by the

כונת כלל התורה שני דברים, והם תקון הנפש, ותקון הגוף, אמנם תקון הנפש הוא שינתנו להמון דעות אמתיות כפי יכלתם, ומפני זה יהיה קצתם בפירוש וקצתם במשל, שאין בטבע ההמון לסבול השגת

Isaac Abravanel, in *Rosh Amanah*, argues that unintentional erroneous beliefs are as spiritually harmful as deliberate ones. He analogizes that like poison which has destructive effects on the body regardless of whether or not one ingests it knowing of such consequences, heresy too, leads to spiritual corruption even if the individual had no intention to rebel. Some medieval Jewish philosophers, such as Simeon Duran (1361-1444) and Joseph Albo (1380-1444), opposed Maimonides' position on accidental heresy. Duran and Albo, unlike Maimonides, took one's intentions into consideration and ruled that just as in *halakha*, *shegaga* (unintentional sin) is judged more leniently, so too in theology. Duran in *Oheb Mishpat*, and Albo in *Sefer HaIkkarim*, both argue that one who accidentally holds mistaken beliefs is not a heretic since he is well-intended and if made aware of his error, would surely correct it. Furthermore, the authoritative nature of Maimonides' Principles of Faith was subject to debate. See M. Shapiro, *The Limits of Orthodox Theology: Maimonides' Thirteen Principles Reappraised*. (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2004) Some subsequent Jewish philosophers (such as Duran, Hasdai Crescas and Albo) agreed with Maimonides that Judaism did have authoritative dogmas, but disputed their content and number, while others (such as Abravanel) objected to the systematization of dogma altogether, arguing that Judaism is concerned with the commandments of the Torah and one's attitude regarding their observance, not with intellectual propositions.

*improvement of their ways of living one with another.
Know that as between these two aims, one is indubitably
greater in nobility, namely, the welfare of the soul- I mean
the procuring of correct opinions- while the second aim- I
mean the welfare of the body- is prior in nature and time.*

Guide of the Perplexed III:27

הענין ההוא כפי מה שהוא, ואמנם תקון
הגוף יהיה כתקון עניני מחיתם קצתם עם
קצתם ... ודע ששתי הכוונות האלה,
האחת מהן בלא ספק קודמת במעלה והוא
תקון הנפש, ר"ל נתינת הדעות האמתיות,
והשנית קודמת בטבע ובזמן.

מורה נבוכים ג:כז

Maimonides conceives of proper belief in God, not merely as a prelude to Divine worship, but as the goal of the other commandments.

Though there is no formal delineation of obligatory beliefs in Biblical or Rabbinic texts, Jews are obligated not only in their actions, but in their conceptions and attitudes as well. As numerous medieval sources indicate, attention must be paid to developing appropriate beliefs and maintaining proper intentions. Bahya emphatically argues in *Chovot ha-Levavot* that without proper conceptions of God, one cannot appropriately obey His laws. Maimonides goes further to argue that knowledge of God is the ultimate objective of humanity and constitutes the individual's continuity in the World to Come. In modern times,⁶⁷ Shavuot provides us with an opportunity to reflect not only upon the practical obligations revealed at Sinai, but upon the implicit intellectual dogmas as well, which strengthen one's emotional and experiential commitment and contribute to a holistic worship of God.

⁶⁷ Louis Jacobs suggests that in modern times there has been a partial return to the 'belief in' from the Biblical era. "Belief-In and Belief-That are now seen as two sides of the same coin." (L. Jacobs. *Faith*. (NY:Basic Books, 1968), 17.