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THE MEANING OF HOLINESS IN JUDAISM

I.

An ancient text of Jewish mysticism declares that ours is a tri-dimensional world: it is the world of Space, Time, and Spirit.¹ Spirit experiences a world that occupies Space and endures in Time. The world, as the product of the creative will of God, must, in its totality and its parts, reflect the character of its Creator. His loving-kindness fills the earth (Ps. 33:5; 119:64), and His majesty covers the heavens (Habakkuk 3:3). The firmament proclaims His glory and all creation declares His wisdom (Ps. 19:1). But the supreme attribute of God is holiness (Lev. 19:2; *et passim*).² This attribute, like the others, must be mirrored in His handiwork. Our mystics assure us that it is actually the quality of holiness which inheres in all ramifications of existence that, like some cosmic energy, makes possible the emergence and the perseverance of all forms of reality, high and low, noble and base, good and evil. "Sparks of holiness"³ are distributed throughout the vast expanses of creation, both physical and spiritual. Without holiness, nothing could exist.⁴ Nevertheless, the Creator has set apart segments of his tri-dimensional universe as specially and uniquely hallowed. He has established distinct areas of holiness in Space, Time, and Spirit. In the realm of Time, He has sanctified the Sabbath, the Years of Release (*Shemittah* and *Yovel*), and

the Holy Seasons. In Space He has hallowed the Sanctuary and the Holy Land. In the domain of Spirit, He has consecrated Israel, collectively and individually.

Professor Abraham J. Heschel has argued most eloquently that "Judaism is a religion of time aiming at the sanctification of time."⁵ But holiness is no more inherent in time than it is in space. "The quality of holiness," Heschel says, "is not in the grain of matter."⁶ But neither is it in the grain of time. Paul Tillich has stated this truth correctly: "Holiness cannot become actual except through holy 'objects.' But holy objects are not holy in and of themselves. They are holy only by negating themselves in pointing to the divine of which they are the mediums."⁷ It is God Who imparts sanctity to Time as He does to Space and to Spirit. The holy is in none of its aspects an idol. It is not a representation—even if only symbolic—of the divine, but rather of the highest possibilities of the created world.⁸ In this sense holiness may inhere in objects in and of themselves, thus necessitating a revision of Tillich's statement.

It behooves us at this point to examine the meaning of the concept of holiness. From the time of the publication of Rudolph Otto's great work⁹, the holy has been identified with the numinous, the "wholly other," the *mysterium tremendum* in whose presence man stands in a state of trepidation and radical fear, and which alternately causes him to seek its face in fascination and to recoil from it in awe.¹⁰ While this description of holiness may be true for religion in general, it does not do justice to the biblical conception of the holy. As Otto himself points out:

The venerable religion of Moses marks the beginning of a process which from that point onward proceeds with ever increasing momentum, by which the numinous is throughout rationalized and moralized, i.e., charged with ethical import, until it become the 'holy' in the fullest sense of the word. The culmination of the process is found in the Prophets and in the Gospels.¹¹

The numinous character of God's *holiness*, biblically considered, is not the product of His being the "wholly other." The "fearfulness" of God and His "awesomeness" are certainly related to the mysterious and transcendent character of the Infinite and Incom-

prehensible. This category of religious experience is fully recorded in Genesis.¹² Nevertheless, Genesis refers to God's holiness only by implication.¹³ And in this book the very "fear of the Lord" itself is not merely dread in the presence of the numinous. It is directly related to the ethical character of God.¹⁴ Attribution of the "fear of God" to Abraham as evidenced by his readiness to sacrifice his son is no contradiction of the ethical quality of this fear, nor does it imply a "teleological suspension of the ethical."¹⁵ Abraham could accede to the *request* of God¹⁶ not because of a "demonic dread"¹⁷ in the presence of the "wholly other" Who is beyond good and evil, and Who overpowered him by "the 'awefulness' and the 'majesty', the 'mystery' and the 'augustness' of His non-rational divine nature"¹⁸ to which man owes blind submission and unquestioning obedience. Rather his was an awe in the presence of God Who had revealed Himself to him as the Supreme Good Who asks of man only that which is good for him, even though that request may be momentarily incomprehensible.¹⁹

Why holiness is not referred to explicitly in Genesis, except for one passage, is not clear. Perhaps the use of the term was avoided in the lives of the Patriarchs because of the distorted meaning the concept of "holiness" had acquired in pagan antiquity, a meaning hardly consonant with Otto's definition.²⁰ The task of radically transforming the concept of holiness in the light of its original meaning as implied in the primeval Sabbath was entrusted to the people of Israel. Throughout the other books of the Pentateuch the term *holiness* is freely used. Like its counterpart, the Sabbath, it was waiting for its helpmate, Israel,²¹ to give it a new meaning.²²

The application of holiness to the life of man sheds light on its meaning in reference to God. The commandment "Holy shall ye be for holy am I the Lord your God,"²³ can hardly mean that man is exhorted to be "wholly other" like the "Wholly Other" Who dwells in His holy habitation. It contains rather the call to a total withdrawal from everything that is impure, ignoble, and unworthy, and the appeal to strive for the attainment of a likeness to God in terms of whole-hearted dedication to goodness, compassion, love, and purity. God is holy because He possesses in full all the attributes of goodness.²⁴ It is the moral perfection that we associate

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with His name that makes Him awesome and fearful:

But the Lord of hosts is exalted through justice,
And God the Holy One is sanctified through righteousness (Is. 5:16).

When the children of Israel sang at the sea:

Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

the answer was given:

Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand—
The earth swallowed them.
Thou in Thy love hast led the people
That Thou hast redeemed (Ex. 15:11-12).

God is glorious in holiness because He strikes down the oppressors and liberates the enslaved.

Likewise the “holy ones” stand in dread in the presence of God not because of the numinous terror that He strikes in their hearts:

A God dreaded in the great council of the holy ones,
And feared of all of them that are round about Him.
Who is a mighty one, like unto Thee, O Lord?
And Thy faithfulness is round about Thee . . .
Thine is an arm with might;
Strong is Thy hand, and exalted is Thy right hand.
Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Thy throne;
Mercy and truth go before Thee (Ps. 89:8-15).

The dread experienced in the presence of the Holy One is not primarily the awareness of one’s “creatureliness” and insignificance, but of moral unworthiness. The closer one comes to God, the more intense becomes the consciousness of one’s failure to achieve that moral excellence which alone permits a person to approach Him:

For who dare of himself to approach to me? says the Lord (Jer. 30:21).²⁵

Our sages have correctly interpreted the passage in the Psalms that the Lord is “feared of all of them that are round about Him” (89-8) as signifying that God’s measure of justice is more severe with those that are close to Him.²⁶ “Through them that are nigh unto Me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.”²⁷ When the Lord prepares the people for the theophany

on Mount Sinai he warns the people not to come too close. In the face of the commandments that are to be revealed, the unworthiness of the people becomes only too glaring. Moses and Aaron alone are considered worthy of ascending the mountain (Ex. 19:11, 21-22, 24). The approach to the Tabernacle is hazardous when undertaken by a person not duly qualified or without the proper precautions (Ex. 28:35, 43; 39:21; Lev. 10:1-3, 9; 16:1; 22:9; Nu. 4:18-20; 17:5).²⁸ "For the Lord thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God" (Deut. 4:24). The jealousy of God is, of course, a moral quality, His intolerance of falsehood and evil.²⁹ Of the individual striving to live in the presence of the righteous God the utmost is demanded:

Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?
Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?³⁰
He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly;
He that despiseth the gain of oppressions,
That shaketh his hands from holding of bribes,
That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood,
And shutteth his eyes from looking upon evil (Is. 33:14-15).

Similarly the Psalmist asks:

Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell upon Thy *holy* mountain?
He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness,
And speaketh truth in his heart;
That hath no slander upon his tongue,
Nor doeth evil to his fellow,
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor;
In whose eyes a vile person is despised,
But he honoureth them that fear the Lord;
He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not;
He that putteth not out his money on interest,
Nor taketh a bribe against the innocent (15:1-5).

and again:

Who shall ascend unto the mountain of the Lord?
And who shall stand in His *holy* place?
He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
Who hath not taken My name in vain,
And hath not sworn deceitfully (Ps. 24:3-4).

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That holiness is the supreme attribute of God we affirm thrice daily in our prayers (and four times on the New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the Festivals, and five times on the Day of Atonement). In the *Amidah* when we proclaim the praises of the Almighty, we open up with the triad of greatness, might, and awesomeness. We invoke His protective grace, His redemptive love, and the compassion wherewith He resurrects the dead. We conclude the section of *praise*³¹ with a declaration of the holiness of God, which is the summation of all His goodness, graciousness, and beneficence. Only at this juncture can we proceed to intercede in behalf of ourselves and make petition for our needs.³²

II.

God who has created the world has bestowed upon it the potentiality of God-likeness. *The attainment by reality in all its phases of the highest reaches of its moral faculties constitutes holiness.* In this sense Space, Time, and Personality can be sanctified. God's holiness has thus extended itself into the created world of Space, Time, and Spirit.

The Sabbath was the first realm in the created world to be sanctified. "And God blessed the Sabbath day and He hallowed it" (Gen. 2:3). God saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good (*ibid.* 1:31). He also blessed the creatures that He had fashioned, the fishes, the birds, and human beings, but nothing created was specifically endowed with holiness till the Sabbath arrived. He then hallowed it just as he tendered His blessing to it. From this primordially sanctified segment of time derive all other phases of sanctified time, such as the New Moons, the Festivals, the Day of Atonement, the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee. All other forms of holiness in the universe are likewise grounded in this original sanctity.³³ On the Sabbath the Space of the universe is sanctified—thus establishing sanctity in Space. The Spirit of man who had been created on the sixth day was likewise sanctified on the Sabbath—thus making possible the sanctity in Spirit.

Holiness, as a special attribute of created things, makes its entrance into the world through the Sabbath. In the course of time,

holiness becomes associated with certain sites. In the book of Exodus the term *holiness* appears for the first time in reference to space. Moses was told that he was standing on "holy ground."³⁴ There is a sacred habitation,³⁵ a sanctuary (Ex. 15:18; 25:8), a holy mountain (Is. 11:9), holy cities (Is. 64:9), and a holy land (Zech. 2:16). Holiness is then extended to a people. Israel is to be a holy people.³⁶ The children of Israel are commanded to be holy men (Ex. 22:30; Lev. 19:2). Priests and Nazirites are endowed with a special sanctity.³⁷ Man is also empowered to bestow upon animals and inanimate objects various degrees of holiness (Ex. 13:1; 28:2; 30:25; Lev. 22:3; 27:9, 16; *et passim*).

A.

The meaning of holiness as it applies to Space, Time, and Spirit can be clarified primarily by its exemplification in the Sabbath, and secondarily in the other phases of reality.

Holiness is the supreme attribute of God revealed to man. Holy in the created world is not what represents God or symbolizes Him. God cannot be represented or symbolized.³⁸ Holy is that which reaches out towards God, and which enables us to know Him as all-encompassing, all-comprehending. Any image represents God under a finite aspect. The holy which indicates the absolute perfection of God, His unlimited sovereignty, His boundless goodness and wisdom, lifts us above our limited conceptions so that we can comprehend the Lord of the universe, insofar as it is humanly possible, in His infinite glory.

The holy which proclaims the infinity of the Lord is spoken of as His own possession. In sanctifying the Sabbath, God has made it His own possession in time, announcing His presence, His sovereignty, and His holiness. This day is a *Sabbath unto the Lord* (Ex. 20:10). On the Sabbath God becomes solely "the possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:19, 22).³⁹

Only on the first day of creation was God originally "the possessor of heaven and earth," because there were no other intelligent beings in the universe with whom He shared His authority and power. It was possession, however, the purpose of which was the transmission of ownership to man⁴⁰ until the Sabbath when

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all of creation is restored to Him.

No plastic image can represent God, because He is inexpressible. But how God acts in nature and history can be dramatized by our deeds.⁴¹ By means of the commandments of the Torah we imitate the ways of God⁴² and also exemplify the relationship of God to the world and man. All creative activities which constitute man's duty during the workday week as an associate in God's continued work of creation must be suspended on the Sabbath. We thereby demonstrate that the Lord is "the possessor of heaven and earth." That "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Ps. 24:1) is true at all times. On the Sabbath it becomes a palpable reality for us, as God alone rules the universe on this day.

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch has interpreted the prohibition of labor on the Sabbath as expressing in a concrete way the restoration of the world to the unlimited sovereignty of God. Hence, the basic categories of labor that are prohibited on the Sabbath are those of a creative and constructive nature.⁴³ "The Torah has prohibited purposeful activity."⁴⁴ This conception of the Sabbath is undoubtedly correct.

Our sages have identified the prohibited types of activity with those employed for the construction of the Tabernacle, the area in space consecrated by the Creator.⁴⁵ The proper activity of man in this world is the establishment of a sanctuary for God, a sanctified world.⁴⁶ On the Sabbath we relinquish our role and return the world to Him Who sanctifies it by His immediate and active presence. Consequently, on this day activities normally directed towards the goal of sanctification of the world by human labor are prohibited. We refrain from work not only because the manifestation of the universal Sovereign is in itself the occasion for celebration. Any exercise of man's normal prerogatives on the Sabbath is regarded as a usurpation of the authority of God Who alone is supreme on the Sabbath. Activities that are expressive of man's independence and power are therefore proscribed, whereas those that are of a disruptive and destructive character, those that exhibit man's powerlessness and dependence, or those not performed in a normal manner are not included in the scope of the culpable labors. Forbidden is that which constitutes an encroachment upon the realm of divine activity—the normal, the con-

structive, the creative work of man;⁴⁷ these most patently are patterned after divine activity, for God never acts out of weakness, nor does He destroy (Ps. 78:38). All other types of work prohibited on the Sabbath, whether biblically or rabbinically, are of a derivative and precautionary character whose purpose is to safeguard the sanctity of the day, as well as to enable the observers of the day to achieve rest and tranquility.⁴⁸

In addition to constructive activities, the transfer of objects from public to private domains, and vice-versa, as well as transfer within the public domain, is prohibited. Man engages in two types of activity in the sphere of labor, the constructive and the locomotive. Man alters objects. He also moves them. On the Sabbath, when the world is restored to God, both types of activity are suspended.

The natural order is not put in abeyance on the Sabbath, although it is God alone Who, on this day, maintains His entire creation by His immediate presence. Consequently, man is not commanded to abstain from food or drink or conjugal relations. The recognition of the sanctity of time depends on human beings who exist in time. Any kind of normal behavior that enhances man's joy in the sovereignty of God is encouraged. God's kingdom is a domain of light, joy, and delight. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad."⁴⁹ Man's life is not a contradiction to God's sovereignty, but the testimony to it.⁵⁰ Therefore, the normal handling of articles within a private domain is not forbidden on the Sabbath, except to the extent that such handling might violate the spirit of the day.⁵¹ Man's right to exist in the world over which God is sole sovereign is affirmed by the retention of the prerogative to employ objects, both natural and fabricated, for need and enjoyment. However, those activities that reflect man's dynamic capacities as a creator of civilization, and as God's viceroy upon the earth, must be brought to a standstill. The establishment of premises, such as private and public domains, is the product of man's creative ingenuity. The transfer of an article from the private and protected domain (*Reshut Ha-Yachid*) to the public and unprotected domain (*Reshut Ha-Rabbim*), or vice-versa, bespeaks man's control over space; God's sovereignty on the Sab-

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bath abrogates this control. The transfer of objects outside of one's four walls within the public domain reflects man's attempt to capture new areas for his operation; man dominates the four walls within his reach.⁵²

On the Sabbath God is sovereign. But, as already stated, He does not call nature to a standstill. All processes of nature continue on this day. Only for the children of Israel has the Sabbath been established as an everlasting covenant (Ex. 31:17). On this day Israel testifies to the real, immediate presence of Almighty God. One who is not a member of the people of the covenant is not obligated to observe the Sabbath. He is, moreover, prohibited to observe it.⁵³ Is the Gentile not infringing on the divine sovereignty by performing labor on this day? Are we to conclude that the sanctity of the day is of a purely subjective character, that God rules over the universe in a time that is experienced by the household of Israel, but to which no objective metaphysical validity attaches? Perhaps it is so. But there is much in the sources, particularly those of a mystical character, to indicate that the Sabbath is endowed with an objective holiness, i.e., on this day the universe achieves a closer relationship with God than during the workaday week, and reaches greater heights. Otherwise, why the selection of this day to the exclusion of any other day? Why the severe sanctions attendant upon the infraction of its holiness? On the Sabbath the world is elevated into a sanctuary for God, but even here nature is still in operation. The people of Israel is engaged in the building of the Kingdom of Heaven, where God will no longer be inferred but experienced, and His glory will be seen by all flesh. Other nations are part of the natural order which it is their task to maintain.⁵⁴ Gentiles may, therefore, perform work for themselves on the Sabbath. The biblical source, cited by the Talmud⁵⁵ as prohibiting the Gentile from participating in the Sabbath is thus clarified: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."⁵⁶ Just as the processes of nature do not come to a halt on the Sabbath, so the labors of the non-Jewish world are not to be interrupted on this day. The people of Israel, the "holy people" (Ex. 19:6; Deut. 14:2), are the genuine mates of the Sabbath.⁵⁷ The goal of creation, the establishment of the Kingdom of God

which the children of Israel testify to His sovereignty and rejoice therein.⁵⁸ The goal of creation is thus achieved by the joint efforts of God and Israel, God on the Sabbath, Israel on the weekdays. Both together complete heaven and earth and all their hosts.⁵⁹

However, the world outside of Israel is not altogether excluded from the holiness of the Sabbath. The "stranger who dwells" in Israel (*Ger-Toschav*) as well as the "slave who dwells" (*Ebed Toschab*), although not full-fledged Israelites, participate in the holiness of the day.⁶⁰ This is also true of the idolater who may not work for us on the Sabbath, and is thus drawn into the circle of holiness, even if by indirection, no less than the lower creatures.⁶¹ It is also noteworthy that, according to one of the greatest authorities, the "stranger who dwells" in our midst is also enjoined to observe the Sabbath.⁶² It is thus evident that the scope of the Sabbatical holiness is broadened to include all residents in the land of Israel and all who associate themselves with the holy people; their actions thereby partake of the sacred character of the labors of the people of God.

The Festivals (*Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot, Rosh Ha-Shanah*), like the Sabbath, are days which are God's special possession in time. They are "festivals of the Lord" (Lev. 23:4). They are observed by refraining from "servile labor."⁶³ Israel commemorates historical events in which the presence of God was manifested before the eyes of men,⁶⁴ when man encountered the Redeemer, the Lawgiver, and the Provider as the Infinite (*Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot*). On Rosh Ha-Shanah the Infinite God is declared to be the Judge of the entire earth. Just as on the Sabbath when the Creator of the world is affirmed as the Absolute and Unlimited, so on the Festivals Israel reaffirms the unlimited and all-comprehensive character of God Who transcends any and all of the attributes celebrated in the Festivals.

While the processes of history stand still for Israel on the Sabbath which commemorates the creation of the world, on the Festivals the obligations of man towards history are reaffirmed, as is the assurance of the triumph of the divine will in history which will come about through man's cooperation. For this reason the very determination of the day of the Festival is contingent upon the calculations and certification of human authorities whose

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privilege it is to proclaim the New Moon.⁶⁵ The Festivals represent the interaction of the human and divine in history.

The date of the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*) is also dependent on the court's determination of the New Moon of Tishri. The purification of man from sin can come about only as the result of man's decision. On *Rosh Ha-Shanah* Israel declares that the Infinite God is the righteous Judge. On *Yom Kippur* Israel voluntarily surrenders all human authority over the world to the Supreme King of Kings. He abstains from food and drink, and the use of water or ointment or leather shoes. He stays away from his conjugal bed; he may not use another person for his enjoyment. *Yom Kippur* is the culmination of the idea of the Sabbath. On this day man abdicates his role as sovereign ruler of his world, and by restoring the world wholly and completely to its true sovereign he achieves forgiveness and atonement.⁶⁶

The Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee are likewise "Sabbaths of the Lord" (Lev. 25:2, 4) and years of holiness (*ibid.* 25:12). Not merely days but years are raised to their highest possible level by testifying that the land is the Lord's and that men are strangers and settlers with Him (*ibid.* 25:23). They confirm that the Lord of the land is the Infinite God Whose years have no end. In the Sabbatical years God's sovereignty over the land is made manifest, so that man must refrain from exercising his authority over it during this time (*ibid.* 25:4, 11). In the Year of Jubilee man's domination over his fellow-man and his fellow-man's property must come to an end (*ibid.* 25:10)⁶⁷ and liberty is proclaimed for *all* men on the Day of Atonement of that year.

The space of the world is sanctified during hallowed time. But there are spaces which are hallowed at all times. The Land of Israel is called, as a sanctified area in space, the "land of the Lord," just as the Tabernacle in the wilderness and the later Temple in Jerusalem were known as "the sanctuaries of the Lord" and the "house of the Lord."⁶⁸ Because these places are dedicated to the sole service of the Infinite God they are lifted to the heights of holiness. Where everything is dedicated to God and His service as nowhere else there He is sovereign in a special way.⁶⁹ They are His own possession in space,⁷⁰ and for this reason a unique system of observances applies to the Land and the Temple.⁷¹

In the realm of Spirit holiness applies likewise to those who have achieved the closest relationship with God, to those whose lives are dedicated exclusively to His service and the fulfillment of His will. Israel is by this token "holy unto the Lord" (Jer. 2:3), His unique possession,⁷² as are the priests, the Levites and the Nazirite who are His (Num., 6:8; 8:14) and who are holy unto Him (Lev. 21:7, 15; Num., *ibid.*). The differing degrees of holiness correspond to different standards of service which apply to these personalities. The more profound one's subservience is to the Infinite God and the broader and deeper one's range of responsibility the more intense the quality of holiness is said to be. In this sense Aaron was sanctified as "most holy" (I Chron. 23:13).

Where God alone is worshipped, there is consecrated territory. Those spirits whose ultimate concern is the One and Only Infinite God are likewise consecrated spirits, for over them God reigns in glory.

B.

Holiness, as the highest expression of God's attributes, signifies that He is lofty and elevated above everything that is earthly. The mundane is not to be disparaged or ignored.⁷³ But it should be recognized for what it is. The mundane is the contingent phase of existence and, as such, it is constantly striving for the absorption of the means of its sustenance whereby its survival is assured. Its nature is to consume and assimilate. God Who is beyond the mundane is not a recipient. He, upon Whom all creatures depend, is dependent upon no one. Holiness thus denotes absolute selflessness. Since man can never completely overcome his self-centredness, his need for sustenance for his survival being so basic, he can only strive towards holiness. Whatever holiness man attains is at best a dim reflection of divine holiness.

In God holiness is the union of His transcendence and His immanence. He is holy because He seeks nothing for Himself. He is holy because He gives everything of Himself. The Seraphim on high as well as His children upon the earth lift their voices to proclaim His holiness which manifests itself in heaven above, on earth beneath, and to all eternity.⁷⁴ His glory fills all creation.⁷⁵

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Holiness, then, is that which is set apart, which is unique and distinct, and which irradiates everything that exists.

The holiness of the Sabbath is like the holiness of God. The Sabbath is set apart as a unique day, different from all other days and distinguished from them, yet its sanctity permeates all the days of the week. As the primordial sanctity in the created world, it is the origin of all other sanctities.⁷⁶ The commandment to remember the Sabbath day (Ex. 20:8) is to be carried out not only on the Sabbath itself. One's thoughts in the weekday are to be directed towards the Sabbath.⁷⁷ The days of the Jewish week have no specific names. They are all related to the Sabbath.⁷⁸ Moreover, the week itself has been renamed the *Sabbath*.⁷⁹ The first three days of the week belong to the departed Sabbath, while the last three days belong to the incoming Sabbath.⁸⁰ The memory and anticipation of the Sabbath thus permeate the entire week. While the distinction between the Sabbath and the workaday week cannot be obliterated, yet like the intermediate days of the festivals (*Chol Ha-Moed*), the aura of the Sabbath hovers over the other days. We are, moreover, enjoined to extend the holiness of the day itself both into the hours that precede its advent, as well as after it has made its exit.⁸¹ On our own we have the privilege of extending the sanctity of the Sabbath even farther.⁸² The preparation for the Sabbath which is itself a religious obligation carries the Sabbath even farther into the weekdays. The workaday week thereby assumes the character of a preparatory period for the Sabbath.⁸³ That every day of the week appropriates for itself some phase of the sanctity of the Sabbath has been emphasized by the Kabbalists.⁸⁴ This doctrine clarifies the Halakhah that an individual who is wandering in the wilderness and does not know when the Sabbath will occur should count six days and sanctify the seventh as the Sabbath.⁸⁵ For every day of the week contains some radiation of the Sabbath.

The holiness of the Festivals likewise extends beyond their allotted limits. Thirty days before a Festival arrives its laws should be reviewed.⁸⁶ The intermediate days of the Festival (*Chol Ha-Moed*) partake of the spirit of the holiday season and are to be honored by a limited restraint from labor.⁷⁷ The Festivals of Passover and Pentecost are linked by the period of the Counting

of the Omer (*Sefirat Ha-Omer*).⁸⁸ The New Year and the Day of Atonement are bridged by the Ten Days of Repentance.⁸⁹ The season of Repentance continues through *Hoshana Rabbah and Shemini Atzeret*,⁹⁰ and precedes the New Year by an entire month, the month of Elul. The call to repentance beckons the household of Israel throughout the entire year,⁹¹ and extends the influence of the Day of Atonement to the entirety of one's lifetime,⁹² in the same manner as the commandment to remember the Exodus from Egypt at all times⁹³ keeps the Passover alive at all times, and just as the obligation to remember the Revelation at Sinai⁹⁴ extends the scope of Pentecost, and as the duty to serve God in joy at all times⁹⁵ renders the influence of Tabernacles a perennial character.

The radiance of holiness by that which is set apart is also characteristic of holiness in space. The sanctity of the Temple and the Courtyards of the House of God, as well as the holiness of Jerusalem can be extended.⁹⁶ The sanctity of the Land of Israel can be extended to foreign territories by conquest.⁹⁷ Houses of worship, both inside the Land of Israel as well as outside, acquire a sanctity similar to that of the Temple.⁹⁸ Synagogues outside the Land of Israel have the character of the Holy Land.⁹⁹ The holiness of the Land of Israel in the future, it is believed, will enclose the entire earth.¹⁰⁰ The Land of Israel serves as the medium through which God's grace is distributed to all lands.¹⁰¹

Israel is a people that is set apart (Lev. 20:26) and that "dwells alone" (Num. 23:9; Deut. 33-28). Yet its holiness is expansive and is radiated to the farthest ends of the earth (Is. 49:6). By the process of conversion the non-Jew becomes a member of the holy community (Lev. 19:34; *et passim*). In time to come all nations will join the Lord and will become His people (Zech. 2:15; Is. 19:25). As Israel will rise to new levels of holiness, they will follow in Israel's wake and attain the present status of the holy people.¹⁰² Every person, regardless of race or nationality, who has dedicated his life to the service of God, and has liberated himself from the vanities in which most men are engrossed, is sanctified by God as "most holy" (*Kodesh-Kodashim*).¹⁰³ Just as the holiness of Israel is broadened to include the non-Jew in its scope either by conversion or by his striving for saintliness, so the holi-

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ness of the high-priesthood, the supreme holiness in Israel (I Chr. 23:13), can be extended by means of a vow to become a Nazirite (Num. 6:6-7; cf. Lev. 21:11-12).

Human personality is endowed with the power of extending its holiness even to animals and inanimate objects when they become dedicated for a holy purpose. When man devotes his possessions to God he enables them to attain the goal of their creation: the highest fulfillment of existence *is* holiness. This power of sanctifying one's possessions belongs to Jews and non-Jews alike.¹⁰⁴

C.

Holiness as an attribute of God implies His eternity and changelessness. Holy is that which is the supreme source of trust and reliability in a world of change and evanescence. It is that which assures us that we are living in an orderly world, free from whims, caprice, and arbitrary decisions. "Holy is that which endures forever."¹⁰⁵ There are derivative types of holiness which are subject to transfer and redemption.¹⁰⁶ God has endowed the basic sanctities in Space, Time, and Spirit with a permanence that makes these sanctities unabrogable. The Sabbath is the primordial sanctity which is the sign of the permanence of the universe and the abiding of God's presence in the world, just as the rainbow is the sign of the continuance of the physical world, and circumcision the sign of the eternity of the people of Israel.¹⁰⁷ Perhaps the reason the Torah was given on the Sabbath¹⁰⁸ is that through the Torah the ultimate achievement of the supernatural order was guaranteed.

The everlasting sanctity of the Land of Israel, and the site of the Holy Temple,¹⁰⁹ as well as the indestructibility of Israel¹¹⁰ exemplify the eternity implied in holiness in the realm of Space and Spirit.

D.

"And the Lord blessed the seventh day and He sanctified it" (Gen. 2:3). Of the creatures made on the first six days, the fishes and fowl were blessed as well as the man and woman created in

