

OU JERUSALEM CENTRE.

RABBI DR ALAN ABRAHAM KIMCHE

“Great Jewish Thinkers”

Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik (1903-1993)

1. A most influential and significant Jewish Leader of 20th century.
2. a 200 years rabbinical dynasty of both paternal and maternal.
3. Named after his great-grandfather the “Beis Halevy” RY Volozhin
4. Talmudic training in Russia and academic training in Berlin
5. 1932 moved to USA Boston representative of Agudat Yisrael
6. 1935 only visit to Israel to submit candidacy for ChR of Tel Aviv
7. 1944 Chairman of Mizrachi Religious Zionists of America.
8. Rosh Yeshiva University RIETS Rabbinical College 1941-1986
9. Non-messianic Religious Zionism - “Kol Dodi Dofek” 1956
10. “Lonely Man of Faith” - 1965. Religious Existentialism.

“The Lonely Man of Faith”

Creation of Man in Bereishit Ch.1

כו) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרִדוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
וּבְבְהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל-הַרְמֵשׁ הָרֹמֵשׁ עַל-הָאָרֶץ
כז) וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם
כח) וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וּכְבֹּשׁוּ וּרְדוּ
בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל-חַיַּי הָרֹמְשֹׁת עַל-הָאָרֶץ
כט) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הִנֵּה נֹתְתִי לָכֶם אֶת-כָּל-עֵשֶׂב זֶרַע אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ
וְאֶת-כָּל-הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ פְרִיעַץ זֶרַע זֶרַע לָכֶם יְהִי לְאֹכְלָהּ

Creation of Man in Bereishit Ch.2

(ז) וַיִּצְרֶה יְקֹוֹק אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עֶפְרָר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפְח בָּאָפִיו נְשִׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה

(ח) וַיִּטֶּע יְקֹוֹק אֱלֹהִים גֶּן־בְּעֵדֶן מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּשֶׂם שֵׁם אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יָצָר
(כא) וַיִּפְלֵ יְקֹוֹק אֱלֹהִים תְּרִדְמָה עַל־הָאָדָם וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח אַחַת מִצְלָעוֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֶּר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתָּנָה

(כב) וַיְבַן יְקֹוֹק אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיְבֵאָהּ אֶל־הָאָדָם
(כג) וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הִפְעַם עִצָּם מִעֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂר מִבָּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לְקַחָהּ זֹאת

(כד) עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד

Rav Soloveitchik proposes that the two accounts of the creation of man (in chapters 1 and 2 of Bereishit) portray two types of man, two human ideals. In their approaches to God, the world and the self.

The first, he calls Adam I, - is guided by the quest for dignity, which is a surface social quality attained by control over one's environment. He is a creative and majestic personality who espouses a practical-utilitarian approach to the world.

Adam II, on the other hand, is guided by the quest for redemption, which is a quality of the depth personality attained by control over oneself. He is humble and submissive, and yearns for an intimate relationship with God and with his fellow man in order to overcome his sense of incompleteness and inadequacy. These differences carry over to the type of community each one creates: the "natural work community" (Adam I) and the "covenantal faith community" (Adam II).

God not only desires the existence of each of these personality types and each of these communities, but actually bids each and every one of us to attempt to embody both of these seemingly irreconcilable types within ourselves. We must attempt to pursue both dignity and redemption.

The demand to be both Adam I and Adam II leads to a built-in tension in the life of each person responsive to this call; and because one lives with a constant dialectic, a continual oscillation between two modes of existence, one can never fully realize the goals of either Adam I or Adam II. Unable to feel totally at home in either community, man is burdened by loneliness.