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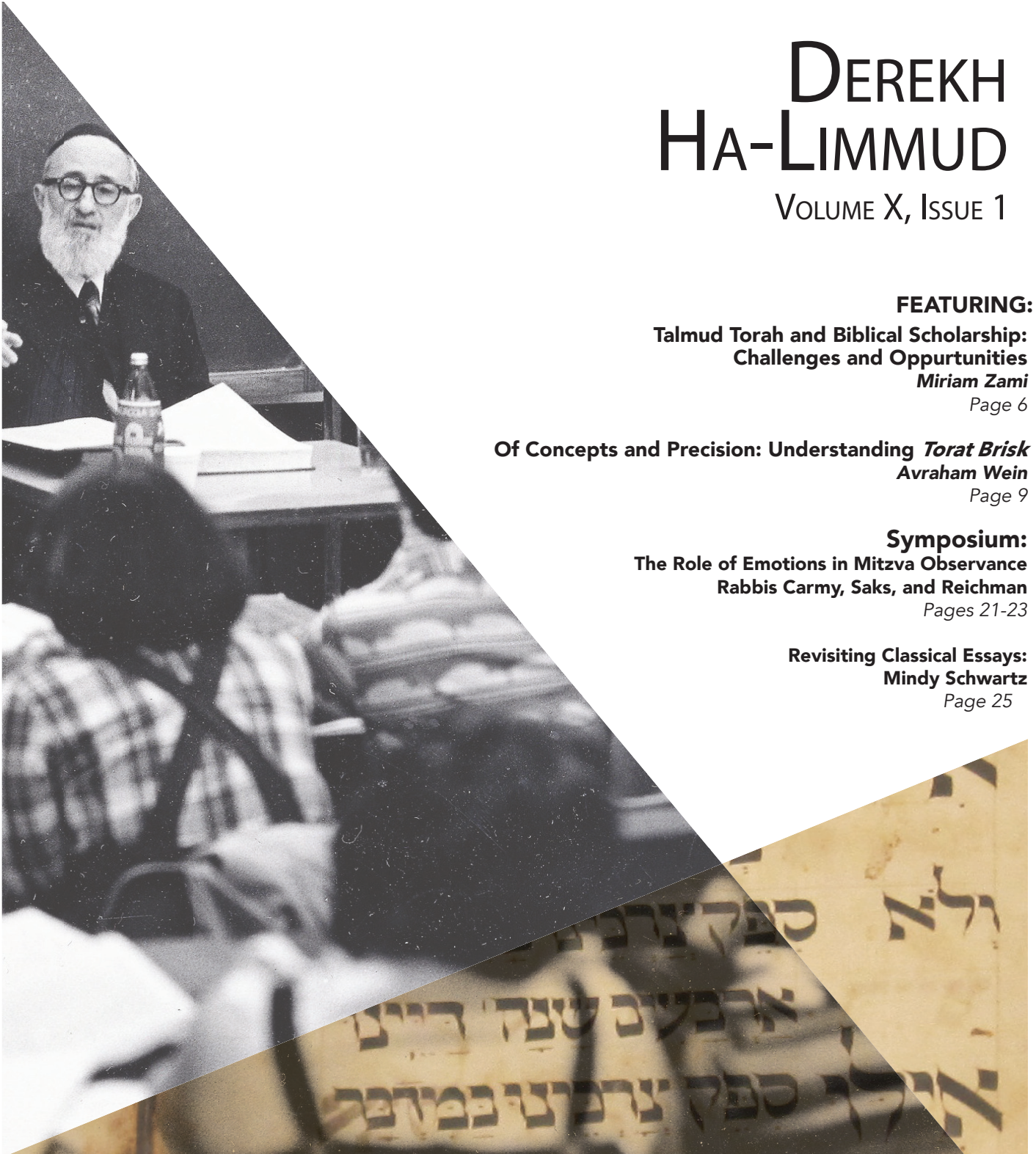
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people often confuse having an emotion with putting it on display.² In this we are inspired by pop psychologists and by the kind of show business personalities or politicians who engage in effusive displays of affection to members of their families, acquaintances, and household pets in an effort to demonstrate their humanity.

Our religious life, unfortunately, is often unconsciously influenced by prevalent attitudes. The less we develop a critical perspective on secular culture, the more we are at the mercy of these attitudes. That is one reason for studying the liberal arts, to analyze, assess and resist these tendencies. The distortion of the value and place of emotion in religious life is much affected by rationalistic behavioristic trends, on the one hand, and by the cheapening of emotion in modern therapeutic culture, on the other

hand. Just because contemporary Western culture oscillates between these two distortions, setting up false dichotomies between emotion and intellect to the detriment of both, adopting other-directed behavior as a substitute for the personal encounter with God, does not mean that we have to follow suit. Philosophy enables us to reflect more clearly on the nature and shadings of emotion and on the cognitive and constitutive role they play in our lives. Literature and music enable us to assess other people's emotional experience and to express our own. History shows us how people in other times and places have lived their emotional lives. We have choice.

With respect to our spiritual lives and our emotional experience we should be *gavras*, so to speak and not *heftsas*. The study of Torah educates us to understand

what emotions are appropriate in different connections, how to be joyful and how to grieve. There are moments of public exuberance in family life, along with moments of intimacy, so too there are times and places where the public manifestation of religious emotion is mandated—Hallel is a public recitation; the prayer on fast days is a very different kind of public performance (see on this Ramban end of *Parashat Bo*). As Rabbi Yosef Blau has often remarked, the joy of Purim is very different from the joy of Yom Kippur and he who meshes the two understands neither.

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¹ See further my comments in *Lomdut*, ed. Yosef Blau (*Orthodox Forum*) pp. 66ff. The Rav's most sustained philosophical essay on emotion is in *Out of the Whirlwind*. For a lengthy discussion of the place of emotion in the Rav's thought, see Alex Sztuden,

"Grief and Joy in the Writings of Rabbi Soloveitchik" (*Tradition* 43:4; 44:3, and 45:2). On the use of family anecdotes in *Halakhic Man*, see Sztuden, "Why are There Stories in *Halakhic Man*?" in Rav Shalom Banayikh, ed. Hayyim Angel and Yitzchak Blau.

² See my further discussion in "The Litvak's Buried Treasure: Further Thoughts on the Dictum 'the Holier the Feeling, the More Intimate'" (*Tradition* 44:1).

The Rav Between Halakhic Men and Lachrymose Lubavitchers

BY RABBI JEFFREY SAKS

Rabbi Soloveitchik's telling of the well-known anecdote of his father, Rav Moshe, and the Lubavitcher *ba'al tokea* plays a curious role in *Halakhic Man*. (It should be noted that the incident occurred in the synagogue in Washington Heights, not in old-world Khislavichi, a mistake the reader might be forgiven for making.) The story itself is a fairly effective demonstration of halakhic man's worldview, which sees in the halakha "a dam against the surging, subjective current coursing through the universal *homo religiosus*" (p. 59). It is precisely this outlook which drove halakhic men to view the Musar movement, and its perceived extremes of emotional life, with a jaundiced eye (see the Brisker Rx for castor oil, p. 75). In fact, although the shofar anecdote might be more well known, it is hardly the sharpest example cited. Although the Rav may have felt compelled to acknowledge in passing (p. 154 n.90) that there is a distinction between the halakhic men and the Stoics and Epicureans, he does not elaborate. A good demonstration of this is the encounter with Yom Kippur's sunset (p.

38), which implies that halakhic men also are sensitive to aesthetic, and presumably emotional, experiences, but ultimately filter them through the prism of the pure halakha. Ultimately the reader is more stunned by the depictions of the Vilna Gaon and R. Elijah Pruzna's encounters with the death of loved ones (pp. 77-78). These halakhic men are not exactly Spock-like, yet their emotions are deeply internalized, private, and regulated through strict halakhic mechanisms. Our reverence for those masters aside, few modern readers will fully identify with the depiction of these kalter litvaks; many will find the anecdotes downright grotesque.

However, I believe that the significance of the shofar story is not in its telling, but in how the Rav frames it. The anecdote occupies a mere eight lines of the text. What follows is two and a quarter pages (in a monograph containing only 132 pages of text) in which the Rav laws out the teaching of R. Shneur Zalman of Lyady regarding shofar and lulav. That is: He gives more than equal time to the opposing

viewpoint. When Rav Moshe charges the lachrymose Lubavitcher: "Do you weep when you take the lulav? Why then do you weep when you sound the shofar? Are not both commandments of God?," the lengthy citation from the *Likkutei Torah* which follows explains precisely why the *ba'al tokea* had no idea what the elder Rabbi Soloveitchik was asking him. To his ears it must have sounded like a nonsense question, akin to asking a sobbing child who has just crashed his bicycle: "Why do you cry when you scrape your knee? Do you cry when you get ice cream?" The Rav explains according to the Alter Rebbe how shofar and lulav represent different emotional experiences (in brief: Shofar heralds how distant we are from the *Deus Absconditus*; lulav signals the polar opposite). The hasidic excursus follows immediately on the heels of the misnagdic anecdote, without as much as a paragraph break, and the casual reader might not immediately perceive how subversive it is to the exposition of halakhic man's worldview. Its place and purpose in the work is, I believe, to gently communicate

that despite his reverence for halakhic man (who is after all, no more and no less than a typological distillation of his own grandfather, father, and uncle), the Rav does not fully identify with him, precisely regarding his position on the role of emotion in life and in the service of God. His lifelong occupation with the matter of *Kiyyum she-baLev* (although admittedly present in earlier Brisker Torah) may reveal a desire to introduce an emotional component into halakha proper. Consider this: If the Rav was a self-identified, card-carrying halakhic man could he also have authored *The Lonely Man of Faith*?

The Rav's ambivalence toward the hero of *Halakhic Man* becomes significant in another area when, in 1959, he revisited the halakhic man, fifteen years after his first appearance, by way of eulogizing his uncle, Reb Velvel, the Brisker Rav of Jerusalem. The eulogy, later published as "Mah Dodekh mi-Dod" (available in *Be-Sod Ha-Yahid ve-haYahad*, an English translation is a serious desideratum), serves as an important supplement to our understanding of *Halakhic Man* in general and the question at hand in particular (especially as its distance in time may make it the product of a more mature perspective).¹

In addressing his uncle's anti-Zionism, the Rav explained: "They said

of him [Reb Velvel] that he was opposed to the State of Israel. This is not correct. Opposition to a State emanates from adopting a position regarding a political body, which is itself a political act. My uncle was completely removed from all socio-political thought or response. What may be said of him is that the State found no place within his halakhic thought system nor on his halakhic value scale. He was unable to 'translate' the idea of a sovereign, secular State to halakhic properties and values." It is not that Reb Velvel was an anti-Zionist, per se, but that, as a halakhic matter the secular State of Israel did not register on his radar screen. Upon reaching the disappointing conclusion that there was no way to integrate the State into the a priori ideals of the halakha, Reb Velvel was forced to retreat and ignore (not oppose) the State. At this point in his presentation, we must pay close attention to the Rav's words: "This disappointment led to my uncle separating himself from the most important event in modern Jewish history [i.e., the establishment of the State]."

Once again, very subtly, the Rav admits that "after many sleepless nights" he has broken with the tradition of halakhic man (and in this case, with the family's rejection of Zionism), and conveys that he himself may not completely share the

worldview that he has idealized in *Halakhic Man* (and again in "Mah Dodekh mi-Dod"). While in the eulogy he goes on to explain the way that he was able to conceive of the modern State of Israel within a halakhic framework, there can be no doubt that he was moved by an emotional consideration, one which his hero, halakhic man, could not or would not register.

We, too, revere halakhic men (and women). But when we look to role models, be they of flesh and blood or philosophical typologies on a page, we must take care when "cutting and pasting" their examples to our own lives. By doing so indiscriminately, we may be importing characteristics which are neither effective or appropriate for ourselves; eclectic modelling if done with integrity is often more sound. If we do not fully identify with *Halakhic Man*, and it is possible its author did not fully do so specifically on the role of emotion in religious life, that need not dampen our commitment to "defend the honor of the halakhah and halakhic men" nor to continue striving to "penetrate into the essence of halakhah" (the Rav's stated goals in composing the work; p. 137).

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¹ For more on this see Jeffrey Saks, "Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik on the Brisker Method," *Tradition* 33:2 (Winter 1999).

Conflict and Paradox: Balancing Emotion, Intellect, and Neo-Hassidut

BY RABBI HERSHEL REICHMAN

When one approaches a piece of the Rav's writings, the reader must be aware that in that context he may not be presented with the full picture. This is because the Rav zt"l often dealt with paradoxes, or "tarti de-satri's," where there are two conflicting, distinct, or paradoxical sides. The Rav was an incredible thinker and teacher, and was able to describe or elaborate one side of a paradox in one context and leave the

other side for another lecture or article.

With regard to this specific question, the paradox here is between the role of the emotion versus the role of the intellect, a major issue in Judaism. In *Halakhic Man*, the Rav emphasizes the intellectual part of Judaism, and the shofar story accentuates the intellectual side very well. This side of the paradox emphasizes strict observance of halakha, and not letting emotion become

dominant. However, in the Rav's other writings, you see that he also has a heavy emphasis on the role of emotion in his religious philosophy. Particularly in *Al Ha-Teshuva*, you find a lot of emotion in the Rav's *derashot*, and he talks about concepts like emotional *teshuvah*. Furthermore, in *U-Vikashtem*, the Rav very much emphasizes the emotional side of the search for God.

I think most of the year the Rav