

# Judaism and the Modern State

*Yoram Hazony*

A well-established view holds that there is no room for religion in general, and for Judaism in particular, in the public life of the modern state. This view derives from a series of assumptions concerning the contemporary polity, which can be stated as follows:

1. That the architects of the modern state designed it as a non-religious or even an anti-religious state, whose public life was to be purged entirely of religious influence as a consequence of the excesses of medieval religion;
2. That these architects, including thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, were themselves ardent secularizers, who found no place for religious tradition in public life; and
3. That the Bible and other Jewish sources were consequently ruled out of bounds in early modernity and played no role in the establishment of the modern states in which we now live.

Needless to say, if one views the history of political thought in this fashion, it is difficult to see pronouncements on politics whose source is in religious tradition as anything other than an illegitimate intrusion. “We built this city without your help,” the modern polity seems to say to religious tradition, “and we have no need of it now.”

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Now, this view of the modern state in its relation to religion is not entirely without foundation, and it is important not to lose sight of this fact. But on the whole, I think it is mistaken. In what follows, I would like to share with you a few thoughts as to why this view is mistaken, and how it is that so problematic an understanding came to have such extraordinary influence.

## II

When I was in graduate school, I studied the history of political thought from a standard textbook on the subject written by Professor Sabine, which described the history of political ideas as moving from Greek philosophy to Roman, from Roman thought to the political philosophy of the New Testament and the early fathers of the Church, and from there straight to medieval thought. Just like that. Not a single word concerning the Bible or any other Jewish source.

Thus while our own political lexicon is today flush with political ideas derived from the Hebrew Bible—among them concepts such as international peace, new world order, national liberation, social justice, disarmament, civil disobedience, and the inherent dignity of man—Sabine nonetheless treats the Prophets as though they never existed. The index does not even list the Bible, the Old Testament, Moses, Isaiah, or Judaism; indeed, there are no listed references to the Jews at all except where Sabine writes about the political philosophies of Mussolini, Alfred Rosenberg, and Hitler.<sup>1</sup>

As for the political ideas of the Bible, Sabine attributes more or less all the ones he treats to Zeno of Citium, who founded the Stoic school circa 300 B.C.E. In passing, he does mention the peculiarly un-Greek character of Zeno's school:

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It was less closely bound to Athens, and indeed to Greece, than any of the other [philosophical] schools. Its founder was a "Phoenician," which must mean that at least one of his parents was Semitic. After him the heads of the school came usually from outlying parts of the Greek world, especially from Asia Minor, where the mingling of Greeks and Orientals proceeded most rapidly....<sup>2</sup>

Yet the question as to what might have been the form or content of this "mingling" of the Stoics with "Orientals" escapes the interest of the historian.

Other leading intellectual histories are not much better. Professor Wolin's suggestively titled history, *Politics and Vision*, likewise has no listings for the Bible or the Prophets in the index. Unlike Sabine, however, Wolin does devote three whole sentences to Judaism before going on to a series of chapters describing the contributions to Western thought of Christian political ideas (which he calls "a new and powerful ideal of community which recalled men to a life of meaningful participation").<sup>3</sup> Here is what he says:

For the religious experience of the Jews had been strongly colored by political elements.... The terms of the covenant between Jahweh and his chosen people had often been interpreted as promising the triumph of the [Jewish] nation, the establishment of a political kingdom that would allow the Jews to rule the rest of the world. The messiah-figure, in turn, appeared not so much as an agent of redemption as the restorer of the Davidic kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

Thus according to Professor Wolin, a thousand years of Jewish political thought prior to the advent of Christianity can be effectively nutshellled as the belief that the Jews should seek ultimate political power with the aim of establishing their rule over the entire planet.<sup>5</sup>

Much the same is true for the other competing textbooks, virtually all of which treat early Christianity with respect, while passing over the Hebrew

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Bible and the contribution of Judaism to Western political thought with hardly a word, or no word at all.

Where does this view of history come from? The university in its modern form was founded in Germany, and it is there that we find the origins of the history and philosophy curriculum as it is studied today throughout the academic world. One need only look at the historiography of Kant and Hegel to see this same pattern—with explanations as to why one should view things this way.

Here, for example, is Kant, explaining why Judaism should be ignored in a history of the development of Western thought:

It is evident that the Jewish faith stands in no essential connection whatever—i.e., in no unity of concepts—with this... history we wish to consider, though the Jewish immediately preceded this (the Christian) church.... The Jewish faith was, in its original form, a collection of mere statutory laws upon which was established a political organization; for whatever moral additions were then or later *appended* to it in no way whatever belonged to Judaism as such. Judaism is not really a religion at all but merely a union of a number of people who, since they belonged to a particular stock, formed themselves into a commonwealth under purely political laws.... [Only later was Judaism] interfused, by reason of moral doctrines gradually made public within it, with a religious faith—for this otherwise ignorant people had been able to receive much foreign (Greek) wisdom.<sup>6</sup>  
[*Emphasis in the original.*]

On Kant's understanding of history, whatever ideas of significance are to be found in the sources of Judaism must be considered to have been of Greek origin, for the Jews were an "ignorant people" incapable of contributing something important themselves.

A similar argument is made by Hegel, who argues that philosophy has been the possession of only two peoples, the Greek and the Teutonic:

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Speaking generally, we have properly only two epochs to distinguish in the history of philosophy... the Greek and the Teutonic. The Teutonic philosophy is the philosophy within Christendom...; the Christian-European people... possess collectively Teutonic culture; for Italy, Spain, France, England, and the rest, have through the Teutonic nations received a new form.... The Greek world developed thought as far as to the Idea; the Christian Teutonic world, on the contrary, has comprehended thought as Spirit.<sup>7</sup>

And what of Judaism? Did not Christianity emerge from Judaism? Hegel explains that this is not the case, and that the content of Christianity arose more or less *ex nihilo*, as if in a “second Creation” of the world:

In Christianity [the] absolute claims of the intellectual world and of spirit had become the universal consciousness. Christianity proceeded from Judaism, from self-conscious abjectness and depression. This feeling of nothingness has from the beginning characterized the Jews; a sense of desolation, an abjectness where no reason was, has possession of their life and consciousness.... [In Christianity] that nothingness has transformed itself into what is positively reconciled. This is a second Creation which came to pass after the first....<sup>8</sup>

Now if one takes these thinkers seriously, and German academia did indeed take them seriously, what arises from all this is a view of the history of ideas in which the Hebrew Bible, as well as Judaism more generally, is seen as a non-player. The Jews were either seen as having received their thought as a gift from the Greeks, or else as having been, philosophically, the nothingness that preceded the birth of Christianity. In either case, it becomes clear how the history of Western thought can be taught without reference to the influence of the Hebrew Bible and of Judaism.

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### III

Of course, not all of Christendom saw things in this way. In Holland, England, and elsewhere, the need to justify political and philosophical rebellion against the claims of the Catholic Church to universal sovereignty led Protestant thinkers back to the study of Hebrew and Aramaic, and to attempt to find the true will of God in the sources of Judaism.<sup>9</sup> In 1574, the famous Swiss Hebraist Cornelius Bertram published *De Politia Judaeorum* (“The Jewish State”), a treatise that sought an understanding of the best regime through the study of the Hebrew Bible, Talmud, the books of the Maccabees, and Maimonides. Thus began a period of 150 years during which the Hebrew Bible and later Jewish tradition became the focus of intense scrutiny in the search for political wisdom that could be of assistance in laying the foundations of a new political order in Protestant Europe.<sup>10</sup> During this period, which lasted well into the 1700s, Bertram’s book was followed by dozens of additional such works, including the Dutch political theorist Petrus Cunaeus’ influential work, *The Hebrew Republic* (1617), which made reference to the Talmud, Midrash Rabba, Maimonides, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Moses ben Ezra, David Kimche, Joseph Karo, Abraham ben David, and others in an effort to expound republican government according to Jewish political thought.<sup>11</sup> Parts of this work were translated into English in time to become a handbook for republican revolutionaries in the period of Cromwell.

Perhaps no people in Europe approached this work of neo-Hebraic political thought with greater alacrity than the English. As Professor Hastings has shown,<sup>12</sup> the English people possessed a long tradition of identification with the biblical Hebrews, which extended back at least as far as the year 730 C.E., when Bede compared the English to the Jews in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. In Tudor England, fighting to maintain its independence against Catholic Spain, this sentiment was captured in

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John Lyly's famous declaration of England as a "New Israel." Nor was this sentiment lost on political thought. The political philosophy of English theorists such as Thomas Hobbes, James Harrington, and John Locke includes extensive interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. Hobbes was learned in Hebrew, and his magnum opus *Leviathan* devotes over three hundred pages to the political teachings of Scripture.<sup>13</sup> Locke knew Hebrew as well, and the first of his *Two Treatises on Government* is devoted to biblical interpretation.<sup>14</sup>

Among neo-Hebraic political thinkers, the most significant was undoubtedly the great statesman and political philosopher John Selden, whose work sought to establish the political philosophy of a sovereign and independent England on the basis of God's law as reflected in the tradition of the rabbis. His 1635 treatise on the law of the sea, *Mare Clausum*—one of the founding texts of international law—argued for the concept of national sovereignty on both land and sea on the basis of the Hebrew Bible and the Talmud. (The work of Grotius, Selden's great Dutch rival, was also informed by that philosopher's knowledge of Hebrew, as well as of biblical and rabbinic sources.) Selden's treatise on *The Jewish Law of Marriage and Divorce* (1646) was significant in accelerating the adjustment of English family law away from Catholic teaching and towards a system much more in keeping with Jewish principles. But his masterworks were two monumental treatises on the foundations of political philosophy: *The Law of Nature and of the Gentiles According to the Learning of the Jews* (1640), whose entire 840-page text is devoted to an exposition of natural law in light of the talmudic laws of Noah, which the rabbinic tradition held to be binding on all the nations of the world; and *On the Assemblies and Legal Authorities of the Ancient Hebrews* (1650-1655), which devotes 1,130 pages to the study of the rabbinic Sanhedrin as a model parliament. In his work, Selden turns to the Talmud, Midrash, Tosefta, Maimonides, Nahmanides, Judah Halevi, Abraham Halevi, Ibn Ezra, R. David Kimche, Gersonides, Rabbeinu Nissim, Joseph Karo, Simon Luzatto, Tzemah David, Onkelos, Targum Jonathan, Zohar, and many others.

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In Selden's day, *The Law of Nature and of the Gentiles According to the Learning of the Jews* was understood by many to be the most significant English work of political philosophy of its time. Hobbes' *Leviathan*, published eleven years after Selden's great work, was written in its shadow and reflects its influence; and as Professor Tuck has argued, there is reason to believe that Selden's ideas continued to dominate political discourse in England for a generation.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, it was reprinted time and again in London, Strasbourg, Frankfurt, and elsewhere in Europe. Despite its extensive citations in the original Hebrew and Aramaic, it remained in print for nearly a century after it was first published.

Yet the history of political philosophy was not gentle with John Selden for his interest in Jewish studies. Leibniz thought that Selden had wasted his extraordinary talents.<sup>16</sup> And as the Enlightenment progressed, it has seemed as though the assessment of history would be the same. The French *philosophes* had little patience for religion of any kind, and certainly not for Judaism; and in Germany, where philosophy paid careful lip service to Christianity, thinkers such as Kant and Hegel made sure to leave little room for Judaism. To them, individuals such as Selden who were profoundly influenced by Jewish teaching were an embarrassment. Ultimately, it was this view of history that prevailed in the English-speaking world as well.

We saw earlier how the historiography of the German academy is reflected in Professor Sabine's history, which faithfully follows Kant and Hegel in writing the Hebrew Bible out of the ancient history of political ideas, depicting Christianity almost as though it sprang fully formed from the thought of ancient Greece. But we now know that the history of Jewish influence on the West did not end in antiquity. It continued at least until the time of John Locke and the founding of the modern republic. How do writers such as Sabine cope with this problem? Here is the way Sabine chooses to portray the work of John Selden:

Selden's opinions both of politics and religion grew from a kind of secularism not very common in the seventeenth century, and from a shrewd

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worldly-wisdom.... Selden's utilitarianism, secularism, and rationalism were far from typical but they appeared again in his friend Thomas Hobbes and in a sense they had the last word at the Revolution in the thought of Halifax.<sup>17</sup>

Remarkably, Selden's overwhelming reliance on the Bible and rabbinic sources in constructing his political philosophy is as if it did not exist. And the same thing takes place when one goes on to study other better-known thinkers. The typical university course studies only the first half of Hobbes' *Leviathan*, because the second half is about the Bible; these same courses study only the second half of Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*, because the first half is about the Bible. Indeed, the biblical discussions are considered so irrelevant that many paperback editions of these books simply omit them altogether, and the students never even know they were there. (This is true, by the way, of the Hebrew editions of both Hobbes and Locke used to teach political thought in Israeli universities. Almost all of the material in these books that draws on Jewish sources was simply not included in the translation.)<sup>18</sup>

Once again, the Jewish influence is simply erased, this time from the history of the founding of the modern state. No wonder, then, that Jewish and Christian students can so easily reach the conclusion that religion had no part in the establishment of the modern political order.

In defense of the universities, I should say that most of the history I have been discussing is not well known. Many of the most important texts, including those of Cornelius Bertram, Carlo Sigonio, Johannes Althusius, Petrus Cunaeus, John Selden, and many others, were written in Latin. Almost none have been translated, placing them outside the reach of all but a few specialists. Someday soon, I hope we will have all of these remarkable sources available to us. Only then will we be able to begin in earnest the work of reviewing the historiography we have inherited from the early years of the German academy. Only then will it be possible to provide well-founded answers to the question: What, in fact, was the

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contribution of Judaism to the thought and public life of the modern Western state?

For now, therefore, we can draw only the most preliminary conclusions with respect to the subject before us. These preliminary conclusions, however, are not insignificant. On the basis of what we already know, it is possible to say with a certain degree of confidence that the three premises I mentioned at the beginning need to be seriously re-evaluated. That is, on the basis of what we now know, it is unclear that the architects of the modern state designed it as a non-religious or even an anti-religious state, whose public life was to be purged entirely of religious influence; it is unclear that these architects were themselves ardent secularizers, who found no place for religious tradition in public life; and it is unclear that the Bible and other Jewish sources were ruled out of bounds in early modernity and played no role in the establishment of the modern state. Indeed, once the whole story has been told, it may turn out that the Jewish tradition did help to build this city. If so, it may be the case that pronouncements on politics whose source is in our religious tradition are anything but an illegitimate intrusion.

#### IV

As I noted earlier, the common view of the modern state as having emerged from a struggle against religion is not without foundation, and we must strive to see the truth in it. There are forms of religion that are, in fact, quite problematic for the public life of the liberal state. Let us try to understand what this problem is.

Anyone who has carefully studied the New Testament and the teachings of the early Church knows that they are, in terms of their metaphysics, something quite different from the Hebrew Bible and the Talmud. I refer in particular to the supposition of a sharp disjuncture between body and soul,

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between the material and the spiritual, which can be found in certain post-biblical Jewish sources, but which are in evidence almost everywhere in early Christian thought. It is this clean fissure in reality—so strikingly captured in the distinction between “that which is unto Caesar,” and “that which is unto God”;<sup>19</sup> or in Jesus’ declaration that “My kingdom is not of this world”<sup>20</sup>—which permits Christians to conceive of the divine as being fundamentally of another world, along with man’s immortal soul, while man’s body is of this earth. With such a fissure in place, one quickly concludes that the other world is one of truth and goodness, and that this world is, by contrast, a realm of illusion and sin, perhaps even of evil. This understanding is the basis for the opposition between the City of Man, which is temporal, partial, and corrupt, and the City of God, which is eternal, perfect, and pure.

If you understand the world in keeping with such a dualism, it is not difficult to come to the conclusion that God’s word, if there is to be such a thing, must be a kind of an incursion of absolute purity and perfection into a fallen world. To compete with the darkness of this world, this incursion must be something overwhelming in its effective power, with the capacity to sweep away the illusion and deceit imposed on man by his materiality. God’s word becomes a “revelation,” by which is meant a form of miraculous knowledge, revealing to man what his own corrupt reason could never have attained. God’s word, as revealed in Scripture, becomes in principle something that is quite distinct from reason, or even opposed to it.

But there is a serious problem with such an understanding of revelation. For how does the individual know what ideas it contains? What we have is Scripture, which is a text consisting of words on a printed page, and our imperfect minds with which to interpret it. On this view, it cannot be the case that this text is read in the normal way, which is to say imperfectly, because then the result would be a transmission not of revelation, but of some error or illusion, and the entire promise of an effective incursion of the divine would dissipate. If the words of Scripture are to fulfill the promise of being a revelation to man, then it must be the case that when the individual goes about reading them,

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what he receives from this activity is itself the revelation in question. Imperfect though his mind may be, it must be the case that the individual has the capacity, in the process of reading Scripture, to attain knowledge of the absolute, the perfect, and the pure.

But of course, it does not work that way. The text does not “reveal” the absolute, the perfect, or the pure to anyone. On the contrary, the encounter with the text only spawns endless contradictory interpretations, each of which implies that the absolute, perfect, and pure do not reside with the others. Or, in other words, that the absolute, perfect, and pure have not been “revealed” at all. In reading Scripture, every individual finds himself thrown back on his own resources, struggling, with the power of his own reason, to attempt to determine its meaning. The very reading of the text refutes the thesis of miraculous knowledge, point-blank.

This is not a small problem for Christianity, as well as for any interpretation of Judaism that insists on importing a dualist metaphysics similar to that of the New Testament. For if there is no direct road to miraculous knowledge, and instead only countless human interpretations—all of them fallen, all of them corrupt—then how can one say that religion provides a way out of the maze of illusion that is this fallen world? Without the possibility of miraculous knowledge, the entire structure of New Testament metaphysics begins to totter. To head off this collapse, one clutches even more tightly at the supposedly miraculous and absolute character of one’s own interpretation. One insists that a certain understanding is rooted in “authority,” while other interpretations are not. The result, at least in medieval Europe, was the Inquisition and the Index.

What I take from this analysis of the promise of Christian religion is the following. If we try to determine what precisely it is that makes many versions of Christianity difficult to reconcile with free inquiry into the public good, we find that it is the claim to make available a miraculous knowledge. This claim, to the extent that it is accepted, paralyzes reasoned discourse; because once someone believes he has absolute and perfect knowledge, the doubts that arise as part of the normal debate regarding issues of public concern can

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only be seen as detracting from the perfect truth he already has. Whether intentionally or not, assertions of miraculous knowledge thus have the effect of delegitimizing all other knowledge with regard to any subject concerning which they are asserted. To admit claims of miraculous knowledge into public debate therefore comes perilously close to calling for an end to public debate.

Is there another approach to the role of Scripture in public life? I think there is another approach, which is the one advanced in the Talmud. The rabbis well knew that no one receives the content of a “revelation,” in the sense of something absolute and perfect, by reading Scripture. What we see is always partial. For this reason, the Talmud establishes the principle that each word of the Tora has “seventy faces,” that each of the many interpretations is equally “the words of the living God.”<sup>21</sup> Moreover, in the struggle to demonstrate the superiority of one interpretation over another, the Talmud explicitly proscribes appeals to revelation. The word of God is “not in heaven,” but of this earth, and men must decide. In matters of interpretation, this means accepting the principle that Tora is always present as multiple views, each of which is legitimate. Where political considerations require that these be reduced to a single decision, the decision is taken not according to “voices from heaven,” but according to the majority opinion among interpreters.<sup>22</sup>

All of this bears greatly on our discussion of the role of Scripture in public life. For if the encounter with Scripture does not result in a revelation by God of the absolute and perfect to the minds of individual men, then religion cannot aspire to an authority sufficient to trump reasoned debate. It should be obvious why. Once it is understood that no rabbinic scholar has access to miraculous knowledge, and, indeed, appeals to direct revelation have been explicitly forbidden in public discourse, each interpreter must rely upon his own mind to be the final arbiter concerning the meaning of the texts before him. There can be no choice in this matter, as all we have is the text before us and the only-partial capacity for understanding it that is the lot of all men. The lack of a single authoritative interpretation is

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therefore accepted as the norm, and the possibility of reaching truth amid competing interpretations depends on the intellectual and moral capacities of the individual interpreter and the open debate in which he is a participant.

This constant tension between the received wisdom found in the scriptural text and the present reason of the various interpreters is nowhere more in evidence than where Judaism comes to discuss matters pertaining to the public good. In fact, the Talmud is littered with legal terms whose import is the introduction of considerations of present public good in opposition to received wisdom: *Yishuv haaretz* (“requirements of settling the world”), *derech eretz* (“the customs of the world”), *tzarchei tzibur* (“the needs of the public”), *migdar milta* (“something necessary for the public good”), *inyanav shel melech* (“matters that affect the king’s interest”), *dina demalchuta* (“the accepted law of the land”), *kvod habriot* (“out of respect for all men”), *darchei shalom* (“the ways of peace”)—all of these and others are categories of public reason that are seen by the Talmud as having sufficient weight to qualify and, where necessary, even to override received wisdom. In other words, reasoning concerning what will bring the public good is not proscribed by Jewish religion, but required by it.

This brings us to the crux of the question of religion in the modern state. For if one attends carefully to the writings of Selden, Hobbes, Locke, and the thinkers of their time, it is clear that they were not fighting against the influence of the Bible in public life.<sup>23</sup> Far from it. What they were fighting was a particular but quite dominant view, according to which a single man sitting in Italy—or any other man, for that matter—could put an end to discussion of the public good in England by saying that he had read Scripture and was in possession of miraculous knowledge, so that no further thought would be required. In Christendom, this understanding of Scripture as a source of present miraculous knowledge meant not the advancement of inquiry into the public good, but its suppression. And the struggle to free public discourse from the shackles imposed on it by this kind of religion really is an important part of the heritage of the Western state.

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But not all religion is this kind of religion. What the Bible and other Jewish sources became in the hands of thinkers such as Bertram, Cunaeus, Grotius, Selden, Hobbes, Harrington, and Locke was, I think, something at least a step closer to what they had been in the rabbinic tradition. They became the foundation for an outstanding tradition of Christian inquiry into the nature of the public good. On the basis of the limited information we now have before us concerning the political thought of this period, it seems a case may be made that it was out of this inquiry that the modern national state, of which we are today citizens, arose.

## V

**I**n the invitation to this conference, the organizers pose a question that I believe reflects keen insight into the matter we are discussing: “Could it be inferred that for the good of humanity, monotheistic religions could only become a positive contributing factor to world harmony when they were neutralized through secularization?”

In my view, religious tradition is not in need of being neutralized through secularization. The very concept of the “secular” relies for its plausibility on a dualism of body and soul, of matter and spirit, which cannot ultimately be defended. Take away the insistence that man lives in two distinct worlds—the City of Man and the City of God—and you have neither a divine world accessible through miraculous knowledge, nor a “secular” world that needs to be protected from the divine one that threatens to inundate it at any moment. God’s word is then understood to be immanent within the world, and accessible through reasoned exploration of the teachings of tradition, which seeks the betterment of this world.

I have suggested in these remarks that the rejection of religion as alien to the public life of the modern state is not tenable; that such a view is

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based on a poor understanding of the history of political ideas, and on a poor understanding of the different possibilities that can inform a religious worldview. But I cannot help feeling that if religion is to take its proper place in political discourse, religious men and women will have need of a humility that has historically proven difficult for them. Treating Scripture as though it is capable of inducing direct revelation in the mind of the reader is not much less dangerous than treating the writings of Marx and Lenin in this same fashion. In either case, the intoxication that comes of believing that one's mind has been in touch with the Absolute has a distinct tendency to leave men blinded with regard to the public good that is evident before their eyes. And this danger exists in Judaism just as it does in Christianity.

Jewish religion has its own internal methods for coping with this problem. The rabbis had already proscribed political decision-making on the basis of "voices from heaven" two thousand years ago. They insisted that no man may be treated as though he has received the whole truth, as though his own mind can stand in the place of God's mind. This decisive theological insight is the basis for the rabbinic tradition of toleration of divergent viewpoints, and for the rabbinic institution of rule of the majority opinion in matters requiring communal decision. It means that Judaism is capable of turning its back on the siren song of miraculous knowledge, and entering into reasoned debate with those of other viewpoints, for the betterment of the Jewish people and of humanity. It means that Judaism is, in principle at least, capable of serving as the basis for the life of a free modern state.

With respect to Christianity, the matter is more difficult. The modern state was forged in the midst of a rebellion against Catholicism. At that time, the intellectual and political leaders of this rebellion drank deeply from the Hebrew sources of Christianity—although just how deeply, we do not yet know. The political liberty we so cherish is in part the result of this renewed encounter with the Hebraic political tradition; and it is not

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necessarily a coincidence that even in the last century, the cause of liberty was at all times strongest in those countries in which Hebraic religion had historically left the deepest impression. If this is so, then the road to a modern Christian state may yet be found to run through a renewed encounter with the political teachings of Israel. Today, this possibility seems remote. But as we have seen, in the history of Western political thought, there is precedent even for this.

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*Yoram Hazony is a Senior Fellow at the Shalem Center and a Contributing Editor of AZURE. His last book was The Jewish State: The Struggle for Israel's Soul (Basic Books and The New Republic, 2000). This article was adapted from a lecture delivered before the Third Annual International Worlds Converge Conference on Religion and Humanity held at the Law Society in London on June 22, 2003.*

## **Notes**

1. George H. Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, *A History of Political Theory* (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden, 1973), pp. 800, 825, 829-830. There is also a mention of the Jews in the section on Nietzsche, p. 812.

2. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, p. 144.

3. Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1960), p. 97.

4. Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 96.

5. To back himself up, Wolin is satisfied with citing a single passage in the Bible, Daniel 7:9-27. But compare Micah 4:3-6: "Nation will not lift up sword against nation.... But they will sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none will make them afraid... for let all people walk everyone in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Eternal our God for ever and ever."

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6. Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, trans. Theodore M. Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 116, 118.

7. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E.S. Haldane (Lincoln: Nebraska, 1995), vol. 1, p. 101.

8. Hegel, *Lectures*, vol. 3, p. 22.

9. The reliance on Jewish sources in Christian political thought is discussed in Fania Oz-Salzberger, "The Jewish Roots of Western Freedom," *AZURE* 13 (Summer 2002); Frank E. Manuel, *The Broken Staff: Judaism Through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1992); Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches* (New York: Knopf, 1987); and in the proceedings of "Political Hebraism: Sources in Early Modern Political Thought," a conference held in Jerusalem under the auspices of the Shalem Center, August 23-26, 2004.

10. My dating refers to the reliance on Jewish sources in European thought. In America, overtly Hebraic political thinking seems to have been acceptable until much later.

11. Petrus Cunaeus, *The Hebrew Republic*, trans. Peter Wyetzner (Jerusalem: Shalem Press, 2005).

12. Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1997), especially chs. 1-3.

13. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C.B. Macpherson (New York: Penguin, 1968), pp. 409-715.

14. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1970), pp. 141-264.

15. Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1979), chs. 4-6, esp. pp. 101, 132, 139.

16. Gottfried Leibniz, "Opinions on the Principles of Pufendorf" (1706), in Leibniz, *Political Writings*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1988), p. 66, cited in Oz-Salzberger, "The Jewish Roots of Western Freedom."

17. This passage begins: "Such an enumeration of religious sects as has just been given should mention a strain of English opinion which was bred in opposition to all of them, but more especially to the pretensions of Presbyterianism.... John Selden may be taken as representing it." Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, p. 415.

18. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, trans. Yosef Or (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1962) [Hebrew]; John Locke, *On Government: Second Treatise*, trans. Yosef Or (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1948). [Hebrew]

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19. Matthew 22:21.
  20. John 18:36.
  21. Numbers Rabba 13; Eruvin 13b; Gitin 6b.
  22. Bava Metzia 59b.

23. For a discussion of religion in the writings of Hobbes and Locke, see A.P. Martinich, *The Two Gods of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes on Religion and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1992); Jeremy Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2002).