

"GAAVAH and ANAVAH":

Pride and Humility in the Jewish Tradition and in Jewish Life Today
(Address at Maimonides School; Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik Lecture Series)

1. Introduction:

- a) Greet Rabbi JJ Schacter; Wish him luck. Grateful to him & Boston J Commy (=Maimonds) for settg up this Instt—t perpetuate memory/tchngs of Rav. He was (& remains) our *validation* as M-O/TuM
- b) Rav postponed begnng *Sheur* ...Spfld. But even then-late bec no left turns...till I gave up makg left turns--& md 3 right turns.... Since, hv also givn up makg right turns... Hope I'm going straight-&-narrow.
- c) As תלמיד of Rav, I am humbled...which leads me into theme: "GAAVAH...
- d) I occasnly lrn about Humlty by havg it imposd on me:
Jerus Hotel: "Lamb not too good last night." "Why? What did he spk about?"
- e) I don't intend מוסר, but לימוד--not admonish/analyze, not preach/שנור in מדות.
- f) Morl attribute we shall focus on=ענוה (humlty/meekss/modesty) & antonym גאווה – ענוה...as in תענון, לא ענוה, עני, עיני, Gen'y: down, lowly, oppressed/deprssd
- g) Reasons for choice of topic:
 - Bec moderns hardly ever discussd/thought about
 - goes against grain mod psychology
 - fundamental to Jsm
 - an essential ingredient of character—touchs each/evry indiv's slf-img/identty

II.

1) **1st Glance**, seems too simple t bother w: humility/ענוה is self-explanatory.
So let me disabuse... Begin by citing SOURCES.

*Bible:(#1): *Bible (#2): *Mishna (#3): *Mishna (#4):

2) **Agreed: Arrogance=insuffrbl**—&=underside of idoltry:if full of self, no place f Gd.
אין אני והוא יכולים לדור בכפיפה אחת. And y=own idol. *Simplistic?*

* Before dismissg this as mother/love/country—**check w רמב"ם—as Rav always did.**

*ס"מ elaborates Theory of Char in דעות 'הל' פרקים, שמנה פרקים, הל' דעות (#10,11-ג,ה,ד,א"ה)

*So: Middle Way ("Goldn Mean")--BT: exceptions—גאווה

3) **My Four Questions on Maimonides:**

a) *is it psychologically desirable?*

b) *mr substnvy*: is it true? שפלות of Mos~he was ignoramus? Is humlty<=>Truth?
והאיש משה ענו מאד <=> אמת ותורתו אמת And: *Rambam himself!*

c) what of (#5) ???

d) How explain absurdty of (#6)??? (*Look who... a nobody...*) Counterft humlty?
והאיש משה ענו מאד And how does Mss hmslf write ענו מאד...

III

3. Now, I hv no way to defend רמב"ם. BUT, fortunly: alternt p-v: רמב"ם (#7):
 רמב"ם holds 2 kinds ענוה: 1, as רמב"ם, but not to extreme;
 other—refusal take up cudgels own behalf (as in story Miriam/Aaron)

*explain רמב"ם (based Wm Frank): diff'ce betw ענוה / שפלות: **HUMILITY/M'KSS**
 ***Meekss**=thoroughly honest, but yields to demands שלום; in Mos's case, שלום בית

***So, acc רמב"ם**, no 4 Qs:

a) psychy OK; b) no conflict ענוה & אמת; & Moss can say of self: ענוה;
 c) even G-d=ענו; d) legit t say: "I'm man of ענוה."

Accordingly: ענוה-m'kness not only not presuppose weak self-image(שפלות),
 but demands strong/realis'c sense self—midway betw שפלות / גאווה. So: (#8) —
 This-case of רמב"ם type ענוה—meekss—and is founded on גבורה....

So רמב"ם: * agrees gen theory char, * 1 form ענוה=humlty, & OK if mod't,
 nt שפלות-extreme; *othr=ענוה-meekss, self-control in face temptation t lash out

5. Support רמב"ם: While רמב"ם proof txt~ (#3), רמב"ם~(#4): בפני כל אדם

6. **LATER SOURCES**—**Musar**=mr austere רמב"ם view—expected of didactic
 outlook. Anti-גאווה=staple J ethcl thought. Pervades both Hasc/Mitngdc lit. Thus--
Mitngdm: חסידות--הגור"ח מוולוז'ין --nocholrly hubris, superciliousness, snobbism
Hasm: צוואת הריב"ש: אפשר מתוך לשמה יבא של"ל
 (both forms arrogance=failure many *our* schools!!)

But in Has lit-greatr symphy רמב"ם view (ענוה, not שפלות). **Reason**: Js thn already
 inferior/abandond/lowly. Thn, morl task Lp=encrg, lift sprts, grtr self-esteem.

Thus **R. Zadok** (#9) —ambivalnc on גאווה: pride=both good/evil. In heart must=humble,
 his pride must be *used*, not *crushed*.. This view articulates w >רמב"ם. Rambam/Levitas

7. **TIME**: I-o bttr undsrtn this view ענוה=m'kness, go bck t 2 paradigms:
 ABR & MSS--**ABR**: *tension* גאווה & ענוה: in debate w Gd (#1) ואנכי עפר ואפר
 Yet: *challenges G-d!* חלילה לך 1st=ענוה, 2nd=גאווה. M'k'ss fits in better>Humlty

MOSES: In Miriam-Aaron incdnt, was *meek*. But also—truly *humble* in self-assessmnt:
 (#13)—אסאפוקר/רשי.... *M ws meekst man in world, also most humble--bt no wimp!*

IV

8. Past couple yrs attempt apply רמב"ם's model t contempy matters.

Tried demonstrate it applies not only t individl char but t collectv char & therefore t
 comml policy. I : רמב"ם's thought→"Moderationism"—moder'n as policy, not only
 as attribute of personality.

In tht sense, רמב"ם (gen. Philo char)hs grt deal teach us. Innoculates vs virus Extremism.

In comml terms: גאווה towrds others=repugnant, & we must rejt every form
 triumphlsm, even when "riding high"... Orthxy tody-on rise, but...

Diff't shuls/schools—humble/arrogant....

9. Likewise, we hv much t learn fr רמב"ם's view of ענוה-meekss.... We in J commy—
 too quick/prone t denounce/blame--or even defend selves. Egos over-involved.
Excessive pride→ t disdain criticism/dismiss it.

Excessive humility→ t cower/ submit w nothing mr thn a whimper;

EX: Zeide... Willy Frank

EX: Rav=role model: good sense slf. ST: "I'm already 'made', Mr. Spiegel."

Yet delightd whn stdnt succflly challeng: *Shulman*. That=ענוה-meekss!!

10. **TIME**: But *beware!* even meekss can b taken t extreme! (#12)—Kamtza
R. Zecharia b. Avkolos...R. Yochanan: His meekss grew into legal fastidiousness...*fear*
take respy...threat of slippery slope...and that→ *churban!!*

In comml terms as in indiv humans, that means we must simultnslly reject arrogance & abjure the weakness of defeatism!

11. **SUMMARIZE**: Maimonidean view character: Middle Way. But excpn:

גאווה-ענוה-שפלות (humlty)

רמב"ן appears t agree to רמב"ם's gen view char, but disagrees 2 points: ענוה = meekss, not humlty; is seprt qualty. & גאווה-humlty=mr desirabl>extreme of שפלות. But all: גאווה=objectnbl.

12. **TIME**: **RAV (Detroit '50's)**-not static-math'l interp רמב"ם, but: dynamic; depends circumstncs: So: tension גאווה ~ ענוה (in both defintns). *Show know whn choose which?*

[Perhaps Rav agrees] R. Zadok —need both--גאווה & ענוה (*humlty*); both in tension;
So: in inner heart—enough pride t blv tht y're impt to G-d; & enough humlty t recognz own marginality; so behave w modesty towards others. And *meekss* at all times
Every person must choose whn t exrecise גאווה, when ענוה .

Our ענוה towards others—leads us to blv in others & not disdain them
Our גאווה is expressed in Midrash: שמאמין בברואיו