Personal Theology

Arthur Green

I would like to address you, both hearers and readers, from an inner place, that is not the locus of most rabbinical convention speeches or journal articles. My opening for this address is Psalm 42:8: שמים אל השמים חיה על כל מ謝ם עלי עלי עלי עלי, which I will translate for our purpose as “Depth calls out to depth, a voice seeking your channels, as all the mighty waves and breakers pass over us.” By this I mean to say that I want to speak, trusting that they will find a channel, a way into your hearts as well. Let all the crashing waves of our seas’ surface pass right over us, and enter with me into תheritance, our shared deep “undersea” places.

The topic I was asked to discuss here is “Personal Theology.” Because I was originally not given a full description of what was meant by this pregnant phrase, I have been allowing it to roll around in my mind for these past several months, and now I will want to talk about it in several ways, which will hopefully all come together.

First is the need for a rabbi to have his/her own theological stance. In the course of your rabbinic education—hopefully an ongoing process throughout your lives—you encounter many compelling teachers and visions of reality. What do you take from them? What do you reject? What does your own experience as person, as Jew, or as rabbi cause you to question, or perhaps refine in a personal way? What is the unique window into Judaism that you and you alone can offer to a congregant, a seeker, a potential convert? This sorting out of readings, teachings, and positions eventually will coalesce into what may be called a rabbi’s personal theology.

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I would say that this need to have a personal theology, one that I fully endorse, is secondary, however, to another more basic need. That is the need to have a personal religious life. The point may seem obvious, but it is truly not so. Let me spend a bit of time explaining what I mean by the rabbi’s need to have a religious life.

As you all know, we liberal rabbis minister to a highly secularized Jewish community. With the notable exception of some Jews-by-choice, personal piety is not a common phenomenon among those who join our congregations. As you also know, it is especially around the life cycle and the quest for legacy—something to pass on to the next generation—that Jews find themselves turning to rabbis and synagogue communities. The birth of a child, education in the tradition, celebration of life’s milestones, tragic losses of life or misfortune, the aging and illness of parents, death and mourning—all of these bring Jews back from their secular pursuits to seek out wisdom and consolation from their tradition, and the personal support and affection of rabbis and other clergy.

Rabbis are expected to meet Jews in such moments with empathy, drawing on a deep well of caring, having an ability to give and to be present to people with whom they otherwise may have little relationship. At such times the traditional phrases of piety do not suffice, nor does the attempt at purely intellectual teaching. The rabbi has to be seen, above all, as genuine, truly caring, and not merely professional. Indeed “professionalism” at such times can be seen as “slick” or superficial.

The ability to be present as a full human being in such moments can only come out of the rabbi’s own inner religious or spiritual life. To live a life of giving to others, you need to be nourished by God’s presence in your own life. Otherwise your well will quickly run dry. To hold people, in their pain as well as in their joy, to pastor in an almost literal sense, you as a rabbi have to be able to draw on a great, indeed endless, reservoir of strength, which is really not your own at all, but God’s, in which you are rooted by your own faith. For a rabbi, cultivating and probing the depths of spiritual life is nothing less than a survival skill.

So teaching students to become rabbis, helping each one grow into his or her own rabbinate, as we like to say it, includes instructing them on how to develop their own inner lives. This includes prayer, both communal and personal. Spiritual direction and counseling also have a place. Continuing all of these throughout your
rabbinate should help keep you open to that reservoir of strength and inspiration. But in our tradition the inner life is also very much nurtured by study of the sources, learned and discussed in open-hearted ways, so that each rabbi’s spiritual life is rooted directly in the text and language of the ages. The rabbinate is the Western world’s original tradition of lifelong learning. Staying close to Torah as a great font of living waters should be an ongoing source of nurture to our own inner gardens, hence to the rich plantings we can pass on to others. A personal theology is not only a series of positions on key issues, and hence cannot be taught in theology courses alone. Rather it is our reflection on our own inner lives, an attempt to understand where we are, each of us, in our own Jewish growth and what we experience within ourselves, including both the presence and absence of God. A theology divorced from the inner life becomes a barren exercise of mind.

This brings us to a second sense of personal theology. Each of our theologies, whether we realize it or not, is in part an articulation of our own journeys through life, amplified through the medium of tradition’s voice. Jewish theology in its most native form is narrative theology. Neither the Torah nor the Talmud articulates a concept of God. They tell us stories about the One who called to Abraham, about the One who brought us forth from Egypt, about the One we encountered standing before the mountain. “Do you want to know the One who spoke the world into being?” asks the Talmud. “Then study aggadah: narrative, stories.”

We share a common story. We are all Jews. All of us, in each generation, as we recite at the seder, came out of Egypt. To someone who unexpectedly seems close to us, feels like a soul sister, we will say “We must have been standing next to each other at Mount Sinai.” (There was, you see, mixed seating, or at least mixed standing, at Sinai.) Not that this is history, of course, but that is entirely beside the point. It is ourstory. The point is best expressed in Buberian language. It may not be “his-story,” in the impersonal third person objective sense, but when turned into first person plural it is “ourstory,” and that’s what matters. Our shared mythology. “That’s our story, and we’re stickin’ with it!”

But each of us then takes that collective story and makes it our own, individually and uniquely. Yes, you too have come out of Egypt, or need still to come out of Egypt, or, most likely, both. What is the particular גיא, narrow strait, that comprises your
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With whom can you talk about that? Might you dream of a religious community where you could be challenged to ask—and free to answer—such a personal question? Part of the classic rabbinic definition of a רון in Avot de-Rabbi Nathan’s comment on רון is one מנה מת電視ו pelo למורה, one “before whom you can reveal all the secrets of your heart.” That sort of “spiritual friendship” is what my ideal of תורה is really all about.

What is my Egypt? How will I come out of it? I am particularly moved by a comment of Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav on the phrase יד ושם. “They made no provisions for the way.” When you’re about to leave Egypt, he says, don’t stop to ask “But how will I make a living out there?” If you do, you’ll never get out.

Another passage: God calls you and says לך לך לך, go forth, for your own sake, following Rashi, or go unto your true self, in the Chasidic reading. But how does that work in my own life? What is my journey? Where will I find my promised land? What if I don’t? How many times will I have to go back and forth to the נגב, that place of dryness, before and even after I get there?

Or another: I am there with Mother Rivka, the first person of whom we are told רבי. What do I mean by seeking out the One? What is it that am I seeking? What do I want of God?

A personal Jewish theology, a personal engagement with these stories, makes a great demand of us. Such a reading of Torah forces us to confront the most powerful questions of our lives. But that confrontation is not only demanding. It is entirely intimate as well. These are questions addressed to our most private self, to the place within us that is deeply hidden from most others, protected by defensive walls, often hidden from our own busy selves most of the time. These personal questions, amplified by the echo-chamber of religious language, are all about רבי יוםします של יד רבי יום בין יד ובין יד.

This, then, is the second meaning of personal theology. Not just a theology that belongs to you alone, but one that is all about your most intimate and secret inner places. Yes, theology is in that sense a personal enterprise. If I share my theology with you, I am sharing something of my deepest self.

If I have spent a Shabbat at your congregation, you have heard me share my interpretation of לך. I call it a flirtation song with the שמחהヘル. I do not believe, you see, that the “extra soul”
we have on Shabbat comes floating down from heaven at 3:42 in the winter season or 7:29 in the middle of summer (at least in our Boston climate!). I believe that soul, the most intimate and therefore vulnerable part of ourselves, is there within us all week long. But it is afraid to come out. It fears being trampled by the pace at which we live, shouted down by the loudness of our encounters in the hustle-bustle of ordinary life, of המלך והמלך. But on רבי שבת we promise it: “It’s all right. You can come out now. I promise, for the next twenty-four hours, to live at a slower pace. No rushing, no fighting, no screaming. No despair over the stock market or the business cycle. I promise not to get depressed by watching politicians on television. It’s safe in my Shabbat world; you can come out now.” So we say to her נשמה, anima (in a text originally written by and for men)

... הנני, ממרך כהן... ור לְ שֶבָּת בְּצָמַךְ הַבֵּכוֹר... הנני, ונוֹלְךָ... מָה נַשָּׁנָהָךְ... לא תַבְשִׂי ולא תַכּלְךָ

We say to this vulnerable (hence; feminine) place within the soul: Come out of hiding. Let me, the conscious self, join with you, the hidden soul-self, in this mystical marriage, as God unites with Israel, as heaven unites with newly created earth. Let us all become whole together. Personal theology: a theology of intimacy.

But there is a third meaning of personal theology that we cannot avoid discussing here, and this may be the true heart of our investigation. I refer to the theology of God as divine person. The Personhood of God, to take the title of my teacher Yochanan Muffs’s beautiful little book on the subject. In my case, I need to ask what we still mean by such designations, indeed how we can use them at all, once we accept that all our personified images of God may be seen as projections from the human onto the divine. Does such awareness mean a rejection of all such language and its emotional content? If so, where do we go as religious Jews? Is there still an attachment possible to the God-language of our Torah that will make for a sense of continuity? What do we say to the critic who says, as one did upon reading my Radical Judaism, that “[his] God bears little or no real relationship to the God of Israel.” The fact that the same was said of the Rambam as well as Mordecai Kaplan is of some comfort, but insufficient as a response.
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I want to tie this back to our prior elucidations of personal theology and talk about the connection between them. Can one be personal about one’s religious life without personifying? Can there be intimacy with a God who remains abstract, even elusive, the God of אֱלֹהִים אָבִי? Or can we give ourselves permission to personify again in a post-critical mode? If religion is all about that which makes us human, how can we invoke the notion of אלוהים without falling back into a religious language that does not reflect what we really believe?

If this talk sounds more like a שָׁתִי in selected texts than a lecture, you will understand the way I seek to do Jewish theology. I read the sources from within, weaving them together and seeking to stretch them, to make them open enough to embrace the meaning I find within them, rather than applying them to a structure that comes from without. In this (as in some other matters) I am a devotee of the Zohar rather than the Rambam, R. Nachman of Bratzlav rather than Moses Mendelssohn or Hermann Cohen, Heschel rather than Kaplan. I fully acknowledge that I am “working” the sources, seeking to pull them in the direction I want them to go. But I have come to understand that in the course of that intense engagement I am giving them the power to “work” me as well. Pulling the tradition in my own direction is an act of engagement, one in which I of necessity make myself vulnerable to being pulled as well. As a darshan, you do not work the cold magic of interpretation on inanimate sources to make them say what you want. You rather engage with tradition as a living body, either as Jacob wrestling with the angel or as the troubadour suitor of that maiden high in the tower who, according to the Zohar, reveals her face only to the one who truly loves her. We wrest meaning from the text in a struggle that is also an act of love. Indeed I sometimes wonder about Jacob, supposedly the most beautiful human since Adam, and that all-nighter with the angel, twin, or alter ego. Wrestling or making love? Are we sure we know where the border lies? Straddling that border between wrestling and lovemaking defines our relationship with the tradition, maybe even with God.

One of my current favorite p’sukim of the Torah comes up in a surprising place, the end of פרשה ה, Exodus 29:46:

וַיִּשְׁתַּחַז בְּאֶלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אָבִי, וַיִּנְסָרוּ לְאֶלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אָבִי. מַאֲרוּחַ מִשְׁחָטָן לָשׁכִּן, בוֹצֵכָם אֵצָרָם אֱלֹהִים.
Read in the Chasidic mode: Whatever Egypt you have come out of, you have been brought forth by God. Realize that! You have been liberated from that מצר, that constraint, narrowing, or squeeze—even if it was the squeeze of unhealthy religion—because God seeks you out as a dwelling-place. Know that your freedom has come about to give you the opportunity to fashion your life as a מוש, a home for the משכן, not just “in their midst,” but within each of them.

Yet the Psalmist saysมองי שמות אלה ייהילו והיה. You have been a dwelling-place for us in each generation. This is one of the verses quoted when the Rabbis sayוהוה מקומו של עלות ואיך החולם מקומנו. We dwell within God, are surrounded by God, rather than the other way around.

Can both of these be true? Can we fashion and be God’s dwelling while we also dwell within God? As rational propositions, it would seem not. The law of contradictions would seem to apply. Either we dwell in God or God dwells in us. But in experiential terms, these two only represent different modes of religious experience: the One who seems to embrace us and surround us from without, becoming our dwelling, and the One that wells up from within, seeking a home within our heart, are the same One.
seeking to come in? Logical contradiction has no place here; we are seeing the same experience from two angles, both of which are psychologically and spiritually quite real.

Those of you who grew up in traditional synagogues will remember one of my very favorite liturgical texts, 

In Israel Zangwill’s classic translation:

They told of Thee, but not as Thou must be.
Since from Thy work they tried to body Thee.
To countless visions did their pictures run,
Behold through all the visions Thou art one.

In Thee old age and youth at once were drawn,
The grey of eld, the flowing locks of dawn.
The ancient judge, the youthful warrior,
The man of battles, terrible in war.

The poem is based on a series of midrashim claiming Israel saw God twice: at the Reed Sea God appeared to them as a youth, while at Sinai they saw God as an elder. The context determines the way God is seen. Who wants to be led in battle by a tottering old God? But who wants to receive law and wisdom from a young whipper-snapper of a deity? Some versions of this trope fashion it around the Torah’s "אתים וארית אתים וארית אתים" (Deut. 32:39). Why is this repeated? Just because you see multiple visions, do not think that I am more than one. "אני היא במדבר אני היא במדבר".

Can the same God be both? קמך והנה? But of course! These are different spiritual moments, each with its own needs, like building a house while we dwell within God, like standing before the gate while we ourselves are the closed door.
The midrash is cautious in its language: ... נראית ... “appeared.” Is the change in God or in them? This would seem to make all the difference. Are we talking about grand-scale supernaturalism, the greatest miracle of revelation, that God can know what each heart and each moment needs, then change appearance accordingly? Or are we simply saying that all our images of God are human projections, reflections of our own need?

There is no answer to that question. As in our previous examples, both are true at once. Yes, God creates us in the divine image. Yes, all our images of God are our projected creation. There is a kaleidoscopic hall of mirrors here, but you can look into this kaleidoscope from either end.

Referring to the visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, our Sages said נראית כותל של נביאים ש폰してしまう. “Great is the power of the prophets, who liken the human form to its Creator” (Tanchuma Chukat 6; B’midbar Rabbah 19:3). But that’s not really what the prophets were doing! In their most intense visionary moments—Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1—they were in fact likening the divine form to that of man. But that was perhaps too much for the Sages to acknowledge. So they said it backwards. But the point is that in depicting God in human form, we are uplifting the human rather than diminishing the Divine. Yes, the hall of mirrors can be opened from either end.

Can we try it this way? We are created in the image of God and we are obliged to return the favor.

Let me turn to yet another favorite midrash (B’reishit Rabbah 17:4): YHVH asks Adam to name the animals. You recall that the creation of humans did not win much favor with the angels, apparently God’s unchallenged favorites until then. But God said to them, “Look how smart this new human is! At that, God paraded a series of four-footed creatures across the stage. “What are these?” the divine voice asked. Having no part of the world of flesh and blood, the angels were dumbfounded. Then God asked Adam, “What’s this one? What’s this?” Adam blithely replied, “This is called a dog. This is called a cat.” “And what should you be called?” God asks. Adam replies, “I should be called Adam, earthing, because I was taken from adamah.” “And what should I be called?” God asks.

Now this is the great moment. The human is being asked to name the Divine, to give YHVH, breathy abstraction itself, an identity, a way of being known, becoming manifest in the human
realm. Adam could have said anything. But without missing a beat, he said, "You should be called Lord, for You are Lord over all your works." It is we, in other words, who have set up the master/servant relationship with the Divine, clearly a projection from human society. Why? Because that was what we needed: someone before whom to bow, to whose authority to submit. It was not that God needed—or needs—to be Master; it was rather we who needed to be subjects.

Do you see what I'm doing here? I'm suggesting a theology that sees through the personal, understands that it is all metaphor, and yet remains affectionately bound to it. Demythologize and remythologize. Both the Rambam and the Zohar understood that the reality of YHVH lies beyond all description in human terms. Maimonides chose the apophatic path: saying less about God is saying more. Purify your theological language, attempt to come as close as you can to the abstract truth. Get rid of myth. The Zohar, recognizing the same truth and inadequacy of language, takes the opposite strategy. Drown them in metaphor! Make everything a metaphor. Of course God is an elder on the throne—Daniel saw Him that way! But so too is God mother, warrior, sun and moon, fountain and river, myrtle branch and etrog, bridegroom and bride. With so much metaphor, and with the metaphors switching back and flowing together at every moment, you couldn’t possibly freeze a single one of them and mistake it for the truth. Dress the mystery of YHVH up in an endless variety of mythic garments of glory.

I recognize that this series of human metaphors is the Rabbis’ way—our way—of giving texture to the intimacy of religious experience. Personal theology requires that. Religious experience, taking us to our most intimate and vulnerable places, demands a language that can speak to our human, all-too-human self. Nothing less than the language of person will do. We give to God the greatest gift we know how to give: that of our humanity.

I proceed with lessons from two Abraham Joshua Heschels, both having very much to do with this sense of personal theology. The first is from the Apter Rav, Professor Heschel’s ancestor, the founder of the line. On Deuteronomy’s (10:12) אֶלְבָּשׁ—What does YHVH your God ask of you?—he noted that the word אֶלְבָּשׁ is numerically 45. So too is the word בְּנֵךְ. The simpler Chasidim, when they heard this, must have understood him to be saying: God wants you to be a mensch.
But to his closer disciples—one of them quotes this in his name—he said that he was referring to the Adam of Ezekiel’s vision. An image like that of man was upon the chariot. What does God want of you? Adam! That is the Adam God wants of you—that you place the image of man atop the chariot. Yes, projection is a mitzvah.

His great-great-grandson, surely not by coincidence, published a book of poems entitled \textit{DUXSQYRDUJVtDEJQ}, \textit{Man: the Divine Name}. The greatest lesson I learned from Heschel, with whom I had the privilege of studying quite closely, came as \textit{YSNJFDYUX}. “Why,” I heard him ask, “is the Torah seemingly so obsessed with the problem of graven images?” If (with the Maimonideans) you believe it is because God has no image, then all these images are merely errors. But why, then, is idolatry such a great sin? The point, he said, is that God indeed \textit{does} have an image. You, a human being, are God’s image. You cannot \textit{make} God’s image; you can only \textit{be} God’s image. The medium in which you need to do that encompasses the canvas of your entire life. To take anything less than a full living, breathing person and declare it God’s image is \textit{XQVYW\JQN}, to diminish God’s image in the world. That is the true sin of idolatry.

You will have noticed, since I have been quoting old Rabbinic and Chasidic sources, that all the varied images until now are those of males. But of course there need to be female images as well, and not just because it is politically correct to say so. I am a disciple of Ben Azzai, who told his friend Rabbi Akiva that he had a greater principle on which to base the Torah than “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Ben Azzai’s נא עליה מלחמה was Genesis 5:1–2, \textit{This Torah is the book of human generations . . . as they—or we—were made in God’s image, created male and female.”} (We don’t know, of course, where Ben Azzai meant to end that proof-text, but I insist on reading him this way.)

Yes, this means that men and women are both equally created in God’s image. But I take it to mean more than that: All of us, created in God’s image, are both male and female. \textit{Not אברם בראש (יואל \textit{בראש). Read not: “He created them all, male and female,” but: “He created them all male and female!”} Feminine images of the deity are not needed only by women. In the deeper spirit of third-wave feminism, all of us are both male and female, and we respond to images of both genders in complex and subtle ways.
The kabbalists were masters of the subtle use of this gender-based complexity. That is one of the things I learn from them, though adapting it to our very different egalitarian values. Among the clusters of symbols (s’firot) that constitute the heart of kabbalistic language, none is as fully developed as that of the tenth, called ש Bounty ממלכת or בנסת ירשא. The mystics have built upon a well-known Rabbinic designation for the indwelling God, שבטיה, that happens to be grammatically feminine, but is nowhere in the old Rabbinic sources described in female terms. In identifying her with בנסת ירשא, an idealized representation of the Jewish people, long described in קדושת תｼריא as the bride of God, they create a female hypostasis, a divine entity that is part of the one indivisible God (they insist on their monotheism, after all!), and yet longs for Him, goes into exile with Israel, weeps for Her children in the persona of רחל or ירושלים, and all the rest. She stands in a liminal place between the upper and lower worlds. When seen from above, from the viewpoint of the mysterious One, She is purely receptive, receiving the flow of divine blessing like an empty receptacle, the sea into whom all the rivers flow, the moon receiving the light of the sun. But when seen from below, from our earthly perspective, ש ירשא is compassionate mother of all life, God as sustainer and nurturer, the One through whom all blessings flow. It is not accidental that this transformative development in Jewish theology took place in thirteenth-century Christian Spain. My article on the subject is entitled “Shekhinah, the Virgin Mary, and the Song of Songs.” That tells you a great deal, but for our purposes it is just a long historical footnote. I celebrate the fact that Judaism has been enriched through contact with other traditions.

The real meaning of “male” and “female” in kabbalistic language is what they call ממקלי ממקלי and ממקלי ממקלי, giver and receiver, so-called active and passive partners, to use the metaphor of human sexuality, but those terms are hardly adequate. As lovers, we know that we are all both givers and receivers, indeed that our own greatest pleasure may lie in giving to the other in ways that entirely blur the clarity of who is giving and who is receiving. Let us not be too embarrassed or prudish to learn from that lesson. It is true in other forms of love as well, including our love relationship with God, as the kabbalists insist.

We human creatures are receivers, and we need to recognize that. God blows the breath of life into Adam’s nostrils, an act
that is repeated in each birth, indeed in each moment, with every breath we take. Life is a gift; \( YHVH, \) \( 
 repeated in each birth, indeed in each moment, with every breath we take. Life is a gift; \( YHVH, \) the breath of all life, is \( קמ"ק \) and we are all \( יקנודע \). This is the usual midrash on \( שיר השירים \). Gratitude is the beginning of religious consciousness.

But that is only the first step. The purpose of Kabbalah is to turn us all into \( גיבורים \), givers. The true goal of religious awareness, of our inward journey, is to awaken and activate the source of divinity within the self, the God who is immanent within our souls. Gratitude leads us toward this inner awakening, the discovery of our \( קנודע \), longing to be joined to her source in the mysterious beyond of \( YHVH \). Bringing out and cultivating this inner point, making it the object of the way we live, fashioning our lives after it, is all part of what it means to be a religious person. It is \textit{personal theology}!

In the interpersonal domain, \( רשון \) especially, this means discovering that generosity of spirit is our true natural state. There are psychological studies to back this up, but we know it as religious people; it is a truth revealed to us. We are here to become givers. We are obliged to give back, to the human community as a whole as well as to all the more specific communities—including the Jewish community—that have made us who we are, that have blessed us with all the material and cultural gifts we have received.

This sense of becoming a giver recaptures and provides a much-needed spiritual foundation for the entire agenda of \( תקן \), in which the Reform Movement has shown such great leadership. Those of you who know and read me are aware that I am a strong supporter of that agenda. I accept no either/or between the revival of Jewish spirituality and our understanding that we are judged by our worldly deeds. But also in the spiritual domain, \( רשון \), there is a way of giving back to the One who gives us life. That has to do with the mystery of \( חננה \), the direction of our spiritual energies. Life, like breathing, is a great circle. We receive; we give back. \( כל נשמה תהלי י-ה \), every breath goes back to \( Yod Hei \), the highest divine name, the deepest inner divine place, which is also \( י \) \( נשמה \) \( כל \) ever breathing that breath back out into us, renewing the first breath of life. In a startling reading of the well-known Hallel verse (Ps. 118:23), the Maggid of Mezritch declares \( ונלאת בכענית \) \( נמא \) \( חיה \) \( יא \) \( יא \) to mean “\( YHVH, \) the Giver, has turned into a \textit{zot}, a female, a receiver. How wondrous in our eyes!”? Yes, we are capable of giving; God is capable of receiving our blessing.
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Here we have arrived at the fourth and final way in which theology is personal, the one that unites them all. God looks into us and finds a mirror, divinity reflected back, offered by each of us in our own unique way. For those of you who know my favorite Rabbi Nachman story, each of us brings back our own portrait of the king. We embody the divine persona. I do not fear incarnational language, as long as it is about all of us, not just one of us. We are the image of God because we contain a font of divinity, flowing forth from within, to be a reflection of God’s presence in the world. In us the divine is inexorably attached to a fact that makes us subject to terrible temptations, but also leads to the greatest exaltation of the divine/human spirit, the ultimate moment of personal theology.

Notes

1. In the gap between the oral and written versions of this essay, I note that the recently appeared Festschrift for Neil Gillman is also (and most appropriately!) entitled Personal Theology (Boston: Academic Press, 2013). My article there, “A Neo-Hasidic Credo,” may be seen as a companion to this piece.
8. I discuss it in Tormented Master (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1979), 355–60. It also serves as the Introduction to Seek My Face (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2003). I have recently had a third opportunity to reflect on it in Roe Horen, ed., Ha-Hayyim ke-Ga’agu’a (Tel Aviv: Yedi’ot, 2010), 91–99 [Hebrew].