

Preface

One of the least common ideas discussed in traditional Yeshivot is God. Little time is set aside to analyze and understand the ways in which He interacts with the world.

Another idea which is a mystery to the average Yeshiva student is how the Torah and laws developed into the rich body of texts that we have today. The relationship between Written and Oral Torah is rarely discussed.

One of the underlying causes of this lack is that the traditional books of Jewish philosophy are often overlooked. Occasionally modern texts are read, such as *Michtav Me'Eliyahu* or *Sifsei Chaim*, but the Jewish 'classics' such as *Moreh Nevuchim*, *Chovos HaLevavos* and *Emunos v'Deos* are usually overlooked.

To fill this gap, Rabbi Dr. Meir Triebitz has created a learning environment which is virtually unique in Jerusalem. He has gathered a group of young talmidei chachamim and together they examine critical issues in Jewish philosophy and hashkafa, using primarily the classics of Jewish medieval philosophy.

The *Hashkafa Circle* has developed and expanded over the past 2 years. During that time critical issues in contemporary and medieval

Jewish philosophy and hashkafa have been studied, leading to a deeper and more rounded understanding of Jewish thought.

This journal brings together some of the articles that have been produced by Rabbi Triebitz and the members of the *Hashkafa Circle*. It fills a perceived gap in traditional learning. We hope that this will make a contribution to the knowledge base and encourage others to examine the issues and ideas of traditional Judaism.

This journal primarily covers two topics. The first four articles examine various concepts of the relationship between God and His creation. This is surely one of the most fundamental issues with which any believing Jew must struggle.

The last three articles address the development of Rabbinic law, from Sinai to the Talmud. They primarily focus on the Rambam's concept of *divrei soferim* and offer a history and understanding of this term.

The members of the *Hashkafa Circle* wish to express their tremendous thanks to the individuals and organization who continue to support them. May the merit of the Torah learning and other worthy causes that they support give them much blessing and success always.

Thanks are also due to Matty Lichtenstein, Rachel Kalen and Shari Feld for burning the midnight oil to ensure that this journal was ready by publication time.

We hope that you enjoy this journal. Please send any comments or feedback, or any articles for publication in future editions to hashkafacircle@gmail.com.

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Adar 5768, Yerushayalim.