

Bnei Noach and Shituf

Can you associate G-d with “something else”?

Existence of G-d

Rambam, Laws of Fundaments of Torah, 1:1-3



- The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of wisdom is to know that there is a **Primary Being** who brought into being all existence. All the beings of the heavens, the earth, and what is between them came into existence only from the truth of His being.
- If one would imagine that He does not exist, no other being could possibly exist.
- If one would imagine that none of the entities aside from Him exist, He alone would continue to exist, and the nullification of their [existence] would not nullify His existence, because all the [other] entities require Him and He, blessed be He, does not require them nor any one of them. Therefore, the truth of His [being] does not resemble the truth of any of their [beings].

Oneness of G-d

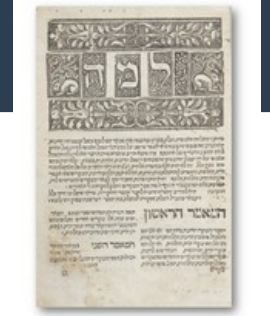


- This God is one. He is not two or more, but one, unified in a manner which [surpasses] any unity that is found in the world (Rambam, Laws of Fundamentals of Torah, 1:7)
- He, blessed be He, is the One to serve and exalt, and to make His greatness known, and to observe His precepts, and not to do so to those who are below in existence: the angels, the stars ... because they are all actors by nature in their actions: they have no judgment or choice, only He, blessed be He. It is also not appropriate to serve them as intermediaries to approach Him, but only to Him should the thoughts be focused and leave all else.

(Rambam, Commentary to the Mishna,
Introduction to Perek Chelek, Fifth principle)

Sefer HaIkrim

R. Iosef Albo, 4:17



- **Why pray to G-d? Four reasons:**

- He is unchanging, so that its goodness does not change.
- He doesn't need the help of others. If He needed help, His goodness would not be assured.
- He has the capacity of giving opposites at the same time. Otherwise, the receiver could not get what it expects at all times, because sometimes a person needs one thing, and someone else needs the opposite of it.
- Nothing can prevent Him from doing its will.

What is Shituf - Association?



- It is the idea that G-d delegated some of His power to other creatures.
- Is it allowed?
 - The commandment of the unification of God: That we were commanded to believe that God, may He be blessed — Who is the Mover of all existence, the Master of everything — is one **without any association**, as it is stated (Deuteronomy 6:4), “Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.” (Sefer HaChinuch, 417)
 - Naomi told Rut, when she insisting in converting: “It is forbidden for us to do idolatry”. (Ievamot 47b). Sounds from here some proof of the prohibition on Shituf (Sefer Mitzvot Hashem, Mitzva 26)
 - We don’t find that it is forbidden to swear in the name of G-d **and something else** for Bnei Noach (Rama, Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim, 156 from Tosafot Sanhedrin 63b, “Asur”, Ran end of first chapter of Avoda Zara and others)

Why would it be allowed?



- And if you ask, why is it permitted for them? ...
All the souls of the nations come from the World of Asia,
and there is only a faint light of Holiness to be found...
Therefore they must believe in G-d. But the flow of
energy to them flows from the “appointed” ones of
each nation and they are subject to them...
(Mikdash Melech to Zohar, Part 3, 286b)

Honor your parents



- **Honor your father and your mother** (Shmot 20:12)
 - began with the father, who is to his children as the Creator who associates in the creation, for G-d is our first Father, and the begotten is our last father (Ramban, commentary to the Torah)
- **Maybe to honor the 70 angels would be like honoring parents?**
 - Even though the nations of the world were not forbidden to associate G-d with something else, they were certainly not commanded to do so, G-d forbid. Regarding father and mother, we were commanded to honor and fear them. The reason for this is understood, because the 70 ministers don't have free will, like the rest of the angels, but, since the energy to the nations comes from the 70 ministers, it gives rise to their error, and they were not warned against making that error.
Look at Rashi on Devarim 4:19 (Likutei Sichot, vol. 16, p. 555)

Rashi on Devarim 4:19



- **And when you look up to the sky and behold the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them. These your God יהוה allotted to other peoples everywhere under heaven**
 - **AND LEST THOU LIFT UP THINE EYES** to ponder on the matter, and to set your heart to go astray after them.
 - **WHICH THE LORD ASSIGNED** to give light to them (to all peoples) (Megillah 9b). — *Another explanation:* which God assigned to them as **deities**; He did not prevent them from going astray after them, but He allowed them to err (to slip) through vain speculations, in order to drive them out from the world. Similarly it states, (Psalms 36:3) "He (God) made him err (slip) through his eyes (i.e. through what his eyes behold) until his iniquity be found and he be hated" (Avodah Zarah 55a).

Conclusion



- **Belief on G-d is a commandment for Bnei Noach**
 - Is not on the list of Seven because it's positive commandment (Sanhedrin 58b)
- **This belief includes many details** (Sefer Mitzvot Hashem, Mitzva 26)
 - Unity
 - Renewed world
 - Creation something from nothing
 - Punishment and reward
 - Divine providence
- **Shituf**
 - Opinions that say it is forbidden
 - Opinions that say it is allowed
 - **The Rebbe:** it is allowed, but not a behavior that likes G-d (and will be punished!)