

## APPENDIX

# Revolutionary Doctrine

## ISRAEL'S THIRTEEN PRINCIPLES OF FAITH

*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*

— Psalm 42:3

*What is most essential to emphasize at this point is that the fundamental principles of our faith are embraced in thirteen basic principles.* — Maimonides<sup>1</sup>

**A**fter finishing with idolatry, we need to attend to idolatry's opposite. If you try to break Revelation down into its fewest common elements, or consistent core ideas, you come out with just Thirteen Principles.\* These are the underlying doctrines of the Hebrew Revolution.

They can be divided into three groups. The first five set out Israel's theology:

- 1) God exists.
- 2) He is one.
- 3) He is spirit, not matter.
- 4) He is eternal.
- 5) He alone may be worshipped.

The next four deal with the inspiration, or Revelation, of the Written and the Oral Torah:

- 6) God communicates with humanity through His prophets.
- 7) Moses is and was unique among all God's other prophets.
- 8) The Lord Revealed His Law — His Torah — through Moses.
- 9) His Law is eternal and immutable — the Law won't be replaced by another set of laws.

The last four go to man's responsibility, and reward and punishment:

- 10) The All-Knowing One knows every action and every thought.
- 11) He rewards those who obey His will and punishes those who reject Him.
- 12) Before the Earth ends, the Messiah will come.
- 13) Some of the dead will live again.

Israel has collectively accepted these Thirteen Principles, which are restated in every Hebrew *Siddur*, or prayerbook, and repeated in the daily Hebrew prayers.<sup>2</sup>

Naturally, every Ben Noah — every non-Jew — need not personally subscribe to each and every Principle. Even though Israel believes that one needs no inspiration but only logic to distill them from Revelation for oneself.

Correct knowledge of God has never been one of the minimal requisites of decent human conduct. But study, and logic, always lead back to these same Thirteen Principles.

Most of the commentary below follows the classic commentaries of Maimonides.<sup>3</sup>

I believe with perfect faith. . . . — *Siddur*<sup>4</sup>