

Joseph Soloveitchik (1903 – 1993), rabbi and philosopher, one of the most important representatives of modern Jewish Orthodoxy, has made an attempt to translate traditional Jewish religious concepts in the language of modern science and philosophy. As a philosopher, he was versed in the Neo-Kantian philosophy of the Marburg School, as a rabbi he was under the influence of the so-called Analytical School, founded in Eastern Europe by members of his family. From the philosophical heritage of Neo-Kantianism he adopted the emphasis on the pureness of thought, understood as mathematical and scientific, and from the direct Kant's inheritance he endorsed particularly his a priori concept of pure forms of sensible intuition and cognitive categories. The Analytic School affected him through their emphasis on a non-historical analysis of religious concepts, leading to their deeper knowledge, and in the same time establishing a new relation to the Transcendent. In this way, Soloveitchik has rehabilitated religion as a noesis and aimed at its philosophical reflection. The central notion of his religious philosophy is halakhah, traditionally conceived as a set of norms and commandments ruling the life of a practising Jew. In Soloveitchik's view the halakhah has become a philosophical concept, a hermeneutic key to the interpretation of religious experience, supposed to be the very foundation of any perception of reality. ...