and the birth itself and the confinement and all the attendant ailments? (381)

**Ch 11**

The longer a person lives, the greater are his cares and worries and troubles. (386)

The righteous servant of God, therefore, loves the life of this world merely because it serves as a stepladder by means of which he reaches and ascends to the next world, not for its own sake. Its love has been implanted in man solely in order that he might not kill himself when trouble befalls him. (387)

**Ch 12**

For the orderly control of the world can be effected only by the application of wisdom. They, however, lower the importance of wisdom by making the love of dominion in and by itself [the goal]. (388)

When a person becomes haughty and conceited about his importance, he oversteps the bounds of his rank, and lords it over his fellowmen both near and far, and regards himself as unique among men, and looks down upon the opinion of everyone else, and stubbornly persists in his own view, contesting every other theory. (388)

The only reason, then, that the Creator implanted in the soul of men the love of high position and eminence was that it might thereby be induced to long for the reward of the world to come. (390)

**Ch 14**

Knowledge affords pleasure to the soul… it also heals the soul of ignorance. … it is as nourishing to it as food… it adorns the soul like pearls and jewels worn by kings. (393)

**Ch 16**

Rest is appropriate for man only after great exertion and the disposal of his needs and the preparation of the means of his livelihood…. However, rest in and by itself, without any of these presuppositions, is rest in name only, resulting in laziness. (398)

Furthermore, what about the softening and the heaviness and the swelling of the body and the growth of tumors, and the development of piles and gout, and sciatica, and varicose veins, and the tumid Barbadoes leg, and many other afflictions which are the result purely of idleness? (398)

**Ch 17**

One should rather take from each type of activity the suitable proportion, as dictated by science and religious law. (399)

When, then, he effects a harmonious blend of all these activities in accordance with our suggestion, he will find approval in both worlds. (400)

**Ch 19**

The harmonious blending of the sensations is generally very beneficial to man, how much more must this apply to the balancing of the tendencies of his character and the objects of his striving. (404)

Beyond that point, his attention should be turned to the acquisition of wisdom, to the service of God, and to the establishment of a reputation for goodness and probity. (405)

This entire book can serve a useful purpose only when it is coupled with sincerity of the heart and an earnest striving for its improvement. (407)

Don’t you see that in such matters as things seen and heard and food and drink, much better results are achieved with the help of the concentration of the mind than without it? (408)
other hand, if he sees an instance in which the said impulse should be checked, he must restrain it until the ground for such restraint no longer exists for him. (360)

Any person, then, who follows this course of giving his cognitive faculty dominion over his appetites and impulses, is disciplined by the discipline of the wise (Pr 15:33). (361)

**Ch 3**

Any act practices exclusively constitutes a distortion from what is straight and is lacking in completeness, while in their combination do not constitute a deficiency but rather completion and perfection. (362)

**Ch 4**

Thirteen principal pursuits, namely: abstinence, eating and drinking, sexual intercourse, eroticism, the accumulation of money, children, development of land, longevity, dominion, revenge, wisdom, worship, and rest. (364)

The more a person slakes his thirst therewith, the more intense does his thirst become. (365)

**Ch 5**

Nourishment affords a person extraordinary pleasure. (367)

There would be no rejoicing at the conclusion of nuptials or at a betrothal or a circumcision or a confinement or a festival without food. (368)

As for wine, they say, it is beautiful in color, goodly in fragrance, and pleasant of taste. It renders joyful one who is sad, generous the miserly, and brave the cowardly. (368)

An excess of food also generates faintness and dulls the mind and changes a person’s disposition, inclining him to greediness and voraciousness, so that he does not realize when he is sated. (368)

In fact, he [a glutton] assumes the characteristics of death, which draws all creatures into itself and is never satisfied. (369)

Furthermore, what about the sins committed and the crimes perpetrated, and the abominations and the sanction of what is ugly and the approval of what is forbidden that gradually insinuate themselves into the body of a person solely as a result of his drinking wine? (370)

Hence it befits a person to secure thereof only what is required for subsistence, namely, enough for the sustenance of his body. (371)

Once, however, he has attained what he needs for his subsistence, he should restrain his appetite. (371)

**Ch 6**

This pleasure has nothing that can take its place. It also increases the soul’s gladness and gaiety and makes the body feel lighter, not to speak of the head and the brain. (371)

Sex is the basis of man’s sociability and of friendly relations that come about through it alone. (371)

If sexual intercourse had been something inherently reprehensible, God would have restrained His prophets and messengers from it. (371)

**Ch 7**

This emotional state, therefore, has its appropriate place only in the relationship between husband and wife. They should be affectionate to each other for the sake of the maintenance of the world. (377)

**Ch 8**

All was well with the acquisition of money so long as it comes to a person spontaneously and with ease. (378)

The love of money becomes for him like a consuming fire, like a wilderness, like death or barrenness that are never sated. (378)

And how can one bear to hear the cries of orphans and widows and the poor and the oppressed to whom he who is intent on the accumulation of money pays no attention? (379)

**Ch 9**

Of what benefit are children to a person if he is unable to provide for their sustenance, covering, or shelter? And what is the good of raising them if it will not be productive of wisdom and knowledge on their part? And what use are the pity and sympathy lavished upon them in the absence of these factors unless it be to add to the heartache of the parents? As for their affection and the honor they might confer, how can these things be expected from them if the preliminaries are lacking? Furthermore, what about the pains of pregnancy and the pangs of childbirth
in this world anything more magnificent than this garden in which God caused Adam, peace be upon him, to dwell. (340)

**Ch 6**

For behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy (Is 65:18). It could not have been meant hereby that God was going to renew the creation of Jerusalem, but rather that He would renew his people’s complete rejoicing. (342)

God has created us to be creatures of joy. (342)

The reason that motivated God’s wisdom, when it caused humanity to dwell on earth, in making the distinction between night and day, which is the result of the peregrinatio of the sun and its movement, was merely in order that they might employ the daytime in working for their livelihood and other occupations and spend the night in relaxation, rest, cohabitation, the practice of solitude, and similar pastimes. (343)

**Ch 9**

In the case of those destined for punishment there will be no meeting… on account of the separation produced by their suffering and their preoccupation with themselves. (352)

**Ch 11**

Israel will then be endowed with the gift of prophetic revelation and minds will be free to dedicate themselves to the quest of wisdom and their characters will have been sufficiently refined to be susceptible to instruction. (355)

TEACHER: A person, then, who will understand these matters will belong to the company of the wise (Dan 12:3). Such a person, again, who will fit people to serve their Master and teach them what they must know in order to come close to God will be classified among those that will turn the many to righteousness. This prospect should serve as an incentive to everyone of learning to invoke the assistance of Providence in instructing others and guiding them aright. (356)

**Treatise 10. Proper Conduct in This World**

**Exordium**

The principle which forms the subject of this treatise is a matter that many people have attempted to fathom but of which only a few have reached a satisfactory view. (357)

At this point, now, I would say that the thing that generally gives the appearance of constituting a unity, whatever sort of unit it be, is singular only in number. Upon careful consideration, however, it is found to be of a multiple nature. (357)

All these phenomena are in accord with the laws of creation: namely, that the Creator, exalted and magnified, be one and God’s works manifold. (357)

**Ch 1**

Man’s conduct in the course of his lifetime cannot logically be based on just a single trait. (358)

So too, is man’s behavior the resultant of a combination of his likes and dislikes in varying proportions. (358)

Man acts as though he were a judge to whom the disposal of the different tendencies is submitted for decision. (358)

When, then, a person behaves in this manner, his affairs will be properly adjusted and well regulated. (358)

I have seen people who think – and with them it is a firm conviction – that it is obligatory for human beings to order their entire existence upon the exploitation of one trait, lavishing their love on one thing above all others and their hatred on a certain thing above the rest. Now I investigated this view and I found it to be extremely erroneous for sundry reasons. (359)

**Ch 2**

Man stands in constant need of a wisdom that would regulate his conduct and behavior. … Principally that consists, in this particular instance, in his exercising control over his impulses and having complete mastery over his likes and dislikes, for each has its distinctive role in which it must be made to function. Once, then, he recognizes the role belonging to a given impulse, he must give it full opportunity to discharge its function in the required measure. On the
The only correct principle on which to proceed, therefore, is that a verse is not to be diverted from its obvious and generally recognized meaning except on the ground of one of the four reasons that I have described. Wherever such grounds do not exist, however, the verse is to be taken in its simple sense. (273)

Ch 7
There exists no object in the world that could completely annihilate another. (278)

AFTERLIFE: It is not necessary for us to rack our brains about the matter. (282)

Our minds are capable only of grasping our present state. As for what is forbidden or permitted in a situation that has no parallel at all in our earthly existence, such as whether or not marriage bonds will be abrogated for those who are resurrected, we need not concern ourselves therewith. (282)

Treatise 8. Redemption

Ch 1
HOPE: Therefore, also, do you find us patiently awaiting what God has promised us, not entertaining any doubts concerning it, nor worrying or despairing. On the contrary, our courage and tenacity increase constantly. (292)

FAITH: Now whoever sees us behaving in this fashion may be surprised at us or regard us as fools for the simple reason that he has not experienced what we have nor believed as we have believed. (293)

Ch 6
They will also rehabilitate the land and dwell in it. (305)

Then prophecy will be so widespread among our nation that even our children and our slaves will prophesy. (310)

We are also informed by Scripture that all pestilence, diseases, and infirmity will disappear, and similarly sadness and sorrow. Their world will rather be one that is replete with joy and gladness, so that it will seem to them as though their heaven and their earth have been renewed for them. (311)

Ch 8
Greater injustices and wrongs are committed nowadays by the strong against the weak than ever. (319)

Treatise 9. Reward & Punishment in Olam Ha-Ba

Ch 1
All well-being in this mundane world is bound up with misfortune, and all happiness with hardship, and all pleasure with pain, and all joy with sorrow. (324)

None of God’s creatures known to me feel secure and tranquil in this world, even when they have reached the most exalted ruling position and the highest station therein. Now this feeling is not something natural to the soul. It is due, rather, to its consciousness of the fact that there is reserved for it an abode that is superior to all the excellencies of its present dwelling. That is why it yearns for that abode and why its eyes look forward longingly to it. Were it not so, the soul would have felt secure and have been at rest. (325)

Ch 2
Earthly rewards constitute only indications and symbols. (329)

Ch 3
Now any interpretation that agrees with reason must be correct, whereas any that leads to what is contrary to reason must be unsound and fallacious. (333)

Ch 4
The doctrine of reward and punishment in the world to come is supported by the three sources of knowledge, namely: reason, Scripture, and tradition, let me say that our nation is fully agreed upon this matter. (336)

Ch 5
They [reward and punishment] will both consist of the same essence, an essence resembling the property of burning, luminous fire, that will shine for the righteous but not for the sinful, while it will burn the sinful but not the righteous. (337)

Now the reward of the hereafter has been called “Garden of Eden” only because there does not exist
**Ch 2**
This inquiry into the science of the soul is an inquiry into a profound, abstract, and subtle science. (239)
Man has spiritual preeminence. (241)

**Ch 3**
As for the quality of [the soul’s] substance, it is comparable in purity to that of the heavenly spheres. Like the latter, it attains luminosity as a result of the light which it receives from God, except that its substance becomes, in consequence hereof, even finer than that of the spheres. That is how it came to be endowed with the power of speech. (242)
The soul performs its functions only by means of the body. (243)
It has furthermore become clear to me that, so far as the human soul is concerned, its seat is in the heart, since it is definitely known that the nerves, which endow the body with the powers of sensation and motion, all have their roots in the heart. I do, indeed, find that the great ramifications of nerves do not issue from the heart, but originate rather from the brain. (244)

**Ch 4**
All acts attributable to God are good and beneficent. (245)
Obedience increases the luminosity of the soul’s substance, whereas sin renders its substance turbid. (246)
The One that subjects the soul to its trials is none other than the Master of the universe. (246)
From what we know, if God had allowed the soul to remain unattached, it would not have been able to attain well-being or bliss or life eternal. For the attainment of all these things can be effected by it only by serving its Master, and the soul has no means, by virtue of its nature, of rendering this service except through the instrumentality of the body. (247)
LIKE KANT: Who stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth, and formed the spirit of man within him (Zech 12:1).
Wisdom consists in knowing things as they are in their real, observable character, not as someone would desire or like them to be. (249)
The body of man contains no impurity in and by itself. It is, on the contrary, entirely pure. (249)

**Ch 5**
The soul and the body constitute one agent. (250)
Every science has a method different from that of another, and that the science of the Law bears no relationship whatever to that of anatomy. (251)

**Ch 6**
God’s knowledge exercises no direct influence on the reality of things. (253)
Not every virtuous man has his life increased, nor is every sinner’s life diminished. (254)

**Treatise 7. Resurrection in Olam Ha-Zeh**

**Ch 2**
Every statement found in the Bible is to be understood in its literal sense except for those that cannot be so construed for one of the following four reasons. 1) It may, for example be rejected by the observation of the senses,… 2) Or else the literal sense may be negated by reason, … 3) Again, [the literal meaning of a Biblical statement may be rendered impossible] by an explicit text of a contradictory nature, … 4) Finally, any Biblical statement to the meaning of which rabbinic tradition has attached a certain reservation is to be interpreted by us in keeping with this authentic tradition. (265-266)

**Ch 3**
Just as the body that has been made sick is the same as that which is healed, so the body that has been put to death is the one that is to be brought back to life. (268)
Each one of us will, when God has brought us back to life, make mention of the fact that it is us that was alive and died and was then resurrected. (269)

**Ch 4**
It if were necessary to construe every verse of Sacred Writ in whatever figurative sense is possible without compelling proof, not a single revealed law would be maintained, since they are all capable of such non-literal interpretation. (272)
How to avoid temptation: “Think up reasons for holding this world in contempt. Let a person remind himself of his condition of powerlessness, misery, exertion, and disillusionment, of his eventual death and the decomposition of the parts of his body, of the vermin and the putrefaction that are destined for him, of the accounting he will have to give for his conduct and the torments to which he will be subjected and whatever appertains to any of these matters. The result of such reflection would be contempt for this world, and once all mundane things are held in contempt, his sins would be included in the totality of things to be abstained from and his resolve to abandon them would be intensified. (222)

If the resolve on the part of the servant of God not to lapse into sin again is sincere, his repentance is accepted, so that if, as a result of temptation, he falls once more, his repentance is not thereby forfeited. (223)

**Ch 7**

5 Degrees of Teshuvah:

1. The first consists of a person’s repenting at the epoch and in the locality in which he has committed his sin, and while the details of his transgressions are still present before him.
2. The second is that which is carried out after the epoch in which the sin was committed has passed and the penitent has moved from the scene of his transgression and the details of his sinful conduct are no longer present before him.
3. The third degree is that which is effected only when he is threatened with impending disaster.
4. The fourth is that which is not undertaking until part of the threatened disaster has already descended on the sinner.
5. The fifth is that which is carried out at the moment when the soul passes. … That is why it is our practice to exhort a person who is fatally ill, at the approach of his death, with the following words: Say, ‘I have sinned, I have been iniquitous. I have been faithless. May my death be an atonement for all my iniquities (Shabbat 32a).’ (227-8)

**Ch 7**

God is free from all affect. (228)

The higher the rank of human beings, the greater the value that attaches to the obedience they give to God. (229)

A life of devotion to God is most highly prized in youth. (229)

Licentiousness is more reprehensible when found in the old. (230)

Deception is more serious a crime when perpetrated by the rich. (230)

Humility is more highly rated when displayed by the great. (230)

Oppression is most unendurable when practiced on the poor. (230)

Fasting is most meritorious when practiced by the self-indulgent. (231)

**Ch 8**

Those who interpret the verses of Sacred Writ allegorically fall into four categories: They may do so either 1) to harmonize a verse with the evidence of the senses, or 2) with the testimony of reason, or 3) with other Biblical passages, or 4) with tradition. Whoever is successful in this is rewarded for it. (232)

One who imputes allegorical meanings to the precepts of the Torah, thereby fostering heresy, borders on the category of the false prophets. (232)

When uneducated people who, upon finding that they do not understand what they read in the Torah, consult about its meaning the most learned and pious of their contemporaries and act upon the latter’s recommendations, they comply fully with the requirements of their religion. (233)

In regard to drunkards, they are not excused for any crime committed by them in their state of drunkenness. (233)

**Treaties 6. The Soul, Death, & After Death**

**Ch 1**

These sundry theories have been supported for us by means of miracles and marvels produced by the prophets, wherefore we have readily accepted them. However, we also endeavored, in addition, to reach these conclusions by means of rational speculation, pursuing the method followed by us in the preceding treatises. (234)
Man cannot be considered as the agent of an act unless he exercise freedom of choice in performing it, for no one can be held accountable for an act who does not possess freedom of choice and does not exercise this choice. (187)

**Ch 4**

The Creator does not in any way interfere with the actions of people. (188)

When a human being hates a thing, he does so usually because it harms him. Our Lord, however, does not hate anything on account of His own personality, because it is impossible that He be affected by any of the accidents appertaining to mortals. He considers them objectionable, only on our account, because of the harm they might inflict upon us. (190)

**Ch 5**

Just as God made no differences between people so far as intelligence, power and ability are concerned, so too could God make no distinction between them in regard to God’s commands or God’s mission to them. (193)

Thanks to the intelligence with which God has endowed humanity, the latter is never really compelled to tell a lie. (195)

**Treatise 5. Merits & Demerits**

**Ch 1**

Our Master, who is exalted and magnified, has made it known to us that, when the instances of obedience on the part of God’s servants predominate, they are accounted as merits, whereas when those of disobedience predominate, they could as demerits. (205)

These human activities leave their traces on the person’s soul, rendering it pure or sullied. (205)

Even though the flaws of the souls, such as sins and iniquities, might not be obvious to human beings because they are incapable of perceiving them with their senses, they are nevertheless evident to their Maker, since it is God that created them and brought them into being. (206)

Isn’t it remarkable! A human being may eat two kinds of food, permitted and forbidden, and find them both nourishing. He may indulge in two types of cohabitation, one of which is permissible while the other is prohibited, and find that both give pleasure, on which account he thinks that they are one and the same thing. Yet the [divine] numismatist distinguishes between the varying effects that the two different classes have upon the spirit of a person. (207)

When the merits predominate in the soul, the latter is thereby purified and rendered luminous. (207)

The only reason for using the metaphor of a book, in referring to God’s record, is that that is how we are accustomed to keep accounts, the purpose being to make the idea more comprehensible to us. (208)

**Ch 2**

It is a general rule laid down by the Wise to requite God’s servants in this world for the minority of their deeds and leave the majority for the next world. (210)

Anyone whose sins exceed his merits is rewarded for the latter so that he resembles one that has fulfilled the entire Torah, whereas one whose merits exceed his sins is punished for the latter so that he resembles one that has burned the entire Torah (Kiddushin 39b)

It should not be alleged that one evil deed is capable of offsetting many good deeds. … Nor must it be believed that one good deed is capable of making up for many evil deeds. Such an effect could be produced by the former only in conjunction with repentance and on account of this repentance, not on account of the good deed itself. (213)

**Ch 3**

The whole purpose of the suffering of the upright is that the rest of God’s creatures might know that God has not chosen the former for nothing. (213)

**Ch 5**

Repentance is 1) the renunciation of sin, 2) remorse, 3) the quest of forgiveness, and 4) the assumption of the obligation not to relapse into sin. (220)

1) **Return, O Israel**, unto the Lord your God; for 2) **you have stumbled in your iniquity**. 3) **Take with you words**, and return to the Lord; say unto God: Forgive all iniquity, and accept that which is good; so will we render for bullocks the offerings of our lips. Asshur shall not save us, 4) **we will not ride on horses**; neither will we call any more the work of our hands our gods (Hosea 14:2-5).
Similarly, if one were to follow up most of these revealed precepts, one would discover that they are, to a large extent at least, partially justified and possess much utilitarian value, although the wisdom and the view that the Creator had in mind in decreeing them is far above anything that people can grasp. (145)

I say therefore – but of course God’s wisdom is above aught that might be said. (150)

Next let me explain the character of the Holy Scriptures and say that God has provided us with summary accounts of all that has transpired in the past in order that we might thereby be put into a fit condition for obeying him. (154)

It was well known to the All-Wise, exalted and magnified, that God’s precepts and the accounts of God’s signs would in the course of time require transmitters, in order that these matters might seem as authentic to posterity as they did to the early ancestors. Therefore did God render the human mind susceptible to the acceptance of authenticated tradition and the human soul capable of finding repose therein, so that God’s Scriptures and traditions might be acknowledged as true. (156)

The laws of the Torah were not subject to abrogation. (157)

Our nation of the children of Israel is a nation only by virtue of its laws. (158)

The reason for our believing in him [Moses], and in every other prophet, is rather the fact that he first called upon us to do what is proper. … Miracles are of no account in supporting the unacceptable. (163)

Is there in the world any expression so explicit and clear-cut as to dispel all ambiguity and doubt? (172)

The Bible is not the sole basis of our religion, for in addition to it we have two other bases. One of these is anterior to it; namely, the fountain of reason. The second is posterior to it; namely, the source of tradition. Whatever, therefore, we may not find in the Bible, we can find in the two other sources. Thus are the commandments rounded out quantitatively as well as qualitatively. (174)

ANIMALS: Should their slaughtering, however, entail pain over and above that which is experienced in natural death, God would be fully aware of it and God would, of course, in such an event compensate the beasts in accordance with the excess of the pain. (175)

SACRIFICES: The purpose of that, as is made clear in the Torah, was to make us pensive. (175)

WORSHIP: All these are forms of devotion not at all prompted by necessity. For reason has long since decided that God does not require anything, but that all things, rather, have need of God.

SACRIFICES: God’s sole aim was that His servants indicate their submissiveness to Him by the best that they possessed. (176)

If the adherents of the Law had been granted perpetual sovereignty, the nonbelievers might have said about them that the only reason they served their Lord was in order to preserve their favorable situation. … Again, God debased the former, and since they nevertheless did not deny God, the justice they were entitled to was confirmed. (179)

**Treatise 4. Obedience & Rebellion**

**Ch 1**

Man’s distinction above the rest of creation was due to the wisdom with which God had endowed him and which God had taught him…. By means of this wisdom, man is able to retain all the events of the past and foresee many of the eventualities of the future, and achieve the subjugation of the animals so as to make them till the soil for him and transport to him its harvest. … By dint of this wisdom he is furthermore able to build the most exquisite dwellings, wear the choicest garments, and prepare the most delicious foods. … By means of it, moreover, he attains to the knowledge of the disposition of the heavenly spheres and the course of the stars and the measurements of their masses and their distances and all the rest of their attributes. (182)

**Ch 2**

Even though man’s body is of small dimension, his soul is more extensive than heaven and earth because his knowledge embraces all they contain. (183)

SUFFERING – I found, however, that they were really salutary for him because they keep him away from sin, and render him submissive to his Maker, and introduce balance into his affairs. (184)

**Ch 3**

Reason demands that the Wise does not impel anyone to do something impossible or too difficult. (186)
Ch. 8
For all divine attributes pertaining to either substance or accident that are encountered in the books of the prophets it is necessary to find in the language of Scripture nonanthropomorphic meanings that would be in keeping with the requirements of reason. Whenever, then, we the community of believers apply to God epithets that have the appearance of anthropomorphisms, this is due to our endeavor to give a proximate and figurative description of the deity. They are not to be taken in the material sense in which we would apply them to human beings. (112)

Since, then, these … points have been cleared up by me, you must no longer be led astray or thrown into uncertainty, oh you who study this book, by such statements that you may make as “God was” and “God wanted” and “God was pleased” and “God was angry” and other such remarks and similar utterances that occur in the Scriptures. For we use these expressions only on the basis of the principle previously established by us, to which they must constantly be referred and related. An edifice, let it be noted, is always built from the foundation upward, never from the top down. Do not, therefore, become confused because of some anthropomorphic attribute of God that you see in the Scriptures, or of which you find us making common use, with the result that you would lapse back again, on its account, into doubt. But check it against the principle, the true nature of which has already been clarified and firmly established. (112)

Ch. 9
Our sages, who were considered trustworthy authorities in regard to our religion (115)

They knew for certain from the prophets, aside from what their reason dictated to them, that by means of these anthropomorphic expressions they meant to designate lofty, exalted ideas. (115)

Ch. 10
Were we, in our effort to give an account of God, to make use only of expressions that are literally true, it would be necessary for us to desist from speaking of God, as one that hears and sees and pities and wills to the point where there would be nothing left for us to affirm except the fact of God’s existence. (118)

Ch. 11
As regards the matter of possession, inasmuch as all creatures are God’s creation and handiwork, it is not seemly for us to say that God possesses one thing to the exclusion of another, nor that God possesses the one to a greater and the other to a lesser degree. (126)

Ch. 12
Even though we denominate the Creator “Maker” and “Agent,” the meaning that we attribute to these terms must not be construed in a corporeal sense. (127)

Ch. 13
For the Creator, however, who requires no mediary cause for the acquisition of God’s knowledge, since it is rather by God’s essence that God is cognizant of things, the past and the future are both on the same level. He knows the one as well as the other without any mediary cause. (132)

Now when a person has achieved the knowledge of this lofty subject by means of rational speculation and the proof of the miracles and marvels, his soul believes it is true and it is mingled with his spirit and becomes an inmate of its innermost recesses. The result is then that, whenever the soul walks in its temple, it finds it…. Moreover his soul becomes filled with completely sincere love for God, a love which is beyond all doubt … That servant of God will also grow accustomed to remembering God in the daytime while doing work and at night while lying on the bed…. Nay it will almost speak – I mean his spirit – lovesick at the recollection of God, out of longing and yearning …. Nay more, the mention of God will nourish the soul more than fatty foods and God’s name quench its thirst better than the juiciest fruit…. The result of this is that when God affords it pleasure, the soul is grateful, and if God causes it pain, it endures it patiently. (132-133)

Put it into your soul and grasp it with your mind. (136)

Treatise 3. Command & Prohibition

Exordium

God’s creation of all things was purely an act of bounty and grace on God’s part. (137)

God is bountiful. (137)

Reason: “We might not be left to roam at large without guidance. (138)
It must rather be demonstrated by means of a proposition other than itself. (48)

**Ch. 3**

It is “not that this Wisdom served the Creator as the instrument whereby He created all things, but that He revealed this Wisdom at the time when He created the elements and their derivatives, His wisdom becoming manifest when He so wisely created all that. (55)

Darkness is not a principle opposed to that of light, but merely the absence of light. (64)

No has, namely, ever seen isolated heat or absolute humidity or pure cold or dryness by itself. (67)

I ask God’s assistance in smiting them with the cane of reason. (76)

Now would that I knew by means of what sense they could reject all knowledge outside of that of sensation! (77)

We see the truth like a flash of lightning that cannot be held or reached. (80) (Saadya’s dismissive description of the skeptical view)

I say, then, that if, as they [the skeptics] would have it, the truth in everything consisted in refraining from thinking about it, then they would have to abstain from abstention itself. (81)

Now when one’s pretended ignorance has advanced so far, or his obstinacy has been carried to such a point, there is no means of speaking to him or any sense in engaging in further controversy with him. (82)

Whoever enters into controversy with them [the skeptics] … is wasting his time, because, according to them, reasoning does not lead to the knowledge of the truth. (82)

**Ch. 4**

However, our reason has decided to ascribe this act exclusively to the Creator, precisely because there is no way whereby a mere creature could conceive of how such an event could have taken place. (84)

We must be content to contemplate this process with our reason without picturing it concretely or representing it in imagination. (84)

As a matter of fact, the true significance of “time” is nothing like this. It constitutes, in reality, only the duration of existing things, the successive stages in the history of the sphere [of the universe] and what is beneath it. Consequently, so long as these beings do not exist, it is idle to speak of “time” in any shape or form. (85)

**Treatise 2. God**

**Exordium**

The data with which the sciences start out are concrete, whereas the objectives that they strive for are abstract. Also there is reached in the field of scientific research a last terminal beyond which no further knowledge is possible… Every station reached by a person in the advance in knowledge consists of necessity of ideas more abstract and subtle than the preceding, the last constituting the most abstract and subtle of all. (87)

Ignorance, on the other hand, has no such source from which it is derived, being merely the absence of knowledge. (89)

The extreme abstractness of the idea of the Creator was its true character. (91)

I mean the idea of the Creator, exalted and magnified – must of necessity be subtler than the subtlest and more recondite than the most recondite and more abstract than the most abstract and profounder than the most profound and stronger than the strongest and more exalted than the most exalted, so that it would be impossible to fathom its character at all. (92)

**Ch. 1**

There is, however, no means of proving the existence of a Creator other than that of creation. (96)

**Ch. 3**

I would, therefore, say in general that, whenever there is encountered in either the assertions of Scripture or in the speech of any one of us monotheists an expression pertaining to the description of our Creator or to His handiwork, which stands in contradiction to the requirement of sound reason, there can be no doubt about it that that expression was meant to be taken in a figurative sense, which the diligent students will find if they seek it. (100)

Ch. 7

God is an indivisible unity.
Introduction: Doubt and Certainty

Inasmuch as my Lord had granted me some knowledge by which I might come to their assistance and had endowed me with some ability that I could put at their disposal for their benefit, I thought that it was my duty to help them therewith and my obligation to direct them to the truth (7).

I also adjure by God, the Creator of the universe, any scholar who, upon studying this book, sees in it a mistake, that he correct it, or, should he note an abstruse phrase, that he substitute for it a more felicitous one. (8)

For the wise have a tender solicitude for wisdom, entertaining for it a sympathy similar to that entertained for one another by members of the same family. (8)

Furthermore I implore in the name of the exalted God every seeker of knowledge who studies this book to read it without bias and have in mind the same objective as I, and to desist from narrow-mindedness and conjecture and confutation, until he will have obtained benefit and have acquired profit by the power and the might of the One who teaches us what profits us. (8)

He that strives for certainty will gain in certitude and doubt will be lifted from the doubter, and he that believes by sheer authority will come to believe out of insight and understanding. (9)

Thus will people improve in their inner being as well as in their outer conduct. (9)

It is clear, then, that the person who speculates begins with a great many things that are all mixed up, from which he continually sifts nine out of ten, and then eight out of nine, and then seven out of eight, until all confusions and ambiguities are removed and only the pure extract remains. (12)

We believe in the validity of authentic tradition, by reason of the fact that it is based upon the knowledge of the senses as well as that of reason. (18)

There are people who definitely consider these dreams to be realities created in the forms seen by a person. They feel compelled to abide by this view, so they maintain, in order not to reject what they have seen with their eyes, not realizing that this dream may be due partly to the previous day’s affairs that flitted through the mind, of which Scripture says, “for a dream comes through a multitude of busy-ness (Ecclesiastes 5:2).” (20)

There is also apt to be mingled with these dreams a glimmer of heavenly light in the form of a hint or a parable. (21)

God has further informed us, however, that if we would engage in speculation and diligent research, inquiry would produce for us in each instance a complete truth, tallying with God’s announcement to us by the speech of God’s prophets. (28)

Personally, however, I consider the case of the miracle of the manna as the most amazing of all miracles, because a phenomenon of an enduring nature excites greater wonderment than one of a passing character. (29)

In this way, then – may God be merciful unto you – do we conduct our speculation and inquiry, to the end that we may expound concretely by means of rational intuition and logical inference what our Master has imparted unto us. (31)

Now God commanded us to take our time with our speculation until we would arrive thereby at these selfsame conclusions. We must, therefore, persevere in this standpoint until the arguments in favor of it have become convincing to us, and we feel compelled to acknowledge God’s Torah by what our eyes have seen and our ears have heard. (32)

Treatise One. Creation

Exordium

Whoever ventures into it [thinking about creation] is seeking light on something that has never been beheld with human eyes nor been perceived by the senses, but which he is nevertheless anxious to ascertain by means of rational deduction. (38)

Yet we all strive to attain with our minds things distant and remote from our senses. (38)

Ch. 1

I next inquired into this matter to see whether it could be supported by reason as it had been verified by prophecy. (40)

Ch. 2

It is not seemly that the thing that one desires to demonstrate testify concerning itself by serving as one of the two premises on which the proof is based.