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**Triennial Cycle (Triennial Torah Cycle) / Septennial Cycle (Septennial Torah Cycle)**

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| **Three and ½ year Lectionary Readings** | **Second Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **I Adar 22, 5784, March 1/2, 2024** | **Second Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:** [**https://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm**](https://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm)

**Roll of Honor:**

This Commentary comes out weekly and on the festivals thanks to the great generosity of:

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David and beloved wife HH Giberet Batsheva bat Sarah

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

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His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham

His Excellency Adon Yaaqob ben David

**For their regular and sacrificial giving, providing the best oil for the lamps, we pray that GOD’s richest blessings be upon their lives and those of their loved ones, together with all Yisrael and her Torah Scholars, amen ve amen!**

**Also, a great thank you and great blessings be upon all who send comments to the list about the contents and commentary of the weekly Torah Seder and allied topics**.

**If you want to subscribe to our list and ensure that you never lose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to** [gkilli@aol.com](mailto:gkilli@aol.com%20) **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

**A Prayer for Israel**

Our Father in Heaven, Rock, and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel, the first manifestation of the approach of our redemption. Shield it with Your lovingkindness, envelop it in Your peace, and bestow Your light and truth upon its leaders, ministers, and advisors, and grace them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land, grant them deliverance, and adorn them in a mantle of victory. Ordain peace in the land and grant its inhabitants eternal happiness.

Lead them, swiftly and upright, to Your city Zion and to Jerusalem, the abode of Your Name, as is written in the Torah of Your servant Moses: “Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you. And the Lord your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it, and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers.” Draw our hearts together to revere and venerate Your name and to observe all the precepts of Your Torah, and send us quickly the Messiah son of David, agent of Your vindication, to redeem those who await Your deliverance.

**A Prayer for our Beloved Hakhamim**

We would like to ask for prayers on behalf of our three Hakhamim, Hakham Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai, Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David, and Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham for their health, as well as for this work, that it may prosper, be of great benefit to all, and that it may be well supported, and we all say, Amen ve Amen!

**A special Prayer for our Beloved Hakham**

**His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai**

We pray especially, for our beloved Hakham His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai. Mi Sheberach…He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal the sick person HE Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai, May the Holy One, Blessed is He, be filled with compassion for him to restore his health, to heal him, to strengthen him, and to revivify him. And may He send him speedily a complete recovery from heaven, among the other sick people of Yisrael, a recovery of the body and a recovery of the spirit, swiftly and soon, and we will say amen ve amen!

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

**Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our GOD, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us through Your commandments, and commanded us to actively study Torah. Amen!**

**Please Ha-Shem, our GOD, sweeten the words of Your Torah in our mouths and in the mouths of all Your people Israel. May we and our offspring, and our offspring's offspring, and all the offspring of Your people, the House of Israel, may we all, together, know Your Name and study Your Torah for the sake of fulfilling Your delight. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Who teaches Torah to His people Israel. Amen!**

**Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our GOD, King of the universe, Who chose us from all the nations, and gave us the Torah. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!**

**Ha-Shem spoke to Moses, explaining a Commandment. "Speak to Aaron and his sons, and teach them the following Commandment: This is how you should bless the Children of Israel. Say to the Children of Israel:**

**May Ha-Shem bless you and keep watch over you; - Amen!**

**May Ha-Shem make His Presence enlighten you, and may He be kind to you; - Amen!**

**May Ha-Shem bestow favor on you and grant you peace. – Amen!**

**This way, the priests will link My Name with the Israelites, and I will bless them."**

**These are the Laws for which the Torah did not mandate specific amounts: How much growing produce must be left in the corner of the field for the poor; how much of the first fruits must be offered at the Holy Temple; how much one must bring as an offering when one visits the Holy Temple three times a year; how much one must do when performing acts of kindness; and there is no maximum amount of Torah that a person must study.**

**These are the Laws whose benefits a person can often enjoy even in this world, even though the primary reward is in the Next World: They are: Honoring one's father and mother; doing acts of kindness; early attendance at the place of Torah study -- morning and night; showing hospitality to guests; visiting the sick; providing for the financial needs of a bride; escorting the dead; being very engrossed in prayer; bringing peace between two people, and between husband and wife; but the study of Torah is as great as all of them together. Amen!**

**I Adar 22, 5784, March 1/2, 2024**

**Shabbat: “V’Yiq’chú Li Terumah” – “that they take for Me an offering”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וְיִקְחוּ-לִי תְּרוּמָה** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“V’Yiq’chú Li T’rumáh”** | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 25:1-9 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 30:1-3 |
| **“that they take for Me an offering”** | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 25:10-16 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 30:4-6 |
| **“que tomen una ofrenda para Mí”** | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 25:17-22 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 30:7-9 |
| Sh’mot (Exodus) 25:1-40 | Reader 4 – Sh’mot 25:23-30 |  |
| Ashlamata: Haggai 2:8-15 +21-23 | Reader 5 – Sh’mot 25:31-33 | **Monday/Thursday Morning** |
|  | Reader 6 – Sh’mot 25:34-36 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 30:1-3 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 61:1-9 | Reader 7 – Sh’mot 25:37-40 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 30:4-6 |
|  | Maftir – Sh’mot 25:37-40 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 306:7-9 |
| N.C.: Mk 8:1-4 | Haggai 2:8-15 +21-23 |  |

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* Materials for the Sanctuary – Exodus 25:1-7
* Purpose of the Sanctuary – Exodus 25:8-9
* The Ark – Exodus 25:10-16
* The Mercy-Seat and the Cherubim – Exodus 25:17-22
* The Table of Showbread – Exodus 25:23-30
* The Menorah (Candlestick) – Exodus 25:31-40

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Shemot (Exodus) 25:1-40**

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
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| 1."The Lord spoke to Moses saying: | 1. ¶ And the Lord spoke with Mosheh, saying, |
| 2. "Speak to the children of Israel, and **have them take for Me an offering**; **from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you will take My offering.** | 2. Speak unto the children of Israel, **that they will set apart (take) before Me a Separation**: **of every one whose heart is willing, but not by constraint, you will take My separation.** |
| 3. And this is **the offering** that you shall take from them: gold, silver, and copper; | 3. And this is the **separation** which you will take of them: gold, and silver, and brass; |
| 4. blue, purple, and crimson wool; linen and goat hair; | 4. and hyacinth, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen; and goats' skins, |
| 5. ram skins dyed red, Tachash skins, and acacia wood; | 5. and skins of rams dyed red, and purpled skins, and woods of sittin, |
| 6. oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the incense; | 6. and olive oil for the light, and aromatics for the confection of the pure anointing oil, and of the fragrant incense; |
| 7. Shoham stones and filling stones for the ephod and for the Choshen. | 7. gems of beryl that are gems of perfection, for engraving and insertion in the ephod and in the breastplate. |
| 8. **And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst** | 8. **And they will make a Sanctuary to My Name, that My Shekinah may dwell among them.** |
| 9. according to all that I show you, **the pattern** of the Mishkan and **the pattern** of all its vessels; and so shall you do. | 9. According to all that I show you, **the likeness** of the tabernacle and **the likeness** of all its vessels, so shalt thou make. |
| 10. **They shall make an ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height.** | 10. **¶ And they will make an ark of sitta wood; two cubits and a half its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height.** |
| 11. And you shall overlay it with pure gold; from inside and from outside you shall overlay it, and you shall make upon it a golden crown all around. | 11. And you will cover it with pure gold within and without, and will make upon it a crown of gold round about.  JERUSALEM: A coronal of gold shall surround it. |
| 12. And you shall cast four golden rings for it, and you shall place them upon its four corners, two rings on its one side, and two rings on its other side. | 12. And you will cast for it four rings of gold, and set them upon its four corners; two rings for one side, and two rings for the second side. |
| 13. And you shall make poles of acacia wood and you shall overlay them with gold. | 13. And you will make staves of sitta wood, and cover them with gold; |
| 14. And you shall bring the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them. | 14. and you will introduce the staves into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried upon them. |
| 15. The poles of the ark shall be in the rings; they shall not be removed from it. | 15. The staves will be inlaid in the rings of the ark, and not be removed from it. |
| 16. And you shall place into the ark the testimony, which I will give you. | 16. And thou shalt put within the ark the testimony that I will give you. |
| 17. **And you shall make an ark cover** of pure gold, two and a half cubits its length and a cubit and a half its width. | 17. **And you will make a (kaphortha) mercy-seat** of pure gold; two cubits and a half the length, and a cubit and a half the breadth, and its depth shall be a handbreadth (pusheka). |
| 18. And you shall make two golden cherubim; you shall make them of hammered work, from the two ends of the ark cover. | 18. And you will make two cherubim, of pure beaten gold will you make them on the two sides of the mercy-seat. |
| 19. And make one cherub from the one end and the other cherub from the other end; from the ark cover you shall make the cherubim on its two ends. | 19. You will make one cherub on this side, and one cherub on that side of the mercy-seat; you will make the cherubim on its two sides. |
| 20. The cherubim shall have their wings spread upwards, shielding the ark cover with their **wings** **(Hebrew: K’nafim\*),** with their faces toward one another; [turned] toward the ark cover shall be the faces of the cherubim. | 20. And the cherubim will stretch forth their wings above, their heads over against each other, their **wings** **(Hebrew: K’nafim\*)** overshadowing the mercy-seat, and their faces over against each other; towards the mercy-seat will be the faces of the cherubim. |
| 21. And you shall place the ark cover on the ark from above, and into the ark you shall place the testimony, which I will give you. | 21. And you will put the mercy-seat above upon the ark, and within the ark you will lay the Tables of the Testimony that I will give you. |
| 22. I will arrange My meetings with you there, and I will speak with you from atop the ark cover from between the two cherubim that are upon the Ark of the Testimony, all that I will command you unto the children of Israel. | 22. And I will appoint My Word with you there, and will speak with you from above the mercy-seat, between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the testimony, concerning all that I may command you for the sons of Israel. |
| 23. **And you shall make a table** of acacia wood, two cubits its length, one cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height. | 23. ¶ **And you will make a table** of sitta wood; two cubits its length, and a cubit its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height. |
| 24. And you shall overlay it with pure gold, and you shall make for it a golden crown all around. | 24. And you will overlay it with pure gold, and make for it a rim of gold round about. |
| 25. And you shall make for it a frame a handbreadth [wide] all around, and you shall make a golden crown for its frame all around. | 25. And you will make to it a border, a handbreadth high round about, and make a golden wreath for its border round about.  JERUSALEM: A border of a span surrounding. |
| 26. And you shall make for it four golden rings, and you shall place the rings on the four corners that are on its four legs. | 26. And you will make for it four golden rings, and set the rings in its four corners which are at its four feet. |
| 27. The rings shall be opposite the frame as holders for the poles [with which] to carry the table. | 27. Over against the border will the rings be, for the place of the staves, to carry the table. |
| 28. And you shall make the poles of acacia wood, and you shall overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with them. | 28. - - - |
| 29. And you shall make its forms, its spoons, its half pipes, and its supports with which it will be covered; of pure gold you shall make them. | 29. And thou will make its dishes and its spoons, its tankards and its measures, which are for the service of libation; of pure gold will you make them. |
| 30. And you shall place on the table showbread before Me at all times. | 30. And upon the table you will set in order the interior bread before Me continually. |
| 31. **And you shall make a menorah** of pure gold. The menorah shall be made of hammered work; its base and its stem, its goblets, its knobs, and its flowers shall [all] be [one piece] with it. | 31. ¶ **And you will make a Candelabrum**; of pure beaten gold will you make the candelabrum; its base and shaft, its cups and apples and lilies, will be of the same. |
| 32. And six branches coming out of its sides: three menorah branches from its one side and three menorah branches from its second side. | 32. Six branches will spread out from its sides; three branches of the candelabrum from one side, and three branches of the candelabrum on the second side. |
| 33. Three decorated goblets on one branch, a knob and a flower, and three decorated goblets on one branch, a knob and a flower; so for the six branches that come out of the menorah. | 33. Three calyxes adorned with their figurations on one branch, with apple and lily; and three calyxes adorned with their figurations on the other branch, with apple and lily: so for the six branches that spread out from the candelabrum. |
| 34. And on [the stem of] the menorah [shall be] four decorated goblets, its knobs and its flowers. | 34. And upon the candelabrum there will be four calyxes adorned with their figurations, their apples and lilies. |
| 35. And a knob under the two branches from it, and a knob under the two branches from it, and a knob under the two branches from it; so for the six branches that come out of the menorah. | 35. And there will be an apple under two branches of it, and an apple under two branches of it, and an apple under two branches of it, for the six branches which extend from the candelabrum. |
| 36. Their knobs and their branches shall [all] be [one piece] with it; all of it [shall be] one hammered mass of pure gold. | 36. Their apples and their branches will be of the same; all of it one beaten work of pure gold. |
| 37. And you shall make its lamps seven, and he shall kindle its lamps [so that they] shed light toward its face. | 37. And you will make its seven lights, and the priest who ministers will kindle the lights, that they may shine over upon its face. |
| 38. And its tongs and its scoops [shall be] of pure gold. | 38. And its snuffers and its shovels of pure gold. |
| 39. He shall make it of a talent of pure gold, with all these implements. | 39. Of a talent of pure gold will he make it and all these its vessels. |
| 40. Now see and make according to **their pattern**, which you are shown on the mountain. | 40. And look, and make according to **their forms** which you have seen in the mountain. |

(\* The Hebrew word in v. 20 – **כְנַף – “Wing” –** mentioned in Ps. 61:5 and Haggai 2:12 (and cf. Zechariah 8:23) is used as a euphemism for the fringed four-cornered garment **(Tzitzit)** worn by male Jews.)

**Reading Assignment**

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| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1990)  **Exodus - VI Vol. 9 – “The Tabernacle”**  **pp. 3 - 78** | **-Ramban: Exodus Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1973)  **pp. 434 - 462** |

**Welcome to the World of Pshat Exegesis**

In order to understand the finished work of the Pshat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the Pshat is intended to produce a catechetical output, whereby a question/s is/are raised and an answer/a is/are given using the seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel and as well as the laws of Hebrew Grammar and Hebrew expression.

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

[cf. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=472&letter=R>]:

**1. Ḳal va-ḥomer:** "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.

**2. Gezerah shavah:** Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.

**3. Binyan ab mi-katub eḥad:** Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.

**4. Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim:** The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.

**5. Kelal u-Peraṭ and Peraṭ u-kelal:** Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.

**6. Ka-yoẓe bo mi-maḳom aḥer:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.

**7. Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.

**Welcome to the World of Remes Exegesis**

Thirteen rules compiled by Rabbi Ishmael b. Elisha for the elucidation of the Torah and for making halakic deductions from it. They are, strictly speaking, mere amplifications of the seven Rules of Hillel, and are collected in the Baraita of R. Ishmael, forming the introduction to the Sifra and reading as follows:

**1. Ḳal wa-ḥomer**: Identical with the first rule of Hillel.

**2. Gezerah shawah**: Identical with the second rule of Hillel.

**3. Binyan ab**: Rules deduced from a single passage of Scripture and rules deduced from two passages. This rule is a combination of the third and fourth rules of Hillel.

**4. Kelal u-Peraṭ**: The general and the particular.

**5. u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The particular and the general.

**6. Kelal u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The general, the particular, and the general.

7. The general which requires elucidation by the particular, and the particular which requires elucidation by the general.

8. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it for pedagogic purposes elucidates the general as well as the particular.

9. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of the special regulation which corresponds in concept to the general, is thus isolated to decrease rather than to increase the rigidity of its application.

10. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of some other special regulation which does not correspond in concept to the general, is thus isolated either to decrease or to increase the rigidity of its application.

11. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of a new and reversed decision can be referred to the general only in case the passage under consideration makes an explicit reference to it.

12. Deduction from the context.

13. When two Biblical passages contradict each other the contradiction in question must be solved by reference to a third passage.

Rules seven to eleven are formed by a subdivision of the fifth rule of Hillel; rule twelve corresponds to the seventh rule of Hillel, but is amplified in certain particulars; rule thirteen does not occur in Hillel, while, on the other hand, the sixth rule of Hillel is omitted by Ishmael. With regard to the rules and their application in general. These rules are found also on the morning prayers of any Jewish Orthodox Siddur.

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Shemot (Exodus) 25:1-40**

**2** **and have them take for Me** Heb. לִי. [I.e.,] dedicated to My name. -[from Tan. 1]

**offering** Heb. תְּרוּמָה, separation. They shall set apart from their property an offering for Me.

**whose heart inspires him to generosity** Heb. יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ, an expression of נְדָבָה, which is an expression of good will, present in French, [a] gift.

**you shall take My offering** Our Rabbis said: [The word תְּרוּמָה, mentioned three times, denotes that] three offerings are mentioned here. One is the offering of a beka [half-shekel] per head, from which they made the sockets, as is delineated in [Exod. 38:26, 27, in the parsha] “ אֵלֶּה פְקוּדֵי, These are the accounts.” Another is the offering of a beka per head for the [community] coffers, from which to purchase the communal sacrifices, and another is the offering for the Mishkan, each one’s [Israelite’s] donation (Talmud Yerushalmi, Shekalim 1:1; Meg. 29b). The thirteen materials mentioned in this section [i.e., this chapter] were all required for the work of the Mishkan or for the garments of the kohanim, [as you will find] when you study them closely (Tan. 5, Song Rabbah 4:25).

**3** **gold, silver, and copper, etc.** They were all given voluntarily; each person [gave] what his heart inspired him to give, except [for] the silver, which they gave equally, a half-shekel for each individual. We do not find throughout the entire work of the Mishkan that more silver was required, as it is said: “The silver of the community census was...a beka per head...” (Exod. 38:25, 26). The rest of the silver, which was given there [in the work of the Mishkan] voluntarily, they [the workers] made into service utensils.

**4** **blue...wool** Heb. תְכֵלֶת, wool dyed with the blood of the chillazon [animal], which bears a blue color.-[from Men. 44a, Tosefta Men. 9:6]

**purple...wool** Heb. וְאַרְגָּמָן, wool dyed with a kind of dye named אַרְגָּמָן. **linen** Heb. שֵׁשׁ. This is linen.-[from Tosefta Men. 9:6]

**and goat hair** Heb. וְעִזִים, the hair of goats. Therefore, Onkelos rendered: וּמְעַזֵי, [i.e.,] what comes from the goats, but not the goats themselves [i.e., not the goat skins], for Targum’s [Onkelos] translation of עִזִים [goats] is עִזַיָא (Gen. 30:32).

**5** **dyed red** Heb. מְאֳָדָּמִים. They were dyed red after being tanned.

**Tachash skins** This was a species of animal that existed only for a [short] time, and it had many hues (גַּוָּנִים). Therefore, [Onkelos] renders [it] סַסְגּוֹנָא, because it rejoices (שֶׁשָׂשׂ) [ס and שׂ are often interchangeable] and boasts of its hues (גַּוָּנִים). -[from Shab. 28a, b]

**and acacia wood** Where did they get these [trees] in the desert? Rabbi Tanchuma explained that our father Jacob foresaw with the holy spirit that the Israelites were destined to build a Mishkan in the desert, so he brought cedars to Egypt and planted them. He commanded his sons to take them with them when they left Egypt.-[from Mid. Tanchuma 9]

**6** **oil for lighting** Pure olive oil to continually kindle the light.

**spices for the anointing oil** which was made to anoint the vessels of the Mishkan and [for] the Mishkan itself to sanctify them, and spices were required for it, as is delineated in [the parsha] תִשָׂא כִּי (Exod. 30:22-33).

**and for the incense** Heb. וְלִקְטֽרֶת הַסַּמִּים, which they burned every evening and morning, as is explained in [the parsha] וְאַתָּה תְּצַוֶּה (Exod. 30:7, 8). The word קְטֽרֶת means the raising of smoke (קִיטוֹר) and columns of smoke תִּמְרוֹת עָשָׁן.

**7** **Shoham stones** Two were needed there [in the Mishkan] for the ephod, mentioned in [the parsha] וְאַתָּה תְּצַוֶּה (Exod. 28:9-12).

**filling** Since they make for them a seat out of gold, like a sort of hole, and the stone is placed there to fill the hole, they are called filling stones. The place of the “seat” is called מִשְׁבֶּצֶת, a setting.

**for the ephod and for the Choshen** The Shoham stones for the ephod and the filling stones for the Choshen. The ephod and the Choshen are explained in וְאַתָּה תְּצַוֶּה they are types of ornaments [worn by the kohanim].

**8** **And they shall make Me a sanctuary** And they shall make in My name a house of sanctity.

**9** **according to all that I show you** -here, the pattern of the Mishkan. This verse is connected to the verse above it: “And they shall make Me a sanctuary...” according to all that I show you.

**and so shall you do** in future generations (Sanh. 16b, Shev. 14b, 15a). If one of the vessels is lost, or when you make the vessels of the Temple, such as [the] tables, menorahs, wash basins, and bases that Solomon made, you shall make them according to the pattern of these [that I will describe in the following verses]. If the verse was not connected to what was written before it, He would not have written, “and so shall you do,” but" so shall you do" [without the word “and”], and it would be speaking about the making of the Tent of Meeting and its vessels.

**10** **They shall make an ark** like the chests that are made without feet, made like a sort of chest called escrin [in Old French, ecrin in modern French], (i.e., a chest or box), which rests on its bottom [without being raised off the floor by the attachment of legs].

**11** **from inside and from outside you shall overlay it** Bezalel made three arks, two of gold and one of wood. Each one had four walls and a bottom, and they were open on the top. He placed the wooden one inside the golden one and the [other] golden one inside the wooden one. He covered the upper rim with gold, thus it is found that [the wooden one] was overlaid from inside and from outside [with gold].-[from Yoma 72b, Shek. 16b]

**a golden crown** Like a sort of crown surrounding it above its rim. For he [Bezalel] made the outer ark higher than the inner one, until it extended upwards opposite the thickness of the ark cover and slightly higher than it, so that when the ark cover lies on the thickness of the walls, the crown extends slightly over the thickness of the ark cover (Yoma 72b). And that [the crown] is the symbol of the crown of the Torah (Tan. Vayakhel 8, Exod. Rabbah 34:2).

**12** **And you shall cast** Heb. וְיָצַקְתָּ, an expression of casting, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders.

**its...corners** Heb. פַּעֲמֽתָיו. As the Targum [Onkelos] renders: זִיוְיָתֵיהּ, its corners. They were attached on the upper corners, close to the ark cover, two from here and two from there, across the width of the ark, and the poles were placed in them [the rings]. The length of the ark separated the poles, two and one-half cubits between [one] pole and [the other] pole, so that the two people carrying the ark would walk between them [the poles]. So it is explained in Men., in the chapter entitled שְׁתֵּי הַלֶּחֶם (98b).

**two rings on its one side** Heb. וּשְׁתֵּי טַבָּעֽת, lit., and two rings. These are the four rings [mentioned] in the beginning of the verse, and [Scripture now] explains to you where they were [to be placed]. This “vav” is superfluous, and it is to be interpreted as שְׁתֵּי טַבָּעֽת, two rings. But you can reconcile it [by interpreting it] in this way: and two of these rings [shall be] on its one side, [meaning, and two of the four rings mentioned in the beginning of this verse shall be on one side, etc.].

**its...side** Heb. צַלְעוֹ, its side.

**13** **poles of** Heb. בַדֵּי, poles.

**15** **they shall not be removed from it** forever.

**16** **And you shall place into the ark** Heb. אֶל-הָאָרֽן, lit., to the ark, [meaning] into the ark.

**the testimony** [I. e.,] the Torah, which serves as testimony between Me and you [Israel] that I commanded you [to fulfill] the commandments written in it.- [from Mid. Tan. Pekudei 4, also Mid. Lekach Tov]

**17** **an ark cover** Heb. כַפּֽרֶת a cover over the ark, which was open from above. He [Moses] placed it [the cover] over it [the ark] like a board.

**two and a half cubits its length** like the length of the ark. Its width was like the width of the ark, and it lay on the thickness of the four walls. Although [Scripture] does not give a measure for its thickness, our Rabbis explained that it was a handbreadth thick.-[from Succah 5a]

**18** **cherubim** Heb. כְּרֻבִים. They had the features of a child.-[from Succah 5]

**you shall make...of hammered work** [This means] that you should not make them separate and then join them at the ends of the ark cover after they are made, as smiths do [in a process] called solderez [in Old French], soldered. Instead, you should take a large quantity of gold at the beginning of the construction of the ark cover and beat it with a hammer and with a mallet in the center [of the mass of gold] so that its ends protrude upward, and [then you should] form the cherubim from the protrusion of its ends.

**hammered** Heb. מִקְשָׁה, batediz in Old French, hammered, like “knocked (נָקְשָׁן) one against the other” (Dan. 5:6).

**ends of the ark cover** Heb. קְצוֹת הכַּפּֽרֶת, ends of the ark cover.

**19** **And make one cherub from the one end** [The text elaborates] so that you will not say [that it means] two cherubim at each end. Therefore, it had to explain, “one cherub from the one end.”

**from the ark cover** itself you shall make the cherubim. This is the meaning of “you shall make them of hammered work”-that you shall not make them [the cherubim] separately and [then] attach them to the ark cover.

**20** **their wings spread** [This means] that you shall not make their wings lying down [resting next to their bodies], but spread high alongside their heads, so that there should be ten handbreadths in the space between the wings and the ark cover, as is stated in Succah (5b).

**21** **and into the ark you shall place the testimony** I do not know why it was repeated, for it already said: “And you shall place into the ark the testimony” (verse 16). We may say that it comes to teach that when it [the ark] is still an ark alone, without an ark cover, he [Moses] should first put in the testimony and then place the ark cover over it. So we find [that] when he [Moses] erected the Mishkan, it says: “And he placed the testimony into the ark,” and afterwards, “and he placed the ark cover on the ark from above” (Exod. 40:20).

**22** **I will arrange My meetings with you there** When I arrange a meeting for you to speak with you, [it is at] that place that I will arrange for the meeting where I will come to speak to you.

**and I will speak with you from atop the ark cover** But elsewhere it says: “and the Lord spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying...” (Lev. 1:1). That is the Mishkan, outside the dividing curtain [whereas the ark was within the dividing curtain]. The two verses are found to contradict one another. The third verse comes and reconciles them. "And when Moses came into the Tent of Meeting...he heard the voice speaking to him from atop the ark cover" (Num. 7:89). [The solution is that] Moses would enter the Mishkan and as soon as he came within the doorway, a voice would descend from heaven to [the place] between the cherubim, from where it emanated and was heard by Moses in the Tent of Meeting.-[from Sifrei, end of Naso]

**and all that I will command you unto the children of Israel** Heb. וְאֵת. This “vav” [that Rashi adds, meaning “and,”] is superfluous, and there are many similar [examples] in the Torah. And you shall interpret it thus: "and all that I will speak with you there is all that I will command you unto the children of Israel."

**23** **its height** The height of its legs [together] with the thickness of the table [top].

**24** **a golden crown** symbolic of the crown of kingship, for the table represents wealth and greatness, as they say, “the royal table.”-[from Yoma 72b]

**25** **a frame** Heb. מִסְגֶּרֶת, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: גְּדַנְפָא, a rim. The Sages of Israel differed concerning the matter. Some say that it was above [i.e., extending from the table top], around the table, like the rims at the edge of the tables of the princes. Some say that it was below [the table top], inserted from one leg to the other on the four sides of the table, and the table top lay on that frame.-[from Men. 96b]

**and you shall make a golden crown for its frame** That is the crown mentioned above, and here He explains to you that it was on the frame.

**27** **The rings shall be opposite the frame** on the legs, inserted opposite the ends of the frame.

**as holders for the poles** Those rings shall be holders in which to insert the poles.

**as holders** Heb. לְבָתִּים, for the purpose of holders.

**for the poles** Heb. לְבַדִּים, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: אַתְרָא לַאֲרִיחַיָא, a place for the poles.

**28** **shall be carried with them** Heb. וְנִשָׂא-בָם, the passive voice. The table shall be carried with them [by the poles].

**29** **And you shall make its forms, its spoons** Heb. קְּעָרֽתָיו וְכַפּֽתָיו. קְּעָרֽתָיו is the form that was made according to the shape of the bread (Men. 97a). The bread was made in the shape of a type of box without a cover. It had a flat bottom (Men. 94b) and it would be bent upward on both sides [forming something] similar to walls. Therefore, it is called לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים, literally, the bread of faces, because it has faces looking in both directions-toward the sides of the house [Mishkan] from here [in one direction] and from there [in the other direction]. It was placed lengthwise across the width of the table, and its walls stood vertically opposite the edge of the table. A golden form and an iron form were made for it. It was baked [on Fridays] in the iron form, and when it was taken out of the oven, it would be placed in the golden form until the next day, which was the Sabbath, when it would be arranged on the table. That form is called קְעָרָה.

**its spoons** Heb. וְכַפּֽתָיו. They were the spoons in which the frankincense was placed. There were two [spoons meant] for the two handfuls of frankincense that were placed beside the two stacks, as it is said: “And you shall place beside the stack pure frankincense” (Lev. 24:7). -[from Men. 97a]

**its half-pipes** Heb. וּקְשׁוֹתָיו. They are sort of half-tubes, hollow and split along their length. They are similar to the tubes made of gold. Three [tubes] were arranged over each bread, so that each bread would rest upon those tubes. They would separate one bread from the other so that air would enter between them and they [the bread] would not grow moldy. In Arabic, any hollow thing is called kaswa.-[from Men. 96a, 97a]

**and its supports** Heb. וּמְנַקּיֽתָיו. Its Aramaic translation is וּמְכִילָתֵיהּ, [meaning] and its bearers. They are branches like golden pegs [Mizrachi explains that they were like columns] standing on the ground and reaching a considerable height upwards above the table, corresponding to the height of the stack of bread. [They were] notched with six (Mizrachi—five) notches, one above the other, and the ends of the pipes between one bread and another were supported by these branches so that the burden of the upper breads should not weigh down on the lower ones and cause them to break. The derivation of מְכִילָתֵיהּ is “its bearers,” similar to “I am weary of bearing [it] (הָכִיל)” (Jer. 6:11). But I do not know how the מְנַקִּיוֹת applies to branches. Other Sages of Israel say that קְשׂתָיו refers to the branches, which harden (מְקֻשוֹת) it [the showbread] and strengthen it so that it does not break, and מְנַקִּיוֹתָיו refers to the pipes, which clean (מְנַקִּין) [the bread] so that it should not become moldy (Men. 96a). But Onkelos, who rendered [מְנַקִּיוֹתָיו as] מְכִילָתֵיהּ, understood it in a similar way to the words of the one [Sage] who says [that] מְנַקִּיוֹת are branches.

**with which it will be covered** Heb. יֻסַּךְ, [meaning] with which it will be covered. Regarding the half-pipes, [Scripture] says “with which it will be covered” because they [the half-pipes] were like a sort of roof and cover over it [the bread], and similarly elsewhere (Num. 4:7) [Scripture] says, “the half- pipes which cover (הַנָּסֶךְ),” and both of these [words]- יֻסַּךְ and (הַנָּסֶךְ) Are words meaning a roof and a cover.

**30** **showbread** Heb. לֶחֶם פָּנִים, lit., bread of faces, [given this appellation] because it has faces, as I explained [on verse 29]. The number of breads and the order of their stacks are explained in [the parsha of] אֱמֽר אֶל הַכּֽהֲנִים, “Speak to the Kohanim” (Lev. 21:1).

**31** **The menorah shall be made of hammered work** [meaning] that it must not be made in sections, [which can be removed]. Its branches and its lamps should not be made individually and then attached, as is the custom of the smiths [through a process] called solderez [in French], soldering, but it [the menorah] must come [be constructed] entirely from one piece [of gold]- beaten with a hammer and cut with a tool, and the branches separated on both sides.-[from Baraitha Melecheth HaMishkan.]

**of hammered work** Heb. מִקְשָׁה. Its Aramaic translation is נְגִיד, an expression of drawing out, [meaning] that he draws the parts out of the block of gold on either side by beating [it] with a hammer. The word מִקְשָׁה means the blow of a hammer, batediz in Old French, hammered, like “knocked (נָקְשָׁן) one against the other” (Dan. 5:6).

**the menorah shall be made** By itself. Since Moses found difficulty with it [i.e., figuring out how to form the menorah], the Holy One, blessed is He, said to him, “Cast the talent [equivalent to sixty-four pounds of gold] into the fire, and it will be made by itself.” Therefore, it is not written: תֵּעָשֶׂה but תֵּיעָשֶׂה. -[from Tan. Beha’alothecha 3]

**its base** This refers to the foot on the bottom [of the menorah], which was made like a box with three legs coming out of it [protruding] downwards.

**and its stem** [This refers to] its central stem rising from the middle of the base, erected upward. At the top of it was the middle lamp, made like a spoon, into which the oil was poured and the wick inserted.

**its goblets** They are a sort of cups made of glass, long and narrow, which are called maderins [in Old French], long, slender glass goblets. These, however, were made of gold, and they protruded from every branch according to the number prescribed by the text. They were [placed] on it [the menorah] only for beauty.

**its knobs** [They were] like sort of round apples all around [the branch], protruding [outward] around the middle branch, in the style of the menoroth that are made for princes. They are called pomeles [in French], apple-shaped knobs (Men. 28b). Their number is prescribed in this parsha, [i.e.,] how many knobs protruded from it and how much [space] was [left] unadorned between one knob and another knob.

**and its flowers** Engravings made on it like a sort of flowers.

**shall [all] be [one piece] with it** Everything shall be of hammered work, out of the solid block [of gold], and not made separately and then attached [to the main stem].

**32** **coming out of its sides** from here and there [in each direction] diagonally, drawn upwards until [they reached] the height of the menorah, which is the middle stem. They came out of the middle stem, one higher than the others: the bottom one was longest, the one above it was shorter than it, and the highest one shorter than that, because the height of their ends [at their tops] was equal to the height of the seventh, middle stem, out of which the six branches extended.

**33** **decorated** Heb. מְשֻׁקָּדִים, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders מְצַיְירִין. They were decorated in the manner that silver and gold vessels are made, which is called nieler [in Old French, nieller in modern French, niello in English].

**and three decorated goblets** protruding from each branch.

**a knob and a flower** were on each branch.

**34** **And on [the stem of] the menorah [shall be] four... goblets** On the main stem of the menorah were four goblets: one protruding on it below the branches and three above the exit of the three branches that extended outwards from its sides.

**decorated...its knobs and its flowers** This is one of the five verses whose meaning cannot be determined. It is unknown whether [to read] “decorated goblets” or “decorated its knobs and its flowers."-[from Yoma 52b]

**35** **And a knob under the two branches** From the knob, the branches extended from its two sides in either direction. This is what we learned in the [Baraitha] Melecheth HaMishkan [ch. 10, Men. 28b, 29a]: The height of the menorah was eighteen handbreadths. [This total is arrived at as follows:] The feet [of the menorah] and the [lowest] flower were three handbreadths. That is the flower mentioned in connection with the base, as it is said: “to its base, to its flower” (Num. 8:4). Then two handbreadths [above this were] unadorned, and a handbreadth [above that] in which [there] was a goblet-[namely one] of the four goblets [mentioned in verse 34]—and a knob and a flower of the two knobs and the two flowers mentioned in connection with the menorah itself, as it is said [on verse 34]: “decorated...its knobs and its flowers.” We learn that on the main stem there were two knobs and two flowers, in addition to the three knobs from which the branches extended, as it is said [here]: “And a knob under the two branches.” And [above the lowest branches were] two handbreadths unadorned, and a handbreadth with a knob and two branches coming out of it on either side, extending upward, opposite the height of the menorah, and one handbreadth unadorned, and a handbreadth with a knob and two branches coming out of it, and one handbreadth unadorned, and a handbreadth with a knob and two branches coming out of it, extending upward, opposite the height of the menorah, and two handbreadths unadorned. [Hence,] three handbreadths remain, in which there were three goblets, a knob, and a flower. The goblets were found to number twenty-two: eighteen for the six branches [of the menorah]-three for each one-and four on the menorah itself, totaling twenty-two. And [there were] eleven knobs-six on the six branches [one on each branch], three on the menorah itself, from which the branches extended, and two more on the menorah, as it is said [in verse 34]: “decorated...its knobs,” [which means two knobs] since the minimum of [the plural] “knobs” is two. One [knob was] below, next to the base, and one in the top three handbreadths [together] with the three goblets. And it [the menorah] had nine flowers: six on the six branches [one on each branch] as it is said [in verse 33]: “on one branch, [there was] a knob and a flower,” and three [flowers] on the menorah [itself], as it is said [here], "decorated...its knobs and its flowers"—the minimum of [the plural] “flowers” is two, and one [additional flower is] mentioned in the parsha Beha’alothecha: “to its base to its flower” (Num. 8:4). If you carefully study this Mishnah that is written above, you will find them [the decorations of the menorah] according to their number, each one in its place.-[from Men. 28b]

**37** **its lamps** [They were] sort of cups into which the oil and the wicks were put.

**[so that they] shed light toward its face** [Namely,] make the openings of the six lamps [which were] at the top of the branches that extend from of its [the menorah’s] sides, turned toward the middle one, so that when the lamps were lit they would shed light עֵבֶר פָּנֶיהָ, towards [or in the direction of] its face. Their light should be turned towards the face of the middle branch, which is the body of the menorah.

**38** **And its tongs** Heb. וּמַלְקָחֶיהָ. They are the tongs made to take the wicks from the oil, to set them in place and to draw them into the mouths of the lamps. Since they [are used for] taking (לוֹקְחִים) [the wicks] with them, they are called מֶלְקָחַיִם, a pair of “takers.” [The Aramaic word] וְצִבְיָתָהָא, which Onkelos renders [for וּמַלְקָחֶיהָ], is a term related to צְבַת, tenailles in French, tongs.

**and its scoops** Heb. וּמַחְתּֽתֶיהָ. They are a kind of small cup with which he [the kohen] would scoop the ashes that are in the lamp every morning when he [the kohen] cleaned the lamps from the ashes of the wicks that burned during the night and were [now] extinguished. The word מַחְתָּה is [the equivalent of] poseydure [or poysedure] in Old French, a little shovel [or] ash pan, like “to scoop (לַחְתּוֹת) fire from a hearth” (Isa. 30:14).

**39** **a talent pure gold** Heb. כִּכַּר.[This means] that its weight along with all its implements shall be nothing but a talent, no less and no more. The talent used for mundane matters was sixty maneh, and the one used for holy matters was double, thus one hundred twenty maneh (Bech. 5a). The maneh is the litra with which silver is weighed according to the weight used in Cologne, which is the equivalent of one hundred gold pieces [or] twenty-five selas, for the sela is equivalent to four gold pieces. [This is the equivalent of sixty-four pounds.]

**40** **Now see and make** See here on the mountain the pattern that I am showing you. [This] informs us that Moses had difficulties with the construction of the menorah, until the Holy One, blessed is He, showed him a [model] menorah of fire. -[from Men. 29a]

**which you are shown** Heb. אֲשֶׁר-אַתָּה מָרְאֶה, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: דִי אַתְּ מִתְחַזֵי, which you are shown. If it were punctuated מַרְאֶה with a “patach,” it would mean that you show others. Now that it is punctuated with a short “kamatz,” it means that you are shown, that others show you, (for the punctuation distinguishes between the active and the passive).

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 61:1-9**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. For the conductor, on neginath, of David. | 1. For praise, with the psalms of David. |
| 2. Hearken, O God, to my request, listen to my prayer. | 2. Accept, O LORD, my petition, hear my prayer. |
| 3. From the end of the earth I call out to You when my heart becomes faint; **on the rock that is higher than I, You lead me.** | 3. From the ends of the earth I will pray in Your presence when my heart is weary; **lead me to a strong fortress built on a rock that is higher than I.** |
| 4. For You were a shelter for me, a tower of strength in the face of the enemy. | 4. For You have been security for me, in truth, a stronghold before the enemy. |
| 5. I shall dwell in Your tent to eternity; I will take shelter in the covert of Your **wings** **(Tzitzit\*)** forever. | 5. I will dwell in Your tent forever; I will be secure in the shade of Your **presence** **(Tzitzit\*)** forever. |
| 6. For You, God, have hearkened to my vows; You have given the heritage of those who fear Your name. | 6. For You, O LORD, have heard my vows; You have given the inheritance to those who fear Your name. |
| 7. **Add days to the days of the king, his years as every generation.** | 7. **You will add days to the age to come, the days of the King Messiah; his years are like the generations of this age and the generations of the age to come.** |
| 8. **May he dwell forever before God; kindness and truth should be prepared to guard him.** | 8. **He will dwell forever in the presence of the LORD; goodness and truth from the Lord of the World will guard him.** |
| 9. **So will I sing praises to Your name forever, when I pay my vows every day.** | 9. **Therefore will I praise Your name forever, when I pay my vows in the day of the redemption of Israel, and in the day the King Messiah is anointed to be king.** |

(\* The Hebrew word in v. 5 - **כְּנָפֶיךָ – “Wing” –** mentioned in Exodus 25:20; and Haggai 2:12 (and cf. Zecharia 8:23) is used as a euphemism for the fringed four-cornered garment **(Tzitzit)** worn by male Jews.)

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Tehillim (Psalms) 61:1-9**

**3** **From the end of the earth** although I am far from my men whom I send against my enemies in battle.

**I call out to You when my heart becomes faint** because of them. Now, about what do I call out to You? That You lead me on a rock, which is higher and stronger than I.

**5** **I shall dwell in Your tent to eternity** Grant me the privilege in this world and in the world to come.

**6** **You have given the heritage of those who fear Your name** You have restored the cities of their heritage through me.

**7** **Add days to the days of the king** If it has been decreed upon me to die young, add days to my days until my years will equal seventy years, as the years of every generation.

**8** **May he dwell** **[May] the king dwell forever before God.**

**kindness and truth** with which he engages himself will be prepared to guard him.

**should be prepared** Heb. מן. Preparation, as (Jonah 4:6): “And the Lord... appointed (וימן) a Kikayon.”

**9** **So will I sing praises** Just as You will benefit me, so will I sing praises to Your name by paying my vows every day.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Tehillim (Psalms) ‎‎61:1-9**

By: H.Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Psalms chapter 61 was written by David. This psalm demonstrates that no distance or danger could diminish David’s fervent love for G-d. Even when Saul pursued him to the furthest reaches of the realm, David’s heart remained rooted in the spiritual center of the land, the House of G-d, and he yearned for the opportunity to serve G-d in the holy precincts.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Sforno[[2]](#footnote-2) and Metzudat David[[3]](#footnote-3) maintain that this psalm was composed when David traveled to repel Aram, the nation which threatened to overrun and to annex the remote eastern boundaries of the land of Israel the end of the land.[[4]](#footnote-4) [That threat is discussed in Psalms chapter 60, to which this chapter is a sequel]

Radak,[[5]](#footnote-5) based on the Midrash, adds that David’s cries echo the collective prayers of Israel in exile. From the dismal loneliness and isolation of the Diaspora, the Jews cry out to their Redeemer to restore them to their national home.

The psalm concludes with a request for the continuity of the Davidic line of kings. The kings of the House of David are the precursors of the Mashiach, who will gather the scattered remnants of Israel into the land of their fathers.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Our chapter of Psalms speaks of a rock, in v.3:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 61:3*** *From the end of the earth will I call unto Thee, when my heart[[7]](#footnote-7) fainteth;*

*lead me to a rock* (צור) *that is too high for me.*

Because David used the word ‘heart’ as his inspiration for his commentary on our Torah seder, I, too, would like to use this pasuk for my commentary. I would like to investigate the Torah’s use of rock and the dust that comes from a rock.

“Rock” is the normal translation of the Hebrew words *tzur -* צור. There are a couple of other words which are sometimes translated as *rock*: *Eben* [stone], *selah* [rock formation], or *matzeivah* [stone monument]. Whenever these words appear, they are metaphors for HaShem.

Maimonides notes, in his Guide for the Perplexed,[[8]](#footnote-8) in his explanation of the term *tzur* - *rock*: Tzur - rock is an equivocal term.

That is to say, the word has several meanings, entirely different one from the other, as opposed to a borrowed term, namely, a metaphor, where there is a similarity between the various meanings. One way that the Torah conceals its esoteric truths is by using words having multiple meanings. It is for this reason that the story relating to the cleft in the rock[[9]](#footnote-9) is formulated the way it is, the term “tzur” intentionally chosen because of its multiple denotations. Maimonides explicates the various meanings of the word “tzur.”

*It is a term denoting a mountain… It is also a term denoting a hard stone like flint… It is, further, a term denoting the quarry from which quarry-stones are hewn…*

*In derivation from the third meaning of this equivocal term (quarry), the word was applied to G-d, who is also designated by the term “tzur.”*

*Subsequently, in derivation from the last meaning, the term was used figuratively to designate the root and principle of everything… On account of the last meaning,* **quarry***, G-d, may He be exalted, is designated as The Rock, as he is the principle and the efficient cause of all things other than himself. Accordingly, it is said:*

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:4*** *The Rock, His work is perfect.*

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:18*** *Of the Rock that begot you, you were unmindful.*

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:30*** *Their Rock had given them over.*

***Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 2:2*** *And there is no Rock like our G-d.*

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 26:4*** *The Rock of Eternity.*

The last verse cited by Maimonides to illustrate the meaning of the term *tzur* relates to G-d’s revelation to Moses in the cleft of the rock:

The verse, “And you shall stand upon the rock”[[10]](#footnote-10) means: Rely upon, and be firm in considering, G-d, may He be exalted, as the first principle. This is the entryway through which you shall come to Him, as we have made clear when speaking of His saying [to Moses]: “Behold, there is a place by Me”.[[11]](#footnote-11)

**Think, for a moment, about the implications of HaShem being a quarry from which other rocks are hewn.**

As we progress in this study, we will see that Maimonides was surely correct when he said that Tzur is equivocal. So, let’s look at another common word for rock.

*Eben* the Hebrew word for rock, “Eben”, is all about **connecting**. According to Rashi,[[12]](#footnote-12) the Hebrew word *stone* or *Eben -* אבן,[[13]](#footnote-13) is a contraction of the words father (ab *–* אב) *and* son + (ben - בן). Both words share the letter beit - ב. This word shows what we all know, that a son is an extension of his father. Yaaqob’s hope for the Jewish people is that we **connect** from generation to generation – through the Torah.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The Hebrew words “stone” (Eben - אבן), “father” (ab - אב), and “son” (ben - בן) were spoken by Mashiach in which he put all the pieces together:

***Matthew 3:9*** *And do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’* (ab - אב)*; for I say to you that from these stones* (Eben - אבן) *G-d is able to raise up children* (ben - בן) *to Abraham.*

With this introduction, let’s turn over a few rocks and see if we can’t connect to the Torah’s usage of this common word.

**Rock**

First usage of *tzur* in the Torah is found in:

***Shemot (Exodus) 17:6*** *Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moshe did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.*

This suggests that a rock has an association with HaShem and a rock is meant to provide something for us. In the case above, the rock was to provide water, a **connection** to life.[[15]](#footnote-15)

**HaShem as a Rock**

Why is HaShem referred to in the following Pasuk as a tzur, a rock?

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:15*** *But Yeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook G-d which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.*

In an earlier Pasuk, Rashi explains this term used as an alternative description of HaShem.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:4*** *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a G-d of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*

Tzur, rock, implies strength, Rashi explains.[[16]](#footnote-16) HaShem is called by this name when we wish to talk about His power and steadfastness. It is as Targum Yonatan renders the word, *mighty*, and his elaboration makes it clear that HaShem is a rock when he is involved in **connecting** people, animals, or things.

***Targum Pseudo Jonathan*** *32:4. Moshe the prophet said: When I ascended the mountain of Sinai, I beheld HaShem of all the worlds, HaShem, dividing the day into four portions; three hours employed in the Law, three with judgment, three in making marriage bonds between man and woman, and appointing to elevate or to abase, and three hours in the care of every created thing: for so it is written: The Mighty One whose works are perfect, for all His ways are judgment, a faithful G-d before whom no iniquity comes forth, pure and upright is He.*

Notice that all of the activities, in the Targum, involve **connecting**.

**Water from a rock[[17]](#footnote-17)**

One of the more famous Torah rocks was the well that traveled with the Children of Israel in the wilderness. Let’s examine this incident a bit more closely. We need to remember that Moshe was told to bring forth water from a rock on two different occasions.

The first time was in Shemot (Exodus) 17:1-7, which tells of an incident in which the Jews asked for water during their ***first*** year in the desert, at which time Moshe was told to ***strike*** a rock and bring forth water.

The second is Bamidbar (Numbers) 20:1-13, which tells of the incident in the beginning of the Jews’ ***fortieth year*** in the desert, when the Jews asked for water, Moshe was told to ***speak*** to a rock to bring forth water, and Moshe struck the rock, instead.

Recall that the reason Moshe could not enter the Promised Land was because of a rock. When the people cried for water at Kadesh, HaShem told Moshe to take his rod and before the eyes of the community order the rock to give water. So Moshe took the rod as he was commanded, went to the rock in front of the community and struck it to bring forth water. HaShem immediately told Moshe that because he had not trusted enough to affirm HaShem’s sanctity, Moshe cannot enter the Promised Land.[[18]](#footnote-18) Fair enough. HaShem had said to *speak* to the rock and did not say to *hit* the rock. Moshe did not follow orders. Others who had not followed orders precisely were struck dead immediately. This is a relatively mild punishment.

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 20:7*** *And G-d spoke to Moshe, saying, “Take the staff and gather the Assembly, you and Aharon your brother, and speak to the rock (selah) before their eyes and give from its waters; bring forth water from the rock to give water to the Assembly and their animals.”*

The Midrash *Yalkut Shimoni*, makes the following comment:[[19]](#footnote-19)

“Speak to the rock, do not strike it. G‑d told Moshe, ‘when a child is young, the educator may hit the lad in order to teach him. When the child grows into adulthood, however, the educator must rebuke him only verbally. Similarly, when the rock was but a ‘small child,’ I instructed you to strike it; but now [after forty years when it has “grown up”] you must only speak to it. Teach it a chapter of Torah and it will produce water.”

This is a strange Midrash. What is the comparison between a rock and a child? And how are you supposed to teach a rock a chapter of Torah?

Obviously, according to the Midrash, the story with the rock was more than a physical event concerning an attempt to draw water from a hard, inanimate object. It was also a psychological and moral tale about how to educate and refine human “rocks” so that they can produce water, and use the water for connecting to HaShem and to others.

Before any refinement could be achieved, the outer “rock” needed to be cracked. The “hard skin” they naturally developed over 210 years in exile, needed to be penetrated before its inner vibrant and fresh waters could be fully discovered.

That is why, immediately after the Exodus, G‑d instructed Moshe to strike the rock. At this primitive point in Jewish history, smiting the “rock” was appropriate, indeed critical. Their hearts were too dense to be pierced in any other way. Moshe needed to be forceful, direct and blunt.

Forty years later, their children and grandchildren, born and raised in liberty and in a highly spiritual environment, developed a sense of selfhood quite different from their parents and grandparents. Forty years in wilderness, in the presence of Moshe, Aaron and miracles, left a dent. The nation had spiritually and psychologically matured.

But suddenly, they, too, began to lament and kvetch about a lack of water. Yet a subtle reading of the text exposes us to a tune quite different from the tune present in their parents’ cry forty years earlier. This new generation of Jews asks only for water, not for meat or other delicacies. They do not express their craving to return to Egypt. Nor do they wish to stone Moshe. They are simply terrified of the prospects of death by thirst.

G-d was sensitive to the nuanced distinctions. He commanded Moshe to speak to the rock, rather than strike it. “Now you must speak to it, teach it a chapter of Torah and it will produce water”, in the above recorded words of the Midrash. The Jews have come a long way. The model of smiting must be replaced with the model of teaching and inspiring.

At that critical juncture, however, Moshe was unable to metamorphose himself. Moshe, who came to identify so deeply with the generation he painstakingly liberated from Egyptian genocide and slavery and worked incessantly for their development as a free and holy people, could not easily assume a new model of leadership. Moshe, calling the people “rebels”, struck the rock. He continued to employ the method of rebuke and strength.

And he struck it twice, because when you attempt to change things through pressure, rather than by persuasion, you must always do it more than once.

This demonstrated that Moshe belonged to the older generation and because of his profound love and loyalty to that generation - about whom he told G-d that should He not forgive them, He could erase Moshe’ name from the Torah,[[20]](#footnote-20) he was not the appropriate person to take the new generation into the land.

Moshe did not possess the ability to properly assess the transformation that had taken place in the young generation of Jews who had come of age. This was not a flaw of Moshe; it was his virtue: A result of his extraordinary intimate connection with the minds of his generation. Moshe has become one with them.

What is more, Moshe wished not, perhaps could not, speak to the rock, for that would demonstrate the flaws of the Jews he faithfully led for forty years; it would highlight the contrast between enslaved parents and liberated children. Moshe chose to diminish himself rather than diminish his people. That is what made Moshe such a unique leader.

So G‑d told Moshe, “*You did not have faith in Me, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel*”. Instead of exposing the elevated spiritual status of the new generation of Jews, Moshe diminished their moral level, creating a crack in their profound and mature relationship with G‑d.

**Two Types of Stones**

The above explanation will clarify another curious anomaly in the biblical description of the two incidents with the water. The description for the “rock” in the first incident is the Hebrew term “tzur.” The description for the rock in the second incident is the Hebrew term “selah.” Why?

(In the case of the tzur, the nation had yet to reach such a high level, though they had been in need of a great miracle in terms of the water. Hitting the rock was a way to do this and to counteract the spiritual imbalance at that time. In fact, “tzur” is the name used to indicate that the rock itself had yet to become transformed to a higher spiritual level, indicated by the word “selah” used 40 years later.)

In English we translate both Hebrew words, tzur and selah, to mean a rock. But in the Hebrew there is a significant difference between the two terms. A tzur is a rock that is hard and solid both in its exterior and interior parts. It is all rock. A selah, on the other hand, is a rock that is hard and rocky on its outside, but its interior contains water or moisture.

When you are dealing with a “rock” that has no moisture stored in it, you have no choice but to smite it. However, when you are confronted with a rock that is merely rocky on the outside but soft on the inside, you have no right to smite it. Now, you must speak to it and inspire it to reveal its internal waters of wisdom, love and inspiration.

**Dust**

Dust, afar - עפר,[[21]](#footnote-21) is an unexpected ingredient in the composition of Adam. It is rare that anyone thinks of themselves as “dust of the earth”. We tend to have a more elevated concept of ourselves as a the ‘highest form of earthly being’. Never the less, when HaShem went to create man, He started with dust.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 2:7*** *And HaShem G-d formed man* (adam) *from the* ***dust*** *of the earth* (adamah) *and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.*

But man is called Adam. What is established here is an interesting connection: Adam and Adamah, man and earth. And not just earth, but “dust of the earth”. The word used for the earth out of which *Adam* was made is *Adamah*. They are the same noun: Adam is the masculine form, Adamah is the feminine. We are literally earth-creatures. There is a sense of this connection also in English in the cognate relationship between the words “human” and “humus[[22]](#footnote-22)“. (The identification of the earth as feminine and humans as masculine reflects the traditional agricultural or poetic characterization of the earth being, like woman, the receiver of seed and bearer of fruit.)

They are the same word: *Adam* and *Adamah*. Just by virtue of his name, it would appear that of the elements which form man, it is Adamah rather than the G-dly element, which would seem to be the primary ingredient.

Dust represents death, the inanimate that has no life-force. The body alone is just “**dust** of the earth”, it needs the soul to give it life.

From the above pasuk, we see that there are two unique building blocks that form the basic elements of man: **Dust** and the **breath** of HaShem. Man is both physical and spiritual, earthly and G-dly.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Because of Adam’s sin, the dust which formed our humble beginning, will also be our end:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:19*** *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for* ***dust*** *thou art, and unto* ***dust*** *shalt thou return.[[24]](#footnote-24)*

Rashi, draws our attention to the origin of the dust out of which Adam was formed. He brings two very different midrashic explanations:

“DUST FROM THE ADAMA: He gathered his (Adam’s) dust from the four corners of the globe so that in whatever place he may die, the ground will absorb him in burial.

AN ALTERNATIVE READING: G-d took his dust from the place of which it is said “ You shall make an altar of earth (adamah) to Me”[[25]](#footnote-25).. I only wish that he may gain atonement ...”

Let us examine the images that Rashi presents to us here. It is difficult to understand what these colorful interpretations are trying to suggest. What do we mean when we talk about the raw materials for man coming from the entire globe? Apparently, we are suggesting that man somehow encompasses the entire world. This first interpretation of Rashi’s is expanded upon by The Netziv[[26]](#footnote-26) in his commentary, HaEmek Davar.

“G-d gathered earth, a little from here and a little from there, unlike the way that he created animal and beast. Human existence differs greatly from that of the animal kingdom. Animals will live only in a specific climate, each according to their specific nature. Each animal is born and thrives in a particular climate. Man is different, living throughout the world, in hot and cold climate, adapting diet and nutrition in accordance with the local conditions. This is the result of G-d gathering the materials for man from all over the globe. In addition, certain lands breed certain temperaments ... but man has no defined temperament due to his diverse origin.”

So the unique aspect of man is his adaptability and universality. His versatile, portable, robust nature is encapsulated in this image. Man lives everywhere in the world. There is nowhere where man is a stranger. Because man is a creation of all places, he is at home in all places. The first Midrash emphasizes the universal nature of man.

But what of the second midrash? The second midrash plays on the word ‘adamah’, knowing that the altar in the Temple is described using that selfsame word: “mizbeach adamah”.[[27]](#footnote-27) On this basis the midrash proposes that man’s origin’s lies in a single spot, the site of the future Temple in Jerusalem. Why? Why does man need to be created from this hallowed place?

According to Rashi, this particular ingredient is vital to grant man the future opportunity of atonement and forgiveness. In this very daring reading, the midrash notes an inherent ‘flaw’ within the blueprint of man, the inevitable tendency towards sin, a devastating imperfection. Man, if he is to exist as man, is going to sin, and thus the very fact of his existence necessitates teshuva,[[28]](#footnote-28) leading to forgiveness, and atonement.[[29]](#footnote-29) Thus forgiveness must precede his very creation. Indeed, this Midrash tells us that it is a crucial ingredient of every fiber of his being.

This suggests that man has a higher purpose than merely being the “dust of the earth”. This higher purpose is lost in Adam. Adam after the fall, epitomizes the “dust of the earth” aspect.

Our humble beginning as the “dust of the earth” is turned around later when Avraham recognizes and acknowledges HaShem. HaShem, then, makes a promise to Avraham.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 28:14*** *And HaShem said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. 16 And I will make thy seed as the* ***dust*** *of the earth: so that if a man can number the* ***dust*** *of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.*

The Midrash explains the very powerful significance of this choice of words. This is more than just a blessing of multitudes. The blessing of “dust of the earth” represents the history of the Jews. Everybody tramples over the dust of the earth, but in the end the dust of the earth always remains on top.

In the final analysis, the “dust of the earth” is always on top. This is the analogy and the blessing of “Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth.” Yaakov is told that his children will be trampled upon and spat upon, like the dust. But in the end, like the dust, they will remain on top.

That same dust ultimately covers those who trample it.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:19*** *From dust you are taken and to dust you will return.[[30]](#footnote-30)*

***Shabbath 152b*** *Our Rabbis taught: ‘And the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto G-d who gave it’: Render it back to him as He gave it to thee, [viz.,] in purity, so do thou [return it] in purity.*

Thus, we come full circle to show that the tremendous blessing also carries with it a powerful reminder that we should remain humble, knowing what our end will be.

Adam’s purpose, was to lift himself up beyond the *dust* within himself and reach an exalted level of spirituality. This is alluded to in the pasuk:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 3:21*** *Who knows the spirit of the sons of man that goes up above, and the spirit of the animal that descends below to the earth.*

Indeed, a scholar who succeeds in learning Torah lishmah, for its own sake, experiences a similar ascendancy:

***Avot 6:1*** *And he is lifted up and elevated above all that is mundane.*

**Little Dust**

Ephron the Hittite sold a cave and its land to Avraham.[[31]](#footnote-31) This cave was called Machpelah.[[32]](#footnote-32) Normally *Ephron* is spelled ‘full’ (with five letters). However, after he negotiated in bad faith with Avraham for the field for burying Sarah, Ephron’s name is spelled ‘missing’ (with four letters)[[33]](#footnote-33) as a sign by the Torah of the belittling of his stature.

Avraham found the cave in the fields that belongs to Ephron. He could see Adam and Chava in the cave. He also saw that they were buried by the entrance to the Garden of Eden that was in the cave of Machpelah.[[34]](#footnote-34)

That was the reason why he wanted to have ownership of this place. He was ready to pay any price and he did pay the full price. His intension was to give us, the future generations, the connection to the tree of life. The patriarchs and the matriarchs that are buried there protect the entrance to the Garden of Eden for us until the time of the resurrection of the dead. Avraham established control over the gates to the Garden of Eden and bridged the gap between death (our world, the Tree of the Knowledge Good and Evil) and life (Garden of Eden and Tree of Life).

It is by no accident that Abraham bought the Machpelah Cave from Ephron (עפרון)[[35]](#footnote-35) the Hittite, whose name is derived from the same root as “dust” (עפר). Man was created, “dust from the earth” and after his sin he was destined to die, “for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Yet “dust” takes on new significance when Abraham states his famous expression of submissiveness and lowliness:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 18:27*** *And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:*

“I am dust and ashes”, the attribute of submissiveness is implied in our context too, in the above-mentioned phrase, “Sarah died in Kiryat Arba, which is Chevron,[[36]](#footnote-36) in the land of Canaan”. Canaan (כנען) is from the same root as “submissiveness” (הכנעה). As the indicated by the Zohar, the four elements of the “city of four” (Kiryat Arba) remain connected by the merit of “the land of Canaan” i.e., the dust-like attribute of a submissive soul.

The field Avraham buys is called *Sde Ephron*: the field of little dust. The name “field of little dust” has resonance: It is as if Avraham buys the dust, the *afar* out of which Adam was first made. One midrash says the dust that created Adam’s body was from the place of the Temple, while another midrash says that Adam’s body was created using dust from every corner of the world. We can understand both of these *midrashim* as containing the truth. Avraham is buying a stake in the land on which he lives, the land on which the Temple will one-day stand. And, there is a connection between Avraham and the whole earth.

**Ashlamata: Haggai 2:8-15 +21-23**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 8. The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, says the Lord of Hosts. | 8. “The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine”, says the LORD of Hosts. |
| 9. The glory of this last House shall be greater than the first one, said the Lord of Hosts. And in this place I will grant peace, says the Lord of Hosts. | 9. The latter glory of this House will be greater than the former”, says the LORD of Hosts, “and I will grant prosperity in this place”, says the LORD of Hosts. |
| 10. On the twenty-fourth [day] of the ninth [month], in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Haggai the prophet, saying: | 10. Pm the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, a word of prophecy from the LORD was with Haggai the prophet saying, |
| 11. So said the Lord of Hosts: Now ask the priests the Torah, saying: | 11. “Thus says the LORD of Hosts, ask now a ruling from the priests, saying, |
| 12. **"Should a man carry contaminated flesh in the skirt of his garment, if it touches in his skirt (i.e. Tzitzit\*) the bread and the pottage and the wine and the oil, or any food, will it [the food] become contaminated?" And the priests replied and said, "No."** | 12. **“If a man carries holy flesh in the wing of his garment (i.e. Tzitzit\*) and touches with his clothing bread or pottage or wine or oil or anything that is eaten, will it become prohibited?” And the priests answered and said, “No.”** |
| 13. And Haggai said, "If the contamination of a dead body touches all these, will it become contaminated?" And the priests replied and said, "It will become contaminated." | 13. And Haggai said, “If one who is defiled by a dead body touches any of these, will it become defiled?” And the priests, answered and said “It will become defiled.” |
| 14. And Haggai replied and said, "So is this people, and so is this nation before Me, says the Lord; and so is all the work of their hands, and whatever they sacrifice there is contaminated. | 14. And Haggai (the prophet) answered and said, “So is this nation and so is this congregation before Me” says the LORD, “and so are all the works of their hands; and what they offer is defiled. |
| 15. And now, consider from this day and before-before placing a stone upon a stone in the Temple of the Lord | 15. And so, consider now from this day onward, before a layer is laid upon a layer in the temple of the LORD - |
| 16. so that they should not come to a heap of twenty measures, and there would be ten; [similarly,] when one would come to the wine vat to draw off fifty press-measures, and there would be twenty. | 16. from the time when you were going in to a heap of twenty (measures) and there were ten, (when) you went in to a winepress in which there were fifty kegs of wine and there were twenty. |
| 17. I smote you with blast and with yellowing and with hail in all the work of your hands, **and you are not [returning] to Me, says the Lord.** | 17. I have struck you with blight and mildew and hail, (even) all the works of your hands, **but you do not return to My service, says the LORD.** |
| 18. Pay attention now, from this day and before-from the twenty-fourth [day] of the ninth [month]- from the day that the Temple of the Lord was founded, pay attention. | 18. “Consider now from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the temple of the LORD began to be established, consider: |
| 19. The seed is still in the granary, and the grapevines, the fig trees, the pomegranate trees, and the olive trees have not yet borne [fruit]-from this day I will bless." | 19. Is the grain yet in the barn? And have the vines and fig-trees and pomegranates and olive-trees not yet yielded anything? From this day on I will bless. |
| 20. And the word of the Lord came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth of the month, saying: | 20. And a word of prophecy from the LORD was with Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day of the month, saying, |
| 21. Say to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, saying: I am shaking up the heaven and the earth. | 21. Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of the house of Judah, saying, “I will shake the heavens and the earth. |
| 22. And I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms, and I will destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations. And I will overthrow the chariots and their riders; and the horses and their riders shall come down, each one by the sword of his brother. | 22. And I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms and will break the power of the kingdoms of the nations, and will overthrow the chariots and their riders; and the horses and their riders will be killed, each by his brother’s sword. |
| 23. **On that day, says the Lord of Hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, My servant; says the Lord, and I will make you as a signet; for I have chosen you, says the Lord of Hosts.** | 23. **“At that time”, says the LORD of Hosts, “I will bring you near, O Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, My servant, says the LORD, “and I will make you as the engraving of a signet ring upon the hand, for I have found pleasure in you, says the LORD of Hosts.”** |

\* The Hebrew word in v. 12 - **בִּכְנַף – “Wing” –** mentioned in Exodus 25:20; and Psalms 61:5 (and cf. Zecharia 8:23) is used as a euphemism for the fringed four-cornered garment **(Tzitzit)** worn by male Jews.)

**Rashi’s Commentary on Haggai 2:8-15 + 21-23**

**8** **The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine** and it is in My power to bring it to whomever I desire.

**9** **shall be greater** There was a controversy between Rav and Samuel. One said: In the building; and one said: In the years, that the years of the First Temple were four hundred and ten, and those of the Second Temple were four hundred and twenty.

**12** **contaminated flesh** flesh of contamination of a carcass as a creeping thing

**if it touches in his skirt** It did not touch the creeping thing itself but the garment, which is the first degree of contamination.

**and the pottage** a cooked food

**will it become contaminated?** Heb. HaYiqdash.

**“No.”** It [the food] will [not] become contaminated. Rav and Shmuel disagree over this matter. One [Rav] says that the priests erred, for he [Haggai] asked them concerning a fourth-degree contamination in reference to hallowed things, and they replied that it [the food] is ritually pure. One [Shmuel] says that the priests did not err, that he [Haggai] asked them concerning a fifth-degree contamination in reference to hallowed things.

**13** **If the contamination of a dead body** The dead body itself.

**It will become contaminated** For the dead body is the father of the father of contamination. The fifth degree of the contamination of the reptile or rodent is a fourth degree in the contamination of a dead body.

**14** **So is this people** Just as you err in this, so do you err in many halachot.

**and whatever they will sacrifice there** if they do not put their hearts to learning.

**15** **and before** The years that passed.

**before placing a stone upon a stone** Before you return to resume the building and to add to the foundation that you laid in the days of Cyrus - when it [the building] was stopped - now put your hearts to engage in the building and in studying the necessities of the priesthood.

**16** **so that they should not come to a heap of twenty measures** So that you should not have a curse sent into your works as [there has been] until now; for they would set up a heap from which twenty seahs should be measured, and would find only ten.

**when one would come to the wine vat** That is the pit before the wine press, into which the wine flows.

**to draw off fifty press-measures** To draw out from [the wine vat] fifty measures with which they would measure wine from the winepresses, and the name [of those fifty measures] is purah.

**to draw off** to draw, as in (Isa. 30:14) “To scoop water from a cistern”; and so (ibid. 47:2) “Draw off the path.”

**and there would be twenty** Not that more of a curse is sent into the wine than is sent into the grain, but a person [may] err in estimating the measure of the wine vat because it is deep, while the heap [of grain] stands before him. In tractate Avot d’Rabbi Nathan (4:4) we learned a reason why a small measure is not mentioned with regard to wine, while it is mentioned with regard to grain, e.g. to draw off twenty-five press measures and it was ten. This teaches us that wine is an extra measure for the world, and when the wine suffers, it is a symptom of a curse for the world. Since the wine must be plentiful, [the prophet] counts a larger number concerning it.

**18** **that the Temple of the Lord was founded** That now for the second time they began to add to the first foundation that they had built in the days of Cyrus.

**19** **The seed is still in the granary** You have not yet sown this year, and the trees have not yet ripened their fruits. From now on you shall sow at a time of blessing, for the building of the Temple will bring blessing into the work of your hands.

**22** **and I will destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations** The kingdom of Persia, which now rules over the entire world, will fall into the hands of another kingdom at the end of thirty-four years from the building of the Temple, as we learned in tractate *Avodah Zarah* (9a).

**23** **and I will make you as a signet** In contrast to what was decreed upon his father Jeconiah (Jer. 22:24): “As I live, says the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, be a signet on My right hand, from there I will remove you.” [Jeremiah further] states there (ibid. 22:30): “Inscribe this man childless.” We learn that his repentance availed [Jeconiah], and Zerubbabel was born to him, and he was made as a signet.

**Correlations**

By: H.Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

& H.H. Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

**Shemot (Exodus) 25:1-40**

**Haggai 2:8-15 +21-23**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 61**

**Mark 8:1-4**

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Psalm are:**

Heart - לב, Strong’s number 03820.

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:**

LORD- יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Saying / Saith - אמר, Strong’s number 0559.

Children / Son - בן, Strong’s number 01121.

Bring / Take - לקח, Strong’s number 03947.

Man / One - איש, Strong’s number 0376.

**Shemot (Exodus) 25:1** And the **LORD <03068>** spake unto Moses, **saying <0559> (8800)**, 2 Speak unto the **children <01121>** of Israel, that they **bring <03947> (8799)** me an offering: of every **man <0376>** that giveth it willingly with his **heart <03820>** ye shall **take <03947> (8799)** my offering.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 61:2** From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my **heart <03820>** is overwhelmed: lead me to the **rock** that is higher than I.

**Haggai 2:8** The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the **LORD <03068>** of hosts.

**Haggai 2:9** The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the **LORD <03068>** of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, **saith <0559> (8804)** the **LORD <03068>** of hosts.

**Haggai 2:23** In that day, saith the **LORD <03068>** of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the **LORD <03068>** of hosts.

**Haggai 2:22** And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every **one <0376>** by the sword of his brother.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Reading**  **Ex. 25:1-40** | **Psalms**  **61:1-9** | **Ashlamata**  **Hag 2:8-15 +21-23** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **vyai** | man | Exod. 25:2  Exod. 25:20 |  | Hag. 2:12  Hag. 2:22 |
| **hL,ae** | these | Exod. 25:39 |  | Hag. 2:13 |
| **rm;a'** | saying | Exod. 25:1 |  | Hag. 2:9  Hag. 2:10  Hag. 2:11  Hag. 2:13  Hag. 2:14  Hag. 2:21 |
| **[B;r>a;** | four | Exod. 25:12  Exod. 25:26  Exod. 25:34 |  | Hag. 2:10 |
| **#r,a,** | earth, land |  | Ps. 61:2 | Hag. 2:21 |
| **tyIB;** | inside, house | Exod. 25:11  Exod. 25:27 |  | Hag. 2:9 |
| **!Be** | sons | Exod. 25:2  Exod. 25:22 |  | Hag. 2:23 |
| **hy"h'** | remain,  will have,  have been, came | Exod. 25:15  Exod. 25:20 | Ps. 61:3 | Hag. 2:10 |
| **hz<** | this | Exod. 25:3  Exod. 25:19 |  | Hag. 2:9  Hag. 2:14  Hag. 2:15 |
| **bh'z"** | gold | Exod. 25:3  Exod. 25:11  Exod. 25:12  Exod. 25:13  Exod. 25:17  Exod. 25:18  Exod. 25:24  Exod. 25:25  Exod. 25:26  Exod. 25:28  Exod. 25:29  Exod. 25:31  Exod. 25:36  Exod. 25:38  Exod. 25:39 |  | Hag. 2:8 |
| **hwhy** | LORD | Exod. 25:1 |  | Hag. 2:8  Hag. 2:9  Hag. 2:10  Hag. 2:11  Hag. 2:14  Hag. 2:15  Hag. 2:23 |
| **~Ay** | day |  | Ps. 61:6  Ps. 61:8 | Hag. 2:15  Hag. 2:23 |
| **lKo** | every,  all  entire,  whole | Exod. 25:2  Exod. 25:9  Exod. 25:22  Exod. 25:36  Exod. 25:39 |  | Hag. 2:12  Hag. 2:13  Hag. 2:14 |
| **!Ke** | so, thus | Exod. 25:9  Exod. 25:33 | Ps. 61:8 | Hag. 2:14 |
| **@n"K'** | wings | Exod. 25:20 | Ps. 61:4 | Hag. 2:12 |
| **@s,K,** | silver | Exod. 25:3 |  | Hag. 2:8 |
| **ble** | heart | Exod. 25:2 | Ps. 61:2 |  |
| **~x,l,** | bread | Exod. 25:30 |  | Hag. 2:12 |
| **xq;l'** | raise, take | Exod. 25:2  Exod. 25:3 |  | Hag. 2:23 |
| **!mi** | inside,  than, against | Exod. 25:11 | Ps. 61:2  Ps. 61:3 | Hag. 2:9  Hag. 2:15 |
| **l[;m;** | upward,  top, onward | Exod. 25:20  Exod. 25:21 |  | Hag. 2:15 |
| **af'n"** | carry, carried | Exod. 25:14  Exod. 25:27  Exod. 25:28 |  | Hag. 2:12 |
| **!t;n"** | fasten,  give,  gave,  given | Exod. 25:12  Exod. 25:16  Exod. 25:21  Exod. 25:26  Exod. 25:30 | Ps. 61:5 | Hag. 2:9 |
| **~ynIP'** | facing,  face,  before | Exod. 25:20  Exod. 25:30  Exod. 25:37 | Ps. 61:3  Ps. 61:7 | Hag. 2:14 |
| **~v'** | there | Exod. 25:22 |  | Hag. 2:14 |
| **!m,v,** | oil | Exod. 25:6 |  | Hag. 2:12 |
| **hn"v'** | years |  | Ps. 61:6 | Hag. 2:10 |
| **~yIn"v.** | two | Exod. 25:12  Exod. 25:18  Exod. 25:19  Exod. 25:22  Exod. 25:23  Exod. 25:35 |  | Hag. 2:10 |

**Greek:**

| **GREEK** | **ENGLISH** | **Torah Reading**  **Ex. 25:1-40** | **Psalms**  **61:1-9** | **Ashlamata**  **Hag 2:8-15 +21-23** | **Pshat**  **Mk 8:1-4** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ἀδελφός** | brother |  |  | Hag 2:22 |  |
| **ἀποκρίνομαι** | answered |  |  | Hag 2:12  Hag 2:13  Hag 2:14 | Mk. 8:4 |
| **ἄρτος** | bread | Exod. 25:30 |  | Hag. 2:12 | Mk. 8:4 |
| **ἐκεῖνος** | that, those |  |  | Hag 2:23 | Mk. 8:1 |
| **ἔπω** | speak, said | Exo 25:2  Exo 25:7 |  | Hag 2:12  Hag 2:13  Hag 2:14  Hag 2:21 |  |
| **ἡμέρα** | day |  | Psa 61:6  Psa 61:8 | Hag 2:15  Hag 2:23 | Mk. 8:1  Mk. 8:2 |
| **θεός** | God |  | Psa 61:1  Psa 61:5  Psa 61:7 |  |  |
| **κύριος** | LORD | Exod. 25:1 |  | Hag. 2:8  Hag. 2:9  Hag. 2:10  Hag. 2:11  Hag. 2:14  Hag. 2:15  Hag. 2:23 |  |
| **λαλέω** | speak, spoke | Exo 25:1  Exo 25:22 |  |  |  |
| **λέγω** | saying | Exod. 25:1 |  | Hag. 2:9  Hag. 2:10  Hag. 2:11  Hag. 2:13  Hag. 2:14  Hag. 2:21 | Mk. 8:1 |
| **μαθητής** | disciple |  |  |  | Mk. 8:1  Mk. 8:4 |
| **ὁδός** | way |  |  |  | Mk. 8:3 |
| **οἶκος** | house |  |  | Hag 2:9 | Mk. 8:3 |
| **ὄνομα** | name |  | Psa 61:5  Psa 61:8 |  |  |
| **ὅς / ἥ / ὅ** | who, which, what | Exod. 25:2  Exod. 25:3  Exod. 25:16  Exod. 25:21  Exod. 25:22  Exod. 25:26  Exod. 25:29  Exod. 25:40 |  | Hag. 2:14 |  |
| **τρεῖς / τρία** | three | Exo 25:32  Exo 25:33 |  |  | Mk. 8:2 |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of Shemot (Exodus) 25:1 – 40**

**“V’Yiq’chú Li T’rumáh” – “that they take for Me an offering”**

By: H. Em Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

|  |
| --- |
| ***Hakham Tsefet’s School of Pshat***  **Mordechai (Mk) 8:1-4**  Mishnah א:א |
| **Again,[[37]](#footnote-37) in those days, there was a large congregation gathered** that followedwith him**, and they did not have anything they could eat.[[38]](#footnote-38)** And he **called his talmidim,** to him and **he said to them, “I have compassion on the congregation, because they have remained with me three[[39]](#footnote-39) days already and do not have anything to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their homes they will collapse on the way, and some of them have come from far away.”[[40]](#footnote-40) And his talmidim answered him, “Where is anyone able to feed these** people **with bread here in this deserted place?”** |

**Commentary to Hakham Tsefet’s School of Pshat**

**Learn to do good**

Most of the locations posited by these unwary scholars concerning the feeding of the multitudes do not fit the description of the true location because they are within a short distance of the local kosher deli per se. The location of the feeding most likely took place atop the Har Arbel (Mount Arbel). Some sources suggest that it would be from this region that redemption would begin.[[41]](#footnote-41) Har Arbel is situated on the southern end of the Galil. The climb alone is more than audacious. The old volcano in that region would have a perfect amphitheater for hearing the Master’ discourse. The congregation that followed Yeshua to a deserted place where food was not available was truly an assembly of committed talmidim. They did not follow Yeshua for the loaves and fishes per se. They came to hear the Torah of the Master and nothing else would suffice. Learning Torah was more important to this congregation than life. This is not to say that they were in any way jeopardizing their lives. And, is clearly obvious that the Master did not expect that of them.

**The Keys to the Kingdom – Governance of G-d, Sovereignty of G-d**

Figure 1 Har Arbel looking north over the Galil

The phrase “Kingdom/Governance of G-d” as we have repeatedly taught is the delegation and defusing of power to a Bet Din. This system is Torah based and demonstrated in the structured universe. Hakham Shaul captures the idea nicely in his Igeret (letter) to the Ephesians. Our translation of this letter is as follows…**Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle[[42]](#footnote-42) against flesh and blood,[[43]](#footnote-43) but[[44]](#footnote-44) against principalities,[[45]](#footnote-45) against authorities,[[46]](#footnote-46)** (powers) **against the rulers of the cosmos,[[47]](#footnote-47)** ruling **the present age of darkness,[[48]](#footnote-48) against spiritual wickedness among the heavenly spheres.[[49]](#footnote-49)**

These words can be read a thousand times and still not be understood. The cosmos is structured in a very special way. This chain of authority is defused through specific “powers” and hierarchy. The reason this diffusion is requisite is that there are aspects of G-d that we cannot directly approach. In other words, if we were to come in direct contact with the Divine Himself, we would cease to exist. Those who diminish G-d to a “Name” that they can pronounce will never understand authority. Thus, they will throw off Rabbinic Authority in favor of their oral contortions. Because the nomenclature of the western world sees “angels” as a winged creature dressed in white, they miss the Jewish understanding of the formation of the cosmos. Those who dabble in forbidden practices understand the constellations divided into twelve groups of “powers” better than the average Christian. This is because they understand the constellations as energies or powers that are the G-d ordained engine of the cosmos. Idolatry is the practice worshiping these powers rather than the G-d who created them. By correctly understanding the structure of the cosmos, we can better understand the Torah world of defused authority. It is clear from the passage of Ephesians cited above that there is a hierarchical system governing the cosmos. This structure is related to the principle of agency. This hierarchical system is mirrored in the ten men of the Esnoga (Synagogue).

**The Master an agent of G-d**

Because the principle of agency is not clearly understood, Yeshua is placed in an incongruous role. In like manner, Hakham Yehudah (Jude) shows us the result of those who leave or abandon their office.

**Yehudah (Jude) 1:6-7 Now the heavenly messengers[[50]](#footnote-50) that did not keep their** Divinely appointed position of **pre-eminence but forsook their proper sphere** (station) **are kept** under guard **in everlasting chains in** deepest **darkness for the great day of judgment.[[51]](#footnote-51)**

While we do not intend to carry our Pshat commentary into Remes, Yeshua as a “prophet like Moshe”[[52]](#footnote-52) functions as Moshe’s counterpart. Moshe represents the Written Torah and the Master represents the Oral Torah. Together they compensate for the abandoned offices and stations of the spheres. Furthermore, the seven officers of the Esnoga (Synagogue), subordinated to Moshe and Yeshua are the mirror of the seven holy angels (powers/messengers) who present the prayers of the Tzadikim before G-d.

**Tob. 12:15** I am Raphael, one of the **seven holy angels** (messengers), which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.

When the seven Paqidim are united with the Bench of three Hakhamim, the prayers of the Tzadikim (righteous/generous) are able to ascend to G-d unrestricted. Amazingly, this is exactly what the Apocalypse of Yochanan (Revelation of John) says.

**Rev. 5:6-8** ¶ **And I looked, and behold, near the throne and the four Hayyoth** (living creatures)**, and in the midst the Zechanim, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits** (messengers) **of God sent out into all the earth. Then he came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him** (G-d) **who sat on the throne. Now when he had taken the scroll, the four Hayyoth** (living creatures) **and the twenty-four Zechanim fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the Tzadikim**.

We offer no So’od comments here because we can apprehend the point easily enough from Pshat. The combined collaboration of the Seven Paqidim and the Bench of three Hakhamim cause the prayers of the Tzadikim to achieve their designated purpose. It is easy enough to see the Kiryat Shema (recital of the Shema) from this passage, which accomplishes the Unity of G-d and the yoke of the Kingdom (Governance/Sovereignty of G-d) through the Hakhamim and Bate Din as opposed to human kings. The first officer of the seven Paqidim is permeated with the quality of chesed (Loving-kindness). While the other six officers balance this quality, the seminal spark is chesed (Loving-kindness). In both of the accounts of the feeding of the multitude, Hakham Tsefet through his amanuensis Mordechai reports chesed (Loving-kindness) as the ignition of the dynamic power of G-d. Therefore, when Yeshua expresses his “compassion” for the people he initiates the dynamic miracle working power of G-d. However, a point, which is easily overlooked, is the fact that his seven talmidim disseminate Divine energy of G-d through their hands. Who performs the miracle of feeding the multitude? On the one hand, the miracle workers are the talmidim in obedience to their Hakham. On the Other hand, it is the Master as he blesses G-d, who “brings the bread forth from the earth.” Yet, on the other hand, all the glory belongs to G-d.

**Three days with no bread?**

While these words might be better explained from Remes perspective we can see them clear enough from the Pshat. As noted above Yeshua says that the congregation has already been three days without bread. It has been three days and is now a part of the fourth day. Yeshua uses the ignition of chesed (Loving-kindness) to generate the miracle of blessing. Here the congregation has been cleansed by the Torah for three days (the three Sabbaths of Penitence before the 9th of Ab). As in our Ashlamata, Malachi has stated “without a (prophetic) vision My people will perish.” If we are the vessel of compassion (chesed), we will be the repository of (prophetic) vision. The combination of (prophetic) vision and chesed are the keys of the Kingdom (Governance of G-d) through Bate Din as opposed to human Kings and Presidents.

**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this week, which particular verse or passage caught your attention and fired your heart and imagination?
2. In your opinion, and taking into consideration all of the above readings for this Sabbath, what is the prophetic message (the idea that encapsulates all the Scripture passages read) for this week?

**Blessing After Torah Study**

**Barúch Atáh Adonai, Elohénu Meléch HaOlám,**

**Ashér Natán Lánu Torát Emét, V'Chayéi Olám Natá B'Tochénu.**

**Barúch Atáh Adonái, Notén HaToráh. Amen!**

**Blessed is Ha-Shem our GOD, King of the universe,**

**Who has given us a teaching of truth, implanting within us eternal life.**

**Blessed is Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!**

**“Now unto Him who is able to preserve you faultless, and spotless, and to establish you without a blemish,**

**before His majesty, with joy, [namely,] the only one GOD, our Deliverer, by means of Yeshua the Messiah our Master, be praise, and dominion, and honor, and majesty, both now and in all ages. Amen!”**

**Next Shabbat:**

**I Adar 29, 5784, March 8/9, 2024**

**Shabbat: ““HaShekel Machatzit” - “Half a Shekel”**

**Mevarchim HaChodesh II Adar – Proclamation of the New Moon of II Adar**

**Sunday evening 10th of March and Tuesday 11th of March**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **מַחֲצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“HaShekel Machatzit”** | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 30:1-5 | Reader 1 – Exodus 26:1-3 |
| **“half a shekel”** | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 30:6-10 | Reader 2 – Exodus 26:4-6 |
| **“medio siclo”** | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 30:11-16 | Reader 3 – Exodus 26:7-9 |
| Shemot (Exodus) 30:1-38  B’Midbar (Numbers) 28:9-15 | Reader 4 – Sh’mot 30:17-21 |  |
| Ashlamata: Melachim bet (II Kings) 11:17–12:17 | Reader 5 – Sh’mot 30:22-25 | **Monday/Thursday Morning** |
| Special: Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 20:18-42 | Reader 6 – Sh’mot 30:26-33 | Reader 1 – Exodus 26:1-3 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 49 | Reader 7 – Sh’mot 30:34-38 | Reader 2 – Exodus 26:4-6 |
| Nazarean Codicil:  Matityahu (Matthew) 17: 24-27 | Maftir – Sh’mot 28:9-15 | Reader 3 – Exodus 26:7-9 |
| I Samuel 20:18-42 |  |

**Reading Assignment for next Shabbat**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1990)  **Exodus - VI Vol. 9 – “The Tabernacle”**  **pp. 260 - 331** | **-Ramban: Exodus Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1973)  **pp. 507 - 541** |

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Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

Edited by His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham

A special thank you to HH Giberet Giborah bat Sarah for her diligence in proof-reading every week.

1. Malbim - Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser (March 7, 1809 – September 18, 1879), better known as The Malbim (Hebrew: מלבי"ם‎‎), was a rabbi, master of Hebrew grammar, and Bible commentator. The name "Malbim" was derived from the Hebrew initials of his name. He used this acronym as his surname in all his published works, and became known by it in common usage. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ovadia ben Jacob Sforno (Obadja Sforno, Hebrew: עובדיה ספורנו) was an Italian rabbi, Biblical commentator, philosopher and physician. He was born at Cesena about 1475 and died at Bologna in 1550. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Metzudat David (“The Bulwark of David”), revealing reasons for the 613 commandments according to the four methods of explanation known as the “PaRDeS system” (Zolkiev, 1862). This great work was written by Rabbi David ben Solomon ibn (Abi) Zimra, also called Radbaz (רדב”ז) after the initials of his name, Rabbi David Ibn Zimra, was an early Acharon of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries who was a leading Posek, rosh yeshiva, chief rabbi, and author of more than 3,000 responsa (halakhic decisions) as well as several scholarly works. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. v. 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. David Kimhi (also Kimchi or Qimhi) (1160–1235), also known by the Hebrew acronym as the Radak (רד”ק) (Rabbi David Kimhi), was a medieval rabbi, biblical commentator, philosopher, and grammarian. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. This introduction was excerpted and edited from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. This is our verbal tally without Torah seder: Heart - לב, Strong’s number 03820. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 1:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Shemot (Exodus) 33:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Shemot (Exodus) 33:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. ibid. 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Rashi Bereshit (Genesis) 49:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Eben Shetiya – foundation stone, is the foundation of the world and was located in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. This is the stone that **connects** heaven and earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Bereshit (Genesis) 48:15-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. At multiple hermeneutical levels. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. **The deeds of the [Mighty] Rock are perfect**Even though G-d is strong [like a rock], when He brings retribution upon those who transgress His will, He does not bring it in a flood [of anger], but [rather] with justice because “His deeds are perfect.” [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. By Yosef Y. Jacobson [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Bamidbar (Numbers) 20:6-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Yalkut Shimoni Chukat Remez 763 toward the end. This book is one of the most popular early Midrashic collections on the Bible, compiled by Rabbi Shimon Ashkenazi HaDarshan of Frankfurt (circa 1260). Many Midrashim are known only because they are cited in this work. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Shemot (Exodus) 32:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. We learn from the Zohar that the neck (luz) bone “עצם־הלוז” (numerical value is 248), is the starting point in creating Adam’s body. “עפר” (dust) also appears first time in the creation of Adam. Genesis 2:7 “Then G-d formed man of the dust of the ground”. That dust is the seed of the physical body encapsulate into the neck bone “עצם־הלוז”, which is immortal. It will stay until the resurrection of the Dead. It is interesting to know that babies are born with 350 bones in their body. 350 is the numerical value of “עָפָר”, dust. As the baby grows to become adult, many bones fused together to form 206 bones and 42 joints and together 248. It is the same numerical value as Avraham and “עצם־הלוז” (neck bone). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Humus is the organic component of soil, formed by the decomposition of leaves and other plant material by soil microorganisms. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Animals too are created from “adamah” but the elements of “afar” (dust) and the Divine breath are absent. Compare Bereshit 2:7 with 2:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 3:20-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Shemot Exodus) 20:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Rabbi Naftali Zvi Berlin - Volozhin 1817-1893 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Shemot (Exodus) 20:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. repentance [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Rashi on Sanhedrin explains that there is atonement in the very degradation of being lowered into the earth. (The Rishonim discuss the paradox this creates in light of the Gemara’s previous statement that it is the lack of burial which is degrading.) This does indeed have a parallel in the atonement of the altar, which according to the Ramban stems from the fact that the slaughter of the sacrifice is a kind of humbling symbolic slaughter of the sinner. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. When it says “for you are dust, and unto dust you shall return”, we see the past and the future. It **doesn’t say** into the ground as in the death of the body, but we are to return to “dust - עפר”, which is the genesis of its creation and its resurrection. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. As the Midrash states, this is one of three places where Scripture attests to the Jews’ uncontestable possession of the Holy Land. For the Cave of Machpelah, the site of the Temple, and the Tomb of Joseph were all purchased without bargaining and paid for with unquestionably legal tender. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The Cave of the Patriarchs, also called the Cave of Machpelah (Hebrew: מערת המכפלה, Maharat ha-Machpelah, the translation is “cave of the double tombs”), is a series of subterranean chambers located in the heart of the old city of Hebron (Kiryat Arba), in the Hebron Hills. The Hebrew name of the complex reflects the very old tradition of the double tombs of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Bereshit (Genesis) 25:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. from the root word “כפל” \’double\’ in Hebrew. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Lit. “little dust” or “of the dust”. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Hebron comes from the root word is “חֶבְר” and it means *connection of two sides*. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. “Again” **πάλιν** – *palin* indicating that this is connected to the first feeding, Mk 6:32-44 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Verbal tally with Yeshayahu (Isa) 1:19 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The Hebrew **תְּרוּמָה** word appears three times in our Torah Seder [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. ἀπὸ μακρόθεν, Donahue and Harrington suggest that this phrase often relates to Gentiles who have come to G-d. (Our interpretation of their words) [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. The Israel Exploration Society & Carta, J. (1993). *The New Encyclopedia of Archeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Vol. 1). (E. S. Jerusalem), Ed.) New York: Simon & Shuster. p. 87 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. The allegory and metaphor is that of armed conflict between two parties. Philo aptly illustrates this “wrestling match.” Alleg. Interp. III 190 -191 But, nevertheless, though pleasure appears to trip up and to deceive the good man, it will in reality be tripped up itself by that experienced wrestler, Jacob; and that, too, not in the wrestling of the body, but in that struggle which the soul carries on against the dispositions which are antagonistic to it, and which attack it through the agency of the passions and vices; and it will not let go the heel of its antagonist, passion, before it surrenders, and confesses that it has been twice tripped up and defeated, both in the matter of the birthright, and also in that of the blessing. For “rightly,” says Esau, “is his name called Jacob, for now has he supplanted me for the second time; the first time he took away my birthright, and now he has taken away my blessing.” (Gen 27:36)

    But the bad man thinks the things of the body the more important, while the good man assigns the preference to the things of the soul, which are in truth and reality the more important and the first, not, indeed, in point of time, but in power and dignity, as is a ruler in a city. But the mistress of the concrete being is the soul. Philo, o. A., & Yonge, C. D. (1996, c1993). The works of Philo: Complete and unabridged. Peabody: Hendrickson. p 72

    What Hakham Shaul has clearly pointed to is in agreement with Philo. Yaaqob wrestled until dawn, and has earned the title “wrestler.” Therefore, the Bne Yisrael are “Sons” of the wrestler who are also engaged in this wrestling match. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Not “wrestling against flesh and blood” shows that humanity is locked in a war of virtue. This virtue is taught and modeled by the Seven men of the Esnoga. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Greek ἀλλὰ (but) is adversative showing struggle. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Three specific “powers” are referenced in this pericope, **ἀρχή** – *arche,* principalities, **ἐξουσία** – *exousia,* authorities and **κοσμοκράτωρ** – *kosmokrator* cosmic rulers. This specific trio is not mentioned anywhere else together as Hakham Shaul has in this verse in the Nazarean Codicil. However, **ἀρχή** – *arche,* is frequently mentioned with **ἐξουσία** – *exousia,* authorities.

    **Aρχάς** from **ἀρχή** – *arche* in terms of person or personality, **ἀρχή** – *arche* refers the “leader, pioneer or originator” or that which is principle in rank. With reference to the “Seven Officers,” this is Chesed. Here we are only making analogy, and reference to positional status, not a word for word translation. On the higher plane, we can see that this is, a reference to the interaction between the Chief Hakham endowed with Chochmah and the Will of Messiah. Philo in his discussion on the Allegory of Creation uses **ἀρχή** – *arche* as a reference to the “origin of creation.” Cf. Philo. (1993). *The Works of Philo, Complete and Unabridged in one volume.* (N. U. Edition, Ed., & C. Yonge, Trans.) Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. p.8. In this way, the seminal Will of Messiah, Chochmah received by the Hakham and Chesed stimulate the Esnoga forward and upward. Both the Chief of the Bet Din and the Principle officer of the Esnoga connect the Esnoga with the formative power of the Torah and its wisdom. The Torah/Oral is the infrastructure of the whole universe. Therefore, **ἀρχή** – *arche* is the basis of the structured universe. The Chief Hakham gives formative wisdom, which aligns the Bet Din with the decisive infrastructure of the universe through the Oral Torah. In similar manner, the Chief officer/Chesed injects the wisdom of the Bet Din into the Seven Officers and the Congregation of the Esnoga. This injection establishes a structured atmosphere, i.e. Oral Torah for the Esnoga.

    **Eξουσίας** from **ἐξουσία** – *exousia,* authorities. **Eξουσία** – *exousia,* is the power of judicial decision and deliberation, the power and rule of government i.e. the Bet Din. **Eξουσία** – *exousia,* also denotes the power of freedom, the unlimited possibility of action. While **ἀρχή** – *arche,* is related to the “Will of Messiah,” **ἐξουσία** – *exousia,* represents the office of the Chief Hakham that connects with that infinite source. In 1 Corinthians Hakham Shaul uses **ἐξουσία** – *exousia,* as the “symbol of **authority**” over the woman’s head. In this sense **ἐξουσία** – *exousia,* shows the infinity of masculine potential. (1 Co. 11:10 Therefore the woman ought to have *a symbol of* **authority** on her head,). **Eξουσία** – *exousia,* possesses authority, jurisdiction, is a symbol of authority, ruler, in control has power, has supernatural power and wisdom and the right to judge.

    **Kοσμοκράτωρ** – *kosmokrator,* the rulers of the heavenly spheres. In the negative sense, the rulers of the heavenly spheres are as our present case has it, **rulers of the cosmos,** ruling **the present age of darkness** showing that the Gentile is under the influence of the heavenly spheres. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. **Eξουσία** – *exousia* from **ἔξεστι** – *exesti* the freedom to act. The negative connotations of **ἐξουσία** – *exousia* show a license for action, meaning that we may have given license for negative authority in our lives. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Hakham Shaul’s inclusion and phrase “we” shows that as he brings the Mesorah to the Gentiles that he, along with the Gentiles coming to conversion must contend with the heavenly spheres. These “spheres” are not necessarily the negative forces of the fallen angels. The difficulty with bringing the Gentile to the Torah is that the Spheres are “legalistic.” The Spheres govern the world by strict justice. As such, Hakham Shaul has a great problem in bringing Gentiles into the Esnoga as converts because of the demand by the Spheres for strict justice. Furthermore, his war of contention in bringing the Gentile to Torah observance is contended by the angelic rivalry and rage. See below [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The “present age” of darkness is omitted in some sources. While there may be justifiable cause to omit the seeming insertion, the phrase bears positive illumination on the text. In the present age, we live in a state that may be equated to darkness when compared to the “age to come,” Olam HaBa (the eternal, infinite coming age). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. These “Spheres” are discussed by Hakham Yehudah (Jude) in 1:13, **They are waterless clouds carried by the fall winds; fruitless trees, twice dead, and uprooted; storm driven** (wild) **waves of the sea, foaming without water to their own shame; wandering spheres** (stars) **for who the deepest darkness is reserved for** (their) **eternity.**

    In view of our understanding of the angelic rivalry (those opposed to creation of humanity because they will have Chesed – acts of righteousness and at the same time have a measure of wickedness in their lives) and the angelic rage which is focused on the Bne Yisrael as the recipients of the Torah Oral/Written. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Verbal connection to Bereshit (Genesis) 32:4, 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Cf. 1 Enoch 10: 4-6 And he said to Raphael: "Bind Azael foot and hand, and cast him into the darkness, and open the desert that is in the Dadouel, and cast him in. "And lay down upon him rough and jagged rocks and cover him with darkness. And let him dwell there for eternity, and cover his face so he cannot see light. "And on the great day of judgment he will be lead into the fire. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Cf. Devarim (Deut) 18:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)