|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Esnoga Bet Emunah**  **4544 Highline Dr. SE**  **Olympia, WA 98501**  **United States of America**  **© 2014**  [**http://www.betemunah.org/**](http://www.betemunah.org/)  **E-Mail:** [**gkilli@aol.com**](mailto:gkilli@aol.com) | **C:\Users\Haggai\Pictures\Menorah 5.jpg** | **Esnoga Bet El**  **102 Broken Arrow Dr.**  **Paris TN 38242**  **United States of America**  **© 2014**  [**http://torahfocus.com/**](http://torahfocus.com/)  **E-Mail:** [**waltoakley@charter.net**](mailto:waltoakley@charter.net) |

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **Third Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Heshvan 15, 5775 – Nov 07/08, 2014** | **Seventh Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Amarillo, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 5:29 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 6:26 PM | **Austin & Conroe, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 5:21 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 6:15 PM | **Brisbane, Australia**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 5:52 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 6:48 PM |
| **Chattanooga, & Cleveland, TN, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 5:23 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 6:20 PM | **Everett, WA. U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 4:24 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 5:29 PM | **Manila & Cebu, Philippines**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 5:08 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 5:59 PM |
| **Miami, FL, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 5:17 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 6:10 PM | **Murray, KY, & Paris, TN. U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 4:33 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 5:30 PM | **Olympia, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 4:29 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 5:33 PM |
| **San Antonio, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 5:25 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 6:19 PM | **Sheboygan & Manitowoc, WI, US**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 4:16 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 5:18 PM | **Singapore, Singapore**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 6:32 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 7:22 PM |
| **St. Louis, MO, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 4:37 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 5:35 PM | **Tacoma, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Nov 07 2014 – Candles at 4:26 PM  Sat. Nov 08 2014 – Habdalah 5:31 PM |  |
|  |  |  |

**For other places see:** [**http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp**](http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp)

**Roll of Honor:**

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

His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham

His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Karmela bat Sarah,

Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family

His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife

Her Excellency Giberet Laurie Taylor

Her Excellency Prof. Dr. Conny Williams & beloved family

Her Excellency Giberet Gloria Sutton & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Yoel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Rivka bat Dorit

His Excellency Adon Tsuriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Gibora bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Gabriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Elisheba bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Yehoshua ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Rut bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Ze’ev ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Hadassah bat Sarah

Her Excellency Giberet Whitney Mathison

**For their regular and sacrificial giving, providing the best oil for the lamps, we pray that G-d’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** [**benhaggai@GMail.com**](mailto:benhaggai@GMail.com) **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

**Shabbat “Mi Mana A’afar” – “Who can count the dust …?”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| מִי מָנָה עֲפַר |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Mi Mana A’afar”** | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 23:10-17 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 25:10-12 |
| **“Who can count the dust … ?”** | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 23:18-24 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 25:13-15 |
| **“¿Quién contará el polvo … ?”** | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 23:25 – 24:2 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 25:10-15 |
| B’Midbar (Num.) 23:10 - 25:9 | Reader 4 – B’Midbar 24:3-9 |  |
| Ashlamatah:  Isaiah 49:23-25 + 50:4-10 | Reader 5 – B’Midbar 24:10-14 | **Monday &**  **Thursday Mornings** |
| Psalm 105:1-6 | Reader 6 – B’Midbar 24:15-25 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 25:10-12 |
|  | Reader 7 – B’Midbar 25:1-9 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 25:13-15 |
|  | Maftir: B’Midbar 25:7-9 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 25:10-15 |
| N.C.: Mk 12:28-34; Lk 10:25-37;  Rm 5:12-16 | - Isaiah 49:23-25 + 50:4-10 |  |

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

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

**Please Ha-Shem, our G-d, 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 desire. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Who teaches Torah to His people Israel. Amen!**

**Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our G-d, 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 doing 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: Honouring 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!**

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* Conclusion of Balaam’s First Prophecy – Numbers 23:10
* New Arrangements – Numbers 23:11-17
* Balaam’s Second Prophecy – Numbers 23:18-24
* Remonstrances and New Preparations – Numbers 23:25 – 24:2
* Balaam’s Third Prophecy – Numbers 24:3-9
* Balak’s Anger – Numbers 24:10-14
* A Vision of Israel’s Future – Numbers 24:15-17
* Oracles Concerning the Gentiles – Numbers 24:18-24
* Departure of Balaam – Numbers 24:25
* The Sin of Baal Peor – Numbers 25:1-9

**Reading Assignment:**

**The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez - Vol 14: Numbers – II – Final Wonderings**

By: Rabbi Yitzchaq Magriso

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1983)

Vol. 14 – “Numbers – II – Final Wonderings,” pp. 187-222.

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: B’midbar (Numbers) 23:10 - 25:9**

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
| --- | --- |
| 10. Who counted the dust of Jacob or the number of a fourth of [or, of the seed of] Israel? May my soul die the death of the upright and let my end be like his." | 10. And when Bileam the sinner beheld the house of Israel, a circumcised people, hidden in the dust of the desert, he said, Who can number the merits of these strong ones, or count the good works of one of the four camps of Israel? Bileam the wicked said: If the house of Israel kill me with the sword, then, it is made known to me, I will have no portion in the world to come: nevertheless if I may but die the death of the true! O that my last end may be as the least among them! |
| 11. Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them!" | 11. And Balak said to Bileam, What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies, and, behold, blessing, you have blessed them. |
| 12. He answered, saying, "What the Lord puts into my mouth that I must take care to say." | 12. But he answered and said, That which the LORD has put in my mouth will I not be careful to speak? |
| 13. Balak said to him, "Come with me to another place from where you will see them; however, you will see only a part of them, not all of them and curse them for me from there. | 13. And Balak said to him, Come now with me where you may see him from another place. You will see only the camp that goes in his rear, but not all their camps; and curse him for me there. |
| 14. He took him to the field of the lookouts, to the peak of the mountain, and he built seven altars and offered up a bull and a ram on [each] altar. | 14. And he brought him to the field of the observatory on the top of the hill, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar. |
| 15. He said to Balak, "Stand here next to your burnt offering and I will be chanced on here | 15. And he said to Balak, Stand you here by your burnt offering and I will meet (Him) yonder. |
| 16. The Lord chanced upon Balaam and placed something into his mouth. He said, "Return to Balak and so you shall speak." | 16. And the Word from before the LORD met Bileam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Return to Balak, and thus speak. |
| 17. When he came to him, he was standing next to his burnt offering, and the Moabite dignitaries were with him, and Balak said to him, "What did the Lord speak?" | 17. And he came to him, and, behold, he was standing by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said to him, What has the LORD spoken? |
| 18. He took up his parable and said, "Arise, Balak, and hear; listen closely to me, son of Zippor. | 18. And he took up the parable of his prophecy, and said: Arise, Balak, and hear; listen to my words, Bar Zippor. |
| 19. God is not a man that He should lie, nor is He a mortal that He should relent. Would He say and not do, speak and not fulfill? | 19. The Word of the living God is not as the words of men for the LORD, the Ruler of all worlds, is the unchangeable (but) man speaks and denies. Neither are His works like the works of the children of flesh, who consult, and then repent them of what they had decreed. But when the LORD of all worlds has said, I will multiply this people as the stars of the heavens, and will give them to possess the land of the Kenaanites, is He not able to perform what He has spoken? And what He has said, can He not confirm it? |
| 20. I have received [an instruction] to bless, and He has blessed, and I cannot retract it. | 20. Behold, from the mouth of the Holy Word I have received the benediction, and their appointed benediction I cannot restrain from them. |
| 21. He does not look at evil in Jacob, and has seen no perversity in Israel; the Lord, his God, is with him, **and he has the King's friendship.** | 21. Bileam the wicked said, I see not among them of the house of Jakob such as worship idols: they who serve false idols are not established among the tribes of the sons of Israel. The Word of the LORD their God is their help, **and the trumpets of the King Meshiha (Messiah) resound among them**: |
| 22. God has brought them out of Egypt with the strength of His loftiness. | 22. Unto Elohim, who redeemed and led them out of Mizraim free, belong power and exaltation, glorification and greatness. |
| 23. For there is no divination in Jacob and no soothsaying in Israel. In time it will be said to Jacob and Israel, 'What has God wrought?' | 23. They of the house of Jakob who use divination are not established, nor the enchanters, who enchant among the greatness (multitudes) of Israel. At this time it is said to the house of Jakob and Israel, How glorious are the miracles and wonder-works which God has wrought! |
| 24. Behold, a people that rises like a lioness (See Malbim) and raises itself like a lion. It does not lie down until it eats its prey and drinks the blood of the slain." | 24. This people reposes alone, and dwells strong as a lion, and rears himself as an old lion. They sleep not till with great slaughter they have slain their adversaries, and taken the spoils of the slain. |
| 25. Balak said to Balaam, "You shall neither curse them nor shall you not bless them." | 25. And Balak said to Bileam, Neither curse them nor bless them. |
| 26. Balaam answered and said to Balak, "Have I not spoken to you, saying, 'Everything the Lord speaks that I shall do." | 26. But Bileam answered and said to Balak, Did I not tell you at the beginning, Whatsoever the LORD speaks, that must I do? |
| 27. Balak said to Balaam, "Come now, I will take you to a different place. Perhaps it will please God, and you will curse them for me from there. | 27. And Balak said to Bileam, Come, and I will now take you to another place, if so be it may be pleasing before the LORD, that you may curse him for me from thence. |
| 28. So Balak took Balaam to the peak of Peor, overlooking the wastelands. | 28. And Balak led Bileam to the high place of the prospect which looks toward Beth Jeshimoth. |
| 29. Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here and prepare for me seven bulls and seven rams. | 29. And Bileam said to Balak, Erect here for me seven altars, and prepare me seven bullocks and seven rams. |
| 30. Balak did as Balaam told him, and offered up a bull and a ram on [each] altar. | 30. And Balak did as Bileam had said, and offered a bullock and a ram upon every altar. |
|  |  |
| 1. Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel; so he did not go in search of omens as he had done time and time again, but turned his face toward the desert. | 1. And Bileam, seeing that it was good before the LORD to bless Israel, went not, as once and again before, in quest of divinations, but set his face toward the wilderness, to recall to memory the work of the calf which they had there committed. |
| 2. Balaam raised his eyes and saw Israel dwelling according to its tribes, and the spirit of God rested upon him. | 2. And Bileam lifted up his eyes, but beheld Israel dwelling together by their tribes in their schools, and (saw) that their doors were arranged so as not to overlook the doors of their companions: and the Spirit of prophecy from before the LORD rested upon him. |
| 3. He took up his parable and said, "The word of Balaam the son of Beor and **the word of the man with an open eye.** | 3. But he took up the parable of his prophecy, and said: Bileam, son of Beor, speaks; **the man speaks who is more honorable than his father, (because) the dark mysteries hidden from the prophets have been revealed to him; and who, because he was not circumcised, fell upon his face when the angel stood over against him**: |
| 4. The word of the one who hears God's sayings, who sees the vision of the Almighty, fallen yet with open eyes. | 4. he has said who heard the Word from before the living God; who beheld the vision before God the Almighty, and, seeking that it might be discovered to him, fell upon his face, and the secret mysteries hidden from the prophets were revealed to him. |
| 5. **How goodly are your tents**, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel! | 5. **How beautiful your houses of instruction**, in the tabernacle where Jakob your father ministered; and how beautiful this tabernacle of ordinance which is found among you, and the tents that surround it, O house of Israel! |
| 6. **They extend like streams, like gardens by the river**, like aloes which the Lord planted, like cedars by the water. | 6. As tides of waters, **so are the house of Israel, dwelling like flocks made strong by the teaching of the Law**; and as gardens planted by the flowing streams, so are their disciples in the fellowships of their schools. The light of their faces shines as the brightness of the firmament which the LORD created on the second day of the creation of the world, and outspread for the glory of the Shekinah. They are exalted and lifted up above all the nations, like cedars of Lebanon planted by fountains of waters. |
| 7. **Water will flow from his wells, and his seed shall have abundant water**; his king shall be raised over Agag, and his kingship exalted. | 7. **From them their King will arise, and their Redeemer be of them and among them, and the seed of the children of Jakob will rule over many nations**. The first who will reign over them will make war with the house of Amalek, and will be exalted above Agag their king; but because he had spared him his kingdom will be taken from him. |
| 8. God, Who has brought them out of Egypt with the strength of His loftiness He shall consume the nations which are his adversaries, bare their bones and dip His arrows [into their blood]. | 8. Unto Elohim, who brought them out free from Mizraim, belong might, and exaltation, and glory, and power. He will destroy the nations of their adversaries, and break down their strength and will send forth the plague-arrows of His vengeance among them, and destroy them. |
| 9. He crouches and lies like a lion and like a lioness; who will dare rouse him? Those who bless you shall be blessed, and those who curse you shall be cursed. | 9. They will repose and dwell as a lion, and as an old lion, that sleeping who will (dare to) awake? They who bless them are blessed, as Mosheh the prophet, the scribe of Israel; and they who curse them are accursed, as Bileam son of Beor. |
| 10. Balak's anger flared against Balaam, and he clapped his hands. Balak said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them these three times. | 10. And Balak's wrath grew strong against Bileam, and, smiting his hands, Balak said to Bileam, I brought you to curse my enemies, and, behold, in blessing you have blessed them these three times. |
| 11. Now, hurry back to your place. I said I would honor you greatly, but the Lord has deprived you of honor." | 11. And now flee to your place. I had said that honoring I would honor you; but, behold, the LORD has kept back Bileam from honor. |
| 12. Balaam said to Balak, "But I even told the messengers you sent to me, saying, | 12. But Bileam said to Balak, Did I not tell your messengers whom you sent to me, saying, |
| 13. 'If Balak gives me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot transgress the word of the Lord to do either good or evil on my own; only what the Lord speaks can I speak.' | 13. If Balak would give me the fullness of his treasures of silver and gold, I have no power to transgress the decree of the Word of the LORD to do good or evil of my own will: what the LORD says will I not speak? |
| 14. And now, I am going to my people. Come, I will advise you...what this people will to do your people at the end of days." | 14. And now, behold, I return to go to my people. Come, I will give you counsel: Go, furnish tavern houses, and employ seductive women to sell food and drinks cheaply, and to bring this people together to eat and drink, and commit whoredom with them, that they may deny their God; then in a brief time will they be delivered into your hand, and many of them fall. Nevertheless, after this they will still have dominion over your people at the end of the days. |
| 15. He took up his parable and said, "The word of Balaam, son of Beor, **the word of a man with an open eye.** | 15. And he took up the parable of his prophecy, and said Bileam the son of Beor speaks; the man speaks **who is more honorable than his father**, because the mysteries hidden from prophets have been revealed to him; |
| 16. The word of the one who hears God's sayings and perceives the thoughts of the Most High; who sees the vision of the Almighty, fallen yet with open eyes. | 16. he speaks who heard the Word from before the LORD, and who knows the hour when the Most High God will be wroth with him; (he speaks) who saw the vision before the Almighty, seeking, prostrate on his face, that it should be revealed to him; the secret, concealed from the prophets, was disclosed unto him. |
| 17. I see it, but not now; I behold it, but not soon. **A star has gone forth from Jacob, and a staff will arise from Israel** which will crush the princes of Moab and uproot all the sons of Seth. | 17. **I will see Him, but not now; I will behold Him, but it is not near. When the mighty King of Jakob's house will reign, and the Meshiha (Messiah), the Power-sceptre of Israel, be anointed, He will slay the princes of the Moabaee, and bring to nothing all the children of Sheth, the armies of Gog who will do battle against Israel and all their carcases will fall before Him**. |
| 18. Edom shall be possessed, and Seir shall become the possession of his enemies, and Israel shall triumph. | 18. And the Edomaee will be utterly driven out, even the sons of Gabela from before Israel their foes, and Israel will be strengthened with their riches and possess them. |
| 19. **A ruler shall come out of Jacob**, and destroy the remnant of the city." | 19. **And a prince of the house of Jakob will arise and destroy and consume the remnant that have escaped from Constantina the guilty city, and will lay waste and ruin the rebellious city, even Kaiserin the strong city of the Gentiles**. |
| 20. When he saw Amalek, he took up his parable and said, "Amalek was the first of the nations, and his fat shall be everlasting destruction." | 20. And he looked on the house of Amalek, and took up the parable of his prophecy, and said: **The first/chief of the nations who made war with the house of Israel were those of the house of Amalek; and they at last, in the days of the King Mashiach (Messiah), with all the children of the east, will make war against Israel; but all of them together will have eternal destruction in their end**. |
| 21. When he saw the Kenite, he took up his parable and said, "How firm is your dwelling place, and your nest is set in a cliff. | 21. And he looked upon Jethro, who had been made proselyte, and took up the parable of his prophecy, and said: How strong is your habitation, who has set your dwelling in the clefts of the rocks! |
| 22. For if Kain is laid waste, how far will Assyria take you captive? " | 22. Yet so is it decreed that the children of the Shalmaia must be despoiled, but not until Sancherib the king of Athur will come and make you captive. |
| 23. He took up his parable and said, Alas! Who can survive these things from God? | 23. And he took up the parable of his prophecy, and said, Woe to them who are alive at the time when the Word of the LORD will be revealed, to give the good reward to the righteous/generous, and to take vengeance on the wicked, to smite the nations and the kings, and bring these things upon them! |
| 24. Ships will come from the Kittites and afflict Assyria and afflict those on the other side, but he too will perish forever." | 24. And ships (lit., sails) armed for war will come forth with great armies from Lombarnia, and from the land of Italia, conjoined with the legions that will come forth from Constantina, and will afflict the Athuraee, and bring into captivity all the sons of Eber; **nevertheless the end of these and of those is to fall by the hand of the King Mashiach (Messiah), and be brought to everlasting destruction**: |
| 25. Balaam arose, went, and returned home, and Balak **went on his way**. | 25. And Bileam rose up and went to return to his place, and Balak also went upon his way, and appointed the daughters of the Midianites for the tavern booths at Beth Jeshimoth, by the snow mountain, where they sold sweet foods cheaper than their price, after the counsel of Bileam the wicked, at the dividing of the way. |
|  |  |
| 1. Israel settled in Shittim, and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of the Moabites. | 1. And Israel dwelt in the place which is called Shittim, on account of the (Shetutha) foolishness and depravity which were among them. And the people began to profane their holiness, and to strip their bodies to the image of Peor, and commit fornication with the daughters of the Moabites, who brought out the image of Peor, concealed under their bundles. |
| 2. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and prostrated themselves to their gods. | 2. And they invited the people to the sacrifices of their idols; and the people ate in their feasts, and bowed themselves to their idols. |
| 3. Israel became attached to Baal Peor, and the anger of the Lord flared against Israel. | 3. And the people of the house of Israel joined themselves to Baal-Peor, like the nail in the wood, which is not separated but by breaking up the wood (or, with the splinters). And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. |
| 4. The Lord said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang them before the Lord, facing the sun, and then the flaring anger of the Lord will be removed from Israel. | 4. And the LORD said to Mosheh, Take all the chiefs of the people, and appoint them for judges, and let them give judgment to put to death the people who have gone astray after Peor, and hang them before the Word of the LORD upon the wood over against the morning sun, and at the departure of the sun take them down and bury them and turn away the strong anger of the LORD from Israel. |
| 5. Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you shall kill the men who became attached to Baal Peor. | 5. And Mosheh said to the judges of Israel, Slay every one a man of his tribe of those who have joined themselves to the idol of Peor. |
| 6. Then an Israelite man came and brought the Midianite woman to his brethren, before the eyes of Moses and before the eyes of the entire congregation of the children of Israel, while they were weeping at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. | 6. And behold, a man of the sons of Israel came, holding a Midianitess, and brought her to his brethren, in the sight of Mosheh and all the congregation of the children of Israel. He answered and said to Mosheh, What is it (that is wrong) to have company with her? If you say, It is forbidden, did you not yourself take a Midianitess, the daughter of Jethro? When Mosheh heard, he trembled and swooned. But they wept, and cried, Listen! And they stood at the door of the tabernacle of ordinance. |
| 7. Phinehas the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the kohen saw this, arose from the congregation, and took a spear in his hand. | 7. And Phinehas bar Elazar-bar Aharon, the priest, saw, and, remembering the ordination, answered, and said: He who ought to kill, let him kill! Where are the lions of the tribe of Jehudah? When they saw, they were quiet. And he arose from among his Sanhedrin, and took a lance in his hand. |
| 8. He went after the Israelite man into the chamber and drove [it through] both of them; the Israelite man, and the woman through her stomach, and the plague ceased from the children of Israel. | 8. Twelve miracles were wrought for Phinehas at the time that he went in after the man of Israel with the Midianitha. The first sign was, (1) He would have parted them but could not; (2) Their mouth was closed, that they could not cry out; for had they cried out, they would have been rescued; (3) He drove the lance through both of them; (4) The lance remained fixed in the wound; (5) When he bare them aloft, the lintel was uplifted for him until he had gone forth; (6) He carried them through the whole camp, six miles, without fatigue; (7) He held them up by his right arm, in sight of their kindred, who had no power to hurt him; (8) The lance was made strong so as not to be broken with the load; (9) The iron transpierced them, but was not withdrawn; (10) An angel came and made bare their corpses in sight of the people; (11) They lingered alive till they had been carried through the entire camp, lest the priest in the tabernacle should be defiled by the dead; (12) Their blood thickened so as not to flow upon him; but when he had borne them through the camp, it brake forth, and they died. Answering, he said before the LORD of the world, Can it be that, on account of these, twenty and four thousands of Israel will die? Immediately the compassions of Heaven were moved, and the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. |
| 9. Those that died in the plague numbered twenty four thousand. | 9. And the number who died by the pestilence was twenty and four thousand. |
|  |  |

**Welcome to the World of P’shat Exegesis**

In order to understand the finished work of the P’shat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the P’shat 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.

**Rashi Commentary for: ‎** **B’Midbar (Num.) 23:10 - 25:9**

**10 Who can count the dust of Jacob** As the Targum [Onkelos] renders, “the children of the house of Jacob, [concerning whom it was stated, 'they shall be as many as the dust of the earth, or one] of the four camps” — [referring to] the four divisions. Another interpretation: The dust of Jacob—The number of mitzvoth they fulfill with dust are innumerable: “You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey [together]” (Deut. 22:10); “You shall not sow your field with a mixture of seeds” (Lev. 19:19), the ashes of the red cow (19:19), the dust used for a woman suspected of infidelity, and others similar to these.-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 12, Num. Rabbah 20:19]

**or the number of the seed of** [The word רֽבַע denotes] their copulations; the seed which issues from sexual intercourse.-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 12, Num. Rabbah 20:19]

**May my soul die the death of the upright** Among them.

**13 curse them for me** Heb. וְקָבְנוֹ לִי . This term is in the imperative: Curse them for me!

**14 the field of the lookouts** There was a high spot from where a lookout stands on guard in case an army approaches the city.

**to the peak of the mountain** Balaam was not as great a diviner as Balak. Balak foresaw that a breach was destined to break into Israel from there, and indeed, Moses died there. He thought that the curse could take effect upon them there, and [he thought,] “This is the breach that I see.”-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 13, Num. Rabbah 20:19]

**15 I will be chanced on here** By the Holy One, blessed is He.

**I will be chanced on** Heb. אקָּרֶה in the passive form.

**16 and placed something into his mouth** What is meant by this placing? What would Scripture had lacked had it [simply] said, "Return to Balak and so shall you speak"? However, when he [Balaam] heard that he was not permitted to curse, he said, “Why should I return to Balak to upset him?” So the Holy One, blessed is He, put a bridle and a bit into his mouth, [so to speak,] as a man goads his beast with a bit to lead it wherever he wants. He [God] said to him, You shall return to Balak against your will.-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 13, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**17 and the Moabite dignitaries were with him** Above (verse 6) it says, “ all the Moabite dignitaries.” However, since they saw that there was no hope, some of them left, and only some of them remained.-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 13, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**What did the Lord speak?** This is an expression denoting derision, as if to say, You are not your own master.-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 13, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**18 Arise, Balak** Since he saw that he was mocking him, he intended to taunt him, “Stand on your feet; you have no right to sit, for I have been sent to you as an emissary of the Omnipresent!”-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 13, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**son of Zippor** Heb. בְּנוֹ צִפּֽר . This [use of the ‘vav’ as a suffix to denote the construct form] is biblical style, as in, “beasts (חַיְתוֹ) of the forest” (Ps. 50: 10); “beasts (וְחַיְתוֹ) of the earth” (Gen. 1:24); “to a spring (לְמַעְיְנוֹ) of water” (Ps. 114:8).

**19 God is not a man that He should lie** He has already promised them to bring them to and give them possession of the land of the seven nations, and you expect to kill them in the desert?-[See Mid. Tanchuma Mass’ei 7, Num. Rabbah 23:8]

**Would He say...** Heb. הַהוּא . This is in the form of a question. And the Targum [Onkelos] renders, “who later relent.” They reconsider and change their minds.

**20 I have received [instruction] to bless** You ask me, What did God speak? [My answer is] I received from Him [instruction] to bless them. (to bless Heb. בָרֵךְ , used in the sense of לְבָרֵךְ “to bless.”)

**and He has blessed, and I cannot retract it** He has blessed them, and I will not retract His blessing.

**and He has blessed** Heb. וּבֵרֵךְ , like וּבִרֵךְ . This is the rule of the letter ‘reish’ as in חֵרֵף אוֹיֵב (Ps. 74:18), like חִרֵף and similarly, וּבֽצֵע בֵּרֵךְ (ibid. 10:3)—one who praises and blesses the thief, saying, “Do not be afraid because you will not be punished; you will be all right,” angers the Holy One, blessed is He. But one cannot say that וּבֵרֵךְ is a noun, for if so, it would be punctuated with a short ‘pathach’ [’segol’] and the accent would be on the first syllable וּבֵרֶךְ . However, since it is a verb in the active form, it is punctuated with a short ‘kamatz’ [’tzeireh’], and the accent is on the last syllable.

**21 He does not look at evil in Jacob** According to the Targum [Onkelos it means: I have looked. There are no idol worshippers in Jacob]. Another interpretation: Its literal meaning can be expounded beautifully. The Holy One, blessed is He, does not look at evil in Jacob. When they transgress His word, He does not deal punctiliously with them to scrutinize their wicked deeds and their iniquity in violation of His law.-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 14, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**perversity** Heb. עָמָל connotes transgression, as in “conceives mischief (עָמָל) ” (Ps. 7:15) [and as in] “For You look at mischief (עָמָל) and provocation” (ibid. 10:14), since a transgression is distressing for the Omnipresent [and עָמָל primarily means hardship and toil].

**the Lord, his God, is with him** Even if they anger Him and rebel against Him, He does not move from their midst.

**and he has the king’s friendship** - וּתְרוּעַת , an expression denoting love and friendship, as in, “the friend of (רֵעֶה) David” (II Sam. 15:37), and in “and has given her to his companion (לְמֵרֵעֵהוּ) ” (Jud. 15:6). Similarly, Onkelos renders, “the Presence of their King is among them.”

**22 God has brought them out of Egypt** You said, “Behold the people coming out of Egypt” (22:11). They did not come out by themselves, but God brought them out.-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 14, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**with the strength of His loftiness** Heb. כְּתוֹעֲפֽת רְאֵם , in accordance with the power of His loftiness (רוּם) and height. Similarly, “and... abundant silver (תּוֹעָפוֹת) ” (Job 22:25); they are terms denoting strength. I maintain that it [תּוֹעֲפוֹת] is a term cognate with [a similar word in the phrase] “and let the birds fly (יְעוֹפֵף) ” (Gen. 1:20) [which denotes] something flying to lofty heights, expressing great power. Thus, כְּתוֹעֲפֽת רְאֵם means flying high. Another interpretation: כְּתוֹעֲפֽת רְאֵם means the power of 're’emim’ and our Rabbis say (Git. 68b) that this refers to demons.

**23 For there is no divination in Jacob** They are worthy of blessing since there are no diviners or soothsayers among them.

**In time it will be said to Jacob and Israel** There will come another time like this, when the love [God has] for them will be revealed to all, for they will be seated before Him and learn Torah from His mouth. Their place will be further in [closer to the Divine Presence] than the ministering angels. They will ask them, “What has God wrought?” This is the meaning of what is stated, “your eyes shall behold your Teacher” (Isa. 30:20). Another interpretation: [The phrase] לְיַעֲקֽב יֵאָמֵר is not in the future tense ["it shall be said to Jacob"] but in the present tense. [Thus, the meaning is:] They have no need for a diviner or sorcerer, for any time it is necessary to tell Jacob and Israel what God has wrought and what decrees He enacted on high, they do not need diviners or soothsayers, but the decrees of the Omnipresent are transmitted to them through their prophets, or the Urim and Tummim inform them [Mid. Tanchuma Balak 14, Num. Rabbah 20:20]. Onkelos, however, does not render [it in] this manner.[Onkelos renders: For the diviners do not wish that good should be bestowed upon Jacob, nor do soothsayers desire the greatness of Israel. At this time, it will be told to Jacob what God has wrought.]

**24 Behold, a people that rises like a lioness** When they awaken from their sleep in the morning they show the vigor of a lioness and a lion in grasping mitzvoth, to don a ‘tallith ’ [prayer shawl], recite the shema and put on ‘tefillin’ [phylacteries].-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 14, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**It does not lie down** [I.e., a Jew does not lie down] on his bed at night until he consumes and destroys any harmful thing that comes to tear him. How so? He recites the shema on his bed and entrusts his spirit to the hand of the Omnipresent. Should an army or a troop come to harm them, the Holy One, blessed is He, protects them, fights their battles and strikes them [their attackers] down dead.[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 14, Num. Rabbah 20:20] Another interpretation: “Behold a people that rises like a lioness...” as the Targum [Onkelos] renders [it: namely, It will not settle in its land until it destroys (the enemy) and takes possession of the land of the nations].

**and drinks the blood of the slain** He prophesied that Moses would not die until he would strike down the Midianite kings dead, and he [Balaam] would be slain with them, as it says, “Balaam the son of Beor the soothsayer did the children of Israel slay with the sword with those that were slain by them” (Josh. 13:22). -[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 14, Num. Rabbah 20:20]

**25 You shall neither curse them nor shall you not bless them** The first גַּם [literally, also, in the clause, “You shall neither...”] adds something to the second גַּם [in the clause “nor shall you curse”] and the second גַּם adds something to the first גַּם [as if he said, Neither bless them nor curse them; neither curse them nor bless them]. Similarly, “It shall be neither mine (גַּם לִי) nor yours (גַּם לְךָ) ” (I Kings 3:26) and similarly, “both the youth (גַּם בָּחוּר) and the maiden (גַּם בְּתוּלָה) ” (Deut. 32:25).

**27 so that you will curse them for me** Heb. וְקַבּֽתוֹ . This is not in the imperative like “curse them” ( וְקָבְנוֹ , in verse 13), but the future tense: it will please God and you will curse them for me from there, maldiras in old French, you will curse.

**28 to the peak of Peor** Balak was a great soothsayer, and he foresaw that they were destined to be smitten through Peor, but he did not know in what way. He said, “Perhaps the curse will take effect on them from there.” It is much the same with all the stargazers; they see things, but they do not know what they are seeing.-[Mid. Aggadah]

**Chapter 24**

**1 Balaam saw that it pleased** He said, “I no longer have to test the Holy One, blessed is He, for He will not want to curse them.”

**so he did not go... as he had done time and time again** As he had done twice -[Mid. Aggadah]

**in search of omens** To divine that perhaps God would chance to meet him as he wished. He said, “Whether He wishes to curse them or not, I will mention their sins so that on the mention of their sins the curse can take effect.”-[Mid. Aggadah]

**but turned his face toward the desert** As the Targum paraphrases ["He directed his face toward the desert, where the Israelites had made the golden calf," or “He directed his face toward the golden calf, which the Israelites had made in the desert.” See Ramban, Midrash Aggadah, Mechokekei Yehudah (Minchath Yehudah, fn. 1)].

**2 Balaam raised his eyes** He sought to cast an evil eye upon them, so here you have his three attributes: an evil eye, a haughty spirit, and greed mentioned above (22:13, 18). -[Avoth 5:19, Mid. Tanchuma Balak 6, Num. Rabbah 20:10]

**dwelling according to its tribes** He saw each tribe dwelling by itself, not intermingling [with other tribes], and he saw that the openings of their tents did not face each other, so that they should not peer into each other’s tents.-[B.B. 60a, Mid. Aggadah]

**and the spirit of God rested upon him** It entered his mind not to curse them.

**3 the son of Beor** Heb. בְּנוֹ בְעֽר , lit., his son was Beor. [However, the word בְּנוֹ is used here] as in “to a spring [לְמַעְיְנוֹ] of water” (Ps. 114:8) [see Rashi 23:18]. The Midrash Aggadah expounds: Both were greater than their fathers; Balak, his son was Zippor, for his [Balak’s] father was his son, as it were, with regard to royalty. And Balaam was greater than his father in prophecy; he was a maneh [a coin equaling one hundred zuz] the son of a peras [a coin equaling fifty zuz, half the value of a maneh].-[Mid. Tanchuma Balak 13, Sanh. 105a]

**with an open eye** Heb. שְׁתֻם הָעָיִן . His eye had been gouged out and its socket appeared open. This term [שְׁתֻם] is mishnaic; “enough time to bore a hole (יִשְׁתּֽם) [in a cask], seal it, and dry it” (A.Z. 69a). Our Rabbis said, Because he said, “the number of the seed of Israel” (23:10), implying that the Holy One, blessed is He, sits and counts the seed that issues from the Israelite sexual unions, waiting for the drop from which a righteous/generous man will be born, he thought, “The One Who is holy, and Whose ministers are holy should direct his attention to matters such as these?” On account of this, Balaam’s eye was blinded (Mid. Aggadah). Some say that the phrase means “of the open eye,” [meaning of clear sight], as Onkelos renders. As for its saying, “with an open eye” rather than “with open eyes,” this teaches us that he was blind in one eye.-[Sanh. 105a]

**4 fallen yet with open eyes** The plain meaning is as understood by the Targum [Onkelos], that He appeared to him only at night, while he was lying down. The Midrashic explanation is that when He appeared to him, he had no strength to stand on his feet, so he fell on his face, for since he was uncircumcised, it was a disgrace to appear before Him while he was standing upright in His presence.-[Mid. Aggadah]

**5 How goodly are your tents** For he saw that the entrances were not facing each other.-[B.B. 60a]

**your dwelling places** Your encampments, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders. Another explanation: "How goodly are your tents"—How goodly are the tent of Shiloh and the eternal Temple when they are inhabited, for offerings are brought up in them to atone for you."

**your dwelling places** Heb. מִשְׁכְּנֽתֶיךָ , even when they are desolate, for they are held as a pledge (מַשְׁכּוֹן) for you, and their desolate state atones for your souls, as it says, “The Lord has spent His fury” (Lam. 4:11). How did He spend it? “He has kindled a fire in Zion” (ibid.) -[See Mid. Tanchuma Pekudei 4]

**6 They extend like streams** They extend and are drawn out for a distance. Our Rabbis said: From this wicked man’s blessings we can determine how he intended to curse them when he decided to turn his face toward the desert. For when the Omnipresent reversed [the words of] his mouth, he blessed them in a way corresponding to the curses he intended to say..., as is stated in [the chapter of] Cheilek (Sanh. 105b).

**like aloes** Heb. כַּאֲהָלִים , as the Targum [Onkelos] renders, [aromatic plants], as in the expression as, “myrrh and aloes (וַאֲהָלוּת) ” (Song 4:14).

**which the Lord planted** in the Garden of Eden. Another interpretation: Like the firmament which is stretched out like a tent (אֽהֶל) as it says, “and he spread them out like a tent (כָּאֽהֶל) to dwell in” (Is. 40:22) (Targum Jonathan and Yerushalmi). (This interpretation is incorrect because, if so, it would have been vowelized כְּאֽהָלִים , with a cholam. - This is obviously a copyist’s comment, because Rashi proceeds to defend this interpretation. Editor’s note)

**which the Lord planted** We find the expression ‘planting’ in relation to tents, as it says, “And he will pitch (וַיִטַּע) his palatial tents” (Dan. 11:45).

**7 from his wells** Heb. מִדָּלְיָו , from his wells; the meaning is as the Targum [Onkelos interprets it, namely, “the king anointed from his sons shall be great.”]

**and his seed shall have abundant water** This expression denotes prosperity, like seed [which flourishes when] planted close to water.

**His king shall be raised over Agag** Their first king [Saul] will capture Agag, king of Amalek.-[Mid. Aggadah]

**and his kingship exalted** [The kingship of Jacob] will become greater and greater, for following him [Saul] will come David and Solomon.-[Mid. Aggadah]

**8 God, Who has brought them out of Egypt** Who caused them all this greatness? God, Who brought them out of Egypt with His power and loftiness. He will consume the nations who are his adversaries.

**their bones** of these adversaries.

**bare** Heb. יְגָרֵם . Menachem (Machbereth p. 59) interprets this word as ‘breaking up.’ Similarly, “They [the wolves] did not gnaw the (גָרְמוּ) [bones] in the morning” (Zeph. 3:3), and similarly, “its shards you shall break (תְּגָרֵמִי) ” (Ezek. 23:34). I, however, maintain that it means ‘bone,’ [and the meaning is:] He strips the surrounding flesh with his teeth and the marrow from within, leaving the bone in its bare state.

**and dip His arrows** - חִצָּיו יִמְחָץ . Onkelos interprets it as referring to the half of the adversaries—[that is,] their part, as in, בַּעֲלֵי חִצִּים (Gen. 49:23) [which the Targum renders as] “those who should take half.” So [according to the Targum] the יִמְחָץ is [used here] as in the expression, “she split (וּמָחֲצָה) and struck through his temple” (Jud. 5:26), [hence, here it means,] they divided [among themselves] their [the adversaries’] land. It is also possible to interpret it in the literal sense, which is “arrows.” The arrows of the Holy One, blessed is He, will be dipped (יִמְחָץ) into the blood of the adversaries—He will dip and stain [the arrows] with blood, as in, “in order that your foot may wade (תִּמְחַץ) through blood” (Ps. 68:24). This is not a departure from the general meaning of ‘wounding,’ as in, “I have wounded (מָחַצְתִּי) ” (Deut. 32:39), for anything stained with blood appears as if it is wounded and stricken.

**9 He crouches and lies like a lion** As the Targum [Onkelos] renders, they will settle in their land with might and power.

**10 he clapped** He struck one [hand] against the other.-[Onkelos, Menachem, Mid. Aggadah]

**13 transgress the word of the Lord** Here it does not say, “my God,” as its says the first time [22:18], because he realized that he was loathsome to the Holy One, blessed is He, and had been banished [by Him].-[Mid. Aggadah]

**14 I am going to my people** “From now I am like the rest of my people,” for the Holy One, blessed is He, had departed from him.

**Come, I will advise you** what action you should take. What is that counsel? "The God of these [people] hates immorality [thus, entice them to sin with your women...] as it is related in [the chapter of] Cheilek (Sanh. 106a). The proof that Balaam offered this counsel to cause them to stumble through immorality is that it says, “They were the ones who were involved with the children of Israel on Balaam’s advice” (31:16).

**what this people will do to your people** This is an elliptical verse, [and it means,] I will advise you how to make them stumble, and tell you how they will punish Moab at the end of days. “And crush the princes of Moab” (verse 17); the Targum [Onkelos] elaborates on the abbreviated Hebrew.

**16 and perceives the thoughts of the Most High** to determine the precise moment that He becomes angry. -[Ber. 7a]

**17 I see it** I see that prominence and greatness of Jacob, but it is not at present, only at a later time.

**A star has gone forth** As the Targum [Onkelos] renders, an expression similar to “He has bent (דָּרַךְ) his bow” (Lam. 2:4), for a star shoots out like an arrow; in old French, destent, as if to say, his good fortune shall rise [prosper].

**and a staff will arise** A king who rules dominantly.

**which will crush the princes of Moab** This refers to David, of whom it says, “he laid them on the ground and measured two cord-lengths to put to death...” (II Sam. 8:2). -[Mid. Aggadah]

**and uproot** Heb. וְקַרְקַר is a term denoting ‘digging’ as in, “I dug (קַרְתִּי) ” (II Kings 19:24); “to the hole of the pit from which you were dug out (נֻקַּרְתֶּם) ” (Is. 51:1); “may the ravens of the valley pick it out (יִִִִִקְּרוּהָ) ” (Prov. 30:17); in French, forer.

**all the sons of Seth** All the nations, for they are all descended from Seth, the son of Adam [lit., the first man].

**18 and Seir shall become the possession of his enemies** For his enemy, Israel.

**19 A ruler shall come out of Jacob** There will be another ruler from Jacob.

**and destroy the remnant of the city** Of the most prominent [city] of Edom, that is, Rome. He says this regarding the King Messiah, of whom it says, “and may he reign from sea to sea,” (Ps. 72:8)," and the house of Esau shall have no survivors" (Obad. 1:18). -[Mid. Aggadah]

**20 He saw Amalek** He perceived the retribution destined to befall Amalek.

**Amalek was the first of the nations** He came before all of them to make war with Israel, and so Targum renders. And his fate shall be to perish by their hand, as it says, “You shall obliterate the remembrance of Amalek” (Deut. 25:19).

**21 He saw the Kenite and said** Since the Kenites were encamped near Amalek, as it is said, “Saul said to the Kenite...” (I Sam. 15:6), he mentions him after Amalek. He perceived the greatness of the sons of Jethro [known also as Keni], of whom it is said, “Tirathites (תִּרְעָתִים) , Shimathites (שִׁמְעָתִים) , Sochathites (סוֹכָתִים) ” (I Chron. 2:55), [expounded on in Sifrei (Beha’alothecha 42) as follows: תִּרְעָתִים , so called because they heard the shofar blast (תְּרוּעָה) on Mount Sinai, because they would cry out (מַתְרִיעִים) and be answered, because they dwelled at the entrance to the gates (תַּרְעֵי) of Jerusalem; שִׁמְעָתִים , so called because they obeyed (שָׁמְעוּ) their father’s command (to abstain from drinking wine and to live in tents, as in Jer. 35:8, 9); סוֹכָתִים , so called because they did not anoint themselves (לֹא סָכוּ) with oil and because they dwelt in booths (סֻכּוֹת) ].

**How firm is your dwelling place** [Balaam asks Jethro, who is Keni,] "I wonder how you merited this? Were you not with me in the counsel [we gave Pharaoh] "Come, let us deal wisely with them"? (Exod. 1:10) Yet now you have settled yourself in the firmness and strength of Israel.-[Sanh. 106a]

**22 For if Kain is laid waste** Fortunate are you that you are settled in this stronghold, for you will never be banished from the world. Even if you are destined to be exiled with the ten tribes, and be eliminated from the place where you had settled, what of it?

**how far will Assyria take you captive?** How far will he exile you? Perhaps as far as Halah or Habor? That is not considered being banished from the world, but being moved from one place to another, and you shall return with the other exiles.

**23 He took up his parable…** Since he mentioned the captivity by Assyria, he says-

**Alas! Who can survive these things from God?** Who can save himself from the One who designates these things, so that the One who decrees [namely, God] should not put these things [into effect] against him? [And what are these terrible things?] That Sennacherib will arise and confuse all the nations, and furthermore, "ships will come from the Kittites"—the Kittites, who are the Romans, shall go forth in huge warships against Assyria.

**24 and afflict those on the other side** And they shall afflict those on the other side of the river [Euphrates].

**but he too will perish forever** Similarly does Daniel explain [concerning the Roman empire], “until the beast was slain and its body destroyed” (Dan. 7:11).

**ships** Heb. וְצִים , huge ships, as it is written, “ וְצִי אַדִּיר ” (Is. 33:21) which the Targum [Jonathan] renders as “a great ship.”-[Yoma 77b]

**Chapter 25**

**1 in Shittim** That is its name.-[Sanh. 106a]

**to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moab** As a result of Balaam’s advice, as is stated in [the chapter entitled] "Cheilek’ (Sanh. 106a).

**2 and prostrated themselves to their gods** When his urge overcame him, and he said to her, “Submit to me,” she took out an image of Peor from her bosom and said to him, “Bow down before this.” -[Sifrei Balak 1]

**3 Peor** - [ פְּעוֹר was so named] because before it they bared [פּוֹעֲרִין] their anus before it and relieved themselves. This was the manner of its worship. -[Sifrei Balak 1]

**and the anger of the Lord flared against Israel** He sent a plague upon them.

**4 Take all the leaders of the people** to judge those who worshipped Peor.- [Sanh. 35a]

**and hang them** The [idol] worshippers.

**and hang them** Heb. הוֹקַע . This refers to [death by] hanging, as we find with the sons of Saul [where a similar expression is used,] “and we shall hang them (הוֹקַעֲנוּם) for the Lord” (II Sam. 21:6), and there hanging is specifically mentioned. Idolatry is [punishable] by stoning, and all those stoned are also hanged [as is stated in Sanh. 45b according to Rabbi Eliezer].

**facing the sun** for all to see. The Midrash Aggadah (Mid. Tanchuma Balak 19) says: The sun identified the sinners, for the cloud folded back from the area above him and the sun shone on him.-

**5 Each of you shall kill the men** Each one of the Israelite judges executed two, and there were eighty-eight thousand Israelite judges, as is stated in Sanhedrin [18a].

**6 Then an Israelite man came** The tribe of Simeon gathered around Zimri, who was their prince, and they said to him, “We have been sentenced to death, yet you sit there [and remain silent] etc.,” as it is related in [the chapter of] Elu hen hanisrafin’ (Sanh. 82a).

**the Midianite woman** Cozbi the daughter of Zur (see verse 15).

**before the eyes of Moses** They said to him, “Moses, is this one forbidden or is she permitted? If you say it is forbidden, who permitted for you the daughter of Jethro...?” as is stated there (Sanh. 82a).

**while they were weeping** The law [that anyone cohabiting with a non-Jewish woman is to be executed by zealots] eluded him. [Therefore,] they all burst out weeping. At the incident of the golden calf Moses [successfully] confronted six hundred thousand as it says, “He ground it until it was powder...” (Exod. 32:20), yet here he appeared so helpless? However, [this happened] so that Phinehas should come and take what was due to him.- [Mid. Tanchuma Balak 20]

**7 Phinehas...saw** He saw the deed and reminded himself of the law. He said to Moses, “I learned from you, ‘If someone cohabits with an Aramean [heathen] woman, zealots have a right to strike him [dead].’ ” He replied to him, “Let the one who reads the letter be the agent to carry it out.” Immediately, “he took a spear in his hand....”-[Sanh. 82a]

**8 into the chamber** Into the tent.

**through her stomach** Heb. קֳבָתָהּ , as in, “the jaw and the maw (וְהַקֵּבָה) ” (Deut. 18:3). He aimed for the male organ of Zimri and her female organs and everyone saw that he had not killed them for nothing. Many miracles happened to him..., as it is related there (Sanh. 82b).

**Ketubim: Psalm 105:1-6**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Give thanks to the Lord, call out in His name; make His deeds known among the peoples. | 1. Sing praise in the presence of the LORD, call on His name; tell of His deeds among the Gentiles. |
| 2. Sing to Him, play music to Him, speak of all His wonders. | 2. Sing praise in His presence, make music in His presence; speak of all His wonders. |
| 3. Boast of His holy name; may the heart of those who seek the Lord rejoice. | 3. Sing praise in His holy name; may the heart of those who seek instruction from the presence of the LORD be glad. |
| 4. **Search for the Lord and His might; seek His presence constantly.** | 4. **Seek the teaching of the LORD, and His Torah; welcome His face continually.** |
| 5. Remember His wonders, which He performed, His miracles and the judgments of His mouth. | 5. Call to mind the wonders that he has done; his miracles, and the judgments of his mouth. |
| 6. The seed of Abraham His servant, the children of Jacob, His chosen ones. | 6. O seed of Abraham His servant, O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones. |
|  |  |

**Rashi’s Commentary to Psalm 105:1-6**

**1 His deeds** Heb. עלילותיו , His deeds.

**3 Boast of His holy name** Boast of the stronghold of His holy name that you have a patron like Him. התהללוּ is “porvontez vous” in Old French, [vantez vous in modern French, boast].

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalms ‎‎104:19-35**

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

This psalm was composed on the day King David brought the Holy Ark from its temporary quarters in the home of Oved Edom to the holy city of Jerusalem, where it was installed with great ceremony and honor. The full details of the event are described in I Chronicles, chapter 16. Verses 8-22 of that chapter closely parallel the first fifteen verses of this psalm, while verses 23-33 of that chapter are an almost exact repetition of psalm 96.

Verse 7 there reads: On that day David determined the foremost activity to be the offering of thanks to HaShem, under the direction of Assaf and his brothers. Rashi explains that Assaf would recite one verse of praise at a time, which would then be repeated by his fellow Levites.

In this composition, the Psalmist emphasizes that the Jews who escorted the Holy Ark are the seed of Abraham, His servant. Abraham's greatest accomplishment was that he traveled from place to place teaching and publicizing the Name of the One G-d. The Holy Ark of the Law also represents G-d's Name. Thus when David carried the Ark from place to place to the accompaniment of thanksgiving to the Almighty, he resembled his illustrious forebear, Avraham.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Radak and Malbim[[2]](#footnote-2) explain that the Levites sang psalm 105 each morning and psalm 96 each evening while the Holy Ark was housed in a temporary tent in Jerusalem. When Solomon built the Temple and the Ark was placed in its permanent abode, a perpetual order of songs was established. These were the Songs of the Day which were related to the respective days of the week and to each special festival.[[3]](#footnote-3)

The verbal tally between our Torah portion and psalm focuses on the word *done* – עשה.[[4]](#footnote-4) Our psalm ascribes the *doing* to HaShem, while in our Torah portion Balak ascribes the *doing* to Bilaam. It is this contrast which sets the stage for Avraham Avinu, in our psalm, the one who repeatedly[[5]](#footnote-5) *did* the commands of HaShem.

Psalm 105 is unique as the only psalm that mentions the patriarch Avraham and does so not just once but three times.[[6]](#footnote-6) This emphasis on Avraham stands in stark contrast to the absence of any reference to David who is the major figure in most of the book of Psalms. It is only fitting, therefore, that we should spend a bit of time studying Avraham Avinu.

In Beresheet (Genesis) chapter 15 we read of **one of the most significant turning points in the history of man**.[[7]](#footnote-7) We find Avraham making himself into dust[[8]](#footnote-8) and ashes and then using this dust[[9]](#footnote-9) to make himself into an entirely new creature.

We read this significant chapter twice in a Sabbatical cycle, when using the triennial Torah cycle. We read it once in the end of Kislev just before the **tekufat**[[10]](#footnote-10) Tebet[[11]](#footnote-11) and again in the end of Sivan just before the **tekufat** Tammuz.[[12]](#footnote-12) It is read both times on the last Shabbat before Rosh Chodesh. The timing suggests a significant **turning point** in the year. This is an entirely appropriate time to read of the **turning point** of mankind. Curiously, our psalm which reference Avraham in an unusual manner is being read only a couple of weeks before Kislev.

The following study is based on a study by Rabbi Noson Weisz.

The first covenant recorded in the Torah between HaShem and man that is arrived at by a process of negotiation is recorded in Beresheet:

***Beresheet (Genesis) 15:18*** *On that day HaShem made a covenant with Avraham saying, "To your descendants have I given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates river.*

This covenant constitutes a legal contract between HaShem and man where each takes on obligations and burdens. This covenant is a major cornerstone upon which the Bne Israel, the Children of Israel, stands.

As can be seen from the above text, the subject of the covenant was the grant of the land of Israel to the children of Avraham. In this covenant HaShem promised Avraham two things:

1. HaShem promised him offspring. Avraham accepted this part of the covenant:

***Beresheet (Genesis) 15:2*** *And Abram said, Lord HaShem, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of* HaShem came unto him, saying, This shall *not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 And he believed in HaShem; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

2. HaShem promised Avraham the land of Israel. This promise Avraham raised some doubts for Avraham:

***Beresheet (Genesis) 15:7*** *And he said unto him, I am HaShem that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8 And he said, Lord HaShem, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?*

Why did the promise of the land raise doubts in Avraham’s mind? Why did Avraham have more trouble accepting the promise of land than the promise of children?

At the time of the signing of this covenant HaShem told Avraham:

***Beresheet (Genesis) 15:13*** *And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.*

The four hundred year exile began when Avraham’s descendent, Yitzchak, was born. A hundred and ninety years later, Avraham’s descendants went into exile in Egypt. They spent two hundred and ten years in Egypt. According to the Gemara, this 210 year exile and oppression were a result of Avraham's questioning HaShem’s promise of the land of Israel, and his subsequent request for proof:

***Nedarim 32a*** *R. Abbahu said in R. Eleazar's name: Why was our Father Abraham punished and his children doomed to Egyptian servitude for two hundred and ten years? Because he pressed scholars into his service, as it is written, He armed his dedicated servants born in his own house. Samuel said: Because he went too far in testing the attributes [i.e., the promises] of the Lord, as it is written, [And he sand, Lord God,] whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? R. Johanan sand: Because he prevented men from entering beneath the wings of the Shechinah, as it is written, [And the king of Sodom said it to Abraham,] Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.*

Why did HaShem have such a significant time period attached to Avraham’s question? A two hundred and ten year exile for simply asking a question? In answering all these questions, let us begin by trying to understand why it took a covenant with HaShem to allow Avraham to have children.

We are not only seeking an explanation for the workings of HaShem that determined that Avraham and Sarah should be naturally childless. We also have to explain why a couple bearing a child in their middle years[[13]](#footnote-13) takes on the proportions of such an immense miracle. After all, Avraham was willing to enter a fiery furnace[[14]](#footnote-14) out of loyalty to HaShem, so why did the mere belief in the promise of having children earn him so much praise from HaShem? What is so immense here?

The Midrash relates that when HaShem told Avraham to leave Ur, Avraham was nervous that people would criticize him for abandoning his parents just as they were getting old. HaShem told Avraham that he is absolved from the obligation of honoring his parents.

***Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 39:7*** *Now what precedes this passage? And Terah died in Haran (ib. XI, 32), [which is followed by] NOW THE LORD SAID UNTO ABRAM: GET THEE (LEK LEKA). R. Isaac said: From the point of view of chronology a period of sixty-five years is still required.[[15]](#footnote-15) But first you may learn that the wicked, even during their lifetime, are called dead.[[16]](#footnote-16) For Abraham was afraid, saying, ' Shall I go out and bring dishonor upon the Divine Name, as people will say, “He left his father in his old age and departed”? ‘Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, reassured him: ‘I exempt thee (leka) from the duty of honouring thy parents, though I exempt no one else from this duty.[[17]](#footnote-17) Moreover, I will record his death before thy departure.’ Hence, 'And Terah died in Haran’ is stated first, and then, NOW THE LORD SAID UNTO ABRAM, etc.*

HaShem added that Avraham was the only person in all of human history who would ever receive such absolution. But why was Avraham absolved?

The Maharal[[18]](#footnote-18) explains in his work *Gevurat HaShem*[[19]](#footnote-19) that Avraham received this absolution because he was a new beginning. Usually, children inherit their potential, whether physical or spiritual, entirely from their parents. As such, they owe their parents honor and respect as the ultimate source of their beings.

On his own, Avraham climbed to a new pinnacle of spirituality. Avraham did not inherit his spiritual potential from anyone. On his own he climbed to a new pinnacle of spirituality whose potential was innate in all human beings but that no one else had ever actualized since the fall of Adam.

The ability to form the powerful spiritual bond with HaShem which prompted HaShem to finally command Avraham to depart from Ur to go to live in the Holy Land was a heretofore unexploited human resource that Avraham obtained directly from Adam himself, as no human being had ever tapped into it before.

Avraham is described by the Midrash[[20]](#footnote-20) as the very first convert to Judaism:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 47:9*** *The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the G-d of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: he is greatly exalted.*

The G-d of Avraham and not the G-d of Yitzchak and Yaaqov? The G-d of Avraham who was the very first convert to Judaism. [He is the noble of spirit among the peoples, as it was only Avraham's nobility of spirit that brought him to HaShem. He was not raised to be a Jew by his parents. Isaac and Jacob already had Jewish parents.] The ruling that applies to all new converts to Judaism, stated many times in the Talmud is that the convert is like a new born child.

***Yevamoth 48b*** *R. Jose said: One who has become a proselyte is like a child newly born.[[21]](#footnote-21)*

In the eyes of Jewish Law, he is no longer related to his previous family. On the other hand, all converts are considered the children of Avraham, their predecessor and the very first convert.

But there is a necessary downside to this. The ability to have children is also a potential one inherits from his parents. Indeed, it could be argued that the human genome is the most basic human factor that is transmitted from generation to generation. Each and every human being who is born represents yet another link in the endless chain of DNA that stretches all the way back to the first man. If Avraham is not a continuation of this chain, but represents an entirely new human departure, then it follows that he cannot serve as a connecting link along the existing chain of generations, but has to originate a brand new chain of his own. To transform oneself is one thing, to be able to transmit this transformation to all future generations of one's descendants is quite another. This is the background to the covenant described in Beresheet (Genesis) 15.

**Above The Stars**

***Shabbath 156a*** *Rab too holds that Israel is immune from planetary influence. For Rab Judah said in Rab's name: How do we know that Israel is immune from planetary influence? Because it is said, and he brought him forth from abroad.[[22]](#footnote-22) Abraham pleaded before the Holy One, blessed be He, ‘Sovereign of the Universe! one born in mine house is mine heir.’ ‘Not so,’ He replied, ‘but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels.’ ‘Sovereign of the Universe!’ cried he, ‘I have looked at my constellation and find that I am not fated to beget child.’ ‘Go forth from [i.e., cease] thy planet [gazing], for Israel is free from planetary influence.*

According to Jewish thought, all physical potential is mapped out in the stars, which serve as both reservoir and conduit of the spiritual force required to bring about all physical changes in the world. Avraham was an expert in the science of reading the stars. Thus he concluded, that his lack of offspring did not result from a mere physical defect which could theoretically be repaired by some sort of operation or its miraculous equivalent, but was due to the fact that the natural universe contained no spiritual energy that could be translated into providing him with offspring. HaShem was informing Avraham that he was correct in this assessment but it was irrelevant, as He, HaShem, was moving him out of this entire system controlled by the stars.

However, there is a major difficulty in the way of going above nature and drawing energy straight from this ultimate source. HaShem may be perfectly willing to supply the necessary inputs, but the recipient has to be able to reach up all the way to the ultimate source to be able to receive this input. In order to be able to accomplish this, Avraham had to somehow increase his own stature so that he could reach above nature, and such length of reach was not yet programmed into human beings.

Here is where *emunah*[[23]](#footnote-23) or the power of faithful obedience comes in to the picture. Suppose that a person who is naturally potent genuinely believes himself or herself to be sterile. As they inherited the capacity to conceive from their parents, and such capacity is already part of their phenotypes, their lack of belief is unlikely to interfere with their ability to actually bring children into the world. They may find themselves shocked to be pregnant. But the contrary is certainly not so. For someone who did not inherit any such capacity, belief is very much an issue. Avraham, who was not born with a capacity to reproduce and had to acquire it in midlife, could only accomplish such acquisition through the power of *emunah*, faithful obedience.

Perhaps the most illustrative example of this principle at work is in the story of Nachshon ben Aminadav. In Shemot (Exodus) 14, the Torah relates the story of the splitting of the sea. The pursuing Egyptians found the Jewish people encamped on the shores of the Red Sea and began their attack. Faced by the sea on one side, and the hostile Egyptians on the other, the Jewish people had nowhere to run. Moses assured them that HaShem would save them and then immersed himself in prayer.

***Shemot (Exodus) 14:15*** *The Lord said to Moses: “Moses, Why do you cry out to me? Speak to the Children of Israel and let them journey forth.”*

But what else was Moses supposed to do? The sea was raging before them. There was nothing else to do except pray. Explains Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin, the student of the Gaon of Vilna:

“HaShem told Moses that from His part, He had done everything He could possibly do to split the sea. But the miracle could not happen unless the Jewish people believed it could happen. They had to start moving in to the sea as though it would get out of their way.”

The Gemara[[24]](#footnote-24) relates that Nachshon ben Aminadav walked straight into the water. First it covered his knees, soon he was immersed in the water up to his neck, and finally it was over his nose and he began to drown. But Nachshon believed that the water could not drown him, as HaShem had told the children of Israel to start traveling. Following HaShem's orders could not lead him into danger. Just before he reached the point of drowning this power of *emunah* finally parted the waters and others who were not on this level of *emunah* were also able to follow. His faithful obedience was the key!

The connection between *emunah* and Avraham's children and the need for a covenant with HaShem to bring this about is now clear.

Let us now move on to the land of Israel.

If Avraham had the necessary strength of *emunah* to reach above nature, connect directly to HaShem, and bring the power of reproduction down to the world, why did this *emunah* fail him about receiving the land of Israel? Why did he ask for a guarantee on this promise?

We must understand what is so special about this land of Israel that HaShem promised Avraham.

The answer to this question also emerges from these same ideas that we have been exploring. First of all, we must understand what is so special about this land of Israel that HaShem promised Avraham. Why did HaShem want Avraham to leave a place where he had a large following and was a major force for good and travel to the land of Canaan? After all isn’t HaShem everywhere?

In the world as HaShem arranged it, the human habitat is always perfectly adjusted to sustain the people it must support. The same spiritual forces that were implanted by HaShem into nature which produce human children also must be able to produce the energy required to sustain them. It would be futile to place human beings into the world without providing them with the necessities of survival. This connection between man and his world is clearly enunciated in the following passage of the Talmud, commenting on the following Torah pasuk.

***Beresheet (Genesis) 7:23*** *And He blotted out all existence that was on the face of the ground -- from man to animals to creeping things and to the bird of the heavens.*

***Sanhedrin 108a*** *And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, [both man and cattle]. If man sinned, how did the beasts sin? — A Tanna taught on the authority of R. Joshua b. Karha: This may be compared to a man who set up a bridal canopy for his son, and prepared a banquet with every variety [of food]. Subsequently his son died, whereupon he arose and broke up the feast, saying, ‘Have I prepared all this for any but my son? Now that he is dead, what need have I of the banquet?’ Thus the Holy One, blessed be He, said too, ‘Did I create the animals and beasts for aught but man: now that man has sinned, what need have I of the animals and beasts?’*

But if this is so, then Avraham's offspring must face another serious problem. For just as nature contained no spiritual energy that Avraham could draw on to reproduce, it also contained no energy for the habitat to sustain any potential offspring that he might have. The promise of offspring and the promise of the land of Israel are thus intertwined.

Just as Avraham had to surmount nature to access his children, he had to reach above the natural world to provide them with a habitat. This habitat is the land of Israel. To bring this down to earth, Avraham had to leave Ur and travel to Canaan. But to bring it to earth also required *emunah*. Oddly enough however, the reach for the habitat takes more *emunah* than the reach for offspring.

To understand this point let us consider the remedy for Avraham's lack of *emunah,* the four hundred year long exile, a large part of which was the 210 years spent in Egypt in a state of oppression. The final step of the Exodus was the splitting of the sea referred to above about which is written:

***Shemot (Exodus) 14:31*** *And the people revered HaShem, and they had faith in HaShem and in Moses, His servant.*

The type of *emunah* required to calmly walk into the waves of the sea, or to follow HaShem into the barren desert, is the type of faithful obedience that is ready to accept the possibility of existing in the physical world without the aid of any natural inputs. Thus man can breathe in the absence of air, can relieve his thirst in the absence of water, and can satisfy his hunger in the absence of food if that is the will of HaShem.

It takes great *emunah* to be able to reach up to heaven and bring the land of Israel down to earth.

It is obviously this type of *emunah* in HaShem that is required to be able to reach up to heaven and bring the land of Israel down to earth. Avraham was not certain that he could pass this type of *emunah* down the chain of generations along with his genes. He knew that in the absence of such *emunah* it was impossible to hold on to the land of Israel. And so, he asked HaShem for a guarantee.

Thus, the four hundred year exile was not a punishment but a means by which the nation of Israel could acquire the necessary *emunah* to be able to settle and hold onto the land of Israel.

In the natural world there is no room or provision for the children of Avraham. But if they can survive intact for four hundred years and grow into a great nation without their own land or country or army, they will internalize the *emunah* that their prosperity and survival comes from HaShem Himself, bypassing the conduit of the world of nature. This *emunah* will also give them a long enough reach to stretch their arm all the way up to heaven and bring down for themselves their country, Israel.

If an exile of four hundred years was sufficient to bequeath the Jewish people such great *emunah,* how much more potent should an exile of two thousand years have proven to be. One would think that the Jewish people can certainly not be far away from the *emunah* necessary to bring the final redemption. Yet we are experiencing great difficulties in merely hanging on to a portion of the land of Israel. Why is this so? How can we explain such a total lack of *emunah* after such a long period of survival against great odds?

The truth is that the power of *emunah* hidden in the Jewish people is immense. The trouble with *emunah* is that we only push the switch that turns it on when we are convinced that there is no way to achieve our objectives according to natural law.

If we look at the history of modern Israel, it is clearly divisible into two parts. Before 1967 everything we touched turned to gold. Since then things haven't gone so smoothly to put it mildly.

This difference in our success in the outer world is entirely matched by the rise and fall of the power of *emunah[[25]](#footnote-25)* within us.

Before 1967, the power of our *emunah* was at full strength. Back then, we looked at ourselves as a people who had to survive against great odds through the strength of our faith and determination. The world has regarded us this way as well. Since then we've come to regard ourselves as a local superpower that is able to manage on its own. The world also treats us this way.

As our *emunah* has waned and so has our worldly success. The lessons of history are obvious. We have only to read the book.

**Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 49:23-25 + 50:4-10‎**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 22. So said the Lord God, "Behold I will raise My hand to the nations, and to the peoples will I raise My standard, and they shall bring your sons in their armpits, and your daughters shall be borne on their shoulder[s]. | 22. Thus says the LORD God: “Behold, I will disclose My might among the Gentiles, and raise My signal over the kingdoms; and your sons will come in litters and your daughters will be carried on couches. |
| 23. And kings shall be your nursing fathers and their princesses your wet nurses; they shall prostrate themselves to you with their face on the ground, and they shall lick **the dust** of your feet, and you shall know that I am the Lord, for those who wait for Me shall not be ashamed. | 23. Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens will minister to you. Upon their faces, upon the ground they will spread out to beseech from you, and lick **the dust** of your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD; the righteous/generous who wait for My salvation will not be put to shame.” |
| 24. Shall prey be taken from a mighty warrior, or shall the captives of the righteous escape?" | 24. Is it possible that booty can be taken from the mighty, or that which virtuous men capture be rescued? |
| 25. For so said the Lord, "Even the captives of a mighty warrior can be taken and the prey of a tyrant shall escape, and with your contender will I contend, and your sons I will save. | 25. Surely, thus says the LORD: “Even that which mighty men capture I will restore, and that which strong men take away I will rescue, for I will avenge your retribution and save your sons. |
| 26. And those who taunt you-I will feed their flesh, and as with sweet wine they shall become drunk [from] their blood; and all flesh shall know that **I am the Lord Who saves you, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.** | 26. I will make the flesh of those who are your oppressors food for every bird of the heavens, and just as they are drunk from sweet wine, so will beasts of the field be drunk from their blood. Then all the sons of flesh will know that **I am the LORD your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Strong One of Jacob**." |
|  |  |
| 4. **The Lord God gave me a tongue for teaching, to know to establish times for the faint [for His] word;** He awakens me every morning, He awakens My ear, to hear according to the teachings. | 4. **The LORD God has given me the tongue of those who teach, to make [me] know [how] to teach with wisdom the righteous/generous who faint for the words of His Law.** Therefore morning by morning he rises early to send his prophets so perhaps the sinners' ears might be opened and they might listen to teaching. |
| 5. The Lord God opened my ear, and **I did not rebel; I did not turn away backwards.** | 5. The LORD God has sent me to prophesy, **and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward.** |
| 6. I gave my back to smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I did not hide my face from embarrassments and spitting. | 6. I gave my back to smiters, and my cheeks to them that pluck out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. |
| 7. But the Lord God helps me, therefore, I was not embarrassed; therefore, I made my face like flint, and I knew that I would not be ashamed. | 7. For the LORD God helps me; therefore I have not been confounded; therefore I have set my face strong like rock, and I know that I will not be put to shame; |
| 8. He Who vindicates me is near, whoever wishes to quarrel with me-let us stand together; whoever is my contender shall approach me. | 8. my innocence is near. Who will go to judgment with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my enemy? Let him come near to me. |
| 9. Behold, the Lord God shall help he that will condemn me, behold all of them shall wear out like a garment, a moth shall consume them. | 9. Behold, the LORD God helps me; who will declare me a sinner? Behold, all of them are like the garment that wears out, that the moth eats. |
| 10. Who among you is God-fearing, who hearkens to the voice of His servant, who went in darkness and who has no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord and lean on his God. | 10. Who among you of those who fear the LORD obeys the voice of His servants the prophets, who perform the Law in distress as a man who walks in the darkness and has no light, trusts in the name of the LORD and relies upon the salvation of his God? |
|  |  |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 49:23-25 + 50:4-10**

**22** **My hand...My standard** A signal to bring the exiles.

**a standard** Perka in O.F., [perche in modern French,] a pole. Comp. (supra 30:17) “And like a flagpole (וְכַנֵּס) on a hill.” It is a signal for gathering, and they place a cloth [a flag] on the end of it.

**in their armpits** Ajjsela [aisela] in O. F., [aisselle in modern French]. Comp. Ezra (Neh. 5:13): “Also I shook out my armpit (חָצְנִי).”

**24** **Shall prey be taken from a mighty warrior** You think that it is impossible to take from Esau those captured from Jacob the righteous one.

**25** **and with your contender** Heb. יְרִיבֵךְ. And with your contender I will contend.

**26** **And those who taunt you I will feed** their flesh to the beasts of the field. The word מוֹנַיִךְ is an expression akin to (Lev. 25:14) “You shall not taunt (אַל תּוֹנוּ).” This denotes taunting with words, those who anger you with their revilings.

**and as with sweet wine** Heb. וְכֶעָסִיס. The sweetness of wine.

**they shall become drunk [from] their blood** So shall those accustomed to drink blood become drunk from their blood. Now who are they? These are the fowl of the heavens. So did Jonathan render this.

**4** **gave me a tongue for teaching** Isaiah was saying, The Lord sent me and gave me a tongue fit to teach, in order to know to establish a time for the faint and thirsty to hear the words of the Holy One, blessed be He.

**to establish times** Heb. לָעוּת. Menahem classified it in the group of (Ps. 119:126) “It is time (עֵת) to do for the Lord.” To establish times for them.

**He awakens my ear** He awakens my ear with His Holy Spirit.

**to hear according to the teachings** According to the custom of the teachings, the truth and that which is proper.

**5** **opened my ear** and let me hear (supra 6:8), “Whom shall I send?” I sent Amos, and they called him ‘pesilus.’ I sent Micah, etc., as is stated in Pesikta of ‘Nachamu nachamu.’

**and I did not rebel** **going on His mission, neither did I turn away backwards, but I said, “Here I am; send me” (ibid.).**

**6** **I gave my back to smiters** He said to me, Isaiah, My children are obstinate; My children are bothersome. [You may go] on the condition that you do not become angry with them. I said to Him, On that condition.

**7** **But the Lord God helps me** if they rise up against me.

**8** **He Who vindicates me is near** The Holy One, blessed be He, is near to me to vindicate me in judgment.

**9** **a moth** Heb. עָשׁ, the worm of the clothing.

**10** **to the voice of His servant** To the voice of the prophets.

**who went in darkness** Even if trouble comes upon him, let him trust in the name of the Lord, for He shall save him.

**Verbal Tallies**

**By: HEm Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David**

**& HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah**

**B’midbar (Numbers) 23:10 – 25:9**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 105:1-6**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 49:23-25 + 50:4-10**

**Mk 12:28-34, Lk 10:25-37, Rm 5:12-16**

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

Jacob - יעקב, Strong’s number 03290.

Done - עשה, Strong’s number 06213.

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

Dust - עפר, Strong’s number 06083.

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

Took / Taken - לקח, Strong’s number 03947.

**Bamidbar (Numbers) 23:10** Who can count the **dust <06083>** of **Jacob <03290>**, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

11 And Balak **said <0559> (8799)** unto Balaam, What hast thou **done <06213> (8804)** unto me? I **took <03947> (8804)** thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 105:5** Remember his marvellous works that he hath **done <06213> (8804)**; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

**Tehillim (Psalms) 105:6** O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of **Jacob <03290>** his chosen.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 49:23** And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the **dust <06083>** of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 49:24** Shall the prey be **taken <03947> (8714)** from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 49:25** But thus **saith <0559> (8804)** the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Seder**  **Num 23:10 – 25:9** | **Psalms**  **Psa 105:1-6** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is 49:23-25 + 50 4-10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **lk;a'** | devour, eat | Num. 23:24 Num. 24:8 Num. 25:2 |  | Isa. 50:9 |
| **~yhil{a/** | GOD | Num. 23:21 Num. 23:27 Num. 24:2 Num. 25:2 |  | Isa. 50:10 |
| **~ai** | though | Num. 24:13 Num. 24:22 |  | Isa. 49:24 |
| **rm;a'** | said, speak | Num. 23:11 Num. 23:13 Num. 23:15 Num. 23:16 Num. 23:17 Num. 23:18 Num. 23:19 Num. 23:23 Num. 23:25 Num. 23:27 Num. 23:29 Num. 23:30 Num. 24:3 Num. 24:10 Num. 24:11 Num. 24:12 Num. 24:15 Num. 24:20 Num. 24:21 Num. 24:23 Num. 25:4 Num. 25:5 |  | Isa. 49:25 |
| **@a;** | anger | Num. 24:10 Num. 25:3 Num. 25:4 |  | Isa. 49:23 |
| **rv,a]** | what, who | Num. 23:12 Num. 23:13 Num. 23:26 Num. 24:4 Num. 24:12 Num. 24:13 Num. 24:14 | Ps. 105:5 | Isa. 49:23 |
| **!Be** | son | Num. 23:18 Num. 23:19 Num. 24:3 Num. 24:15 Num. 24:17 Num. 25:6 Num. 25:7 Num. 25:8 | Ps. 105:6 | Isa. 49:25 |
| **~G"** | also | Num. 24:24 Num. 24:25 |  | Isa. 49:25 |
| **rb'D'** | word | Num. 23:16 |  | Isa. 50:4 |
| **%l;h'** | come, go, walk | Num. 23:13 Num. 23:27 Num. 24:1 Num. 24:14 Num. 24:25 |  | Isa. 50:10 |
| **!he** | behold | Num. 23:24 |  | Isa. 50:9 |
| **[r'z<** | seed | Num. 24:7 | Ps. 105:6 |  |
| **[d'y"** | know, known | Num. 24:16 | Ps. 105:1 | Isa. 49:23 Isa. 50:4 Isa. 50:7 |
| **hwhy** | LORD | Num. 23:12 Num. 23:16 Num. 23:17 Num. 23:21 Num. 23:26 Num. 24:1 Num. 24:6 Num. 24:11 Num. 24:13 Num. 25:3 Num. 25:4 | Ps. 105:1 Ps. 105:3 Ps. 105:4 | Isa. 49:23 Isa. 49:25 Isa. 50:4 Isa. 50:5 Isa. 50:7 Isa. 50:9 Isa. 50:10 |
| **bqo[]y"** | Jacob | Num. 23:10 Num. 23:21 Num. 23:23 Num. 24:5 Num. 24:17 Num. 24:19 | Ps. 105:6 |  |
| **hKo** | here | Num. 23:15 Num. 23:16 |  | Isa. 49:25 |
| **yKi** | nevertheless | Num. 24:22 |  | Isa. 49:25 |
| **lKo** | all, whole, entire, every | Num. 23:13 Num. 23:26 Num. 24:17 Num. 25:4 Num. 25:6 | Ps. 105:2 | Isa. 50:9 |
| **aol** | neither, nor, no | Num. 23:19 Num. 23:20 Num. 23:21 Num. 23:23 Num. 23:25 |  | Isa. 50:5 |
| **ble** | accord, heart | Num. 24:13 | Ps. 105:3 |  |
| **xq;l'** | took, take | Num. 23:11 Num. 23:14 Num. 23:20 Num. 23:27 Num. 23:28 Num. 25:4 Num. 25:7 |  | Isa. 49:24 Isa. 49:25 |
| **ymi** | who | Num. 23:10 Num. 24:9 Num. 24:23 |  | Isa. 50:8 Isa. 50:9 Isa. 50:10 |
| **%l,m,** | king | Num. 23:21 Num. 24:7 |  | Isa. 49:23 |
| **tpeAm** | marvels |  | Ps. 105:5 | Isa. 50:8 |
| **!t;n"** | give, given | Num. 24:13 |  | Isa. 50:4 Isa. 50:6 |
| **db,[,** | servant |  | Ps. 105:6 | Isa. 50:10 |
| **l[;** | beside | Num. 23:15 Num. 23:17 Num. 23:28 Num. 24:6 |  | Isa. 50:7 |
| **rp'['** | dust | Num. 23:10 |  | Isa. 49:23 |
| **hP,** | mouth | Num. 23:12 Num. 23:16 Num. 24:13 | Ps. 105:5 |  |
| **~ynIP'** | overlooks, face | Num. 23:28 Num. 24:1 | Ps. 105:4 | Isa. 50:6 Isa. 50:7 |
| **ar'q'** | called | Num. 24:10 Num. 25:2 | Ps. 105:1 |  |
| **bArq'** | near | Num. 24:17 |  | Isa. 50:8 |
| **~Wf** | puts | Num. 23:12 Num. 23:16 Num. 24:21 Num. 24:23 |  | Isa. 50:7 |
| **hx'v'** | down | Num. 25:2 |  | Isa. 49:23 |
| **~ve** | name |  | Ps. 105:1 Ps. 105:3 | Isa. 50:10 |
| **[m;v'** | hear | Num. 23:18 Num. 24:4 Num. 24:16 |  | Isa. 50:4 Isa. 50:10 |
| **~[;** | people | Num. 23:24 Num. 24:14 Num. 25:1 Num. 25:2 Num. 25:4 | Ps. 105:1 |  |
| **hf'['** | do, did, done, make | Num. 23:11 Num. 23:19 Num. 23:26 Num. 23:30 Num. 24:13 Num. 24:14 Num. 24:18 | Ps. 105:5 |  |
| **ybiv.** | captive | Num. 24:22 |  | Isa. 49:24 Isa. 49:25 |

**Greek:**

| **Greek** | **English** | **Torah Seder**  **Num 23:10 – 25:9** | **Psalms**  **Ps 105:1-6** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is 49:23-25 + 50 4-10** | **Peshat**  **Mk/Jude/Pet**  **Mk 12:28-34** | **Remes 1**  **Luke**  **Lk 10:25-37** | **Remes 2**  **Acts/Romans**  **Rm 5:12-16** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ἀγαπάω** | you shall love |  |  |  | Mk. 12:30 Mk. 12:31 Mk. 12:33 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **ἀκούω** | heard, hear | Num. 23:18 Num. 24:4 Num. 24:16 |  | Isa. 50:4 Isa. 50:10 | Mk. 12:28 Mk. 12:29 |  |  |
| **ἄνθρωπος** | man, men | Num 23:19  Num 24:3 Num 24:7  Num 24:15  Num 24:17 Num 25:6 Num 25:8 |  |  |  | Lk. 10:30 | Rom. 5:12 Rom. 5:15 |
| **ἀνίστημι** | raise up,  rose up | Num 23:18 Num 23:24 Num 24:9  Num 24:17  Num 24:25 |  |  |  | Lk. 10:25 |  |
| **ἀπέρχομαι** | went forth | Num 24:25 |  |  |  | Lk. 10:30 |  |
| **ἀποθνήσκω** | die | Num 23:10 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 5:15 |
| **ἀποκρίνομαι** | answer | Num 23:26 |  |  | Mk. 12:28 Mk. 12:29 Mk. 12:34 | Lk. 10:27 Lk. 10:28 |  |
| **βασιλεία** | kingdom | Num 24:7 |  |  | Mk. 12:34 |  |  |
| **διάνοια** | mind |  |  |  | Mk. 12:30 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **διδάσκαλος** | teacher |  |  |  | Mk. 12:32 | Lk. 10:25 |  |
| **δίδωμι** | give, given | Num. 24:13 |  | Isa. 50:4 Isa. 50:6 |  | Lk. 10:35 |  |
| **δικαιόω** | justice, justify |  |  | Isa 50:8 |  | Lk. 10:29 |  |
| **εἰσέρχομαι** | enter | Num 25:8 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 5:12 |
| **ἐπερωτάω** | ask | Num 23:15 |  |  | Mk. 12:28 Mk. 12:34 |  |  |
| **ἔρχομαι** | came, come | Num 25:6 |  |  | Mk. 12:30 Mk. 12:31 Mk. 12:33 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **ζάω** | living | Num 24:23 |  |  | Mk. 12:30 Mk. 12:31 Mk. 12:33 Lk. 10:27 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **θεός** | GOD | Num. 23:21 Num. 23:27 Num. 24:2 Num. 25:2 |  | Isa. 50:10 | Mk. 12:29 Mk. 12:30 Mk. 12:34 | Lk. 10:27 | Rom. 5:15 |
| **θυσία** | sacrifice | Num 23:15 Num 25:2 |  |  | Mk. 12:33 |  |  |
| **ἱερεύς** | priest | Num 25:7 |  |  |  | Lk. 10:31 |  |
| **Ἰησοῦς** | Jesus |  |  |  | Mk. 12:29 Mk. 12:34 | Lk. 10:29 Lk. 10:30 Lk. 10:37 | Rom. 5:15 |
| **ἰσχύς** | strength |  |  |  | Mk. 12:30 Mk. 12:33 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **καρδία** | heart |  | Psa105:3 |  | Mk. 12:30 Mk. 12:33 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **κρίμα** | decree |  | Psa 105:5 |  |  |  | Rom. 5:16 |
| **κύριος** | LORD | Num. 23:12 Num. 23:16 Num. 23:17 Num. 23:21 Num. 23:26 Num. 24:1 Num. 24:6 Num. 24:11 Num. 24:13 Num. 25:3 Num. 25:4 | Ps. 105:1 Ps. 105:3 Ps. 105:4 | Isa. 49:23 Isa. 49:25 Isa. 50:4 Isa. 50:5 Isa. 50:7 Isa. 50:9 Isa. 50:10 | Mk. 12:29 Mk. 12:30 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **λέγω** | say | Num 23:26  Num 24:12 |  | Isa 49:25 | Mk. 12:29 Mk. 12:30 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **μέγας** | great |  |  |  | Mk. 12:29 Mk. 12:30 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **νόμος** | law |  |  |  | Mk. 12:29 Mk. 12:30 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **ὅλος** | whole, entire |  |  |  | Mk. 12:30 Mk. 12:33 | Lk. 10:27 |  |
| **ὁράω** | seeing, look | Num 23:13 Num 23:21 Num 24:3  Num 24:15 |  |  | Mk. 12:28 Mk. 12:34 | Lk. 10:31 Lk. 10:32 Lk. 10:33 |  |
| **πᾶς** | all, whole, entire | Num. 23:13 Num. 23:26 Num. 24:17 Num. 25:4 Num. 25:6 | Ps. 105:2 | Isa. 50:9 | Mk. 12:34 |  |  |
| **πληγή** | calamity | Num 25:8 Num 25:9 |  |  |  | Lk. 10:30 |  |
| **πλησίον** | neighbor |  |  |  | Mk. 12:31 Mk. 12:33 | Lk. 10:27 Lk. 10:29 Lk. 10:36 |  |
| **ποιέω** | did, do, done | Num. 23:11 Num. 23:19 Num. 23:26 Num. 23:30 Num. 24:13 Num. 24:14 Num. 24:18 | Ps. 105:5 |  |  | Lk. 10:25 Lk. 10:28 Lk. 10:37 |  |
| **πορεύομαι** | go, gone | Num 23:15 Num 24:1 |  | Isa 50:10 |  | Lk. 10:37 |  |
| **προσέρχομαι** | came near |  |  |  | Mk. 12:28 | Lk. 10:34 |  |
| **ψυχή** | soul |  |  |  | Mk. 12:30 | Lk. 10:27 |  |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of “B’Midbar?” (Num.) “23:10 — 25:9”**

**“Mi Mana A’afar” “Who can count the dust”**

**By: H. Em Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham &**

**H. Em. Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Tosefta**  **Luqas (LK)**  Mishnah **א:א** | **School of Hakham Tsefet’s Peshat**  **Mordechai (Mk)**  Mishnah **א:א** |
| **And behold, a certain halakhic expert stood up to test[[26]](#footnote-26) him, saying, “Rabbi, what must I do so that I will merit life in the Olam HaBa?” And he said to him, “What is written in the Torah? How do you interpret[[27]](#footnote-27)** it?” **And he answered** and **said, “You will love the LORD your God from all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.” But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Yeshua, “And who is my neighbor?” And Yeshua replied** and **said, “A certain man was going down from Yerushalayim** (Jerusalem) **to Yericho**  (Jericho)**, and fell into the hands of robbers, who both stripped him and beat** him**.** After **inflicting blows on** him**, they went away, leaving** him **half dead. Now by coincidence a certain priest was going down on that road, and** when he **saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. And in the same way also a Levite,** when he **came down to the place and saw** him**, passed by on the opposite side. But a certain man of Shomron** (Samaritan) **who was traveling came up to him and,** when he **saw** him**, had compassion. And he came up** and **bandaged his wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine, and he put him on his own animal** and **brought him to an inn and took care of him. And on the next day, he took out two denarii** and **gave** them **to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him, and whatever you spend in addition, I will repay to you when I return. Which of these three do you suppose became a neighbor of the man who fell among the robbers?” So he said, “The one who showed chesed to him.” And Yeshua said to him, “You go and do likewise.”** | **And one of the Soferim** of the Pharisees **approached him** (Yeshua) **hearing them** (Yeshua and his talmidim) **studying** (Heb. Drash), **knowing** (seeing) **that he** (Yeshua) **taught them well** with chokhmah, **asked him, which is the chief** (Heb. Rosh) **mitzvah of all? And Yeshua answered him, The chief** (Heb. Rosh) **mitzvah of all is: *“Hear, Israel. The LORD our God is one LORD,******And you will love the LORD, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your means.*”** (Deut. 6:4, 5) **This is the chief** (Heb. Rosh) **mitzvah.** **And the second is like this, *“You will neither take revenge from nor bear a grudge against the members of your people; you will love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”*** (Lev. 19:18 ) **There is not another mitzvah greater than these** two. **And the Sofer said to him, You are right Rabbi** (Hakham). **In truth you have said, "*that God is one,*"** Deut. 6:4, 5 **and "*You have been shown, in order to know that the LORD He is God;*** *and* ***there is none else besides Him.*"** (Deut. 4:35) **“*And you will love the LORD, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your means.*”** (Deut. 6:4, 5) **"*You will neither take revenge from nor bear a grudge against the members of your people; you will love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.*"** (Lev. 19:18)" as Hosea said, **“*For I desire loving-kindness, and not sacrifices, and knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*”** (Hos. 6:6) **And seeing that he** (the Sofer) **answered wisely** because he was a Hakham, **Yeshua said to him, You are not far from** but near to (part of)[[28]](#footnote-28) **the** dynamic **governance of God. And no one was bold enough to question him anymore.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Remes**  **Romans**  Mishnah **א:א** |
| **Sin entered into the cosmos through Adam HaRishon[[29]](#footnote-29)** (one man, i.e. the first man)**, and because of this death** (entered) **through sin,[[30]](#footnote-30) so also death spread to all people because all sinned. For until the** written **Torah was given** (at Har Sinai)**, sin existed in the world, but no one was charged with violation of the** written **Torah, because the Torah had not been given in a written form. Yet death reigned from Adam** (HaRishon) **until Moshe even over those who did not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam** (HaRishon), **who is an allegory of the coming one.** **But the gift** (Natan HaTorah – of the Torah) **is not like the trespass, for if by the trespass of the one, the many died, by** how **much more did the loving-kindness of God and the gift** (of the Torah) **by the loving-kindness of the Adam Kadmon** (one man)**,[[31]](#footnote-31) Yeshua HaMashiach, multiply** it **to the many.[[32]](#footnote-32) And the gift** (of the Torah) is **not as through the one who sinned, for on the one hand, judgment from the one** sin led **to condemnation, but the gift** (of the Torah)**, apart from many trespasses, leads to justice.** |

**Nazarean Codicil to be read in conjunction with the following Torah Seder**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Num 23:10 – 25:9 | Ps 105:1-6 | Is 49:23-25 + 50:4-10 | Mk 12:28-34 | Lk 10:25-37 | Rm 5:12-16 |

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

**And one of the Soferim** of the Pharisees **approached him** (Yeshua)

Hakham Tsefet’s pericope masterfully weaves its way through the Torah with great alacrity and genius. What we find amazing and appalling is the great amount of defunct scholarship, which has not yet learned to apply hermeneutic to text for commentary of translation.

*A Scribe, apparently without the usual prejudices of his class, and impressed by his answer to the Sadducees, approaches Jesus with an honest question as to the first of the commandments of the Law.[[33]](#footnote-33)*

Gould’s prejudice reeks of anti-Semitic manure. Not only does Gould not apply any hermeneutic to the text, he allows anti-Semitic prejudice to permeate his comments here. While opinions are opinions, the depth of anti-Semitic prejudice, which permeates these commentaries, is intolerable.

What Gould fails to comprehend is that Yeshua and the “Sofer” (Scribe) are most likely from the same school of thought, i.e. the School of Hillel. While it is not impossible for the Sofer to be from the School of Shammai, it is most improbable. Here we base our thoughts on the fact that the “Golden rule” and logic of the Shema’s position within the Mishnah give preeminence to the School of Hillel.[[34]](#footnote-34)

**b. ﻿Shab. 31a** On another occasion it happened that a certain heathen came before Shammai and said to him, Make me a proselyte, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot. Thereupon he repulsed him with the builder's cubit, which was in his hand.[[35]](#footnote-35) When he went before Hillel, he said to him, “What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbour: [[36]](#footnote-36) that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof; go and learn it.”

While it is possible to have derived a different conclusion, we can surmise that the “Sofer” is from the School of Hillel. Yeshua’s logic is married to the logic of the School of Hillel. Because the “Sofer” and Yeshua harmonize in thought and halakha, we have derived that the Sofer is one of the P’rushim and that he is most likely from the School of Hillel as is Yeshua. We will further this idea later on in the interpretation.

**Hearing and the Shema**

**Hearing them** (Yeshua and his talmidim) **studying** (Heb. Drash)**,** “**akousas autōn suzētountōn” συζητέω** (and συνζητέω) impf. **συνεζήτουν**; (1) *inquire together, discuss, question* (MK 9.10); (2) in a negative sense *dispute, debate, argue with* (AC 6.9)[[37]](#footnote-37)

*“a discussion in the course of which disputants persistently advocate/sponsor a particular point of view, dispute, discussion.” [[38]](#footnote-38)*

Timothy & Barbara Freiburg note that the same word is used in Mark 9:10.

**Mark 9:10-11** And they kept (guarded and held) his saying to themselves, and they discussed (*drash*) with one another the rising from the dead would mean. And they inquired (*drash*) of Him, saying, Why do the scribes (*most likely the “scribes of the Prushim*)[[39]](#footnote-39) say it is necessary for Eliyahu come first?

Consequently, the most logical Hebrew parallel for this words as used in this context is “**Drash**.”

However, we can derive deeper insights from this pericope. The pericope gives the distinct pleasure of seeing the teaching technique of Yeshua. We have translated the Greek phrase “*akousas autōn suzētountōn*” “hearing them (Yeshua and his talmidim) studying (drash).” It is clear from the Greek Lexical information that “*suzētountōn*” demonstrates a Socratic teaching style. In other words, Yeshua used the Socratic method of questioning the talmidim as his teaching style. This teaching style is engaging rather than perorate. By engaging the mind of his talmidim, Yeshua could teach them to think and **drash** for themselves. This line of reasoning and teaching would have required Yeshua to prepare questions that force his talmidim to reach deeply into their mind for answers based on prior teachings. The cited passage demonstrates that Yeshua must have consistently used the Socratic method of teaching. The talmidim question, “Why do the scribes (most likely the “scribes of the P’rushim) say it is necessary for Eliyahu come first”? This also intimates that Yeshua promoted learning the teachings of the Soferim. This would mean the writings and teachings of the Soferim (of the P’rushim) were in harmony with Yeshua on a much grander scale than previously understood. What is further revealed is that Yeshua must have used this system regularly as a teaching method. “And they inquired (**drash**) of Him” is not a simple question with a simple answer. The drash is that of exchange and deliberation.

Of course, this all begs a question. What was Yeshua teaching his talmidim when the Sofer became so intrigued? While a great deal of conjecture would be required to elaborate on such a question, we may be able to put together the partial pieces of what Yeshua was teaching.

Materials associated with this pericope[[40]](#footnote-40) dealt with the inability to properly discern, know and interpret the scriptures. Therefore, we would conclude that Yeshua was potentially teaching “Corral Hermeneutics,” (the end is in the beginning and the beginning is in the end) or something in line with the “dynamic power of G-d.” By saying that Yeshua **could** have been teaching along the lines of the dynamic power of G-d we are purporting that Yeshua was teaching the positive mitzvothhh as acts of building the world. This sits well with the fourth pericope of Mark that we have cited so many times.[[41]](#footnote-41) That pericope deals with the governance of G-d as it would soon be established in the future through the rabbinical system. This concept fits well with the present pericope as well. To be more succinct it would appear that Yeshua was teaching the Dynamic (positive) mitzvothhh. This would naturally have caused the Sofer, on overhearing the teaching of Hokhmah to put forward his question.

**Seeing or knowing**

“*Eidōs*”- **knowing** (seeing) **that he** (Yeshua) **taught them well** with Hokhmah

We can only begin to imagine what it must have been like to listen to the lectures and discourse of Yeshua. Here we see (know understand) that he taught with wisdom. Mordechai has repeatedly taught us that Yeshua taught with wisdom and authority. We have seen in the past how Yeshua demonstrated that the Tz’dukim failed in their logic because they could not “see,” perceive or understand at a prophetic level. Here the Sofer has the ability to “Ra’ah” “see” through prophetic eyes. This statement is overwhelmingly important as it offers a bridge unto the So’od level of hermeneutics.

The Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature Third Edition, (BDAG) defines εἰδὼς as… “to be intimately acquainted with or stand in a close relation to, know”

Therefore, we should read…

KNOWING [being intimately acquainted with and stand in close relation to, knowing”] (SEEING) THAT HE (YESHUA) **TAUGHT THEM WELL** [WITH HOKHMAH]

The Sofer was intimately acquainted with teachings of Yeshua? If so how could this be? The six entries of “*oida*” in the Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature Third Edition, (BDAG) further our understanding of what the Sofer “saw.”

1. to have information about, know
2. to be intimately acquainted with or stand in a close relation to, know
3. to know/understand how, can, be able
4. to grasp the meaning of something understand, recognize, come to know, experience
5. to remember, recollect, recall, be aware of
6. to recognize merit, respect, honor

Each entry could bear a great deal of commentary. The key point here is that Yeshua and the Sofer were of the same mind concerning what Yeshua taught. Here again, we would postulate that Yeshua and the Sofer belonged to the same Pharisaic School of Hillel. This would explain all the possible entries noted above concerning, the Sofer’s “knowing” (seeing).

Sabin translates this εἷς τῶν γραμματέων (*eis tōn grammateōn*) to mean “some of the Scribes.” The Greek word *eis* can be translated as “some.” Strong’s exhaustive concordance cites six times that the word *eis* is translated as “some.” Though the primary meaning of *eis*, is “one” the possibility of Sabin’s translation is intriguing. The best possible explanation would be that “some of the Soferim” approached Yeshua. Upon hearing (knowing) that Yeshua taught with Hokhmah, “one” of the Soferim that had gathered, ventured the question concerning the mitzvothhh. Therefore, rather than having “one” Sofer” which agreed with Yeshua we would have a number of Soferim in agreement with Yeshua. They could also possibly be from the School of Hillel. If there is any plausibility to the thought that the Soferim were in agreement with Yeshua and from the School of Hillel, we must re-interpret Yeshua’s interaction with the Soferim and P’rushim. Here we might also postulate that the Soferim were a part of the audience being taught along with his talmidim. From this, the Soferim knew that Yeshua taught with Hokhmah.

**Shema as a Mitzvah**

**The chief** (Heb. Rosh) **mitzvah of all is: “Hear, Israel. The LORD our God is one LORD,**

A superficial look at our pericope causes one to ask another question. What mitzvah is Yeshua really talking about? The only reason we present this question is that some parties do not have a clue, which Mitzvah Yeshua could be discussing with the Sofer of our pericope.

The Tetragrammaton is rooted in the idea that HaShem is the self-existent ONE. HaShem is the only self-extent ONE. No other creature, person or thing is self-existent. HaShem alone is the cause and reason for all things. He is the ONE who produced all existence without partnership or equal.[[42]](#footnote-42)

This mitzvah is a positive (dynamic) mitzvah. The mitzvah declares that we will believe in the ONE G-d and verbally announce that belief in the form of the K’riat Shema. From this material and the contiguity of the idea of the “dynamic power of G-d,[[43]](#footnote-43) it is from this that I have deduced the plausibility that Yeshua was teaching his talmidim the positive mitzvothhh when the Sofer overheard the teaching. This would fit the genre of the “Governance of G-d” through the positive mitzvothhh. A key point made concerning the Shema is that it is the acceptance of the “Yoke of the Kingdom” (Governance of G-d).

**m. Ber. 2:2** Said R. Joshua b. Qorha, “Why does [the passage of] Shema ﻿precede [that of] And it will come to pass [if you keep my commandments]? “So that one may first accept upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of heaven and afterwards may accept the yoke of the commandments.

Accepting the “Yoke of the Kingdom” is the acceptance of the dynamic Governance of G-d. Not only does the observance of the dynamic mitzvothhh connect us with G-d, the observance of the dynamic mitzvothhh rebuilds the word (tikkun ha-olam). As noted above, this was the special message of the School of Hillel. It is profound to note that this is a parallel thought to the Governance of G-d as taught by Yeshua and his talmidim.

In our reading of the Decalogue we note that the Decalogue not only introduces the Torah as a whole, or, all of the mitzvothhh can be found in the opening statement “I am the LORD your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage﻿.”﻿ In this concise statement, G-d summarily invests a single statement with all the 613 mitzvothhh. However, it logically leads to the “chief [Heb. Rosh] mitzvah of all,” the Shema. G-d establishes His sovereign identity as the Absolute, Eternal self-existent ONE. He furthers His omnipotence to tell us that He is our Redeemer.

Consequently, the G-d gives us the Torah as a means of His Chesed. The loving-kindness of G-d gave us the mediator of the Torah. The Jewish soul never faces G-d without the mediator of the Torah.[[44]](#footnote-44) Threshing this concept effusively causes us to see the splendour of the Torah given by G-d. We can further establish that G-d chose Yisrael to be a nation invested with the Torah. This week’s pericope of Mordechai connects to the Torah Seder in a special way. Both Hakham Tsefet and Balaam attribute Yisrael with being **the chosen people of G-d.** Balaam does this through his prophecy in which he “sees” Yisrael and the Messiah as G-d’s chosen people. Hakham Tsefet “sees” Yisrael as being the chosen people of G-d by his proclamation of the Shema as the “chief [Heb. Rosh] mitzvah of all.”

There are other affirmations of the Shema. However, any emendation to the Shema nullifies it as the Shema and the “chief [Heb. Rosh] mitzvah of all.” The Shema means ONE G-d and ONE Torah. All other emendations are annulments of the Shema and the Torah. Because there is ONE G-d and His Torah is ONE we must read and understand that the Shema declares that, the imperative of G-d is unconditional. The Torah, which records the Shema, is the universal statement of truth. No other truth exists outside of the Torah. By the Torah G-d created the universe. Consequently, the Shema as the chief [Heb. Rosh] mitzvah of all, teaches us that man is subject to an absolute ethical and monotheistic imperative. Perhaps we could state that because “G-d is ONE, truth (Torah) is one.

**When a Question is not a Question**

**And one of the Soferim** of the Pharisees **approached him** (Yeshua) **… asked him, which is the chief** (Heb. Rosh) **mitzvah of all?**

Above I have suggested that it is plausible to believe that the Sofer or Soferim were from the School of Hillel. While this bears further research, I see another fascinating point. The Sofer or Soferim were listening to the lesson of chokhmah taught by Yeshua with admiration.

Hakham Tsefet’s speech unveils his intention. He shows the Sofer or Soferim in a positive light. The language of the text suggests another interesting observation. It would appear, at least superficially, that the Sofer or Soferim are actually a part of the lesson.

*“a discussion in the course of which disputants persistently advocate/sponsor a particular point of view, dispute, discussion.” [[45]](#footnote-45)*

In the process of συνζητέω — *suzētountōn,* *Drash* questions are often posited which cause the discussion to move in a particular direction. This can be for several reasons, such as, a talmid wanting further elucidation on a particular thought, or simply because the talmid already knows, but wants the teacher to elucidate on behalf of the other talmidim. Here we opine that the latter is possible in the present case. The Sofer asks a question that he already has the answer to for the sake of the talmidim and audience rather than needing personal elucidation.

**And seeing that he** (the Sofer) **answered wisely** because he was a Hakham**,**

It is also possible that the Sofer, a Hakham was present with some of his own talmidim. And, for the benefit of his talmidim he asks the question. He may have already taught his talmidim this lesson and wants Yeshua to reiterate what he has taught. I realize that there is plenty of room for conjecture here and I have conjectured a fair amount. Nonetheless, I have said nothing outside of the realm of the plausible and normative.

As is usual we always want to know, what is Hakham Tsefet trying to say in this pericope? In a matter of speaking this is a busy Torah Seder and pericope. In short, we can see that Hakham Tsefet is trying to establish a couple of important thoughts.

1. Yeshua was NOT in discord with all the Soferim. He was only in discord with the School of Shammai and those Soferim who were legitimately “painted ones.”

Yeshua and the Sofer or Soferim have more in common than most Bible scholars have admitted. It would be a worthwhile study to plumb the depths of the parallel teachings of the P’rushim and Yeshua

1. Hakham Tsefet is trying to reiterate the core principle of Judaism, which is the Unity and Oneness of HaShem

The chief [Heb. Rosh] mitzvah of all is the Shema or “Unity of G-d.” This is the central theme of monotheism. Judaism does not fall under the category of henotheism, and Jews can never be accused of henotheistic practices.

1. By means of contiguity, Hakham Tsefet is trying to teach us the beauty of having a Hakham as a Torah teacher with its great reward.

The proximity of this pericope to the previous one where Yeshua is dealing with problems of poor teaching and learning skills shows the reader just how powerful a positive interaction with a real Hakham can be.

**Commentary to Hakham Shaul’s School of Remes**

**Introduction and setting**

Hakham Shaul is addressing Gentiles who lack the mental discernment of our Father Abraham. Therefore, they must be made aware of the Oral Torah (Mesorah) and the Written Torah. Furthermore, they must be made aware of the consequences for not adhering to both.

In this commentary, we will discuss…

1. The result of Adam’s sin introduced death on a cosmic level
2. The Oral Torah is the cosmic DNA of creation
   1. Therefore, all men are judged and accountable to the Oral Torah
3. Adam HaRishon is the antithesis of Adam Kadmon
4. It is the “gift” of the Torah, both Oral and Written that frees humanity from condemnation
5. It is the loving-kindness of G-d, as expressed through Adam Kadmon brings justice
6. It is through faithful obedience to the Torah that men are deemed just (a Tsaddiq) in G-d’s court
7. The seminal effect of Peshat on the subsequent levels of hermeneutics

**Theme or Key thought:**

A case for the importance of the Oral Torah

It is the general assessment of the Christian majority, be they Protestant or Catholic that man does not have the capacity to “please” G-d. Here we must vehemently object. And, we will use the Nazarean Codicil as “case law” to supplant their ideas.

**Luqas (Luke) 1:5-6 And now it happened in the days of Herod, king of Y’hudah, that there was a Kohen** (priest) **named Z’kharyah, of the** (priestly) **division of Aviyah.[[46]](#footnote-46) And he had a wife from the daughters of Aharon, and her name was Elisheba.[[47]](#footnote-47) And they were both righteous/generous before God, walking blamelessly** (sinless) **in all the mitzvoth** (commandments) **and statutes[[48]](#footnote-48) of the LORD.**

If adjectives like “blameless,” “sinless” and “righteous/generous” are not pleasing before G-d, humanity has no hope whatsoever at all. However, because this Biblical husband and wife show the normal ability to keep ALL of the (applicable) mitzvoth, (commandments) we can come to an understanding that Torah observance does in fact establish favor with G-d. Therefore, we must assert that G-d loves roses[[49]](#footnote-49) more than tulips![[50]](#footnote-50)

**Sin entered the cosmos and the Cosmic Torah**

Hakham Shaul’s pericope to the Romans is not a narrative about sin. The narrative of Hakham Shaul follows and maintains continuity of his explanation for the need of halakhah, or a halakhic cosmos. The “beginning” of the Jewish people told in Sefer B’resheet (Genesis) reveals the halakhic nature of their history at the onset of the narrative. In the beginning, “Elohim” bespeaks judgment, justice and judicial activity.[[51]](#footnote-51) The activity of the Ruach Ha-Elohim (v.2) shows a direct legal environment is determined. This shows us that “creation” of a legal cosmos is the direct purpose of G-d (Elohim – the supreme Judge). Therefore, creation’s environment is halakhic. The unfolding narrative of creation is told and depicted as a systematic development of “legal halakhah.” This causes us to understand that the Cosmos is an Oral Torah. Study of the Oral Torah will show its systematic process and development.

The Nazarean Codicil, subordinate to the Torah does not simply re-tell the Torah’s story. It “re-tells” the story in terms of the role of Messiah and his judicial agenda in the earth. The Nazarean Codicil as a Mesorah conveys the story in its principal legal parts, not as a single, continuous narrative. In this manner it is the same as the Torah. While certain “narrative” parts do tell a story, the agenda is halakhic and Theocentric. Messiah as the agent of G-d (HaShem) works to create a theocratic society. And, a Theocratic society is never without halakhah. The “gift” and “loving-kindness of G-d” is the life of Messiah told in halakhic terms. However, the gift and loving-kindness of G-d in the present pericope is directly related to the Oral and Written Torah. The written Torah comes at an age when men cannot be trusted to live by the Cosmic Torah. Therefore, the Written Torah, as a gift is the undergirding of the Oral Torah. It is therefore necessary for Messiah and his agents to work towards the establishment of this Theocracy. In the coming age, Y’mot HaMashiach we will live by these theocratic mores.

B’resheet 1-3 teaches us about the sin of Adam HaRishon. Sin entered the cosmos through the sin of one man. The opening of B’resheet shows us that the cosmos must be tied to halakhah. Furthermore, as we have stated, B’resheet 1:1-5 shows the inevitable fall of Adam HaRishon.[[52]](#footnote-52) Careful examination of the B’resheet narrative reveals its legal and covenantal nature. The talmidim of Abraham were in their own right men of monumental genius. Abraham is said to have logically deduced that there can be only one G-d. Therefore, we opine that those who were Torah Scholars under his tutelage must have been men who were equally brilliant.

The brilliance of the Nazarean Hakhamim is that they established a halakhic structure that integrated the life of Messiah in conjunction with the liturgy of the Torah Sedarim. However, their genius was in telling this tale in a halakhic, semi-haggadic and distinctively traditional format. Torah and Mesorah are woven together as one fabric. When looking at the fabric is seems impossible to discern where one begins and the other disappears. In one sense, we desire to know and learn the Torah. Yet, on the other hand, we need to know how this fits into the establishment of a theocratic society. The Nazarean Rabbanim were not concerned with “theory.” They realized that the execution of the mitzvoth in the social order of an entire society is what really matters.

Here we again turn to Remes/Allegorical Mysticism. The secrets of the Nazarean Rabbanim are interwoven with bits of Halakhic, Haggadic, Midrashic and So’odic pieces. The genius of presenting their material in such fashion makes it possible to convey more material than would otherwise be possible. The narrative only functions as a carrier for the cosmic message of the Torah in Messianic dress.

The seminal statement of the Nazarean Codicil found in the Peshat writings of Hakham Tsefet reads…

**Mordechai** (Mk.) **א ¶ The chief part** (Resheet) **of the Masorah** (Tradition/Oral Law) **is Yeshua ‎Ha-Messiah, the Son of God** (i.e. Ben Elohim = the King/Judge)**; ‎as it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send My messenger** (Agent) **before your face** (into your presence)**, which will ‎prepare your way** (Hebrew: Derekh/Halakha) **before you”** (Exodus 23:30; & Malachi 3:1).

It is clearly abundant that Hakham Tsefet wants his readers to connect with Sefer B’resheet. However, if we peer into this passage deeply and long enough the seminal So’odic secret begins to surface. A cosmic secret (So’od) and plan unfolds from a “simple” Peshat text. We can better understand this if we appeal to Rashi’s comments to B’resheet 1:1…

‎‎**בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא‎ IN THE BEGINNING ‎GOD CREATED** — This verse calls aloud ‎for explanation in the manner that our ‎Rabbis explained it: **God created the world ‎for the sake of the Torah which is called ‎‎(Prov. 8:22) "The beginning (‎רֵאשִׁית ‎ -Resheet) of ‎His** (God's) **way"**, and for the sake of ‎Israel who are called (Jer. II. 3) "The ‎beginning **(‎רֵאשִׁית ‎ -Resheet)** of His (G-d's) increase". ‎‎[The Rabbis translated thus: For the sake ‎of (‎**בּ**‎) the Torah and Israel which bear the ‎name of **‎רֵאשִׁית ‎ -Resheet** G-d created the heavens ‎and the earth.”‎[[53]](#footnote-53)

Hakham Shaul following the words of his master Hakham Tsefet, connects with the same Proverb showing us that “**God created the cosmos ‎for the sake of the Torah which is called ‎‎(Prov. 8:22) “The beginning (‎רֵאשִׁית ‎ -Resheet) of ‎His (God's) way.”** Or, that the Torah was the instrument, “workman” of creation. However, Hakham Shaul’s “Torah” is alive.[[54]](#footnote-54) Furthermore, the legal universe makes it impossible for a man to say that he is without sin. In order for sin to exist, per se there must be a definition of what equates to sin. This is readily and systematically found in the Mesorah. **However, the “revelation” of sin in the Toroth is not for the sake of condemnation!** This misnomer commonly held among Christians in the greatest lie ever fabricated. The revelation of sin from the Toroth is for the sake of bringing humankind close to G-d and or returning to G-d. The revelation of sin is making one aware of obstacles that hinder one’s relationship with G-d.

**GENESIS RABBAH 1:1.1-2** **“Then I was beside him like a little child, and I was daily his delight** rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world, and delighting in the sons of men” (Prov. 8:30-31).

Hakham Tsefet by way of contiguity[[55]](#footnote-55) reflects on B’resheet and further elucidates his revelation of the Mesorah, Messiah and “Way of HaShem.”

Mordechai (Mk.) **א And now it happened in those days,[[56]](#footnote-56) Yeshua came from the** city of **Branches**[[57]](#footnote-57) **of the Galil and was immersed by Yochanan in the Yarden. And immediately coming out of the water[[58]](#footnote-58) he saw the heavens torn apart and the spirit** (ruach - breath) **descending on him like a dove. And a** daughter of a **voice** (bat kol) **came from the heavens** saying, **“You are my son, the beloved; with you I have delight[[59]](#footnote-59).”**

Again, Hakham Shaul interpreting Hakham Tsefet’s secret, sees Messiah (Adam Kadmon) as “R’sheet” as he was taught by Hakham Tsefet. Hakham Tsefet takes us back to Gan Eden with his “Bat Kol.” The Hebrew word **“Eden”** means, **“Delight.”** Now we have extended Peshat to Remes and reached the limit of allegorical hermeneutics. If we are to understand the intent of Hakham Tsefet beyond this point, we must turn to Drash and So’odic interpretive keys, all of which are Oral, never to be written down. However, Hakham Shaul’s awareness of Hakham Tsefet’s teachings makes it abundantly clear that there was a Cosmic Torah before there was a “Written Torah” and that both of them are in fact the “Gift of G-d!”

This also confirms the thesis that we have posited concerning the Peshat texts of Hakham Tsefet being the deepest mystical (secret) in all of the Nazarean Codicil. Hakham Shaul is able to take the Peshat text of Hakham Tsefet and derive deep secret (Remes mystical) content therein. This can only happen in Remes when there is seminal Peshat. However, we have learned from our Masters that the opening pericopes of B’resheet are not to be taken as literal. This intimates that the beginning pericopes of B’resheet are So’odic materials. The exact point of demarcation where B’resheet departs from being strictly So’od is somewhere near the end of the 3rd or 4th chapter. This being said the line is somewhat evasive because the text gradually leans and lends itself to Peshat understanding. We here posit the thesis that Hakham Tsefet has followed the same principles. His opening pericopes lend themselves to a more So’odic interpretation than the latter chapters. This is the hermeneutic principle of the end being wedged in the beginning.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Hakham Shaul’s present pericope takes all of these things into his comments and then shows us a very important principle if we are able to see it. That principle as stated above is that the end is contained in the beginning. His pericope shows that humanity began with the Cosmic Oral Torah as a guide for humanity. The evolution of the Torah will return to its seminal beginning where the Oral Torah is the cosmic Nomos. Mittleman lays out his understanding of this idea by saying…

The Torah, as a normative order, a nomos, is the plan of the cosmos. Therefore, Torah study is not simply the study of a peculiar positive nomos-cum-narrative, but is the inner truth of the world as such. A premise such as this informs Aboth as well. Torah is more than story and law; it is the inner pulse of reality.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Therefore, we inhabit a “*nomos* – a normative universe.” Torah is not only a “system of rules” but rather becomes the structure of the world in which we live. G-d can demand justice because justice is the foundation of the cosmic Torah. The Torah is the fabric and infrastructure of all life. As such, the present world is structured by the *nomos* of the Torah; as we have stated in our Peshat commentary, G-d’s law is maintained by dynamic Torah observance. If we violate that structure and order, we damage the fabric of the universe. When we conform to the dynamic normative *nomos* of Torah, we build the universe or repair the damage caused by sin. If we are to understand the world in which we live, we must study its *nomos*, Torah. Of course, this develops into a bifurcate approach to Torah, static and dynamic. Herein, legal hermeneutics becomes the fundamental contrivance for life’s directive. As such, each mitzvah is an opportunity to build or destroy the world. The positive mitzvoth (commandments) demonstrate our devotion to G-d along with our determination to collaborate with Him in the creative and reparative process. “The performance of a mitzvah transforms the overall character of one’s life.”[[62]](#footnote-62) As such, the transformation of a single life is the reparation of the world, Torah – *nomos*. The static practice of mitzvoth sustains the universe. While we may often think in terms of our individual practices, we must realize that the practice of Torah is a universal singularity. As Yeshua was “one” with G-d and Torah, we must abandon our individuality for the sake of the one G-d and Torah. The acceptance of the Yoke of the Kingdom in the K’riat Shema (recital of the Shema Deut. 6:4) discussed above is not only for the sake of G–d’s unity, it is to forge our existence into that unity. The fragmentation of the world, Gen 1:6ff is repaired through our unification of G–d and His Torah. If the “mitzvoth are vehicles for enlivening and refining the consciousness of the Divine”[[63]](#footnote-63) we must be engaged in this practice on a universal level. Or, we might opine that the practice of the Torah – *nomos* has cosmic effects. Practice of the Torah *– nomos* by a society is not only the realization and healing of the world; it is becoming one with G-d. It is for this reason that the K’riat Shema (recital of the Shema) has precedence as a Halakhic norm in all of Jewish life.

In defining *nomos* as a “plan for the universe,” we can see why G-d gave the Torah *–* *nomos* in the wilderness. By exhibition of the Torah *–* *nomos* in the wilderness G-d demonstrated that the Torah *–* *nomos* is, universal and eternal. Therefore, we can see how Hakham Shaul understood *nomos* as a “law,” for the Gentiles and Torah for the Jewish people. The *nomos* of the Gentile is NOT the Torah of the Jew. Through acceptance of the Torah,the Gentile embraces Judaism and comes under the canopy of righteousness/generosity as presented in Torah. The *nomos* of the Gentile is the “law” of subservience to the varied intermediaries, which govern their territories under the authority of G-d. Each “intermediary is matched to the disposition of the nation and peoples it governs. Furthermore, the disposition of the intermediary may change to match the changing disposition of the subordinate nation. However, when the Gentile embraces Torah in the same manner as the Jew (i.e. through conversion to Judaism), he no longer lives under the *nomos* of the universe as moderated through an intermediary in the way other Gentiles do.

In the coming chapter of Hakham Shaul’s Igeret to the Romans we will see that Hakham Shaul discusses being “free from sin.” How are we to accomplish such a monumental task?

**﻿m. Aboth 6:2﻿** And it says, and the tables were the work of god, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.[[64]](#footnote-64) Read not *haruth* [which means “graven”] but *heruth* [which means “freedom”].[[65]](#footnote-65) **For there is no free man for you but he that occupies himself with the study of the Torah; and whoever regularly occupies himself with the study of the Torah, lo, he is exalted,** as it is said, and from *Mattanah* to *Nahaliel*; and *nahaliel* to bamoth.[[66]](#footnote-66)

**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat, which reading touched your heart and fired your imagination?
2. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 23:10?
3. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 23:20?
4. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 23:21?
5. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 24:3?
6. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 24:5?
7. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 24:7?
8. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 24:14?
9. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 24:17?
10. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 24:19?
11. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 25:3?
12. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 25:4?
13. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 25:6?
14. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 25:7?
15. In your opinion what is the intent of Hakham Tsefet’s pericope by the hand of his scribe Mordechai (Mark) for this Shabbat?
16. What was the sin of Zimri, the man that took the Midianite woman into his tent, that merited the death penalty?
17. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and imagination of the Psalmist for this week?
18. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and the imagination of the prophet this week?
19. What part/s of the Torah Seder, Psalm, and the prophets fired the heart and the imagination of Hakham Tsefet for this week?
20. After taking into consideration all the above texts and our Torah Seder, what would you say is the general prophetic message from the Scriptures for this coming 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:**

**Shabbat “Pin’chas” – “Phinehas”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| פִּינְחָס |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Pin’chas”** | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 25:10-15 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 26:19-22 |
| **“Phinehas”** | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 25:16-18 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 26:23-25 |
| **“Finees”** | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 26:1-4 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 26:19-25 |
| B’Midbar (Num.) 25:10 - 26:18 | Reader 4 – B’Midbar 26:5-7 |  |
| Ashlamatah:  Malachi 2:5-7 + 3:1-6, 10 | Reader 5 – B’Midbar 26:8-11 | **Monday &**  **Thursday Mornings** |
| Psalm 105:7-15 | Reader 6 – B’Midbar 26:12-14 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 26:19-22 |
|  | Reader 7 – B’Midbar 26:15-18 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 26:23-25 |
|  | Maftir: B’Midbar 26:15-18 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 26:19-25 |
| N.C.: Mk 12:35-37a; Lk 20:41-44;  Rm 5:17-21 | - Malachi 2:5-7 + 3:1-6, 10 |  |

Shalom Shabbat!

Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

1. Ibn Ezra [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In the name of Seder Olam Rabbah. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. These opening remarks are 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-3)
4. Done - עשה, Strong’s number 06213. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. In each of the ten tests that Avraham passed. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Tehillim (Psalms) 105:6, 9, 42; cf. Ps 47:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Avraham is associated with one of the climaxes of creation; the Akeida, the binding of Yitzchak. Avraham was also associated with the subsequent crash; the death of Sarah Imeinu. The other high points include the creation of Adam, The revelation of Yosef in Egypt, the giving of the Torah, and the building of the Mishkan. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. ***Beresheet (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:* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The burial place of Sarah was purchased from Ephron, whose name means the spiritual power of fear, dust. The vav nun on the end of Ephron’s name indicates the diminutive. Ephron, therefore, means “Little Dust”. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Tekufat means “turning point”. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The winter solstice [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The summer solstice [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Avraham lived to 175 and Sarah to 127; they were only a 100 and 90 respectively when they had Isaac; that is to say middle aged [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 34:9, Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 38:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. To bring the narrative to the death of Terah. For Terah was seventy years old at Abram's birth (Gen. XI, 26), whilst Abram departed from Haran at the age of seventy-five (ib. XlI, 4); hence Terah, whose age at death was two hundred and five (ib. XI, 32), died sixty-five years after this command, and yet it is narrated before. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Hence Terah is already in his lifetime called dead. (Though it is stated supra, 38:12, that he repented, presumably this was much later.) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. This is deduced from the emphasis GET THEE (LEK LEKA), where lek (‘go’) alone would have sufficed. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Hakham Judah Loew ben Bezalel [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Chapter 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Tehillim 47:10 Rashi D”H Am & Malbim D”H Am; Yalkut Shimoni Tehillim Remez 754; Yalkut Shimoni Shir HaShirim Remez 992 and Machzor Vitri siman 287. See also Bava Batra 15A that identifies Eitan HaEzrachi as Avraham Avinu. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. All his previous sins are forgiven. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Genesis 15:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Emunah = Faithfulness, faithful obedience. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Sotah 37a [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Emunah = “faithful obedience” [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. **ἐκπειράζω** - *ekpeirazo* need not be interpreted as evil in intent. The Torah Scholar may be testing Yeshua’s knowledge and skill at interpreting the Torah as a Torah Scholar. This was common practice amongst Torah Scholars during the first century C.E. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Some versions suggest that the question is “how do you read it?” The correct intention of ἀναγινώσκω is how do you interpret it? [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The words “near” and “far” are Hebrew expressions that are not fully translatable to English. While in English “near” has the connotation of being close and yet not there, in Hebrew “being near” means that one is part of whatever is being mentioned. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. “**ἑνὸς** **ἀνθρώπου”** intimates “one man.” However, we can, and should read it not as “one man” but “man one” i.e. Adam (man) HaRishon (the one or first man). It should not read as Delitzsch has **אָדָם אֶחָד** “one unified man” However, we can read in **אָדָם אֶחָד** that all men were united in Adam HaRishon. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Cf. B’resheet 2:17, where the “principle (law) of sin and death enters the cosmos. Sin and death now becomes a “spiritual law.” Also establishing the principle of “where there is not sin there is no death.” [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. While the same phrase is used, the indication is not the same person. Therefore, we can see that Hakham Shaul sees Yeshua as Adam Kadmon. Furthermore, like Philo Hakham Shaul makes a distinction between Adam HaRishon and Adam Kadmon. It will also be noted that the nomenclature shows that Hakham Shaul is speaking of another subject, i.e. “the man” and therefore changes his address to **τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου** demanding that we see this man a differing from “**ἑνὸς** **ἀνθρώπου.”** i.e. Adam HaRishom. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The “few” is said about the members of the community of Israel, whilst the “many” is said about those outside the community of Israel – i.e. the Gentiles. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Gould, E. P. (1922). A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark (230). New York: Scribner's sons. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. For my thoughts on Hillel and Yeshua’s part in the placement of the Shema in the Mishnah see [Hillel’s Mishnah](http://torahfocus.com/2010/02/12/hillels-mishnah/) & [The Mishnah and Yeshua](http://torahfocus.com/2010/02/15/mishnah-and-yeshua/) [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. ﻿Rashi: a cubit to measure off the amount of work done by a builder. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. The golden Rule; cf. Lev. XIX, 18: but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.- V. Hertz, Leviticus, pp.22 or 223, and cf. R. T. Herford, Talmud and Apocrypha, p. 148 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Friberg, Timothy, Barbara Friberg, and Neva F. Miller. Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament. Baker's Greek New Testament Library. Trafford Publishing, 2005 p.360 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature. "Based on Walter Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wr̲terbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frhchristlichen [sic] Literatur, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker." (3rd ed.) (954). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Some versions read ὅτι λέγουσιν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Pericope 104c [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Cf. Mark 1:14—15 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Rabbi Aaron haLevi of Barcelona, Sefer haHinnuch, , Feldheim Publishers, Volume 4 pp. 249—251 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Cf. Mordechai 12:18-27 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. I have given here a summary paraphrase of statement made by Abraham Joshua Heschel in his work God in search of Man, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1955 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*. "Based on Walter Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wr̲terbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frhchristlichen [sic] Literatur, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker." (3rd ed.) (954). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Cf. 1Chr 24:7–18 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. The present introductory style can be found in typical “husband / wife” introductions in the Tanakh. Cf. 1Sa.1:1–2 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. This refers to the Chukim, pl.m. Chukot pl.f. Chukim/Chukot are statutes, inexplicable Laws of the Torah. The use here implies the extent of their “righteous/generosity” which is attested to by the use of “blameless/sinless. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. For a better understanding of the “rose” (Shoshanah) see Frankel, Ellen, and Betsy Platkin Teutsch. *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols*. Northvale, N.J.: J. Aronson, 1992. p. 139 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. T.U.L.I.P. is the acronym for the Calvinistic doctrinal belief that man is incapable of pleasing G-d due to his “Total depravity.” Building in the idea of total depravity, he embarks on explaining Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace and the Preservation of the Saints. For more information on the Calvinist doctrine of “Tulip” see Palmer, Edwin H. *The Five Points of Calvinism; a Study Manual*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. In this sense, the Narrative of B’resheet bespeaks not only “justices” but a systematic justice. If we study the Mesorah/Oral Torah long enough we will see that it has a very specific structure. What needs to follow the understanding of the systematic structure of the Oral Torah is our awareness of the part that it played in the creation, establishment and government of the Cosmos. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. See our discussion on Torah Focus, a shir given on Thursday October 30th 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Rashi on B’resheet 1:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. The genius of the Nazarean Rabbanim is the concept that a Torah Scholar through much study and practice of the mitzvoth becomes the Torah Incarnate – the embodiment of the Torah in the flesh, and therefore a “living Torah.” The precedent for this is to be found in Malachi 2:6 – “The Law of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and did turn many away from iniquity.” [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Contiguity as a hermeneutic can have a number of influences on the text. Firstly, it can connect two pericopes or pieces of text through their close proximity because they share a common idea. Secondly, they can share commonality because they are a continuation of a narrative that crosses more than one pericope. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. What days? **John 1:1** ¶ “**In the beginning**” In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and Apart From Him, nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not 1comprehend it. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. There is a great deal of controversy concerning the title “Nazareth” as the place where Yeshua “grew up” or resided during his early years. Nazareth is not mentioned in any Jewish literature i.e. Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash or Josephus. The etymology of the word seems to be related to the idea that Messiah would be from the stock or “branch” of David. Further research shows that **נָצַר** also means to guard or watch. Therefore, it is suggested that the “City of Branches” or the “City of “Guardians” or “City of Watchmen” is Tzfat. Consequently, this would make Tzfat the actual place of Yeshua’s early residence. This interpretation seems to be more in line with the thought of Yeshua being from the “branch” of Jessie (Davidic stock). Given the Remes interpretation of the present materials we would suggest that Yeshua was the “guardian, watchman of the “soul,” “Oral Torah,” “Wisdom” – Hokhmah and Tzfat was the “secret garden” or “garden of secrets” (So’od). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. When reviewing B’resheet we not that the “spirit of Elohim hovered over the waters disturbing them. The “Spirit of Elohim” according to the Rabbanim is Messiah. The “heavens torn apart” is synonymous with the separating of waters, light and firmaments etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. A verbal tally with Gan Eden (i.e. Garden of Delight), implying that Yeshua would be the key to enter PaRDeS (Paradise). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Yesha’yahu (Isa.) 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Mittleman, A. L. (2011). *A Short History of Jewish Ethics: Conduct and Character in the Context of Covenant.* John Wiley & Sons. p. 65 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Ex. XXXII, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Read not . . . but (read) . . . is an exegetical device used when the expounder felt that a minor alteration of a word would provide a short cut to the interpretation he wished to convey. It was a deliberate and manifest play on words, and was not intended to indicate a variant in the Scriptural text. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Treating the Hebrew place-names as if they were common nouns, the passage may be taken to mean Through (God's) gift (to Israel) (i.e. the Torah) (one attains) a heritage of God; from the heritage of God (one is raised) to high places. MV adds: But if he cultivates overweening pride, God brings him low, as it is said, And from Bamoth (i.e. high places) to the valley (Num. XXI, 20, the continuation of the quotation in our text). V. Er. 54a. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)