

MORDECHAI 105E

MORDECHAI 13:1-2

BESB	GREEK TEXT
Mar 13:1 And as he (Yeshua) came out of the Temple, and one of his talmidim said to him, Rabbi [Hakham], Look! What kind of stones and what kind of buildings! Mar 13:2 And Yeshua answering him, said Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon a stone; all will be hurled down (and) destroyed.	Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ λέγει αὐτῷ εἷς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ Διδάσκαλε ἴδε ποταποὶ λίθοι καὶ ποταπαὶ οἰκοδομαί 2 καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτῷ Βλέπετε ταύτας τὰς μεγάλας οἰκοδομάς οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῆ ἕλιθος ἐπὶ λίθῳ, ὅς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ

DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

וַיְהִי בְּצֵאתוֹ מִן־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֶחָד מִתְלָמִידָיו רַבִּי רְאֵה מַה־יִּפּוּ הָאֲבָנִים ^{DLZ Mark 13:1}
וְהַבְּנִינִים הָאֵלֶּה: ² וַיַּעַן אֹתוֹ יֵשׁוּעַ וַיֹּאמֶר הֲרֵאִיתָ אֶת־הַבְּנִינִים הַגְּדֹלִים הָאֵלֶּה לֹא־תִשָּׂאָר אֶבֶן עַל־
אֶבֶן אֲשֶׁר לֹא תִתְפָּרֵק:

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INTRODUCTION

In lieu of a lengthy commentary this week, I have opted to offer a few short comments. His Eminence has given us a rich document to read and study. My commentary should be weighed against the cited materials in His Eminence's reworking of Edersheim's chapters on "The Life and times of Jesus the Messiah."^a Therefore, I will offer a few brief remarks as I see this week's pericope relation to the Torah Readings.

^a While I concur with the remarks and reworking of Edersheim's work by His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai, I differ in opinion with varied descriptions made by Edersheim such as "Solomon's Stables," which is a fallacy. Solomon never had "stables" at or near the Temple. I am certain that Solomon revered the Temple, as did his father David. The tile "Solomon's Stables" was given because during the Crusader period the crusader knights used the location as a stable.

AND AS HE (YESHUA) CAME OUT OF THE TEMPLE, AND ONE OF HIS TALMIDIM SAID TO HIM, RABBI [HAKHAM], LOOK! WHAT KIND OF STONES AND WHAT KIND OF BUILDINGS!

What must be remembered when reading the Nazarean Codicil is that the Temple was in a constant state of construction and renovation. We tend to read the Nazarean Codicil as if the Temple was in perfect operational status. The renovations to the Temple were incomplete until the middle 60's of the Common Era. This would mean that Yeshua never witnessed the renovations in a completed form. Therefore, the statements of the talmidim must have been in relation to the construction that they viewed as they were leaving the Temple.

It is most likely that Yeshua and his talmidim exited the Temple through the Huldah tunnels to the south. This would have been then appropriate path to Bet Pagah (Bethany). These two sets of tunnels were named after the prophetess Huldah, the wife of Shallum, Jeremiah's contemporary.^a These two tunnels were pre-Herodian.^b Exactly why these gates are referred to as the "Huldah tunnels" or "Gates" is a matter of conjecture. It has been suggested that the Hebrew name "Huldah" means weasel or mole. The pilgrim would enter the tunnel and rise to the platform of the Temple as a mole or weasel.^c These tunnels were extended during the Hasmonean and Herodian renovations. For some unexplained reason the tunnels were named after the prophetess Huldah.^d Today when viewing the southern end of the Temple walls it appears that, there were two sets tunnels albeit one set is covered by later construction. One set is the typical set of two tunnels and the other set to the east appears to be a "triple gate." In a personal conversation and interview held at the Pool of Siloam in June 2006, Professor Dr. Ronny Reich suggested that the third gate was added some time after the Herodian period possibly as late as the Umayyad period or even by Crusaders who used the area to stable horses.

These tunnels offered an entrance and exit described in the Mishnah.^e The Mishnah also offers other points of entry and exit. However, the primary point of entry and exit was through the southern Huldah gates. All other gates seem to serve other specific purposes. It is here at the Huldah Gates that the "Beautiful Gates"^f were located.^g From this location the massive stones, which stabilized the colossal southeastern wall, would have been visible.

Josephus describes the walls of the Temple and the construction needed to build a level platform in his Jewish Wars. I have translated these passages in the past for some research on the Temples construction.

*The lower regions of the walls were built up **from the bedrock as much as three hundred cubits.**^h But some areas exceeded this height. The depth was not apparent because the valleys were filled to level the narrow city streets.*

^a Cf. 2Kgs. 22:14; 2Chr 34:22 (3285 to 3316) b. Meg. 14b

^b Ritmeyer, L. (2006). The Quest, Revealing the Temple Mounbt in Jerusalem. Jerusalem: Carta, The Lamb Foundation. p.85

^c Schick, C. (1896) Die Stiftschutte, der Tempel in Jerusalem und der Tempelplatz der Jetztzeit (Berlin.) p. 185

^d I will delve into this further below

^e Cf. m. Mid. 1:3

^f Cf. Second Lukas (Acts) 3:2 In a lecture given by Orit Peleg (student of Elat Mazar) presenting materials she had prepared for her doctoral dissertation, Orit demonstrated the true beauty of the magnificent gates. Her thesis offered positive proof that these gates were the "Beautiful Gate" of Acts and that the artistry was strictly Jewish.

^g See illustration below

^h The Royal cubit measured inches. This would mean that the height of the southeastern corner of the Temple might have reached nearly 500 ft. While Josephus is given to hyperbole, it is plausible to believe the southeastern corner reached a staggering height.

Now stones as great as forty cubits in magnitude were used to build because of the abundance of funds and the ambition of the people. The people expressed their desire to accomplish to accomplish the enterprise in an efficient time span by their positive determination.^a



RECONSTRUCTION OF THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY OF THE DOUBBLE HULDAH GATES^b

The southern end of the Temple would have given any pilgrim an overwhelming impression of the Temple. It would have given view to the largest stones of the Temple's construction. Today many of these foundational stones are hidden from view. While most stones weighed nearly 5 tons there are two massive stones on the western wall that weigh 400 and 600 metric tons. The stones at the base of the southern corners form some of the largest. This is because these massive stones form a solid foundation for the walls of excessive height.

^a Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1996, c1987). *The works of Josephus : Complete and unabridged. Includes index.* Peabody: Hendrickson. Wars 5.188-189, My translation

^b Mazar, E. (2002). *The Complete Guide to the Temple Mount Excavations.* Shoham Academic Research and Publication. p. 53



NOTE THE LENGTH OF THE STONES JUST ABOVE THE RUBBLE, THESE STONES OF EXTRA LENGTH STABILIZED THE HIGH WALL ABOVE

THE IRONY OF PROPHECY

While I can offer no proof that the location of Yeshua's prophecy was in the proximity of the Huldah Gates, I submit that I draw this conclusion by Hillel' 2nd and 6th hermeneutic principles.^a I will first reiterate that the title given for the gates at the southern end of the Temple as "Huldah Gates"^b is not sufficiently explained by historical scholarship. Here I would like to offer my scholarly opinion. The prophetess Huldah lived as a contemporary to Yermiyahu (Jeremiah) as stated above.^c The prophecies of Yermiyahu recorded in the Tanakh are well known. Likewise, the reasons for his "Lamentations" echo through the ages as a reminder that the Babylonians destroyed Yerushalayim with its First Temple. While the Tanakh records the prophecy of Huldah the prophetess, her prophecy is not as well known.

2 Kings 22:14. And Hilkiyah the priest and Ahikam and Achbor and Shaphan and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah the son of Harhas, the keeper of the raiment, and she was sitting in Jerusalem in the study-hall, and they spoke to her. 15. And she said to them, "So has the Lord God of Israel spoken, 'Say to the man who sent you to me, 16. "So has the Lord said, 'Behold I bring calamity to this place and upon its inhabitants—all the words of the scroll that the king of Judah read. 17. Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to pagan deities, in order to provoke Me with all the deeds of their hands, My wrath is kindled against this place, and it shall not be quenched.' 18. And concerning the king of Judah who has sent you to inquire of the Lord, so shall you say to him, 'So has the Lord God of Israel said, "The words are what you heard. 19. Since your heart has become soft, and you have humbled yourself before the Lord, when you heard what I spoke about this place and about its inhabitants, to become a desolation and a curse, and you rent your garments and wept before Me, I, too, have heard [it],' says the Lord. 20. Therefore, behold I gather you in to your forefathers, and you shall be gathered into your graves in peace, and your eyes shall not see any of the calamity that I am bringing upon this place." And they brought back word to the king.^d

My conjecture is that the prophetess Huldah was standing on the southern steps of the Temple mount of her day, looking down the Kidrion valley into the Ge'Hinnom^e (Gehanna) a place given to extreme idolatry.

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

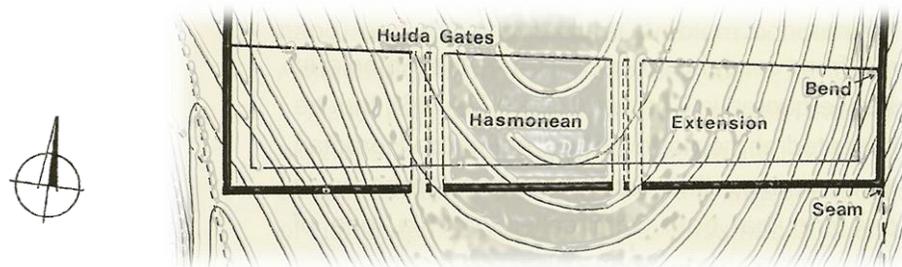
^b Cf. m. Mid. 1:3

^c Cf. 2Kgs. 22:14; 2Chr 34:22 (3285 to 3316) b. Meg. 14b

^d Rashi's translation

^e Valley of Hinnom

The palace of King David was just below this wondrous view. It seems most plausible that many of the subsequent kings of Yisrael lived in this vicinity. Therefore, the title given to these gates could easily have been because Huldah prophesied from this location. What is interesting about Huldah's prophecy is that it foretells the destruction of the First Bet haMikdash with reason. Therefore, I would further conjecture that Yeshua was in the proximity of the Huldah Gates when he made his prophecy of the Temples pending doom.



SOUTHERN STEPS OF THE TEMPLE MOUNT

If there is any validity to all this conjecture, we may have a reason furthered by Yeshua as to why the Temple was destroyed.

Targum Malachai 3:22

22. Remember the Law of Moses My servant, which I commanded him on Horeb for all Israel, to teach them statutes and ordinances.

Targum Yermiyahu 2:8,13

2:8. The priests did not say: 'Let us fear before the LORD'; nor did the teachers of the Law study to know the fear of Me. But the king rebelled against My Memra, and the prophets of falsehood prophesied in the name of the idols, and went after what would not profit them.

2:13. For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken My service, for the sake of which I bring goodness upon them like a fountain of water which does not cease; and they have strayed after the idols which are like broken pits for them, which cannot guarantee water.

The prophetess accuses the Bne Yisrael of idol worship. While the thought deserves a deeper explanation, I will offer a brief elucidation here. After the reforms of Ezra as mentioned in the previous pericope, idolatry was no longer a problem for the Bne Yisrael. However, I will offer a new form of idolatry that the Bne Yisrael had begun to embrace in the time of Yeshua. The new form of idolatry was assimilation. This assimilation actually began in Babylon. Many of the Bne Yisrael refused to leave Babylon's comforts to re-pioneer Eretz Yisrael. The Southern steps offered the main entrance into the Temple plaza. While there was a "Shushan Gate," "Eastern gate" it was not used for public entrance and exit. Consequently, the public entrance was to the south through the "Huldah Gates." Yisrael's new idolatry was in becoming like the nations (Gentiles). This is especially evident when we review the past few pericope and the accusations brought against the Tz'dukim by Yeshua.

CONCLUSION

In summary, I offer the three reasons for the Temples destruction.

1. Failure to tithe appropriately supporting the work of G-d

2. Failure to keep Shabbat
3. Failure to appropriately keep the mitzvot and attend the Festivals
 - a. Because there are specific, mitzvot related to the Temple, it would also be implied that these mitzvot were being directly violated.

In noticing these things, Yeshua foretold the Temple's pending doom. This doom would foster the rise of the rabbinic system, which I believe Yeshua, Hillel and other such renowned Rabbis of that era fought to bring about as a means of Judaic reform. The Temple became defunct thereby circumventing its purpose for existence. It is very interesting to note that the Mishkan was retired by Solomon (the son of David as Edersheim has pointed out) in favor of the First Temple and Yeshua points to the retirement of the Temple (as a Son of David) in favor of the rabbinic system.

BS"D (B'Siyata D'Shamaya)
Aramaic: With the help of Heaven
Paqid Dr. Adon Eliyahu ben Abraham

CONNECTIONS TO TORAH READINGS

TORAH SEDER

Thematically the Torah Seder deals with the Mishkan and the offerings that were to be offered there. The pericope of Mordechai deals with the Temple, which was a graduation of the Mishkan.

TEHILLIM

Psalm 105:45 tells us that HaShem gave the Bne Yisrael statutes and laws. These statutes and laws would have been the foundation of the Temple complex. However, when the mitzvot were abandoned the Temple became pointless and source of Divine contempt. Yeshua expressed that fact that this contempt would end the Temple's existence in his prophecy.

ASHLAMATAH

The forsaking of the Mitzvot relates to the Ashlamatah as noted concerning the Psalm.

SPECIAL ASHLAMATAH

The same is true of our special Ashlamatah, where the priests (guardians of the Temple) lost their fear of G-d through assimilation, the new form of idolatry.

MITZVOT

Torah Add	M#	Mitzvah	Oral Torah
B'Midbar 28:26	404	Precept of Mussaf offering	m. Tamid
B'Midbar 29:1	405	Precept of blowing the Shofar on Rosh HaShanah	m. R.H.

QUESTIONS OR REFLECTION

1. How is the prophecy of Yeshua related to the prophecy of Huldah?
2. If Solomon, the son of David retired the Mishkan in favor of the First Temple what did Yeshua, the son of David favor instead of the Second Temple?