

# MORDECHAI 106A

## MORDECHAI 13:3—8

BESB	GREEK TEXT
3 As he (Yeshua) was sitting on the Har Zeytim (Mount of Olives) across from the Bet HaMikdash, Tsefet and Ya'akov and Yochanan and Adam bar Yona were questioning him privately (personally conversing with Yeshua),	3 Καὶ καθημένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν κατ' ἰδίαν Πέτρος καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἀνδρέας
4 "(Will you) Tell us, when these things will happen, and what will the sign be when all these things are going to be accomplished?"	4 Εἰπέ ἡμῖν πότε ταῦτα ἔσται καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ πάντα ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι
5 And Yeshua answering them said, "See (watch with discernment) that no one misleads you."	5 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀποκριθεὶς αὐτοῖς ἤρξατο λέγειν Βλέπετε μὴ τις ὑμᾶς πλανήσῃ·
6 "Many will come in my authority, saying, 'I am he!' and mislead many."	6 πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου λέγοντες ὅτι Ἐγὼ εἰμι καὶ πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν
7 "When you hear of wars and reports of anarchy, do not be troubled (cry out); these things must take place; but the end (goal) is yet to come."	7 ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε πολέμους καὶ ἀκοὰς πολέμων μὴ θροεῖσθε· δεῖ γὰρ γενέσθαι ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος
8 "For nation will rise up against nation, and empire against empire; there will be earthquakes in places; there will be famines. These things are simply prominent birth pangs."	8 ἐγερθήσεται γὰρ ἔθνος ἐπὶ ἔθνος καὶ βασιλεία ἐπὶ βασιλείαν καὶ ἔσονται σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους καὶ ἔσονται λιμοί· καὶ ταραχαὶ ἀρχαὶ ὠδίνων ταῦτα

### DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

3 וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל־הַר הַזַּיְתִּים מִמּוֹל הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וַיִּשְׁאַל־וּהוּ פְּטְרוֹס וַיַּעֲקֹב וַיּוֹחָנָן וַאֲנָדְרִי וְהֵם לְבָדָם אֶת־וֹ: 4 אָמְרָנָא לָנוּ מַתִּי תִהְיֶה־זֹאת וּמַה־הוּא הָאוֹת בָּבֵא הָעֵת אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה־בָּהּ כָּל־זֹאת: 5 וַיַּעַן יֵשׁוּעַ וַיְדַבֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם הַשְּׂמָרוּ לָכֶם פְּרִי־תַעֲבָה אֶתְכֶם אִישׁ: 6 כִּי רַבִּים יָבֹאוּ בְּשֵׁמִי לֵאמֹר אֲנִי הוּא וְהִתְעוּ רַבִּים: 7 וּבְשֵׁמְעֶכֶם מִלְחָמוֹת וּשְׂמוּעוֹת מִלְחָמָה אֶל־תִּבְהַלּוּ כִּי־הִיוּ תִהְיֶה זֹאת וְעוֹד לֹא בָּא הַקֶּץ: 8 כִּי־יִקּוּם גּוֹי עַל־גּוֹי וּמַמְלָכָה עַל־מַמְלָכָה וְהָיָה רָעַשׁ כֹּה וְכֹה וְהָיָה רָעַב וּמַהוּמָה:

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## INTRODUCTION

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As I prepared the translation of Mordechai (Mark) this past Monday, I immediately noted that this week’s Pericope of Mark makes an instantaneous connection to the Torah Seder. When we look at the parallel, it is astonishing.

### TORAH SEDER

Verse 2: Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the children of Israel, saying: This is the thing the Lord has commanded.

### MORDECHAI

As he (Yeshua) was sitting on the Har Zeytim (Mount of Olives) opposite the Bet Mikdash, Tsefet and Yaakov and Yochanan and Andrew were questioning him privately (personally conversing with Yeshua),

**Rashi comments as follows... the heads of the tribes** *He honored the chieftains by teaching them first, and only later the rest of the Israelites. How do we know that he did so with other statements? For it says, “[Moses called to them] and Aaron and all the princes of the community returned to him, and Moses would speak to them. Afterwards, all the children of Israel would draw near” (Exod. 34:31- 32). [If so,] why did [Scripture] see fit to mention it here? It is to teach us that annulment of vows may be performed by a single expert, and if no single expert is available, it may be annulled by three laymen. Alternatively, perhaps Moses related this passage to the princes alone? However, here it says, “This is the word,” and in [the chapter dealing with] sacrifices slaughtered outside the Temple confines it [also] says, “This is the word” (Lev. 17:2). Just as there it was said to Aaron, his sons and all the Israelites, as it says, “Speak to Aaron, etc.” (Lev. 17:2), so in this case was it said to all of them.-[Ned. 78a]*

Yeshua is seated with his chief talmidim, teaching them before he teaches the others. Adam bar Yona is the brother of Hakham Tsefet. Why he is included in the number of those who are in session with Yeshua is a mystery. What is not a mystery is that hierarchical order of the chief talmidim. Hakhamim Tsefet, Yaakov and Yochanan form the triad for the initial Bet Din of the Nazarean Jews. Adam bar Yona, Hakham Tsefet’s brother is most likely present most likely because he shares a bond with his brother. If this is the case, the “session” at hand could hardly have been a formal “Bet Din.” However, the inner circle of Yeshua’s talmidim hears things directly from the master’s mouth. The other talmidim will hear these things later or through the talmidim, which form the inner circle.

## FORENSICS

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In [Pericope 105 C—D](#) I made the following comment...

*I have stated in the past, that translation is a painstaking process. I will reiterate my statement here. Again, to be concise, the real trouble with the Greek texts we have at present is that they are not the original documents from which the present text developed. This presents several problems. Firstly, we do not know exactly what was and was not contained in those documents, the problem compounded*

*by the plethora of extant “Greek New Testaments.” Secondly, our focus is to “weed out” the tampering that has been done with the text. Many of today’s translations and commentaries are plagued with anti-Semitic remarks and opinions, which only serves to compound our work. However, we have particular tools with which to interpret the text. These hermeneutic tools must NOT be abandoned for the sake of opinion or bias. Consequently, we have to use the extant Greek texts, applying hermeneutic and forensics to uncover the truth of the text.*

This week’s Pericope, (Mark 13:3-8) the Greek text makes some possible allusions to the textual anomalies, which could demonstrate much of what we have been trying to say about Mark as a Mesorah.<sup>a</sup>

### **AS HE (YESHUA) WAS SITTING ON THE HAR ZEYTIM (MOUNT OF OLIVES)**

As always, when I begin my look at the weekly pericope I try to determine what Hakham Tsefet was thinking and why he pens the words of his pericope through his scribe Mordechai. This week is no different. The connection to the Torah Seder is immediate and obvious. However, this does not tell us what Hakham Tsefet was thinking and why he pens his words this week.

The present pericope presents Yeshua sitting on **HAR ZEYTIM (MOUNT OF OLIVES)**. Of course, the big question is why **HAR ZEYTIM (MOUNT OF OLIVES)** and what is actually happening here? And, as always, we are forced to apply hermeneutic to try to determine the answer. The context of the “corral”<sup>b</sup> ALWAYS determines the meaning. While there may be exceptions, we have to see what kind of horses are in the corral before we determine what was going on in Hakham Tsefet’s mind.

Simply stated, the Hebrew word “*Yeshiva*” means, “to sit.” However, this is only an elementary definition of the word. Its uses developed into the idea of study, which in turn became used for the academy and court sessions. It is noteworthy to examine the similarity between the “sitting” of the Judges in the Sanhedrin and the “sittings” of the Hakhamim in the *Yeshivot* or academies. Their office, that of the Sanhedrin, is educational as well as judicial.

## **WHEN THESE THINGS WILL HAPPEN**

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***“(WILL YOU) TELL US, WHEN THESE THINGS WILL HAPPEN, AND WHAT WILL THE SIGN BE WHEN ALL THESE THINGS ARE GOING TO BE ACCOMPLISHED?”***

When we look at this verse, we tend to look at it from the perspective of contiguity. In other words, we look at the text and associate the interpretation from Mark 13:1-2 because of its close proximity. Most scholars want to interpret the present pericope by retreating to Mark 13:1-2.<sup>c</sup> While this is the consensus, I do not entirely agree here. Again, I retreat to my “corral” of the Torah Seder for my answer.

The phrase ***“(WILL YOU) TELL US, WHEN THESE THINGS WILL HAPPEN”*** implies discussion. In other words, there is a discussion, of which we are uninformed. Here we must keep in mind that masterful genius of Hakham Tsefet. Hakham Tsefet is following the practices requisite for [writing the Nazarean Codicil](#).<sup>d</sup> Hakham Tsefet is concerned with espousing his pericope with the Torah Seder, revealing the Messianic

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<sup>a</sup> Cf. Mark 13:3 and 8 where the end is in the beginning.

<sup>b</sup> Here I refer to the cliché coined by His Eminence, “Corral Hermeneutics”

<sup>c</sup> See for example, Lane, W. L. (1974). *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel According to Mark*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p. 450 and R., France. (2002). *The New International Greek Testament Commentary, The Gospel of Mark*. Grand Rapids MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p.505

<sup>d</sup> My discussion on “Writing the Nazarean Codicil” is two part discussion. See [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)

aspects of the Torah Seder and demonstrating those Messianic aspects through the life of Yeshua.<sup>a</sup> Therefore, Hakham Tsefet is not always given to revealing the whole narrative that took place behind the scenes.

So, how do we interpret the pericope, by looking at the horses in the corral?

When we look at the Torah Seder, we are given clues to its content by its title. This week's title is "**unto the heads of the tribes**". Therefore, we maintain that Yeshua is speaking to the "**heads**" of his eventual Bet Din and those who would guide the Nazarean Movement in the very near future.

Looking at one of the aspects of the corral, we see something very interesting.

### B'Midbar 31:2 (Rashi)

### Targum Pseudo Yonatan

2. "Take revenge for the children of Israel against the Midianites; **afterwards you will be gathered to your people.**"

2. Take retribution for the children of Israel from the Midianites; **and afterward you will be gathered to your people.**

The context<sup>b</sup> is herein established. Why did Moshe meet with the "heads of the tribes" in B'Midbar 30:2? Moshe met with the heads of the tribes, because he knew that he would soon "be gathered to his people." Therefore, we see Yeshua meeting with his "chief talmidim" most likely, for the same purpose. Professor Morna D. Hooker notes that this section of Mordechai is familiar with Tanakh's farewell discourses.<sup>c</sup> Ya'akov tells his siblings what will be the outcome of their lives and decedents.<sup>d</sup> Likewise, David and Moshe demonstrate these same principles just before their death. The case of David makes the antithesis of our present Sabbath. David intended to build a Temple, which he never was able to do. Nevertheless, David passes his intent on to his officials and decedents. I will return to this idea in the commentary below.

The pericope opens with Yeshua sitting with the "three pillars" of the Nazarean movement. The words "**(WILL YOU) TELL US, WHEN THESE THINGS WILL HAPPEN**" may be telling us that Yeshua was privately telling these "chief talmidim" that they would be called upon in the near future to lead the movement towards its eventual goal. This in turn would have prompted the question "**(WILL YOU) TELL US, WHEN THESE THINGS WILL HAPPEN**".

## THE HEAD OF THE NAZAREAN MOVEMENT

Gal 2:8—9 For he who worked in Tsefet in that he was sent of the Jews also worked in me and sent me to the Gentiles.<sup>9</sup> And when they knew of the mercy that was given to me, Yaakov and Tsefet and Yochanan, those who were considered to be pillars, gave to me and to Bar-Nabba the right hand of fellowship that we [should work] among the Gentiles and they among the circumcision.

Hakham Shaul refers to Hakhamim Ya'akov, Tsefet and Yochanan as the pillars of the Nazarean Community. For those who feel that this is a hierarchical order, we will establish the who's who through Hakham Tsefet's name. I would also reiterate one other point before I launch into my exposition of Hakham Tsefet's name. The Greek word order of a text is ALWAYS subject to scrutiny. The Greek word order always requires some hermeneutic and logic. Therefore, we should not be alarmed that by an apparent order of names.

<sup>a</sup> Professor Morna Hooker notes that Mark I put together with a series of sayings, the "collection of sayings is arranged by theme rather than discourse." Here I note that Hakham Tsefet was not trying to present a chronological account of Yeshua's life. Hakham Tsefet was trying to espouse the Torah Seder and related readings. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet would place materials of common genre together to match the Torah Seder.

<sup>b</sup> **Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano**: Interpretation deduced from the context.

<sup>c</sup> Hooker, M. D. (1991). *Black's New Testament Commentaries: The Gospel According to Saint Mark*. London: A & C Black Publishers Ltd. Cf. Deut. 32 & 1 Chr. 28. I would further note that the present Torah Seder is also precedential.

<sup>d</sup> Cf. Gen. 49:2-27

Hakham Tsefet is called by three titles. Shimon, Peter and Cephas. When we look at the Peshitta, Hakham Tsefet is NEVER called Cephas. I will not, at present, deal with the arguments concerning the possibility of the two names referring to two individuals. However, I will rest on the fact that the Peshitta never calls Hakham Tsefet “Cephas” as an evidence of the singularity of person. And, it is not the focus of this document to argue these points. My question is what does the name Tsefet mean, and how does this relate to his being the head of the Nazarean Movement.

Yeshua makes the following statement about Hakham Tsefet.

Joh 1:42 And he brought him to Jesus. And Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, the son of Jonas. You will be called Peter."<sup>a</sup>

Hakham Tsefet must have been “Shimon,” but Yeshua says that he would be called Peter (Tsefet). Why does Yeshua call Shimon “Tsefet”? And, why is the name not found in scripture for any other individual? While the name “Tsefet” does not appear as a proper name, it does appear in the Tanakh.

2Ch 3:15 Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high, and the chapter that was on the top of each of them was five cubits.<sup>b</sup>

I will include the Hebrew text of the cited passage for clarification.

וַיַּעַשׂ לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת עַמּוּדִים שְׁנַיִם אַמּוֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וְחֲמִשׁ אַרְבָּּ וְהַצֵּפֶת אֲשֶׁר-עַל-רֵאשׁוֹ אַמּוֹת חֲמִשׁ: ס<sup>15</sup>

The transliteration the highlighted text reads v’ha’tzefet. The phrase v’ha’tsefet would read “and the chapter.” The word chapter is translated “tsefet” which is not the pillar itself. The “tsefet” is the cap or head of the pillar. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet is not only seen as a “pillar,” Hakham Tsefet is the cap or head of the pillar. The “tsefet” is the upper portion of the pillar, which supports the edifice. Consequently, Hakham Tsefet is not only the “pillar” of the Nazarean Community; he is the primary support for the whole community.

Tsefet is also the name of a Biblical and modern city in Eretz Yisrael.

Jud. 1:17 And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Tz’fat, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.

Tz’fat is so titled because it is one of the highest “mountains” within Eretz Yisrael. Please note that I said “within” Eretz Yisrael. I realize that Mount Hermon is higher than Tz’fat.

When we return to our “corral” we might ten say that Moshe was speaking to the “Tsefet” of the tribes of the Bne Yisrael. Moshe was speaking to the heads of the pillars. We must understand that both the Torah Seder and the pericope of Mordechai, from G-d’s perspective, are “top down.”

## THE SABBATH OF VISION

### JAMES EDWARDS COMMENTS...

*Mark 13 is frequently interpreted in relative detachment from the rest of the Gospel, often as an apocalypse. **Apocalyptic**, meaning “unveiling,” is a broad and rather ill-defined term for a type, or perhaps theme, of Jewish literature that concerns final events before the end of time, including visions*

<sup>a</sup> Magiera, J. M. (2006). *Aramaic Peshitta New Testament Translation*. Light Of The Word Ministry.

<sup>b</sup> KJV

*(often in bizarre imagery) of the defeat of chaos and the restoration of creation, and of the coming of the Son of Man to judge the wicked and establish a kingdom of righteousness.<sup>a</sup>*

While it is outside of the scope of Hakham Tsefet (P'shat) to make an “apocalyptic revelation”, we can see that he lays the foundation for Remez, Midrash and Sod. My point here is not to note the possible apocalyptic nature of this pericope, which scholars contend, but I wish to comment on the apparent “detachment” of these pericope as a revelation or revealing. Edwards aptly notes that there is something “unrevealing” about this pericope. However, the true point is missed; this pericope fits perfectly on the Sabbath of Hazon (Vision).

*Most importantly, Mark 13 admonishes readers against attempts at constructing timetables and deciphering signs of the Parousia. Disciples are admonished to be alert and watchful (vv. 5, 9, 23, 33, 35, 37), reminded that they do not know the time of the end (vv. 33, 35), and warned not to be led astray by even the most obvious signs (vv. 5, 6, 21, 22), for the end is not yet (vv. 7, 13).<sup>b</sup>*

*The premium of discipleship is placed not on predicting the future but on **faithfulness in the present**, especially in trials, adversity, and suffering.<sup>c</sup>*

We have come to the end of the Tree weeks and are now looking forward to the days of strengthening. However, the Sabbath of Vision comes before this period. The reading of Yeshayahu 1:1-27 is Yeshayahu's vision of the Temple's destruction. This special Sabbath looks at the Temple's destruction just before the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av.

However, the title given to this special Sabbath is revealing. Or, I should say that the title “Hazon” is not given without cause. Torah is a revelation of time. Or, I might say that time is revealed by reading the Torah. Therefore, it is not by chance that we read this special “vision” before the “Ninth of Av.” However, in reconstructing the Nazarean Codicil's association with the Triennial Torah reading schedule we must ever scrutinize our work. We must always ask ourselves the following questions. Are we on track with the Triennial Torah readings? Are we on track with matching the Nazarean Codicil with the Torah reading and time? The present pericope espouses the Torah Seder without any question as noted above. This leaves us with the question of the Torah Seder being correct with time. It would appear from the Pericope of Mordechai that we are right on schedule! However, I have another question. Does this Torah Seder and pericope of Mordechai match the special Shabbat reading of Yeshayahu 1:1-27?

## **YESHA'YAHU'S VISION**

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The text opens with the phrase “The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz.” Consequently, we see that Yesha'yahu was the son of a Prophet. This sets a precedent for the mention of the prophet's ancestry. When the ancestry of the prophet is mentioned, we assume that the prophet is the son of a prophet, “Navi ben Navi”.

Yesha'yahu 1:1. The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, [and] Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

The opening pasuk establishes the context of the “vision.”

However, the second pasuk is equally revealing.

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<sup>a</sup> Edwards, J. R. (2002). *The Gospel according to Mark*. The Pillar New Testament commentary (p. 384). Grand Rapids, Mich; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos.

<sup>b</sup> Ibid

<sup>c</sup> Ibid

Yesha'yahu 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken; Children I have raised and exalted, yet they have rebelled against Me.

The Hebrew phrase *וְהִאֲזִינִי אֲרִץ וְשָׁמַיִם* is of germane to our questions. The Yesha'yahu is calling the Heavens and earth to bear witness to that validity of his prophecy. The phrase *וְשָׁמַעְו שְׁמַיִם* calls for the heavens to bend down to hear his Prophecy. No other prophet uses this phrase. Or I should say that no other prophet, save one, calls the Heavens to witness his prophecy.

D'varim 32:1 Listen, O heavens, and I will speak! And let the earth hear the words of my mouth!

Note the similarity of speech. Yesha'yahu emulates the words of Moshe Rabbanu who calls the heavens and earth to witness his testimony. The text of D'varim 32 is Moshe Rabbanu's farewell speech. I have noted this above saying, Professor Morna D. Hooker notes that this section of Mordechai is familiar with Tanakh's farewell discourses.<sup>a</sup> My footnote cites the farewell speech of Moshe Rabbenu and David HaMelek. The hermeneutic of "**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 connects D'varim 32:1 with Yeshaya'yahu 1:1. However, hermeneutic rule **Ka-yoze bo mi-makom aher**: Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage connects D'varim 32:1 with B'Midbar 30:2. Before Moshe Rabbanu can be "gathered to his people", he must set in order the hierarchy of the Bne Yisrael. Therefore, we have a verbal and thematic connection to Yesha'yahu 1:1. This makes us realize that the Triennial Torah readings presently read are in perfect time with Shabbat Hazon. The materials and thoughts of Mordechai 13:3-8 logically connect with Yesha'yahu 1:1. However, another way of saying that Yesha'yahu prophesied of the temple's destruction is to use an idiom for Yesha'yahu. "Yeshua," an idiom for Yesha'yahu, prophesied the destruction of the Temple. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet is making a play on words connecting with Yesha'yahu 1:1.

## **THE NINTH OF AV IN THE FIRST CENTURY**

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The Prophet Zechariah prophesied that the days of mourning, associated with the Temple's destruction would be turned into Festivals.<sup>b</sup> This prophecy took place some 590<sup>c</sup> years before the Temple's destruction. Therefore, when Yeshua sat on Har Zeytim (Mount of Olives) the prophecy was some 550 years old. Zechariah's prophecies were well known in the time of Yeshua. What we do not know is how the "ta'anit" (fasts) of Zechariah were understood or practiced during the Yeshua's time. The Gemara Ta'anit 12a allude to the possibility that pious Jews of the First Century fasted on the Ninth of Av. While this is hard to determine, it seems plausible that pious Jews fasted on the Ninth of Av to try to prevent the recurrence of the Temple's destruction. If pious Jews of the First century fasted on the Ninth of Av, Hakham Tsefet could easily have connected the reading of Yesha'yahu 1. The Qumran community may have fasted in hopes that the Temple would return to it Solomonic purity. The facts are vague and hard to determine.

One factor that is left out in determining Hakham Tsefet understands that this pericope should be read on Shabbat Hazon is Hakham Tsefet's prophetic ability. Hakham Tsefet had the clarity of vision to put the Nazarean Codicil in writing and correlate it to the Triennial Torah reading schedule. Therefore, he must have spent a great deal of time considering what to include and how to form his materials. Another fact that is overlooked, is Hakham Tsefet's place in Orthodox Judaism of the First century. The fast Ninth of

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<sup>a</sup> Hooker, M. D. (1991). *Black's New Testament Commentaries: The Gospel According to Saint Mark*. London: A & C Black Publishers Ltd. Cf. Deut. 32 & 1 Chr. 28. I would further note that the present Torah Seder is also precedential.

<sup>b</sup> Cf. Zechariah 8:18-23

<sup>c</sup> I am giving these dates in approximated round numbers

Tevet, (please note that I said Ninth of Tevet NOT Ninth of Av) is thought, by some, to have originated out of its relation and reverence for Hakham Tsefet's death and yartzeit.<sup>a</sup>

The prayer "Nishmat" recited every Shabbat morning is also attributed to Hakham Tsefet.<sup>b</sup>

*"The soul of every living being," the initial words and name of a prayer recited at Sabbath and festival morning services at the conclusion of the Pesukei de-Zimra introductory biblical hymns. This prayer expresses the gratitude men owe to God for His mercies in sustaining them. In talmudic literature it is called Birkat ha-Shir (Benediction of the Song," Pes. 10:7, and 117b–118a). Based upon the opinion of R. Johanan, Nishmat also became part of the Passover Haggadah.*

*Nishmat consists of three main sections. The first contains an avowal of God's unity: "Besides Thee we have no King. Deliverer, Savior, Redeemer... We have no King but Thee." **Some scholars believed that this passage was composed by the apostle Peter as a protest against concepts foreign to pure monotheism** (A. Jellinek, *Beit ha-Midrash*, 6 (19382), 12; *Maḥzor Vitry*, ed. by S. Hurwitz (19232), 282; Hertz, 416).<sup>c</sup>*

What we now see is that Hakham Tsefet **may** have played a positive role in the establishment of **some** of the Sabbath liturgy during the First Century. It would therefore not be out of the realm of possibility that Hakham Tsefet was aware of the incorporation of Yesha'yahu 1:1 into the Torah Reading schedule if it were not already a part of the reading cycle for the Sabbath preceding the Ninth of Av. Therefore, I would argue that Hakham Tsefet intentionally made this pericope align with Yesha'yahu 1 to be read on Shabbat Ḥazon.

## HAḤAZON

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We have followed the Prophet Yermi'yahu for the past three weeks. The prophecies of Yermi'yahu are depressing and full of bitterness. The "Vision" of Yesha'yahu differs from the prophecies we have read over the past weeks. And, how do they differ? Yeshayahu's "Vision" offers a very profound insight that we must not overlook. In the middle of a chapter which would seem like roomful despair G-d stops to say "come now, let us debate."<sup>d</sup> The Targum reads, **Then, when you return to the Law, you will beseech before Me, and I will carry out your request,** says the LORD: though your *sins* are scarlet *like dyed cloth*, they will be white like snow; though they are red like crimson, they will become like *pure wool*.

Hope is posited through teshuvah.

Therefore, Yesha'yahu opens the door to teshuvah in his "vision." G-d gives powerful at the end of the Vision. Or, I might say that the concluding passages are the real "Vision."

***Yesha'yahu 1:26 And I will restore your judges as at first and your counsellors as in the beginning; afterwards you shall be called City of Righteousness/Generosity, Faithful City.***

**b. B.B. 3b** R. Hisda said: A synagogue should not be demolished before another has been built to take its place. Some say the reason is lest the matter should be neglected,<sup>e</sup> others to prevent any interruption of religious worship.<sup>f</sup> What practical difference does it make which reason we adopt? There is a difference if

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<sup>a</sup> S.Z. Leiman, "The Scroll of the Fasts-the Ninth of Tebeth," JQR 74, (1983): 178.

<sup>b</sup> Shimon Halevi Horovitz, *Machzor Vitri*, (Berlin: bi-defus shel Ts. H. Ittskavski, 1889), 282. This is also discussed in Wout Van Bekkum, "The Rock on Which the Church is Founded," *Saints and Role Models in Judaism and Christianity* (Brill, 2004), 300 and "Nishmat Kol Hai," *Encyclopedia Judaica* Second Edition, Judaica (2006).

<sup>c</sup> Skolnik, F. (2006). *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Second Edition,. Macmillan Reference USA Keter Publishing House Ltd. Volume 15 p. 276

<sup>d</sup> Cf. Yesha'yahu 1:18

<sup>e</sup> So that the congregation will be left without a synagogue. Lit., on account of transgression.

<sup>f</sup> During the time when the second synagogue is being built. Lit., on account of prayer.

there is another synagogue.<sup>a</sup> Meremar and Mar Zutra pulled down and rebuilt a summer synagogue in winter and a winter synagogue in summer.<sup>b</sup>

How does this Gemara relate to the “Vision” of Yesha’yahu?

If G-d has established the mitzvot for human observance, He will not violate those mitzvot. Or, we could say that G-d keeps the mitzvot He has established for humanity. Logic says that it is obscured for G-d to establish a rule for humanity that He himself would violate.

Therefore, G-d, by logic cannot destroy the Temple (sanctuary) without first establishing another. So, how does G-d answer for allowing the Temple to be destroyed? G-d did not allow the Temple (first or second) without first establishing another Temple. Hakham Tsefet teaches us that G-d’s preferential “Temple” is not of stones. G-d’s preferential “Temple” is a Temple of living stones, incarnating the Mesorah of Yeshua, the Oral Torah. Here I have a further question. If a Synagogue cannot be destroyed unless a greater one is built, would Messiah come back to build that same Temple which was destroyed in the First century?

The “Vision” of Yesha’yahu was the construction of a Temple (community) where the Governance of G-d dominated rather than Epicureanism.

## **BIRTH PANGS WHY WAIT?**

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His Eminence has elaborated on verse 4, 6 and 8 of our present pericope. Therefore, I will leave his comments for the reader to follow. I would like to briefly address the “Birth Pangs” of verse 8. My thesis here is that the whole of the materials we have for this Sabbath, weave together like a single piece of fabric. Or, to use the analogy from above, are all in one corral. This would mean that all that we find in associated materials would fit within or corral.

**b. San 98a** Ulla said; Let him [The Messiah] come, but let me not see him.<sup>c</sup> Rabbah said likewise: Let him come, but let me not see him. R. Joseph said: Let him come, and may I be worthy of sitting in the shadow of his ass's saddle.<sup>d</sup> Abaye enquired of Rabbah: What is your reason [for not wishing to see him]? Shall we say, because of the birth pangs [preceding the advent] of the Messiah?<sup>e</sup> But it has been taught, R. Eleazar's disciples asked him: What must a man do to be spared the pangs of the Messiah? [He answered,] **Let him engage in study and benevolence; and you Master do both.** He replied: [I fear] lest sin cause it,<sup>f</sup> in accordance with [the teaching of] R. Jacob b. Idi, who opposed [two verses] [viz.,] it is written, And, Behold, I am with thee, and will guard thee in all places whither thou goest;<sup>g</sup> but it is written, Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed<sup>h</sup> He was afraid that sin might cause [the nullification of God's promise]. Even as it was taught, Till thy people pass over, O Lord.<sup>i</sup> This refers to the first entry [into Palestine]; till thy people pass over, which thou hast purchased;<sup>j</sup> this refers to their second entry. Hence you may reason: The Israelites were as worthy of a miracle being wrought for them at the second entry as at the first, but that sin caused it [not to happen].

Rabbi Eleazar taught that the pangs will be averted by those who are engaged in (Torah) study and acts of kindness. This sounds like the restoration of Navi Yesha’yahu.

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<sup>a</sup> In which case the second reason does not apply.

<sup>b</sup> b. B.B. 3b In the summer, a more airy building was used to escape the heat.

<sup>c</sup> V. n. 7

<sup>d</sup> [Following the reading in Yalkut (v. Levy),

<sup>e</sup> These troubles are generally referred to as birth pangs, being the travail which precedes the birth of a new era.

<sup>f</sup> That sin may neutralise the other two, and so I will suffer after all.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. XXVIII, 15; spoken by God to Jacob.

<sup>h</sup> Ibid. XXXII, 8: in view of God's promise, why did he fear?

<sup>i</sup> Ex. XV, 16.

<sup>j</sup> Ibid.

*Yesha'yahu 1:26 And I will restore your judges as at first and your counsellors as in the beginning; afterwards you shall be called City of Righteousness/Generosity, Faithful City.*

Therefore, I would submit that the repentance that would bring about restoration is one of returning, with diligence in Torah study and acts of righteousness.

Any woman who has experienced childbirth can perfectly understand the necessity of birth pangs. Today's science has created methods that allow women to bear children surgically by a method called caesarian section. However, the woman is still put through the pain of surgery and the nine months of child bearing which are stressful to her system. Nevertheless, in the normal process of childbirth the woman knows that the process of pain is the body's way of allowing the child to be born. In other words, if the child is to be born, the mother's body must constrict the child and force it into the birth canal. The tremendous pain is outweighed by the joy of childbirth. By enduring the process of childbirth, the mother experiences an unspeakable joy when she sees the child.

The pangs of bringing about the Messianic era will be averted for those who have engaged in the environment of that era. Those who have accustomed themselves to that environment will hardly notice any difference. Why, because, they have trained themselves to live in that environment in the here and now.

## CONCLUSION

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In my humble opinion Hakham Tsefet was either aware of the special Shabbat "Hazon" which may or may not have been practiced in the First Century. Or, Hakham Tsefet foresaw that it would be a special Sabbath in the future. While this is all conjecture on my part, I have seen the connection through the Torah readings this week as noted above. In my mind, I believe Hakham Tsefet deserved the rightful place as "Tsefet" of the pillars of Nazarean Judaism.

I would further reiterate that we MUST be diligent in Torah Study and acts of righteousness if we are to avert the birth pangs of Messiah. As heralds of Messiah, we should know of these pangs before they occur. When my firstborn son was about to be delivered (1979) my wife was attached to a special monitor. This monitor was capable of determining the length and degree of her contractions. After several hours of watching this monitor (my son was born after 30hrs of labor), I learned to read the monitor. I was able to determine when my wife was about to have a contraction before she actually felt the pain.

The beauty of learning Torah and studying Hakham Tsefet with a Hakham is the ability to read the signs posted along the way. One does not have to be a prophet. One simply needs to be able to read.

The millions of dollars being made by fictitious stories of the eschaton serve as a self-fueled monster. They appeal to the public sense of fear of the end. By buying these fictitious novels of hype, the machine in turn sells more fear.

What do we have to fear? Heaven! G-d, NOTHING else! I do not make these remarks brazenly of flippantly. However, I acknowledge that G-d alone is in control and that no created being, will ever thwart the plan of G-d. I further acknowledge that I have submitted to His authority. I am perfectly confident that He will deal with me justly. I will be satisfied with that however, it works out. I concur with my mentor His Eminence Rabbi Dr Yoseph ben Haggai, "**Non, je ne regrette rien**"!<sup>a</sup>

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

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<sup>a</sup> Google it ☺

## CONNECTIONS TO TORAH READINGS

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### TORAH SEDER

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The Mesorah of Mark makes an immediate connection to the Torah Seder in v3 by listing the chief/heads of the Nazarean Community B'Midbar 30:2 Mark 13:3

### TEHILLIM

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The list of deeds found in Psalm 106:1-5 are the deeds of the righteous or, heads of the Tribes of the Bne Yisrael and the Nazarean Community Mark 13:3

### ASHLAMATAH

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Through the *Memra* (G-d's word or, the living stones, incarnating the Mesorah of Yeshua, the Oral Torah) all of the seed of Yisrael will be justified and glorified 45:25. Likewise, Yeshua foretells the end of the age and Temple from the beginning 46:10

### SPECIAL ASHLAMATAH

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I believe that Hakham Tsefet's strongest connection this week is through the "Vision." Yeshua foretells of the Temple's destruction and the Eschaton as does Yesha'yahu.

### MITZVOT

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Torah Add	M#	Mitzvah	Oral Torah
B'Midbar 30:3	406	Precept of nullifying vow	m. Nedarim
B'Midbar 30:3	407	That we should not break the vows we make	m. Nedarim

### QUESTIONS OR REFLECTION

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1. What was Yeshua actually doing on Har Zeytim (Mount of Olives) with the chief/heads of the Nazarean Community to be?
2. Why did Moshe meet with the "heads of the tribes" in B'Midbar 30:2?
3. Why does Yeshua call Shimon "Tsefet"?
4. Is the name Tsefet found in scripture?
5. Are we on track with the Triennial Torah readings?
6. Are we on track with matching the Nazarean Codicil with the Torah reading and time?
7. Does this Torah Seder and pericope of Mordechai match the special Shabbat reading of Yeshayahu 1:1-27?

8. How does the vision of Yesha'yahu and Yermi'yahu, read over the past weeks differ?
9. How does this Gemara b. B.B 3b relate to the "Vision" of Yesha'yahu?
10. If we are not permitted to destroy even a Synagogue how does G-d answer for allowing the Temple to be destroyed?
11. If a Synagogue cannot be destroyed unless a greater one is built, would Messiah come back to build that same Temple which was destroyed in the First century?