

MORDECHAI 97

MORDECHAI 10:35-41

BESB

Mar 10:35 And Yaakov and Yochanan, the sons of Zavdeyel, approached Him (Yeshua), [and] said, Rabbi (Hakham), we have a request that whatever we may request, you would grant us.

Mar 10:36 And he (Yeshua) asked them, what do you desire for me to do for you?

Mar 10:37 And they said to him, allow us (permit us the honor) that we may sit one on the right [hand] of you and one on the left [hand] of you in your [seat of] honor.

Mar 10:38 But Yeshua said to them, you do not know what you [are] asking (for). Do you have the ability to drink [from] the cup, which I [now] drink [from], and to be immersed with the immersion [that] I am [now] immersed with?

Mar 10:39 And they said to him, we are able. However, Yeshua said to them, certainly you will drink [from] my cup, and you will be immersed with the immersion with which I am immersed.

Mar 10:40 But to sit on my right [hand] or [on] my left [hand] is not mine to give, but for whom it has been appointed.

Mar 10:41 And the [other] ten hearing, began to be indignant about [at] Yaakov and Yochanan.

GREEK TEXT

³⁵ Καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰακώβος καὶ Ἰωάννης οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου λέγοντες Διδάσκαλε θέλομεν ἵνα ὁ ἐὰν αἰτήσωμέν ποιήσης ἡμῖν

³⁶ ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Τί θέλετέ ποιῆσαι με ὑμῖν

³⁷ οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ Δὸς ἡμῖν ἵνα εἷς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου καὶ εἷς ἐξ εὐωνύμων σου καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου

³⁸ ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Οὐκ οἶδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι

³⁹ οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ Δυνάμεθα ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Τὸ μὲν ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πίεσθε καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε

⁴⁰ τὸ δὲ καθίσει ἐκ δεξιῶν μου καὶ ἐξ εὐωνύμων μου οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι ἀλλ' οἷς ἠτοίμασται

⁴¹ Καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ δέκα ἤρξαντο ἀγανακτεῖν περὶ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου

DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

³⁵ וַיִּקְרְבוּ אֵלָיו יַעֲקֹב וַיּוֹחָנָן בְּנֵי זְבֻדֵי וַיֹּאמְרוּ רַבִּי חַפְצִים אֲנַחְנוּ שְׂתַעֲשֶׂה לָּנוּ אֶת־אֲשֶׁר נִשְׂאֵל מִמֶּךָ:

³⁶ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם מִה־אֹיְתָם כִּי־אֶעֱשֶׂה לָכֶם: ³⁷ וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו תְּנֶה־לָּנוּ לְשִׁבַת אֶחָד לַיְמִינֶךָ וְאֶחָד

לְשִׁמְאֵלְךָ בְּכַבֻּדְךָ: ³⁸ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם יְשׁוּעַ לֹא יִדְעַתֶּם אֵת אֲשֶׁר שְׂאֵלְתֶם הַתּוֹכְלוּ לְשִׁתּוֹת אֶת־הַכּוֹס

אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי שֹׂתָה וְלַהֲטִיבֵל הַטְּבִילָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹטֵבֵל: ³⁹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו נוֹכַל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם יְשׁוּעַ אֶת־הַכּוֹס

אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי שֹׂתָה תִשְׂתּוּ וְהַטְּבִילָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹטֵבֵל תִּטְבְּלוּ: ⁴⁰ אָךְ שִׁבַת לַיְמִינִי וְלְשִׁמְאֵלִי אֵין בְּיָדִי לְתַת

בְּלָתִי לְאֲשֶׁר הוֹכֵן לָהֶם: ⁴¹ וַיְהִי כִשְׂמַע זֹאת הִעֲשָׂרָה וַיַּחֲלוּ לְכַעֵס אֶל־יַעֲקֹב וַיּוֹחָנָן:

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INTRODUCTION

Abot 5:7 There are seven traits to an unformed golem, and seven to a sage. (1) A sage does not speak before someone greater than he in wisdom. (2) And he does not interrupt his fellow. (3) And he is not at a loss for an answer. (4) He asks a relevant question and answers properly. (5) And he addresses each matter in its proper sequence, first, then second. (6) And concerning something he has not heard, he says, “I have not heard the answer.” (7) And he concedes the truth [when the other party demonstrates it]. And the opposite of these traits apply to a golem.^a

We can never underestimate the value of the teachings of the Fathers (Abot). As we approach Pesach, the “Sayings of the Fathers” will increase in importance, as we will read a passage from those writings each week. The above-cited Mishnah is of particular interest because it deals with ethical behavior within the Esnoga.^b A few weeks ago, we saw the golem as a part of the commentary with the word “truth” marked on his head.^c The present Mishnah tells us that the dullard is a “golem.” Last week we read that the Tefillin and tzitzit were marks of G-d’s presence and our committal to Him.^d The present Mishnah teaches us how to differentiate between the golem (dullard) and the Hakham (wise man) by his conduct.

*There is so much detail to the world, so much to appreciate, so much of which to be in awe. Yet there are individuals who fail to grasp this, and are too ego-centered to reach out and fully absorb the surrounding environment. There are seven ways in which one can distinguish the properly integrated, wise individual from the boor — **the individual who has a fragile ego, who needs to assert the self and bring it into prominence.** They all deal with the dialogical quality of the*

^a Jacob Neusner, *The Mishnah A New Translation*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press) 1988.

^b Synagogue

^c <http://www.torahfocus.com/triennial/ShabbatZakhor.pdf>

^d <http://www.torahfocus.com/triennial/IIAdar2071.pdf>

individual vis-a-vis others. The wise person appreciates wisdom, is not threatened by the fact that others may be wiser, will not even dare speak but is ready to absorb the wisdom of others. Such a person will not interrupt someone else's speech, does not feel the world will come to an end if what one has to say is not said immediately.^e

In light of what His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai taught us in our last lesson we can appreciate the ego that is not so frail as to need an over abundance of boasting.^f

THE LAMP OF G-D

The golem, boor is only concerned with himself and his world. He feels that his thoughts should take preeminence above others. Therefore, he tries to usurp the authority of the wise. In this vein, the golem is truly a picture of the individual who needs the truth of this season.

Pro 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law (teaching and instruction) is light; and debate for (ethical) instruction are the way of life.^g

This Proverb connects light with apprehension of the instructions of the Torah filtering them through an ethical filter. These become the “way of life” for the Hakhamim. Light in the context of the Proverb has deeper meanings, which we will not entertain at this point. We will point out that the Proverb makes a natural connection between light and those who accept the instruction of the Torah along with its ethical teachings. The Parable demonstrates the truth that a Hakham is one who can fully appreciate the power of truth. Remember that in the mythical story of the Golem the word “truth” animated the creature of clay. We are but dust. When we have been animated, it is by the words of the Torah.

Shabbat 1:3 A tailor should not go out carrying his needle near nightfall, lest he forget and cross [a boundary]; nor a scribe with his pen. And [on the Sabbath] one should not search his clothes [for fleas], or **read by the light of a lamp. In truth**, it was said: [On the Sabbath] a teacher sees [**by the light of a lamp**] where the children are reading, but he does not read. Similarly, a man-Zab should not eat a meal with a woman-Zab, because it leads to transgression.^h

The readings from the Psalm this week have a special blessing for the righteous/generous.

Tehillim 97:11. **A light is sown for the righteous, and for the upright of heart, joy.** Tehillim 97:11. **Light has shone and is hidden for the righteous/ generous, and joy for the upright of heart.**

Shabbat 2:1 With what do they kindle [the Sabbath light] and with what do they not kindle [it]? They do not kindle with (1) cedar fiber, (2) uncarded flax, (3) raw silk, (4) wick of bast, (5) wick of the desert, (6) or seaweed; or with (1) pitch, (2) wax, (3) castor oil, (4) oil [given to a priest as heave offering which had become unclean and must therefore be] burned, (5) [grease from] the fat tail, or (6) tallow. Nahum the

^e Bulka, Reuven P. The Chapters of the Fathers, A Psychological Commentary on Pirkey Avoth, Jason Aronson Inc, 1993

^f <http://www.torahfocus.com/triennial/IIAdar2071.pdf>

^g My translation

^h Jacob Neusner, *The Mishnah A New Translation*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press) 1988.

Mede says, "They kindle [the Sabbath lamp] with melted tallow." And sages say, "All the same is that which is melted and that which is not melted: they do not kindle with it."

From the cited Mishnah, Hillel and Shammai debated the lighting of the Chanuka lights. The light of Chanuka and the light sown for the righteous is one of dedication. The word "Chanuka" is one that I find fascinating. The Hebrew word "Chanuka" has its root in the word "chinuch" (education). The Targum words the pasuk in a way that demonstrates that if we are ever to find the light of the Torah we must search for it. Consequently, the light of Chanuka (and the Menorah) tell us that we like the oil, are to ascend to G-d through Torah study. Of course, this means that we should each aspire to become Hakhamim.

MY CUP AND IMMERSION

Mar 10:38 But Yeshua said to them, you do not know what you [are] asking (for). Do you have the ability to drink [from] the cup, which I [now] drink [from], and to be immersed with the immersion [that] I am [now] immersed with?

Do you have the ability to drink [from] the cup, which I [now] drink [from],

Yeshua makes a direct link to the ideas of the Torah Seder, light, education and consecration. Can you drink of the cup (of suffering)? Many people have desired to become a Torah Scholar when they hear a Hakham teaching the Torah. However, they do not comprehend the countless hours required for study, learning (education) and devotion to the threshing for kernels, which will be the bread upon which they feast. The Menorah was to only be fueled by purest oil. This teaches us how dedicated we must be to truth and Torah study. However, Yeshua is not simply alluding to this sort of pain. The pain and suffering that Yeshua alludes to is the rebirth of priesthood of the firstborn. This week's Torah Seder is permeated with connections to the understanding of why the Kohanim were selected and what would happen in the future.

B'Midbar 8:21. The Levites cleansed themselves and washed their clothes. Then Aaron lifted them as a waving before the Lord, and Aaron atoned for them to cleanse them.

Do you have the ability to ... be immersed with the immersion [that] I am [now] immersed with?

Rashi translates B'Midbar 8:21 in a very interesting way. "Then Aaron lifted them" alluding to the Kohanim rather than the offerings offered. This satisfies the idea of a Korban, which "brings near" the offerer. Therefore, the *olah* (burnt offering) elevates the offerer of those for whom the offering is offered.

The "mikvah" is also an elevation. Specifically it is an elevation of status. Therefore, just as the oil, being consumed in the Menorah brings light through the elevation of the flame the *olah* elevates the Kohanim and the Mikvah elevates the immersed.

So why is this pericope of Mordechai weighed against this particular Torah Seder?

On the other hand, why did Hakham Tsefet, through his scribe Mordechai pen the words that we have in this pericope?

B'Midbar 8:11. Then Aaron shall lift up the Levites as a waving before the Lord on behalf of the children of Israel, that they may serve in the Lord's service.

B'Midbar 8:11. And Aharon will present the Levites, (as) an elevation before the LORD from the sons of Israel, and they will be for the work of the service of the LORD.

Verses 11, 13 and 15 are most unusual. They all contain the Hebrew word תְּנוּפָה, meaning wave or shake indicating the waving towards the altar indicating a threefold dedication of the Kohanim. Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch defines תְּנוּפָה as dedication, designation and direction.¹

This begs the question of why the Kohanim had to be dedicated three times.

The threefold dedication bespeaks method. The method of complete dedication requires a dedication by the whole community and by G-d. Yisrael dedicated the Kohanim to G-d. G-d dedicated the Kohanim to His service and Aaron dedicated the Kohanim to G-d and the service of the Mishkan.

B'Midbar 8:7. This is what you shall do to them so as to cleanse them: sprinkle them with cleansing water and pass a razor over all their flesh; then they shall wash their garments and cleanse themselves.

B'Midbar 8:7. And this will you do to purify them. Sprinkle upon them the water for uncleanness through sin (chattata), and let the razor pass over all their flesh, and let them wash their raiment, and wash themselves in forty seahs of water.

Note Rashi's commentary to B'Midbar 8:7

and pass a razor over all their flesh I found in the writings of R. Moses Hadarshan (the preacher): Since they [the Levites] were submitted in atonement for the firstborn who had practiced idolatry [when they worshipped the golden calf], which is called sacrifices to the dead—and one afflicted with tzara'ath is considered dead—they required shaving like those afflicted with tzara'ath.

Note the connection between the Mikvah and the dedication of the Kohanim. The dedication ceremony demands their death in a matter of speaking. Mikvah is a picture of death as well as elevation. The elevation comes from death to a previous status of way of life. The Kohanim were accustomed to a way of life that died when they were dedicated to HaShem's service.

Therefore, we could reword Yeshua's statement to read as follows.

Mar 10:38 Do you have the ability to suffer in the manner in which I suffer, and to die to the life you now possess as I do?

Hakham Tsefet is most astute. He notes that triple play on the word תְּנוּפָה in our Torah Seder and makes his own double play of triple word use.

*Mar 10:38 But Yeshua said to them, you do not know what you [are] asking (for). Do you have the ability to drink [from] the cup, which I [now] drink [from], and to be **immersed** with the **immersion** [that] I am [now] **immersed** with?*

*Mar 10:39 And they said to him, we are able. However, Yeshua said to them, certainly you will drink [from] my cup, and you will be **immersed** with the **immersion** with which I am **immersed**?*

ⁱ Hirsch, Rav Samson Raphael, The Hirsch Chumash, Sefer B'Midbar, Feldheim Publishers –Judaica Press, 2008 p.158

Why does Hakham Tsefet use the word “immerse” or “immersion” three times in two verses?

As noted above the Hebrew word תְּנוּפָה means dedication. We have also noted that the idea of immersion is that of elevation. Consequently, Hakham Tsefet uses the word immersion and the elevation of status in the same way that the Torah Seder uses the idea of תְּנוּפָה. The threefold immersion means complete and whole immersion in the study of Torah and pursuit of the position of Hakham.

*B'Midbar 8:11 Then Aaron shall **lift up** [elevate] the Levites as a waving before the Lord on behalf of the children of Israel,*

*15. Following this, the Levites shall come to serve in the Tent of Meeting. You shall **cleanse them and lift them** as a waving.*

TIME OUT

We should note here that the sin of the Golden Calf renders the Firstborn dead to G-d's service.

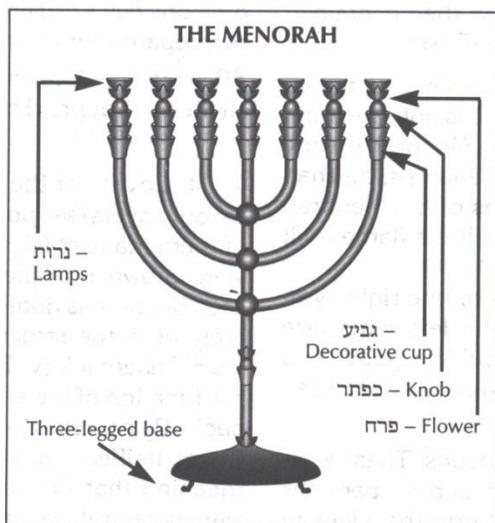
B'Midbar 8:16 For they are wholly given (נְתֻנִים נְתֻנִים) over to Me from among the children of Israel; instead of those that open the womb all the firstborn of Israel I have taken them for Myself.

*17 For all the **firstborn among the children of Israel are Mine** whether man or beast since the day I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt; I have sanctified them for Myself.*

The Torah Seder makes another double play on the word נָתַן meaning, “to give.” Again, we have another idea of completeness.

Why were the Kohanim “given”? The firstborn among the Bne Yisrael possess a particular sanctity. Their sanctity is sanctity above the other Bne Yisrael. Because Paro oppressed the Bne Yisrael and their firstborn, G-d punished the firstborn of the Egypt. This act of G-d demonstrates just how holy the firstborn of Yisrael actually are.

So, why does HaShem insert a parenthetical period where the Kohanim serve in His service rather than the Firstborn?



Note B'Midbar 9:7...

B'Midbar 9:7 Those men said to him, "We are ritually unclean [because of contact] with a dead person; [but] why should we be excluded so as not to bring the offering of the Lord in its appointed time, with all the children of Israel?"

B'Midbar 9:7 and these men said to him, "We are unclean, on account of a man who died with us: therefore we are hindered from killing the Pascha, and shedding the blood of the LORD's oblation upon the altar at its time, that we may eat its flesh, being clean, among the children of Israel."

B'Midbar 9:7 *Why should we be excluded* He [Moses] told them, "Sacrifices cannot be offered in a state of ritual uncleanness." They replied, "Let ritually clean kohanim sprinkle the blood for us, and let ritually clean people eat the

flesh." He said to them, "Wait, and I will hear..." like a disciple who is confident of hearing from his

teacher's mouth. Fortunate is the mortal who is so confident, for whenever he wished, he could speak with the Shechinah...^j

In a manner of speaking, the firstborn are rendered ritually unclean and therefore incapable of offering offerings before G-d.

If the idea of dedication and immersion serve to educate (*chinuch*), then there must have been a reason that the parenthetical period of the Kohanim is inserted into the Priestly service. Furthermore, if the idea of immersion and dedication are for the purpose of elevation then we must surmise that the parenthetical insertion of the Kohanim served to elevate the Firstborn in some fashion.^k

A HOUSE FULL OF BROTHERS

Personally, I grew up the oldest of seven children. I have three brothers and three sisters. My father never placed the work of boys on my sisters. Nor did he place the work of the sisters on me or my brothers. Likewise, my father saw that some of the boys were better suited to certain tasks. As the oldest, I was the first in line for a job. I gained a great deal of experience from being the first in line. However, I was able to pass this information on to my younger brothers. In the absence of my father and mother, I was usually responsible for their wellbeing.

When my duties elsewhere made me absent my brother Jerry, (the second in the line of boys) was usually selected for my chores. You might say that Jerry was a substitute in my absence.

Though present, the firstborn are rendered incapable of service because of their sin of the Golden Calf. However, at some point this parenthetical substitution must end. The great question will be how would G-d rectify for the sin of the Golden Calf and re-institute the Firstborn. And, how would this re-institution be an elevation of status?

Before I venture into an explanation of the Tikkun for the sin of the Golden Calf and the firstborn, I would like to venture a thesis.

As I stated above my brother Jerry conducted service in my absence. However, Jerry always wanted instruction as to how to fulfill my chores when they were technical in nature. Consequently, I became an educator as well as an older brother. While we can see that the Kohanim would be the spiritual governors of the Bne Yisrael per se, there remains a need for the firstborn among the ranks of the Bne Yisrael to do what they really did best. What do the first-born do best? In simple terms, they educate. This brings us to another question. How do the educational skills of the firstborn relate to their *tikkun*, re-instatement, and elevation?

Yoma 1:1 Seven days before the Day of Atonement they set apart the high priest from his house to the councilors' chamber...

Yoma 1:3 They handed over to him elders belonging to the court, and they read for him the prescribed rite of the day [of atonement]. And they say to him, "My lord, high priest, you read it with your own lips, "lest you have forgotten—or never [even] learned it to begin with." On the eve of the Day of Atonement at dawn they set him up at the eastern gate and bring before him bullocks, rams, and sheep, so that he will be informed and familiar with the service.

^j Rashi's commentary to B'Midbar 9:7

^k Here I suggest that the elevation is that of the Firstborn rather than the Kohanim for reasons I will divulge later.

These “*Mishnayot*” picture something unique with regard to the relationship of the firstborn and the Priesthood. The Elders (representatives of the firstborn) are teaching the High Priest (representative of the Kohanim). Here there is an apparent role reversal with regard to the two parties.

During the occupation of the Kohanim, the Kohen served as an educator on a particular level. It was still the occupation of the firstborn to teach the family how to conduct the services as taught by the Kohanim. Consequently, the Firstborn never lost their ability or responsibility to educate and judge. Regardless of the fact that the Kohen Gadol served as the spiritual leader of the nation the Firstborn still functioned as the spiritual leader of his house and community, under the authority of the Kohen Gadol.

The Mishnah’s tractate Yoma clearly demonstrates that the roles of Kohanim and Firstborn have now been reversed. The Elder (representative of the firstborn) now instructs the Kohen Gadol. This tells us that at the time of the writing the Mishnah the tikkun of the firstborn had already taken place. It further demonstrates that the primary quality of the Firstborn is that of teaching and instruction. The sin of the Golden Calf demonstrated their failure in ONE area alone. The area of their failure was that of the offering of an invalid sacrifice.

THE GIVER AND RECEIVER

B’Midbar 8:16 For they are wholly given **כִּי נְתַנְיָם** **כִּי נְתַנְיָם** over to Me from among the children of Israel; instead of those that open the womb all the firstborn of Israel I have taken them for Myself.

B’Midbar 8:16 for separated they are separate before Me from among the sons of Israel, instead of everyone who opens the womb; the first-born of all who are of the sons of Israel have I taken (to be) before Me.

The Hebrew phrase **כִּי נְתַנְיָם** indicates that the giver renounces in favor of the recipient. It should be noted that the *Levi'im* have no original claim to the Priesthood. Furthermore, we should note that the obligation of service in the Sanctuary was that of all Yisrael. However, the responsible agent in carrying out the service of the Sanctuary was that of the firstborn.¹ The giving over mentioned here is that of the whole nation to the Kohanim their right to function in their stead. Therefore, the office of the Priesthood was handed from the Firstborn to the *Levi'im* intentionally. Again, this begs the question: why did the firstborn intentionally hand over the office of Priesthood to the *Levi'im*?

The authority of the firstborn was always intended to be educational and family related. The authority of the firstborn was never intended to be national. If the firstborn had accepted the national rule of the people in the fashion of the *Levi'im*, the Bne Yisrael would have suffered on a grander scale. Their teaching skills and the close family unit were more important than their functioning as a priestly class in the manner of the *Levi'im*. We will note one other aspect of this thought here. The Firstborn as a teaching class were ever a reminder to the Bne Yisrael as to the gravity of sin. One single sin had caused them a parenthetical interruption of service. This warning would have to be heeded by all Yisrael and the Kohanic Priesthood.

Therefore, the tractate Yoma is far more revealing than first assumed. How so? The role of authority is in the hands of the giver. In Yoma 1:1-3 we ask another question. Who is the giver and who is the receiver?

¹ Hirsch, Rav Samson Raphael, The Hirsch Chumash, Sefer B’Midbar, Feldheim Publishers –Judaica Press, 2008 p.163

It is evident that the Kohen Gadol as a representative of the Kohanim has given over his authority to the Elders or representatives of the Firstborn.

Consequently, the tikkun had been meted out and the restoration has been accomplished.

How did this tikkun manifest itself?

TIKKUN

A representative of the Firstborn must demonstrate that he wished for the authoritative role to be returned to the firstborn and the *Levi'im* must concede to that request.

*Joh 3:30-31 He must increase, but I must decrease. ³¹ He that cometh from a **first place** (ἐπάνω) is the (authority) above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth: he that cometh from heavens (first things) is above all.^m*

Here we are not able to delve into the Sod of Yochanan, which would more fully explain our scenario. However, I will delve into a P'shat explanation for the sake of my thesis.

*Gen 18:2 He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men stood **in front of him** (ἐπάνω). He ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the ground.*

The passage from Genesis demonstrates the definition of "in front or first place." Also note that Abraham bows before these men of the "first place" or those "in front" of him. The place of the firstborn is the place of authority.

he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth: he that cometh from heavens is above all.ⁿ

We might reword this translation so we can clarify its meaning. That which is of the earth is secondary.

Gen 1:1 In the beginning of G-d's creating the heavens and earth.^o

The "Heavens" come before or take precedence over the earth.

Shemot 25:40 "See that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain (above i.e. the heavens).

That which is of the earth is that which is secondary indicating the Kohanic Priesthood is secondary in function and office. We saw this in our Parsha of Parah Adumah.^p The primary role of Priesthood was initially given to the Firstborn.

Yochanan, the representative of the Kohanim willingly gives the Kohanic Priesthood to Yeshua, with the same connotation of כִּי נְתַנִּים נְתַנִּים as the Bne Yisrael in B'Midbar 8:16. Yeshua willingly accepts the transference as a firstborn representing the firstborn.

^m My translation

ⁿ My translation

^o Also my rendition

^p <http://www.torahfocus.com/triennial/ParahAdumah71.pdf>

Mordechai 1:1 The permanence of the Mesorah of Yeshua HaMashiach, the Son of the Judge;

Mordechai 1:4 Yochanan did immerse in the wilderness (B'Midbar), and proclaim the immersion of restoration for the remission of sins (of the firstborn).^q

If you will remember above, we said that the dead do not dance. We might further the question by saying "or do they"? The Firstborn were considered dead to the office of the priesthood yet the continued as educators. How is the tikkun meted out? Firstly, it is meted out through atonement of Torah study and scholarship. Secondly, Yeshua's resurrection, as a firstborn reanimates the firstborn to lively service and lively stones. The Firstborn are now a picture of the Living Festival of Chag HaMatzah.

The permanence of the Mesorah superseded the Kohanic Priesthood. Therefore, Yochanan willingly, wholly gave (נְתַנְיָם נְתַנְיָם) the Kohanic Priesthood over to Yeshua and the Firstborn to reciprocate for the act of G-d, Bne Yisrael, and Aaron wholly giving (נְתַנְיָם נְתַנְיָם) the office of the firstborn to the Kohanim.

CLEANSING THE FIRSTBORN

B'Midbar 8:7 This is what you shall do to them so as to cleanse them: sprinkle them with cleansing water and pass a razor over all their flesh; then they shall wash their garments and cleanse themselves.

B'Midbar 8:7 And this will you do to purify them. Sprinkle upon them the water for uncleanness through sin (chattata), and let the razor pass over all their flesh, and let them wash their raiment, and wash themselves in forty seahs of water.

We have a sublime reference to the ashes of the Red Heifer in the phrase "*sprinkle them with cleansing water.*" Not only would the office of the Firstborn have to be given back to them by the Kohanic Priesthood, the firstborn would have to be ritually cleansed. Or, should I say that their representative would have to be cleansed in a manner like that of the Red Heifer.

The Torah Seder presents a paradox this week.

B'Midbar 9:15 On the day the Mishkan was erected, the cloud covered the Mishkan, which was a tent for the Testimony, and at evening, there was over the Mishkan like an appearance of fire, [which remained] until morning.

B'Midbar 9:15 And on the day on which the tabernacle was reared the Cloud of Glory covered the Tabernacle; it overspread the Tabernacle of Testimony by day, and at evening, it was over the Tabernacle like a vision of Fire until the morning.

The paradox is that the pillar above the Mishkan was seen as either fire or a Cloud (water). Both of these elements are required for ritual cleansing in the ashes of the Para Adumah. Both of these elements would be required to cleanse the Firstborn or its representative. I will not delve into the more esoteric aspects of this paradox here in this commentary. Rashi's commentary to Beresheet 1:1 tells us that the heavens were created from fire and water. By way of inference, we see this would happen to Yeshua.

Mar 10:37 And they said to him, allow us (permit us the honor) that we may sit one on the right [hand] of you and one on the left [hand] of you in your [seat of] honor.

^q I will note in brief here that Mordechai 1:3-8 is read in the Triennial Torah Reading schedule beginning in Nisan rather than Tishrei.

His seating in the seat of honor would have caused him to pass through the cloud of water and fire ritually cleansing him in a similar manner to those cleansing ashes of the Para Adumah.

CONCLUSION

It seems perfectly evident what Hakham Tsefet had on his mind when he penned these words through Mordechai his scribe. Hakham Tsefet demonstrated how the reconciliation of the firstborn took place through the activities of Yeshua. The text would lend itself easily to greater levels of interpretation, which we must discard for the sake of P'shat. The names, vocabulary, repetition of words even to the mimic of twos and threes demonstrate that close interaction between the Torah Seder and the pericope of Mordechai. The revelation the Hakham Tsefet wants us to see is that Yeshua restored the priesthood to the firstborn.

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

CONNECTIONS TO TORAH READINGS

Torah Seder

This pericope of Mordechai is specifically connected to the Torah Seder through the idea of the Mikveh. B'Midbar 8:21 and Mordechai 10:38-39. Mordechai is secondarily connected to the Torah Seder through the idea of Teaching (becoming a Hakham) and dedication to Torah service. It is the function of the Kohen to be a teacher/leader of Yisrael. Yeshua demonstrates the ideal leader and teacher of the Bne Yisrael.

Tehillim

By way of inference, the Sons of Zavdeyel want to sit near the Master as he sits on his seat of honor. The Psalmist tells us that righteousness/generosity and judgment are the foundations to the Throne of G-d. Mordechai 10:37 and Psalms 97:2

Ashlamatah

The Ashlamatah finds special attachments to Mordechai through its verbal connections and sublime thematic assertions. The right [hand] is a position of authority. The menorah of Zechariah 4:3 has two olive trees near it. One is on the right and one of the left. The idea of sitting, fuling and throne are also resident in Zec. 6:13

MITZVOT

Torah Add	M#	Mitzvah	Oral Torah
B'Midbar 9:11-12	380	Precept of the second Passover	Pesachim
B'Midbar 9:11	381	Precept of eating matzah and bitter herbs on the second Passover.	
B'Midbar 9:12	382	Precept of leaving nothing of the second Passover until the second day	
B'Midbar 9:12	383	Prohibition against breaking any of the bones of the Second Passover	

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Why is this pericope of Mordechai weighed against this particular Torah Seder? Or why did Hakham Tsefet through his scribe Mordechai pen the words that we have in this pericope?
2. Why did the Kohanim have to be dedicated three times?
3. Why does Hakham Tsefet use the word immerse or immersion three times?
4. Why were the Kohanim "given"?
5. Why does HaShem insert a parenthetical period where the Kohanim serve in His service rather than the Firstborn?
6. How did G-d rectify for the sin of the Golden calf and re-institute the Firstborn.
7. How would rectify for the sin of the Golden calf and re-institute the Firstborn be an elevation of status?
8. What do the first-born do best?
9. How do the educational skills of the firstborn relate to their tikkun and reinstatement?
10. Why did the firstborn intentionally hand over the office of Priesthood to the *Levi'im*?
11. How is the tractate Yoma is far more revealing than first assumed?
12. In Yoma 1:1-3 who is the giver and who is the receiver?
13. How did the tikkun of the Firstborn manifest itself?