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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah**  **12210 Luckey Summit**  **San Antonio, TX 78252**  **United States of America**  **© 2024**  [**https://www.betemunah.org/**](https://www.betemunah.org/)  **E-Mail:** [**gkilli@aol.com**](mailto:gkilli@aol.com) | **Menorah 5** | **Esnoga Bet El**  **102 Broken Arrow Dr.**  **Paris TN 38242**  **United States of America**  **© 2024**  [**https://torahfocus.com/**](https://torahfocus.com/)  **E-Mail:** [**waltoakley@charter.net**](mailto:waltoakley@charter.net) |

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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **Second Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Shevat 17, 5784 – January 26/27, 2024** | **Second Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

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

**Roll of Honor:**

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

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

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

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His Excellency Adon Brad Gaskill and beloved wife Cynthia Gaskill

His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham

His Excellency Adon Ya’aqob ben David

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

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

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

**A Prayer for Israel**

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

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

**A Prayer for our Beloved Hakhamim**

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

**A special Prayer for our Beloved Hakham**

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

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

**Note*: As there are many versions of the Torah and Tanach (Bible), the locations of passages (verses) may not coincide with the locations of the readings in our parsha as printed. We try to follow the parsha as printed and from time to time this problem may be evident and some corrections may be needed. Thank you for your patience.***

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Shevat 17, 5784, January 26/27, 2024**

**Shabbat: “V’Atem Tihyu Li” –** **“And you will be unto me”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“V’Atem Tihyu Li”** | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 19:6-9 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 21:1-3 |
| **“And you will be unto me”** | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 19:10-13 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 21:4-6 |
| **“Y vosotros seréis para Mí”** | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 19:14-16 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 21:7-11 |
| Sh’mot (Exodus) 19:6 – 20:23 | Reader 4 – Sh’mot 19:17-25 |  |
| Ashlamatah:  Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:6 – 62:4 | Reader 5 – Sh’mot 20:1-13 | **Monday / Thursday Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – Sh’mot 20:14-17 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 21:1-3 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 57:1-12 | Reader 7 – Sh’mot 20:18-22 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 21:4-6 |
|  | Maftir – Sh’mot 20:20-22 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 21:7-11 |
| N.C.: Mk 7:14-16; | Isaiah 61:6 – 62:4 |  |

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* A Kingdom of Priests – Exodus 19:6
* Moses Informs the Israelites of G-d’s Purpose – Exodus 19:7-9
* The People to be Rendered Fit for the Revelation – Exodus 19:10-15
* Natural Accompaniments of the Revelation – Exodus 19:16-19
* The Final Directions Before the Revelation – Exodus 19:20-25
* The Decalogue – Exodus 20:1-13
  + First Word: Recognition of the Sovereignty of G-d – Exodus 20:2
  + Second Word: The Unity and Spirituality of G-d – Exodus 20:3-6
  + Third Word: Against Perjury and Profane Swearing – Exodus 20:7
  + Fourth Word: The Sabbath - Exodus 20:8-11
  + Fifth Word: Honor of Parents – Exodus 20:12
  + Sixth Word: The Sanctity of Human Life – Exodus 20:13
  + Seventh Word: The Sanctity of Marriage – Exodus 20:13
  + Eighth Word: The Sanctity of Property – Exodus 20:13
  + Ninth Word: Against Bearing False Witness – Exodus 20:13
  + Tenth Word: Against Covetous Desires – Exodus 20:14
* The Effect of the Revelation – Exodus 20:15-18
* How G-d is to be Worshipped – Exodus 20:19-23

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Shemot (Exodus) 19:6 -20:23**

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
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| 6. **And you will be to Me a kingdom of princes and a holy nation.’** These are the words that you will speak to the children of Israel.” | 6. **And before Me you will be crowned kings, and sanctified priests, and a holy people.** These are the words you will speak to the sons of Israel.  [JERUSALEM. And to My Name will you be kings and priests and a holy people. These are the words you will speak.] |
| 7. Moses came and summoned the elders of Israel and placed before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. | 7. And Mosheh came that day, and called the elders of the people, and set in order before them all these words which the Lord had commanded.  [JERUSALEM. And Mosheh came and called the sages of Israel and set in order before them all these words which the Word of the Lord had commanded him.] |
| 8. And all the people replied in unison and said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do!” and Moses took the words of the people back to the LORD. | 8. And all the people responded together, and said, all that the Lord has spoken we will do. And Mosheh carried back the words of the people before the Lord.  JERUSALEM. And all the people answered together in the fulness of their heart, and said, all that the Word of the Lord hath spoken, we will do. And Mosheh returned the words of the people in prayer before the Lord.] |
| 9. And the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am coming to you in the thickness of the cloud, in order that the people hear when I speak to you, and they will also believe in you forever.” And Moses relayed the words of the people to the LORD. | 9. And the Lord said to Mosheh, Behold, on the third day I will reveal Myself to thee in the depth of the cloud of glory, that the people may hear while I speak with thee, and may believe in thee forever. And Mosheh delivered the words of the people before the Lord. [JERUSALEM. And the Word of the Lord said to Mosheh, Behold, My Word will be revealed to you in the thickness of the cloud, that the people may hear while I speak with you, and may also believe forever in the words of the prophecy of you, My servant Mosheh. And Mosheh delivered the words of the people in prayer before the Lord.] |
| 10. And the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and prepare them today and tomorrow, and they will wash their garments. | 10. And the Lord said to Mosheh on the fourth day, Go unto the people, and prepare them today and tomorrow; let them wash their raiment, and be prepared |
| 11. And they will be prepared for **the third day**, for **on the third day**, the LORD will descend before the eyes of all the people upon Mount Sinai. | 11. **On the third day**; for **on the third day** the Lord will reveal Himself to the eyes of all the people, upon the Mount of Sinai. |
| 12. And you will set boundaries for the people around, saying, ‘Beware of ascending the mountain or touching its edge; whoever touches the mountain will surely be put to death.’ | 12. And you will set limits for the people that they may stand round about the mountain, and will say, Beware that you ascend not the mount, nor come near its confines; whoever comes near the mount will be surely put to death. |
| 13. No hand will touch it, for he will be stoned or cast down; whether man or beast, he will not live. When the ram’s horn sounds a long, drawn out blast, they may ascend the mountain.” | 13. Touch it not with the hand; for he will be stoned with hailstone or be pierced with arrows of fire; whether beast or man, he will not live. But when the voice of the trumpet is heard, they may go up (forwards) towards the mount.  [JERUSALEM. No man will touch it with the hand; for stoned he will be stoned, or fiery arrows will flee against him; whether beast or man, he will not live. When the trumpet sounds, they may go up toward the mountain.] |
| 14. So Moses descended from the mountain to the people, and he prepared the people, and they washed their garments. | 14. And Mosheh went down that day to the people, and prepared the people, and they blanched their clothes. |
| 15. He said to the people, “Be ready **for three days**; do not go near a woman.” | 15. And he said to the people, be ready for **the third day**; abstain from the marriage‑bed.  [JERUSALEM. And he said to the people, be ready for **the third day**; abstain from the marriage‑bed.] |
| 16. It came to pass **on the third day** when it was morning, that there were thunder claps and lightning flashes, and a thick cloud was upon the mountain, and a very powerful blast of a Shofar, and the entire nation that was in the camp shuddered. | 16. And it was **on the third day**, on the sixth of the month, in the time of the morning, that on the mountain there were voices of thunders, and lightnings, and mighty clouds of smoke, and a voice of a trumpet exceeding loud; and all the people in the camp trembled. |
| 17. Moses brought the people out toward God from the camp, and they stood at the bottom of the mountain. | 17. And Mosheh brought forth the people from the camp to meet the glorious Presence of the Lord; and suddenly the Lord of the world uprooted the mountain, and lifted it in the air, and it became luminous as a beacon, and they stood beneath the mountain. |
| 18. And the entire Mount Sinai smoked because the LORD had descended upon it in fire, and its smoke ascended like the smoke of the kiln, and the entire mountain quaked violently. | 18. And all the mount of Sinai was in flame; for the heavens had overspread it, and He was revealed over it in flaming fire, and the smoke went up as the smoke of a furnace, and all the mountain quaked greatly.  [JERUSALEM. And all mount Sinai sent up smoke, because the glory of the Shekinah of the Lord was revealed upon it in flame of fire.] |
| 19. The sound of the Shofar grew increasingly stronger; Moses would speak and God would answer him with a voice. | 19. And the voice of the trumpet went forth, and grew stronger: (then) Mosheh spoke, and was answered from before the Lord with a gracious and majestic voice, and with pleasant and gracious words. |
| 20. The LORD descended upon Mount Sinai, to the peak of the mountain, and the LORD summoned Moses to the peak of the mountain, and Moses ascended. | 20. And the Lord revealed Himself on mount Sinai upon the summit of the mountain, and the Lord called unto Mosheh from the summit of the mount, and Mosheh went up. |
| 21. The LORD said to Moses, “Go down, warn the people lest they break [their formation to go nearer] to the LORD, and many of them will fall. | 21. And the Lord said to Mosheh, Descend, and warn the people, lest they come directly before the Lord to gaze, and many of them fall. |
| 22. And also, the priests who go near to the LORD will prepare themselves, lest the LORD wreak destruction upon them.” | 22. The priests, also, who approach to minister before the Lord, must be sanctified, lest the Lord destroy them. |
| 23. And Moses said to the LORD, “The people cannot ascend to Mount Sinai, for You warned us saying, ‘Set boundaries for the mountain and sanctify it.’ “ | 23. And Mosheh said before the Lord, the people cannot come up to mount Sinai, because You did instruct us, saying, make limits to the mount, and sanctify it. |
| 24. But the LORD said to him, “Go, descend, and [then] you will ascend, and Aaron with you, but the priests and the populace will not break [their formation] to ascend to the LORD, lest He wreak destruction upon them.” | 24. And the Lord said to him, Go down, and then ascend, you and Aharon with you; but let not the, priests or the people directly come up to gaze before the Lord, lest He slay them. |
| 25. So Moses went down to the people and said [this] to them. | 25. And Mosheh went down from the mountain to the people, and said to them, draw near and hear the Law with Ten Words.  [JERUSALEM. And Mosheh went down from the mountain to the people, and said to them, draw near and receive the Ten Words.] |
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| 20:1. God spoke all these words, to respond: | 1. And the Lord spoke all these words, saying:  [JERUSALEM. And the Word of the Lord spake all the excellence of these words saying:] |
| 2. “I am the LORD, your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. | 2. The first word, as it came forth from the mouth of the Holy One, whose Name be blessed, was like storms, and lightnings, and flames of fire, with a burning light on His right hand and on His left. It winged its way through the air of the heavens, and was made manifest unto the camp of Israel, and returned, and was engraved on the tables of the covenant that were given by the hand of Mosheh, and were turned in them from side to side: and then called He, and said: Sons of Israel My people, I am the Lord your God, who brought you out free from the land of Mizraim, from the house of the bondage of slaves. |
| 3. You will not have the gods of others in My presence. | 3. The second word which came forth from the mouth of the Holy One, whose name be blessed, was like storms, and lightnings, and flames of fire. A burning light was on His right hand and on His left and was borne through the air of the heavens, returned, and was made manifest unto the camp of Israel; it returned, and was engraved on the tables of the covenant, and was turned in them from side to side. Then called He, and said, House of Israel, My people, You will have no other God beside Me. |
| 4. You will not make for yourself a graven image or any likeness which is in the heavens above, which is on the earth below, or which is in the water beneath the earth. | 4. You will not make to yourselves image or figure, or any similitude of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. |
| 5. You will neither prostrate yourself before them nor worship them, for I, the LORD, your God, am a zealous God, Who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me, | 5. You will not bow down to them, or worship before them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God and an avenger, punishing with vengeance, recording the guilt of wicked fathers upon rebellious children unto the third and unto the fourth generation of them who hate Me; |
| 6. and [I] perform loving kindness to thousands [of generations], to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments. | 6. but keeping mercy and goodness for thousands of generations of the righteous who love Me, and who keep My commandments and My Laws. |
| 7. You will not take the name of the LORD, your God, in vain, for the LORD will not hold blameless anyone who takes His name in vain. | 7. My people of the house of Israel, Let no one of you swear by the name of the Word of the Lord your God in vain; for in the day of the great judgment the Lord will not hold guiltless anyone who swears by His name in vain. |
| 8. Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it. | 8. My people of the house of Israel, Remember the day of Shabbat, to sanctify it. |
| 9. Six days may you work and perform all your labor, | 9. Six days you will labour, and do all your service: |
| 10. but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD, your God; you will perform no labor, neither you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your beast, nor your stranger who is in your cities. | 10. but the seventh day is (for) rest and quietude before the Lord your God: you will not perform any work, you, and your sons, and your daughters, and your servants, and your handmaids, and your sojourners who are in your cities. |
| 11. For [in] six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it. | 11. For in six days the Lord created the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and whatever is therein, and rested on the seventh day: therefore the Lord has blessed the day of Shabbat and sanctified it. |
| 12. Honor your father and your mother, in order that your days be lengthened on the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you. | 12. My people, the house of Israel, Let every man be instructed in the honour of his father and in the honour of his mother: that your days may be multiplied upon the land which the Lord your God gives you. |
| 13. You will not murder. You will not commit adultery. You will not steal. You will not bear false witness against your neighbor. | 13. My people, the sons of Israel, You. will not be murderers; you will not be companions of or partakers with murderers: in the congregations of Israel there will not be seen a murderous people; neither will your sons rise up after you and teach one another to take part with murderers: for on account of the guilt of murder the sword comes forth upon the world.    My people of the house of Israel, Be you not adulterers, nor companions nor partakers with adulterers: nor in the congregations of Israel will there be seen an adulterous people, that your sons may not arise after you to teach one another to have part with adulterers: for through the guilt of adultery death comes forth upon the world.    Sons of Israel My people, You will not be thieves, nor companions nor partakers with thieves: there will not be seen in the congregations of Israel a thievish people; that your sons may not arise after you to teach one another to have part with thieves: for on account of the guilt of theft famine comes forth upon the world.    Sons of Israel My people, You will not testify against your neighbor a testimony of falsehood, nor be companions or partakers with those who bear false witness nor will there be seen in the congregations of Israel a people who testify a testimony of falsehood; neither will your sons arise after you to teach one another to have part with those who testify falsehood: for because of the guilt of false testimony the clouds go up and the rain comes not down, and dryness comes upon the world. |
| 14. You will not covet your neighbor’s house. You will not covet your neighbor’s wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbor.” | 14. Sons of Israel My people, You will not be covetous companions or partakers with the covetous: nor will there be seen in the congregations of Israel a covetous people; that your sons may not arise after you to teach one another to have part with the covetous: neither will any among you covet the wife of his neighbour, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass nor anything that belongs to his neighbour; because through the guilt of covetousness the government breaks in upon the possessions of men to take them, and the wealthy are made poor, and slavery comes upon the world. |
| 15. And all the people saw the voices and the torches, the sound of the Shofar, and the smoking mountain, and the people saw and trembled; so they stood from afar. | 15. And all the people saw the thunders, and were turned back, every one as he heard them coming forth from the midst of the lights, **and the voice of the trumpet as it will raise the dead**, and the mountain smoking; and all the people saw and drew back, and stood twelve miles off.  [JERUSALEM. And all the people saw the thunders and the lights, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and the people saw and trembled and stood afar off.] |
| 16. They said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear, but let God not speak with us lest we die.” | 16. And they said to Mosheh, speak you with us, and we can hear; but let it not be spoken with us any more from before the Lord, lest we die. |
| 17. But Moses said to the people, “Fear not, for God has come in order to exalt you, and in order that His awe will be upon your faces, so that you will not sin.” | 17. And Mosheh said to the people, Fear not; for the glory of the Lord is revealed to try you, whether His fear is before your faces, that ye may not sin. |
| 18. The people remained far off, but Moses drew near to the opaque darkness, where God was. | 18. And the people stood twelve miles off; but Mosheh drew near to the height of the darkness where was the glory of the Lord. |
| 19. The LORD said to Moses, “So will you say to the children of Israel, ‘You have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you. | 19. And the Lord said to Mosheh, speak thus to the sons of Israel: You have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you; |
| 20. You will not make [images of anything that is] with Me. Gods of silver or gods of gold you will not make for yourselves. | 20. sons of Israel, My people, you will not make, that you may worship, the likeness of the sun or the moon or the stars, or the planets, or the angels who minister before Me; idols of silver, nor idols of gold, you will not make to you. |
| 21. An altar of earth you will make for Me, and you will slaughter beside it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. Wherever I allow My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you. | 21. An altar of earth you will make to My Name, and sacrifice upon it your burnt offerings and your sanctified oblations from your sheep and from your oxen. And in every place where My Shekinah will dwell, and you worship before Me, there will I send My blessing upon you, and will bless you.  [JERUSALEM. An altar grounded in the earth will you make unto My name and will offer upon it your burnt offerings and sacred oblations, your sheep and your oxen. In every place in which you will memorialize My holy Name, My Word will be revealed to you, and bless you.] |
| 22. And when you make for Me an altar of stones, you will not build them of hewn stones, lest you wield your sword upon it and desecrate it. | 22. But if you will make an altar of stones unto My Name, you will not build them sculptured; for if you lift up iron, from which the sword is made, upon the stone, you will profane it.  [JERUSALEM. But if you make an altar of stones unto My Name, you will not build it with sculptured ones, because the sword is made of iron. If you work with iron upon it, you wilt profane it.] |
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| 23. And you shall not ascend with steps upon My altar, so that your nakedness shall not be exposed upon it.’ “ | 23. And you shall not ascend with steps upon My altar, so that your nakedness shall not be exposed upon it.’ “ |

**Reading Assignment:**

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| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1990)  **Exodus III Vol. 6 – “The Ten Commandments”**  **pp. 60 - 446** | **-Ramban: Exodus Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1973)  **pp. 274 - 337** |

**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.

**Welcome to the World of Remes Exegesis**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. Deduction from the context.

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

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

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Sh’mot (Exodus) ‎‎‎‎‎‎‎‎‎‎19:6 – 20:23**

**Chapter 19**

**6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of princes** Heb., מַמְלֶכֶת כּֽהֲנִים , princes, as it is said: “and David’s sons were chief officers (כּֽהֲנִים) “ (II Sam. 8:18). -[from Mechilta]

**These are the words** No less and no more.-[from Mechilta]

**8 and Moses took the words of the people back…** on the next day, which was the third day, for he ascended early in the morning (Shab. 86a). Did Moses [really] have to [bring back to God an] answer? Rather, the text comes to teach you etiquette from Moses-he did not say, “Since He Who sent me knows, I do not have to reply.”-[from Mechilta]

**9 in the thickness of the cloud Heb.** בְּעַב הֶעָנָן , in the thickness of the cloud, and that is the opaque darkness (עֲרָפֶל) [mentioned in Exod. 20:18].-[from Mechilta]

**and…in you forever** Also in the prophets who will follow you.-[from Mechilta]

**And Moses relayed, etc.-**on the following day, which was the fourth day of the month.-[from Jonathan]

**the words of the people,** etc. [Namely] a response to this statement I have heard from them [the Israelites], that they want to hear [directly] from You. [They maintain that] there is no comparison between one who hears [a message] from the mouth of the messenger and one who hears [it] from the mouth of the king [himself]. [They say,] “We want to see our King!”- [from Mechilta]

**10 And the Lord said to Moses** If [it is] true that they compel [Me] to speak with them, go to the people.

**and prepare them** Heb. וְקִדַָּשְׁתָּם , and you shall prepare them (Mechilta), that they should prepare themselves today and tomorrow.

**11 And they shall be prepared** Separated from women.-[from Mechilta]

**for on the third day** which is the sixth of the month, and on the fifth [of the month], Moses built the altar at the foot of the mountain, and the twelve monuments, the entire episode stated in the section of וְאֵלֶה הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים (Exod. 24), but there is no sequence of earlier and later incidents in the Torah.-from Mechilta]

**before the eyes of all the people**-[This] teaches [us] that there were no blind [persons] among them, for they were all cured.-[from Mechilta]

**12 And you shall set boundaries** Set boundaries for them as a sign that they should not come nearer [to the mountain] than the boundary.

**saying** The boundary says to them, “Beware of going up from here on,” and you shall warn them about it.

**or touching its edge** Even the edge of it.

**13 or cast down** From here [it is derived] that those liable to death by stoning are [first] cast down from the stoning place, which was as high as two heights [of a man].-[from Sanh. 45a]

**cast down**-Heb. יִיָרֶה , shall be cast down to the earth, like “He cast (יָרָה) into the sea” (Exod. 15:4).

**When the ram’s horn sounds a long, drawn-out blast-**When the ram’s horn sounds a long, drawn-out blast,this is the sign of the Shechinah’s withdrawal and the cessation of the voice [of God]. As soon as the Shechinah withdraws, they are permitted to ascend [the mountain].-[from Mechilta]

**the ram’s horn** Heb. הַיוֹבֵל . That is a shofar of a ram, for in Arabia, they call a ram “yuvla.” And this shofar was from Isaac’s ram [the ram that Abraham sacrificed instead of Isaac]. (Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 31).

**14 from the mountain to the people** [This] teaches [us] that Moses did not turn to his [own] affairs, but [went directly] from the mountain to the people.-[from Mechilta]

**15 Be ready for three days** For the end of three days. That is the fourth day, for Moses added one day of his own volition. This is the view of Rabbi Jose [who says that the Torah was given on the seventh of Sivan]. According to the one who says that the Ten Commandments were given on the sixth of the month, however, Moses did not add anything, and “for three days” has the same meaning as “for the third day.” [from Shab. 87a]

**do not go near a woman** [to have intimacy with her] for all these three days [of preparation], in order that the women may immerse themselves on the third day and be pure to receive the Torah. If they have intercourse within the three days, the woman could [involuntarily] emit semen after her immersion and become unclean again. After three days have elapsed [since intercourse], however, the semen has already become putrid and is no longer capable of fertilization, so it is pure from contaminating the [woman] who emits it.-[from Shab. 86a]

**16 when it was morning** [This] teaches [us] that He preceded them [on Mount Sinai], which is unconventional for a flesh and blood person to do, [i.e.,] having the teacher wait for the pupil. And so we find in Ezekiel (3:22, 23), “‘Arise, go out to the plain, etc.’ So I arose and went out to the plain, and behold, there the glory of the Lord was standing.”-[from unknown Midrashic source]

**17 toward God** [This expression] tells [us] that the Shechinah came out toward them like a bridegroom going out toward a bride. This is [the meaning of] what is stated: “The Lord came from Sinai” (Deut. 33:2), and it does not say, “came to Sinai.”-[from Mechilta]

**at the bottom of the mountain** According to its simple meaning, at the foot of the mountain. Its midrashic interpretation is, however, that the mountain was uprooted from its place and turned over them like a vat.-[from Shab. 88a]

**18 the entire Mount Sinai smoked** Heb. עָשַׁן . This word עָשַׁן is not a noun, because the “shin” is vowelized with a “pattach.” But [it is] the past tense of a [singular] verb in the form פָּעַל , like אָמַר , said, שָׁמַר , watched, שָׁמַע , heard. Therefore, its targum is תָּנַן כּוֹלֵית, and [Onkelos] did not translate תְּנָנָא [which would mean: was all smoke]. All [instances of] עָשָׁן in Scriptures are vowelized with a “kamatz” because they are nouns.

**the kiln-**[used for the baking] of lime. I could think that it means [Mount Sinai smoked] like the kiln and no more. Therefore, [to clarify this,] Scripture states: “[the mountain was] blazing with fire up to the heart of the heaven” (Deut. 4:11) [meaning that the fire was far greater than in a lime kiln]. Why then does the Torah say “kiln”? In order to explain to the [human] ear what it is able to hear, [i.e., to give the reader a picture that can be imagined]. He gives the creatures [humans] a sign familiar to them. Similar to this [is the description in reference to God:] “He shall roar like a lion” (Hos. 11:10). Who but Him gave strength to the lion? Yet the Scriptures compare Him to a lion? But we describe Him and compare Him to His creatures in order to explain to [humans] what the ear is able to hear. Similar to this [is], “And its sound [the voice of God] was like the sound of abundant waters” (Ezek. 43:2). Now who gave the water a sound but He? Yet you describe Him and compare Him to His creatures in order to explain to [humans] what the ear is able to hear.- [from Mechilta]

**19 grew increasingly stronger** It is customary for mortals that the longer one blows long notes [on a horn], the weaker and fainter its sound becomes. Here, however, it constantly grew stronger. Now why at the beginning was this so [i.e., a weak sound]? In order to let their ears hear what they were able to hear [and not shock them suddenly].-[from Mechilta]

**Moses would speak** When Moses would speak and make the Decalogue heard to Israel-for they heard from the mouth of God only “I am…” and “You shall not have” (Mak. 24a)—the Holy One, blessed be He, would assist him [Moses] by giving him strength so that his voice would be strong and audible.- [from Mechilta]

**would answer him with a voice** [This means] He would answer him concerning the voice, [and not with a voice. The ב in בְקוֹל is used], similar to [the ב in בָאֵשׁ in the phrase:] “that will answer with fire” (I Kings 18:24). [ בָאֵשׁ means] concerning the fire, [i.e., signifying] to bring it [the fire] down [from Heaven].- [from Mechilta]

**20 The Lord descended upon Mount Sinai** I may think that He actually descended upon it. Therefore, Scripture says: “You have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you” (Exod. 20:19). This teaches that [He did descend although still in the heavens,] He bent down the upper heavens and the lower heavens and spread them upon the mountain like a spread on a bed, and the Throne of Glory descended upon them [the upper heavens and the lower heavens].- [from Mechilta]

**21 warn the people** Heb. הָעֵד. Warn them not to go up the mountain.

**lest they break** their position [i.e., their ranks] because of their longing for God, to see [Him], and they move too close to the side of the mountain.

**and many of them will fall** Heb. וְנָפַל . Whatever [number] falls from them, let it be even a single person, to Me it is considered [as if] many [have fallen].-[from Mechilta]

**lest they break** Heb. יֶהֶרְסוּ . Every [expression of] הֲרִיסָה [denotes] the separation of the collection of [the parts of] the building. Likewise, those who separate from the position of people break up that position.

**22 And also, the priests** [I.e.,] also the firstborn, who perform the [divine] service.- [from Zev. 115b]

**who go near to the Lord** to offer up sacrifices (targumim), they too shall not rely on their importance to ascend the mountain.

**shall prepare themselves** They shall be ready to stand on their position.

**lest the Lord wreak destruction** Heb. יִפְרֽץ , an expression of a breach. [This means] He will kill some of them and [thus] make a breach in them [their completeness].

**23 The people cannot** I do not have to warn them because today they have already been warned for three days, and they cannot ascend [the mountain] since they have no permission.

**24 Go, descend** And warn them a second time. We admonish a person before the act [he is to perform], and we admonish him again at the time of the act [when it is to be performed]. [from Mechilta]

**and [then] you shall ascend, and Aaron with you,** **but the priests** I might think that they too shall be with you, [that the verse should be rendered: and you shall ascend, and Aaron with you, and the priests, but the people…]. Therefore, the Torah states: “and you shall ascend” [the pronoun is meant for emphasis, in order to exclude the priests]. Consequently, you must say that you [shall have] a partition for yourself, Aaron [shall have] a partition for himself, and the priests [shall have] a partition for themselves. Moses went closer than Aaron, and Aaron closer than the priests, but the people shall altogether not break their position to ascend to the Lord.- [from Mechilta]

**lest He wreak destruction upon them**-Heb. .יִפְרָץ Although יִפְרָץ is vowelized with a short “kamatz,” it has not changed from its grammatical construction. So is the way of every word vowelized with a “melupum” (“cholam”); when it comes next to a “makkaf,” its vowelization changes to a short “kamatz.” [Hence, the word יִפְרֽץ -which in this case appears with a “makkaf,” a hyphen, is changed to .יִפְרָץ]

**25 and said [this] to them** this warning. [Apparently, Rashi understands “and said to them” to mean that Moses said something to them. Since the object is obscure, Rashi inserts “this warning,” to clarify that the verse means that Moses relayed to the Israelites God’s warning to keep their distance from the mountain.]

**Chapter 20**

**1 God spoke**-Heb. אֱלֹהִים . [The word] אֱלֹהִים always means “a judge.” [This Divine Name is used here] because there are some sections in the Torah [that contain commandments] that if a person performs them, he receives a reward, but if not, he does not receive any punishment for them. I might think that so it is with the Ten Commandments. Therefore, Scripture says: “God (אֱלֽהִים) spoke,” [signifying God’s role as] a Judge, [Whose function is] to mete out punishment [when the Ten Commandments are not obeyed]. [from Mechilta]

**all these words** [This] teaches [us] that the Holy One, blessed be He, said the Ten Commandments in one utterance, something that is impossible for a human being to say [in a similar way]. If so, why does the Torah say again, “I am [the Lord, your God (verse 2)]” and “You shall have no…” (verse 3)? Because He later explained each statement [of the Ten Commandments] individually.- [from Mechilta]

**to respond** Heb. לֵאמֽר , lit., to say. [This] teaches [us] that they responded to the positive [commandments], “Yes,” and to the negative [commandments], “No.”-[from Mechilta]

**2 Who took you out of the land of Egypt** The taking [you] out [of Egypt] is sufficient reason for you to be subservient to Me. Alternatively, [God mentions the Exodus] since He revealed Himself on the sea as a valiant warrior, and here He revealed Himself as an old man full of mercy, as it is said: “and beneath His feet was like the form of a brick of sapphire” (Exod. 24:10). That [brick] was before Him at the time of the enslavement [to remember the Israelites’ suffering when they made bricks as slaves], “and like the appearance of the heavens” (Exod. 24:10), [i.e., there was joy before Him] when they were redeemed. Since I change in [My] appearances, do not say that they are two [Divine] domains, [but] I am He Who took you out of Egypt and [I am He Who performed the miracles] by the sea (Mechilta). Alternatively, [God mentions the Exodus] since they [the Israelites] heard many voices [during the revelation], as it is said: “And all the people saw the voices” (verse 15), [meaning that] voices came from four directions and from the heavens and from the earth, [so] do not say that there are many domains (Exod. Rabbah 5:9). And why did He say [this] in the singular [possessive], אֱלֹהֶיךָ ? In order to give Moses an opening to offer a defense in the incident of the calf. This is [the meaning of] “Why, O Lord, should Your anger be kindled against Your people?” (Exod. 32:11). You did not command them, “You shall not have the gods of others before Me,” but [You commanded] me alone (Exod. Rabbah 43:5).

**out of the house of bondage** Literally, out of the house of slaves. [I.e.,] from Pharaoh’s house, where you were slaves to him. Or perhaps [Scripture] means only: from the house of slaves, that they were slaves to [other] slaves? Therefore, Scripture says: “and He redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt” (Deut. 7:8). Consequently, you must say that they were slaves to Pharaoh, but not slaves to [other] slaves.-[from Exod. Rabbah 43:5]

**3 You shall not have** Why was this said? Since it says, “You shall not make for yourself, etc.” I know only that one may not make [graven idols, etc.] How do I know that one may not keep what was already made? Therefore, Scripture states: “You shall not have.” -[Mechilta]

**the gods of others** Heb. אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים , which are not gods, but that others have made them for gods over themselves. It is impossible to interpret this passage to mean: gods other than I, since it is a disgrace for Heaven to call them gods along with Him. Alternatively: strange gods, for they are strange to their worshippers. They cry out to them, but they do not answer them, and it appears as if it [the god] were a stranger, who never knew him [the worshipper].-[from Mechilta]

**in My presence** Heb. עַל-פָּנָּי [This means] as long as I exist [signifying forever. God states this so] that you should not say that only that generation was commanded [prohibited] concerning idolatry.-[from Mechilta]

**4 a graven image** Heb. .פֶּסֶל [It is called by this name] because it is sculpted (נִפְסָל) .

**or any likeness** The likeness of anything that is in the heavens.

**5 a zealous God** Heb. קַנָּא , zealous to mete out punishment. He does not forgo retaliating by forgiving the sin of idolatry. Every [expression of] קַנָּא means enprenemant in Old French, zealous anger. He directs His attention to mete out punishment.

**of those who hate Me** As the Targum [Onkelos paraphrases: when the sons continue to sin following their fathers, i.e.], when they cling to their fathers’ deeds.-[from Sanh. 27b]

**6 perform loving-kindness** that a person does, to pay the reward until the two-thousandth generation. It is thus found that the measure of reward [from God] exceeds the measure of [His] retribution by [the ratio of] one to five hundred, for this one is for four generations, and that one is for two thousand [generations]. -[from Tosefta Sotah 4:1]

**7 You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain** You shall not swear in vain by the name of the Lord, your God.-[Onkelos] לַֽשָוְא -[This word appears twice in this verse.] (The second [mention of ]לַֽשָוְא is an expression of falsehood, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: לְֽשִיקְרָא , as it says [in Shavuot 21a]: “What constitutes a vain oath? If one swears contrary to what is known, [for example, saying] about a stone pillar that it is [made of] gold. (The first [mention of לַֽשָוְא is an expression of vanity, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: [ לְמַגָּנָא ].) This [refers to] one who swears for no reason and in vain, [for example making an oath] concerning [a pillar] of wood, [saying] that it is wood, and concerning [a pillar] of stone, [saying] that it is stone.-[from Shevuoth 29a, Mechilta]

**8 Remember** Heb. זָכוֹר [The words] “remember (זָכוֹר) “ and “keep (שָׁמוֽר) “ (Deut. 5:12) were pronounced with one utterance. Similarly [the statements], “Those who profane it shall be put to death” (Exod. 31:14) and “And on the Sabbath day, two lambs” (Num. 28:9) [were said in one utterance], and similarly, “You shall not wear shaatnez,” and “You shall make tzitzith for yourself” (Deut. 22:11, 12). Similarly, [the phrases] “The nakedness of your brother’s wife [you shall not uncover]” (Lev. 18:16), [and] “Her brother-in-law shall come in to her” (Deut. 25:5) [were said in one utterance]. This [occurrence of God saying two phrases simultaneously in one utterance] is the meaning of what is said: “God spoke one thing, I heard two” (Ps. 62:12) (Mechilta). [The word] זָכוֹר is in the פָּעוֹל form, an expression of ongoing action, like “[Let us engage in] eating and drinking אָכוֹל וְשָׁתוֹ) )” (Isa. 22:13), [and] “walking and weeping הָלוֹךְ וָּבָכֽה) )” (II Sam. 3:16), and this is its interpretation: Pay attention to always remember the Sabbath day, so that if you chance upon a beautiful thing, you shall prepare it for the Sabbath (Mechilta).

**9 and perform all your labor** When the Sabbath arrives, it shall seem to you as if all your work is done, that you shall not think about work.

**10 neither you, your son, your daughter** These are young children. Or perhaps it refers to adult children? You must admit that they have already been warned [to observe the Sabbath]. Rather, [this word] comes only to warn adults concerning young children resting [from work] (Mechilta). This is the meaning of what we learned [in the Mishnah]: If a young child comes to extinguish [a fire on the Sabbath], you may not allow him [to do so] since you are responsible for his resting [from work] (Shab. 121a).

**11 and He rested on the seventh day** As if [it were] possible, He ascribed rest [even] to Himself to teach (as an example) from Him of kal vachomer [a fortiori] reasoning for man, whose work is with toil and fatigue, that he must rest on the Sabbath. [I.e., although God does not and did not actually rest, He had His cessation of creating recorded as rest, so that humans would learn that if God, Whose work is accomplished without any toil or fatigue, rested on the Sabbath, surely people, whose work is accomplished only with hard work and fatigue, must rest on the Sabbath.]-[from Mechilta]

**blessed…and sanctified it** He blessed it with manna to double it on the sixth day—”double bread”—and He sanctified it with manna, that it did not fall then [on the Sabbath].-[from Mechilta]

**12 in order that your days be lengthened** If you honor [your parents], your days will be lengthened, and if not, they will be shortened. The words of the Torah are written briefly; they are explained by deriving the negative from the affirmative and the affirmative from the negative.-[from Mechilta]

**13 You will not commit adultery** Adultery applies only [to relations] with a married woman, as it is said: “[And a man who commits adultery with the wife of a[nother] man, who commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor,] [both] the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death” (Lev. 20:10); [and it says,] “[You are] the adulterous wife, who, instead of her husband, takes strangers” (Ezek. 16:32). [In both these verses, the term “adultery” is used in reference to the extramarital relations of a married woman.]

**You will not steal** The text refers to kidnapping. [The verse] “You will not steal” (Lev. 19:11) refers to stealing money. Or perhaps this one [verse] refers only to stealing money and the one written further (in Lev.) refers to kidnapping? You must admit that [the meaning of] a statement is derived from its context. Just as [the former two commandments] “You shall not murder” [and] “You shall not commit adultery” refer to capital sins, “You shall not steal” also refers to a capital sin [i.e., a sin punishable by death].-[from Sanh. 86a]

**15 And all the people saw** [This] teaches [us] that there was not one blind person among them. From where do we know that [there was] no mute person among them? The Torah states: “And all the people replied” (Exod. 19:8). From where do we know that there was no deaf person among them? The Torah states: “We will do and hear” (Exod. 24:7). [from Mechilta]

**the voices** They saw what was audible, which is impossible to see elsewhere.-[from Mechilta d’Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai]

**the voices** Emanating from the mouth of the Almighty. Many voices, voices coming from every direction, and from the heavens, and from the earth.-[Rashi above, verse 2]

**and trembled** Heb. וַיָנֻעוּ נוֹעַ means only trembling.-[from Mechilta]

**so they stood from afar** They were drawing backwards twelve mil, as far as the length of their camp. The ministering angels came and assisted them [in order] to bring them back, as it is said: “Kings of hosts wander; yea they wander” (Ps. 68:13). [from Shab. 88b]

**17 in order to exalt you** To magnify you in the world, so that your name should circulate among the nations, that He in His glory revealed Himself to you.-[from Mechilta]

**to exalt** נַסוֹת , an expression of exaltation and greatness, similar to “lift up a banner (נֵס) “ (Isa. 62:10); “will I raise My standard (נִסִי) “ (Isa. 49:22); “and like a flagpole (וְכַנֵּס) on a hill” (Isa. 30:17), which is upright. [Thus all these words signify “raising up.”]

**and in order that His awe** By way of the fact that you saw that He is feared and dreaded, you will know that there is none beside Him and you will fear him.

**18 drew near to the opaque darkness** Within three partitions: darkness, cloud, and opaque darkness, as it is said: “And the mountain was burning with fire unto the heart of the heavens, darkness, cloud, and opaque darkness” (Deut. 4:11). Opaque darkness is [synonymous with] “the thickness of the cloud,” [concerning] which He [God] had said to him [Moses], “Behold, I am coming to you in the thickness of the cloud” (Exod. 19:9). [from Mechilta]

**19 So shall you say** with this language.-[from Mechilta] I.e., with this exact wording and in Hebrew.-[Mechilta]

**You have seen** There is a difference between what a person sees and what others tell him. [Concerning] what others tell him, sometimes his heart is divided whether to believe [it or not].-[from Mechilta]

**from the heavens I have spoken** But another verse states: “The Lord descended upon Mount Sinai” (Exod. 19:20). The third verse comes and harmonizes them: “From the heavens He let you hear His voice in order to discipline you, and on earth He showed you His great fire” (Deut. 4:36). His glory was in heaven, His fire and His power were on the earth. Alternatively, He bent down the [lower] heavens and the highest heavens and spread them out upon the mountain. So [Scripture] says: “And He bent the heavens, and He came down” (Ps. 18:10). [from Mechilta]

**20 You shall not make [images of anything that is] with Me** You shall not make a likeness of my servants who serve Me on high.-[from Mechilta, R.H. 24]

**Gods of silver** This [statement] comes to warn about the cherubim, which you make to stand with Me [in the Temple], that they may not be [made] of silver, for if you deviate to make them of silver, they are to Me as gods.-[from Mechilta]

**or gods of gold** This [statement] comes to warn [us] that one shall not add [more cherubim] to [the two, which is the number God required]. For if you make four [cherubim], they are to Me as gods of gold.-[from Mechilta]

**you shall not make for yourselves** You shall not say, “I will make cherubim in the synagogues and in the study halls, in the manner that I make [them] in the Temple.” Therefore, it says: “you shall not make for yourselves.”-[from Mechilta]

**21 An altar of earth** Attached to the ground, [meaning] that it should not be built on pillars or on a block of wood (another version: [on] a base). [According to the Mechilta and Rashi on Zev. 58a, the reading is “archways.”] Alternatively, [ מִזְבַָּח אֲדָמָה means] that he [Moses] would fill the hollow of the altar with earth when they [the Israelites] encamped. [from Mechilta]

**you shall make for Me** That from the beginning, it shall be made in My name. [I.e., it should not be made for another purpose and then later used as an altar.]-[from Mechilta]

**and you shall slaughter beside it** Heb. עָלָיו , like “And beside it (וְעָלָיו) was the tribe of Manasseh” (Num. 2:20). Or perhaps עָלָיו means literally “upon it.” Therefore, Scripture says: “the flesh and the blood on the altar of the Lord, your God” (Deut. 12:27), [meaning that only the flesh and blood are to be put on the altar] but the slaughtering is not [to be performed] on top of the altar.- [from Mechilta]

**your burnt offerings and your peace offerings** which are from your sheep and your cattle. “Your sheep and your cattle” is the explanation of “your burnt offerings and your peace offerings.”

**Wherever I allow My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you** Heb. אַזְכִּיר , lit., I will mention. [This should apparently read תַּזְכִּיר , you will mention. Therefore, Rashi explains that it means: whenever] I will permit you to mention My Explicit Name, there I will come to you and bless you. I will cause My Shechinah to rest upon you. From here you learn that permission was given to mention the Explicit Name only in the place to which the Shechinah comes, and that is in the Temple in Jerusalem. There permission was given to the priests to mention the Explicit Name when they raise their hands to bless the people.-[from Mechilta, Sifrei, Num. 6:23, Sotah 38a]

**22 And when you make for Me an altar of stones** Heb. אִם . Rabbi Ishmael says: Every [mention of] אִם in the Torah is optional except [for] three. [One of them is in this verse:] “And when (אִם) you make Me an altar of stones.” Behold, this אִם serves as an expression of כַּאֲשֶׁר , when, [meaning] and “when you make Me an altar of stones, you shall not build them of hewn stones.” [This אִם cannot mean “if,”] for it is incumbent upon you to build an altar of stones, for it is said: “[Of] whole stones shall you build” (Deut. 27:6). Similarly, “When (אִם) you lend money” (Exod. 22:24) is obligatory, for it is said: “and you shall lend him” (Deut. 15:8). This one, too, serves as an expression of כַּאֲשֶׁר , when. Similarly, “And when (אִם) you offer up a first fruits offering” (Lev. 2:14). This is the omer offering, which is [also] obligatory. Thus [all] these instances of אִם are not conditional but are definite and serve as an expression of כַּאֲשֶׁר , when.-[from Mechilta]

**hewn stones**-Heb. גָזִית , an expression of shearing (גְּזִיזָה) , [meaning] that [the stone-cutter] hews them and cuts them (וַּמְסַתְּתָן) with iron [tools].

**lest you wield your sword upon it** Heb. כִּי . This [instance of] כִּי serves as an expression of פֶּן , lest, which is the same as “perhaps.” Perhaps you will wield your sword upon it.

**and desecrate it** Thus you have learned that if you wield iron upon it, you have desecrated it, for the altar was created to lengthen man’s days, and iron was created to shorten man’s days [because it is used to make swords]. It is improper that the “lengthener” be wielded over the “shortener” (Middoth 3:4). Moreover, the altar makes peace between Israel and their Father in heaven. Therefore, the cutter and destroyer shall not come upon it. The matter is a kal vachomer [a fortiori] conclusion-if [concerning the] stones, which neither see, hear, nor speak, because [of the fact that] they make peace, the Torah said, “You shall not wield iron upon them” (Deut. 27:5), how much more [are we certain that] one who makes peace between husband and wife, between family and family, between man and his fellow, will have no troubles befall him!-[from Mechilta]

**23.** **And you shall not ascend with steps**: When you build a ramp for the altar, do not make it with steps, eschalons in Old French, but it must be smooth and slanting. — [from Mechilta].

**so that your nakedness shall not be exposed**: Because due to the steps, you must widen your stride, although it would not be an actual exposure of nakedness, for it is written: “And make them linen pants” (Exod. 28:42). Nevertheless, widening the strides is close to exposing the nakedness [of the one ascending the steps], and you behave toward them [the stones] in a humiliating manner. Now these matters are a kal vachomer [a fortiori] conclusion, that if [concerning] these stones-which have no intelligence to object to their humiliation-the Torah said that because they are necessary, you shall not behave toward them in a humiliating manner. [In contrast,] your friend, who is [created] in the likeness of your Creator and who does object to being humiliated, how much more [must you be careful not to embarrass him]!-[from Mechilta]

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 57:1-12**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. For the conductor, al tashcheth, of David a michtam, when he fled from before Saul in the cave. | 1. For praise, concerning the distress at the time when David said, “Do not harm.” It was spoken by David, humble and innocent, when he fled from Saul’s presence in the cave. |
| 2. Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me, because my soul took refuge in You, and in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until the destruction passes. | 2. Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in Your Word my soul has trusted, and in the shade of Your Presence I will be confident until the turmoil passes. |
| 3. I will call upon the Most High God, upon the God Who completes [what He promised] for me. | 3. I will pray before God Most High, the Mighty One, who commanded the spider who completed a web for me. |
| 4. He will send from Heaven and save me from the disgrace of him who yearns to swallow me up forever; God will send His kindness and His truth. | 4. He will send His angel from heaven above, and He will redeem me; He has put to shame the one who bruises me, forever; God will send His goodness and His truth. |
| 5. My soul is among lions; I lie among men who are aflame; their teeth are [like] spears and arrows, and their tongue is [like] a sharp sword. | 5. My soul glows while in the midst of flames; I will sleep among coals that burn, the sons of men whose teeth are like lances and arrows, and whose tongue is like a sharp sword. |
| 6. Be exalted above the heavens, O God; over all the earth be Your glory. | 6. Be exalted over the angels of heaven, O God; Your glory is over all those who dwell on earth. |
| 7. They prepared a net for my steps, he bent down my soul; they dug a pit before me, they will fall into it forever. | 7. They have set a net for my footsteps; my soul is bowed down; they dug before me a pit, they have fallen into the middle of it forever. |
| 8. My heart is steadfast with God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises. | 8. My heart is turned to Your Torah, O Lord; my heart is turned to fear You; I will praise and sing! |
| 9. Awaken, my honor; awaken [me], lyre and harp; I will awaken the dawn. | 9. Wake up, my glory! Wake up to praise by means of the harp and lyre; wake up for the prayer of morning. |
| 10. I will thank You among the peoples, O Lord; I will sing Your praises among the kingdoms. | 10. I will give thanks before You among the peoples, O Lord; I will praise You among the Gentiles. |
| 11. For Your kindness is great up to the heavens, and Your truth is up to the skies (shechakim). | 11. For Your goodness is high to reach the heavens, and Your truth, to the clouds. |
| 12. Be exalted above the heavens, O God, over all the earth be Your glory. | 12. Be exalted, O Lord, above the angels of heaven; O God, above all the inhabitants of the earth is Your glory. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Tehillim (Psalms) 57:1-12**

**1 For the conductor, al tashcheth** David called this psalm by this name because he was near death, and he established this psalm, saying, “Do not destroy me, O Lord.”

**2 Be gracious to me, etc., be gracious to me** that I should neither kill nor be killed.

**until the destruction passes** Heb. הוות , until the evil passes.

**4 from the disgrace of him who yearns to swallow me up** And He will save me from the disgrace of ֽשֽאַפִי , who says to swallow me up, golosa moy in Old French, longs to swallow me up. (See above 56:2.)

**5 My soul is among lions** Abner and Amassa, who were “lions” [leaders] the in Torah, and who do not protest against Saul.

**I lie among men who are aflame** En flanboyanz, or enflamoyonz, among those who are flaming. Among the Ziphim, who are aflame after slander.

**6 Be exalted above the heavens** Withdraw from the earthlings, who are unworthy of having Your Shechinah rest among them, and on the earth You shall be honored by this.

**7 he bent down my soul** i.e., the enemy.

**they will fall into it** They will ultimately fall into it. כפף is cline, or clina in Old French, bent, bent down, an expression of (below 145:14): “and straightens all who are bent down (הכפופים) .”

**8 My heart is steadfast with God, my heart is steadfast** Faithful to You in the Divine standard of justice and faithful to You in the Divine standard of mercy.

**9 Awaken, my honor** and let me not sleep until three hours [of the day have passed], as other kings do. awaken [me], lyre and harp

**Awaken me, you lyre and harp** hanging on my bed, open to the north side. And as soon as midnight arrived, the north wind would blow on it, and David would get up and engage in Torah.

**I will awaken the dawn** I awaken the dawn; the dawn does not awaken me.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Tehillim (Psalms) ‎‎57:1-12**

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

The narrative of Shmuel alef (I Samuel) chapter 24, serves as the background for this chapter of psalms. Saul and three thousand men search for David in the rocky caves of the wilderness of En-Gedi. All alone, Saul inadvertently entered the cave in which David and his men were hiding. Instead of yielding to his men’s demands that he kill Saul, David contented himself with cutting off a corner from a garment, which Saul had momentarily removed. In this manner, David sought to impress upon Saul that he was not his enemy and that Saul was unjustified in hating and pursuing him.

This is the first of three psalms (57-59) which refer to Saul’s pursuit of David; all begin with the plea Al Tashchet — Do not destroy!

This highly dramatic moment, fraught with danger for both Saul and David, prompted David to compose this psalm.[[1]](#footnote-1)

According to Rashi, this chapter of psalms is entitled ‘Al Tashchet’ because David composed it when he was on the brink of destruction and death; thus, he was pleading to G-d for salvation.

According to Alshich, David’s righteousness and humility were truly astounding. Despite Saul’s threat and his implacable hatred, David persisted in accepting him as his king and refused to injure his sovereign in any way. David’s primary concern was not for his own life, but for Saul’s. David’s men forcefully insisted that it would be suicidal not to exploit this G-d-given opportunity to slay their pursuer, Saul; but David held them back, shouting, ‘Al Tashchet’ – ‘do not destroy’!

The Midrash[[2]](#footnote-2) notes that centuries earlier, David’s ancestor, Lot, was saved from the destruction of Sodom by hiding in a cave. Thus David prayed, ‘Master of the Universe! Even before I entered this cave, You showed kindness to others for my sake and saved them in a cave! (Lot and his daughters) Therefore, now that I myself am in a cave,[[3]](#footnote-3) I beg of You, be kind and do not destroy!’

***Bereshit (Genesis) 19:30*** *And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.*

I would like to spend a bit of time examining a very interesting subject, quite the opposite of the caves we just looked at, that is introduced by:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 57:11*** *For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the skies* (Shehakim)*.*

The subject I would like to explore in greater detail, is the subject of *heavens*, because this word is used four plus times in the twelve pesukim of our psalm.

The Hebrew word normally translated as ‘heaven’ is *shamayim*. This Hebrew word is always in the plural so our translation should also be plural: Heavens. Rashi teaches us that Shamayim is a combination of two words: **Aish** (fire) and **Mayim** (water).[[4]](#footnote-4)

Shamayim - שמים = Aish - אש *+* Mayim - מים

Shamayim (Heavens) = Aish (fire) + Mayim (waters)

Why is a letter missing from the Hebrew word “Shamayim”? The “aleph” of “aish” is not included in the word shamayim. In The Creator’s Divine involvement with human beings, there cannot be the fullest measure of the severity of judgment. The word “mayim”, Hebrew for, “water”, representing mercy, is written in full, but the word “aish”, Hebrew for, “fire”, symbolic of justice, is not fully dispensed in order to enable humanity to approach a heavenly existence.[[5]](#footnote-5) The world cannot endure the fullness of justice.

So, the word *shamayim*, “heavens” = “fire and water”. If you are accustomed to the concept that the heavens are a place of fluffy clouds, then this might be a bit of a different perspective. It is also instructive to know that Our Sages teach that *Shamayim* comes from the Hebrew word *sham* which mean *There*. This suggests that when the righteous/generous reach the Olam HaBa, the renewed earth, they will finally be *There*. Thus we see that heaven has the connotation as the place where HaShem dwells, as we can see from the Tanach:[[6]](#footnote-6)

***I Melachim (Kings) 8:22-28*** *Then Solomon stood before the altar of the HaShem in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven And said: “O HaShem, G-d of Israel, there is no G-d like you in heaven above or on earth below--you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it--as it is today. “Now HaShem, G-d of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, ‘You shall never fail to have a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful in all they do to walk before me as you have done.’ And now, O G-d of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father come true. “But will G-d really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! Yet give attention to your servant’s prayer and his plea for mercy, O HaShem my G-d. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day.*

Now that we understand that the Heavens are where HaShem dwells, it is important for us to realize that people do not dwell there.

***Yochanan (John) 3:13*** *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

The Tanach and the Nazarean Codicil[[7]](#footnote-7) are replete with references to the fact that the righteous will dwell on earth forever. It does not contain any references to suggest that they will “inherit heaven”. Here are a few of those references:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 60:20-21*** *Thy sun shall no more go down, Neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for HaShem shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. 21 Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever; the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, wherein I glory.*

***Tehillim (Psalms) 37:28-29*** *For the HaShem loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off; The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever.*

***Matityahu (Matthew) 5:5*** *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

*Shamayim* is used of heavens in the first part of our verse (Psalms chapter 57:4), however, the Hebrew word used later in our psalm and translated as ‘skies’ (Psalms chapter 57:11, end of the pasuk), is the Hebrew word שְׁחָקִים, Shechakim.[[8]](#footnote-8) So what is the proper translation of Shechakim? This is a difficult question given that it is plural and comes from a root that means ‘grind’. Sefer Bahir, a mystical work, defines it as ‘skies’. Whatever the name we translate for this word, the fact of the matter is that it is just one of the seven firmaments[[9]](#footnote-9) that make up shamayim, heavens. The Talmud speaks of these seven:

***Chagigah 12b*** *R. Judah said: There are two firmaments, for it is said: Behold, unto the Lord thy G-d belongeth heaven, and the heaven of heavens.[[10]](#footnote-10) Resh Lakish said: [There are] seven, namely,* ***Wilon****,[[11]](#footnote-11)* ***Rakia’****,[[12]](#footnote-12)* ***Shehakim****,[[13]](#footnote-13)* ***Zebul****,[[14]](#footnote-14)* ***Ma’on****,[[15]](#footnote-15)* ***Makon****,[[16]](#footnote-16) ‘****Araboth****.[[17]](#footnote-17) Wilon serves no purpose except that it enters in the morning and goes forth in the evening[[18]](#footnote-18) and renews every day the work of creation, for it is said: That stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain,[[19]](#footnote-19) and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.[[20]](#footnote-20) Rakia’ is that in which sun and moon, stars and constellations are set, for it is said: And G-d set them[[21]](#footnote-21) in the firmament [Rakia’] of the heaven.[[22]](#footnote-22)* ***Shechakim is that in which millstones stand and grind[[23]](#footnote-23) manna for the righteous for it is said: And He commanded the skies [Shechakim] above, and opened the doors of heaven; and He caused manna to rain upon them for food etc.[[24]](#footnote-24)*** *Zebul is that in which [the heavenly] Jerusalem[[25]](#footnote-25) and the Temple and the Altar are built, and Michael, the great Prince,[[26]](#footnote-26) stands and offers up thereon an offering, for it is said: I have surely built Thee a house of habitation [Zebul], a place for Thee to dwell in for ever.[[27]](#footnote-27) And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? For it is written: Look down from heaven, and see, even from Thy holy and glorious habitation.[[28]](#footnote-28) Ma’on is that in which there are companies of Ministering Angels, who utter [divine] song by night, and are silent by day for the sake of Israel’s glory,[[29]](#footnote-29) for it is said: By day the Lord doth command His lovingkindness,[[30]](#footnote-30) and in the night His song is with me.[[31]](#footnote-31)*

Thus we learn that there are seven ‘heavens’, namely: *Wilon, Rakia’, Shehakim, Zebul, Ma’on, Makon, ‘Araboth*. The third of the seven heavens is called *Shechakim*, the word used in v.11 of our psalm.

The Tanach has seven different designations for heaven; therefore, there must be seven heavens. The following lists tells us where these seven names are to be found in the Tanach:

**Vilon -וילון**, Isaiah 40:22 Vilon is the name of Jalon extrapolated unto Isaiah 40:22.

**Rakia - רקיע**, Genesis 1:6-8, Genesis 1:17, Genesis 1:20, and Psalms 19:1-2, Psalms 150:1, Ezekiel 1:22-23.

**Shechakim - שחקים**, Deuteronomy 33:26, 2 Samuel 22:12, Psalm 18:11-12, Psalms 36:5-6, Psalms 57:10-11, Psalms 77:17-18, Psalms. 78:23, Psalms 89:37-38, Psalms 108:4-5, Proverbs 8:28, Job 35:5, Job 36:28, Job 38:37.

**Zebul - זבול**, Isaiah 63:15, 1 Kings, 8:13, 2 Chronicles 6:2.

**Ma’on - מעון**, Deuteronomy 26:15, Psalms 26:8, Psalm 71:3, Psalm 90:1, and Zechariah 2:17 {Zechariah 2:13}.

**Makon - מכון**, Deuteronomy 28:12, 1 Kings 8:39, 2 Chronicles 6:30, Psalms 89:14-15, Psalms 97:2, Isaiah 4:5.

**Araboth - ערבות**, Psalms 68:4-5.

Now let’s examine, briefly, each of these seven, according to Resh Lakish:[[32]](#footnote-32)

**Wilon**

***Wilon****, [I.e., ‘Curtain’, from Lat. Velum.] - Wilon serves no purpose except that it enters in the morning and goes forth in the evening.[[33]](#footnote-33)*

According to Rashi,[[34]](#footnote-34) Wilon (‘Curtain’) draws in every morning, and thus causes the light of day to become visible; in the evening it draws out and hides the daylight. This process constitutes the renewal of the work of creation. But Tosafot. explains that Wilon produces the light of day, and when it withdraws at night darkness prevails.

*and renews every day the work of creation, for it is said: That stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.[[35]](#footnote-35)*

Several heavens were created, seven in fact, each to serve a purpose of its own. The first, the one visible to man, has no function except that of covering up the light during the night time; therefore, it disappears every morning.

**Rakia**

***Rakia’****, [I.e., ‘Expanse, firmament’.] - Rakia’ is that in which sun and moon, stars and constellations are set, for it is said: And G-d set them in the firmament [Rakia’] of the heaven.[[36]](#footnote-36) The planets are fastened to the second of the heavens;*

***Midrash Rabbah - Bereshit (Genesis) VI:6*** *Where are the spheres of the sun and the moon set? In the second heaven (Rakia), as it says, AND G-D SET THEM IN THE RAKI’A OF THE HEAVEN. R. Phinehas said in R. Abbahu’s name: This verse is explicit, and the men of the Great Assembly further explained, Thou art the Lord, even Thou alone; Thou hast made the heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host:[[37]](#footnote-37) thus where are all their hosts set? In the second ‘Rakia ‘, which is above the heaven. From the earth to the ‘ Rakia ‘*

**Shechakim**

***Shehakim****, [Lit., ‘Clouds’, from eja, ‘dust’[[38]](#footnote-38)] - Shechakim is that in which millstones stand and grind manna for the righteous for it is said: And He commanded the skies [Shechakim] above, and opened the doors of heaven; and He caused manna to rain upon them for food etc.[[39]](#footnote-39)*

Why are they [the clouds] called Shechakim? Resh Lakish said: Because they break up (shohakim) the [mass of] water [into rain drops]. In the third the manna is made for the pious in the hereafter;

**Zebul**

***Zebul****, is that in which [the heavenly] Jerusalem[[40]](#footnote-40) and the Temple and the Altar are built, and Michael, the great Prince,[[41]](#footnote-41) stands and offers up thereon an offering, for it is said: I have surely built Thee a house of habitation [Zebul], a place for Thee to dwell in for ever.[[42]](#footnote-42) And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? For it is written: Look down from heaven, and see, even from Thy holy and glorious habitation.[[43]](#footnote-43)*

The fourth contains the celestial Jerusalem together with the Temple, in which Michael ministers as high priest, and offers the souls of the pious as sacrifices.

**Ma’on**

***Ma’on****, [I.e., ‘Dwelling, habitation’.] - Ma’on is that in which there are companies of Ministering Angels, who utter [divine] song by night, and are silent by day for the sake of Israel’s glory, for it is said: By day the Lord doth command His lovingkindness, and in the night His song is with me.[[44]](#footnote-44)*

In the fifth heaven, the angel hosts reside, and sing the praise of G-d, though only during the night, for by day it is the task of Israel on earth to give glory to G-d on high.

**Makon**

***Makon****, [I.e., ‘Fixed or established place, foundation, residence’.] - Makon is that in which there are the stores of snow[[45]](#footnote-45) and stores of hail, and the loft of harmful dews and the loft of raindrops, the chamber of the whirlwind and storm, and the cave of vapor, and their doors are of fire, for it is said: The Lord will open unto thee His good treasure,[[46]](#footnote-46) But are these to be found in the firmament? Surely, they are to be found on the earth, for it is written: Praise the Lord from the earth, ye sea-monsters, and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind, fulfilling his word![[47]](#footnote-47) — Rab Judah said in the name of Rab: David entreated concerning them, and caused them to come down to the earth. He said before Him: Lord of the universe, Thou art not a G-d that hath pleasure in wickedness; let not evil sojourn with Thee; righteous art Thou, O Lord, let not evil sojourn in Thy abode. And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? For it is written: Then hear Thou in heaven, Thy dwelling place [Makon].[[48]](#footnote-48)*

The sixth heaven is an uncanny spot; there originate most of the trials and visitations ordained for the earth and its inhabitants. Snow lies heaped up there and hail; there are lofts full of noxious dew, magazines stocked with storms, and cellars holding reserves of smoke. Doors of fire separate these celestial chambers, which are under the supervision of the archangel Metatron. Their pernicious contents defiled the heavens until David’s time. The pious king prayed G-d to purge His exalted dwelling of whatever was pregnant with evil; it was not becoming that such things should exist near the Merciful One. Only then they were removed to the earth.

**Araboth**

***Araboth****. [V. Tehillim (Psalms) 68:5. Levy: Perhaps from crg, ‘to be dark’ (cf. crg evening) and syn. with kprg: (thick darkness, heavy cloud, in which G-d dwells; cf. Shemot XX, 18).] - ‘Araboth is that in which there are Right and Judgment and Righteousness, the treasures of life and the treasures of peace and the treasures of blessing, the souls of the righteous and the spirits and the souls[[49]](#footnote-49) which are yet to be born, and dew wherewith the Holy One, blessed be He, will hereafter revive the dead. Right and Judgment, for it is written: Right and judgment are the foundations of Thy throne.[[50]](#footnote-50) Righteousness, for it is written: And He put on righteousness as a coat of mail.[[51]](#footnote-51) The treasures of life, for it is written: For with Thee is the fountain of life.[[52]](#footnote-52) And the treasures of peace, for it is written: And called it, ‘The Lord is peace’.*

*[Shoftim VI, 24. Rashi renders: He (the Lord) called it (peace) unto Him.]*

*And the treasures of blessing, for it is written: he shall receive a blessing from the Lord.[[53]](#footnote-53) The souls of the righteous, for it is written: Yet the soul of my lord shall be bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy G-d.[[54]](#footnote-54) The spirits and the souls which are yet to be born, for it is written: For the spirit that enwrappeth itself is from Me, and the souls which I have made.[[55]](#footnote-55) And the dew wherewith the Holy One, blessed be He, will hereafter revive the dead, for it is written: A bounteous rain didst Thou pour down, O G-d; when Thine inheritance was weary, Thou didst confirm it.*

*[Tehillim 68:10. The verse refers to the Revelation at Sinai, when, according to the Midrash, the souls of the children of Israel momentarily left their bodies, but G-d with His bounteous rain or dew of resurrection revived them. Cf. Cant. Rab. to Cant. V, 6.]*

*There [too] are the Ophanim and the Seraphim,[[56]](#footnote-56) and the Holy Living Creatures,[[57]](#footnote-57) and the Ministering Angels, [Apparently distinct from those dwelling in Ma’on] and the Throne of G-d; and the King, the Living G-d, high and exalted, dwells over them in ‘Araboth, for it is said: Extol Him that rideth upon Araboth whose name is the Lord.[[58]](#footnote-58) And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? From the word ‘riding’, which occurs in two Biblical passages. Here it is written: ‘Extol Him that rideth upon Araboth’. And elsewhere it is written: Who rideth upon the heaven as thy help.[[59]](#footnote-59) And darkness and cloud and thick darkness surround Him, for it is said: He made darkness His hiding-place, His pavilion round about Him, darkness of waters, thick clouds of skies.[[60]](#footnote-60) But is there any darkness before Heaven? For behold it is written: He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth, what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him.[[61]](#footnote-61) — There is no contradiction: the one [verse] ‘The seventh heaven’, on the other hand, contains naught but what is good and beautiful: right, justice, and mercy, the storehouses of life, peace, and blessing, the souls of the pious, the souls and spirits of unborn generations, the dew with which G-d will revive the dead on the resurrection day, and, above all, the Divine Throne, surrounded by the seraphim, the ofanim, the holy Hayyot, and the ministering angels.*

Now, there are a couple of very interesting perspectives that are not widely known about the seven heavens.

First, Chazal explains that the *Techelet*, in our tzitzith, reminds one of the heavens. There are seven heavens and six spaces between them, thus resulting in a total of thirteen.

***Menachoth 39a*** *What is the minimum length of a joint? — It was taught: Rabbi says, [In a joint] the thread must be wound once, twice and a third time. It was taught: If a man wishes to make few, he should not make less than seven, and if many, he should not make more than thirteen. If few, he should not make less than seven, to correspond to the seven heavens; and if many, he should not make more than thirteen, to correspond to the seven heavens plus the six intervening spaces.*

Second, the seven major musical notes, on the diatonic scale,[[62]](#footnote-62) are called keys. Each of the seven keys opens a different door in Shamayim, and it is only through music that these entryways can be opened. Musicologists do not know why the term “key” is used, but it is quite possible that it is a tradition handed down from Yuval,[[63]](#footnote-63) whom the Torah identifies as the father of music.

The Zohar even says that there is an entranceway, in Shamayim, that can be opened only with neginah.[[64]](#footnote-64) The Zohar relates that David HaMelech approached that entrance only with the neginah of his Sefer Tehillim.[[65]](#footnote-65)

Now that we have examined the seven heavens, lets return to the third heaven - *Shechakim*. Hakham Shaul speaks of this part of ‘heaven’:

***2 Corinthians 12:1*** *It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: G-d knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: G-d knoweth;) 4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

The apparent parallelism of the passage equates the Third Heaven with “Paradise”.[[66]](#footnote-66) Now I believe we can begin to appreciate what David said in our psalm:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 57:11*** *For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the skies* (Shehakim)*.*

I pray that our little excursion through the heavenly realms has been enlightening.

**Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:6 – 62:4**

| **Rashi** | **Targum of Isaiah** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings unto the humble; He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the eyes to them that are bound; | 1. The prophet said, A spirit of prophecy before the LORD God is upon me, because the LORD has exalted me to announce good tidings to the poor; he has sent me to strengthen the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to those who are bound, Be revealed to light; |
| 2. To proclaim the year of the LORD’S good pleasure, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; | 2. to proclaim the year of pleasure before the LORD, and the day of vengeance before our God; to comfort all those who mourn; |
| 3. To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the mantle of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called terebinths of righteousness/generosity, the planting of the LORD, wherein He might glory. | 3. to confuse those who mourn in Zion - to give them a diadem instead of ashes, oil of joy instead of mourning, a praising spirit instead of their spirit which was dejected; that they may call them true princes, the people of the LORD, that He may be glorified. |
| 4. And they will build the old wastes, they will raise up the former desolations, and they will renew the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. | 4. They will build up ancient ruins, they will raise up former devastations; cities that were ruined will be repaired, devastations of many generations. |
| 5. And strangers will stand and feed your flocks, and aliens will be your ploughmen and your vinedressers. | 5. Aliens will stand and feed your flocks, the sons of Gentiles will be your plough men and vinedressers. |
| 6. But you will be named the **priests** of the LORD, men will call you the ministers of our God; you will eat the wealth of the **Gentiles**, and in their splendour will you revel. | 6. But you will be called the priests of the LORD, men will speak of you as those who minister before our God; you will eat the possessions of the **Gentiles,** and in their glory you will be indulged. |
| 7. For your shame which was double, and for that they rejoiced: ‘Confusion is their portion’; therefore in their land they will possess double, everlasting joy will be unto them. | 7. Instead of your being ashamed and confounded, two for one the benefits I promised you I will bring to you, and the Gentiles will be ashamed who were boasting in their lot; therefore in their land they will possess two for one: theirs will be everlasting joy. |
| 8. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity/lawlessness; and I will give them their recompense in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. | 8. For 1 the LORD love judgment, despised before Me are deceit and oppression: 1 will in truth give them a reward of their deeds, and I will make an eternal covenant with them. |
| 9. And their seed will be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the peoples; all that see them will acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD has blessed. **{P}** | 9. Their sons will be exalted among the Gentiles, and their sons’ sons in the midst of the kingdoms; all who see them will acknowledge them, that they are the seed whom the LORD has blessed. |
| 10. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul will be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of victory, as a bridegroom puts on a priestly diadem, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. | 10. Jerusalem said, I will greatly rejoice in the Memra of the LORD, my soul will exult in the salvation of my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of virtue, as the bridegroom who prospers in his canopy, and as the high priest who is prepared in his garments, and as the bride who is adorned with her ornaments. |
| 11. For as the earth brings forth her growth, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause victory and glory to spring forth before all the Gentiles. | 11. For as the earth which brings forth its growth, and as a channelled garden which increases what is sown in it, so the LORD God will disclose the virtue and the praise of Jerusalem before all the Gentiles. |
|  |  |
| 62:1. For Zion’s sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her triumph go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a torch that burns. | 1. Until I accomplish salvation for Zion, 1 will not give rest to the Gentiles, and until I bring consolation for Jerusalem, 1 will not give quiet to the kingdoms; until her light is revealed as the dawn, and her salvation burns as a torch. |
| 2. And the Gentiles will see your triumph, and all kings your glory; and you will be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will mark out. | 2. The Gentiles will see your innocence, and all the kings your glory; and they will call you by the new name which by His Memra the LORD will make clear. |
| 3. You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the open hand of your God. | 3. You will be a diadem of joy before the LORD, and a crown of praise before your God. |
| 4. You will no more be termed Forsaken, neither will your land any more be termed Desolate; but you will be called, My delight is in her, and your land, Espoused; for the LORD delights in you, and your land will be espoused. | 4. You will no more be termed Forsaken, and your land will no more be termed Desolate; but you will be called, Those who do my pleasure in her, and your land Inhabited; for there will be pleasure before the LORD in you, and your land will be inhabited. |
| 5. For as a young man espouses a virgin, so will your sons espouse you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so will your God rejoice over you. | 5. For just as a young man cohabits with a virgin, so will your sons co-inhabit in your midst, and just as the bridegroom rejoices with the bride, so will your God rejoice over you. |
| 6. I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem, they will never hold their peace day nor night: ‘You that are the LORD’S remembrancers, take no rest, | 6. Behold, the deeds of your fathers, the righteous, O city of Jerusalem, are prepared and watched before Me; all the day and all the night continually they do not cease. The remembrance of your benefits is spoken of before the LORD, it does not cease, |
| 7. And give Him no rest, till He establishes, and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.’ | 7. and their remembrance will not cease before Him until He establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth. |
| 8. The LORD has sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength: Surely I will no more give your corn to be food for your enemies; and strangers will not drink your wine, for which you have laboured; | 8. The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his strong arm: “I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and the sons of Gentiles will not drink your wine for which you have laboured. |
| 9. But they that have garnered it will eat it, and praise the LORD, and they that have gathered it will drink it in the courts of My sanctuary. **{S}** | 9. But those who garner the grain will eat it and will give praise before the LORD, and those who press the wine will drink it in My holy courts. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for:** **Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:6 – 62:4**

**6 priests of the Lord** Princes of the Holy One, blessed be He.

**the possessions of the nations** the possessions of the nations [after Jonathan].

**you shall succeed [them]** You shall enter in their stead into the glory they have taken until now.

**7 Instead of your shame** which was twofold, even they would constantly bemoan their disgrace as their lot. That is to say that instead of until now My people were constantly bemoaning disgrace, their lot...

**8 For I am the Lord, Who loves justice, hates robbery in a burnt offering** Therefore, I do not accept burnt offerings from the heathens (the nations [Parshandatha, K’li Paz]), for they are all results of robbery.

**and I will give their wage** The wage of Israel, which shall be in truth. Alternatively, I will give the reward for the deeds they performed, for they suffered the derisions of the heathens (the nations [Mss. and K’li Paz]) for My honor in truth.

**10 like a bridegroom** who dons garments of glory like a high priest.

**and like a bride, who adorns herself with her jewelry** Heb. [lit. her utensils, in this case,] her jewelry.

**Chapter 62**

**1 For the sake of Zion** I will do, and I will not be silent concerning what they did to her.

**I will not rest** There will be no peace before Me until her righteousness comes out like brilliance.

**2 shall pronounce** shall pronounce.

**4 “inhabited”** [lit. possessed,] inhabited.

**Correlations**

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

& H.H. Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

**Shemot (Exodus) 19:6 – 20:23**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:6 – 62:4**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 57**

**Mk 7:14-16**

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

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

Called / Cry - קרא, Strong’s number 07121.

People - עם, Strong’s number 05971.

Face / From - פנים, Strong’s number 06440.

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

Priests - כהן, Strong’s number 03548.

Nation / Gentiles - גוי, Strong’s number 01471.

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

**Shemot (Exodus) 19:6** And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of **priests <03548>**, and an holy **nation <01471>**. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the **children <01121>** of Israel.

7 And Moses came and **called <07121> (8799)** for the elders of the **people <05971>**, and laid before their **faces <06440>** all these words which the LORD commanded him.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 57:1** To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David, when he fled **from <06440>** Saul in the cave. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 57:2** I will **cry <07121> (8799)** unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 57:4** My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the **sons <01121>** of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 57:9** I will praise thee, O Lord, among the **people <05971>**: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:5** And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the **sons <01121>** of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:6**  But ye shall be named the **Priests <03548>** of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the **Gentiles <01471>**, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Reading**  **Ex, 19:6 – 20:23** | **Psalms**  **57:1-12** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is. 61:6 – 62:4** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **yn”doa]** | Lord |  | Ps. 57:9 | Isa. 61:11 |
| **bhea’** | love | Exod. 20:6 |  | Isa. 61:8 |
| **lae** | God | Exod. 20:5 | Ps. 57:2 |  |
| **~yhil{a/** | God | Exod. 19:17  Exod. 19:19  Exod. 20:1  Exod. 20:2  Exod. 20:3  Exod. 20:5  Exod. 20:7  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:12  Exod. 20:19  Exod. 20:20  Exod. 20:21 | Ps. 57:1  Ps. 57:2  Ps. 57:3  Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:7  Ps. 57:11 | Isa. 61:6  Isa. 61:10  Isa. 62:3 |
| **rm;a’** | say, said | Exod. 19:8  Exod. 19:9  Exod. 19:10  Exod. 19:12  Exod. 19:15  Exod. 19:21  Exod. 19:23  Exod. 19:24  Exod. 19:25  Exod. 20:1  Exod. 20:19  Exod. 20:20  Exod. 20:22 |  | Isa. 62:4 |
| **#r,a,** | land, earth, ground | Exod. 20:2  Exod. 20:4  Exod. 20:11 | Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:11 | Isa. 61:7  Isa. 61:11  Isa. 62:4 |
| **rv,a]** | which, who, whom | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:16  Exod. 19:18  Exod. 20:2  Exod. 20:4  Exod. 20:7  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:12  Exod. 20:21 |  | Isa. 62:2 |
| **!Be** | sons | Exod. 19:6  Exod. 20:5  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:22 | Ps. 57:4 |  |
| **%r’B’** | blessed | Exod. 20:11 |  | Isa. 61:9 |
| **yAG** | nation | Exod. 19:6 |  | Isa. 61:6  Isa. 61:9  Isa. 61:11  Isa. 62:2 |
| **dy”** | hand | Exod. 19:13 |  | Isa. 62:3 |
| **hwhy** | LORD | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:8  Exod. 19:9  Exod. 19:10  Exod. 19:11  Exod. 19:18  Exod. 19:20  Exod. 19:21  Exod. 19:22  Exod. 19:23  Exod. 19:24  Exod. 20:2  Exod. 20:5  Exod. 20:7  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:11  Exod. 20:12  Exod. 20:22 |  | Isa. 61:6  Isa. 61:8  Isa. 61:9  Isa. 61:10  Isa. 61:11  Isa. 62:2  Isa. 62:3  Isa. 62:4 |
| **ac’y”** | brought, bring forth, goes | Exod. 19:17  Exod. 20:2 |  | Isa. 61:11  Isa. 62:1 |
| **!heKo** | priests | Exod. 19:6  Exod. 19:22  Exod. 19:24 |  | Isa. 61:6 |
| **!WK** | ready, prepared | Exod. 19:11  Exod. 19:15 | Ps. 57:6  Ps. 57:7 |  |
| **lKo** | all, whole, entire, every | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:8  Exod. 19:11  Exod. 19:12  Exod. 19:16  Exod. 19:18  Exod. 20:1  Exod. 20:4  Exod. 20:9  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:11  Exod. 20:17  Exod. 20:18 | Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:11 | Isa. 61:9  Isa. 61:11  Isa. 62:2 |
| **!Ke** | therefore, thus, so | Exod. 20:11 |  | Isa. 61:7  Isa. 61:11 |
| **aol** | no, not | Exod. 19:13  Exod. 19:23  Exod. 20:3 |  | Isa. 62:4 |
| **dyPil;** | lightning, torch | Exod. 20:18 |  | Isa. 62:1 |
| **lp;n”** | perish, fallen | Exod. 19:21 | Ps. 57:6 |  |
| **vp,n<** | soul |  | Ps. 57:1  Ps. 57:4  Ps. 57:6 | Isa. 61:10 |
| **!t;n”** | gives, given | Exod. 20:12 |  | Isa. 61:8 |
| **d[;** | till, until |  | Ps. 57:1 | Isa. 62:1 |
| **~l’A[** | forever, everlasting | Exod. 19:9 |  | Isa. 61:7  Isa. 61:8 |
| **l[;** | before, therefore, above. | Exod. 20:3  Exod. 20:11 | Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:11 |  |
| **~ynIP’** | before, face | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:18  Exod. 20:3  Exod. 20:20 | Ps. 57:6 |  |
| **ar’q’** | called | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:20 | Ps. 57:2 | Isa. 61:6  Isa. 62:2  Isa. 62:4 |
| **ha’r’** | gaze, see | Exod. 19:21  Exod. 20:18  Exod. 20:22 |  | Isa. 61:9  Isa. 62:2 |
| **~ve** | name | Exod. 20:7 |  | Isa. 62:2 |
| **~yIm;v’** | heaven | Exod. 20:4  Exod. 20:11  Exod. 20:22 | Ps. 57:3  Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:10  Ps. 57:11 |  |
| **anEf’** | hate | Exod. 20:5 |  | Isa. 61:8 |
| **%w<T’** | among, midst |  | Ps. 57:4  Ps. 57:6 | Isa. 61:9 |
| **tx;T;** | under, instead | Exod. 20:4 |  | Isa. 61:7 |
| **ds,x,** | lovingkindness | Exod. 20:6 | Ps. 57:3  Ps. 57:10 |  |
| **dAbK’** | glory |  | Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:8  Ps. 57:11 | Isa. 61:6  Isa. 62:2 |
| **~[;** | people | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:8  Exod. 19:9  Exod. 19:10  Exod. 19:11  Exod. 19:12  Exod. 19:14  Exod. 19:15  Exod. 19:16  Exod. 19:17  Exod. 19:21  Exod. 19:23  Exod. 19:24  Exod. 19:25  Exod. 20:18  Exod. 20:20  Exod. 20:21 | Ps. 57:9 | Isa. 61:9 |

**Greek:**

| **GREEK** | **ENGLISH** | **Torah Reading**  **Ex, 19:6 – 20:23** | **Psalms**  **57:1-12** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is. 61:6 – 62:4** | **Peshat**  **Mishnah of Mark,**  **Mk 7:14-16** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ἀκούω** | hear, heard | Exo 19:8  Exo 19:9 |  |  | Mk. 7:14  Mk. 7:16 |
| **ἄνθρωπος** | man | Exo 19:13 |  |  | Mk. 7:15 |
| **γυνή** | woman, wife | Exo 19:15  Exo 20:17 |  |  |  |
| **δύναμαι** | able | Exo 19:23 |  |  | Mk. 7:15 |
| **̓́πω** | say, said | Exod. 19:8  Exod. 19:9  Exod. 19:10  Exod. 19:12  Exod. 19:15  Exod. 19:21  Exod. 19:23  Exod. 19:24  Exod. 19:25  Exod. 20:1  Exod. 20:19  Exod. 20:20  Exod. 20:22 | Psa 57:9 | Isa. 62:4 |  |
| **ἕτερος** | another, other | Exo 20:3 |  |  |  |
| **κύριος** | LORD | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:8  Exod. 19:9  Exod. 19:10  Exod. 19:11  Exod. 19:18  Exod. 19:20  Exod. 19:21  Exod. 19:22  Exod. 19:23  Exod. 19:24  Exod. 20:2  Exod. 20:5  Exod. 20:7  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:11  Exod. 20:12  Exod. 20:22 |  | Isa. 61:6  Isa. 61:8  Isa. 61:9  Isa. 61:10  Isa. 61:11  Isa. 62:2  Isa. 62:3  Isa. 62:4 |  |
| **λέγω** | saying, said | Exo 19:12  Exo 19:21  Exo 19:23  Exo 20:1  Exo 20:20 |  |  | Mk. 7:14 |
| **μέσος** | mist, among |  | Ps. 57:4  Ps. 57:6 | Isa. 61:9 |  |
| **ὄνομα** | names | Exod. 20:7 |  | Isa. 62:2 |  |
| **οὐρανός** | heaven | Exod. 20:4  Exod. 20:11  Exod. 20:22 | Ps. 57:3  Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:10  Ps. 57:11 |  |  |
| **πᾶς** | all, whole, entire, every | Exod. 19:7  Exod. 19:8  Exod. 19:11  Exod. 19:12  Exod. 19:16  Exod. 19:18  Exod. 20:1  Exod. 20:4  Exod. 20:9  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:11  Exod. 20:17  Exod. 20:18 | Ps. 57:5  Ps. 57:11 | Isa. 61:9  Isa. 61:11  Isa. 62:2 | Mk. 7:14 |
| **πατήρ** | father | Exo 20:5  Exo 20:12 |  |  |  |
| **πιστεύω** | trust, believe | Exo 19:9 |  |  |  |
| **προσέρχομαι** | forward | Exo 19:15 |  |  |  |
| **υἱός** | sons | Exod. 19:6  Exod. 20:5  Exod. 20:10  Exod. 20:22 | Ps. 57:4 |  |  |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of Shemot (Exodus) 19:6 – 20:23**

**“V’Atem Tihyu Li” - “And you will be unto me”**

By: H. Em Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

|  |
| --- |
| **Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat**  **Mordechai (Mk) 7:14-16**  **Mishnah א:א** |
| ¶ **After he called the congregation to himself again, he** began**saying to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and become wise:[[67]](#footnote-67) there is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the him.”** “**If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”** |

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ex 19:6 – 20:23** | **Psa 57:1-12** | **Is 61:6-62: 4** | **Mk 7:14-16** |

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

The subject material of this pericope is “**what defiles a person**.” In Mordechai 7:16 Yeshua addresses the congregation and says: **“There is nothing outside the man which can defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile him.”** And in v. 17 the Talmidim call this statement a “riddle.” In other words, this statement requires some unpacking. Per Sabin[[68]](#footnote-68) the interpretation of this “riddle” is that though,

“at first glance, Jesus’ saying appears to challenge the Jewish dietary laws, after all, if nothing that one takes in is defiling, then why refuse to eat certain foods? The parenthetical comment “Thus he declared all foods clean” was probably added later and was intended as just such an explanation. We know, however from Acts 10:1-11 that the question of which foods were unclean went on being debated in the early church. And as Jesus goes on teaching here, we see that he is presenting something more morally complex. The complexity is contained in what comes “from within people, from their hearts” (7:21). If we grasp the saying as a whole, we realize that the emphasis is not on dismissing what enters a person but on demonstrating the greater evil of “what comes out” (7:20). As in much of Jesus’ teaching, his intent appears not so much to disregard external rules as to focus on internal realities.”

The problem with this line of argument is that the Jewish dietary laws can be found in the Scriptures, they are NOT, as Sabin states: “external rules”! These rules are **commandments** found in the Torah (Word) of G-d, therefore the explanation to this riddle needs to found in a similar but different line of argumentation.

Edwards[[69]](#footnote-69) noted something interesting, though because his dogma dictates that the Master declared all food clean, something impossible for the Messiah to do, he totally misses the point. The Mishnah in Tractate Kelim 2:1-7, explains that the “interior spaces were the most susceptible of defilement and thus most in need of cleansing.”[[70]](#footnote-70) In other words, the theory is that flat surfaces are normally clean, whereas a hollowed surface or receptacle is susceptible of uncleanness.[[71]](#footnote-71)

While we read the phrase “therefore, he declared all foods clean” parenthetically, we note that Messiah does not have power or authority to invalidate Scripture. Furthermore, we can clearly see that there has been a Monk monkeying with the text to validate whatever propaganda they will have for the sake of their doctrines. However, we can negate the notion of Yeshua declaring “all food clean,” by contextual hermeneutic. No Jewish Rabbi in the first century or present would call pork, “food.” Nor would he consider anything “food” that was not properly outlined in the Levitical code or the Oral Torah whereupon the Rabbis had detailed what is Kosher. No self-respecting Rabbi would honestly declare unacceptable things edible as “food.” Even those liberal branches, while they may eat things that are not deemed Kosher do not set out to abrogate the Torah.

Therefore, the Master is using here, a Kal VaChomer argument that goes like this: “If the inside of vessels is most susceptible to defilement, how much more so the inside of a person!” Thus, the words: **“There is nothing** relatively **from outside the man, having entered into him, which is able to defile him”** are correct if we understand that it is in a context of a riddle. For, we know that if a man eats say rotten fish, or rotten food, he surely will have a disease that renders him unclean/defiled, and even more, in peril of death. In the context of a riddle we can understand that “there is nothing [relatively] from outside a man” as relative to the comparison made in a specific riddle – i.e. **“But the things going out from him, those are the things defiling the man.”**

As can be seen the comparison in this riddle has nothing to do with “declaring all foods clean” and thereby abrogating the Torah, but rather the comparison here is between the outer part (less susceptible to defilement) with the inner part of a vessel or human being (which is more susceptible to defilement).

Yeshua’s words are better comprehended when we understand the laws of ritual purity. We will not elaborate at length here other than to make our point. Take for example blood. Blood within the body does not contaminate any other person that we encounter. However, when the blood that is inside is exposed to the “outside” and others encounter it, ritual impurity ensues. This is because blood is to be retained in a vessel, i.e. the body. Likewise, seminal fluid exposed to the outside contaminates. This fluid is to be transferred from vessel to vessel. When it is “spilled” per se, ritual impurity results. These two analogies show that fluids such as blood and semen are analogous of life so long as they are in their proper containers. But, when these fluids are “spilled” they are analogous of death, the principal father of uncleanness.

These ideas are anchored with another interesting one in v, 16 – **“If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear,”** which Delitzsch renders in the Hebrew as: **“כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אָזְנַיִם לוֹ לִשְׁמֹע יִשְׁמָע” – “Kol-Asher Aznayim Lo LiShmo YiShma” - Lit. “All with ears to obey/hear, obey/hear.”** In other words, the Master is anchoring this riddle and its explanation in the Shema (Deut. 6:4 ff.), as it is said: “And you will love Ha-Shem your G-d with all your heart.” And the most inner part of the human being is “the heart.”

Hakham Tsefet through his amanuensis Mordechai is here to teach us that Yeshua did not come to abrogate the mitzvoth, G-d forbid! Here when the Torah Seder is replete with the establishment of the Mitzvot among the Jewish people, along with their, “we will obey and hear” the present pericope is perfectly timed.

Mt 5:17 **Do not conceive** in your minds **that I have come to do away with[[72]](#footnote-72) the** mitzvot of the **Torah or the words of the Prophets. I have not come to do away with the** mitzvot **but to magnify[[73]](#footnote-73)** them.

The truest sense of this Midrashic passage is that Yeshua came to “magnify the Torah and Mitzvot, and making them honorable.” by interpreting the Torah correctly, per the teachings of the House of Hillel. Rabbi Yechiel Tzvi Lichtenstein suggests that Yeshua came to “fill the gaps in the faulty Pharisaical interpretations of the Torah.”[[74]](#footnote-74) We would interpret this statement to mean that Yeshua came to fill the gaps (breeches in the wall) that the Pharisaical School of Shammai made in their faulty teaching of the Torah. Consequently, we see the “Marqan Peshat” and “Luqan Remes” as Yeshua’s methodological search for the Shammaite abrogation of the Torah through their “faulty” teachings. This “Nazarean Talmud” corrects the faulty teachings of the Pharisaical School of Shammai. We have cited Abot 1:1 ad nauseam. However, the phrase “make a fence around the Torah” is very apropos here. Yeshua was inspecting the fence (Oral Torah) for places where it had been breached and might be appropriately walled.

**Some Questions to Ponder:**

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

**Blessing After Torah Study**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Next Shabbat:**

**Shevat 24, 5784, February 2/3, 2024**

**Shabbat: “V’Eleh HaMishpatim” – “And these are the ordinances”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וְאֵלֶּה, הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“V’Eleh HaMishpatim”** | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 21:1-6 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 22:24-26 |
| **“And** **these are the ordinances”** | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 21:7-17 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 22:27-30 |
| **“Y estas son las ordenanzas”** | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 21:18-27 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 23:1-3 |
| Sh’mot (Exodus) 21:1 – 22:23 | Reader 4 – Sh’mot 21:28-37 |  |
| Ashlamatah:  Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 56:1-9 + 57:19 | Reader 5 – Sh’mot 22:1-12 | **Monday / Thursday Mornings** |
| Special Ashlamatah:  Shmuel (I Samuel) 20:18-42 | Reader 6 – Sh’mot 22:13-16 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 22:24-26 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 58:1-12 | Reader 7 – Sh’mot 22:17-23 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 22:27-30 |
|  | Maftir – Sh’mot 22:17-23 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 23:1-3 |
| N.C.: Mk 7:17-23. | Isaiah 56:1-9 + 57:19 |  |

**Reading Assignment for next Shabbat**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1990)  **Exodus - IV Vol. 7 – “The Law”**  **pp. 3- 248** | **-Ramban: Exodus Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1973)  **pp. 338 - 396** |

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Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

Edited by His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham

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1. This intro is 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-1)
2. Bereshit Rabbah 51:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Tehillim (Psalms) 57:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Rashi on Genesis 1:8 quoting Genesis Rabbah 7 and Talmud, Chagigah 12a. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Chidah [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Tanakh* is an acronym for Torah (Law), Neviim (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings), and is how Jews refer to the so called *Old Testament*. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The *Nazarean Codicil* is how we will refer to the so called *New Testament* which is neither new, nor a testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Shechakim* has a root which means “to grind”. It is so named, we are taught, because manna is ground in that section of the heavens, and is prepared to be fed to the tzaddikim in the next world. Accordingly, it is possible that we eat food symbolizing manna not to commemorate the manna eaten by our ancestors in the desert, but rather to commemorate the manna that will be fed to the righteous in the future. On Shabbat, when we are given a glimpse into the everlasting Shabbat of the next world, we eat food resembling the manna that will be fed to those deserving of basking in the glory and enjoying the delights of the “Yom Shekulo Shabbat. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The vault or arch of the sky. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 10:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. I.e., ‘Curtain’, from Lat. Velum. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. I.e., ‘Expanse, firmament’. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Lit., ‘Clouds’, from שחק, ‘dust’ (cf. Isa. XL, 15). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. B.D.B.: ‘Elevation, height, lofty abode’; N.H., ‘Temple’. Jastrow: ‘(place of offering or entertainment) residence, especially Temple’. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. I.e., ‘Dwelling, habitation’. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. I.e., ‘Fixed or established place, foundation, residence’. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Tehillim (Psalms) 68:5. Levy: Perhaps from ערב, ‘to be dark’ (cf. ערב evening) and syn. with ערפל: (thick darkness, heavy cloud, in which G-d dwells; cf. Shemot (Exodus) 20:18). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. According to Rashi, Wilon (‘Curtain’) draws in every morning, and thus causes the light of day to become visible; in the evening it draws out and hides the daylight. This process constitutes the renewal of the work of creation. But Tosafot. explains that Wilon produces the light of day, and when it withdraws at night darkness prevails. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Thus there is a curtain-like heaven. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 40:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. I.e., the heavenly luminaries. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Bereshit (Genesis) 1:17. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. There is probably a play here on the meaning of שחק (the root of shehakim), which means ‘to rub away, pulverize, grind’ (cf. Shemot (Exodus) 30:36 and Iyov (Job) 14:19). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Tehillim (Psalms) 78:23, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Cf. Ta’an. 5a: ‘The Holy One blessed be He, said: I shall not enter the Jerusalem which is above, until I enter the Jerusalem which is below’. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Michael is Israel’s Guardian Angel; cf. Dan. 12:1 and Yoma 77a. Num. Rab. s. 2, Hul. 40a. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. I Kings 8:13; the earthly Temple corresponds to the heavenly Sanctuary. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 63:15. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Because Israel utters G-d’s praise by day. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. By silencing the angels by day. G-d shows lovingkindness to the children of Israel, who are thus permitted to win divine grace by their prayer. Cf. also A.Z. 3b on the same verse. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Tehillim (Psalms) 42:9. I.e., by night the song of the angels joins mine (says Israel), which I uttered by day (Rashi). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Chagigah 12b, Shim’on ben Lakish, better known by his nickname Resh Lakish, was an amora who lived in the Roman province of Syria Palaestina in the third century. He was reputedly born in Bosra, east of the Jordan River, around 200 CE, but lived most of his life in Sepphoris. Nothing is known of his ancestry except his father’s name. He is something of an anomaly among the giants of Torah study as he was supposed to have been in his early youth a bandit and a gladiator. Resh Lakish was regarded as one of the most prominent Amoraim of the second generation, the other being his brother-in-law and halakhic opponent, Johanan bar Nappaha. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Chagigah 12b [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Shlomo Yitzchaki (22 February 1040 – 13 July 1105), today generally known by the acronym Rashi (Hebrew: רש”י, RAbbi SHlomo Itzhaki), was a medieval French rabbi and author of a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Tanach. Acclaimed for his ability to present the basic meaning of the text in a concise and lucid fashion, Rashi appeals to both learned scholars and beginner students, and his works remain a centerpiece of contemporary Jewish study. His commentary on the Talmud, which covers nearly all of the Babylonian Talmud (a total of 30 tractates), has been included in every edition of the Talmud since its first printing by Daniel Bomberg in the 1520s. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 40:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Bereshit (Genesis) 1:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Nehemiah 9:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. cf. Yeshayahu 40:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Tehillim (Psalms) 78:23-24 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Cf. Ta’anith. 5a: ‘The Holy One blessed be He, said: I shall not enter the Jerusalem which is above, until I enter the Jerusalem which is below’. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Michael is Israel’s Guardian Angel; cf. Daniel 12:1 and Yoma 77a. Num. Rab. s. 2, Hul. 40a. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. I Melachim (Kings) 8:13; the earthly Temple corresponds to the heavenly Sanctuary. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 63:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Tehillim (Psalms) 42:9. I.e., by night the song of the angels joins mine (says Israel), which I uttered by day (Rashi). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. For these stores cf. Job 38:22f also Yeshayahu 29:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Devarim (Deuteronomy), 28:12; implying also the existence of a bad store, i.e., of punishments; but the “Ein Jacob’ reads here Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 50:25. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Tehillim (Psalms) 148:7-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Melachim alef (I Kings) 8:39 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Rashi explains that either ‘spirits’ and ‘souls’ are synonymous, or else ‘spirit’ means the soul that has bodily form (ectoplasm?). [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Tehillim (Psalms) 89:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 59:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Tehillim (Psalms) 36:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Tehillim (Psalms) 24:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Shmuel alef (1 Samuel) 25:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 57:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 6:2; in Rabbinic literature they are understood to be angels of fire, cf. Devarim (Deuteronomy) Rab.11 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Yehezechel (Ezekiel) 1:5f. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Tehillim (Psalms) 68:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 33:26 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Tehillim (Psalms) 18:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Daniel 2:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. In music theory, a diatonic scale is a heptatonic scale that includes five whole steps and two half steps in each octave, in which the two half steps are separated from each other by either two or three whole steps, depending on their position in the scale. This pattern ensures that, in a diatonic scale spanning more than one octave, all the half steps are maximally separated from each other (i.e. separated by at least two whole steps). The word “diatonic” comes from the Greek διατονικός, meaning progressing through tones. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Yuval (Hebrew: יוּבָל) is a Hebrew first name. It means stream, brook, or tributary. In the Bible, Yuval was the son of Lamech and Adah, a brother of Jabal, a descendant of Cain. He was named as the ancestor of all who played the lyre and pipe (see Bereshit (Genesis) 4:20-21). Yuval is known as the father of music. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. song [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Harav Moshe Wolfson, shlita. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Henry, Matthew, *Commentary on the Whole Bible Volume VI (Acts to Revelation)*: Second Corinthians Chapter 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. **σύνετε** from **συνίημι, συνίω** – *suniemi* [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Sabin, M. N. (2006), New Collegeville Bible Commentary: The Gospel According to Mark, Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, pp. 65-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Edwards, J. R. (2002), The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to Mark, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 211-212. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Schürer, E. (1890) A History of the Jewish People in the Times of Jesus Christ, (2008 Reprint), Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Vol. II, pp.476-77 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. We have used the word “break” rather than “destroy” based on cross-linguistic hermeneutics. This principle is based on the fact tha the LXX translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek. The number of possible words used by the translators of the LXX shows us how the Hebrew words were translated into Greek. In the present case, we have Hebrew *avar* (H5674) as a parallel. Lexical data from TWOT is as follows, 1556.0 **עֲבַר** (*abar*) **pass over, by, through, alienate, bring, carry, do away, take, take away, transgress.** [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Cf. Isaiah 42:21**.** [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Vine of David. (2011). *The Delitzsch Hebrew Gospels.* Marshfield, MO: Vine of David. Translators Preface XX [↑](#footnote-ref-74)