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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah**  **4544 Highline Dr. SE**  **Olympia, WA 98501**  **United States of America**  **© 2015**  [**http://www.betemunah.org/**](http://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**  **© 2015**  [**http://torahfocus.com/**](http://torahfocus.com/)  **E-Mail:** [**waltoakley@charter.net**](mailto:waltoakley@charter.net) |

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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **Third Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Sivan 26, 5775 – June 12/13, 2015** | **Seventh Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:**

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| **Amarillo, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:44 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:47 PM | **Austin & Conroe, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:15 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:15 PM | **Brisbane, Australia**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 4:42 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 5:38 PM |
| **Chattanooga, & Cleveland, TN, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:38 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:41 PM | **Manila & Cebu, Philippines**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 6:07 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 7:01 PM | **Miami, FL, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 7:54 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 8:52 PM |
| **Murray, KY, & Paris, TN. U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 7:57 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:02 PM | **Olympia, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:49 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 10:09 PM | **Port Orange, FL, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:06 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:04 PM |
| **San Antonio, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:16 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:15 PM | **Sheboygan & Manitowoc, WI, US**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:15 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:29 PM | **Singapore, Singapore**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 6:52 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 7:44 PM |
| **St. Louis, MO, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:08 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 9:15 PM | **Tacoma, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 12 2015 – Candles at 8:48 PM  Sat. Jun 12 2015 – Habdalah 10:08 PM |  |
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**For other places see:** [**http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp**](http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp)

**Roll of Honor:**

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

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

His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham

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

His Honor Paqid Adon Yoel ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Rivka bat Dorit

His Honor Paqid Adon Tsuriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Gibora bat Sarah

Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family

His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife

Her Excellency Giberet Laurie Taylor

Her Excellency Giberet Gloria Sutton & beloved family

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

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

Her Excellency Giberet Prof. Dr. Emunah bat Sarah & beloved family

Her Excellency Giberet Patricia Sand

His Excellency Adon El-Adamah Ruach

Her Excellency Giberet Lydia Ruach

Her Excellency Giberet Anternette Clabon

Her Excellency Giberet Rosalyn Reed

Her Excellency Giberet Shanique Scipio

Her Excellency Giberet Olette Jennings

His Excellency Adon Ernest Davis

Her Excellency Giberet Claudine Johnson

Her Excellency Giberet Veronica Lagrone

Her Excellency Giberet Misty Freeman

Her Excellency Giberet Erma Dupree

His Excellency Adon Robert Dick & beloved wife Her Excellency Giberet Cobena Dick

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

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

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

**Shabbat “Ki Yihyeh B’kha” - “If there is among you”**

**&**

**Shabbat Mevar’chim HaChodesh Tammuz**

**(New Moon of the month of Tammuz)**

**(Tuesday Evening June 16 – Thursday Evening June 18, 2015)**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **כִּי-יִהְיֶה בְךָ** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Ki Yihyeh B’kha”** | Reader 1 – D’barim 15:7-11 | Reader 1 – D’barim 16:18-20 |
| **“If there is among you”** | Reader 2 – D’barim 15:12-18 | Reader 2 – D’barim 16:20-21 |
| **“Si hay contigo”** | Reader 3 – D’barim 15:19-23 | Reader 3 – D’barim 16:18-21 |
|  | Reader 4 – D’barim 16:1-4 |  |
| D’barim (Deut.) 15:7 – 16:17  BeMidbar (Num) 28:9-15 | Reader 5 – D’barim 16:5-8 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
| Psalm 119:137-176 | Reader 6 – D’barim 16:9-12 | Reader 1 – D’barim 16:18-20 |
| Ashlam.: Amos 8:4-10 + 9:13-16  I Sam. 20:18,42 | Reader 7 – D’barim 16:13-17 | Reader 2 – D’barim 16:20-21 |
| P. Abot 4:15 | Maftir – B’Midbar 28:9-15 | Reader 3 – D’barim 16:18-21 |
| N.C.: Mark 15:6-15;  Lk 23:26-32; Rm 12:1-8 | Amos 8:4-10 + 9:13-16  I Sam. 20:18,42 |  |

**We dedicate this Torah Seder Commentary in honor of the birthdays of His Excellency Adon Cory Sean Felty, and Her Excellency Giberet Simcha bat Sarah. We wish them both a most joyous Yom Huledet Samech (Happy Birthday) in the company of loved ones, and we pray that they both have a very long and productive life, with very good health, the opportunity to perform many and great deeds of loving-kindness and copious prosperity in all their endeavors, Amen ve amen!**

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**These are the Laws for which the Torah did not mandate specific amounts: How much growing produce must be left in the corner of the field for the poor; how much of the first fruits must be offered at the Holy Temple; how much one must bring as an offering when one visits the Holy Temple three times a year; how much one must do when 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!**

**Summary of the Torah Seder – ‎ D’barim (Deut.) ‎‎15:7 – 16:17**

* The Israelite is warned against letting the approach of the Year of Release hinder him from helping his needy brother – Deut. 15:7-11
* The Release of Slaves – Deut. 15:12-18
* Of Firstlings – Deut. 15:19-23
* The Three Pilgrimage Festivals – Deut. 16:1-8
* The Feast of Weeks – Deut. 16:9-12
* The Feast of Tabernacles – Deut. 16:13-15
* Conclusion – Deut. 16:16

**Reading Assignment:**

**The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez - Vol 17: Deuteronomy – III – Gratitude & Discipline**

By: Rabbi Yitzchaq Behar Argueti & Rabbi Shmuel Yerushalmi

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1992)

Vol. 17 – “Deuteronomy – III – Gratitude & Discipline,” pp. 168-190.

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**For: D’barim (Deut.) ‎15:7 -16:17‎**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN** |
| --- | --- |
| 7. **If there will be among you a needy person, from one of your brothers in one of your cities, in your land the Lord, your God, is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, and you shall not close your hand from your needy brother.** | 7. **But if you be not diligent in the precepts of the Law, and there be among you a poor man in one of your cities of the land which the LORD your God gives you, you will not harden your heart, nor hold back your hand from your poor brother;** |
| 8. Rather, you shall open your hand to him, and you shall lend him sufficient for his needs, which he is lacking. | 8. but you will open your hand to him, and lend to him according to the measure of his lack through which he is in need. |
| 9. Beware, lest there be in your heart an unfaithful thought, saying, "The seventh year, the year of release has approached," and you will begrudge your needy brother and not give him, and he will cry out to the Lord against you, and it will be a sin to you. | 9. Beware lest there be a word in your proud heart, saying: The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand, and your eye become evil toward your poor brother, so as to be not willing to give to him, and he cry against you to the LORD, and there be guilt upon you. |
| 10. You shall surely give him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him; for because of this thing the Lord, your God, will bless you in all your work and in all your endeavors. | 10. Giving you will give to him, nor will your heart be evil when you give to him; for on account of this matter the LORD your God will bless you in all your works that you put your hands unto. |
| 11. **For there will never cease to be needy within the land.** Therefore, I command you, saying, you shall surely open your hand to your brother, to your poor one, and to your needy one in your land. | 11. **But forasmuch as the house of Israel will not rest in the commandments of the Law, the poor will not cease in the land:** therefore I command you, saying: You will verily open your hands toward your neighbors, to the afflicted around you, and to the poor of your country. |
| 12. If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you for six years, and in the seventh year you shall send him forth free from you. | 12. If your brother, a son of Israel, or if a daughter of Israel, be sold to you, he will serve you six years; and when the seventh comes, you will send him from you free. |
| 13. And when you send him forth free from you, you shall not send him forth empty- handed. | 13. And when you let him go away from you at liberty, you will not send him away empty. |
| 14. You shall surely provide him from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your vat, you shall give him from what the Lord, your God, has blessed you | 14. Comforting you will comfort him out of your flocks, your floors, and your wine presses; as the LORD has blessed you, you will give to him. |
| 15. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord, your God, redeemed you; therefore, I am commanding you this thing today. | 15. And be mindful that you were servants in the land of Mitzrayim, and that the LORD your God set you free; therefore I command you today that you do this thing. |
| 16. And it will be, if he says to you, "I will not leave you," because he loves you and your household, for it is good for him with you, | 16. But if he say to you, I will not go out from you, because I love you and the men of your house, and because it has been good for him to be with you, |
| 17. Then you shall take an awl and put it through his ear and into the door, and he shall be a servant to you forever; and also to your maidservant you shall do likewise. | 17. then you will take an awl, and bore (or apply) it through his ear, and that to the door of the house of judgment, and he will be your serving servant until the Jubilee. And for your handmaid also you will write a certificate of release, and give it to her. |
| 18. You shall not be troubled when you send him free from you, for twice as much as a hired servant, he has served you six years, and the Lord, your God, will bless you in all that you shall do. | 18. It must not be a hardship in your eyes when you send him away from you; for double the hire of an hireling has he been of service to you six years; and on his account the LORD your God has blessed you in all that you have done. |
| 19. Every firstborn male that is born of your cattle or of your flock you shall sanctify to the Lord, your God. You shall neither work with the firstborn of your ox, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. | 19. Every firstling male that comes of your herd and flock you will consecrate before the LORD your God. You will not work with the firstlings of your herd, nor shear the firstlings of your flocks; |
| 20. You shall eat it before the Lord, your God, year by year, in the place the Lord chooses-you and your household. | 20. you will eat thereof before the LORD your God from year to year, in the place which the LORD will choose, you and the men of your houses. |
| 21. And if there be any blemish in it, whether it be lame, or blind, or any ill blemish, you shall not sacrifice it to the Lord, your God. | 21. But if there be any spot in it, if it be lame or blind, or have any blemish, you will not sacrifice it before the LORD your God: |
| 22. You shall eat it within your cities, the unclean and the clean together, as the deer, and as the gazelle. | 22. you may eat it in your cities; he who is unclean, (so) that he may not approach to holy things, and he who being clean may approach the holy, may alike (eat), as the flesh of the antelope or hart. |
| 23. However, you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it on the ground, as water. | 23. Only you will not eat the blood; you will pour it out upon the ground like water. |
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| 1. Keep the month of spring, and make the Passover offering to the Lord, your God, for in the month of spring, the Lord, your God, brought you out of Egypt at night. | 1. Be mindful to keep the times of the festivals, with the intercalations of the year, and to observe the rotation thereof: in the month of Abiba to perform the pascha before the Lord your God, because in the month of Abiba the Lord your God brought you out of Mitzrayim; you shall eat it therefore by night. |
| 2. You shall slaughter the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, your God, [of the] flock, and [the Festival sacrifices of the] cattle, in the place which the Lord will choose to establish His Name therein. | 2. But you will sacrifice the pascha before the LORD your God between the suns; and the sheep and the bullocks on the morrow, on that same day to rejoice in the feast at the place which the LORD will choose to make His Shekinah to dwell there. |
| 3. You shall not eat leaven with it; for seven days you shall eat with it **matzoth, the bread of affliction**, for in haste you went out of the land of Egypt, so that you shall remember the day when you went out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life. | 3. You will not eat leavened bread with the pascha; seven days you will eat unleavened bread unto His Name, **the unleavened bread of humiliation**; for with haste you went forth from the land of Mitzrayim; that you may remember the day of your outgoing from the land of Mitzrayim all the days of your life. |
| 4. And no leaven shall be seen with you within all your border for seven days; neither shall any of the flesh you slaughter on the preceding day in the afternoon, remain all night until the morning. | 4. Take heed that in the beginning of the pascha there be no leaven seen among you within all your borders for seven days; and that none of the flesh which you sacrifice in the evening of the first day remain till the morning. |
| 5. You shall not sacrifice the Passover offering within any of your cities, which the Lord, your God, is giving you. | 5. It will not be allowed you to eat the pascha in (any) one of your cities which the LORD your God gives to you; |
| 6. Except at the place which the Lord, your God, will choose to establish His Name-there you shall slaughter the Passover offering in the afternoon, as the sun sets, at the appointed time that you went out of Egypt. | 6. but in the place which the LORD your God will choose to make His Shekinah to dwell, there will you sacrifice the pascha; and in the evening at the going down of the sun you may eat it until the middle of the night, the time when you began to go out of Mitzrayim. |
| 7. And you shall roast [it] and eat [it] in the place which the Lord, your God, will choose, and you shall turn away in the morning and go to your dwellings. | 7. And you will dress and eat it in the place which the LORD your God will choose, and in the early morn (if need be) you may return from the feast, and go to your cities. |
| 8. For six days you shall eat matzoth, and on the seventh day there shall be a halt to the Lord, your God. You shall not do any work [on it]. | 8. On the first day you will offer the omer, and eat unleavened cakes of the old grain; but in the six remaining days you may begin to eat unleavened cakes of the new grain, and on the seventh day you will assemble with thanksgiving before the LORD your God; no work will you perform. |
| 9. You shall count seven weeks for yourself; from [the time] the sickle is first put to the standing crop, you shall begin to count seven weeks. | 9. Seven weeks number to you; from the time when you begin to put the sickle to the harvest of the field after the reaping of the omer you will begin to number the seven weeks. |
| 10. **And you shall perform the Festival of Weeks to the Lord, your God,** the donation you can afford to give, according to how the Lord, your God, shall bless you. | 10. **And you will keep with joy the Festival of Weeks before the LORD your God,** after the measure of the freewill offerings of your hands, according as the LORD your God will have blessed you. |
| 11. **And you shall rejoice** before the Lord, your God, -you, and your son, and your daughter, and your manservant, and your maidservant, and the Levite who is within your cities, and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, who are among you, in the place which the Lord, your God, will choose to establish His Name therein. | 11. **And you will rejoice with the joy of the feast** before the LORD your God, you and your sons, your daughters, your servants and handmaids, the Levites who are in your cities, and the stranger, the orphan, and the widow who are among you, at the place which the LORD your God will choose where to make His Shekinah to dwell. |
| 12. And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall keep and perform these statutes. | 12. Remember that you were servants in Mitzrayim; so will you observe and perform these statutes. |
| 13. You shall make yourself the Festival of Sukkoth for seven days, when you gather in [the produce] from your threshing floor and your vat. | 13. The Feast of Tabernacles you will make to you seven days, when you will have completed to gather in the grain from your threshing floors, and the wine from your presses. |
| 14. **And you shall rejoice in your Festival-**you, and your son, and your daughter, and your manservant, and your maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, who are within your cities. | 14. **And you will rejoice in the joy of your feasts with the clarinet and flute,** you and your sons and daughters, your handmaids, the Levite, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, who are in your cities. |
| 15. Seven days you shall celebrate the Festival to the Lord, your God, in the place which the Lord shall choose, **because the Lord, your God, will bless you in all your produce, and in all the work of your hands, and you will only be happy.** | 15. Seven days you will keep the feast before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD will choose, **because the LORD your God will have blessed you in all your provision, and in all the work of your hands, and so will you be joyful in prosperity.** |
| 16. Three times in the year, every one of your males shall appear before the Lord, your God, in the place He will choose: on the Festival of Matzoth and on the Festival of Weeks, and on the Festival of Sukkoth, **and he shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.** | 16. Three times in the year will all your males appear before the LORD your God in the place that He will choose; at the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; **nor must you appear before the LORD your God empty of any of the requirements;** |
| 17. **[Every] man [shall bring] as much as he can afford, according to the blessing of the Lord, your God, which He has given you.** | 17. **every one after the measure of the gifts of his hands, according to the blessing which the LORD your God has bestowed upon you.** |
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**Rashi’s Commentary on D’barim (Deut.) ‎15:7 -16:17‎**

**7 If there will be among you a needy person** **The most needy person has priority. -[Sifrei]**

**from one of your brothers Your brother on your father’s side has priority over your brother on your mother’s side.-[Sifrei]**

**[in one of] your cities** The poor of your city have priority over the poor of another city. -[Sifrei]

**you shall not harden [your heart]** **Some people suffer [as they deliberate] whether they should give [to the needy] or they should not give; therefore it says: “you shall not harden [your heart].” Some people stretch out their hand [to give], but then close it; therefore it says: “nor close your hand.”-[Sifrei]**

**[nor close your hand] from your needy brother** **If you do not give him, you will ultimately become a “brother of the needy” [i.e., becoming needy yourself].-[Sifrei]**

**8 [Rather] you shall open [your hand]** **Even many times.**

**[Rather] you shall open [your hand]** Heb. כִּי־פָתֽחַ תִּפְתַּח . Here, the word כִּי has the meaning of “rather” [whereas in verse 7 it means “if,” and in verse 10, “because”].

**and you shall lend** **If he does not want [your money] as a [charitable] gift, give it to him as a loan.-[Sifrei ; Keth. 67b]**

**[lend him] sufficient for his needs** **However, you are not commanded to make him wealthy.-[**Sifrei]

**[sufficient for his needs,] what he is lacking** **Even a horse to ride on and a servant to run before him [if he is accustomed to this type of lifestyle].** -[Sifrei ; Keth. 67b]

**he [is lacking]** Heb. יֶחְסַר לוֹ , lit. **what is lacking for him. This refers to a wife [i.e., you should help him marry a wife]. Similarly, it is stated: “I shall make for him (לוֹ) a helpmate opposite him” (Gen. 2:18).** -[Keth. 66b]

**9 and he will cry out [to the Lord] against you** **One might think this is a requirement [namely, that this poor man is obliged to "cry out... against you"]. Therefore, Scripture says, “[On his day you shall give him his payment...] so that he will not cry against you [to the Lord]” (Deut. 24:15). -[Sifrei 15:138]**

**and it will be a sin to you** **in any case, even if he does not cry [against you]. If so, why does it say, “and he will cry out... against you?” [It means that God says:] I hasten to punish in response to the one who cries out more than to the one who does not cry out.-[Sifrei]**

**10 You shall surely give him Even a hundred times.-[Sifrei]**

**him** [meaning] **between him and you [i.e., privately].** -[Sifrei]

**for because of this thing** Heb. דָָּבָר , **lit. word. Even if you said [i.e., gave him your “word”] that you would give, you will receive a reward for the saying along with the reward for the deed**.-[Sifrei]

**11 Therefore** Heb. עַל־כֵּן , here meaning מִפְּנֵי כֵן , [i.e.,] “because of this,” or “therefore.”

**saying** I offer you advice for your own good.-[Sifrei]

**[You shall surely open your hand] to your brother, to your poor one** To which brother? To your poor one.

**to your poor one** Heb. לַעֲנִיֶּךָ , [spelled] with one “yud,” [singular form,] means one poor person, but עֲנִיֶּיךָ with two "yud"s [the second “yud” denoting the plural form,] means two poor people. [Here, since it is written with one “yud,” meaning one poor person, thus modifying אָחִיךָ , your brother, which is in the singular]. See Yosef Hallel, Leket Bahir, Chavel.

**12 If [your brother...] is sold to you** **By others [but not one who sells himself because of poverty]. Scripture is speaking here of one whom the court sold [for a theft that he had committed]. But has it not already been stated, “If you buy a Hebrew servant” (Exod. 21:2) and there, too, Scripture is referring to one whom the court sold (Mechilta )? Nevertheless, [it is repeated here] because of two points which are new here: The first is that it is written [here] “or a Hebrew woman,” that she, too, [like a manservant,] goes free at the end of six [years]. This does not mean a woman whom the court has sold, for a woman is not sold [by the court] on account of a theft, since it is stated [that the thief will be sold] “for his theft” (Exod. 22:2), not for her theft. Thus, [we are referring here to] a minor whom her father sold [as a handmaid], and it teaches you here that if six years terminate before she shows signs [of puberty], she goes free (Exod. 21:7-11). The second new point here is: “You shall surely provide him.”**

**14 You shall surely provide him** Heb. הַעֲנֵיק תַּעֲנִיק . **[The root ענק ] denotes an ornament worn high [on the upper portion of the body] within view of the eye. [Thus, this verse means that you should give him] something through which it will be recognized that you have benefited him. Others explain [the word הַעֲנֵיק ] as an expression of loading on his neck [meaning that you should load him with gifts].**

**[You shall surely provide him] from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your vat** **One might think that I must [give him] only these things [listed in the verse here]. Therefore, Scripture states, “from what the Lord, your God, has blessed you,” meaning, from everything with which your Creator has blessed you. Then why are these mentioned? Just as these particular things are within the realm of blessing, so too, you should provide him only with what falls within the realm of blessing. This [therefore] excludes mules, [which are sterile, and are thus not considered within the realm of blessing] (Kid. 17a). In tractate Kiddushin (17a)our Rabbis derived by means of a gezerah shavah how much one must give the servant of each kind.**

**15 And you shall remember that you were a slave [in the land of Egypt]** **And I loaded you up [with booty], and then did so a second time, from the spoil of Egypt and from the spoil at the Sea [of Reeds]; so too should you load him up, and then do so a second time.-[Sifrei]**

**17 [And he shall be] a servant [to you] forever** Heb. לְעוֹלָם . One might think that [ לְעוֹלָם , “forever”] is to be interpreted literally. Therefore, Scripture states: “[And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It will be a Jubilee for you;] and you shall return, every man to his property, and you shall return, every man to his family” (Lev. 25:10). Consequently, you learn that the term לְעוֹלָם here can mean only the period until the Jubilee. [This period is also called לְעוֹלָם .]-[Mechilta 21:6]

**and also to your maidservant you will do likewise** to provide her. One might think that Scripture includes her concerning the piercing [of the ear] as well. Therefore, it states, “And if the manservant (הַָעֶבֶד) will clearly say, [I love my master... then...his master shall bore his ear with an awl]” (Exod. 21:5-6); [i.e.,] a manservant (עֶבֶד) must have his ear pierced, but not a maidservant.-[Sifrei]

**18 for twice as much as much as a hired servant** From here our Rabbis said: A Hebrew slave serves both by day and by night, and that is double the amount of labor of a man hired only for day work. And what is his service during the night? That his master gives him a Canaanite maidservant [as a wife], and the [resultant] children [belong] to the master.-[Sifrei, Kid. 15a]

**19 Every firstborn male... you shall sanctify [to the Lord]** But elsewhere (Lev. 27:26) it says, “[But the firstborn which will be a firstborn for the Lord of the livestock,] no man shall sanctify it.” How is this [reconciled]? [The verse in Leviticus means that] one may not sanctify [the firstborn] to be another sacrifice [but only as a firstborn sacrifice]. And our verse here teaches us that it is a duty to proclaim [over the firstborn animal], “You are hereby sanctified as a firstborn.” Another explanation: It is impossible to say “sanctify [this firstborn animal],” because [Scripture] already says, “no man must shall sanctify it” (Lev. 27:26). And yet it is impossible to say that we shall not sanctify it, for [here] it already says, “you shall sanctify.” So how [can these two verses be reconciled]? [The answer is that we are dealing with an indirect sanctification, namely:] One may sanctify the value of the privilege [i.e., the owner of the firstborn animal has the privilege of choosing to which kohen he will give it. This privilege has a market value, namely how much an Israelite will pay so that the owner of the firstborn will give it to his grandson who is a kohen. The verse, therefore, means:] one may dedicate the value of this privilege according to its benefit and give it to the Temple [treasury].-[Ar. 29a]

**You shall neither work with the firstborn of your ox, nor shear [the firstborn of your flock]** The Rabbis derived that also the the converse [i.e., shearing your ox and working the flock] is prohibited. Scripture is merely speaking [here] of the usual manner [in which these animals are used].-[Bech. 25a]

**20 You shall eat it before the Lord, your God** [Scripture] is addressing the kohen, for we have already found [a statement to the effect] that it [the firstborn] is part of the dues given to kohanim, whether the animal is unblemished or whether it is blemished. For it is stated, “and their flesh [i.e., of the firstborn animals] shall be yours [i.e., the kohen 's]” (Num. 18:18). -[Bech. 28a] [In both cases, the kohen is entitled to eat the entire animal. The difference between the blemished and the unblemished animals is that the blemished animal is slaughtered outside the Temple, and its flesh may be eaten anywhere by anyone invited by the kohen. The unblemished animal, however, must be slaughtered in the Temple courtyard, its blood dashed on the altar, and its fat burned on the altar. The flesh must be eaten by the kohen and his household within the time allotted for eating it.] [

**You shall eat it before the Lord...] year by year** From here we derive the law that one should not delay it [i.e., from sacrificing it] beyond its first year (Bech. 28a). [If so, however,] one might think that it becomes unfit [as a sacrifice] when the first year has elapsed. [Therefore, the Torah tells us that] it [the firstborn animal] has already been compared to ma’aser [sheini], as it is said, “And you shall eat before the Lord, your God... the tithes of your grain, your wine, and your oil, and the firstborn of your cattle and of your sheep” (Deut. 14:23). Just as ma’aser sheini does not become unfit [when it is left over] from one year to the next, neither does the firstborn animal become unfit. However, [this verse means] that the proper way to fulfill this commandment [of the firstborn animal] is during its first year.

**year by year** If one slaughtered it at the end of its first year [on the last day], he may eat it on that day and one day of the next year. This teaches [us] that it [a firstborn animal] may be eaten for two days and one [intervening] night.-[Bech. 27b]

**21 [And if there be any] blemish [in it]** [This is] a כְּלָל , a general statement [not limiting itself to anything in particular].

**lame, or blind** [This is] a פְּרָט , particular things, [limiting the matter to these things].

**any ill blemish** [Once again the verse] reverts to כְּלָל , a general statement. [Now we have learned that when a verse expresses a כְּלָל , then a פְּרָט , and then a כְּלָל again, just as in this case, we apply the characteristics of the פְּרָט to the whole matter.] Just as the blemishes detailed [lame or blind] are externally visible blemishes that do not heal, so too, any externally visible blemish that does not heal [renders a firstborn animal unfit for sacrifice and may be eaten as ordinary flesh].-[Bech. 37a]

**23 However, you shall not eat its blood** [Although eating the blood of any animal is prohibited, this prohibition is mentioned here] so that you should not say: "Since this [blemished firstborn animal] is entirely permitted [to be eaten now after its blemish, even though] it started out from a forbidden status, since it was sanctified, [and now it is permitted] for it is slaughtered outside [the Temple] without having to be redeemed, and [it may be] eaten. I might [therefore] think that its blood is permitted as well!" Therefore, Scripture states, "However, you shall not eat its blood."

**Chapter 16**

**1 Keep the month of spring** Heb. אָבִיב . Before it [Nissan] arrives, watch that it should be fit for the אָבִיב , ripening [capable of producing ripe ears of barley by the sixteenth of the month], to offer up in it the omer meal offering. And if not, proclaim it a leap year [thereby enabling you to wait another month, until the barley ripens].-[San. 11b]

**[for in the month of spring the Lord, your God, brought you] out of Egypt at night** But did they not go out by day, as it is said, “on the morrow of the Passover the children of Israel went out...” (Num. 33:3)? However, since during the night Pharaoh gave them permission to leave, as it is said, “So he called for Moses and Aaron at night [and said, ‘Rise up, go out from among my people...]’ ” (Exod. 12:31), [therefore, here it says “at night”].-[Ber. 9a]

**2 You shall slaughter the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, your God,** [of the] flock As it is said, “You may take [it] either from the sheep or from the goats” (Exod. 12:5).

**and...cattle** These are slaughtered as the chagigah [Festival offering]. If a large group was formed for the Passover offering, they bring a Festival offering along with it, so that the Passover sacrifice will be eaten [after a sufficient meal, and therefore] after the required satiation. [Everyone had to designate himself to a particular company of people, which was then relevant to one particular Passover offering (Pes. 69a- 70b).] Our Rabbis also derived many other things from this verse.-[Sifrei ; Pes. 70a]

**3 the bread of affliction** **[I.e.,] bread that brings to mind the affliction they suffered in Egypt.-[**Sifrei]

**for in haste you went out of the land of Egypt** And the dough [that you had prepared for eating] did not have time to become leavened, so this [matzah] will be for you as a reminder. And the haste [here] is not on your part, but on the part of the Egyptians, for so it says, “So the Egyptians took hold of the people [to hasten to send them out of the land]” (Exod. 12:33). -[Sifrei ; Ber. 9a] so that you shall remember By eating the Passover sacrifice and the matzah, the day you went out [of the land of Egypt].

**4 neither shall any of the flesh you slaughter on the preceding day in the afternoon, remain all night until the morning** This is an admonition regarding leaving over the flesh of the Passover sacrifice, offered up by future generations, because [so far this prohibition] had been mentioned only with regard to the Passover sacrifice offered in Egypt (see Exod. 12:10). And יוֹם רִאשׁוֹן stated here is the fourteenth of Nissan [the preceding day, and not the fifteenth, which is the first day of Passover], just as it says: “but on the preceding day (בַּיוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן) you shall clear away leaven from your houses” (Exod. 12:15). Now since Scripture digressed from the subject of the Passover sacrifice and began to speak of the rules pertaining to the seven days [of the Festival]-such as, “seven days you shall eat with it matzoth ” (verse 3); “And no leaven shall be seen with you within all your border for seven days” (verse 4)—it was necessary to specify to which slaughtering [Scripture] is admonishing. For had it written only “neither shall any of the flesh you slaughter in the afternoon, remain all night until the morning” [without saying “the preceding day”], I might have thought that the peace offerings slaughtered during all the seven days are also subject to [the prohibition of] “And you shall not leave any of it until the morning,” (Exod. 12:10), and may be eaten only for [one] day and a night. Therefore, it is written: “on the preceding day in the evening,” [thereby clarifying that the verse is referring to the Passover sacrifice]. Another explanation: Scripture is referring to the Festival offering brought on the fourteenth of Nissan [and not to the specific Passover sacrifice], and it teaches with reference to it that it may be eaten for two days [and the intervening night]. Now the רִאשׁוֹן mentioned here [according to this explanation], is the first day of the Festival [i.e., the fifteenth of Nissan, rather than the preceding day]. And this is the meaning of the verse: The flesh of the Festival offering, which you slaughtered in the afternoon, shall not remain overnight after the first day of the Festival until the morning of the second day [the sixteenth of Nissan], but rather, it is to be eaten on the fourteenth and the fifteenth [and the intervening night]. And thus it is taught in tractate Pes. (71b).

**6 there you shall slaughter the Passover offering] in the afternoon**, **as the sun sets, at the appointed time that you went out of Egypt [In this verse,] three separate times are specified: 1)"in the afternoon," [i.e.,] from the sixth [seasonal] hour [not clock-hours, but rather the twelve equal divisions of the time between dawn and dusk, each one known as a שָׁעָה זְמַנִּית , a “seasonal hour”]. From this time onward [afternoon], you shall slaughter it (זְבָחֵהוּ) “as the sun sets,” you shall eat it (תּֽאכְלֵהוּ) ; and 3)"at the appointed time that you went out [of Egypt]," you must burn it (שוֹרְפֵהוּ) . I.e., [at the beginning of the morning of the first day of Passover, whatever is left over from the Passover sacrifice] becomes נוֹתָר , left over, and must be burned [on the next day].-[Sifrei ; see Ber. 9a]**

**7 And you shall roast** [it] Heb. וּבִשַּׁלְתָּ . [Here] this term means “roasted in fire” (צְלִי אֵשׁ) (see Exod. 12:9), for roasting is also included in the general term of בִּשּׁוּל , “cooking.”

**and you shall turn away in the morning [and go to your dwellings]** [i.e.,] the morning of the second day [of Passover]. This teaches that [the pilgrim] is required to remain [in Jerusalem] the night when the Festival terminates.-[Sifrei ; Pes. 95b; Chag. 17a-b]

**8 For six days you shall eat matzoth** But elsewhere it says, “For seven days [you shall eat matzoth]!” (Exod. 12:15). [The solution is:] For seven days you shall eat matzoth from the old [produce] and six days [i.e., the last six days, after the omer has been offered] you may eat matzoth prepared from the new [crop]. Another explanation: It teaches that the eating of matzoh on the seventh day of Passover is not obligatory, and from here you learn [that the same law applies] to the other six days [of the Festival], For the seventh day was included in a general statement [in the verse “For seven days you shall eat matzoth,” but in the verse: “Six days you shall eat matzoth ”] it has been taken out of this general [statement], to teach us that eating matzoh [on the seventh day] is not obligatory, but optional. [Now we have aready learned that if something is singled out of a general statement, we apply the relevant principle not only to itself but to every thing included in the general category. Thus the seventh day] is excluded here not to teach regarding itself, rather to teach regarding the entire generalization [i.e., the entire seven days of the Festival]. Just as on the seventh day the eating of matzah is optional, so too, on all the other days, the eating of matzah is optional. The only exception is the first night [of Passover], which Scripture has explicitly established as obligatory, as it is said, “in the evening, you shall eat matzoth ” (Exod. 12:18). -[Mechilta on Exod 12:18; Pes. 120a]

**[and on the seventh day there shall be] a halt to the Lord your God** - עֲצֶרֶת . Keep yourself back from work. Another explanation: [ עֲצֶרֶת means] a gathering for eating and drinking, as the expression, “Let us detain (נַַעַצְרָה) you” (Judg. 13:15).

**9 from [the time] the sickle is first put to the standing crop**, [you shall begin to count seven weeks] [I.e.,] from the time the omer is harvested [on the sixteenth of Nissan], which is the beginning of the harvest.-[see Lev. 23:10, Sifrei ; Men. 71a]

**10 the donation you can afford to give [I.e.,] sufficient generous donation from you; according to the blessing [that God bestows upon you], bring peace offerings of happiness [these are extra peace offerings in addition to the Festival offerings] and invite guests to eat [with you].**

**11 the Levite... the stranger, the orphan, and the widow** [God says:] **These are My four, corresponding to your four, [namely,] “Your son, and your daughter, and your manservant, and your maidservant.” If you shall gladden Mine, I will gladden yours.**-[Midrash Aggadah, Midrash Hagadol. Compare Tanchuma 18, Pesikta d’Rav Kahana p.100a. Note that in incunabula editions, this comment of Rashi is connected to the preceding one: and invite guests to eat [with you]: the Levite... the stranger, the orphan, and the widow. [God says:] These are My four...]

**12 And you shall remember that you were a slave [in Egypt]** On this condition did I redeem you [from Egypt], that you keep and perform these statutes.

**13 You shall make yourself the Festival of Sukkoth...] when you gather in [the produce]-** [i.e.,] at the time of the ingathering, when you bring the summer fruits into the house. Another explanation: “when you gather in [the produce] from your threshing floor and your vat” וּמִיִּקְבֶךָ) (בְּאָסְפּ;ְךָ מִגָּרְנְךָ teaches that we should cover the sukkah [only] with the waste products that come from the threshing floor and the vat [i.e., with things that have grown from the ground, have become detached, and are not susceptible to ritual uncleanness. Since they are not foods and are not vessels, they are not susceptible to spiritual uncleanness. - R.H. 13a; Suk. 12a]

**15 and you will only be happy** According to its simple meaning, this is not an expression denoting a command, but rather an expression of an assurance [i.e., I promise you that you will be happy]. **But according to its oral interpretation, [our Rabbis] learned from this to include the night before the last day of the Festival for the obligation of rejoicing.-[see Suk. 48a; Sifrei]**

**16 and he shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed But bring burnt-offerings of appearance (עוֹלוֹת רְאִיָּה) [which are obligatory when appearing before the Lord in Jerusalem on the Festivals] and Festival peace-offerings. -[Chag. 8b]**

**17 [Every] man [shall bring] as much as he can afford** **One who has many eaters [i.e., a large family] and many possessions should bring many burnt-offerings and many peace- offerings.-[Sifrei ; Chag. 8b]**

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: B’Midbar (Num.) 28:9-15**

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| **RASHI** | **TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN** |
| 9. On the Shabbat day [the offering will be] two yearling lambs without blemish, and two tenths [of an ephah] of fine flour as a meal-offering, mixed with [olive] oil, and its libation. | 9. but on the day of Shabbat two lambs of the year without blemish, and two‑tenths of flour mixed with olive oil for the mincha and its libation. |
| 10. This is the burnt-offering on its Shabbat, in addition to the constant (daily) burnt-offering and its libation. | 10. On the Sabbath you will make a Sabbath burnt sacrifice in addition to the perpetual burnt sacrifice and its libation. |
| 11. At the beginning of your months you will bring a burnt-offering to Adonai, two young bulls, one ram, seven yearling lambs, [all] without blemish. | 11. And at the beginning of your months you will offer a burnt sacrifice before the LORD; two young bullocks, without mixture, one ram, lambs of the year seven, unblemished; |
| 12. And three tenths [of an ephah] of fine flour as a meal-offering mixed with the [olive] oil for each bull, two tenths [of an ephah] of fine flour as a meal-offering, mixed with the [olive] oil for the one ram, | 12. and three tenths of flour mingled with oil for the mincha for one bullock; two tenths of flour with olive oil for the mincha of the one ram; |
| 13. And one tenth [of an ephah] of fine flour as a meal-offering mixed with the [olive] oil for each lamb. A burnt-offering of pleasing aroma, a fire-offering to Adonai. | 13. and one tenth of flour with olive oil for the mincha for each lamb of the burnt offering, an oblation to be received with favour before the LORD. |
| 14. Their libations [will be], one half of a hin for (a) bull, one third of a hin for the ram, and one fourth of a hin for (the) lamb, of wine. This is the burnt-offering of each [Rosh] Chodesh, at its renewal throughout the months of the year. | 14. And for their libation to be offered with them, the half of a hin for a bullock, the third of a hin for the ram, and the fourth of a hin for a lamb, of the wine of grapes. This burnt sacrifice will be offered at the beginning of every month in the time of the removal of the beginning of every month in the year; |
| 15. And [You will also bring] one he-goat for a sin offering to Adonai, in addition to the constant (daily) burnt-offering it will be done, and its libation. | 15. and one kid of the goats, for a sin offering before the LORD at the disappearing (failure) of the moon, with the perpetual burnt sacrifice will you perform with its libation. |
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**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 119:137-176**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM** |
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| 137. ¶ You are righteous, O Lord, and Your judgments are upright. | 137. **TZADE.** Your are righteous/generous, O LORD, and your judgments are upright. |
| 138. **You commanded Your testimonies, [which are] righteousness/generosity, and they are exceedingly faithful.** | 138. **You have commanded righteousness/ generosity, testimony, and much faithfulness.** |
| 139. My zeal incenses me, for my adversaries have forgotten Your words. | 139. My zeal has overcome me, for my oppressors have forgotten Your words. |
| 140. Your word is very pure, and Your servant loves it. | 140. Your word is very pure, and Your servant loves it. |
| 141. I am young and despised; I have not forgotten Your precepts. | 141. I am small and despised; I have not forgotten Your commandments. |
| 142. **Your righteousness is perpetual righteousness, and Your Torah is true.** | 142. **Your generosity is righteousness forever, and Your Torah is truth.** |
| 143. Distress and anguish have overtaken me; Your commandments are my occupation. | 143. Trouble and the oppressor have befallen me; Your commandments are my delight. |
| 144. The righteousness of Your testimonies is eternal; enable me to understand and I shall live. **{P}** | 144. Your testimonies are righteousness/ generosity forever; give me insight and I will endure. |
| 145. ¶ I called with all my heart; answer me, O Lord; I shall keep Your statutes. | 145. **QOPH.** I have called with a whole heart; answer me, O LORD! I will keep Your decrees. |
| 146. I called to You; save me and I shall keep Your testimonies. | 146. I have called You, redeem me; and I will keep Your testimonies. |
| 147. I arose early, when it was still night, and I cried out; I hoped for Your word. | 147. I have risen early at dawn, and prayed; I have waited long for Your word. |
| 148. My eyes preceded the watches to speak of Your word. | 148. My eyes have preceded the watches of morning and evening to speak of Your word. |
| 149. Hearken to my voice according to Your kindness; O Lord, according to Your custom sustain me. | 149. Hear my voice in accordance with Your kindness, O LORD; sustain me according to Your judgments. |
| 150. Pursuers of lewdness have drawn near; from Your Torah they have distanced themselves. | 150. Those who pursue fornication have drawn near; they have gone far from Your Torah. |
| 151. You are near, O Lord, **and all Your commandments are true.** | 151. You are near, O LORD, **and all Your commandments are truth.** |
| 152. From before, I knew from Your testimonies, for You established them to [the end of] the world. **{P}** | 152. Long ago I grew wise from Your testimonies, for You founded them forever. |
| 153. ¶ See my affliction and release me, for I have not forgotten Your Torah. | 153. **RESH.** See my affliction and deliver me; for I have not forgotten Your Torah. |
| 154. Plead my cause and redeem me; for Your word sustains me. | 154. Argue my case and redeem me; heal me for Your word. |
| 155. Salvation is far from the wicked, for they did not seek Your statutes. | 155. Redemption is far from the wicked; for they have not sought Your decrees. |
| 156. Your mercies, O Lord, are abundant; according to Your custom, sustain me. | 156. Your mercies are many, O LORD; heal me according to Your judgments. |
| 157. Many are my pursuers and my adversaries; from Your testimonies I did not turn away. | 157. Those who pursue me and oppress me are many; I have not turned away from Your testimonies. |
| 158. I saw traitors and I quarreled [with them] because they did not keep your word. | 158. I saw despoilers and I contended with them, who have not kept Your word. |
| 159. See that I love Your precepts, O Lord; according to Your kindness, sustain me. | 159. See this, for I have loved Your commandments; O LORD, according to Your kindness heal me. |
| 160. **The beginning of Your word is true, and each of Your righteous/generous judgments is eternal. {P}** | 160. **The beginning of Your word is truth; and all the judgments of Your righteousness/generosity are forever.** |
| 161. ¶ Princes pursued me for nothing, but my heart feared Your word. | 161. **SHIN.** Rulers have pursued me without cause; and my heart is in fear of Your word. |
| 162. I rejoice over Your word as one who finds great spoil. | 162. I am glad concerning Your word, like a man who finds much spoil. |
| 163. I hate falsehood, and I abominate [it], **I love Your Torah.** | 163. I have hated deceit and loathed it; **I have loved Your Torah.** |
| 164. Seven times a day I praise You for Your righteous judgments. | 164. Seven times a day I have praised You, because of the judgments of your righteousness/ generosity. |
| 165. **There is abundant peace to those who love Your Torah, and they have no obstacle.** | 165. **There is great peace for those who love Your Torah in this age, and they have no stumbling-block in the age to come.** |
| 166. I hoped for Your salvation, O Lord, and I performed Your commandments. | 166. I have hoped for Your redemption, O LORD, and I have done Your commandments. |
| 167. My soul kept Your testimonies, and I love them exceedingly. | 167. My soul has kept Your testimonies, and I have loved them greatly. |
| 168. I kept Your precepts and Your testimonies, for all my ways are before You. **{P}** | 168. I have kept Your commandments and Your testimonies, for all my ways are before You. |
| 169. ¶ May my song of prayer draw near before You, O Lord; according to Your word, enable me to understand. | 169. **TAV.** My prayer will come near in Your presence, O LORD; give me insight according to Your word. |
| 170. May my supplication come before You; according to Your word, save me. | 170. Let my prayer come before You; deliver me according to Your word. |
| 171. My lips will utter praise when You teach me Your statutes. | 171. My lips will seek praise, for You will teach me Your decrees. |
| 172. **My tongue will proclaim Your word, for all Your commandments are righteous/generous.** | 172. **My tongue will reply to Your word, for all Your judgments are righteousness/generosity.** |
| 173. May Your hand be [ready] to help me, for I have chosen Your precepts. | 173. May Your hand be ready to help me, for I have taken pleasure in Your commandments. |
| 174. **I yearned for Your salvation, O Lord, and Your Torah is my occupation.** | 174. **I have yearned for Your redemption, O LORD, and Your Torah is my delight.** |
| 175. May my soul live and praise You, and may Your judgments help me. | 175. May my soul live and praise You, and may Your judgments give me aid. |
| 176. I went astray like a lost lamb; seek Your servant, for I did not forget Your commandments. **{P}** | 176. I have gone astray like a lost flock; seek Your servant, for I have not forgotten Your commandments. |
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**Rashi’s Commentary on Tehillim (Psalms) 119:137-176**

**139 My zeal incenses me** Heb. קנאתי . The zeal with which I am zealous for Your name against those who forget Your words, cuts me and incenses me against them.

**141 I am young and despised** As it is stated (I Sam. 17:14): “And David was the youngest.” I am despised to the extent that I humble myself beside those who engage in the Torah, to learn, for I have not forgotten Your precepts; [nor have I refrained] from searching and debating with them about Your righteousness that is within them [the precepts], which is righteousness and truth to eternity; and even though troubles have befallen me, they were my occupation. And forever enable me to understand their righteousness and I shall live by them (Deut. 30:20): “for it [the Torah] is your life and the length of your days.”

**146 and I shall keep** (The acronym of, עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ is דמה בן פֶרֶץ ; the “vav” is vowelized with a “holam,” but in the other instances, it is עֵדֽתֶיךָ ; the “daleth” is vowelized with a “holam.”)

**148 watches** Half the night, two watches, and according to one who says that the night consists of three watches, David would rise from bed at the first third of the night and engage in Torah until midnight, as it is said: “to speak of Your word.” From midnight on, he would engage in songs and praises, as it is said (verse 62): “At midnight, I rise to give thanks to You.”

**150 Pursuers of lewdness have drawn near a counsel of sins.** They follow the counsel of their sins and distance themselves from your Torah to draw near to the counsel of their evil.

**151 You are near to these faraway people,** who distance themselves from Your Torah, if they repent of their way.

**152 From before, I knew from Your testimonies** Before the thing came about, I knew it from Your testimonies. Before they inherited the land, You commanded them about the first fruits, heave offerings, and tithes, and before You gave them rest from their enemies, You commanded them (Deut. 25:19): “And it will be, when the Lord Your God gives you rest, etc.” to appoint a king, to annihilate Amalek, and to build the Temple.

**to the world** For You established Your testimonies concerning all things destined to be until the end of the world.

**160 The beginning of Your word is true And the end of Your word is not true? Rather, the end of Your word proves that the beginning of Your word is true. For, when the nations heard, “I am the Lord your God,” and “You shall not have [another god],” and “You shall not take, etc.,” they said, “Everything is for His benefit and for His glory.” As soon as they heard, “Honor, etc.; You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery,” they admitted [that they had erred] about the beginning of Your word, that it is true.**

**162 I rejoice over Your word** Over Your promise that You promised me. Another explanation: Over one of Your enigmatic statements, when I understand it. Our Rabbis, however, interpreted it as referring to circumcision, for [when] David was in the bathhouse and saw himself without zizith, without tefillin, and without Torah, he said, “Woe is to me, for I am naked of all commandments.” As soon as he thought of the circumcision, he rejoiced and said when he emerged (from the bathhouse), “I rejoice over Your word.” **[This refers to] circumcision, which was first given with a saying (אמירה) , and not with speaking (דיבור) , as it is said (Gen. 17:9): “And God said (ויאמר) to Abraham, ‘And you shall keep My covenant.’”**

**164 Seven times a day** In the morning, twice before the reading of “Shema” and once after it, and in the evening, twice before it and twice after it.

**for Your righteous judgments** For the reading of the Shema, which consists of words of Torah.

**168 for all my ways are before You** You know all my ways.

**169 according to Your word,** **enable me to understand the words of Your Torah; according to their law and in the order in which they stand.**

**171 will utter** will speak.

**172 My tongue will proclaim** Heb. תען . Every [expression of] עַנִיָה is an expression of a loud voice, and the “father” of them all is (Deut. 27:14): “And the Levites shall proclaim (וענו) and say [to all Israel with a loud voice].”

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalm 119: 137-176**

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

I am repeating my introduction from the first part of this psalm for continuity.

The life of King David was devoted to the attainment of self-perfection in the service of God. Every action and every step in David’s life was calculated to bring him closer to this lofty goal. In this psalm of one hundred seventy-six verses, the lengthiest in the Book of Tehillim, David painstakingly charts the progressive stage of his determined ascent toward spiritual perfection. The psalm follows the sequence of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; eight verses begin with א, aleph, the next eight with ב, beit, and so on, because this psalm embodies an orderly program for achieving personal perfection. The Talmud[[1]](#footnote-1) refers to this psalm a תמניא אפין, the repetition of eight. Whereas the number seven symbolizes the power of This World, which was created in seven days, eight symbolizes release from the desires of the mundane work which distract a person from his spiritual aspirations.[[2]](#footnote-2)

In these verses David describes the many obstacles and danger that confronted him in his lifetime. Yet his spirit refused to be overwhelmed by sorrow, for he embraced the fount of joy, the Torah. As David followed the guiding light of G-d’s Torah, his lips burst forth in these ecstatic verses of praise for G-d’s salvation. This psalm opens with the statement: Praiseworthy are those whose way is wholesome, who walk with the Torah of HaShem. It goes on to cite scores of examples of how David strived to walk with G-d. In conclusion David declares: ‘I have attempted to follow You all my life HaShem. If I have failed, I beseech You not to abandon me! I have strayed like a lost sheep; seek out Your servant, I have not forgotten Your commandments’.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Our Torah portion opens with HaShem’s admonition that we should **open our hand** liberally to our needy brother. King David picks up this verbal cue in our portion of Psalm 119:173 by pleading for HaShem **to open His hand** to help him. Radak[[4]](#footnote-4) indicates that this is midda-kneged-midda action.[[5]](#footnote-5) That is, just as King David opened his hands to do what HaShem commanded, by taking care of the needy, so also should HaShem take care of him.

This ‘open hand’ for the needy is also echoed in the opening words of our Ashlamata:

***Amos 8:4*** *Hearken to this, you who swallow up the needy, and to cut off the poor of the land.*

Thematically, there are a couple of connections between the Torah, with the Targum, and our Psalm portion. Consider the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Torah (Targum)** | **Psalm** |
| **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 15:7** But if you be not diligent in the precepts of the Law, and there be among you a poor man in one of your cities of the land which the LORD your God gives you, you will not harden your heart, nor hold back your hand from your poor brother; | **Tehillim (Psalm) 119:168** I kept Your precepts and Your testimonies, for all my ways are before You. **{P}** |
| **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 15:11** **But forasmuch as the house of Israel will not rest in the commandments of the Law, the poor will not cease in the land:** therefore I command you, saying: You will verily open your hands toward your neighbors, to the afflicted around you, and to the poor of your country. | **Tehillim (Psalm) 119:143** Distress and anguish have overtaken me; Your commandments are my occupation. |

Now I would like to examine the ramifications for this section of Psalms as it relates to our prayers.

David exclaims,[[6]](#footnote-6) ‘Seven Times a Day I have praised you for Your righteous ordinances’. Rashi explains that these seven times are in fact the seven berachot[[7]](#footnote-7) that we recite every day which relate directly to kriyat shema;[[8]](#footnote-8) three berachot in shacharit,[[9]](#footnote-9) two before kriyat shema and one after, and four berachot in Arbit,[[10]](#footnote-10) two before kriyat shema and two after. Seven focused berachot a day revolving around our fundamental daily kriyat shema.[[11]](#footnote-11) David HaMelech expressed it clearly, “Seven Times a Day I have praised you”, and this is what he meant![[12]](#footnote-12)

The Beit Yosef[[13]](#footnote-13) quotes the Gaonim[[14]](#footnote-14) who cite the source in the verse ‘Seven times a day I have praised You’.[[15]](#footnote-15) The Mishnah Berurah[[16]](#footnote-16) lists them:

(1) after Pesuke DiZimra,

(2) after Shemone Esrae,

(3) after Kedusha Di’Sidra,

(4) after Aleinu,

(5) after Ashrei of Mincha,

(6) after Shemone Esrae of Mincha,

(7) after the evening kriyat shema before Shemone Esre.

According to the Jerusalem Talmud,[[17]](#footnote-17) shema is “sandwiched” between four blessings in the evening and three in the morning, for a total of seven each day, so that it will correspond to the verse:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164*** *Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous ordinances.*

The Gemara[[18]](#footnote-18) says that the intent of this verse is referring to the seven berachot surrounding the kriyat shema.[[19]](#footnote-19) In the morning there are two before the shema and one after the shema. At night there are two before the shema and two after. The seven praises mentioned in the verse are the seven blessings of the shema, and the “just laws” are those referred to in the shema itself.

The meforshim[[20]](#footnote-20) on the prayers explain that the two berachot before the shema are designed to help us focus on two main ideas:

1. The first berachot is designed to help us focus on the fact that HaShem constantly renews creation. The natural order is only a façade. In fact HaShem is constantly renewing the world every second and second. When we focus on this idea we must realize that whatever we want and need in life can only come directly Him and not through any other intermediary.

2. The second berachot is designed to help us focus on the fact that Klal Israel is the focal point of all of HaShem’s great and powerful love. He made us partners with Him in creation and we have to accept that yoke and follow his Torah.

The Gemara,[[21]](#footnote-21) in berachot, says that in the first berachot before the shema, which refers to the renewal of Creation, we should always mention both the day and nigh time periods. The reason for this is that even though we want to focus on the renewal of the specific time period at hand nevertheless Chazal didn’t want to give the impression to heretics that there are multiple deities (the God of day and the God of night) therefore we always mention both together to show that the One G-d has dominion over all of the time periods.

The Gemara[[22]](#footnote-22) says that there are two different versions of the customs of the second berachot of the shema. One version is *ahavat olam*[[23]](#footnote-23) the other version is *ahavah rabbah*.[[24]](#footnote-24) Since the Gemara did not conclude which custom is the correct one, therefore the custom is to say *ahavah rabbah* in the morning and *ahavat olam* at night. There is basis for this split in the scripture because the verse says in Yeshayahu “You renew the world in the morning, how great is your trust in us”. The usage of the word “great” is connected to the morning.

The Rif[[25]](#footnote-25) gives a basis of why we should hold like the opinion that says “Ahavat Olam” always. The Shulchan Aruch[[26]](#footnote-26) rules like the Rif, therefore the Sefardi custom is to say *ahavat olam* both at Shacharit and Arbit.

The berachot after the shema has to do with the fact that HaShem redeemed us from Egypt and constantly protects us throughout all the future exiles.

Let’s briefly review. The Talmud states that one can fulfill the Sinaitic obligation of Torah study through the morning and evening Shema.[[27]](#footnote-27) However, it is not merely that one can fulfill the commandment of learning Torah by reciting the Shema. "The end goal of the mitzva of the Shema is because of Torah study".[[28]](#footnote-28) In other words, the mitzva of Shema is essentially identical with that of Torah study, and Ahavah Rabbah is a blessing on Torah study. Following this logic brings us to the conclusion that the last blessing, ga'al Israel, the one after the Shema, is for that aspect of the Shema that constitutes the commandment to re­member the Exodus.

What do the Rishonim say?[[29]](#footnote-29)

There are situations when for some reason a blessing cannot be said before a mitzva and is post­poned until after the mitzvah was performed.1 presumably the reason for the exception in this case is that one cannot formu­late a proper blessing on the Shema until he has internalized the facts of the Exodus from Egypt. It is only after we fully integrate the historic experience of the Exodus, revelation, and redemp­tion as laid out in Emet V'Yatziv that we can appreciate what the Shema has to teach us about God and His Kingship. Only then can we pronounce a blessing.

The Meiri[[30]](#footnote-30) and the Tosafot[[31]](#footnote-31) are of the opinion that the blessing on the Shema is the sec­ond one, Ahavah Olam, or Ahavah Rabbah. This approach is consis­tent with the understanding that the Shema is primarily a paradigm of Torah and that Ahavah Rabbah is a blessing on Torah study.

Many authorities, including the Rambam,[[32]](#footnote-32) believe that all the blessings together are the blessings of the Shema. They draw a parallel to blessings before and after the public reading of the Torah and the Megillah. Like these, the Shema is a scriptural reading recited in a formal setting, and, like them, there are blessings before and after it. This opinion should mandate that whenever the Shema is recited, even after the time for the morning prayers has passed, the blessings must be recited with it.

The first blessing echoes and amplifies the motif of accep­tance of the yoke of Heaven expressed in the Shema, and the second blessing does the same for Torah study. The third bless­ing elaborates on the Exodus and connects the Shema to the Shemone Esrei. The realization of this basic fact led the Sages to mandate that the blessings be repeated together with the Shema whenever possible to preserve the richness of the Shema experience.

Now that we have looked at the blessings which surround the Shema, let’s look at the shema, itself, in greater detail.

Shema is the quintessential statement of the Jew. Its importance is underscored by its inclusion in the tefillin, mezuzah, and our prayers.

For those who do not know what the Shema is, it is worth while to give a basic definition that we can expand upon throughout this study. The word ‘Shema’ is an English transliteration of the Hebrew word שמע. Shema means ‘to hear’, and is taken from the first word of the following Torah command:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-9*** *Hear, O Israel: HaShem our G-d, HaShem is one: 5 And thou shalt love HaShem thy G-d with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*

The Shema is an affirmation of our covenantal relationship and a declaration of faith in one G-d. The obligation to recite the Shema is separate from the obligation to pray and a Jew is obligated to say Shema in the morning and at night, as we can see from the above passage.

The Master of Nazareth, Yeshua, called the Shema, “the first commandment of all”.

***Mordechai (Mark) 12:28-34*** *And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? 29 And Yeshua answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. 31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. 32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: 33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. 34 And when Yeshua saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.*

The Rambam, as we shall see, cited ‘belief in G-d’ as the first commandment. The Master of Nazareth taught that that the Shema was the first commandment of all.

The Shema consists of three paragraphs extracted from several Torah verses. Before we look at the details, it is worthwhile to understand the importance of this prayer / command.

The importance of this prayer is underscored by the Talmud,[[33]](#footnote-33) where we learn that the reading of the Shema morning and evening fulfills an important mitzva:

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 1:8*** *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

So important is this prayer that as soon as a child begins to speak his father is directed[[34]](#footnote-34) to teach him the Shema and the verse:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 33:4*** *Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.*

The Talmud teaches us that this important prayer even reaches into our dreams:

***Berachot 57a*** *If a man were to dream that he is reciting the Shema, he is worthy that the Divine Presence should rest upon him…*

The significance of the Shema is that it is a prayer, in which we accept the **yoke of The Kingdom**. The reciting of the first verse of the Shema is called the *acceptance of the yoke of the kingship of G-d*.[[35]](#footnote-35) Accepting the yoke of the Kingdom[[36]](#footnote-36) is a vital part of understanding the Shema.

The Ramban[[37]](#footnote-37) has said that the primary function of all the mitzvot is to learn the fear of G-d.[[38]](#footnote-38) Chazal[[39]](#footnote-39) teach that “Fear of G-d”[[40]](#footnote-40) is reverential awe.

These are the four rungs in the ladder of prayer. In the first phase of the "service of the heart" (which culminates in the first section of the Shema), the objective is to develop a feeling of love towards HaShem, a yearning and craving to draw close to Him. The second phase (coinciding with the second section of the Shema) is the development of feelings of reverence and awe toward HaShem. The third phase (associated with the blessing "True and Enduring", recited between the Shema and the Amida) is the fusion of love and awe in our relationship with HaShem. In the fourth phase (attained during the silent recitation of the Amida) we transcend emotion itself, abnegating all feeling and desire to achieve an utter commitment and unequivocal devotion to HaShem.

The directives of the Shema, Devarim 6:4ff, intimate two ways for Israel to express its love for HaShem: **to do** and **to hear**. Later Hakhamim will refer to these “ways” as “**duties of the limbs**” and “**duties of the heart**”, the “duties of the limbs” implying what the Hakhamim came to call *halacha.* Derived from the causative verb *halak* (to walk, i.e., to make someone else walk, to lead, to guide), *halacha* is that component of Torah which provides guidance through definitive rulings or commandments (mitzvot). It answers the questions ‘what,’ ‘when,’ and ‘how’ in Israel’s call to holiness.

Rambam[[41]](#footnote-41) lists the reading of the Shema as the tenth of the positive mitzvot:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Mitzva #** | **Verse #** | **248 Positive Mitzvot** |
| P 1 | Ex. 20:22 | Believing in G-d |
| P 2 | Deut. 6:4 | Unity of G-d |
| P 3 | Deut. 6:5 | Loving G-d |
| P 4 | Deut. 6:13 | Fearing G-d |
| P 5 | Exo23:25; Deu11:13; 13:5 | To serve G-d |
| P 6 | Deut 10:20 | To cleave to G-d |
| P 7 | Deut. 10:20 | Taking an oath by G-d's Name |
| P 8 | Deut. 28:9 | Walking in G-d's ways |
| P 9 | Lev. 22:23 | Sanctifying G-d's Name |
| P 10 | Deut. 6:7 | Reading the Shema twice daily |

Let’s look at the details of the "Shema", the prayer HaShem's people pray twice a day; once in the evening and once in the morning. The basic command is found in:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-9*** *Hear, O Israel: HaShem our G-d, HaShem is one. Love HaShem your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.*

In the above passage, you will notice that we speak of these commands when we sit at home. When do we sit at home? We sit at home in the *evening*. Then we talk of them when we walk along the road. When do we walk along the road? We walk along the road in the *morning*. The scripture then goes on to tell us to talk of them when we lie down. When do we lie down? We lie down in the *evening*. Finally, we are to talk about them when we get up. When do we get up? We get up in the *morning*. So, the pattern holds: "evening" begins the day, and "morning" ends the day.

**HaShem is One!**

The human body has a mashal, an analogy, about HaShem’s oneness. This mashal is based on our observation of the world. Our observation is that this world is composed of differentiated parts. We observe this same differentiation when we observe other human beings. They seem to be composed of parts: Head, hands, legs, etc. This is analogous to this world which seems to be composed of parts. Further, as we saw in our last mashal, HaShem seems to be composed of parts. Yet, we know that HaShem is ONE. That is our declaration in the Shema: HaShem is one! To understand this paradox, HaShem gives us a mashal in our own bodies that will help us understand this paradox.

When others observe us, they see parts. When we observe ourselves externally we see parts. However, when we grasp ourselves internally we see only the totality. We do not grasp ourselves, internally, as a collection of parts. We see only… ourselves! When we use our intellect, or our creativity, we do not have the sensation of moving to another part. We have only the sensation of ourselves as a unity.

Our awareness of ourselves is always in totality. We grasp ourselves as a unity, not a collection of parts.

From this mashal we learn how to view HaShem as one. Since the whole world is nothing more than a manifestation of HaShem, we learn that despite the appearance of parts, this world is one as HaShem is one. Thus we can begin to understand a bit about the unity of HaShem by observing how we are unified to ourselves.

**Malchut - Kingship**

One of the important functions of the Shema is to make HaShem our King. The Rambam taught this concept:[[42]](#footnote-42)

*“The Second Mitzva is the commandment in which we are commanded regarding knowledge of the Oneness [of G-d], namely, that we should know that the Creator of Existence and its Primary Cause is One, as He stated, “Understand, O Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is One” (Devarim 6:4). In many midrashim you will find the Sages saying, “Al menas le’yached et Shemi” (“for the purpose of unifying My Name”) and “Al menas le’yachdeini” (literally, “for the purpose of unifying Me” - obviously, we cannot take this literally), and the like. Their intent in this statement is that the only reason He took us out of slavery and acted kindly and benevolently with us was in order that we should be a state of knowledge of [His] Oneness, for we are obligated in this. In many places this mitzva is referred to as “the mitzva of Oneness.”* ***This mitzva is also called “Malchut,” as the Sages say, “To accept upon oneself the yoke of the Malchut Shamayim,”[[43]](#footnote-43) which means recognition and knowledge of [His] Oneness.***”

Thus, we see that according to Chazal, the idea of *“Malchut HaShem”* (Kingship of HaShem)is the same as the idea of *“Yichud HaShem”,* the seclusion of HaShem*.* With this idea, the *Adon Olam* prayermakes sense. To say that HaShem was *Melech* (King)before any form was created is to say that He was One before He created the universe. Likewise, to say that HaShem will be *Melech* (King)after everything ceases to exist is to say that His Oneness will not be affected in any way when the universe ends. Lastly, we can understand the tenth *pasuk* of *Malchiyot* (Kingship). Even though the *Shema* doesn’t mention any form of the word *“Melech”* (King)it is nevertheless the perfect expression of *Malchut HaShem* (Kingship of HaShem)*,* for it explicitly states that HaShem is One.

There is one more question we must answer: **How is *Malchut*** (Kingship) **a metaphor for Oneness?** The Rambam may have supported his statement from the words of Chazal, but what were Chazal thinking when they decided to refer to the idea of *Yichud HaShem* (the seclusion of HaShem) by the analogy of *Malchut*?

Before we answer this question, let us briefly review the idea of HaShem’s Existence and HaShem’s Oneness. The Rambam writes:[[44]](#footnote-44)

*“The First Fundamental Principle is the Existence of the Creator, praised is He. Namely, that there Exists an Existence which is perfect in all manners of existence, and this Existence is the cause of the existence of all other existences, and through Him their existence is established, and their existence stems from Him. And if one could entertain the thought of the removal of His Existence, the existence of every other existence would be nullified and they would not remain in existence. And if one could entertain the thought of the removal of all existence besides Him, then His Existence, may He be exalted, would not be nullified, and would not lack, for He, may He be exalted, does not need the existence of any other . . . all of them are dependent on His Existence. And this first fundamental principle is that which is indicated by the statement, “I am HaShem your G-d.”*

HaShem refers to Himself as *“Eheyeh Asher Eheyeh”,* the Existing Being Who Is the Existing Being, or the Inherently Existent Being. In other words, our existence is a contingent and accidental existence; at one point in time, we did not exist, and sooner or later, we shall cease to exist; we do not have to exist, but rather, we exist because HaShem wills it. HaShem’s existence, on the other hand, is independent and essential; He always existed, exists now, and will always exist; unlike us, HaShem must exist. To suggest that HaShem could cease to exist is as absurd as the notion that water could cease to be wet. It is the nature of water to be wet, and it is the Nature of HaShem to Exist, as it were.

*“The Second Fundamental Principle is His Oneness, may He be exalted. Namely, that this Cause of everything is One, not like the oneness of a species and not like the oneness of a class, and not like one unified composite, which can be divided into many unities, and not one like a simple body, which is one in number but is subject to division and subdivision ad infinitum, but He, may He be exalted, is One – a Oneness unlike any other oneness in any way.”*

HaShem is One, and Only One. If our conception of G-d’s oneness contains any plurality whatsoever, then it must be incorrect. If our conception of G-d’s oneness is comparable in any way whatsoever to the oneness of anything else, it must be incorrect. G-d’s oneness is absolute, unshared by and incomparable to any other oneness. In fact, Chazal teach that when we say HaShem is one, we mean that there is nothing except HaShem!

**Thus, *Malchut HaShem* is not a metaphor for HaShem’s rulership over His creations. Rather, it is a metaphor for His Absolute Uniqueness - Oneness which is unlike any other**. To say that HaShem is *Melech* (King) is to say that HaShem’s existence and oneness are completely superior and utterly different than the existence and oneness of any of His subjects.

The Rebbi formulated the idea in an eloquent, easy-to-remember expression: ***Malchut* does not refer to HaShem’s KingSHIP, but HaShem’s KingNESS**. It is not a metaphor for His rulership over His creations, for HaShem was King before the universe existed. Rather, *Malchut* is a metaphor for His uniqueness, distinctness, and utter superiority of existence to all other beings.

By now we can see that the psalmist compressed a lot of meaning into a simple pasuk:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164*** *Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous ordinances.*

**Aslamatah: Amos 8:4-10 + 9:13-15**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RASHI** | **TARGUM** |
| 4. ¶ Hearken to this, **you who swallow up the needy**, and to cut off the poor of the land. | 4. Listen to this, you **who trample the heads of the needy** like the dust of the earth, you who think of abolishing the words of the poor from the land; |
| 5. Saying, "When will the month be delayed, so that we will sell grain, and the Sabbatical Year, so that we will open [our stores of] grain, to make the ephah smaller and to make the shekel larger, and to pervert deceitful scales. | 5. Who say, "When will the month for grain arrive/ so that we can sell grain? And the sabbatical year so that we can open the ‎storehouses, and make the measure small and make the sela greater, dealing dishonestly with deceitful scales? |
| 6. To purchase the poor with money, and the needy in order to inherit them, and the refuse of the grain we will sell." | 6. That we may buy ‎the poor for silver and the needy in order to acquire an inheritance. that we may sell the refuse of the grain. |
| 7. The Lord swore by the pride of Jacob: I will never forget any of their deeds. | 7. The LORD who gave ‎greatness to Jacob swears; “None of their deeds will ever be forgotten.” |
| 8. Shall the land not quake for this, and shall all its inhabitants [not] be destroyed? Yea, it shall rise up wholly like the rain cloud, and it shall cast up and sink like the river of Egypt. **{P}** | 8. Shall not the land be laid waste for this, and all that dwell in it be desolated? A king will come up against it with ‎his army which is great like the waters of a river, and he will cover it all and drive out its inhabitants and it will sink like the ‎river of Egypt. |
| 9. ¶ **And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to set at midday, and I will darken the land on a sunny day.** | 9. **And at that time, says the LORD God, I will cover the sun at noon, and I will darken the earth on a sunny day.** |
| 10. And I will turn your festivals into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation, and I bring up sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head, and I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and its end is like a bitter day. **{P}** | 10. I will ‎turn your feasts into mourning and all your songs into lamentation. I will put sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head. I will ‎make it like mourning for an only child, and the end of it like a bitter day. |
| 11. ¶ Behold, days are coming, says the Lord God, and I will send **famine into the land,** not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water, **but to hear the word of the Lord.** | 11. Behold the days are coming, says the LORD God, when I ‎will send **a famine on the land**: not that one will hunger for eating or thirst for drinking. **but for hearing the words of the LORD.** |
| 12. And they shall wander from sea to sea and from the north to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it. | 12. Men will wander from the sea to the west and from the north to the east; they will go to seek ‎instruction from the LORD, but they will not find it. |
| 13. On that day, the beautiful virgins and the young men shall faint of thirst. | 13. At that time, the congregations of Israel, who are like beautiful maidens that in ‎their beauty fornicated with wicked/Lawless young men, will be weary and they will be struck down and prostrated with thirst. |
| 14. Those who swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, "As your god lives, O Dan," and "As the road to Beersheba exists," shall fall and no longer rise. **{S}** | 14. Those ‎who swear by the guilt of Samaria, saying, “The god who is in Dan lives; and the laws of Beer-sheba endure:” will fall and never rise ‎again‎. |
|  |  |
| 1. I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said: Strike the lintel, and the sideposts shall quake, and break to pieces those who are at the head of all of them, and their remnant I will slay by the sword; no one of them shall flee, and no one of them shall escape. | 1. The prophet said: “I saw the glory of the LORD; it ascended by the cherub and rested on the altar, and he said, ‘If my people Israel will ‎not return to the Law, extinguish the lamp; king Josiah will be slain, the temple will be laid waste, and the temple courts will be ‎destroyed; and the vessels of the Sanctuary will be taken into captivity. The last of them 1 will kill with the sword; not one of them ‎will escape, and not one of them will survive. |
| 2. If they dig down into the grave, from there My hand shall take them, and if they ascend to the heavens, from there I will bring them down. | 2. If they should think to hide as though in Sheol, from ‎there they will be taken by My Memra and if they climb high buildings to heaven, from there ‎they will be brought down by My Memra. |
| 3. And if they hide at the peak of Carmel, from there I will search [them out] and I will take them, and if they hide from before My eyes in the land of the sea, from there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. | 3. If they should think to hide themselves on top of ‎city towers. there I will command searchers, and they will search them out. and if they hide ‎from My Memra among the islands of the sea, there I will command nations who are strong ‎like the serpent to slay them. |
| 4. And if they go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword and it shall slay them, and I will place My eye upon them for evil and not for good. | 4. And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will ‎command those who kill with the sword to slay them. I will set My Memra against them for ‎evil and not for good. |
| 5. And the Lord God of the Hosts, Who touches the land and it quakes, and all the inhabitants thereof shall be destroyed, and it shall ascend wholly like the river, and it shall sink like the river of Egypt. | 5. It is the LORD God of hosts who rebukes the land and it trembles; all ‎who dwell in it will be desolated. And a king will come up against it with his army, which is ‎great like the waters of a river, and he will cover it all and it will sink like the river of ‎Egypt. |
| 6. Who built His upper stories in Heaven and has founded His company on earth; Who calls the water of the sea and pours it out on the face of the earth, the Lord is His Name. | 6. It is He who made the Shekinah of His glory dwell in the lofty stronghold and ‎established His congregation on the earth; who commanded to assemble armies as numerous ‎as the waters of the sea and scattered them upon the face of the earth; the LORD is His name: |
| 7. Are you not like the children of the Cushites to Me, O children of Israel? says the Lord. Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and Aram from Kir? | 7. ‎‎"Children of Israel, are you not regarded as beloved children before Me?”‎ says the LORD. “Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, the Philistines from Cappadocia. and the Arameans from Cyrene?” |
| 8. Behold the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from upon the face of the earth; but I will not destroy the house of Jacob, says the Lord. | 8. “Behold, the works of the sinful kingdom have been revealed before the LORD God, and I will destroy it off the face of the earth! But I will ‎not completely destroy the house of Jacob,” says the LORD. |
| 9. For, behold I command, and I will scatter the house of Israel among all the nations; as it is shaken in a sieve, and not a coarse particle falls to the earth. | 9. "For, behold, I will give the order and I will scatter the house of Israel ‎among all the nations, as one shakes with a sieve, and not a stone from it falls through the meshes to the ground. |
| 10. By the sword shall all the sinful of My people perish, those who say, "The evil shall not soon come upon us." | 10. All the sinners of My ‎people will be killed with the sword, who say, ‘Evil will neither hasten nor come upon us.’ |
| 11. **On that day, I will raise up the fallen Tabernacle of David, and I will close up their breaches, and I will raise up its ruins, and build it up as in the days of yore.** | 11. **At that time, I will set up again the ‎kingdom of the house of David that has fallen; I will rebuild their cities and set up their congregations anew. It will rule over all the ‎kingdoms and it will destroy and make an end of the greatness of armies; but it will be rebuilt and re-established as in the days of ‎old,** |
| 12. **In order that they inherit the remnant of Edom and all the nations because My Name is called upon them, says the Lord Who does this.** **{P}** | 12. **so that the house of Israel, who are called by My name, may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations, says the LORD. ‎Behold, this is what I will do.** |
| 13. ¶ Behold days are coming, says the Lord, that the plowman shall meet the reaper and the treader of the grapes the one who carries the seed, and the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. | 13. Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when the ploughman will meet the reaper, and the presser" ‎of grapes him who puts out the seed; and the mountains will produce sweet wine, and all the hills will be tilled. |
| 14. And I will return the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall rebuild desolate cities and inhabit [them], and they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their produce. | 14. I will bring ‎back the exiles of My people Israel. They will rebuild ruined cities and inhabit them; they will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they ‎will till gardens and eat their fruit. |
| 15. **And I will plant them on their land, and they shall no longer be uprooted from upon their land, that I have given them, said the Lord your God.** **{P}** | 15. **And I will establish them upon their land, nevermore to be exiled from their land which I have ‎given them, says the LORD your God.** ‎ |
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**Rashi’s Commentary on Amos 8:4-10 + 9:13-15**

**4 you who swallow up** Heb. הַשֽׁאֲפִים , who swallow up the needy.

**and to cut off** Heb. וְלַשְׁבִּית , like וּלְהַשְׁבִּית . And examples [of this are found in Isaiah 23:11:] " To destroy (לַשְׁמִד) its strongholds.” (II Kings 9:15) "To go and tell (לַגִיד) in Jezreel.”

**5 Saying, “When will the month be delayed”** -This is the swallowing up. They anticipate the time that the grain will be expensive and will be sold to the poor with interest, and they will take their fields.

**the month be delayed** Heb. יַעֲבֽר . Jonathan renders: When will the year be interpolated and [when] will the month of interpolation come? This is an expression of delay, like (Jer. 46: 17) “Has allowed the appointed time to pass by (הֶעֱבִיר) .” And because they delay the offering up of the Omer, and the year is extended, and the old grain becomes expensive.

**and the Sabbatical Year, so that we will open grain** -When will the Sabbatical Year come, and the grain will become expensive, and we will open our storehouses of grain.

**to make the ephah smaller** To sell for a smaller measure, and our money we will receive with a large shekel.

**6 in order to inherit them** Heb. בַּעֲבוּר נַעֲלָיִם . [from Jonathan] and

**the refuse of the corn we will sell** -[Jonathan renders:] And the sweepings of the grains we will sell. The refuse that fell from the wheat into the sieve, to sell at high prices to the poor.

**8 Shall the land not quake for this** -Is this iniquity not serious enough that the land be destroyed because of it?

**Yea, it shall rise up wholly like the rain cloud** Heb. כָּאֽר . And in another place (9:5), Scripture says: “And it shall come up wholly like the river (כַיְאֽר) ,” and Jonathan renders them both identically: And a king shall rise upon it with his camp as numerous as the waters of the river, and cover it completely. To me, it seems difficult to define כָאֽר like כַיְאֽר . It can, however be explained like: (Job 36:32) “On the clouds, the rain (אוֹר) is covered. (Job 37:11) ” He scatters his rain cloud (אוֹרוֹ) .” And it shall go up wholly like a rain cloud, pitch darkness.

**and it shall overflow and sink like the river of Egypt** -The Nile overflows once in forty years and waters the land, and when it overflows, it brings up mud and dirt on its banks, and when it returns from watering, it returns over its banks and its water sinks. And that is called sinking, for the dirt that makes the water murky, settles.

**and it shall cast up** Heb. וְנִגְרְשָׁה , Like (Isa. 57:20) “And its waters cast up (וַ ִיּגְרְשׁוּ) mud and dirt.” Also the land will spew out the wicked in its midst, and afterwards it will rest.

**9 I will cause the sun to set at midday** -When there will be exceeding tranquility, a sudden downfall will come and our Rabbis said: This refers to the day of Josiah who died by the “peaceful sword” as our Rabbis said: There was no more peaceful sword than Pharaoh-Neco who said to Josiah, (II Chron. 35:21) “What do I have to do with you, O king of Judah; not upon you yourself today.” Not upon you do I come today, but to pass through your land “to the house against which I wage war etc.” [from Mo’ed Katan, Ta’anith 22a]

**the sun** -**The kingdom of the house of David is compared to the sun, as it is said: (Psalms 89:37) “And his throne is like the sun opposite Me.”**

**10 And I will turn your festivals into mourning** -as the matter is stated: (II Chron 35:24) “And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.”

**and all your songs into lamentation -**as the matter is stated: (ibid. verse 25) “And all the singing men and singing women spoke in their lamentations.”

**like the mourning for an only son** -Like a father who mourns over an only son.

**11 but to hear -**for the holy spirit shall terminate from them.

**13 shall faint** Heb. תִּתְעַלַּפְנָה . Their spirit shall fly out. Cf. (Jonah 4:8) “And he fainted (וַיִּתְעַלָּף) .” And so, (Ezekiel 31:15) “The trees of the field fainted (עֻלְפֶּה) for him.” And so in the language of the Mishnah (Chullin 3b): “He may faint (נִתְעַלְּפָה) ,” pasmer, (pamer) in French. [from Dunash p.84]

**14 “As your god lives, O Dan,”** -One of the calves that Jeroboam erected in Dan.

**Chapter 9**

**1 standing beside the altar** -Going away from the cherub to the altar on its way out, on the golden altar which is in the Temple, and this is one of the ten travels made by the Shechinah. [from Jonathan]

**Strike the lintel** -which is on top of the roof.

**and the sideposts shall quake** -The lower doorposts of the Temple; so will the king be slain and the princes quake.

**and break to pieces those who are at the head of all of them** Heb. וּבְצַעַם , like וּפְצַעַם [wound them or break them] And Jonathan renders כַּפְתּוֹר as the Menorah: [If the people of the house of Israel do not repent,] extinguish the Menorah; King Josiah shall be slain. And the sideposts shall quake, meaning that the Temple will be destroyed, and the Courtyards will be demolished. וּבְצַעַם בְּרֽאשׁ כֻּלָם , meaning that the vessels of the Temple will go into captivity. וּבְצַעַם means ‘their money’ shall go into exile at the head of all of them.

**2 If they dig down into the grave** -If they think to hide in Sheol.

**My hand shall take them** -Their enemies shall take them with My word. -[from Jonathan]

**and if they ascend to the heavens** -And if they ascend to the lofty mountains up to the heavens, from there they shall bring them down with My word.

**3 at the peak of Carmel** -At the top of the towers of the fortifed cities. [from Jonathan]

**from there I will search [them out] -**From there I will appoint searchers, and they will search them out. [from Jonathan]

**in the land of the sea** Heb. בְּקַרְקַע הַיָּם . [Jonathan renders:] בְּנִיסֵי יַמָּא , in the islands of the sea.

**I will command the serpent** - Jonathan renders: peoples as strong as a serpent.

**5 Who touches the land and it quakes** -Who rebukes the land and it quakes. וַתָּמוֹג is an expression of motion. And the Lord is He Who touches the land and it quakes. I.e, this decree emanates from Me.

**6 and... His company -**The company of His creatures. Another explanation: The company of the righteous was the foundation of the earth and the ceiling [other editions: and the benefit] of the heavens, for whose sake everything exists.

**Who calls the water of the sea -**Who says to gather camps as numerous as the waters of the sea. [from Jonathan]

**7 Are you not like the children of the Cushites to Me** -Why should I refrain from exacting retribution upon you since you do not return to Me? Have you not come from the sons of Noah like the other nations? Like the Cushites whom you resemble, as the matter is stated: (Jer. 13:22) “Will a Cushite change his skin…? So will you be able to improve.”

**Did I not** -Was it not out of My goodness, the beginning of My choosing you, My taking you out of the land of Egypt? Now what is that to Me? The Philistines, too, I took out of Caphtor in such a manner when the Caphtorites came upon the Avvites, as the matter is stated (Deut. 2:23) “And the Avvites who lived in open towns up to Gaza etc.” They vanquished also the people of Gaza and the remaining lords of the Philistines under them, and I took them out of their hands, and, even so, I did not make them My people.

**and Aram from Kir** -And so am I destined to bring Aram up from Kir, where Sennacherib will exile them, and, at the end of days, when the kingdom of Assyria will terminate, they will go out.

**8 and I will destroy it** -The kingdom is the house of Jehu, but I will not destroy the house of Jacob.

**9 For behold I command** -to exile them among all the nations, an unusually great scattering.

**as it is shaken** -What they sift with a sieve after the fine bran falls out of it, and there remains the coarse [bran], which cannot come out, and then the one who shakes [it], shakes with all his might.

**it is shaken** -by another, and it is impossible to read יָנוּעַ , since that denotes a thing that moves by itself.

**10 “The evil shall not soon come upon us.”** -Because of our iniquities, the evil shall not hasten to approach and to come.

**11 On that day** -And, after all these will befall him, that day will come, the day destined for the redemption, and thereon...

**I will raise up the fallen Tabernacle of David** - **Jonathan renders: the kingdom of the house of David.**

**12 In order that they inherit -[I.e, in order that] Israel [inherit] the remnant of Edom etc.**

**because My Name is called upon them** Heb. אֲשֶׁר , like כִּי , because.

**13 that the plowman shall meet the reaper** -(Lev. 26: 5) “And your threshing shall overtake the vintage, and the vintage shall overtake the sowing.” They will not finish plowing until the harvest comes, and they will not finish harvesting until the time of sowing comes.

**shall melt** Heb. תִּתְמוֹגַגְנָה . Jonathan renders: shall split. Tilled soil splits when rains come.

**sweet wine** Heb. עָסִיס . Good and sweet wine.

**In The School of the Prophets**

**Amos 8:4-10 + 9:13-15**

**By: Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai**

Our Ashlatamatah for this week covers four Petuchot (Pericopes/Paragraphs): 1) Amos 8:4-8; 2) Amos 8:9-10; 3) Amos 8:11 – 9:12 (divided into two sections – Amos 8:11-14 and 9:1-12); and 4) Amos 9:13-15.

Rabbi Dr. S. M. Lehrman,[[45]](#footnote-45) divides the contents of these Petuchot (Pericopes/Paragraphs), and to which we have added further subdivisions, as follows:

* Amos 8:4-14 – The Fourth Vision: The Coming Judgment of the Northern Kingdom of Israel

1. Earthquake – vv. 4-8
2. Eclipse – vv. 9-10
3. Famine – vv. 1-12
4. Drought – vv. 13-14

* Amos 9:1-4 – The Fifth Vision: G-d’s Sentence on the Northern Kingdom of Israel
* Amos 9:5-6 – The Might of G-d

1. Judgment Begins in the Sanctuary
2. There are No Privileges When Righteousness/Generosity and Justice are Abandoned

* Amos 9:7-15 – Final Message of Hope

The Primary Verbal Tally between the Torah Seder and our Ashlamatah is as follows:

**Torah Seder (Deut. 15:7 – 16:17):**

**Deut. 15:7**

**כִּי-יִהְיֶה בְךָ אֶבְיוֹן מֵאַחַד אַחֶיךָ, בְּאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ, בְּאַרְצְךָ, אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ--לֹא תְאַמֵּץ אֶת-לְבָבְךָ, וְלֹא תִקְפֹּץ אֶת-יָדְךָ, מֵאָחִיךָ, הָאֶבְיוֹן.**

**7** If there be among you **a needy man**, one of your brethren, within any of your gates, **in your land** which the LORD your God gives you, you will not harden your heart, nor shut your hand from **your needy** brother;

**Amos 8:4**

**שִׁמְעוּ-זֹאת, הַשֹּׁאֲפִים אֶבְיוֹן; וְלַשְׁבִּית, ענוי- (עֲנִיֵּי-) אָרֶץ.**

**4** Hear this, O you that would swallow **the needy,** and destroy the poor **of the land,**

The Hebrew word **אֶבְיוֹן – Eb’yón –** translated as **“Needy”** is also equated in our first verse of our Ashlamatah (Amos 8:4) as: **עֲנִיֵּי – Aniyei –** translated as **“poor”** and from the Hebrew root **עני – Oní** (Strong’s # H6041), and from which the Matsa (unleavened bread) for Pesach (Passover) receives the name of “**Lechem Oni – Bread of the Poor.”**

Now the Hebrew word **אֶבְיוֹן – Eb’yón** (Strong’s # H34) at one time in history also became the name (i.e. Ebionites)[[46]](#footnote-46) by which Nazarean Jews were identified – since the word means: destitute, beggar, needy, poor (man). And the reason they were called by this name is because of the strong persecution that Nazarean Jews went first by the hands of the Romans and then even more fierce persecution at the hands of the Christian Church, so that they were left literally “destitute” and needing to “beg” or remain poor and wondering from place to place in order to survive. In the end, between the Christian Church and Islam succeeded, but only for a time, to exterminate this important group of Jewish people. There are some who erroneously claim “that their name suggests that they placed a special value on voluntary poverty.” This is nothing but a cover-up and an obfuscation of the relentless extermination by the Christian Church of the Nazarean Jews.[[47]](#footnote-47)

Wikipedia[[48]](#footnote-48) correctly states:

*Since historical records by the Ebionites are scarce, fragmentary and disputed, much of what is known or conjectured about the Ebionites derives from the Church Fathers, who wrote polemics against the Ebionites, whom they deemed heretical Judaizers. Consequently very little about the Ebionite sect or sects is known with certainty, and most, if not all, statements about them are conjectural.*

*Many scholars distinguish the Ebionites from other Jewish Nazarean groups, e.g., the Nazarenes., others consider them identical with the Nazarenes.*

Small historical pointers of the extermination of the Nazareans/Ebionites do exist, and one such of them is mentioned in Church History, the so called “Quartodeciman Controversy” between the Roman Bishop Victor and the “so called” Bishops of the East regarding the exact date and whether to celebrate or not the Jewish Passover.[[49]](#footnote-49) The reading of this Ashlamatah (Lesson from the Prophets) when viewed in connection with the history and mass extermination of the Nazarean/Ebionite Jews in the reign of the Roman Emperor Constantine as head of the Christian Church is most apt for this season as we are preparing in this coming week to celebrate Chanukah whereby the Greek King Antiochus IV Epiphanes profaned the Temple by sacrificing a pig in the Holy Altar, enacted laws to forbid circumcision and the study of Torah, etc. and how the Maccabees in a long revolt regained and cleansed the Temple precincts.

The festival of Chanukah for us, has a very special meaning, since in our generation we are seeing a small but miraculous revival of the Jewish Nazarean movement albeit with many other sects around it trying to asphyxiate it and prevent it from attaining its goals, but G-d, most blessed be He, is the owner of this work, and He will see to it that it prospers, and becomes a trustworthy instrument in His hands to achieve the final redemption, amen ve amen! We cry from the bottom of our heart together with the Psalmist: ***“We are small and despised; We have not forgotten Your commandments.”*** (Psalm 119:141).

In suma, the pericope of Hakham Tsefet (Peter) by the hand of his scribe Mordechai (Mark) shows that what happened to the Master also happened to his “real” Jewish disciples in the first four centuries of the common era, and to the Jewish people in general as his body even to this very day. But the time is near whereby these crimes will be punished most severely by G-d as He did to the unfaithful Northern Israelite Kingdom, as it is said:

‎

**Amos 8:7** The LORD who gave ‎greatness to Jacob swears; ‎‎**“None of their deeds will ever be forgotten.”**‎

‎**Amos 8:8**. Will not the land be laid waste for this, and all ‎that dwell in it be desolated? A king will come up ‎against it with ‎his army which is great like the waters ‎of a river, and he will cover it all and drive out its ‎inhabitants and it will sink like the ‎river of Egypt.‎**{P}**‎

‎People can hide behind their theologies, vain imaginations, and as Hakham Shaul puts it: "strong delusion,”[[50]](#footnote-50) but our G-d, most blessed be He, can’t be fooled or permit righteousness/generosity and justice to be abandoned. We know that in many instances human history has been doctored in what is called “revisionism” to favour the guilty and dress them as righteous. But the prophecy in our Ashlamatah (Lesson from the Prophets) and the coming festival of Chanukah testify that true and genuine history is but **His** (i.e. G-d’s) **Story** in His dealings with the universe, mankind, and His chosen people, and in **His Story** the Psalmist sates: ***“There is great peace for those who love Your Torah ‎in this age, and they have no stumbling-block in the ‎age to come"***" (Targum Pslam 119:165).

Another question that rises from this Ashlamatah is: Why are there poor and needy amongst G-d’s people? This very poignant question should give us much to think about. The best answer to this most profound and soul searching question, and which amongst us perfectly judges in G-d’s eyes those who are “genuine” and those who are “fake” is found in last week’s Torah Seder in Debarim (Deut.) 15:4 and in the first verses of our Torah Seder for this week (Deut: 15:7,11), according to the translation of Targum Pseudo Jonathan:

**15:4 “If you will only be diligent in the precepts of the Law, there will be no poor among you;”**

**15:7 “But if you be not diligent in the precepts of the Law, and there be among you a poor man”**

**15:11** **“But forasmuch as the house of Israel will not rest in the commandments of the Law, the poor will not cease …”**

I remarked in my last Sunday Table-Talk on the Torah Seder and allied readings, that “being diligent in the precepts of the Law” amounts to having a heart full and overflowing with Chessed – (Heb. for: “loving-kindness”). I further remarked that in Acts 4:34-35 we read:

**Acts 4:34** For there was not even anyone **needy** among them, because all those who were owners of [surplus] plots of land or houses were selling them and bringing the proceeds of the things that were sold

**Acts 4:35** and placing them at the feet of the apostles (Nazarean Hakhamim/Rabbis). And it was being distributed to each as anyone had **need.**

This was neither communism nor the abolishment of private property amongst Nazarean Jews of that time, as some so called Scholars want us to believe. No! Never in a million years! G-d forbid! What we are seeing here is that as the Jewish people were being filled with the Ruach Ha Qodesh (Heb. for: “Spirit of Holiness”) the Nazarean Jews developed a keen awareness of the needs of the community and were selling any surplus possessions and “placing them at the feet of the Nazarean Hakhamim/Rabbis” so that the command of Deut. 15:4 **“If you will only be diligent in the precepts of the Law, there will be no poor among you;”** be fulfilled among them – such was their love and zeal for G-d’s Torah/Law!

Hakham Yochanan (John) in a passage that we will read for Chanukah elucidates this further when he writes:

“But whoever has the world's material possessions and observes his brother **[in need]** and shuts his heart [overflowing with Chessed – loving-kindness] against him, how does the love of God reside in him?”

Therefore, from a Jewish perspective, whether Nazarean or non-Nazarean, “Shomer Mitzvoth” (Heb. for “keeping/ guarding the commandments”) without Ahavah Yisrael (Heb. for “love of the Jewish brothers”) that is a heart overflowing with Chessed (Heb. for “loving-kindness”) **cannot be considered** a proper “Shomer Mitzvoth” (Heb. for keeping/guarding of the commandments). The sure sign that a person is a Nazarean Jew, above everything else is aptly described by Hakham Shaul as:

**2Cor 9:7** Each one [should give] as he has decided in his heart, not [reluctantly] or from compulsion, for God loves a cheerful (hilarious) giver.

**2Cor 9:8** And God is able to cause all grace to abound to you, so that in everything at all times, [because you] have enough of everything, you may overflow in every good work (Heb. “G’milut Chasadim” – “Deeds of Loving-Kindness”)[[51]](#footnote-51). .

And as the Nazarean Talmud for this week reads:

**Rom 12:9-21** Love must be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; be attached to what is good, 10being devoted to one another in brotherly love, esteeming one another more highly in honor, 11not lagging in diligence, being enthusiastic in spirit, serving the LORD [G-d], 12rejoicing in hope, enduring in affliction, being devoted to prayer, 13**contributing to the needs of the saints** (Heb. “Tsadiqim”), pursuing hospitality. 14Bless those who persecute, bless and do not curse them. 15Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. 16Think the same thing toward one another; [do not think arrogantly], but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise [in your own sight]. 17Pay back no one evil for evil. Take thought for (be considerate in) what is good in the sight of all people. 18If it is possible on your part, be at peace with all people. 19Do not take revenge yourselves, dear friends, but give place to God's wrath, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the LORD (Deut. 32:35). 20But “If your enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; for you will heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD will reward you” (Proverbs 25:21, 22). 21Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**May all the needs of this ministry be speedily fulfilled, and may there never be any needy among us, and among all of our most noble and beloved Jewish brothers and sisters and Torah Scholars, amen ve amen!**

**Special Ashlamatah:  I  Samuel 20:18, 42**

18. And Jonathan said to him, Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be expected, for your seat will be empty.

42. And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, because we have sworn, the two of us, in the name of Ha-Shem, saying, Ha-Shem will be between you and me, and between my seed and your seed forever. And he rose up and went. And Jonathan went into the city.

**Verbal Connections**

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

**HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah**

**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 15:7 -16:17**

**Tehillim (Psalm) 119:137-176**

**Amos 8:4-10 + 9:13-15**

Mk 15:6-15, Lk 23:26-32, Rm 12:1-8

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

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Hand - יד, Strong’s number 03027.

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

Poor man / needy - אביון, Strong’s number 034.

Land - ארץ, Strong’s number 0776.

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Giveth / given – נתן, Strong’s number 05414.

Open / set forth / wide - פתח, Strong’s number 06605.

**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 15:7-8** If there be among you a **poor man <034>** of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy **land <0776>** which the **LORD <03068>** thy **God <0430>** **giveth <05414> (8802)** thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine **hand <03027>** from thy **poor <034>** brother: 8 But thou shalt **open <06605> (8799)** thine **hand <03027> wide <06605> (8800)** unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

**Tehillim (Psalm) 119:137** TZADDI. Righteous art thou, O **LORD <03068>**, and upright are thy judgments.

**Tehillim (Psalm) 119:173** Let thine **hand <03027>** help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.

**Amos 8:4** Hear this, O ye that swallow up the **needy <034>**, even to make the poor of the **land <0776>** to fail,

**Amos 8:5** Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may **set forth <06605> (8799)** wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?

**Amos 8:7** The **LORD <03068>** hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works.

**Amos 9:15** And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have **given <05414> (8804)** them, saith the **LORD <03068>** thy **God <0430>**.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Seder**  **Deu 15:7 – 16:17** | **Psalms**  **119:137-176** | **Ashlamatah**  **Amos 8:4-10 + 9:12-15** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **!Ayb.a,** | poor man | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:1 |  | Amos 8:4 Amos 8:6 |
| **bhea'** | loves | Deut. 15:16 | Ps. 119:140 Ps. 119:159 Ps. 119:163 Ps. 119:165 Ps. 119:167 |  |
| **lk;a'** | eat, ate | Deut. 15:20 Deut. 15:22 Deut. 15:23 Deut. 16:3 Deut. 16:7 Deut. 16:8 |  | Amos 9:14 |
| **~yhil{a/** | GOD | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:14 Deut. 15:15 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 15:19 Deut. 15:20 Deut. 15:21 Deut. 16:1 Deut. 16:2 Deut. 16:5 Deut. 16:6 Deut. 16:7 Deut. 16:8 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:11 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:16 Deut. 16:17 |  | Amos 9:15 |
| **rm;a'** | saying | Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:11 Deut. 15:16 |  | Amos 8:5 Amos 9:15 |
| **#r,a,** | land, earth, ground | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:11 Deut. 15:15 Deut. 15:23 Deut. 16:3 |  | Amos 8:4 Amos 8:8 Amos 8:9 |
| **rv,a]** | which, who | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:8 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 15:20 Deut. 16:2 Deut. 16:4 Deut. 16:5 Deut. 16:6 Deut. 16:7 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:11 Deut. 16:14 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:16 Deut. 16:17 | Ps. 119:158 | Amos 9:12 Amos 9:15 |
| **aAB** | at sunset, come, go | Deut. 16:6 | Ps. 119:170 | Amos 8:9 Amos 9:13 |
| **rx;B'** | chooses | Deut. 15:20 Deut. 16:2 Deut. 16:6 Deut. 16:7 Deut. 16:11 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:16 | Ps. 119:173 |  |
| **rb'D'** | thought, thing, words | Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:10 | Ps. 119:139 Ps. 119:147 Ps. 119:160 Ps. 119:161 Ps. 119:169 |  |
| **hy"h'** | come, has | Deut. 15:16 Deut. 15:21 |  | Amos 8:9 |
| **hz<** | this | Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:15 |  | Amos 8:4 Amos 8:8 Amos 9:12 |
| **gx;** | feast | Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:13 Deut. 16:14 Deut. 16:16 |  | Amos 8:10 |
| **vd,xo** | month | Deut. 16:1 |  | Amos 8:5 |
| **qxo** | statutes | Deut. 16:12 | Ps. 119:145 Ps. 119:155 Ps. 119:171 |  |
| **dy"** | hand | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:8 Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:11 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:17 | Ps. 119:173 |  |
| **hwhy** | LORD | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:14 Deut. 15:15 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 15:19 Deut. 15:20 Deut. 15:21 Deut. 16:1 Deut. 16:2 Deut. 16:5 Deut. 16:6 Deut. 16:7 Deut. 16:8 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:11 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:16 Deut. 16:17 | Ps. 119:137 Ps. 119:145 Ps. 119:149 Ps. 119:151 Ps. 119:156 Ps. 119:159 Ps. 119:166 Ps. 119:169 Ps. 119:174 | Amos 8:7 Amos 8:9 Amos 9:12 Amos 9:13 Amos 9:15 |
| **~Ay** | today, day | Deut. 15:15 Deut. 16:3 Deut. 16:4 Deut. 16:8 Deut. 16:13 Deut. 16:15 | Ps. 119:164 | Amos 8:9 Amos 8:10 Amos 9:13 |
| **yKi** | if, because | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:12 Deut. 15:13 Deut. 15:16 Deut. 15:21 Deut. 16:15 | Ps. 119:139 Ps. 119:159 |  |
| **lKo** | all, every, whole, entire | Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 15:19 Deut. 15:21 Deut. 16:3 Deut. 16:4 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:16 | Ps. 119:145 Ps. 119:151 Ps. 119:160 Ps. 119:168 Ps. 119:172 | Amos 8:7 Amos 8:8 Amos 8:10 Amos 9:12 Amos 9:13 |
| **hf,[]m;** | work | Deut. 15:10 Deut. 16:15 |  | Amos 8:7 |
| **~yIr'c.mi** | Egypt | Deut. 15:15 Deut. 16:1 Deut. 16:3 Deut. 16:6 Deut. 16:12 Amos 8:8 |  | Amos 8:8 |
| **!t;n"** | generously give | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:14 Deut. 15:17 Deut. 16:5 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:17 |  | Amos 9:15 |
| **db,[,** | servant, slave | Deut. 15:15 Deut. 15:17 Deut. 16:11 Deut. 16:12 Deut. 16:14 | Ps. 119:140 Ps. 119:176 |  |
| **~l'A[** | forever | Deut. 15:17 | Ps. 119:142 Ps. 119:144 Ps. 119:152 Ps. 119:160 |  |
| **!yI[;** | eye | Deut. 15:9 | Ps. 119:148 |  |
| **l[;** | against | Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:11 Deut. 15:15 | Ps. 119:164 | Amos 8:8 |
| **ynI['** | poor, needy | Deut. 15:11 |  | Amos 8:4 |
| **~ynIP'** | before, face | Deut. 15:20 Deut. 16:11 Deut. 16:16 | Ps. 119:169 Ps. 119:170 |  |
| **hw"c'** | command | Deut. 15:11 Deut. 15:15 | Ps. 119:138 |  |
| **ar'q'** | call, cry | Deut. 15:9 | Ps. 119:145 Ps. 119:146 | Amos 9:12 |
| **br'q'** | near | Deut. 15:9 | Ps. 119:150 Ps. 119:169 |  |
| **ha'r'** | see, seen | Deut. 16:4 Deut. 16:16 | Ps. 119:153 Ps. 119:158 Ps. 119:159 |  |
| **vaor** | sum of, head |  | Ps. 119:160 | Amos 8:10 |
| **[b;v,** | seventh | Deut. 15:9 Deut. 16:3 Deut. 16:4 Deut. 16:9 Deut. 16:13 Deut. 16:15 | Ps. 119:164 |  |
| **xk;v'** | forgotten |  | Ps. 119:139 Ps. 119:141 Ps. 119:153 Ps. 119:176 | Amos 8:7 |
| **~ve** | name | Deut. 16:2 Deut. 16:6 Deut. 16:11 |  | Amos 9:12 |
| **[m;v'** | hear, heard |  | Ps. 119:149 | Amos 8:4 |
| **rm;v'** | beware, keep, watch | Deut. 15:9 Deut. 16:1 Deut. 16:12 | Ps. 119:146 Ps. 119:158 Ps. 119:167 Ps. 119:168 |  |
| **vm,v,** | sunset | Deut. 16:6 |  | Amos 8:9 |
| **ynI[\** | affliction | Deut. 16:3 | Ps. 119:153 |  |
| **hf'['** | do, did, make, done | Deut. 15:17 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 16:1 Deut. 16:8 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:12 Deut. 16:13 | Ps. 119:166 | Amos 9:12 Amos 9:14 |
| **xt;P'** | freely, open | Deut. 15:8 Deut. 15:11 |  | Amos 8:5 |

**Greek:**

| **Greek** | **English** | **Torah Seder**  **Deu 15:7 – 16:17** | **Psalms**  **119:137-176** | **Ashlamatah**  **Amos 8:4-10 +**  **9:13-16** | **Peshat**  **Mk/Jude/Pet**  **Mk 15:6-15** | **Remes 1**  **Luke**  **Lk 23:26-32** | **Remes 2**  **Acts/Romans**  **Rm 12:1-8** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ἀδελφός | brother | Deu 15:7  Deu 15:9  Deu 15:11 Deu 15:12 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 12:1 |
| αἰών | eon | Deu 15:17 | Psa 119:142 Psa 119:144 Psa 119:152 Psa 119:160 |  |  |  | Rom. 12:2 |
| ἀναβαίνω | ascend |  |  | Amo 8:8 | Mk. 15:8 |  |  |
| ἀπάγω | away |  |  |  | Matt. 27:2 | Lk. 23:26 |  |
| ἄρχω | began, begin |  |  |  | Mk. 15:8 | Lk. 23:30 |  |
| βουνός | hills, mountains |  |  | Amo 9:13 |  | Lk. 23:30 |  |
| γίνομαι | should be, came to pass | Deu 15:7  Deu 15:9 | Psa 119:173 |  |  | Lk. 23:31 |  |
| γινώσκω | know, knowing |  | Psa 119:152 |  | Mk. 15:10 |  |  |
| διδάσκω | teach, taught |  | Psa 119:171 |  |  |  | Rom. 12:3 Rom. 12:6 |
| δίδωμι | give, given generously, | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:14 Deut. 15:17 Deut. 16:5 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:17 |  | Amos 9:15 |  |  | Rom. 12:3 Rom. 12:6 |
| εἷς | one | Deu 15:7 |  |  | Mk. 15:6 |  | Rom. 12:4 Rom. 12:5 |
| ἕκαστος | each | Deu 16:17 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 12:3 |
| ἑορτή | holiday, festival | Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:13 Deut. 16:14 Deut. 16:16 |  | Amos 8:10 | Mk. 15:6 |  |  |
| ἔρχομαι | coming, come |  |  | Amo 9:13 |  | Lk. 23:26 Lk. 23:29 |  |
| ζάω | live, enliven |  | Psa 119:144 Psa 119:149  Psa 119:154  Psa 119:156 Psa 119:159 Psa 119:175 |  |  |  | Rom. 12:1 |
| ἡμέρα | day | Deut. 15:15 Deut. 16:3 Deut. 16:4 Deut. 16:8 Deut. 16:13 Deut. 16:15 | Ps. 119:164 | Amos 8:9 Amos 8:10 Amos 9:13 |  | Lk. 23:29 |  |
| θεός | GOD | Deut. 15:7 Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:14 Deut. 15:15 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 15:19 Deut. 15:20 Deut. 15:21 Deut. 16:1 Deut. 16:2 Deut. 16:5 Deut. 16:6 Deut. 16:7 Deut. 16:8 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:11 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:16 Deut. 16:17 |  | Amos 9:15 |  |  | Rom. 12:1 Rom. 12:2 Rom. 12:3 |
| θυγάτηρ | daughters | Deu 16:11 Deu 16:14 |  |  |  | Lk. 23:28 |  |
| ἰδού | behold |  |  | Amo 9:13 |  | Lk. 23:29 |  |
| Ἰησοῦς | Jesus |  |  |  | Mk. 15:15 | Lk. 23:26 Lk. 23:28 |  |
| κατά | against, according to | Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:11 Deut. 15:15 | Ps. 119:164 | Amos 8:7 |  |  | Rom. 12:5 Rom. 12:6 |
| κράζω | cried out, shouted |  | Psa 119:147 |  | Mk. 15:13 Mk. 15:14 |  |  |
| λαμβάνω | took, conferred |  |  |  | Matt. 27:1 |  |  |
| λαός | people |  |  | Amo 9:14 |  | Lk. 23:27 |  |
| λέγω | says, said | Deut. 15:9 Deut. 15:11 Deut. 15:16 |  | Amos 8:5 Amos 9:15 | Mk. 15:7 Mk. 15:9 Mk. 15:12 Mk. 15:14 | Lk. 23:28 Lk. 23:29 Lk. 23:30 | Rom. 12:3 |
| μέτρον | measure |  |  | Amo 8:5 |  |  | Rom. 12:3 |
| οἰκτιρμός | compassion |  | Psa 119:156 |  |  |  | Rom. 12:1 |
| ὄρος | mountain |  |  | Amo 9:13 |  | Lk. 23:30 |  |
| ὅς / ἥ / ὅ | which, who | Deu 15:7 Deu 15:10  Deu 15:18 Deu 15:19 Deu 15:20  Deu 16:2  Deu 16:4  Deu 16:5  Deu 16:6  Deu 16:7  Deu 16:11  Deu 16:15 Deu 16:16 Deu 16:17 |  | Amo 9:12 Amo 9:15 | Mk. 15:6 Mk. 15:12 | Lk. 23:27 Lk. 23:29 |  |
| πᾶς | all, every, whole, entire | Deut. 15:10 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 15:19 Deut. 15:21 Deut. 16:3 Deut. 16:4 Deut. 16:15 Deut. 16:16 | Ps. 119:145 Ps. 119:151 Ps. 119:160 Ps. 119:168 Ps. 119:172 | Amos 8:7 Amos 8:8 Amos 8:10 Amos 9:12 Amos 9:13 |  |  |  |
| ποιέω | do, did, done, make | Deut. 15:17 Deut. 15:18 Deut. 16:1 Deut. 16:8 Deut. 16:10 Deut. 16:12 Deut. 16:13 | Ps. 119:166 | Amos 9:12 Amos 9:14 | Mk. 15:7 Mk. 15:8 Mk. 15:12 Mk. 15:14 Mk. 15:15 | Lk. 23:31 |  |
| πολύς / πολλός | many much |  | Psa 119:156 Psa 119:157 Psa 119:162 Psa 119:165 |  |  | Lk. 23:27 | Rom. 12:4 Rom. 12:5 |
| σπουδή | haste | Deu 16:3 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 12:8 |

**PIRQE ABOT**

**Pereq Dalet**

**Mishnah 4:16**

**By: Hakham Yitschaq ben Moshe Magriso**

**Rabbi Yehudah said: Be careful in learning, since an inadvertent error in learning is considered purposeful.**

This master warns that you should be very careful in studying the Torah. You must focus carefully on each lesson, in order to understand the reason *(ta'am*) for each thing. If one is careless in his concentration, and does not read carefully, he may misunderstand the reason for a subject, and thus draw a wrong conclusion about the law.

When one does this, he may then inadvertently permit something that is forbidden. In such a case, God does not consider it an inadvertent error (*shogeg*). Rather it is counted against him as if he had done it on purpose *(be-mezid*). This is because he should have been more careful in his studies, and paid good attention.

Some authorities read *talmid* meaning "student" instead of *limud* meaning "learning." The master then says:]

***Be careful with a student*, *since an inadvertent error of a student is considered purposeful***

This teaches that a person must be very cautious with his language (*lashon*) when learning with students. He should speak very clearly, and not use ambiguous terms. Otherwise, the students may misunderstand the point (havanah) and the error will remain with them forever. In such a case, the error of the student is counted against the master. It is the master's fault for having used ambiguous language.

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of “D’barim (Deut.) 15:7 — 16:17”**

**“Ki Yihyeh B’kha” “If there is among you”**

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

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Tosefta**  **Luqas (LK)**  Mishnah **א:א** | **School of Hakham Tsefet’s Peshat**  **Mordechai (Mk)**  Mishnah **א:א** |
| **And as they led him away, they seized Sh’mon, a certain** man **of Cyrene, who was coming from the country,** and **placed the cross on him, to carry** it **behind Yeshua. And a large gathering of the people were following him, and women who were mourning and lamenting him. But turning to them, Yeshua said, “Daughters of Yerushalayim, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children! For behold, days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed** are **the barren, and the wombs that did not give birth, and** the **breasts that did not nurse!’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ For if they do these** things **when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?” And two criminals were also led away to be executed with him.** | **Now at each** (Passover) **feast[[52]](#footnote-52) he** (Pilate) **customarily released to them,** (the Jewish people) **one[[53]](#footnote-53)** (any) **prisoner whom they requested.[[54]](#footnote-54) Now** (there was) **one called Bar Abba imprisoned with the rebels who had performed murder during the insurrection. And the people** (Tz’dukim)[[55]](#footnote-55) **came up** (and)**began to ask him** (Pilate) **to do as he customarily did** (for them). **Then Pilate answered them, saying,[[56]](#footnote-56) "Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?"[[57]](#footnote-57) For he realized that the Kohen Gadol had handed him** (the Master) **over out of jealousy. However, the Kohen Gadol pressed the people** (Tz’dukim) **so that he would release for them Bar Abba instead. So Pilate answered** (and) **said to them again, "Then what do you want me to do with** the one**whom you call the king of the Jews?" And they shouted back, "Crucify him!" And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he committed?" But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!" So Pilate, wanted to satisfy the crowd, released for them BarAbba. And** after**he had Yeshua whipped, he handed** him **over so that he could be crucified.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Remes**  **Romans**  Mishnah **א:א** |
| **Therefore, brethren[[58]](#footnote-58) I urge you, by the mercies of God that you stand as if your bodies were a living sacrifice[[59]](#footnote-59) set apart** (agios) **for God's service** (purposes) **by formal, legal restrictions and limitations accepted[[60]](#footnote-60)** **by God,** and **appointed to logical service** (abodah). **And do not be conformed to the ideologies** [and fads] **of the present secular age[[61]](#footnote-61) but be transformed through mental renewal,[[62]](#footnote-62)** for **our goal is to fulfill God’s desire** (delight) **through logical deduction** (a living sacrifice for the sake) **of fulfilling God’s desire for your life which is an appropriate goal.**  **¶ The loving-kindness[[63]](#footnote-63)** of God **shown to me says that we should think ourselves in terms of mental objectivity because God has allotted** gifts **to each[[64]](#footnote-64) of us according to our faithful obedience. In the same sense** as **the body has many parts and organs but they do not all share in the same function, so, the many[[65]](#footnote-65)** (Gentiles) **become one[[66]](#footnote-66) in the body** (politic) **of Messiah and each one members of one another. Therefore, having differing favorable gifts given[[67]](#footnote-67) to us such as the “Magid”[[68]](#footnote-68) appointed and apportioned according to his** (their) **faithfulness** (to the congregation – community)**. If Yesod[[69]](#footnote-69) serves, the Meturgeman teaches,[[70]](#footnote-70) the first Parnas exhorts, and the second Parnas gives while the Chazan leads** (in the services) **and the Masoret shows the congregation loving-kindness and mercy,** and thus **the body of Messiah is unified.** |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dt 15:7 – 16:17 | Ps 119:137-176 | Amos 8:4-10 + 9:13-15 | Mordechai 15:6-15 | 1 Luqas 23:26-32 | Rom 12:1-8 |

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

**May our Master Teach us concerning the Year of Release (Shimitah)?**

**Gen 1:31—2:3** Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. And then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

The Mishnah establishes rules found in the Torah with regard to the explicit correlation of Shabbat and the Sabbatical condition of the land. *Masechet[[71]](#footnote-71)* Shebi‘it sets forth the laws of relationship to the Land of Israel, which embodies the fundamental truth that G-d is solitary proprietor of Eretz Yisrael. Consequently, the Mishnah, masechet Shebi’it sets forth a number of halakhic rules with regard to the land and its use during the Sh’mittah year. For example…

1. The prohibition of farming the land during the seventh year;
2. The use of the produce in the seventh year solely for eating, that is to say, its purpose and function by its very nature; and
3. The remission of debts

During the Sh’mittah year, the B’ne Yisrael demonstrate that Eretz Yisrael belongs to G-d and they are His tenants. The laws of the Mishnah mandate how the tenants are to treat the land, property that they inhabit as tenants. Furthermore, Seder Zeraim initially establishes that G-d requires particular practices of those tenants who occupy His land, property. By the observance of the rules and laws of the land, we are able to insure that the crops and produce is “Holy.” Adam and Ḥava lived in a Garden established by G-d, and as tenants of the Garden, they were subject to the rules of the Garden. Only with the abuse of G-d’s property and violation of applicable laws are the tenants evicted.

Tractates Ma’aserot and Ma’aser Sheni further establish levies required to live in that land. These levies paid to G-d’s agents, insure that the tenant has the usufructuary use of that land so long as they follow the rules of that land and pays its dues. Of course, this subject needs further elaboration. Nonetheless, logic will suffice to delve deeper into this thought.

Logic dictates that the message of Shabbat and Shebi‘it are the same.

The boundaries of Shabbat, established by an Erub, establish a periphery of communal property. Or, the Erub marks off a particular piece of land which is the boundary of Shabbat. We relate to this property and its instructions (the instructions of Erub) just as we would to Eretz Yisrael. Furthermore, Shabbat and Shebi‘it are sanctifications of time. The periphery of time is sanctified in the same manner as the Erub that marks the limit of Shabbat. We relate to time through the rules of Moedim, G-d’s divinely appointed practices for the sanctification of time. Therefore, Shabbat and Shebi‘it further another point in relation to the Sh’mittah. Shabbat and Shebi‘it teach us that G-d is not only the Master of the Land, but He is also the Master of Time. In other words, we release our control, or personal use of time during Shabbat and Shebi‘it. During this “time” we effectively relinquish personal use for that period and engage in special, “G-d oriented” practices. The effect of Shabbat even revises our speech.

However, Shabbat and Shebi‘it only work when we relinquish our control of property and time to G-d. If we were to fail to relinquish control of the land and time, we fail to reap the benefits of either. The term *hefker* is something under no one’s ownership. The declaration of *hefker[[72]](#footnote-72)* is, in part a fallacy. *Hefker* is the release of ownership and the acknowledgment of G-d’s omnipotence. Our relinquishment of property and time connect us with the whole community of Yisrael. Therefore, by our relinquishment of control over time and property we connect with the community of Yisrael. Likewise, when we relinquish our use of those periods we are able to connect with G-d.

During Shabbat, the Erub forms communal property. The property that “we possessed” is “released” to become communitarian. Because we are a part of this communitarian society, we are collectively responsible for adhering to the rules of tenement-ship. What this insures is responsibility within and for other communal members.

**Prosbul**

Hillel enacted a rule with regard to the Sh’mittah. The Torah establishes a precept in D’barim 15:9, which we will read in the coming Torah Seder.

**Deu 15:9** Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand, and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the LORD against you, and it become sin among you.

This very verse and circumstance anticipated by G-d caused Hillel to enact the Prosbul. The Prosbul circumvented fraudulent practices with regard to the Sh’mittah. There were those who had planned not to pay for the loan given them immediately prior to the Year of Release, Sh’mittah. By the enactment of the Prosbul, Hillel guaranteed the repayment of monies borrowed at the threshold of the Sh’mittah. Herein Hillel made every man liable for his actions. Through Peshat hermeneutics, we can determine that if it was a sin, not to loan money to those in need, it was also a sin to fail to pay back those monies borrowed. An old adage says, “there aint no such thing as a free lunch”! EVERYONE must do his share.

**Insurrection and eviction**

From a Peshat hermeneutic, we can derive from the account of Adam and Ḥava that failure to observe the rules of the land brings expulsion. Furthermore, if we were to rehearse the story of Cain, we would see that his spilling of blood on the land polluted that land and brought about his exile. The broad rule of Peshat derived from masechet Shebi‘it determines particular rules of Eretz Yisrael.

**Targum Pseudo Yonatan Yesha’yahu 63:9—11** In *every time that they sinned before Him so as to bring affliction upon themselves*, He did not afflict *them*, *an* angel *sent from Him* saved them; in His love and in His pity *upon them* He *delivered* them; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. 10. But they rebelled and *incited to anger against the Memra of* His holy *prophets*; therefore, *His Memra was* turned to be *an* enemy, and He Himself *battled* against them. 11. Then he *had pity for the glory of His name, for the sake of the remembrance of His benefits which were from* of old, the prodigies which He did by the hands of Moses for His people *that they might not say*, Where is He who brought them up out of the sea, *where is He who led them in the* wilderness as the shepherd his flock? Where is He who *made the Memra of His holy prophets dwell among them*

While the Prophet looked at a historical event, we can look at this event and see an allusion to the Diaspora in the phrase, “*He who led them in the* wilderness as the shepherd his flock.” “The Holy One, blessed be He, taught us statutes and ordinances” through His Divinely appointed agents (the Hakhamim). We rebelled against these rules and were evicted from the land. The Holy One, Blessed be He taught us through Hakham Hillel the Elder that we must treat our brothers with communitarian propinquity. Hillel’s Prosbul demonstrated our lack of collective responsibility. Our sin was not only a sin against the land and our brothers; we sinned against G-d. Had we learned the lesson of “cleaving to G-d,” through cleaving to our Hakhamim we would not have been evicted from the land. Nevertheless, we rebelled as Rashi clearly points out.

Rashi’s commentary to verse Yesha’yahu 63:10 reads, “**But they rebelled”** “They angered.” Comp. (Deut. 9:7) “You were rebellious (מַמְרִים).”

Consequently, insurrection caused Yisrael’s eviction from Eretz Yisrael. Here we identify the point of intersection, as a conflict, between G-d’s and man’s will. The halakhah of masechet Shebi‘it takes as its task the realization of Yisrael’s acceptance of G-d’s will for G-d’s Land, shared by Yisrael on princely terms.

**Mar 15:7** Now (there was) one called Bar Abba imprisoned with the rebels who had performed murder during the insurrection.

Note the sin of Bar Abba. His sin was that of murder, which we have discussed in the story of Cain previously. Bar Abba, undoubtedly a Zealot,[[73]](#footnote-73) in his “zeal,” was inappropriate to the extreme of murder. In trying to bring about autonomy, Bar Abba shed blood on the soil of Eretz Yisrael, polluting the land. Was Bar Abba correct in his insurrection against Rome?

**Targum Pseudo Yonatan Yesha’yahu 63:1**. *He is about to bring a stroke upon* Edom, *a strong avenger upon* Bozrah, *to take the just retribution of His people, just as He swore to them by His Memra. He said, Behold,* I *am revealed - just as I spoke - in virtue, there is* great *force before Me* to save. 2. Why *will mountains be* red *from the blood of those killed,* and *plains gush forth* like *wine in the* press? 3. *"Behold, as grapes trodden in the* press, *so will slaughter increase among the armies of the* peoples, *and there will be no strength for them before* Me; I will *kill* them in My anger and trample them in My wrath; *1 will break the strength of their strong ones before Me,* and I *will annihilate* all *their wise ones.* 4. For *the* day of vengeance *is before Me,* a**nd *the* year of My *peoples salvation* has come.**

Our Prophet foresaw the ruin of Edom as G-d’s assigned justice for Edom/Rome. The B’ne Yisrael in the first century looked for a redeemer who would bring Edom/Rome to its demise. Bar Abba was like many other zealots who lived in the land seeking autonomy. Just after the destruction of the Temple, Rabbi Akiba misplaced his confidence in Bar Kokhba. Rabbi Akiba, Bar Kokhba and Bar Abba were all misguided and tried to circumvent the plan of G-d. Bar Abba was like Cain. Cain refused to acknowledge his father’s sin. As a result, he brought a vegetable offering rather than an animal sacrifice required as a sin offering. Bar Abba, in his zeal to reestablish the glory of Yisrael, equivocated the rules of the land. Consequently, he incurred a debt that he could not repay.

**The Snare of the Wicked**

**Tehillim 119:110**. The wicked laid a snare for me, but I did not stray from Your precepts.

**Mar 15:12 So Pilate answered** (*and*) **said to them again, "Then what do you want me to do with** the one **whom you call the king of the Jews?"**

The trap of the enemy was to act like Bar Abba, Rabbi Akiba and Bar Kokhba. However, Yeshua refused, to the point of death to conduct himself in any behavior that was contrary to the will of G-d.

Yeshua has gone out of his way to demonstrate that he is NOT an insurrectionist.[[74]](#footnote-74) Furthermore, Yeshua determines that he is not an insurrectionist with his comments found in Mark 12:13—17; 14:48—49

**Mar 12:13—17** And they (the chief priests of the Sadducees (Heb. Tz'dukim) and the scribes (Heb. soferim) of the Sadducees) apostolized to him (Yeshua) some of the Soferim and of the household of Herod, to *politically* ensnare him in discourse. 14 And these came, and asked him: Rabbi (Hakham); we know (perceive) that you are true, and that you are not bribed by any man, and you are not afraid (concerned) to face any man, but teach the way (i.e. Torah) of Elohim (Heb. God in His attribute of justice) in truth. Does your teaching allow paying taxes to the Caesar? Is it permissible (allowed) or not? 15 But knowing their deceitfulness, he said to them, "Why do you test (attempt to ensnare) me? Bring me a denarius so that I may see *it*." 16 And they brought *it*. And he said to them, Whose image (icon) and inscription is this? And they said to him, the Caesar's. 17 And answering, Yeshua said to them, Give back the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of Elohim to Elohim. And they were astonished by him.

**Mar 14:48—49** And Yeshua said responding to (pronounced a guilty sentence against) them, "Have you come out with daggers and clubs, as if against a robber (**also translated insurrectionist**),[[75]](#footnote-75) to take me?" 49 I was with you daily in the Bet HaMikdash teaching and you did not seize me (then). Nevertheless, the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Through his obedience, he would rectify the sin of the Golden calf, release the Levitical Priesthood from their intermediary duty and re-establish the Priesthood of the firstborn. All of this was a preparation for the coming Diaspora. Yeshua’s thoughts may have sounded like the following Psalm.

**Tehillim 119:113**. I hate those who harbor iniquitous thoughts, but Your Torah I love.

**Targum Pseudo Yonatan Tehillim 119:126.** It is time to do *the will of* the LORD; *the scholars* have desecrated Your Torah.

**Tehillim 119:127**. Because I loved Your commandments more than gold, even more than fine gold.

I loved your commandments more than “gold.” Yeshua was now facing the ability to make tikun for the sin of the golden calf or serve his personal agenda. The tempter in the Matthew account of the “temptation of the master” offers a plan “if only” he would bow and worship the adversary he could solve all the world problems. While we will not delve into the Midrashic interpretations of these passages, we understand this to mean in Jewish terms, as yielding to personal desire vs. following the will of G-d. Yeshua loved the mitzvot more than gold. In other words, his personal desire became so intertwined with the will of G-d that it was impossible for him to do anything else. His captivity brought about a release and resolve for the sin of the golden calf. The hermeneutic principle of Sevarah will illuminate all the imports that we do not have room to discuss at present.

**Conclusion**

In the inauguration of his ministry, Yeshua was granted the privilege of announcing the Yobel (Jubilee). With the termination of his ministry, he was able to bring about a tikun, release for the sin of the golden calf. He inaugurated a Yobel and declared a spiritual release.

Hakham Tsefet has used the word “**release**” four times firmly anchoring the present pericope with the Sh’mittah of our present Torah Seder.[[76]](#footnote-76) Hakham Tsefet’s opening…

**Mar 15:6** **Now at each** (Passover) **feast he** (Pilate) **customarily released to them,** (the Jewish people) **one** (any) **prisoner whom they requested.**

This verse lays the foundation for his discussion. And, finding the end in the beginning and the beginning in the end he concludes with…

**Mar 15:15** **So Pilate,** because he**wanted to satisfy the crowd, released for them Bar Abba. And** after**he had Yeshua whipped,[[77]](#footnote-77) he handed** him **over so that he could be crucified.**

What is Hakham Tsefet trying to say?

We have seen that Sh’mittah and Shabbat deal with time related mitzvot. In the course of our discussion, we have briefly discussed four tractates of the Mishnah.

1. Shebi‘it — dealing with the Year of release
2. Erub — dealing with Sabbath boundaries
3. Ma’aserot —tithe and
4. Ma’aser Sheni and — the second tithe

One lesson connects all four tractates. That lesson is …

**Ecc. 3:1** To everything *there is* a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:

Simply stated the sanctification of time requires specific actions at specific times. To act outside of those appointed times (Divine Appointments) is to miss the point of each of the lessons taught by the Hakhamim.

The land of Yeshua’s time was filled with genuine Hakhamim and those who were pseudo-scholars. In this, our Psalmist says, as we have cited above…

**Targum Pseudo Yonatan Tehillim 119:126.** It is time to do *the will of* the LORD; *the scholars* have desecrated Your Torah.

Sh’lomo reiterates his point concerning time…

**Ecc 3:10-11** I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied. 11 **He has made everything beautiful in its time**. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

Acting in accordance with the rhythm of G-d’s timing insures success. However, when we try to accomplish the will of G-d at the wrong time we bring ruin and tragedy on ourselves.

From this principle, the Sages of blessed memory have initiated the context of the entire Mishnah with its opening phrase…

“From what time?”[[78]](#footnote-78)

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

It is obvious that the present pericope of Romans is an allegorical look at the unity of the seven men of the congregation as an appointed and fit offering for the unification of the congregation. For example, in Peshat there can be no such thing as a “living sacrifice.” Therefore, we must look at what Hakham Shaul is saying through the lens of allegorical speech.

Time and space will not allow us to look at the whole process of the sacrificial system of the First Century Temple. Now the animal that was to be used as a sacrifice was brought to the Bet HaMikdash through the “Mifqad Gate.” Here the number of animals **was counted and tallied**. Each animal was inspected to see that it met the appropriate qualifications. If the animal were free of blemish, it would be “**appointed**” (mifqad –associated with Paqid)[[79]](#footnote-79) for sacrifice. The act of seeing one’s self as a “living sacrifice” is a mental state of sacrificing the whole mind to G-d. Only when we have achieved a perfected balance of Yetzer haTob and Yetser haRa will we see the true mysteries of G-d. This requires a mental status of “guarding” (shomer) each thought as Hakham Shaul says in his second Igeret to the Corinthians.[[80]](#footnote-80) In this, we are called upon to develop and possess “Virtuous Minds.”[[81]](#footnote-81)

**Therefore, brethren[[82]](#footnote-82) I urge you, by the mercies of God that you stand as if your bodies were a living sacrifice[[83]](#footnote-83) set apart** (agios) **for God's service** (purposes) **by formal, legal restrictions and limitations accepted[[84]](#footnote-84)** **by God,** and **appointed to logical service** (abodah). **And do not be conformed to the ideologies** [and fads] **of the present secular age[[85]](#footnote-85) but be transformed through mental renewal,[[86]](#footnote-86)** for **our goal is to fulfill God’s desire** (delight) **through logical deduction** (a living sacrifice for the sake) **of fulfilling God’s desire for your life which is an appropriate goal.**

Mental renewal requires guarding as we have just stated.

**Destroying vain speculations and every lofty** thought **raised up against the knowledge of God**, **and** we are**to take every thought captive** bringing it **into obedience to the** body of **Messiah**[[87]](#footnote-87)

Because we have are freed from the “constrictions” of Mitzrayim we must now look at those things that we have carried on our backs as pieces of Mitzrayim that keep us bound to lawlessness. The Pascal Sacrifice made it possible to open a door to freedom.

Hakham Shaul used the Greek word **ἅγιος –** *hagios* “agios” freely. This word is usually translated as “holy” etc. However, it is interesting that the Strong’s Enhanced Lexicon associates this word with…

**40 ἅγιος** [*hagios* /**hag**·ee·os/] adj. From *hagos* (an awful thing) **[cf 2282];** 229 occurrences; AV translates as “holy” 161 times, “saints” 61 times, “Holy One” four times, and translated miscellaneously three times. **1** most holy thing, a saint. [[88]](#footnote-88)

We have highlighted the number 2282 in the dictionary trace. But we must know that this number is not a Greek number but rather a reference to the Hebrew lexicon.

**2282 חַג** [*chag*, *chag* /khag/] n. m. From 2287; TWOT 602a; GK 2504 62 occurrences; AV translates as “feast” 56 times, “sacrifice” three times, “feast days” twice, and “solemnity” once. **1** f**estival, feast, festival-gathering, pilgrim-feast.** 1a **feast**. 1b **festival sacrifice.**[[89]](#footnote-89)

It is evident that this word connects to our present Torah Seder of D’barim 16:16 where all male Jews are to appear before the LORD. It would appear that the Strong’s Enhanced Lexicon is connecting to the cultic sense of the word **ἅγιος** – hagios*.* *The Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Second Edition[[90]](#footnote-90) makes the following association.

ⓐ in the cultic sense ***dedicated to God, holy, sacred,*** i.e. reserved for God and God’s service:[[91]](#footnote-91)

While we, at present have no other evidence, we know that the Sages of Eretz Yisrael were accustomed to borrowing Greek words and their possible meanings for their use. Here we opine that this is a case in point.[[92]](#footnote-92)

An animal once “appointed” as being “holy” it is “**set apart** (**ἅγιος** *hagios*) **for God's service** (purposes) **by formal, legal restrictions and limitations.”** Now if we look at the imagery and allegory of Hakham Shaul closely we will begin to notice what he is propounding in the second part of his pericope.

The key to “unity” in the body of Messiah is found in these final words.

**Therefore, having differing favorable gifts given to us such as the “Magid” appointed and apportioned according to his** (their) **faithfulness** (to the congregation – community). **If Yesod serves, the Meturgeman teaches, the first Parnas exhorts, and the second Parnas gives while the Chazan leads** (in the services) **and the Masoret shows the congregation loving-kindness and mercy** the body of Messiah is unified.

Hakham Shaul lists “Seven” things, personas that guard the unity of each congregation. One might say that these “Seven” characters guard (shomer) the mental integrity and real estate of that congregation. Now we have learned that Greek word order has little meaning other than those important words that are placed at the beginning and end. If we order these offices and officers correctly, the wording might be…

**Appointed and apportioned according to their faithfulness** (to the congregation – community)

1. **the Masoret shows the congregation loving-kindness and mercy**
2. **the Chazan leads** (in the services)
3. **the “Magid” prophesies**
4. **the first Parnas exhorts,**
5. **the second Parnas gives**
6. **Yesod serves**
7. **the Meturgeman teaches**

If these officers hold and guard their place, the congregation is at unity with each other, with Messiah and with the Divine. Now if these officers are not heeded and obeyed people place themselves at risk because by their actions of dissent they consider themselves NOT to be a part of the Congregation and this is tantamount to being “cut off.’

However, when we stop to reflect on what we have learned from Hakham Shaul’s Igeret to the Romans, we note that he has laid out a set of halakhic rules that deal with how the Jewish people of the lost tribes are given an opportunity to return. The exile has been long and arduous, but we need to persevere as we join in the task of cosmic tikun. It may take years to recover one single soul but we must be patient and tenacious all at the same time. The greatest key is found in faithful obedience to the Master and his Mesorah.

**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:**

**Shabbat “Shof’tim VeShot’rim” - “Judges and Officers”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **שֹׁפְטִים וְשֹׁטְרִים** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Shof’tim VeShot’rim”** | Reader 1 – D’barim 16:18-20 | Reader 1 – D’barim 18:1-3 |
| **“Judges and Officers”** | Reader 2 – D’barim 16:21-17:1 | Reader 2 – D’barim 18:3-5 |
| **“Jueces y Alcaldes”** | Reader 3 – D’barim 17:2-7 | Reader 3 – D’barim 18:1-5 |
|  | Reader 4 – D’barim 17:8-10 |  |
| D’barim (Deut.) 16:18 – 17:20 | Reader 5 – D’barim 17:11-13 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
| Psalm 120, 121, 122 | Reader 6 – D’barim 17:14-17 | Reader 1 – D’barim 18:1-3 |
| Ashlam.: Is. 56:1-9 + 57:19 | Reader 7 – D’barim 17:18-20 | Reader 2 – D’barim 18:3-5 |
| P. Abot 4:17 | Maftir – D’barim 17:18-20 | Reader 3 – D’barim 18:1-5 |
| N.C.: Mark 15:16-21;  Lk 23:26-32; Rm 12:9-21 | Is. 56:1-9 + 57:19 |  |

**Coming Events:**

**Tekufah of Tammuz - (Summer Solstice) – June 21, 2015**

**For further information see: Power Point presentation under** [**http://www.betemunah.org/lessons.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/lessons.html)

**(press D)**

**Coming Fast**

**Fast of Tammuz 17**

**Tammuz 18, 5775 – Evening Saturday 4th of July – Evening Sunday 5th of July**

**For further information see:** [**http://www.betemunah.org/tamuz17.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/tamuz17.html)

Shalom Shabbat!

Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

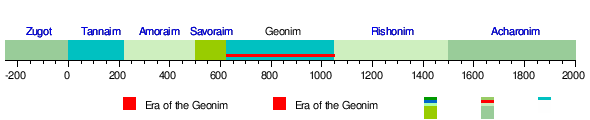
Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

1. Berachot 4b [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See prefatory remarks to psalm 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. v. 176 - These opening remarks are excerpted, and edited, from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. **David Kimchi** (1160–1235), also known by the Hebrew acronym as the **Radak**, was a medieval Rabbi, biblical commentator, philosopher, and grammarian. Born in Narbonne, Provence, he was the son of Rabbi Joseph Kimchi and the brother of Rabbi Moses Kimchi, both biblical commentators and grammarians. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid. 3, on verse 119:73. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Berachot = Blessings [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Kiryat Shema = Reciting the Shema [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Morning prayers [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Evening prayers [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. These Berachot are D’Rabanan. Kol Bo (Siman 5e and 122) say that Brachot Pesuke DiZimra are D’Rabanan but Brachot Kriyat Shema are DeOritta. Rabbenu Yosef ben Pelet and Rabbenu Yishaya agree. However, it seems (lacking explicit sources) that we hold Le’halacha that the Brachot are D’Rabanan as many times the Achronim use the idea of Safek Brachot LeHakel by these Brachot as well [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ibid. 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Orach Chaim 55 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The Gaonim were the presidents of the two great Babylonian, Talmudic Academies of Sura and Pumbedita, in the Abbasid Caliphate, and were the generally accepted spiritual leaders of the Jewish community world wide in the early medieval era, in contrast to the Resh Galuta (Exilarch) who wielded secular authority over the Jews in Islamic lands.

    Gaonim is the plural of גאון (Gaon), which means "pride" or "splendor" in Hebrew and since the 19th century "genius" as in modern Hebrew. As a title of a Babylonian college president it meant something like "His Excellency".

    The Gaonim played a prominent and decisive role in the transmission and teaching of Torah and Jewish law. They taught Talmud and decided on issues on which no ruling had been rendered during the period of the Talmud.

     [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Mishnah Berurah 55:5. The Mishnah Berurah (Hebrew: משנה ברורה‎ "Clarified Teaching") is a work of halacha (Jewish law) by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (Poland, 1838–1933), also colloquially known by the name of another of his books, Chafetz Chaim "Desirer of Life".

    His Mishnah Berurah is a commentary on Orach Chayim, the first section of the Shulchan Aruch which deals with laws of prayer, synagogue, Shabbat and holidays, summarizing the opinions of the Achronim (post-Medieval rabbinic authorities) on that work. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Talmud Yerushalmi 9a [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid. 14 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Orach Chaim: Siman 59 and 236 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. The terms meforshim and parshanim (commentaries/commentators) almost always refer to later, post-Talmudic writers of Rabbinic glosses on Biblical and Talmudic texts. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Gemara according to Rabbeinu Yonah / Shulchan Aruch 59:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Berachot 11b [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. An eternal love [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. A great love [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi ha-Cohen (1013 - 1103) (Hebrew: ר' יצחק אלפסי) - also known as the Alfasi or by his Hebrew acronym Rif (Rabbi Isaac al-Fasi), was a Moroccan Talmudist and posek (decider in matters of halacha - Jewish law). He is best known for his work of halacha, the legal code Sefer Ha-halachot, considered the first fundamental work in halakhic literature. He was born in the Algerian city Al Qal'a of Beni Hammad, but spent the majority of his career in Fes, and is therefore known as "Alfasi" ("of Fes" in Arabic). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Shulchan Aruch (60:1). The Shulchan Aruch (Hebrew: שֻׁלחָן עָרוּך‎, literally: "Set Table") also known by various Jewish communities but not all as "the Code of Jewish Law". There are various legal codes in Judaism but the Shulchan Aruch is the most widely consulted. It was authored in Safed, Israel, by Yosef Karo in 1563 and published in Venice two years later. Together with its commentaries, it is the most widely accepted compilation of Jewish law ever written. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Nedarim 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Pnei Meivin, Orach Chaim 133 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. This section is an except from: *With All Your Heart: The Shema in Jewish Worship, Practice and Life*,  By Meir Levin [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Magen Avot 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Sotah 39a, s.v. "kol kohen" [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Hilchot Berachot 1:17; Hilchot Tefillah 7:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Menachoth 99b [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Sukkah 42a [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Mishna Berachot 2:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Governance of G-d [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. An acronym for *Nachmanides*, also known as Rabbi Moses ben Nachman Girondi, Bonastruc ça Porta. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Yirat Shamayim – Lit. Fear of Heaven. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. **Chazal** (Hebrew: חז"ל‎) is an acronym for the Hebrew "**Ḥ**akhameinu **Z**ikhronam **L**iv'rakha", (**ח**כמינו **ז**כרונם **ל**ברכה, literally "Our Sages, may their memory be blessed"). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. It is well known that the sea is a remez for the **fear of G-d**. [As **Chazal** teach that the color of the sea is like that of heaven... which is like that of the throne of Glory.] That is the meaning of 'from the great sea.' These are the people who are great in their fear of HaShem. [Fear of HaShem is the border.] [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. In Sefer HaMitzvot [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Lit. Kingship of Heaven [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Commentary on Sanhedrin, Chapter 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Lehrman, S. M. (1961), in Rev. Dr. A Cohen (Ed.), Soncino Books of the Bible: The Twelve Prophets, London: The Soncino Press, pp. 116-124. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Cf. Wikipedia – “Ebionites, or Ebionaioi, (Greek: Ἐβιωναῖοι) (derived from Hebrew אביונים ebyonim, ebionim, meaning "the poor" or "poor ones"), is a Christian patristic term referring to a Jewish Nazarean sect or sects that existed during the first centuries of the Christian Era. They regarded Yeshua as the Messiah and insisted on the necessity of following Jewish religious Law and rites.” - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ebionites> [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. This horrendous mass murder of Nazarean Jews (men, women and children) is little spoken of by historians, but in my humble opinion it is one of the many crimes against the Jewish people perpetrated by Christianity together with inquisitions, progroms, the holocaust, etc. etc. No, historian, to date, has dealt yet comprehensively with this dark episode. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Schaff, P. & Wace, H. (1982), Nicene And Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series: Eusebius’ Church History, Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp.242-244. See also Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quartodecimanism> (but careful, this last citation contains some errors as for example that the Bishop of Rome Victor did not excommunicate those that celebrated Pesach, and that the Council of Nicea did not deal finally with this so called heresy, and whereby by edict of Constantine those Nazareans/Ebionites that observed Pesach were to be put to death – the meaning of excommunication in those days). [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:11. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. The Mishnah also describes G'milut Chasadim as one of the few mitzvoth (commandments) for which there is no minimum amount sufficient to satisfy your obligation. (Pe'ah 1:1; reiterated in Talmud Chagigah 7a). That verse also describes G'milut Chasadim as one of the few things that one derives benefit from in this world and yet still be rewarded for in the world to come. The Talmud says that G'milut Chasadim is greater than Tzedakah (charity), because unlike Tzedakah, G'milut Chasadim can be done for both poor and rich, both the living and the dead, and can be done with money or with acts. (Talmud Sukkah 49b). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Verbal connection to D’barim 16:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Verbal connection to D’barim 15:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. We surmise from materials and commentaries on this verse that Pilate released a prisoner because he revered Dionysus and esteemed the City of Dionysia of this Roman deity.

    The Athenian Anthesteria were pan of a wider cycle of Dionysiac festivals which extended from the Rural Dionysia in Posideon (December-January) via Lcnaia (in Gamelion, January-February) and Anthesteria to the City Dionysia in Elaphebolion (March-April). Every festival projected its own image of Dionysiac epiphany.

    Brill. (1999). *Dictionary of Deities and Demon in the Bible* (2 ed.). (K. v. Toom, B. Becking, & P. W. van der Horst, Eds.) Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. p 254

    Unlike many pagan festivals, which occurred in the spring, which celebrated fertility the Dionysian festival in March/April, was associated with violence. Merrit, “Jesus Barabbas” determined at the Dionysian festival a single prisoner was released. Although the “prisoner” released in the Dionysian festival was not acquitted. He was only released in order to participate in the festival. Consequently, Pilate’s “custom” may have originated in a pagan festival. Craig Evans tries to make a case that the Mishnah (Pes. 8:6) details this custom. However, while his thesis is plausible, the argument is unconvincing. Given the Roman bent towards mythology I opt for the solution above. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. It should be a matter of common logic that the crowd was of the Tz’dukim for three reasons. The P’rushim were presently occupied in Pesach preparations and that they “came up” or “went up” indicates that they went to the Hasmonean fortress, Antonia at the Northwestern corner of the Temple mount isolating the incident from the Temple area proper. Thirdly, because the P’rushim was ready to offer their Korban Pesach they would have been is a state of ritual purity excluding them from entering Gentile homes or edifices. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Verbal connection to D’barim 15:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. The repetitive use of “King of the Jews” whereby Pilate guarantees Yeshua’s conviction and death. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Verbal connection to D’barim 15:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. The idea of being a "living sacrifice" is somewhat contrary to the Temple cult. What we must understand Hakham Shaul to say is that in allegorical terms we should live as if set apart for God's service (purposes) by formal, legal restrictions, limitations, and dead to anything outside that realm of service. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. The order in which Hakham Shaul makes his presentation is in the order of animals brought to the Temple for sacrifice. As such, these animals enter into the Temple precincts as potential sacrifices through the "mifqad" gate (Gate of appointment). Here the animal is inspected to see if it is a permissible sacrifice. If the animal is an “acceptable” sacrifice, it is “appointed” (Paqid) to Divine service. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Do not think of yourselves as if this present age were the only existence we will ever experience. Remember that all Yisrael will have their part in the Olam HaBa

    Verbal connection to D’barim 15:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Psa 19:7 restoration – tikun converts or reverts the soul to its original state of purity. Thus, Torah study returns the soul to a state of purity. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. **Rm. 5.2** **By our faithful obedience** to the Mesorah **we have experienced** (access) **loving-kindness** (Chesed – Masoret) **in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.** [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Verbal connection to D’barim 16:17 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Here Hakham Shaul means that the Gentiles who have turned towards G-d have a single and specific function in the “body” as if they were a single organ in that body. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Verbal connection to D’barim 15:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Verbal connection to D’barim 15:7, Amos 9:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Magid – Prophet or Darshan [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Yesod – 3rd Parnas (Female Pastor seeing to the needs of families and womanly issues) The Meturgeman is the Teacher, Exhortation belongs to the office and ministry of the 1st Pastor (Parnas) the “Giver” is the 2nd Parnas (Pastor) and the “Leader” is the Chazan who leads the services and the Merciful one is the Masoret or the “President of the Congregation” full of G-d’s mercy and loving-kindness [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Verbal connection to Psa 119:171 [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. מסכת; lit. "web” — Tractate [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Yad Avraham Institute. (2008). *The Mishnah, Artscroll Mishnah Series, A New Translation with Commentary Yad Avraham Anthologized from Talmudic Sources and Classic Commentators,* (Vol. IIa). (R. Y. Danziger, Ed., & R. M. Roberts, Trans.) Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, ltd. p. 241 [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Use of “Zealot” may be anachronistic. Nevertheless, it serves well to demonstrate the character of the insurrectionist. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Cf. Mark 11:17; 12:13-17 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. **λῃστής, οῦ, ὁ** (1) *robber, bandit, highwayman*, one who seizes by violence, in contrast to a thief (κλέπτης), who uses stealth (LU 10.30); (2) **politically *insurrectionist, revolutionary, rebel* who favors the use of force** (JN 18.40); (3) figuratively, of unscrupulous, greedy, or overambitious leaders (JN 10.8) Friberg, T., Friberg, B., & Miller, N. F. (2000). *Vol. 4*: *Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. Baker's Greek New Testament library (246). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Cf. Mark 15:6,9,11,15 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Martin Hengel purports the idea that only slaves were flogged before their execution by crucifixion. If this is true and Hakham Tsefet knew of this particular practice, he would have been further solidifying his relation to the Year of Release, the Shimitah. See e.g Moloney, F. J. (2002). The Gospel of Mark, A Commentary. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers. 316 noote 201, Hengel, M. (1977). Crucifixion in the Ancient world and the folly of the Cross. (J. Bowden, Trans.) London: SCM Press. pp. 51—63 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. **m. Ber 1:1** [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. The Hebrew letter פּ (Peh) is identical to the letter (Feh) and only distinguished by a dot the belly of the letter. Thus the Hebrew word Mifqad can also be read as MiPqad. Both speak an appointee to the court or the Temple to supervise or count – i.e. the office of a Paqid. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. “taking every thought captive” 2 Cor. 10:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Cf. Dow, Phil. *Virtuous Minds: Intellectual Character Development for Students, Educators, & Parents*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Verbal connection to D’barim 15:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
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86. Psa 19:7 restoration – tikun converts or reverts the soul to its original state of purity. Thus, Torah study returns the soul to a state of purity. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. 2 Cor. 10:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Strong, J. (1996). *The exhaustive concordance of the Bible: Showing every word of the text of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order.* (G40). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Strong, J. (1996). The exhaustive concordance of the Bible : Showing every word of the text of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order. Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship. (H2282). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Bauer, Walter, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, Second Edition*. Edited by William F. Arndt and Frederick W. Danker. 2nd edition. Chicago: The University Of Chicago Press, 1979. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Ibid p.10 [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. For more evidence on the use of Greek in Jewish writings see Lieberman, Prof Saul. *Greek in Jewish Palestine/Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*. New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary Press, 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)