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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** |
| **Tammuz 03, 5775 – June 19/20, 2015** | **Seventh Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:**

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| **Amarillo, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:47 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:50 PM | **Austin & Conroe, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:17 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:17 PM | **Brisbane, Australia**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 4:43 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 5:39 PM |
| **Chattanooga, & Cleveland, TN, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:40 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:43 PM | **Manila & Cebu, Philippines**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 6:09 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 7:02 PM | **Miami, FL, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 7:57 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 8:54 PM |
| **Murray, KY, & Paris, TN. U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 7:59 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:04 PM | **Olympia, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:52 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 10:12 PM | **Port Orange, FL, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:08 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:07 PM |
| **San Antonio, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:18 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:17 PM | **Sheboygan & Manitowoc, WI, US**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:18 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:31 PM | **Singapore, Singapore**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 6:54 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 7:45 PM |
| **St. Louis, MO, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:11 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 9:17 PM | **Tacoma, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Jun 19 2015 – Candles at 8:51 PM  Sat. Jun 20 2015 – Habdalah 10:11 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 “Shof’tim VeShot’rim” - “Judges and Officers”**

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| **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 |  |

**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.) 16:18 – 17:20‎‎**

* Judges – Deuteronomy 16:18-19
* Justice, justice will you follow – Deuteronomy 16:20
* Against Idolatrous worship – Deuteronomy 16:21 – 17:7
* The Supreme Court – Deuteronomy 17:8-13
* The King – Deuteronomy 17:14-20

**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. 191-237.

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: D’barim (Deut.) ‎16:18 -17:20‎**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN** |
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| 18. You shall set up **judges and law enforcement officials** for yourself in all your cities that the Lord, your God, is giving you, for your tribes, and they shall judge the people [with] righteous judgment. | 18. **UPRIGHT judges and efficient administrators** you will appoint in all your cities which the LORD your God will give you for your tribes, and they will judge the people with true judgment. |
| 19. You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show favoritism, and you shall not take a bribe, for bribery blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts just words. | 19. You will not set judgment aside, nor respect persons, nor take a gift, because a gift blinds the eyes of the wise who take it; for it perverts them to foolishness, and confuses equitable words in the mouth of the judges in the hour of their decision |
| 20. Justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may live and possess the land the Lord, your God, is giving you. | 20. Upright and perfect judgment in truth will you follow, that you may come to inherit the land which the LORD your God will give you. |
| 21. You shall not plant for yourself an asherah, [or] any tree, near the altar of the Lord, your God, which you shall make for yourself. | 21. As it is not allowed you to plant a grove by the side of the LORD's altar, so is it not allowed you to associate in judgment a fool with a wise judge to teach that which you are to do. |
| 22. And you shall not set up for yourself a monument, which the Lord, your God hates. | 22. As it is not for you to erect a statue, so are you not to appoint to be a governor a proud man, whom the LORD your God does abhor. |
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| 1. You shall not sacrifice to the Lord, your God, an ox or a sheep that has in it a blemish or any bad thing, for that is an abomination to the Lord, your God. | 1. You will not sacrifice before the. LORD your God a bullock or lamb which has any blemish or evil in it, or which is torn or rent; for that is abominable before the LORD your God. |
| 2. If there will be found among you, within one of your cities which the Lord, your God is giving you, a man or woman who does evil in the eyes of the Lord, your God, to transgress His covenant, | 2. If there be found among you in one of your cities that the LORD your God will give you a man or woman who does what is evil before the LORD your God in transgressing His covenant, |
| 3. and who will go and worship other gods and prostrate himself before them, or to the sun, the moon, or any of the host of the heavens, which I have not commanded; | 3. and, following after evil desire, will serve the idols of the Gentiles, and worship them, or the sun, or the moon, or all the host of the heavens, which I have not commanded; |
| 4. and it will be told to you, and you will hear it, and investigate thoroughly, and behold, the matter coincides; this abomination has been perpetrated in Israel. | 4. and it be told you, and you hear and make inquiry by witnesses fairly; and, behold, if this word be true and certain, that such abomination is wrought among you, |
| 5. Then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has committed this evil thing, to your cities, the man or the woman, and you shall pelt them with stones, and they shall die. | 5. then you will bring forth that man or woman who has done this evil thing, unto the gate of your house of judgment, the man or the woman, and you will stone them that they die. |
| 6. By the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall the one liable to death be put to death; he shall not be put to death by the mouth of one witness. | 6. Upon the word of two witnesses or of three he will die who is guilty of death; they will not be put to death on the word of one witness. |
| 7. The hand of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people, and you shall abolish evil from among you. | 7. The hands of the witnesses will be first upon him to kill him, and afterward the hands of all (any of) the people; and so will you bring down the evil doer among you. |
| 8. If a matter eludes you in judgment, between blood and blood, between judgment and judgment, or between lesion and lesion, words of dispute in your cities, then you shall rise and go up to the place the Lord, your God, chooses. | 8. If there be with you an extraordinary matter for judgment between unclean and clean blood, cases of life or of money, or between a plague of leprosy or of the scall, with words of controversy in your Beth Din, then you will arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God will choose; |
| 9. And you shall come to the Levitic kohanim and to the judge who will be in those days, and you shall inquire, and they will tell you the words of judgment. | 9. and you will come to the priests of the tribe of Levi, and to the judge who will be in those days, and inquire of them, and they will show you the process of judgment. |
| 10. And you shall do according to the word they tell you, from the place the Lord will choose, and you shall observe to do according to all they instruct you. | 10. Then will you do according to the word of the custom of the Law that they will show you at the place the LORD will choose, and observe to do whatsoever they teach you. |
| 11. According to the law they instruct you and according to the judgment they say to you, you shall do; you shall not divert from the word they tell you, either right or left. | 11. According to the word of the Law that they will teach you, and the manner of judgment they pronounce, you will do. You will not turn aside from the sentence they will show you, to the right or to the left. |
| 12. And the man who acts intentionally, not obeying the kohen who stands there to serve the Lord, your God, or to the judge that man shall die, and you shall abolish evil from Israel. | 12. And the man who will act with presumption, and not obey the judge or the priest who stands there to minister before the LORD your God, that man will be put to death; so will you put down the doer of evil from Israel, |
| 13. And all the people shall listen and fear, and they shall no longer act wantonly. | 13. and all the people will hear, and be afraid, and not do wickedly again. |
| 14. When you come to the land the Lord, your God, is giving you, and you possess it and live therein, and you say, "I will set a king over myself, like all the nations around me," | 14. When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and possess, and dwell in it, and you say, Let us appoint a king over us, like all the nations about me, |
| 15. you shall set a king over you, one whom the Lord, your God, chooses; from among your brothers, you shall set a king over yourself; you shall not appoint a foreigner over yourself, one who is not your brother. | 15. you will inquire for instruction before the LORD and afterward appoint the king over you: but it will not be lawful to set over you a foreign man who is not of your brethren. |
| 16. Only, he may not acquire many horses for himself, so that he will not bring the people back to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, for the Lord said to you, "You shall not return that way any more." | 16. Only let him not increase to him more than two horses, lest his princes ride upon them, and become proud, neglect the words of the Law, and commit the sin of the captivity of Mizraim; for the LORD has told you, By that way you will return no more. |
| 17. And he shall not take many wives for himself, and his heart must not turn away, and he shall not acquire much silver and gold for himself. | 17. Neither will he multiply to him wives above eighteen, lest they pervert his heart; nor will he increase to him silver or gold, lest his heart be greatly lifted up, and he rebel against the God of heaven. |
| 18. And it will be, when he sits upon his royal throne, that he shall write for himself two copies of this Torah on a scroll from [that Torah which is] before the Levitic kohanim. | 18. And it will be that if he be steadfast in the commandments of the Law he will sit upon the throne of his kingdom in security. And let the elders write for him the section (pharasha) of this Law in a book before the priests of the tribe of Levi; |
| 19. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the Lord, his God, to keep all the words of this Torah and these statutes, to perform them, | 19. and let it be at his side, and he will read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this Law, and all these statutes to perform them: |
| 20. so that his heart will not be haughty over his brothers, and so that he will not turn away from the commandment, either to the right or to the left, in order that he may prolong [his] days in his kingdom, he and his sons, among Israel. | 20. that his heart may not be arrogant toward his brethren, nor decline from the precepts to the right or the left, and that his days may be prolonged over his kingdom, his and his sons among Israel. |
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**Rashi’s Commentary on D’barim (Deut.) ‎16:18 -17:20**

**18 Judges and law-enforcement officials** Heb. שֽׁפְטִים וְשֽׁטְרִים . שֽׁפְטִים are judges who decide the verdict, and שֽׁטְרִים are those who chastise the people in compliance with their order, (who strike and bind [not found in early editions]) with rods and straps, until he [the guilty party] accepts the judge’s verdict.

**in all your cities** Heb. בְּכָל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ , in every city. for your tribes [This phrase] refers back to “You shall set up... for yourself.” Thus, the understanding of the verse is “You shall set up judges and law-enforcement officials for yourself, for your tribes, in all your cities that the Lord, your God, is giving you.”

**for your tribes** This teaches us that judges must be appointed for every tribe, and for every city.-[Sifrei, San. 16b]

**and they shall judge the people [with] righteous judgment** Appoint judges who are expert and righteous so that they will judge justly.-[from Sifrei]

**19 You shall not pervert justice** [This is to be understood] according to its apparent meaning.

**you shall not show favoritism** Even during the statement of pleas [by the litigants]. This is an admonition addressed to the judge, that he should not be lenient with one litigant and harsh with the other, [e.g., ordering] one to stand [while allowing] the other to sit, because as soon as one notices that the judge is showing more respect toward his opponent, he cannot plead his case any longer [because he thinks that it will be of no use].

**and you shall not take a bribe** Even [if you intend] to judge justly -[from Sifrei].

**for bribery blinds** As soon as he [the judge] accepts a bribe from him [a litigant], it is impossible for him not to be favorably disposed towards him, to decide the judgment in his favor.

**just words** Heb. דִּבְרי צַדִּיקִים , just words, true judgments.

**20 Justice, justice shall you pursue** Seek out a good court. (Sifrei; San. 32b)

**that you may live, and you possess [the land]** The appointment of fitting judges is sufficient merit to keep Israel alive and settled in their land.-[from Sifrei]

**21 You shall not plant for yourself an asherah** [This admonition is] to make one liabl e [to punishment] from the time of planting it, and even though he did not worship it, he transgresses a prohibition for its planting.-[from Sifrei]

**You shall not plant...any tree, near the altar of the Lord your God** This is a prohibition addressed to one who plants a tree or builds a house on the Temple Mount.-[Sifrei]

**22 And you shall not set up for yourself any monument** A monument of one stone, to sacrifice on it even to Heaven.

**which [the Lord your God] hates** God has commanded you to make an altar of stones and an altar of earth. This, however, He hates, because this was a [religious] statute of the Canaanites, and although it was dear to Him in the days of the Patriarchs, now He hates it, since these [people] made it a statute for idolatry. (See Sifrei)

**Chapter 17**

**1 You shall not sacrifice... or any bad thing** Heb. דָּבָר רַע . This is an admonition to one who would make sacrifices disqualified (פִּגּוּל) through an evil [improper] utterance דִּבּוּר רַע . And from this [expression] our Rabbis derived other explanations as well, as they appear in [the tractate] Shechitath Kodashim [early name for Zevachim].-[Zev. 36]

**2 to transgress His covenant which He made with you,** namely, not to worship idols.

**3 which I have not commanded** to worship them.-[Meg. 9b]

**4 [the matter] coincides** Heb. נָכוֹן דָּבָר , the testimony coincides. [I.e. the testimony of one witness coincides with that of the other.

**5 Then you shall bring out that man... to your cities** Heb. אֶל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ . One who translates אֶל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ as לִתְרַע בֵּית דִינָךְ , “to the gate of your court,” is mistaken, for we have learned the following: when the verse [here] says "אֶל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ" , this refers to the city where [the accused] worshipped idols, or does it refer to the gates [of the court] where he was judged [since the courts were located at the gates]? [In answer to this,] the verse here says שְׁעָרֶיךָ , and above (verse 2), it says שְׁעָרֶיךָ Just as שְׁעָרֶיךָ mentioned [clearly] refers to the city where he worshipped [idols] [and not to the gates of a court], so too, the word שְׁעָרֶיךָ mentioned here refers to the city where he worshipped [idols]. Thus the correct version of the Targum is לְקִרְוָיךְ , to your cities.

**6 two witnesses, or three** But if testimony can be executed through two witnesses, why then does Scripture specify "or three"? [It does so] to draw a comparison between [testimony of] three to that of two; just as two witnesses are considered one unit, so too, are three witnesses considered one unit, and they are not subject to the laws of “plotting witnesses” עֵדִים זוֹמְמִין , unless all of them are proven to be “plotting witnesses.”-[Mak. 5b] (See Deut. 19:16-21.)

**8 If a matter eludes you [in judgment]** Heb. כִּי יִפָּלֵא . [The term] הַפְלְאָה always denotes detachment and separation; [here it means] that the matter is detached and hidden from you.

**between blood and blood** Between ritually unclean blood [of menstruation], and ritually clean blood.-[Niddah 19a] (See Rashi on Lev. 12:1-5.)

**between judgment and judgment** Between a judgment of innocent and a judgment of guilty.

**between lesion and lesion** Between a ritually unclean lesion, and a ritually clean lesion.

**words of dispute** whereby the Sages of the city [the judges] differ in their opinion on the matter, one declaring it impure, the other pure, one ruling guilty, the other innocent.

**then you shall rise and go up** [This] teaches [us] that the Temple [the seat of the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court] was on a higher elevation than all other places.-[Sifrei ; San. 87a]

**9 [And you shall come to] the Levitic kohanim** i.e., the kohanim, who are descended from the tribe of Levi.

**and to the judge who will be in those days** Although this judge may not be [of the same stature] as other judges who preceded him, you must listen to him, for you have only the judge [who lives] in your time.-[R.H. 25b]

**11 either right or left,** Even if this judge tells you that right is left, and that left is right. How much more so, if he tells you that right is right, and left is left!-[Sifrei]

**13 And all the people shall listen** From here we derive [the ruling] that they postpone his execution [i.e., of the זְקַן מַמְרֵא , the rebellious sage] until the Festival [when all Israel appears in Jerusalem], and they execute him on the Festival.-[San. 89a]

**16 he may not acquire many horses for himself** But, only what he needs for his chariots, “so that he will not cause the people to return to Egypt” [to purchase the horses], because horses come from there, as it is said of Solomon (I Kings 10:29), “And a chariot that went up and left Egypt sold for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty.”-[San. 21b]

**17 And he shall not take many wives for himself** Only eighteen, for we find that David had six wives, and it was told to him [by Nathan the prophet] (II Sam. 12:8): “and if this is too little, I would add for you like them and like them” [totaling eighteen].-[San. 21a and Sifrei]

**and he shall not acquire much silver and gold for himself** However, he may have what is required to provide for his troops.-[San. 21b]

**18 And it will be, when he sits [upon his royal throne]** If he does this, he merits that his kingdom will remain established.-[Sifrei]

**two copies of this Torah-** Heb. מִשְׁנֵה הַתּוֹרָה i.e., two Torah scrolls, one that is placed in his treasury, and the other that comes and goes with him (San. 21b). [I.e., a small scroll, which the king carries with him. Thus the Talmud derives מִשְׁנֵה from שְׁנַיִם , two.] Onkelos, however, renders פַּתְשֶׁגֶן , copy. He interprets [the word] מִשְׁנֵה in the sense of repeating and uttering. [I.e., one copy of the Torah, which the scribe would write while uttering the words before he writes them, deriving מִשְׁנֵה from שִׁנּוּן , studying.]

**19 the words of [this] Torah** [This is to be understood] according to its apparent meaning [namely a commandment written in the Torah].

**20 and so that he will not turn away from the commandment** Not even from a minor commandment of a prophet.

**in order that he may prolong [his] days [in his kingdom]** From this positive statement, one may understand the negative inference [i.e., if he does not fulfill the commandments, his kingdom will not endure]. And so we find in the case of Saul, that Samuel said to him, “Seven days shall you wait until I come to you to offer up burnt-offerings” (I Sam. 10:8), and it is stated, “And he waited seven days” (I Sam. 13:8), but Saul did not keep his promise and neglected to wait the entire [last] day. He had not quite finished sacrificing the burnt-offering, when Samuel arrived and said to him (I Sam 13:13-14), “You have acted foolishly; you have not kept [the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you...] so now your kingdom will not continue” (I Sam 13:13-14). Thus we learn, that for [transgressing] a minor commandment of a prophet, he was punished.

**he and his sons** [This] tells [us] that if his son is worthy of becoming king, he is given preference over any [other] person.-[Hor. 11b]

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) ‎120:1-7; 121:1-8; & 122:1-9**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM** |
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| 1. A song of ascents. In my distress I called to the Lord, and He answered me. | 1. A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. In the presence of the LORD, when I was in distress, I prayed, and He received my prayer. |
| 2. O Lord, save my soul from false lips, from a deceitful tongue. | 2. O LORD, deliver my soul from lips of deceit, from a deceptive tongue. |
| 3. What can He give you, and what can He add to you, you deceitful tongue? | 3. What does He give to you, O slanderer? And what does He add to you, O defamer, deceptive tongue? |
| 4. Sharpened arrows of a mighty man with coals of brooms. | 4. The arrows of a warrior, sharp as lightning from above, with coals of broom that burn in Gehenna below. |
| 5. Woe is to me for I have sojourned in Meshech; I dwelt among the tents of Kedar. | 5. Woe is me, for I have settled down with the oasis-dwellers; I have dwelt with the tents of the Arabs. |
| 6. For a long time, my soul dwelt with those who hate peace. | 6. More than these, my soul abides with Edom, the hater of peace. |
| 7. I am at peace, but when I speak, they [come] to [wage] war. | 7. I am peaceful, for I will pray; but they are for war. |
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| 1. A song for ascents. **I shall raise my eyes to the mountains, from where will my help come?** | 1. A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. **I will lift up my eyes to the mountains. Whence shall come my help?** |
| 2. My help is from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. | 2. My help is from the presence of the LORD, who made heaven and earth. |
| 3. He will not allow your foot to falter; Your Guardian will not slumber. | 3. He will not allow your foot to falter, your guardian does not slumber. |
| 4. Behold the Guardian of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. | 4. Behold, He does not slumber and He will not sleep, the guardian of Israel. |
| 5. The Lord is your Guardian; the Lord is your shadow; **[He is] by your right hand.** | 5. The LORD will guard you, **the LORD will overshadow you, on account of the mezuzah affixed on your right side as you enter.** |
| 6. By day, the sun will not smite you, nor will the moon at night. | 6. By day, when the sun rules, the morning-demons will not smite you, nor will the liliths, at night, when the moon rules. |
| 7. **The Lord will guard you from all evil; He will guard your soul.** | 7. **The word of the LORD will guard you from all harm, He will guard your soul.** |
| 8. **The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in from now and to eternity.** | 8. **The LORD will guard your going out for business and your coming in to study Torah, from now and forevermore.** |
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| 1. A song of ascents of David. I rejoiced when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." | 1. A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. I rejoiced with those who say to me, "Let us go to the sanctuary of the LORD." |
| 2. Our feet were standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. | 2. Our feet were standing in your gates, O Jerusalem. |
| 3. **The built-up Jerusalem is like a city that was joined together within itself.** | 3. **Jerusalem that is built in the firmament is like a city that has been joined together on earth.** |
| 4. There ascended the tribes, the tribes of God, testimony to Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord. | 4. Unto which the tribes have gone up, the tribes of the LORD, He who testifies to Israel that His presence abides among them when they go to give thanks to the name of the LORD. |
| 5. For there were set thrones for judgment, thrones for the house of David. | 5. For there thrones have been placed; in Jerusalem thrones are in the sanctuary for the kings of the house of David. |
| 6. **Request the welfare of Jerusalem; may those who love you enjoy tranquility.** | 6. **Seek the welfare of Jerusalem; those who love you will dwell in tranquility.** |
| 7. May there be peace in your wall, tranquility in your palaces. | 7. Let there be peace in your armies, tranquility in your citadels. |
| 8. For the sake of my brethren and my companions, I shall now speak of peace in you. | 8. On account of my brothers and companions, I will now speak in you of peace. |
| 9. For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I shall beg for goodness for you. | 9. Because of the sanctuary of the LORD our God, I will seek to do good to you. |
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**Rashi’s Commentary on Tehillim (Psalms) 120:1-7; 121:1-8; & 122:1-9**

**Chapter 120**

**1 A song of ascents** which the Levites will recite on the fifteen steps that go down from the Israelites’ court to the Women’s court, and there are fifteen psalms entitled “A song of ascents” (Suc. 5:4, Mid 2:5). And our Rabbis said that David composed them to raise the deep, as is explained in Tractate Succah (53a). And according to the Aggadah (Yerushalmi Sanh. 10:2, 52b), it is to be interpreted: A song for a hundred steps (שיר למאה עולות) .

**2 from false lips** The arm of those who hunt people with their mouth with wicked accusations.

**3 What can He give you** [What can] the Holy One, blessed be He [give you]?

**and what can He add to you** [What] safeguard and walls? Behold you are placed within two walls.

**4 Sharpened arrows of a mighty man** Behold you kill in a distant place like an arrow.

**with coals of brooms** All coals, when extinguished on the outside, are extinguished on the inside, but these extinguish themselves on the outside but not on the inside (ibid.). Another explanation: What will He give you? What is the Holy One, blessed be He, destined to decree upon you? Arrows of a mighty man with coals of brooms. His arrows from above and Gehinnom from below.

**5 Woe is to me** says the congregation of Israel, for I have already suffered in many exiles. Behold I sojourned in Meshech with the sons of Japheth in the kingdom of Persia, Greece, and Meshech.

**7 I am at peace** With them.

**but when I speak peacefully with them,** they come to wage war with me.

**Chapter 121**

**1 A song for ascents** The simple meaning is that when the Levites began to ascend the steps, they recited this song. Although this song is not written first, there is no chronological sequence. (In other books I found:)

**A song for ascents** [The Psalmist] alludes, in the second psalm, to the steps that ascend for the righteous/generous in the future from beneath the tree of life to the Throne of Glory, as we learned in Sifrei (Ekev 47): “It does not say here, ‘A song of ascents’ but, ‘A song for ascents’; a song for the One Who is destined to make ascents for the righteous/generous in the future.” This is what the Kalir established (in the concluding poem of the morning service for the second day of Succoth, which was composed by Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Simon the son of Yochai in Chagigah, chapter “We may not expound,” see there): “And from beneath them thirty steps, one above the other until the Throne of Glory, flying and ascending with the pleasant speech of the song of ascents.”

**Chapter 122**

**1 I rejoiced when they said to me** I heard people saying, “When will that old man die, and his son Solomon reign and build the Temple, and we shall go up on the festival pilgrimages?” And I am happy.

**2 Our feet were standing** in battle everywhere because of the gates of Jerusalem, where they were engaged in Torah.

**3 The built-up Jerusalem** When my son Solomon builds the Temple within it [Jerusalem], it will be built with the Shechinah, the Temple, the Ark, and the altar.

**is like a city that was joined together within itself** Like Shiloh, for Scripture compared them to one another, as it is said (Deut. 12:9): “to the rest and to the inheritance.” The rest is Shiloh. The inheritance is Jerusalem (see Sifrei Re’eh 66). And our Rabbis said (Ta’an. 5a): There is a Jerusalem in heaven, and the Jerusalem on earth is destined to be like it.

**4 There ascended the tribes** For there in Shiloh the tribes ascended when they went up from Egypt, and the Tabernacle was established in its midst.

**the tribes of God** Heb. יָ־הּ , which is testimony to Israel, for the heathens were talking about them when they left Egypt, and they would say about them that they were the offspring of adulterous unions. If the Egyptians ruled over their own bodies, surely [they ruled] over their wives. Said the Holy One, blessed be He, “I attest that they are the sons of their fathers.” He bestowed His name upon them: the Reubenites (הראובני) , the Simeonites (השמעוני) (Num. 26). He added the letters of the name, one on this side and one on that side. The result is that this name יָ־הּ is testimony to Israel.

**5 For there were set thrones, etc.** For also in Jerusalem the Shechinah will rest, and thrones will sit there upon which to judge the nations, and the royal thrones of the house of David.

**6 Request the welfare of Jerusalem** and say to her, “May those who love you enjoy tranquility, and let there be peace in your wall.”

**8 For the sake of Israel,** my brethren and my companions

**I shall now speak** I, King David, [shall now speak] of peace in you.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalms 120:1-7; 121:1-8; & 122:1-9**

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

In the preceding composition, Psalm 119, David describes in vivid detail how Torah wisdom and mitzvah observance constitute the very basis of the world order, the alphabet of the universal design. The individual who follows this comprehensive program will surely be elevated and will experience blessing and success, as Solomon said: *The path of life for the wise leads upward*.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Now the Psalmist begins a series of fifteen psalms which describe the rising fortunes of the wise. Psalms 120 through 134 are collectively known as the Psalms of ascent. Midrash Shocher Tov comments that the title of each psalm is not, *A Song of Ascent* (singular), but *A Song of Ascents* (plural), because when the Children of Israel are worthy to ascend, they do not climb one step at a time; rather, they mount many rungs at once. As Scripture states: *And you shall be in constant ascent*.[[2]](#footnote-2) Conversely, if they fail to follow God’s instructions, the Children of Israel descend many levels at once, as Scripture warns, *And you shall fall very low*.[[3]](#footnote-3)

These fifteen psalms were sung in the Temple, for it was in that sacred location that the Jew was catapulted toward successively higher summits. In the Temple, Israel declared that man must not be spiritually stagnant; the world is composed of infinite degrees of goodness, and man’s mission is to scale the *spiritual heights*, which rise from earth heavenward.

The Talmud tells us that these fifteen Psalms were composed by King David:

***Sukkah 53a*** *FIFTEEN STEPS. R. Hisda said to a certain Rabbi who was arranging his Aggadas before him, ‘Have you heard in correspondence to what David composed his fifteen Songs of Ascent?’ — ‘Thus’, the other replied, ‘said R. Johanan: When David dug the Pits the Deep rose up and threatened to submerge the world, and David thereupon uttered the fifteen Songs of Ascent and caused its waves to subside’.*

The verbal tally between the Torah and the Psalm is *mishpat* - משפת,[[4]](#footnote-4) which is translated as *judgment*. We find this in:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:18-19*** *Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which HaShem thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.*

***Tehillim (Psalms) 122:5*** *For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.*

Curiously, the format of Psalm 120 is the structure of a menorah. The psalm contains an introduction (verse 1): *A cry to the Lord in time of trouble*; a first part (verses 2-4): *An appeal for deliverance from a deceitful tongue*; and a second part (verses 5-7): *A complaint against him who hates peace*.[[5]](#footnote-5)

This provides a second allusion to Chanukah where the miracle concerned the cruz of oil for the menorah, which was enough for one day, yet it burned for eight days.

Psalm 121 is the only one of the Psalms of Ascent which begins ‘shir lamaalot’ whereas the other fourteen Psalms begins with ‘shir hamaalot’. Psalm 121 is also a part of the Sephardic siddur for shacharit on Shabbat. According to the Midrash Shocher Tov,[[6]](#footnote-6) this Psalm alludes to Israel’s ultimate victory in the time of the Mashiach, as foretold in Obadiah 1:21: Those who save will ascend Mount Zion to judge Esau’s mountain, and the kingdom will be HaShem’s. Once Israel ascends these heights, they will never again descend to exile and bondage. When our Torah portion, in Debarim 17:14, speaks of the appointment of a King, no one doubts that this is ultimately speaking of Mashiach ben David.[[7]](#footnote-7) He will be our king during the time spoken about by our Psalm.

Ibn Ezra teaches that Psalm 122 was composed specifically for the Levites to sing in the Temple after it was constructed.[[8]](#footnote-8) This Psalm teaches us some deep insights into Jerusalem. This mystical city is unlike any other. Because it is situated in the center of Israel, form east to west and from north to south, Jerusalem is the ultimate place of *connection*. It shares this centeredness with the mid-brain, the heart, and the womb / prostrate, and just as those organs are essential to life, so also is Jerusalem essential to life.

I would like to examine the significance and meaning of the number fifteen (15). I have discovered that we always find fifteen in places of holiness and redemption, but I am getting ahead of myself. Let’s start at the beginning. Fifteen, in Hebrew, can be expressed with the letters yod (י) and a hey (ה): י = 10, ה = 5.

Normally we do not use the yod-hey - יה (Yah) to express the number fifteen (10 + 5) as it is one of the names of HaShem. Thus, the world was created with the concept of fifteen.

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 26:4*** *for within Yah- יה is HaShem, the rock of the universe.*

Longstanding tradition is to avoid the straightforward way of writing the number fifteen. Accordingly, fifteen is written as tet-vav - טו: Nine+six. HaShem’s Name, as it were, is hidden within the number fifteen. We could also retranslate the above pasuk as:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 26:4*** *With the name Yah HaShem created the world.*

The word *Yah*, spelled with a yud and a hey, equals in gematria fifteen. Thus, the world was created with the concept of fifteen. Yet, the word *Yah* only represents half of HaShem’s Name. HaShem’s kingship will only be fully revealed when Mashiach arrives. So, if HaShem created the world with fifteen, then it naturally follows that the world was given to us as a way of perceiving HaShem from this world. **Fifteen always represents the elevation from physical to spiritual.** **The number fifteen signifies a significant rise in kedushah**.[[9]](#footnote-9) From this we can understand the Kli Yakar that fifteen is often used to represent the bond between man and wife, as we shall soon see.

**The Mabul – The Flood**

***Bereshit 7:20,24*** *The water rose fifteen[[10]](#footnote-10) Amot (cubits) above the highest of mountains.... The water covered the earth for 150 days.*

The careful reader of the Torah’s account of the great flood is immediately struck by the recurrence of decimal factors of fifteen in the account. The waters of the flood rose fifteen Amot above the ground, and they remained there for 150 days. With regard to Noach’s Ark, we are told that it measured 300 Amot in length and 50 in width.[[11]](#footnote-11) That would make its floor space 15,000 square Amot. And since the 30 Amot height of the Ark was divided into three equal compartments, each compartment measured 150,000 cubic Amot in volume. Kli Yakar,[[12]](#footnote-12) noting this interesting recurrence, explains that the number fifteen indeed has in it a symbolism that is related to the events surrounding the great flood.

The waters of the Mabul rose above the highest mountain fifteen amot, to signify that mankind’s activities had been anything but holy, and, had pushed the Divine Presence, symbolized by the letters yod-hey, toward heaven and away from man.

The fifteen cubits represented HaShem’s presence above the earth the hundred fifty days represents the fifteen permeating all ten aspects of creation.

The Kli Yakar bases the measurements of Noach’s ark (three hundred x fifty x thirty Amot) on the premise that the main cause of the Flood was immoral practices, as the Pasuk describes at the end of Parshat Bereshit. Rashi too, hints at this a number of times at the beginning of the Parsha. Indeed, the reason that they were punished with boiling water, say Chazal, was because they sinned with boiling semen, Midda keneged Midda.

From there we see, says the Kli Yakar, that G-d’s Name ‘Yah’, who's gematria is fifteen, is defiled as a result of immoral behavior. That explains why, he says, the number fifteen occurs many times in the Parsha of the Flood. First of all, the water of the Flood rose fifteen Amot above the mountain tops; secondly, the water ‘gathered strengthened’ for a hundred and fifty days (ten times fifteen).

The measurements of the ark too, he points out, are closely connected with the number fifteen, inasmuch as its area (three hundred x fifty) was fifteen thousand square Amot (a thousand times fifteen). And as for the height (thirty Amot), seeing as each of the three floors was ten Amot tall, it transpires that each floor measured the sum total of a hundred and fifty thousand cubic Amot (ten thousand times fifteen)!

The ark was also instrumental in bringing the world and all its flesh back to the level of holiness and purity that had existed before the Generation of the Flood.

**In Marriage**

The Talmud[[13]](#footnote-13) states that a successful marriage depends upon the inclusion of HaShem in the relationship, that is, making the marriage Torah based. This is symbolized by the fact that the word “Ish” (man: aleph-yud-shin) and “Ishah” (woman: aleph-shin-heh) share common letters: aleph-shin – אש - which spells the word for “fire” -- but also have one letter different from each other: a “yod - י” in Ish and a “hey - ה” in Ishah, the letters of which we have been speaking. The message is quite precise: Remove HaShem from a marriage (i.e., symbolized by fifteen, the yod-hey), and you are left with “fire” (aleph-shin), unholy passion and a flame that consumes the marriage.

The name of yod-hay represents HaShem as He appears to us in this world, through the veil of nature. This is the *yod* of the man and the *hay* of the woman. Since all creatures eventually expire, the continued existence of the world is possible only through reproduction. The bond of man and woman in order to reproduce through marriage is symbolic of nature in general. It is through such a bond, and the natural processes that it represents, that HaShem’s Presence becomes known in this world. As the Gemara said, the Divine Presence of yod-hay rests upon a man and wife who are faithful to each other.

Fifteen categories of women exempt their rivals from yibum[[14]](#footnote-14)and chalitzah (the shoe-removal ceremony relieving a brother-in-law of his obligation to marry his widowed sister-in-law).

***Yevamoth 2a*** *FIFTEEN [CATEGORIES OF] WOMEN EXEMPT THEIR RIVALS AND THE RIVALS OF THEIR RIVALS AND SO ON, AD INFINITUM, FROM THE HALIZAH AND FROM THE LEVIRATE MARRIAGE; AND THESE ARE THEY: HIS DAUGHTER, THE DAUGHTER OF HIS DAUGHTER AND THE DAUGHTER OF HIS SON; THE DAUGHTER OF HIS WIFE, THE DAUGHTER OF HER SON AND THE DAUGHTER OF HER DAUGHTER; HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW, HIS MOTHER-IN-LAW’S MOTHER, AND HIS FATHER-IN-LAW’S MOTHER; HIS MATERNAL SISTER, HIS MOTHER’S SISTER, HIS WIFE’S SISTER AND HIS MATERNAL BROTHER’S WIFE;*

The Kli Yakar tells us that the number fifteen, and the Holy Name produced by yod-hey - יה, often is used to represent the bond between man and wife. For example, in the Temple a staircase separated between the Women’s Court and the Men’s Court (Court of the Israelites). This staircase consisted of fifteen steps, upon which the Levite musicians stood and played their musical instruments during the Succoth celebrations. According to some, the fifteen “Songs of ascent” (Shir HaMaalot) of Tehillim (Psalms. 120-134) were so called because they were sung on these steps.[[15]](#footnote-15) The fifteen Songs of Ascent were sung by the Levites while ascending the fifteen stairs in the Beit HaMikdash, the Temple. Thus we see the elevation of fifteen, from physical to spiritual, in the physical act of moving, and ascending, closer to HaShem in the Holy of Holies, and closer to HaShem through the music and the lyrics of the Psalms. This is one reason for the fifteen steps between the Women’s court and the court of Israel in the Beit HaMikdash.

**In Torah Shebaal Peh**

The Mishna in Pirke Avot 5:25 states, “a fifteen year old begins the study of Gemara”.

The Talmud[[16]](#footnote-16) gives us fifteen signs of what the world will be like immediately prior to the coming of the Mashiach. This pre-Messianic period is known as the Ikveta D’meshicah *-* the “footsteps of the Messiah”, the time when we believe the Mashiach is just around the corner and his footsteps can be heard. Here is the list of the signs that signal the Messiah’s imminent arrival, as quoted in the *Talmud*:

**Sotah 49b** *When the footsteps of the* Messiah *can be heard...*

*(1) chutzpah (insolence) will increase;*

*(2) inflation will soar;*

*(3) the vine will yield its fruit, but wine will be expensive;*

*(4) the dominant power in the* world *will promote the denial of G-d;*

*(5) no one will be able to reprove another [for everyone will be guilty of the same transgressions];*

*(6) the meeting place (of Torah scholars) will be used for immorality;*

*(7) the Galilee will be destroyed, and the Gablan will become desolate;*

*(8) the people who live on the border will go around begging from town to town and will not be pitied;*

*(9) the wisdom of the Torah scholars will rot, and those who fear* sin *will be despised;*

*(10) the truth will be hidden;*

*(11) young people will shame old men, and old men will stand up before youngsters, a son will degrade his father, and a daughter will rebel against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;*

*(12) a man’s enemies will be the members of his* household*;*

*(13) the face of the generation will be like the face of a dog;*

*(14) a son will not be ashamed before his* father*;*

*(15) On whom can we rely? On our Father in* heaven*.”*

**In Our Blessings**

Fifteen words in the *bircat kohanim*, the priestly blessings. *bircat kohanim* contain three lines consisting of three, five and seven words, totaling fifteen words and fifteen is the gematria[[17]](#footnote-17) equivalent for the Divine Presence (יה). Rabbenu Bachya stated that this sequencing reminds us of the three Patriarchs, the five books of the Torah and the seven days of the week (or seven dimensions of heaven).

Fifteen is the number of words in the blessing we say over the Yom Tov candles. When we light these candles we ascend from the days of work to the day of rest (of the festival). We ascend from the physical world to the spiritual world.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלוהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב.‏

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha’olam, asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu l’hadlik ner shel Yom Tov.[[18]](#footnote-18)

We also begin our ascent every morning when we pray. One of the very first parts of shacharit[[19]](#footnote-19) prayers are the fifteen Birchot HaShachar (morning blessings). These are the first fifteen of the 100 blessings we will say during the day. With these blessing we begin to transcend this world and enter HaShem’s world. The goal of the morning prayers is to make ourselves one with HaShem.

We recite fifteen blessings every morning:

Blessed... who has given the rooster the ability to discern between light and darkness.

Blessed... for not making me a gentile.

Blessed... for not making me a slave.

Blessed... for not making me a woman, or making me according to His will.

Blessed... who gives sight to the blind.

Blessed... who dresses the naked.

Blessed... who frees the incarcerated.

Blessed... who raises up those who are stooped.

Blessed... who sets the land upon the waters.

Blessed... who prepares the footsteps of man.

Blessed... who has provided me with my needs.

Blessed... who girds Israel with heroism.

Blessed... who crowns Israel with glory.

Blessed... who grants strength to the tired.

And the last blessing...

Blessed... who withdraws sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eye lids... Blessed... who grants benevolence to His Nation Yisrael...May it be Your will...

When analyzing the blessings, one could get the impression that although they relate to very basic issues, which indeed require the offering of thanks to the Almighty, there is no common thread joining them nor a discernible intellectual framework which guided the Rabbis who instituted the blessings. In addition to the apparent disconnected content of the blessings, there is another difficulty. At the end of every blessing recited by the chazzan, we must reply with “Amen.” The only exception is with the last blessing, “Blessed... who withdraws sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eye lids,” where the “Amen” is delayed until the end of an additional lengthy blessing which closes with, “Blessed... who grants benevolence to His Nation Yisrael.” Why?

I suggest that there is, indeed, a definite framework within which the Hakhamim composed these fifteen blessings. It is the episode of the exodus from Egypt. With this in mind, the blessings and their order become rational and mandatory:

Paro came to Moshe at midnight of the fifteenth of Nisan[[20]](#footnote-20) to order him and the Jewish people to immediately leave Egypt. Moshe refused, saying that that we will not leave like “thieves in the night” but in daylight, as a proud people, with heads high, for all to see.

From midnight on, the Jewish nation waited impatiently for the first rays of dawn, which would signal daylight. When the roosters crowed, the rabbis knew that day had come; and they enacted the first blessing, “Blessed... who has given the rooster the ability to discern between light and darkness.” This was not to glorify the natural ability of roosters to discern the beginning of morning, but to indelibly set in our national consciousness the glory of that night.

When looking back at what they left, the Jews saw the condition of the Egyptian people where not a home was without a death. This gave rise to the second bracha, “Blessed... for not making me a gentile.” At the first taste of freedom they said, “Blessed... for not making me a slave”.

The first mitzva given by HaShem to the nation to sacrifice a lamb or goat and put its blood on the doorposts was directed at the males of the nation. So they recited, “Blessed... for not making me a woman,” in order to be obligated to do this first mitzva.

The flight out of Egypt came on the wake of the plague of darkness, when the Egyptians were blinded but the Jews were able to see. So they praised HaShem with the blessing, “Blessed... who gives sight to the blind”.

HaShem commanded Moshe to instruct the people to “borrow” vessels and clothing from their Egyptian neighbors. This was to enable the Jews to shed their tattered clothing of slavery and don the clothing of free men. So they recited the next two blessings, “Blessed... who dresses the naked, Blessed... who frees the incarcerated”.

Since a slave is prohibited from standing erect, the people now recited, “Blessed... who raises up those who are stooped”.

Upon seeing the waters of Yam Suf turned into dry land they said, “Blessed... who sets the land upon the waters”.

When the Jewish nation saw the might army of Paro running berserk into the death trap of the split waters, they praised HaShem with, “Blessed... who prepares the footsteps of man”.

While walking in the twelve lanes of the parted waters (one for each tribe) that were filled with drinking water, fruit and other luxuries, the Jews said, “Blessed... who has provided me with my needs”.

Upon being victorious in their battle against Amalek in Rephidim, the people said, “Blessed... who girds Israel with heroism”.

When receiving the Torah, the people were blessed with “atarim”, crowns of glory and they recited, “Blessed... who crowns Israel with glory”.

And when the episode of the Exodus and all that transpired at that time ended, the nation took stock of what had happened and praised HaShem with the words, “Blessed... who grants strength to the tired”.

And the last blessing -

“Blessed... who withdraws sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids,” after which there is no reply of “Amen”.

We were freed by HaShem from Egyptian slavery and were given the Torah at Mount Sinai, followed by over 3000 years of Jewish history; but despite it all, HaShem has yet to fully “withdraw sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids.” We as a nation have not yet awoken to the true life which HaShem had planned for His “chosen people.”

Yehuda Ha’Levi writes in his classic “The Kuzari” that, in the future, Am Yisrael will be granted the gift of prophecy. Cognizance of HaShem, accompanied by the unfolding of the profoundest secrets of the worlds within the text of the Torah, is possible only through prophecy. The human intellect was not made with the capacity to disclose these matters nor to comprehend them even when explained. For this we need prophecy. When that time comes, we will all realize that life, with all its understanding and wisdom until that moment, was only a dream, a virtual reality.

This is what King David meant when he wrote in Tehillim 126:

שיר המעלות בשוב ה’ את שיבת ציון היינו כחלמים:

“*A song of Ascent*

*When HaShem will return the captives of Zion, we will realize that we were dreaming*”

Therefore the time has not yet arrived to answer “Amen” after “Blessed... who withdraws sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids”. However, when the time does arrive, prophecy will be granted only to us who live in Eretz Yisrael (as stated in many sources that prophecy was granted only here).

**In The Festivals**

The moon, an oft used simile for the *whole of Israel*, grows daily until it reaches it’s apex on the fifteenth day of the month. We have several festivals that occur during this climatic period.

Pesach is on the fifteenth day of Nisan.

Succoth is on the fifteenth day of Tishri.

Tu B’Shebat (Rosh HaShana for fruit trees) is on the fifteenth day of Shevat.

Tu B’Av is on the fifteenth day of Av

Shushan Purim is the fifteenth of the month of Adar (or Adar bet).

The Maharal writes that these festivals are to teach us that when *whole of Israel* were at their zenith, they had acquired fifteen levels of holiness (as enumerated in Dayenu), the ultimate sphere of holiness as represented in HaShem’s name יה.

There are two numbers that play a significant role by the Pesach Seder, which occurs on the fifteenth of Nisan. One number is four, and the other is fifteen.

The word Abib, spring, equals fifteen in gematria, and Pesach is referred to as Chag HaAbib, the spring festival.

We declare our praise to HaShem through the number fifteen, because HaShem redeemed us on the fifteenth of the month of Nisan. That said, there are fifteen parts of the Pesach seder:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1) Kadesh | 2) Ur-chatz | 3) Karpas | 4) Ya-chatz | 5) Magid | 6) Ra-chatza | 7) Motzi | 8) Matza |
| 9) Maror | 10) Korech | 11) Shulchan Orech | 12) Tzafun | 13) Barech | 14) Hallel | 15) Nirtzah |  |

As we progress through these fifteen steps of the Haggada, we ascend from this world to the next world even as the first half of the seder, before dinner, speaks to the past redemption and the second half speaks to the future redemption.

15 steps in the seder song *Dayenu*: Why are there fifteen stanzas of Dayenu? The fifteen lines correspond to HaShem’s name: Yod and hey - ה + י. Yod represents the next world, and hey represents this world. Fifteen always represents the elevation from physical to spiritual. The Maharal further explains that the number 15 represents man’s connection to HaShem. Thus we see that when man (physical) is elevated to HaShem (spiritual), then we will surely see the number 15.

**Five Stanzas of Leaving Slavery**

1) If He had brought us out of Egypt.

2) If He had executed justice upon the Egyptians.

3) If He had executed justice upon their gods.

4) If He had slain their first born.

5) If He had given to us their wealth.

**Five Stanzas of Miracles**

6) If He had split the sea for us.

7) If He had led us through on dry land.

8) If He had drowned our oppressors.

9) If He had provided for our needs in the wilderness for forty years.

10) If He had fed us manna.

**Five Stanzas of Being with HaShem**

11) If He had given us Shabbat.

12) If He had led us to Mount Sinai.

13) If He had given us the Torah.

14) If He had brought us into the Land of Israel.

15) He built the Temple for us.

Note that *Dayenu* begins with the words: *kamah* *maalot* *tovot* - how many good favors has HaShem bestowed upon us. The song then lists fifteen generous gifts that HaShem has given us. But the word *maalot* may not only mean “good favor,” but may also mean *ascent*, referring to our ascension from the physical to the spiritual. Notice that the praise of Dayenu[[21]](#footnote-21) takes us from abject slavery to the very throne of HaShem in the Promised Land. We progressed from the physical to the spiritual. Thus we see that fifteen always represents the elevation from physical to spiritual.

The total number of measures of flour brought with the Musaf offerings on Rosh Chodesh, each day of Pesach, and Shavuot is also fifteen - 3 for each of the 2 bulls + 2 for the ram and 1 for each of the 7 lambs – but not the three Tishri festivals. Pesach is a time where HaShem elevates us even when we are unworthy; therefore it is not surprising that this would be reflected specifically in the Musaf offerings.

On the festivals, we have a requirement is to read a minimum of fifteen verses from the Prophets since fifteen is the minimum number of verses that must be read from the Torah for the five persons honored with aliyot.

**Aslamatah: Isaiah 56:1-9 + 57:19‎**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. ¶ So says the Lord, "**Keep justice and practice righteousness**, for My salvation is near to come, and My benevolence to be revealed." | 1. Thus says the LORD: **"Keep judgment and do righteousness/generosity**, for My salvation is near to come, and My virtue to be revealed. |
| 2. Fortunate is the man who will do this and the person who will hold fast to it, he who keeps the Sabbath from profaning it and guards his hand from doing any evil. | 2. Blessed is the man who will do this, and a son of man who will hold it fast, who will keep the Sabbath from profaning it, and will keep his hands from doing any evil. " |
| 3. Now let not the foreigner who joined the Lord, say, "The Lord will surely separate me from His people," and let not the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree."**{P}** | 3. Let not a son of Gentiles who has been added to the people of the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from His people"; and let not the eunuch say, "Behold, I am like a dry tree." |
| 4. ¶ For so says the Lord to the eunuchs who will keep My Sabbaths and will choose what I desire and hold fast to My covenant, | 4. For thus says the LORD: "To the eunuchs who keep the days of the Sabbaths that are mine, who are pleased with the things I wish and hold fast to My covenants, |
| 5. "I will give them in My house and in My walls a place and a name, better than sons and daughters; an everlasting name I will give him, which will not be discontinued.**{S}** | 5. I will give them in My sanctuary and within the land of My Shekhinah’s house a place and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not cease. |
| 6. And the foreigners who join with the Lord to serve Him and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, everyone who observes the Sabbath from profaning it and who holds fast to My covenant. | 6. And the sons of the Gentiles who have been added to the people of the LORD, to minister to Him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be His servants, everyone who will keep the Sabbath from profaning it, and hold fast to My covenants- |
| 7. I will bring them to My holy mount, and I will cause them to rejoice in My house of prayer, their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon My altar, for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. | 7. these I will bring to the holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their holy sacrifices will even go up for [My] pleasure on My altar; for My sanctuary will be a house of prayer for all the peoples. |
| 8. So says the Lord God, Who gathers in the dispersed of Israel, I will yet gather others to him, together with his gathered ones. | 8. Thus says the LORD God who is about to gather the outcasts of Israel, I will yet bring near their exiles, to gather them." |
| 9. All the beasts of the field, come to devour all the beasts in the forest.**{P}** | 9. All the kings of the peoples who were gathered to distress you, Jerusalem, will be cast in your midst; they will be food for the beasts of the field-every beast of the forest will eat to satiety from them. |
| 10. ¶ His lookouts are all blind, they do not know, dumb dogs who cannot bark; they lie slumbering, loving to slumber. | 10. All their watchmen are blind, they are all without any knowledge; dumb dogs, they cannot bark; slumbering, laying down, lov­ing to sleep. |
| 11. And the dogs are of greedy disposition, they know not satiety; and they are shepherds who know not to understand; they all turned to their way, each one to his gain, every last one. | 11. The dogs have a strong appetite; they do not know satiety. And they who do evil do not know [how] to understand; they have all gone into exile, each his own way, each to plunder the mammon of Israel. |
| 12. "Come, I will take wine, and let us guzzle old wine, and tomorrow shall be like this, [but] greater [and] much more." | 12. They say, "Come, and let us guzzle wine, let us be drunk with old wine; and our feast of tomorrow will be better than this days, very great." |
|  |  |
| **1. The righteous man has perished, but no one takes it to heart, and men of kindness are taken away, with no one understanding that because of the evil the righteous man has been taken away.** | **1. The righteous/generous die, and no one lays My fear to heart; and men of recompenses of mercy are gathered, while they do not understand. For from before the evil which is about to come the righteous/generous are gathered,** |
| 2. He shall come in peace; they shall rest in their resting- place, whoever walks in his uprightness.**{S}** | 2. they will enter into peace; they will rest in the place of their bedroom who perform His Law. |
| 3. And you, draw near hither, children of sorcery; children who commit adultery, and played the whore. | 3. But you, draw near hither, people of the generation whose deeds are evil, whose plant was from a holy plant, and they are adulterers and harlots. |
| 4. On whom will you [rely to] enjoy yourselves; against whom do you open your mouth wide; against whom do you stick out your tongue? Are you not children of transgression, seed of falsehood? | 4. Of whom are you making sport? And before whom will you open your mouth and continue speaking great things? Are you not children of a rebel, the offspring of deceit, |
| 5. You who inflame yourselves among the terebinths, under every green tree, who slaughter the children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks. | 5. You who serve idols under every green tree and sacrifice children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks? |
| 6. Of the smooth [stones] of the valley is your portion; they, they are your lot; to them too you have poured out libations, offered up sacrifices; in the face of these shall I relent? | 6. Among the smooth rock of the valley is your portion; even there they are your lot; to them you have poured out drink offerings, you have brought offerings. Will My Memra repent for these things? |
| 7. On a high and lofty mountain you placed your couch; there too you went to slaughter sacrifices. | 7. Upon a high and lofty mountain you have set the place of your camping, and there you went up to offer sacrifice. |
| 8. And behind the door and the doorpost you have directed your thoughts, for while with Me, you uncovered [us] and went up, you widened your couch and made for yourself [a covenant] with them; you loved their couch, you chose a place. | 8. Behind the door and the doorpost you have set the symbol of your idols; you resembled a woman who was beloved by her husband and strayed after strangers, you have made wide the place of your camping; and you have made a covenant for yourself with them, you have loved the place of their bedroom, you have chosen a place. |
| 9. And you brought a gift to the king with oil, and you increased your perfumes; and you sent your ambassadors far off, and you humbled them to the grave. | 9. When you performed the Law for yourself, you prospered in the kingdom, and when you multiplied for yourself deeds, your armies were many; you sent your messengers far off, and humbled the strong ones of the peoples to Sheol. |
| 10. With the length of your way you became wearied; you did not say, "Despair." The power of your hand you found; therefore, you were not stricken ill. | 10. In the length of your ways you promised to repent; you increased many possessions, and so you did not hope to repent. |
| 11. And whom did you dread and fear, that you failed, and you did not remember Me; you did not lay [Me] to your heart. Indeed, I am silent and from everlasting, but you do not fear Me. | 11. Whom did you dread and before whom [do you] fear, so that you continued to speak lies, and did not remember My service, did not lay My fear upon your heart? Have I not given you respite for a long time, that if you repented - and before Me you did not repent? |
| 12. **I tell your righteousness and your deeds,** and they shall not avail you. | 12. **I have told you that good deeds are virtues for you,** but you increased for yourself evil deeds which will not profit you. |
| 13. When you cry out, let your collections save you; wind shall carry all of them off, a breath shall take them, **but he who trusts in Me shall inherit the land and shall inherit My holy mount.** | 13. Cry out, if now the deeds of your deceit with which you were laboring from your childhood will deliver you! The wind will carry them all off, they will be for nothing. **But he who trusts in My Memra will possess the land, and will inherit My holy mountain.** |
| 14. And he shall say, **"Pave, pave, clear the way; remove the obstacles from the way of My people."{S}** | 14. And he will say, **"Teach, and exhort, turn the heart of the people to a correct way, remove the obstruction of the wicked from the way of the congregation of my people."** |
| 15. For so said the High and Exalted One, Who dwells to eternity, and His name is Holy, "With the lofty and the holy ones I dwell, and with the crushed and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the crushed. | 15. For thus says the high and lofty One who dwells in the heavens, whose name is Holy; in the height He dwells, and his Shekhinah is holy. He promises to deliver the broken in heart and the humble of spirit, to establish the spirit of the humble, and to help the heart of the broken. |
| 16. For I will not contend forever, neither will I be wroth to eternity, when a spirit from before Me humbles itself, and souls [which] I have made. | 16. For I will not so avenge forever, nor will My anger always be (so); for I am about to restore the spirits of the dead, and the breathing beings I have made. |
| 17. For the iniquity of his thievery I became wroth, and I smote him, **I hid Myself and became wroth, for he went rebelliously in the way of his heart.** | 17. Because of the sins of their mammon, which they robbed, My anger was upon them, I smote them, removed my Shekhinah from them and cast them out; **I scattered their exiles because they went astray after the fantasy of their heart.** |
| 18. I saw his ways and I will heal him, and I will lead him and requite with consolations him and his mourners. | 18. The way of their repentance is disclosed before Me, and I will forgive them; I will have compassion on them and requite them with consolations, and those who mourn them. |
| 19. **[I] create the speech of the lips; peace, peace to the far and to the near," says the Lord, "and I will heal him."** | 19. **The one who creates speech of lips in the mouth of every man says, Peace will be done for the righteous/generous, who have kept My Law from the beginning, and peace will be done for the penitent, who have repented to My Law recently, says the LORD; and I will forgive them.** |
| 20. **But the wicked are like the turbulent sea, for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mud and dirt.** | 20. **But the wicked are like the tossing sea which seeks to rest and it cannot, and its waters disturb mire and dirt.** |
| 21. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."**{P}** | 21. There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked." |
|  |  |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Isaiah 56:1-9 + 57:19**

**Chapter 56**

**2 who will do this** who observes the Sabbath, etc.

**3 “The Lord will surely separate me from His people,”** Why should I become converted? Will not the Holy One, blessed be He, separate me from His people when He pays their reward.

**Let not the eunuch say** Why should I better my ways and my deeds? I am like a withered tree, for lack of remembrance.

**4 and hold fast** Heb. וּמַחֲזִיקִים , and hold fast.

**7 for all peoples** Not only for Israel, but also for the proselytes.

**8 I will yet gather of the heathens** ([Mss. and K’li Paz:] of the nations) who will convert and join them.

**(together with his gathered ones** In addition to the gathered ones of Israel.)

**9 All the beasts of the field** All the proselytes of the heathens ([Mss. and K’li Paz:] All the nations) come and draw near to Me, and you shall devour all the beasts in the forest, the mighty of the heathens ([Mss. and K’li Paz:] the mighty of the nations) who hardened their heart and refrained from converting.

**the beasts of the field** [The beast of the field is not as strong as the beast of the forest.] The beast of the field is weaker and of weaker strength than the beast of the forest. Since he stated, “I will yet gather others to him,” he stated this verse.

**10 His lookouts are all blind** Since he said, “Seek the Lord,” and the entire section, and they do not heed, he returns and says, Behold the prophets cry out to them ([Mss.:] to you) and announce concerning repentance, so that it will be good for them. Yet their leaders are all like blind men, and they do not see the results, like a lookout appointed to see the approaching army, to warn the people, but he is blind, unable to see whether the army is coming, and dumb, unable to warn the people, like a dog that was appointed to guard the house, but he is dumb, unable to bark. Similarly, the leaders of Israel do not warn them to repent to do good.

**they lie slumbering** Heb. הֽזִים . Dunash (Teshuvoth Dunash p. 24) explained: lying sound asleep, and Jonathan rendered: lying slumbering, and there is no comparable word in Scripture.

**11 And the dogs are of greedy** **disposition** wanting to fill their stomachs [engrote talent in O.F.], sick with hunger.

**and they are shepherds** Just as the dogs know no satiety, neither do the shepherds know to understand what will occur at the end of days. they all turned to the way of their benefit, each one to his gain, to rob the rest of the people over whom they are appointed.

**every last one** Heb. מִקָּצֵהוּ , [lit. from its end.] Comp. (Gen. 19:4) “all the people from the end (מִקָּצֶה) ,” from one end of their number until its other end, they all behave in this manner.

**12 Come, I will take wine** So would they say to one another.

**and tomorrow** shall be like this with feasting and drinking.

**Chapter 57**

**1 The righteous**/generous man such as Josiah.

**but no one takes it to heart** why he departed.

**with no one understanding** what the Holy One, blessed be He, saw to take him away.

**that because of the evil** destined to befall the generation, the righteous man perished.

**2 He shall come in peace** for so says the Holy One, blessed be He, Let this righteous man come to his forefathers in peace, and let him not see the evil.

**they shall rest in their resting place** when the evil occurs, he who was walking נְכֽחוֹ , in his uprightness. Comp. (Amos 3:10) “To act rightly (נְכֽחָה) .”

**3 And you, draw near hither** The survivors after the righteous have departed, and receive your sentences.

**children of sorcery** Heb. עֽנְנָה בְּנֵי , children of sorcery.

**children who commit adultery** That the male commits adultery.

**and played the whore** the female.

**4 On whom will you [rely to] enjoy yourselves** Since you have turned away from following Me, on whom will you rely to enjoy yourselves with good. Had you merited, you would then enjoy yourselves with the Lord, but now, on whom will you rely to enjoy yourselves?

**against whom do you open your mouth** wide when you scorned and mocked His prophets.

**5 You who inflame yourselves among the terebinths** Who stimulate themselves with semen under the אֵלִים , they are the terebinth and the oak.

**who slaughter the children** for a sacrifice to the idols.

**clefts** Heb. סְעִפֵי , the clefts of the rocks. Comp. (Jud. 15:11) “to the cleft (סְעִיף) of the rock.”

**6 Of the smooth [stones] of the valley** [Lit. of the smooth ones of the valley, i.e.,] among the smooth stones that are in the valley.

**your portion** With them they will stone you.

**they, they are your lot** to be saddened with them. Why? For to them too you have poured out libations.

**in the face of these** shall I relent from doing harm to you?

**7 you placed your couch** The couch of your adultery to idolatry on the high mountains.

**8 And behind the door and the doorpost** you have directed your thoughts Since he compares her to an adulterous woman, for whom her paramours look and wait before the door of her house, while she, lying beside her husband, directs her heart and her thoughts to the door and the doorpost, how she will open the door and come out to them.

**for while with Me, you uncovered [us] and went up** You were lying beside Me, and you removed the cover with which we were covered together, and you went up from beside Me.

**you widened your couch** to accommodate many adulterers.

**and made for yourself a covenant** with them.

**you loved their couch** when you chose for yourself יָד , a place, to demonstrate to them your love.

**a place** Heb. יָד , aise or ajjse in O.F., a side. Comp. (II Sam. 14:30) “See Joab’s field is near mine (עַל יָדִי) .”

**9 And you brought a gift to the king with oil** Heb. וַתָּשֻׁרִי . Originally, I aggrandized you, and you would greet your king with all sorts of delights. וַתָּשֻׁרִי is an expression of an audience. Comp. (Num. 24:17) “I see him (אֲשׁוּרֶנוּ) but he is not near.” [Also] (I Sam. 9:7), “And there is no present (תְּשׁוּרָה) to bring,” [i.e.,] a gift for an audience.

**and you sent your ambassadors** Your messenger afar to collect tribute from the heathen kings. ([Manuscripts and K’li Paz read:] the kings of the nations.)

**and you humbled the laws of the heathens** (of the nations [Mss. and K’li Paz]) to the grave. Jonathan rendered it in this manner.

**10 With the length of your way you became wearied** You engaged in your necessities, in the filling of your lust, to increase your wealth.

**you did not say,** “Despair.” I will despair of these and I will no longer care to engage in them, but I will pay my attention to Torah and precepts.

**The power of your hand you found** Heb. חַיַּת , the necessity of your hand you have found; you have succeeded in your deeds.

**therefore, you were not stricken ill** Your heart was not stricken ill to worry about My service, to engage in the Torah. חַיַּת is an Arabic word, meaning necessity.

**11 And whom did you dread** Of whom were you afraid?

**that you failed** Heb. תְּכַזֵּבִי , that you ceased to worship Me and you betrayed Me. Comp. (infra 58:11) “Whose water shall not fail (יְכַזְּבוּ) .” Comp. also (Psalms 116:11) “Every man is a traitor (כּֽזֵב) .” Falajjnc in O.F., to fail. Likewise, every expression of כָּזָב means one upon whom people rely, and he fails and betrays them. Indeed, I am silent I kept silent in the face of many transgressions that you transgressed against Me.

**12 I tell your righteousness** Constantly, I tell you things to do, so that you will be righteous/generous.

**and your deeds that you do** against My will shall not avail you at the time of your distress.

**13 When you cry out, let your collections save you** Let the collection of your idols and your graven images [and those who deny the Torah] that you collected, rise and save you when you cry out from your distress. Indeed, wind will carry all of them off, and they will not rise, neither will they be able to save.

**14 And he shall say, “Pave, pave”** **So will the prophet say in My name to My people, “Pave, pave a paved highway, clear away the evil inclination from your ways.”**

**remove the obstacle** **Remove the stones upon which your feet stumble; they are wicked thoughts.**

**15 “With the lofty and the holy ones”** I dwell, and thence I am with the crushed and the humble in spirit, upon whom I lower My Presence.

**humble...crushed** Suffering from poverty and illnesses.

**16 For I will not contend forever** If I bring afflictions upon a person, My contention with him is not for a long time, neither is My anger forever.

**when a spirit from before Me humbles itself** Heb. יַעֲטוֹף . When the spirit of man, which is from before Me, humbles itself, confesses and humbles itself because of its betrayal. Comp. (Lam. 2:19) “humbled (הָעֲטוּפִים) with hunger,” “when the small child and the suckling are humbled (בֵּעָטֵף) .” And the souls which I made.

**when a spirit from before Me** Heb. כִּי . This instance of the word כִּי is used as an expression of “when.” Comp. (infra 58:7) “When you see (כִּי תִרְאֶה) ”; (Deut. 26:1) “When you come (כִּי תָבוֹא) .” That is to say, when his spirit is humbled, and he is humbled, I terminate My quarrel and My anger from upon him.

**17 For the iniquity of his thievery** Heb. בִּצְעוֹ , his thievery.

**I became wroth** at the beginning and I smote him, always hiding My face from his distress and I was wroth for he went rebelliously in the way of his heart. Transpose the verse and explain it thus: For the iniquity of his thievery and the fact that he went rebelliously in the way of his heart, I became wroth and smote him.

**18 I saw his ways** when he humbled himself before Me, when troubles befell him.

**and I will heal him,** **and I will lead him** Heb. וְאַנְחֵהוּ . I will lead him in the way of healing. Alternatively, וְאַנְחֵהוּ is an expression of rest and tranquility.

**him and his mourners** to those who are troubled over him.

**19 [I] create the speech of the lips** I create for him a new manner of speech. In contrast to the trouble that befell him, and everyone was degrading him, they will call, “Peace, peace.”

**to the far and to the near** Both are equal; he who aged and was accustomed to My Torah and My worship from his youth, and he who drew near now, just recently to repent of his evil way. Said the Lord, “I will heal him of his malady and of his sins.”

**20 But the wicked** who do not give a thought to repent.

**like the turbulent sea** This sea its waves raise themselves high and strive to go out of the boundary of sand that I made as a boundary for the sea, and when it reaches there, against its will it breaks. The next wave sees all this, yet does not turn back. Similarly, the wicked man sees his friend being punished for his wickedness; yet he does not turn back. Also, just as the sea has its mud and its offensive matter on its mouth, [i.e., on its surface,] so do the wicked have their offensive matter in their mouth; e.g., Pharaoh said, (Exodus 5:2) “Who is the Lord?” Sennacherib said (supra 36:20), “Who are they among all the Gods of the lands...?” Nebuchadnezzar said, (supra 14:14) “I will liken myself to the Most High.”

**like the turbulent sea** Like the sea, which is turbulent, that casts up all day mud and dirt.

**21 There is no peace** In contrast to what he said to the righteous and the repentant, “Peace, peace to the far, etc.,” he returned and said, “There is no peace for the wicked.”

**In The School of the Prophets**

**Isaiah 56:1-9 + 57:19‎**

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

As usual, our Prophetic Lesson for this Sabbath in the Hebrew text extends along three Petuchot (Closed Paragraphs) – the first starting in Isaiah 56:1 and concluding at Isaiah 56:3, the second Petucha (Closed Paragraph) starts in Isaiah 56:4 until verse 9 (with a section brake at 56:5); and the third Petucha (Closed Paragraph) starts in Isaiah 56:10 and concluding in 57:21 (with section breaks at 57:1, and 57:13). However, our Sages full of compassion for the congregation stipulated that for public reading from the Teba (pulpit) we should only read from the Prophets ten verses (Isaiah 56:1-9 and 57:19). This of course, does not limit the preacher to refer or use in the course of his homily (sermon) from Isaiah 56:1 through to 57:19. In fact some of the most interesting parts of this Ashlamatah (Lesson from the Prophets) are not read in public this week.

The verbal tally between our Torah Seder and Ashlamatah (Lesson from the Prophets) is as follows:

**Deuteronomy 16:18 -**

**שֹׁפְטִים וְשֹׁטְרִים, תִּתֶּן-לְךָ בְּכָל-שְׁעָרֶיךָ, אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ, לִשְׁבָטֶיךָ; וְשָׁפְטוּ אֶת-הָעָם, מִשְׁפַּט-צֶדֶק.**

Judges and officers will you make for yourself in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, tribe by tribe; and they will judge the people with **righteous/generous** **judgment.**

**Isaiah 56:1 -**

**כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה, שִׁמְרוּ מִשְׁפָּט וַעֲשׂוּ צְדָקָה:  כִּי-קְרוֹבָה יְשׁוּעָתִי לָבוֹא, וְצִדְקָתִי לְהִגָּלוֹת.**

Thus says the LORD: Keep **justice,** and do **righteousness/generosity;** for My salvation is near to come, and My favour to be revealed.

Also the terms **שֹׁפְטִים – Shof’tim (judges),** and **וְשָׁפְטוּ – V’Shaf’tu (and they will judge)** in the Torah Seder are related to the Hebrew term **מִשְׁפָּט – Mishpat (justice)** in our Ashlamatah.

Psalm 122:3-5 continues this line of thought when it speaks about in v.5 - **כִסְאוֹת לְמִשְׁפָּט** – **Kis’ot L’Mishpat (Thrones of Justice).**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RASHI** | **TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN** |
| 3. **The built-up Jerusalem is like a city that was joined together within itself.** | 3. **Jerusalem that is built in the firmament is like a city that has been joined together on earth.** |
| 4. There ascended the tribes, the tribes of God, testimony to Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord. | 4. Unto which the tribes have gone up, the tribes of the LORD, He who testifies to Israel that His presence abides among them when they go to give thanks to the name of the LORD. |
| 5. For there were set **thrones for judgment,** thrones for the house of David. | 5. For there thrones have been placed; in Jerusalem thrones are in the sanctuary for the kings of the house of David. |

This Sabbath in Isaiah 57:14 it is written:

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM** |
| --- | --- |
| 14. And he shall say, **"Pave, pave, clear the way; remove the obstacles from the way of My people."{S}** | 14. And he will say, **"Teach, and exhort, turn the heart of the people to a correct way, remove the obstruction of the wicked from the way of the congregation of my people."** |

The reading of the Targum to Isiah 57:14, not only describes the role of the Prophet as Rashi states but equally important it also describes the role of a Judge and Officer described in our Torah Seder! The English term best befitting these roles and attributes would be an “enabler” or “facilitator.” Thus, the role of a judge or a prophet is to “facilitate” and/or “enable” to follow a correct walk/way. But this also brings a tremendous responsibility to those judged or guided, as our Torah Seder in Deut. 17:10-13 states:

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN** |
| --- | --- |
| 10. **And you shall do according to the word they tell you,** from the place the Lord will choose, and you shall observe to do according to all they instruct you. | 10. **Then will you do according to the word of the custom of the Law that they will show you** at the place the LORD will choose, and observe to do whatsoever they teach you. |
| 11. **According to the law they instruct you and according to the judgment they say to you, you shall do; you shall not divert from the word they tell you, either right or left.** | 11. **According to the word of the Law that they will teach you, and the manner of judgment they pronounce, you will do. You will not turn aside from the sentence they will show you, to the right or to the left.** |
| 12. **And the man who acts intentionally, not obeying the kohen who stands there to serve the Lord, your God, or to the judge that man shall die, and you shall abolish evil from Israel.** | 12. **And the man who will act with presumption, and not obey the judge or the priest who stands there to minister before the LORD your God, that man will be put to death; so will you put down the doer of evil from Israel,** |
| 13. **And all the people shall listen and fear, and they shall no longer act wantonly.** | 13. **and all the people will hear, and be afraid, and not do wickedly again.** |

Similarly, this week in our Nazarean Talmud Hakham Shaul admonishes:

**Letlove be without hypocrisy** (genuine)**. You will hate what is evil by clinging[[22]](#footnote-22) to what** (those who are) **is good.[[23]](#footnote-23)**

A Hakham/Torah Judge who errs in judgment is required of G-d to pay an extremely high price, but equally a person who disobeys the counsel of a Hakham/Torah Judge is said to be acting “presumptuously” and therefore, merits the death penalty and nowadays this death penalty is executed at the hands of G-d, most blessed be He! The High Priest who erred grossly in the judgment of His Majesty King Messiah Yeshua, and Pilate who again committed a great injustice in the judgment of the Master, both in the end died from horrific deaths, and further the Kohanim lost completely and forever their priesthood, and Israel their physical Temple as it is said in Isaiah 56:10-11:

‎10¶ His lookouts are all blind, they do not know, ‎dumb dogs who cannot bark; they lie slumbering, ‎loving to slumber.‎ ‎11And the **dogs are of greedy disposition**, they ‎know not satiety; **and they are shepherds who know ‎not to understand;** they all turned to their way, each ‎one to his gain, every last one.‎

And on this, Rashi comments:

**And the dogs are of greedy** **disposition** wanting to fill their stomachs [engrote talent in O.F.], sick with hunger.

**and they are shepherds** Just as the dogs know no satiety, neither do the shepherds know to understand what will occur at the end of days. they all turned to the way of their benefit, each one to his gain, to rob the rest of the people over whom they are appointed.

This Sabbath we also read in the P’shat of Mark:

**And they put purple** (a robe) **on him, and after weaving a crown of thorns, they placed it on his** head. **And they began saluting him** saying, **"Hail, king of the Jews!"**

A **purple** robe. **Purple** in Israel is the colour for royalty. Therefore kings dress in a robe that is purple. Even to this day for example, some chief Rabbis wear a black robe with purple. In the following picture we can see the chief Rabbi of Turkey meeting with President Obama of the U.S. in his recent visit to Turkey. Notice the purple on the chief Rabbi’s gown and hat.



Now the king is one of the chief justices of the land as well. And his mission is to ensure that **justice, righteousness and charity** to the needy are dispensed throughout the land.

Finally the Prophet in Isaiah 57:19-20 presents us a choice this week:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 19. **[I] create the speech of the lips; peace, peace to the far and to the near," says the Lord, "and I will heal him."** | 19. **The one who creates speech of lips in the mouth of every man says, Peace will be done for the righteous/generous, who have kept My Law from the beginning, and peace will be done for the penitent, who have repented to My Law recently, says the LORD; and I will forgive them.** |
| 20. **But the wicked are like the turbulent sea, for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mud and dirt.** | 20. **But the wicked are like the tossing sea which seeks to rest and it cannot, and its waters disturb mire and dirt.** |

And this Shalom (communal peace/health/wealth) can only be obtained when one takes upon oneself the yoke of the Kingdom of the Messiah (i.e. by clinging to the Torah Sages), and the Yoke of the Commandments (by performing them according to the instructions of our Hakhamim). May HaShem, most blessed be He, grant us the courage, integrity, faithfulness, and loving-kindness to do so, amen ve amen!

**Verbal Connections**

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

**HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah**

**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:18 -18:13**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 120, 121, 122**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 56:1-9 + 57:19**

**Mk 15:16-21, Lk 23:26-32, Rm 12:9-21**

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

Make / give /given - נתן, Strong’s number 05414.

Gates - שער, Strong’s number 08179.

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

G-d - אלהים, Strong’s number 0430.

Tribes - שבט, Strong’s number 07626.

Judgment - משפת, Strong’s number 04941.

Eyes - עין, Strong’s number 05869.

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

Make / give / given - נתן, Strong’s number 05414.

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

People - עם, Strong’s number 05871.

Judgment - משפת, Strong’s number 04941.

**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:18-19** Judges and officers shalt thou **make <05414> (8799)** thee in all thy **gates <08179>**, which the **LORD <03068>** thy **God <0430>** **giveth <05414> (8802)** thee, throughout thy **tribes <07626>**: and they shall judge the **people <05971>** with just **judgment <04941>**. 19 Thou shalt not wrest **judgment <04941>**; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the **eyes <05869>** of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 120:1** « A Song of degrees. » In my distress I cried unto the **LORD <03068>**, and he heard me.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 120:3** What shall be **given <05414> (8799)** unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?

**Tehillim (Psalms) 121:1** « A Song of degrees. » I will lift up mine **eyes <05869>** unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 122:2** Our feet shall stand within thy **gates <08179>**, O Jerusalem.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 122:4** Whither the **tribes <07626>** go up, the **tribes <07626>** of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the **LORD <03068>**.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 122:5** For there are set thrones of **judgment <04941>**, the thrones of the house of David.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 122:9** Because of the house of the **LORD <03068>** our **God <0430>** I will seek thy good.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 56:1** Thus saith the **LORD <03068>**, Keep ye **judgment <04941>**, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 56:3** Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the **LORD <03068>**, speak, saying, The **LORD <03068>** hath utterly separated me from his **people <05971>**: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 56:5** Even unto them will I **give <05414> (8804)** in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Seder**  **Deu 16:18 – 17:20** | **Psalms**  **Psa 120 – 122** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is 56:1-9 + 57:19** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **bhea'** | love |  | Ps. 122:6 | Isa. 56:6 |
| **xa'** | brother, countryman | Deut. 17:15 Deut. 17:20 | Ps. 122:8 |  |
| **~yhil{a/** | GOD | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:20 Deut. 16:21 Deut. 16:22 Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:3 Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 122:9 |  |
| **rm;a'** | say, said | Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:16 | Ps. 122:1 | Isa. 56:1 Isa. 56:3 Isa. 56:4 Isa. 57:19 |
| **#r,a,** | earth, land, ground | Deut. 16:20 Deut. 17:14 | Ps. 121:2 |  |
| **rv,a]** | which, who | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:20 Deut. 16:21 Deut. 16:22 Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:3 Deut. 17:5 Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:9 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:11 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 |  | Isa. 56:4 Isa. 56:5 |
| **aAB** | come, go, enter | Deut. 17:9 Deut. 17:14 | Ps. 121:1 Ps. 121:8 | Isa. 56:1 Isa. 56:7 |
| **rx;B'** | chooses | Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:15 |  | Isa. 56:4 |
| **tyIB;** | house |  | Ps. 122:1 Ps. 122:5 Ps. 122:9 | Isa. 56:5 Isa. 56:7 |
| **!Be** | sons | Deut. 17:20 |  | Isa. 56:2 Isa. 56:3 Isa. 56:5 Isa. 56:6 |
| **tyrIB.** | covenant | Deut. 17:2 |  | Isa. 56:4 Isa. 56:6 |
| **%l;h'** | gone, go | Deut. 17:3 | Ps. 122:1 |  |
| **hNEhi** | behold | Deut. 17:4 | Ps. 121:4 |  |
| **rh;** | mountains |  | Ps. 121:1 | Isa. 56:7 |
| **dy"** | hand | Deut. 17:7 | Ps. 121:5 | Isa. 56:2 Isa. 56:5 |
| **hwhy** | LORD | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:20 Deut. 16:21 Deut. 16:22 Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 Deut. 17:16 Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 120:1 Ps. 120:2 Ps. 121:2 Ps. 121:5 Ps. 121:7 Ps. 121:8 Ps. 122:1 Ps. 122:4 Ps. 122:9 | Isa. 56:1 Isa. 56:3 Isa. 56:4 Isa. 56:6 Isa. 56:8 Isa. 57:19 |
| **!ymiy"** | right hand | Deut. 17:11 Deut. 17:20 | Ps. 121:5 |  |
| **@s;y"** | again | Deut. 17:16 | Ps. 120:3 |  |
| **ac'y"** | bring, going | Deut. 17:5 | Ps. 121:8 |  |
| **x;rey"** | moon | Deut. 17:3 | Ps. 121:6 |  |
| **bv;y"** | live | Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:18 | Ps. 122:5 |  |
| **laer'f.yI** | Israel | Deut. 17:4 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:20 | Ps. 121:4 Ps. 122:4 | Isa. 56:8 |
| **yKi** | if | Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:14 | Ps. 120:7 |  |
| **lKo** | all, entire, every, whole | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:21 Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:3 Deut. 17:7 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:13 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 121:7 | Isa. 56:2 Isa. 56:6 Isa. 56:7 Isa. 56:9 |
| **aSeKi** | throne | Deut. 17:18 | Ps. 122:5 |  |
| **aol** | no, neither, nor | Deut. 17:16 Deut. 17:17 | Ps. 121:4 Ps. 121:6 |  |
| **x;Bez>mi** | altar | Deut. 16:21 |  | Isa. 56:7 |
| **!mi** | too | Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:20 |  | Isa. 56:5 |
| **![;m;** | so, sake | Deut. 17:20 | Ps. 122:8 Ps. 122:9 |  |
| **jP'v.mi** | judgment | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:19 Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:9 Deut. 17:11 | Ps. 122:5 | Isa. 56:1 |
| **!t;n"** | give, appoint | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:20 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 | Ps. 120:3 Ps. 121:3 | Isa. 56:5 |
| **dA[** | again, yet | Deut. 17:13 |  | Isa. 56:8 |
| **~l'A[** | forever |  | Ps. 121:8 | Isa. 56:5 |
| **!yI[;** | eyes | Deut. 16:19 Deut. 17:2 | Ps. 121:1 |  |
| **hl'['** | go up | Deut. 17:8 | Ps. 122:4 |  |
| **dm;['** | stand | Deut. 17:12 | Ps. 122:2 |  |
| **#[e** | tree | Deut. 16:21 |  | Isa. 56:3 |
| **ar'q'** | read | Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 120:1 | Isa. 56:7 |
| **jb,ve** | tribes | Deut. 16:18 | Ps. 122:4 |  |
| **~Alv'** | peace |  | Ps. 120:6 Ps. 120:7 Ps. 122:6 Ps. 122:7 Ps. 122:8 | Isa. 57:19 |
| **~v'** | there | Deut. 17:12 | Ps. 122:4 Ps. 122:5 |  |
| **hd'y"** | thanks |  | Ps. 122:4 | Isa. 56:5 Isa. 56:6 |
| **xm;f'** | glad |  | Ps. 122:1 | Isa. 56:7 |
| **~yIm;v'** | heavenly | Deut. 17:3 | Ps. 121:2 |  |
| **rm;v'** | careful, Keeps | Deut. 17:10 | Ps. 121:3 Ps. 121:4 Ps. 121:5 Ps. 121:7 Ps. 121:8 | Isa. 56:1 Isa. 56:2 Isa. 56:4 Isa. 56:6 |
| **vm,v,** | sun | Deut. 17:3 | Ps. 121:6 |  |
| **anEf'** | hates | Deut. 16:22 | Ps. 120:6 |  |
| **r[;v;** | town, gates, courts | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:5 Deut. 17:8 | Ps. 122:2 |  |
| **hp'f'** | lips |  | Ps. 120:2 | Isa. 57:19 |
| **tr'v'** | serve | Deut. 17:12 |  | Isa. 56:6 |
| **~[;** | people | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 17:7 Deut. 17:13 Deut. 17:16 |  | Isa. 56:3 Isa. 56:7 |
| **hf'['** | make, do, done, did | Deut. 16:21 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:4 Deut. 17:5 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:11 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 121:2 | Isa. 56:1 Isa. 56:2 |
| **[r'** | evil, defect | Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:5 |  | Isa. 56:2 |
| **[r'** | evil | Deut. 17:7 Deut. 17:12 | Ps. 121:7 |  |

**Greek:**

| **Greek** | **English** | **Torah Seder**  **Deu 16:18 – 17:20** | **Psalms**  **Psa 120 – 122** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is 56:1-9 + 57:19** | **Peshat**  **Mk/Jude/Pet**  **Mk 15:16-21** | **Remes 1**  **Luke**  **Lk 23:26-32** | **Remes 2**  **Acts/Romans**  **Rm 12:9-21** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ἀγαθός** | good |  | Psa 122:9 |  |  |  | Rom. 12:9 Rom. 12:21 |
| **ἀγρός** | field |  |  |  | Mk. 15:21 | Lk. 23:26 |  |
| **αἴρω** | lift |  | Psa 121:1 |  | Mk. 15:21 |  |  |
| **ἄνθραξ** | coals |  | Psa 120:4 |  |  |  | Rom. 12:20 |
| **ἄνθρωπος** | man, men | Deu 17:5  Deu 17:12 Deu 17:15 |  | Isa 56:2 |  |  | Rom. 12:17 Rom. 12:18 |
| **ἀπάγω** | took away |  |  |  | Mk. 15:16 | Lk. 23:26 |  |
| **ἄρχω** | began, begin |  |  |  | Mk. 15:18 | Lk. 23:30 |  |
| **αὐλή** | courts, courtyards |  | Psa 122:2 |  | Mk. 15:16 |  |  |
| **γράφω** | written, write | Deu 17:18 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 12:19 |
| **γυνή** | woman, wife | Deu 17:2 Deu 17:5  Deu 17:17 |  |  |  | Lk. 23:27 |  |
| **δίδωμι** | appoint, gives | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:20 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 | Ps. 120:3 Ps. 121:3 | Isa. 56:5 |  |  | Rom. 12:19 |
| **διώκω** | pursue | Deu 16:20 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 12:13 Rom. 12:14 |
| **δουλεύω** | serve |  |  | Isa 56:6 |  |  | Rom. 12:11 |
| **δυνατός** | mighty |  | Psa 120:4 |  |  |  | Rom. 12:18 |
| **δύο** | two | Deu 17:6 |  |  |  | Lk. 23:32 |  |
| **ἐξάγω** | bring forth | Deu 16:1 Deu 17:5 |  |  | Mk. 15:20 |  |  |
| **ἔρχομαι** | camae, come | Deu 17:9 |  |  | Mk. 15:21 | Lk. 23:26 Lk. 23:29 |  |
| **ἕτερος** | other | Deu 17:3 |  |  |  | Lk. 23:32 |  |
| **ἡμέρα** | days | Deu 17:9 Deu 17:12 Deu 17:19 |  |  |  | Lk. 23:29 |  |
| **θυγάτηρ** | daughter |  |  | Isa 56:5 |  | Lk. 23:28 |  |
| **ἰδού** | behold | Deut. 17:4 | Ps. 121:4 |  |  | Lk. 23:29 |  |
| **καλέω** | called |  |  | Isa 56:7 |  |  |  |
| **κεφαλή** | head |  |  |  | Mk. 15:19 |  | Rom. 12:20 |
| **κλαίω** | weep, cry |  |  |  |  | Lk. 23:28 | Rom. 12:15 |
| **Κυρηναῖος** | Cyrene |  |  |  | Mk. 15:21 | Lk. 23:26 |  |
| **κύριος** | LORD | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:20 Deut. 16:21 Deut. 16:22 Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 Deut. 17:16 Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 120:1 Ps. 120:2 Ps. 121:2 Ps. 121:5 Ps. 121:7 Ps. 121:8 Ps. 122:1 Ps. 122:4 Ps. 122:9 | Isa. 56:1 Isa. 56:3 Isa. 56:4 Isa. 56:6 Isa. 56:8 Isa. 57:19 |  |  | Rom. 12:11 Rom. 12:19 |
| **λαός** | people | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 17:7 Deut. 17:13 Deut. 17:16 |  | Isa. 56:3 Isa. 56:7 |  | Lk. 23:27 |  |
| **λέγω** | saying, said |  |  | Isa 56:1 Isa 56:3  Isa 56:4 |  | Lk. 23:28 Lk. 23:29 Lk. 23:30 | Rom. 12:19 |
| **μακάριος** | blessed |  |  | Isa 56:2 |  | Lk. 23:29 |  |
| **μή** | not, no | Deut. 17:16 Deut. 17:17 | Ps. 121:4 Ps. 121:6 | Isa 56:2 Isa 56:3  Isa 56:6 |  | Lk. 23:28 | Rom. 12:19 |
| **ξηρός** | dry |  |  | Isa 56:3 |  | Lk. 23:31 |  |
| **ξύλον** | trees | Deut. 16:21 |  | Isa. 56:3 |  | Lk. 23:31 |  |
| **ὄρος** | mountain |  | Ps. 121:1 | Isa. 56:7 |  | Lk. 23:30 |  |
| **ὅς / ἥ / ὅ** | which, wno | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:20 Deut. 16:21 Deut. 16:22 Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:3 Deut. 17:5 Deut. 17:8 Deut. 17:9 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:11 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 |  | Isa. 56:4 Isa. 56:5 |  | Lk. 23:27 Lk. 23:29 |  |
| **πᾶς** | all, whole, every, entire | Deut. 16:18 Deut. 16:21 Deut. 17:1 Deut. 17:3 Deut. 17:7 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:13 Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 121:7 | Isa. 56:2 Isa. 56:6 Isa. 56:7 Isa. 56:9 |  |  | Rom. 12:17 Rom. 12:18 |
| **ποιέω** | do, did, done, make, made | Deut. 16:21 Deut. 17:2 Deut. 17:4 Deut. 17:5 Deut. 17:10 Deut. 17:11 Deut. 17:12 Deut. 17:19 | Ps. 121:2 | Isa. 56:1 Isa. 56:2 |  | Lk. 23:31 | Rom. 12:20 |
| **πολύς / πολλός** | many much |  | Psa 120:6 |  |  | Lk. 23:27 |  |
| **πονηρός** | evil | Deu 17:1 Deu 17:2  Deu 17:5  Deu 17:7  Deu 17:12 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 12:9 |
| **προσευχή** | prayer |  |  | Isa 56:7 |  |  | Rom. 12:12 |
| **προσκυνέω** | obeisance to | Deu 17:3 |  |  | Mk. 15:19 |  |  |
| **Σίμων** | Simon |  |  |  | Mk. 15:21 | Lk. 23:26 |  |
| **σταυρός** | cross |  |  |  | Mk. 15:21 | Lk. 23:26 |  |
| **τόπος** | place | Deu 17:8 Deu 17:10 |  | Isa 56:5 |  |  | Rom. 12:19 |
| **υἱός** | sons | Deut. 17:20 |  | Isa. 56:2 Isa. 56:3 Isa. 56:5 Isa. 56:6 |  |  |  |
| **χαίρω** | rejoice |  |  |  | Mk. 15:18 |  | Rom. 12:12 Rom. 12:15 |

**Pereq Dalet**

**Mishnah 4:17**

**By: Hakham Yitschaq ben Moshe Magriso**

**Rabbi Shimeon said: There are three crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of royalty. But the crown of a good name rises above them all.**

Rabbi Shimeon says that there are three crowns which the Torah requires us to respect.

The first is the crown of the Torah. This requires us to respect the Torah scholar (talmid chakham) since he is worthy of the crown of Torah. It is thus written, "You will honor the face of an elder (zaken)" (Leviticus 19:32).

The Hebrew word zaken (זקן) can be taken as an abbreviation of **zeh kanah chakhmah** **—"this one has gained wisdom."** This commandment therefore obliges us to honor the Torah scholar, the one who **"has gained wisdom."**

The second crown is the crown of priesthood (kehunah). The Torah commands us to honor the cohen-priest, as it is written, "You will sanctify [the cohen-priest] ... he will be holy to you" (Leviticus 21:8). This teaches that we are obligated to sanctify the cohen-priest and give him honor.

The third crown is the crown of royalty. **The Torah mandates that we honor a king, as it is written, "You must place a king over yourselves" (Deuteronomy 17:15).** This means that the king whom you place in power must be respected, whatever he commands. As long as you are under his jurisdiction, you must respect and honor him.

Besides these three, there is another crown, which is not mentioned in the Torah. This is the crown of a good name (**keter shem tov**). This crown belongs to one who has fear of Heaven **(Yirat HaShamayim),** and a good name because of his good deeds. Although this last one is not mentioned in the Torah, it is higher than the three other crowns, because the others are meaningless without it.

If a person is a Torah scholar, and has the crown of Torah, but does not have the crown of a good name, which consists of fear of heaven and good deeds, he does not deserve honor. Rather, he may be denigrated and dishonored, since the crown of the Torah cannot function without the crown of a good name.

Similarly, the crown of priesthood is worthless without the crown of a good name. If a High Priest (Cohen Gadol) does not possess fear of Heaven, then he can be stripped of all his honor. He may even be cursed, as in the incident of the High Priest and the two sages, Shemaya and Avtalyon.

We are also not obligated to honor a king who does not possess fear of heaven and does not follow the teachings of Judaism.

We thus see that the crown of a good name is the greatest of all. None of the other crowns has value unless accompanied by the crown of a good name.

These three crowns were alluded to in the furniture of the Tabernacle. When God commanded that we make a holy Ark (aron ha-kodesh), He said, "You will make a golden crown round about" (Exodus 25:11). Such a crown is also mentioned with respect to the show-bread Table (shulchan), (Exodus 25:24), and the Altar (mizbeach), (Exodus 30:3). The crown on the Ark represents the crown of Torah, that on the Altar represents the crown of priesthood, and that on the Table represents the crown of royalty.

**Two of these crowns have already been taken.** The crown of priesthood has already been taken by Aaron, and it is reserved exclusively for his offspring. The crown of royalty was taken by King David, and it remains the inheritance of his descendants. **However, the crown of Torah remains, and whoever wishes may come and take it.**

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of “D’barim?” (Deut.) “16:18 – 17:20”**

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

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

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

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| **School of Hakham Tsefet’s Peshat**  **Mordechai (Mk)**  Mishnah **א:א** |
| **And the soldiers** taking **him** (Yeshua) **away, led** him **out to the courtyard of** the palace, that is, the governor's Praetorian **and called together the whole cohort. And they put purple** (a robe) **on him, and after weaving a crown of thorns, they placed it on his** head. **And they began saluting him** saying, **"Hail, king of the Jews!" And they repeatedly struck him on the head with a reed, and** they **were spitting on him, and they knelt** down **and did homage[[24]](#footnote-24) to him** mockingly. **And after they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple robe and put his own clothes on him, and they led him out[[25]](#footnote-25) to crucify him. And they instructed a passerby, one Shimon, a Galut Jew from Cyrene, Lybia who was coming from that country,** the father of Alexandros and Rufos, **to carry his cross.** |

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| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Remes**  **Romans**  Mishnah **א:א** |
| **Letlove be without hypocrisy** (genuine)**. You will hate what is evil by clinging[[26]](#footnote-26) to what** (those who are) **is good.[[27]](#footnote-27) Be affectionate to your brethren and love one another esteeming others more highly** (preferring ) **and honoring one another. Be diligent and do not be lagging behind; be enthusiastic in spirit; be working for the LORD.[[28]](#footnote-28) Be delighted** (rejoicing) **in your expectations.[[29]](#footnote-29)** **Bear your afflictions bravely. Be persistent[[30]](#footnote-30) in prayer. Be contributing to the needs of the Tsadiqim** (holy ones); **practice hospitality.[[31]](#footnote-31)**  **¶ Invoke blessing[[32]](#footnote-32) on your persecutors, blessings, not curses.[[33]](#footnote-33) Rejoice with those who rejoice[[34]](#footnote-34) and weep with those who weep. And however you esteem yourselves do also toward your brethren. Do not be high-minded[[35]](#footnote-35)** (prideful), **but** go out **to those who are downcast,[[36]](#footnote-36) and do not be wise in your opinions of yourselves. Repay no person evil for evil, but be preoccupied with doing acts of Tsedeqah** (doing good) **before all people.[[37]](#footnote-37) And make peace with every person according to the** **virtuous** (reasoning) **power** of the soul **that is within you. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to rage, for it is written:[[38]](#footnote-38) "*Do not say, ‘I will repay evil’; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you"*** (D’barim 32:35). **And as it is written "*If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; For you will heap burning coals on his head, And the LORD will reward you*"** (Mishle 25:21-22) **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good.** |

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

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| \*Dt 16:18 – 17:20 | Ps 120 – 122 | Is 56:1-9 + 57:19 | Mordechai 15:16-21 | 1 Luqas 23:26-32 | Rom 12:9-21 |

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

**Behold the King of the Jews**

While the messianic figure of the Rabbis has covered a plethora of ideals and personas, the two outstanding figures representing messiah are David and Yosef. While there are scholars, who postpone the two concepts until after the Bar Kokhba revolt, the “Gabriel Revelation”[[39]](#footnote-39) reveals the truth that the idea predates the first century C.E. by as much as 200 years. As Messiah ben Yosef, Yeshua was to suffer rather than reign, as pictured in the Davidic prototype. However, the Davidic son established the primary prototype for the messianic persona.

**1Ki 1:39-40** Then Zadok the priest took a horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. And they blew the horn, and all the people said, **"*Long* live King Solomon**!" 40 And all the people went up after him; and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth *seemed to* split with their sound.

**1Ki 2:1-4** Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: "I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. "And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; "that the LORD may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, `If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' He said, `you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

G-d’s promise to King David is most profound, “If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me (G-d) in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,” He said, “you will not lack a man on the throne of Israel.” The Messiah must be faithful to the Torah, its Chuqot (statutes), mitzvot, (commandments) eduyot (testimonies), mishpatim (judgments) and Derek HaShem (ethics).

All the accounts we have of Yeshua’s life demonstrate him as a man of great piety.

We are so accustomed…to make Jesus the object of religion that we become apt to forget that in our earliest records he is not portrayed as the object of religion, but as a religious man. Thomas Walter Manson, the Teachings of Jesus (1935), 101[[40]](#footnote-40)

As Geza Vermes points out, Yeshua is pictured from the accounts of his life and contents of his “Mesorah” as wrapped within the confines of a pious Pharisaic Jew of the late second Temple period. Judaism of the late second Temple period saw the Torah as the absolute maxim for life. Furthermore, it was the application of Torah and the Oral Torah, which governed the religious life of the pious Jew. Temple worship played a vital part in the role of the general populace of this era. However, it appears not to have been the primary concern for those Jews who lived in the distant locations of Eretz Yisrael. Geza Vermes seems to believe that the mandate found in our present Torah Seder[[41]](#footnote-41) was more idealistic than practical.[[42]](#footnote-42) Therefore, we would surmise that the Jewish people who actually “appeared before the LORD” three times a year were the more pious Jewish people. The picture portrayed of Yeshua in the Nazarean Codicil matches the image of Yosef. When the Sages of blessed memory, want to portray a man of piety, they use Yosef as their prototype. Consequently, Yeshua the son of Yosef is a fitting messianic title.

While the Biblical prophecies, which tell us that Messiah would intervene in the affairs of humanity, are somewhat cryptic, the Oral Torah contains a plethora of materials, which explain his role in redemption. Rabbi Akiva, with the failure of Bar Kokhba looked to the future for redemption. His parallel taken from the words of Rabbi Tarfon, taught that the first redemption from Egypt would lay the foundation and precedent for the final redemption in the distant future.[[43]](#footnote-43) We must assert that the Jewish view of redemption does not match the typical western view of “salvation.” Judaism saw the redemption as the end of exile. The analogy presented above clearly demonstrates that desire for Jewish autonomy. However, redemption is not merely autonomy. The Rabbis looked to the end of the age when the Jewish people would be the kings and priests of the earth. Therefore, the final phase of redemption would include the subjugation of the Gentiles by the Messianic redeemer. The violent abuse of Rome during the first century was intolerable. Hence, the Jewish people of that era longed for the appearing of this messianic figure.

Refusal of Rome**[[44]](#footnote-44)** to Acknowledge Yeshua as Messiah

Not only did Pilate refuse to acknowledge Yeshua as the Messiah, his cohort of nearly 600 men incessantly mocked Yeshua by placing a robe of purple and crown made of thorns on him. Then to show their disdain for the Messianic concept they spat and struck him repeatedly with a reed as it is written “6 I gave my back to the smitters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. (Isa 50:6)”. As we will see the refusal of Rome to accept and acknowledge Yeshua as the Messiah is not relegated to a few Roman soldiers from Pilate’s militia.

The Espousal of Rome

Rome has refused to accept Yeshua as the Messiah, establishing a pseudo-messiah. Replacement theology has relegated messiah to a mockery of his true character and mission

The Tz’dukim of the late second Temple period established the mindset for the coming Roman “priesthood.” The defunct priesthood of the late second Temple period espoused Rome. This defunct priesthood surrendered a Jewish Messiah to the Roman hoard in order to become a new priesthood. The Tz’dukim who disappeared with the destruction of the second Temple reappears as the priesthood of “Christianity.” The “out of work” priests looked for new occupational territory and employment, which they find in Rome. Regardless, we see that the espousal of Rome as inevitable when one abandons true normative Judaism. We must concur with the above cited thesis and further that we see the Tz’dukim’s espousal of the Roman government as an analogy of what was to come. The Roman cohort of Pilate derided Yeshua through vicious behavior and conduct against a pious Jew as if he were a slave or a criminal. This behavior is nothing new for Rome. Nor should we be surprised at their conduct. Historically Rome has been the instigator for many of the atrocities leveled against the Jewish people. However, we must note that Rome’s treatment of Yeshua has yet to change. Consequently, we must restate that Rome has yet to accept Yeshua as the Jewish Messiah. By this statement, we mean that Rome and all of it siblings have NEVER accepted Yeshua as **Jewish Messiah**, albeit they have deified “Jesus” as their Christ. Accordingly, we have pseudo-priesthood with a pseudo-messiah. **Messiah divorced from normative Judaism is not a Jewish Messiah but a Roman Christ**.

One of the most heinous crimes perpetrated against Yeshua and the Jewish people is the crime of “replacement theology.” However, we must assert that this idea was not the brainchild of a later Christian strategist. The Tz’dukim and Samaritans developed this notion long before Christianity. Nonetheless, the idea of our present pericope, as found in the Nazarean Codicil is of Roman origin. Herod had the legitimate priests of Levitical lineage assassinated only to “replace” them with a pseudo-priesthood that would follow Roman rules and serve the interests of Roman authorities. Consequently, Judaism’s battle with Rome and replacement theology has existed for millennia. Furthermore, its Roman origins remain intact to this very day.

Yaakov and Easu

The world has survived these thousands of years in the midst of a struggle, brother against brother. Ya’aqob and Esau were not the first brothers with these troubles. The very first brothers of Biblical mention demonstrate the difficulties of rivalries between brothers. However, it is Ya’aqob and Esau, which the Sages use to depict the present Diaspora.

**Mal 1:2-3** "I have loved you," says the LORD. "Yet you say, `In what way have You loved us?' *Was* not Esau Jacob's brother?" Says the LORD. "Yet Jacob I have loved; But Esau I have hated, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage For the jackals of the wilderness.

Hakham Shaul cites this prophetic passage in his letter to the Roman talmidim of Yeshua.[[45]](#footnote-45) The Prophet speaks of the demise of Rome (Edom – Esau – Christianity).[[46]](#footnote-46) The “mountain laid waste” can only be understood as an analogy for the “government” of Rome. We will not delve into the imagery except to say that we must expect the Roman system and rule to crumble in the final redemption just as the Egyptian régime toppled under the leadership of Moshe Rabbenu. Our mention of the Roman government must be understood as the system, which has incessantly tried to strip Yeshua of his Jewish persona and Rabbinic profession. Like the Romans of Pilate’s cohort, they dress Yeshua in Roman garb mockingly honoring him as “King of the Jews.” However, before they placed him on the tree they redressed him in his Jewish apparel to show disdain and contempt for a Jewish Rabbi and Messiah. The death of a Jewish Prophet and Rabbi allowed them to resurrect a Roman god in his place. Their mental perspective of Messiah has yet to change. **And, they have yet to accept a Jewish Messiah.**

We have noted that Hakham Shaul wrote a letter to the community of believers in Rome. In short, Hakham Shaul sums up his requirements in the initial paragraph of his letter.

**Rom 1:5 Through him** (Yeshua) **we have received chesed and a commission to bring into obedience[[47]](#footnote-47) among all gentiles,** living in **faithfulness** to the Torah **under his authority…[[48]](#footnote-48)**

Please note that the Gentiles are called to obedience and faithfulness to the Torah under the authority and Mesorah of Yeshua the Jewish Messiah. The letter of Hakham Shaul lays down the prototypical acceptance for the Messianic community. Those who follow Yeshua Must observe the Torah![[49]](#footnote-49)

I have accepted Yeshua as the Messiah

Common nomenclature among Christians, as noted, is the acceptance of Yeshua as Messiah. The difficulty being, **Christianity** (Rome) **has yet to accept a Jewish Messiah!** The **“Jesus** we believed in in our youth was a blond-haired hippie type rebel, who was in rebellion against the “establishment,” which at the time we thought was the Jewish religion. Much to our surprise Yeshua turned out to be a pro – Torah Rabbi of the first century promoting rabbinic halakhah. Only after embracing the Jewish interpretation of Messiah could one say that he **accepted Yeshua as the Messiah! There is no such thing as a Gentile Messiah!**

**Acts 10:1-2** There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout *man* and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people (of Yisrael), and prayed to God appropriately.

**Act 10:47-48** "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be immersed who received the Divine Presence just as we *have*?" 48 And he commanded them to be immersed…

Cornelius demonstrates the profile for a genuine Gentile follower of Yeshua. While Cornelius appears here in our initially cited text as a “pious” man (Gentile) who “fears G-d” he converts to Judaism in verse 47. It is a fallacy to believe or purport that Cornelius became a “Christian.” In other words, the true path of **Any** follower of Yeshua is sooner or later to convert to Judaism. However, we have juxtaposed Cornelius against the Roman cohort of our present pericope to demonstrate the appropriate response to Yeshua by a Gentile. The passage cited above from Hakham Shaul’s letter to the Romans clearly instructs Gentiles to **“**live in **faithfulness** to the Torah **under his** (Messiah’s) **authority.**”

Has Rome Fallen?

**If the “First Redemption” can be pictured in the initial Pesach and “**Yetsi'at Mitzrayim” (Exodus from Egypt) we must realize that there will be another redemption, a final redemption, which overturns all Roman rule in the earth. The demise of the Roman system will find masses themselves embracing a true Jewish Messiah rather than the false Christ they have worshiped for millennia.

Peroration

Subjugation by Rome not only brought Yisrael to its departure, sending them into Diaspora, it infiltrated and plagiarized its religious aspects instituting a pseudo-Judaism, which mimicked nearly every aspect of this ancient religion. This plagiarism has wearied the soul of the Jewish people. G-d through His agent, Messiah will exact the appropriate vengeance upon Rome, Edom and those who have espoused their doctrines.

**Targum Pseudo Yonatan Yesha’yahu 62:1** 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.

We have cited this passage in the recent past. However, it suffices to cite it again for the present materials.

The prophet prophesies concerning what the Holy One, blessed be He, said that He is destined to wreak vengeance upon Edom, and He, personally, will slay their heavenly prince, like the matter that is said (supra 34:5), “For My sword has become sated in the heaven.” And afterward, (ibid.) “it shall descend upon Edom,” and it is recognizable by the wrath of His face that He has slain [them with] a great massacre, and the prophet is speaking in the expression of the wars of human beings, dressed in clothes, and when they slay a slaying, the blood spatters on their garments, for so is the custom of Scripture; it speaks of the Shekhinah anthropomorphically, to convey to the ear what it can hear. Comp. (Ezek. 43:2) “His voice is like the voice of many waters.” The prophet compares His mighty voice to the voice of many waters to convey to the ear according to what it is possible to hear, for one cannot understand and hearken to the magnitude of the mighty of our God to let us hear it as it is.

“The heavenly prince of Edom is destined to commit two errors. He thinks that Bozrah is identical with Bezer in the desert, which was a refuge city. He will also err insofar as it affords refuge only for inadvertent murder, but he killed Israel intentionally.”[[50]](#footnote-50)

Rashi’s comments make clear that there will be a war waged against Edom (Rome – Christianity who has failed to embrace Yeshua as a Jewish Messiah). Messiah our *Go’el*, “Kinsman redeemer” will exact punishment on those who have been involved in intentional crimes against the Jewish people.

**The Prophet Yermiyahu records the events of those days.**

**Jer 16:19-21** O LORD, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable *things*." 20 Will a man make gods for himself, Which *are* not gods? 21 "Therefore behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; And they shall know that My name *is* the LORD.”

Note that the Prophet reiterates the justice, which G-d will pour out on those who refuse to accept the true path to G-d in the words “Therefore behold, I will this once **cause them to know**, **I will cause them to know** My hand and My might.”

Messiah’s death in the present pericope of Mordechai is not so strange when we stop to count the millions of Jews destroyed by senseless malice and hatred. Why did the Romans crucify Yeshua? Rome crucified a Jewish Rabbi in order to replace him with a gentile god. No self-respecting Jew could accept such a messiah. The demise of a Roman god is at hand. And, the footsteps of a Jewish Messiah are echoing in the near distance.

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

**Shof’tim VeShot’rim**

Hakham Shaul speaks of “clinging” to what is “good” (beneficial). The use of “**κολλάομαι”** means to unite oneself with, associate with, join; stick to (**of dust**); hold on to (Ro 12.9). Almost all Lexicons use the idea of “clinging to” or being bound to “good,” i.e. that which is beneficial. However, we find that idea of clinging to something as “dust” inspirational. Our “inspiration” is based on the following Mishnah.

m. Aboth 1:4 Jose ben Jo'ezer of Çeredah said, Let your house be a meeting-house for the Hakhamim; and **powder yourself in the dust** (avaq) **of their feet**; and drink their words with thirstiness.

We know that the sixth (positive) commandment is that of “cleaving” (clinging) to G-d based on D’barim 10: 20. The Rambam notes that this means that we are to cleave (cling) to the Hakhamim and their talmidim.[[51]](#footnote-51) Now because we are reading words that have allegorical meanings we should understand that dust is very significant in the Scriptures. The Primordial Nachash (serpent) was cursed to “eat the dust” while crawling on its belly. The creature who had walked upright in humanoid form is now a slithering creature forced to eat the dust of the earth.

“Dust” in Scripture can have several meanings. But, we will minimize our thoughts for the sake of time.

**Mt. 10:14** “**But whoever does not receive you** (your Torah teaching), **neither listens to your words** (Mesorah - oral explanations of the written Torah as taught by the Master), **when you go out from the** (their) **house or from the village, shake the dust from your feet.”**

The Midrashic meaning of Hakham Matityahu are interpreted to mean that we are not to accept the legal rulings of those who refuse to accept the Torah as the true standard for all “law.” Do we accept the “cultural holiness” of a secular system? Heaven forbid. Those who walk in the mandates of the Torah live by a higher standard. Therefore we “shake off the dust” of their antinomian conduct and standards.

Again, the use of “dust” is non-literal in this Midrashic text. However, we find the “dust” of these passages related to the “feet.” Therefore, “dust” must have an association with “halakhah.” In the case of the Nachash (serpent) he can no longer “walk” in an upright fashion. Now he must slither unable to rise to the place of having proper conduct. Again, shaking off the dust bespeaks refusal to walk in a fashion similar to those who will not accept the Torah and the Mesorah. Thus, the serpent, refusing to accept the standard of the Oral Torah in Gan Eden is relegated to slithering in the dust of those who can walk in the steps of the Torah. In other words, the dust of our righteous/generous conduct is constantly thrown in his face.

The Mishnah above has a plethora of possible meanings. We will summarize by saying that the idea is that of “clinging” or cleaving to the Sage. The allegory shows that one should be so close to his teacher that if they were walking the talmid would be covered by the dust of his mentor.

**People should say of a talmid, “Happy is his teacher (Hakham) who taught him wisdom.”**

True guidelines exist for teachers and students in the Gentile world. These boundaries are better defined within Judaism.

Talmud Torah 5:1 Just as a person is obligated to honor and be in awe of his father, similarly, he is obligated to honor and be in awe of his teacher more than his father. Because his father brings him into this world but his teacher - who taught him wisdom - brings him to Olam haBa (the World to Come).[[52]](#footnote-52)

The conflict would seem to be that we honor the Sage more than our father. This is not the true point at hand. We must also note that there is a “similarity” in what is honorable. When the child is in the home, the father is his guide. But, when the student has exited the home for the Bet Midrash his new “father” is his mentor and Sage who now is given preference over the father. The analogy should be easily understood, in that we submitted ourselves to our fathers in love and honor. Similarly, we must, in the same way honor our Mentors who open for us the gates of Eden allowing us to enter the Olam HaBa on their merit. Is this blind acceptance of everything a Mentor says? Heaven forbid! What Teacher would want such a talmid. The occupation of the Talmid is to wrestle, (“avaq” - dust which also comes from the root "to wrestle") with the teachings of our Mentor until we have a personal resolve on how to “walk” in his dust (avaq). We also note that the relationship between the teacher and student is similar to that of a father and son. A father may give his son instruction (Torah) telling him not to play in the street for example. Of course, the father knows the dangers that his son cannot envision. The Teacher as the guardian of the soul knows the consequences of activities that blatantly defy the Torah. Some of the actions leave irreparable marks on the soul.

The Hakham understands these words with great alacrity. He understands that a father lives with his son on a daily basis, teaching and instructing his son in Torah and halakhot. Likewise, he knows what the student lacks as far as his Torah education. The Mentor guides the talmid in the things he understands and teaches him deeper meanings once he has mastered his practical Torah.

It is through the words of our teachers that we begin to have true awe and fear of G-d in the sense of true love. Likewise, through their words we find a true sense of awe for the Torah and the Oral Torah. The Hakham instructs his talmidim in the deepest worship of G-d through Talmud Torah. As the Sages have taught us that, the highest form of worshiping G-d is through Torah study. The Rambam teaches us that the sanctity of the Bet Midrash is higher than that of the Synagogue.[[53]](#footnote-53)

How are these words in any way related to the present pericope of Mordechai (Mark)? We see the Roman cohort of 600 men who taunt and agonize the Master with disrespect and disdain. Hakham Shaul shows is through a plethora of ideal how we are to treat our teachers and one another. There can be no discord in the Bet Midrash. In similar fashion Hakham Shaul has connected with the theme of the Torah Seder through his lauding those who cling to “good” that, which is beneficial such as the Shof’tim VeShot’rim (Judges and Officers).[[54]](#footnote-54)

The essential role of the Hakham can hardly be under estimated. And while we cannot deny the truth that each of us has a “Mal'ach Shomer" (Guardian Angel) per se, the Hakham is a “guardian angel” of sorts. The word for angel in many languages simply means “messenger.” And, we note that the Hebrew word “Shomer” means guarding, but it also means guarding ourselves against falling into sinful practices. Therefore, we find the Hakham to be a guardian angel of sorts. However, the Hakham is not interested in running about giving orders. He is more interested in making his talmidim stand as Hakhamim in their own right.

**Rev 4:1** **After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in the Heavens, and a voice** (Heb. kol) **which I heard like a Shofar speaking with me saying, “Come up here, and I will show you whatever is granted to happen after these things.”**

**Rev 22:17 “And The Ruach** (Mesorah - spirit) **and The Kallah** (Bride – the Hakhamim) **are saying, 'Come', and let him who hears,** (Heb. Shema) **say, “Come”, and let him who thirsts** (after the words of the Hakhamim) **come and take the water of life without charge.”**

The message of these combined words is a call to press towards the goal of becoming a Torah Scholar.

Amen V’Amen.

**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 “Lo Yihyeh LaKohanim” - “There will not be for the priests”**

|  |  |  |
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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **לֹא-יִהְיֶה לַכֹּהֲנִים** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Lo Yihyeh LaKohanim”** | Reader 1 – D’barim 18:1-8 | Reader 1 – D’barim 20:10-15 |
| **“There will not be for the priests”** | Reader 2 – D’barim 18:9-13 | Reader 2 – D’barim 20:16-20 |
| **“Los sacerdotes no tendrán”** | Reader 3 – D’barim 18:14-22 | Reader 3 – D’barim 20:10-20 |
|  | Reader 4 – D’barim 19:1-10 |  |
| D’barim (Deut.) 18:1 – 20:9 | Reader 5 – D’barim 19:11-14 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
| Psalm 123 - 126 | Reader 6 – D’barim 19:15-21 | Reader 1 – D’barim 20:10-15 |
| Ashlam.: Jeremiah 33:18-26 | Reader 7 – D’barim 20:1-9 | Reader 2 – D’barim 20:16-20 |
| P. Abot 4:18 | Maftir – D’barim 20:5-9 | Reader 3 – D’barim 20:10-20 |
| N.C.: Mark 15:22-28;  Lk 23:33-34; Rm 13:1-10 | Jeremiah 33:18-26 |  |

**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)

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**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. Mishlei (Proverbs) 15:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 28:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 28:43 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Judgment - משפת, Strong’s number 04941. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Bible – Psalms with the Jerusalem Commentary, volume three. By Amos Hakham. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. 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, on verse 119:73. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The Messiah who is a descendant of King David. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Holiness [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This the first use, in the Torah, of the number fifteen alone. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Bereshit (Genesis) 6:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Sotah 17a [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Positive mitzva #216 - levirate marriage [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Tiferet Yisrael, Midot [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Sotah 49b [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. numerical [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Blessed are You, Adonaiour God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us through the mitzvotand has commanded us to kindle the festival lights*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Morning prayers [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Pesach seder night [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Pesachim 10:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Be united with, **clinging** to the Sages. And or being in close connection with the Torah Scholars. **3566 κολλάομαι** unite oneself with, associate with, join; stick to (**of dust**); hold on to (Ro 12.9); m. Aboth 1:4 Jose ben Jo'ezer of Çeredah said, Let your house be a meeting-house for the Hakhamim; and powder yourself in the dust of their feet; and drink their words with thirstiness. **b. Sanhedrin 110a** "Anyone who challenges the authority of his teacher is considered as if he challenges the authority of God, as it says: (Bamidbar [Numbers] 26:9) [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Verbal connection to Psalm 122:9. Those who do right, i.e. leaders and teachers who teach us how to walk in the Torah. Louw-Nida (57.110) the generous - Tsaddiq. Also LN 88.8 **one who does good deeds**, i.e. Tsaddiq. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Verbal connection to D’barim 17:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Verbal connection to D’barim 17:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Be united with, **clinging** to the Sages. And or being in close connection with the Torah Scholars. **3566 κολλάομαι** unite oneself with, associate with, join; stick to (**of dust**); hold on to (Ro 12.9); m. Aboth 1:4 Jose ben Jo'ezer of Çeredah said, Let your house be a meeting-house for the Hakhamim; and powder yourself in the dust of their feet; and drink their words with thirstiness. **b. Sanhedrin 110a** "Anyone who challenges the authority of his teacher is considered as if he challenges the authority of God, as it says: (Bamidbar [Numbers] 26:9) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Verbal connection to Psalm 122:9. Those who do right, i.e. leaders and teachers who teach us how to walk in the Torah. Louw-Nida (57.110) the generous - Tsaddiq. Also LN 88.8 **one who does good deeds**, i.e. Tsaddiq. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Some manuscripts have **τῷ καιρῷ** (the time, or the opportunity), Thus, we would read the passage to mean we take the opportunity to be working diligently. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Biblical hope has no contemporary parallel. Biblical hope (**ἐλπίς** *elpis*) means to know a thing will happen in the truest sense of “knowing” (Da’at). (looking forward to in confident expectation). Thus we can read the passage to mean “be delighted knowing (intimately) that your expectations will be fulfilled.” [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Verbal connection to D’barim 16:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Some versions will read, “love the converts/strangers.” [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Thayer’s - #**2259 εὐλογέω 2.** *to invoke blessings*: **τινα**, upon one, Matt. 5:44 Rec.; Luke 6:28; Rom. 12:14; absolutely,

    The idea of “invoking blessings” shows authority or a place of authority. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. **κατήραμαι**; (1) middle, as stating that a supernatural power will cause harm to someone or something.Friberg, T., Friberg, B., & Miller, N. F. (2000). *Vol. 4*: *Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. Baker's Greek New Testament library. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books. p. 221 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Denoting mutual good feeling and unanimity of sentiment; not, of course this does not mean agreement in opinion on all subjects. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Believing that you are mentally aloof [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Those who have true humility of the soul [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Verbal connection to D’barim 17:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Verbal connection to D’barim 17:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. **BAR** 34:05, Sep/Oct 2008 “Messiah the Son of Joseph” [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Vermes, G. (1993). *The Religion of Jesus the Jew.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press. p. 184 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. D’barim 16:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Cf. m. Pesachim 10:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Here I use “Rome” as the people, and the religion developed from Rome. I further the understanding that “Rome” is Edom. It must also be stated that Rome is Catholicism and all of it siblings, i.e. Protestant Christianity, which fails to accept a JEWISH messiah and the Torah, written and Oral. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Cf. Rom 9:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. For an in-depth presentation of the relationship of Easu with Edom and Rome, see… Harry Sysling, *Teḥiyyat ha-metim: the resurrection of the dead in the Palestinian Targums of the Pentateuch and parallel traditions in classical rabbinic literature.* Mohr Siebeck, 1996 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Note: It is G-d’s grace, if I may use the term, to bring Gentiles into faithful obedience of the Torah and Oral Torah through the agent of Yeshua our Messiah. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. My rendition [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Mt assertion is that they must accept the Torah Written, Oral along with the Mesorah of Messiah. The Mesorah of Messiah will take us to deeper levels of commitment in some areas which may not be comfortable for some of his followers. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Cf. Rashi Yesha’yahu 62:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Maimonides, Moses. *The Commandments: The 613 Mitzvoth of the Torah Elucidated in English*. Vol. 1. 2 vols. New York: Soncino, 2003. p.9 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. (Rambam), Maimonides, and Rabbi Eliyahu Touger. *Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Talmud Torah: The Laws [Which Are] for the Study of the Torah*. Moznaim Publishing Corporation, 1989. p. 226 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. (Rambam), Maimonides, and Rabbi Eliyahu Touger. *Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Talmud Torah: The Laws [Which Are] for the Study of the Torah*. Moznaim Publishing Corporation, 1989. p. 228 [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. See Rashi above D’barim 16:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-54)