**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat, what verse or verses touched your heart and fired your imagination?

I really enjoyed the connections of Vayikra 26:30 regarding the Rashi translation and the Targum:

**and My Spirit will reject you**. VS **and My Word will abhor you**.

This should really put to bed the idea that we can be led by the Spirit apart from The Word.

1. How is Variqra 26:27 related to Vayiqra 26:46?

The reason we should be listening and following HaShem’s word is because He gave these statutes at Sinai and WE AGREED TO FOLLOW THEM!

The Torah Seder begins with and admonition for those who would treat God with chance. The final verse of this Torah Seder teaches us that the statutes, the ordinances, and the laws of the Lord are the way of Judaism and the descendants of Yaakov, Yitzchak and Abraham.

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 26:30?

**your edifices** – What are these edifices?

**your sun-idols** – What are sun-idols?

**I will make your corpses [fall] upon [the corpses of your idols]** - How so?

**and My Spirit will reject you** – How is this manifested?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 26:31?

**I will lay your cities waste** – Does this mean that it is desolate of people?

**and your holy places** מִקְדְּשֵׁיכֶם **desolate** - Does this mean that it is desolate of sacrifices?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 26:35?

**all the days that it remains desolate** – Why is this word הָשַּׁמָּה unusual?

**whatever it had not rested on your sabbaticals** – How long did the land not get to rest?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 26:36?

**I will bring fear** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew word: מֽרֶךְ ?

**they will flee as one flees the sword** – How will we flee?

**a rustling leaf** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew phrase: עָלֶה נִדָּף?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 26:38?

**You will become lost among the nations** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

**and the land of your enemies will consume you** – To whom does this refer?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 26:41?

**Then I too, will... bring them [... (back while) in the land of their enemies]** – Is this a good thing?

**If then... becomes humbled** – What is the meaning of this unusual Hebrew phrase: אוֹ אָז יִכָּנַע ?

**then, [their sufferings] will gain appeasement for their iniquity** – What does this pasuk mean?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 26:42?

**And I will remember My covenant [with] Jacob** – What do we learn from the spelling of this Hebrew word: יַעֲקוֹב?

**I will remember My covenant [with] Jacob, and also... Isaac, and also... Abraham] -** Why are the forefathers enumerated in reverse order?

1. What does this Torah Seder, explicitly or implicitly, teach about following the Septennial Torah Cycle of readings?

The septennial cycle shows us that it is tied to the calendar and to time itself. If we fail to follow it, we will not see the prophesies concerning time. In fact, our view of prophesy will be distorted. With the septennial cycle, we read one cycle during a Sabbatical cycle of years for the land. Just as Yeshua’s (Messiah ben Joseph) life was unrolled in three and half years, so also was the Torah scroll unrolled in three and half year. (The septennial cycle suggests that the Messiah ben David will be the unrolling of the Torah for the second cycle of three and half years – making up one septennial cycle.)

For example: We read about a potential enemy destroying our land and taking us captive at the same time that the following event took place:

**R. Shimon b. Shetach** reorganized the Sanhedrin, eliminating its Tzedukim members. Additionally, the Samaritans asked Alexander the Great to destroy the Beit HaMikdash. He agreed. **Shimon HaTzadik** put on his Bigdei Kehunah and went out to greet him. Alexander came down from his chariot and bowed before him, saying that he saw a vision of him before every battle. He agreed not to destroy the Beit HaMikdash and allowed the Jews to do to the Samaritans as they wished. **Yoma 69a** 3448 [313 BCE].

We are also completing Vayikra just before Tu B’Shevat. In other words, we will be starting Bamidbar on the Shabbat closest to one of the four new years: Tu B’Shevat – the new year for trees.

In the Septennial Torah Cycle, one would read all of the laws, statutes and ordinances of Ha-Shem during the cycle, reminding them of the necessity for the sabbatical rest of the land, thereby averting punishment.

1. What does this Torah Seder has to teach about “Zekhut Abot” (i.e. merits of our Patriarchs - cf. <http://www.betemunah.org/merit.html>?

Rashi tells us explicitly, in v.42, that HaShem will mercifully remember us, when we repent, because of the merits of Yaaqov, Yitzchak, and Avraham.

We benefit from the good deeds of our ancestors. It is important for us to amass good deeds for future generations.

1. In the Hebrew Scriptures what astonishing similarity is there between Ya’aqob and Eliyahu?

Jacob took a letter ["vav"] from the name of Elijah [the Prophet] as security—that he will come and herald the redemption of his [Jacob’s] children [and since this is Elijah’s mission in life, his name will remain “incomplete,” as it were, until he fulfills it, speedily, in our days.

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the Psalmist‎ in Psalm 89:16-38‎?

The Psalmist keyed in on the benefits of observing the Torah, of walking in and doing HaShem’s statutes, as found in our Torah portion. He was especially enamored with HaShem’s faithfulness. We observe the Torah because HaShem commanded it and for no other reason.

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the prophet Isaiah 1:19 – 2:5‎?

The Prophet picks up on the Torah’s promises and punishments and elaborates on their effects.

1. How is the reading of Hakham Tsefet (2 Peter 3:11-16) related to the readings for this Shabbat?

2 Tsefet 3:11 All these things being in the process of dissolution, what country (people) must you belong to and what sort of acts of piety (should) (your) holy conduct (produce).

Hakham Tsefet sees that we must not succumb to the pressures of the worldly pagan systems or rebel against the mandates of God. He concludes that we should be people of piety and holy in our conduct. rather than those who “do not listen (obey) to God, treating Him as happenstance. Vayikra 26:27

Hakham Tsefet further plays on the “Day of G-d,” (Elohim the Judge) by whom the heavens and elements will dissolve with great heat in connection with the judgments placed on rebellious children. v12 and Vayikra 26:27ff

Tehillim

Hakham Tsefet connects to the Psalm through the idea of piety and holiness as well. See v21 Likewise, the Hebrew word “salvation” is matched in Greek. The Lord being the master of Deliverance (salvation). See Tsefet v14

Ashlamatah

Hakham Tsefet connects to the Prophet through the idea of God being the “Master” of Hosts. Yeshayahu 1:24. Furthermore, he connects with the idea of Judges. (Elohim) And, v28 of Yeshayahu speaks of the “destruction” and identification of the sinners.

1. In your opinion, what is the chief purpose that Hakham Tsefet wants to address in 2 Peter 3:11-16?

He wants folks to understand the end so that they will understand how they must live today.

We have a continuation of a theme that requires our need to forsake the things that would detract from pleasing HaShem. It seems that Hakham Tsefet Knowing the times of turning (Tekufa), is doubling his efforts by the summation of what manner of people (Jewish) we should be, by imitating the Holiness of all those who walked before us and with us .

With his emphasis on how we are to be a Holy people in a world that knows nothing of holiness, he continues to expound on the fact that it is because those looking towards G\_d are being led astray by the unlearned, who are very good at tickling ears and telling people what they want to hear, but can offer only shallow lessons at best, and great error/harm at worst.

This is in keeping with the teaching of the Sages, in that; one is not able to survive this journey without a Torah teacher/scholar/Hakham, to guide/navigate in the direction needed to be in the center of HaShem’s Will.

1. Explain how Hakham Tsefet derived all of his material in 2 Peter 3:11-16 from the Torah Seder for this Shabbat, Psalm 89:16-38, and ‎ Isaiah 1:19 – 2:5?

See question 15.

1. How are the readings for this Shabbat communicating that a new month and a new Book of the Torah is coming upon us?

The Psalmist references the fact that the moon is set for an eternal *sign*, and a faithful witness in the sky forever. It does this after speaking of HaShem’s promise to David. (We say that David melech Israel Chai v’kayam at the time of the new moon). The new Moon (Month) is derived from Psalm 89:31-32 where the Psalmist speak of the Throne (a covered chair) and the moon which is covered when it is renewed.

The special ashlamata and the maftir both speak of the coming New Moon.

Finally, this is the penultimate seder of Vayikra which is being read at the end of Tebet. This means that we will be reading the first seder of Bamidbar on the Shabbat close to Tu B’Shevat. The idea that we will be reading the book of Numbers is also derived from Vayikra 26:42 and the “enumeration” of the Patriarchs. The opening of Numbers is the enumeration of the Bne Yisrael.

Hakham Tsefet also speaks of a new heaven and a new earth as he alludes to: Isaiah 66:15-24. This pasuk also speaks explicitly of the New Moon.

The Prophet seems to allude to the New moon when he tells the house of Yaakov to come into the light of the Lord v 5 of Chapter 2

1. From the reading of Leviticus 26:30 from Rashi’s Translation vs. Targum Pseudo Jonathan what important principle is disclosed here?

and My Spirit will reject you. VS. and My Word will abhor you.

That we can not follow the Holy Spirit except we follow the Word of HaShem in His Torah.

1. In your opinion, and taking into consideration all of the above readings for this Sabbath, what is the prophetic message for this week?

We are at the turning point of the year, of the month, and of the book of Vayikra which signifies a turning point in our lives. We must learn Torah and heed our Hakhamim while striving to fulfill HaShem’s commands.

By obeying the commandments, we become people of holiness. Rebelliousness and disobedience will cause alienation from HaShem.

The septennial Torah reading cycle will teach us what we need on a daily basis. Living by the System of God will bring the appropriate reward and disobedience will result in punishment.

Continue to strive to do the Torahs mitzvots and grow in Torah Knowledge. Only by doing this can we become more intimate with our Father and therefore be in a position, at His call, to be ready to give an answer to all men.

Long for conversion, with great hope and profound yirah (fear).

This week our Master assists us to see the wisdom in properly aligned motivations and actions, for all things superfluous will pass and all things planned will come to pass. Doing so will continue to cleanse His people and the world as a whole, as well as one’s own psyche in general.

Hashem is faithful to those who are faithful to His statutes and ordinances. We should strive to be as faithful as we can and draw close to Him. We are also walking out prophecy daily, as we are 'humbling our clogged hearts...while in the land of our enemy'.

The time for playing with HaShem is over. The Tree does not reject you. We are in the time of the Spirit which is one of blood. We have progressed from Torah > to fire > to blood. It is time to be serious about grafting ourselves onto The Good Olive Tree (Israel).