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

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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **Third Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Heshvan 15, 5785 – November 15/16 2024** | **Third Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

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

**Roll of Honor:**

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 Tzuriel 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 Leah bat Sarah & beloved mother

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

His Excellency Adon Michael ben Yosef and beloved wife HE Giberet Sheba bat Sarah

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

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

His Excellency Adon Ovadya ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Mirit bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Brad Gaskill and beloved wife Cynthia Gaskill

His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham

His Excellency Adon Ya’aqob ben David

His Excellency Adon Bill Haynes and beloved wife HE Giberet Diane Haynes

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

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

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

**A Prayer for Israel**

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

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

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

***We pray for her Excellency Giberet Miriam bat Sarah***, Mi Shebeirach… He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, may he bless and heal Giberet Miriam bat Sarah and may He send her a complete recovery to her 248 organs and her 365 sinews. Please heal her, please heal her, please heal her and strengthen her and return her to her original strength. May He send her a complete recovery of her body and her soul from the heavens among the other sick of Yisrael, and we will say Amen ve amen!

**Reading Assignment**

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| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yitzchok Magriso, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1989)  **Leviticus – I-Vol. 11– “The Divine Service” pp. 387-402** | **Ramban: Leviticus Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1974)  **pp. 231-246** |

**Calendrical note**: This Shabbat, Heshvan 15 is the Shabbat closest to **Heshvan 18**, which was the first full day of Noach’s flood, according to Rashi. In the bimodality of the months, the corresponding Shabbat would be **Iyar 18**, aka Lag B’Omer. What makes this especially interesting is that HaShem will put his bow (rainbow) one year after the start of the flood. To commemorate HaShem’s bow, children play with bows and arrows on Lag B’Omer.

**Welcome to the World of Pshat Exegesis**

In order to understand the finished work of the Pshat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the Pshat is intended to produce a catechetical output, whereby a question/s is/are raised and an answer/a is/are given using the seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel and as well as the laws of Hebrew Grammar and Hebrew expression.

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

[cf. [http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=472&letter=R](about:blank)]:

**1. Ḳal va-ḥomer:** "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.

**2. Gezerah shavah:** Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.

**3. Binyan ab mi-katub eḥad:** Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.

**4. Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim:** The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.

**5. Kelal u-Peraṭ and Peraṭ u-kelal:** Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.

**6. Ka-yoẓe bo mi-maḳom aḥer:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.

**7. Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.

**Welcome to the World of Remes Exegesis**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. Deduction from the context.

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

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

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Shabbat: “Asher Yishchat” – “(he) who slaughters”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁחַט** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **‘Asher Yishchat”** | Reader 1 – Vayikra 17:1-3 | Reader 1 – Vayikra 18:1-3 |
| **“(he) who slaughters”** | Reader 2 – Vayikra 17:4-6 | Reader 2 – Vayikra 18:4-6 |
| **“que degüelle”** | Reader 3 – Vayikra 17:7-9 | Reader 3 – Vayikra 18:7-9 |
| Vayikra (Leviticus) 17:1–18:5 | Reader 4 – Vayikra 17:10-12 |  |
| Ashlamata:  Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-11 | Reader 5 – Vayikra 17:13-15 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – Vayikra 17:16-18:2 | Reader 1 – Vayikra 18:1-3 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 81:1-17 | Reader 7 – Vayikra 18:3-5 | Reader 2 – Vayikra 18:4-6 |
|  | Maftir – Vayikra 18:3-5 | Reader 3 – Vayikra 18:7-9 |
| N.C.: 1 Pet 3:8–17, Lk 12:22-34 | Isaiah 66:1-11 |  |

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* On Slaying Animals for Food – Lev. 17:1-7
* Offerings of Sacrifices and Their Slaughter Must be Done in the Temple Only – Lev. 17:8-9
* Blood Not to be Eaten – Lev. 17:10-14
* Carcass which Causes Defilement – Lev. 17:15-16
* Introductory Exhortation – Lev. 18:1-5

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Vayikra (Leviticus) 17:1 – 18:5**

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
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| 1. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: | 1. And the LORD spoke with Mosheh, saying: |
| 2. Speak to Aaron and to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them: This is the thing the Lord has commanded, saying: | 2. Speak with Aharon and with his sons, and with the sons of Israel, and tell them: This is the word which the LORD has commanded, saying: |
| 3. Any man of the House of Israel, **who slaughters** an ox, a lamb, or a goat inside the camp, or who slaughters outside the camp, | 3. A man of the house of Israel, young or old, **who will kill as a sacrifice** a bullock, or lamb, or goat in the camp, or who kills it without the camp, |
| 4. but does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to offer up as a sacrifice to the Lord before the Mishkan of the Lord, this [act] will be counted for that man as blood he has shed blood, and that man will be cut off from among his people; | 4. and brings it not to the door of the tabernacle of ordinance to offer it an oblation before the LORD, before the tabernacle of the LORD, the blood of slaughter will be reckoned to that man, and it will be to him as if he had shed innocent blood, and that man will be destroyed from his people. |
| 5. in order that the children of Israel should bring their offerings which they slaughter on the open field, and bring them to the Lord, to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, to the kohen, and slaughter them as peace offerings to the Lord. | 5. In order that the sons of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they have heretofore killed on the face of the field, they may henceforth bring them before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of ordinance, unto the priest, and sacrifice their consecrated victims before the LORD. |
| 6. And the kohen will dash the blood upon the altar of the Lord at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and he will cause the fat to go up in smoke, as a pleasing fragrance to the Lord. | 6. And the priest will sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of ordinance, and burn the fat, to be received with acceptance before the LORD. |
| 7. **And they will no longer slaughter their sacrifices to the satyrs after which they stray.** This will be an eternal statute for them, for [all] their generations. | 7. **Neither will they offer any more their sacrifices unto idols which are like unto demons, after which they have wandered.** This will be an everlasting statute to them, unto their generations. |
| 8. And you should say to them: Any man of the House of Israel or of the strangers who will sojourn among them, who offers up a burnt offering or [any other] sacrifice, | 8. And you will tell them: A man, whether young or old, of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who will sacrifice a burnt offering, or consecrated oblation, |
| 9. but does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to make it [a sacrifice] to the Lord, that man will be cut off from his people. | 9. and bring it not to the door of the tabernacle of ordinance, to be made an oblation before the LORD, that man will be destroyed from his people. |
| 10. And any man of the House of Israel or of the strangers that sojourn among them, **who eats any blood, I will set My attention upon the soul who eats the blood, and I will cut him off from among his people**. | 10. A man also, whether young or old, of the house of the family of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn, in dwelling among them, **who will eat any blood, I will cause employment to turn away (or cease) from that man who eats any blood, and will destroy him from among his people.** |
| 11. For the soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have therefore given it to you [to be placed] upon the altar, to atone for your souls. For it is the blood that atones for the soul. | 11. Because the subsistence of the life of all flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you for a decree, that you will bring the blood of the victim unto the altar to make atonement for the blood of your lives, because the blood of the victim is to atone for the guilt of the soul. |
| 12. Therefore, I said to the children of Israel: None of you will eat blood, and the stranger who sojourns among you will not eat blood. | 12. Therefore, have I said to the sons of Israel, beware lest any man among you eat the blood. Neither will the strangers who sojourn by dwelling among you eat the blood. |
| 13. And any man of the children of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn among them, who traps a quarry of a wild animal or bird that may be eaten, and sheds its blood, he will cover it [the blood] with dust. | 13. And any man, whether young or old, of the house of the stock of Israel, or of the sojourners who sojourn by dwelling among you, who hunts venison of beast or fowl proper to be eaten, will pour out its blood when it is killed; and if what he has killed be not destroyed **(or strangled?)**, let the blood be covered with dust. |
| 14. For [regarding] the soul of all flesh its blood is in its soul, and I said to the children of Israel: You will not eat the blood of any flesh, for the soul of any flesh is its blood all who eat it will be cut off. | 14. Because the subsistence of the life of all flesh is its blood; it is its life; and I have told the sons of Israel, You will not eat the blood of any flesh; for the subsistence of the life of all flesh is its blood: whosoever among you eats it will be destroyed. |
| 15. And any person, whether a native or a stranger, who eats carrion or what was torn, will immerse his garments and immerse himself in the waters, and will remain unclean until evening, and then he will become clean. | 15. And any man who will eat flesh which has been thrown away on account **of having been strangled (or corrupted)**, or the flesh of that **which has been torn**, (any man,) whether native or sojourner, will wash his clothes, and bathe in forty seahs of water, and be unclean until evening when he will be clean; |
| 16. But if he does not immerse [his garments] or immerse his flesh, he will bear his sin. | 16. but if he be perverse and will not wash, nor bathe his flesh, he will bear his transgression. |
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| 1. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: | 1. And the LORD spoke with Mosheh, saying: |
| 2. Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: I am the Lord, your God. | 2. Speak with the sons of Israel, and say to them, I am the LORD your God. |
| 3. Like the practice of the land of Egypt, in which you dwelled, you will not do, **and like the practice of the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you, you will not do, and you will not follow their statutes.** | 3. After the evil work of the people of the land of Mizraim, among whom you have dwelt, you will not do; so likewise, **after the evil work of the people of the land of Kenaan, whither I am bringing you, you will not do, neither will you walk according to their laws;** |
| 4. You will fulfill My ordinances and observe My statutes, to follow them. I am the Lord, your God. | 4. but you will perform the orders of My judgments, and observe My statutes to be walking in them: I am the LORD your God. |
| 5. You will observe My statutes and My ordinances, **which a man will do and live by them**. I am the Lord. | 5. And you will keep My statutes, and the order of My judgments, **which if a man do he will live in them, in the life of eternity, and his portion will be with the just:** I am the LORD. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Vayikra (Leviticus) 17:1 – 18:5**

**3** **Who slaughters an ox, a lamb, [or a goat]** Scripture is speaking of [slaughtering] holy sacrifices [not of slaughtering ordinary animals], for Scripture continues, “to offer up as a sacrifice” (next verse). -[*Torath Kohanim* 17:91]

**inside the camp** But outside the Courtyard. - [*Torath Kohanim* 17:89; *Zev.* 107b]

**4 will be counted [for that man] as blood** As though he had shed human blood, for which one is liable to the death penalty.

**He has shed blood** [This comes] to include one who dashes the blood [of a holy sacrifice] outside [the Temple Courtyard]. - [Zev. 107a]

**5** **which they slaughter** which they are accustomed to slaughter.

**7 to the satyrs** Heb. לַשְּׂעִירִים, to the demons, like, “and satyrs (וּשְּׂעִירִים) will dance there” (Isa. 13:21). -[Torat Kohanim 17:100]

**8 Who offers up a burnt offering** [This passage] comes to make liable one who causes the limbs [of a sacrifice] to go up in smoke outside [the Temple Courtyard] like the one who slaughters [a sacrifice] outside [the Courtyard. Consequently,] if one person slaughtered [the sacrifice] and his fellow offered it up [outside the Courtyard], they are both liable [to the penalty of excision]. - [*Torath Kohanim* 17:103; Zev. 106a]

**9 [that man] will be cut off [from his people]** Heb. מֵעַמּוֹ, lit. from his peoples. [The plural form of “peoples” teaches us that] his offspring will be cut off as well as his own days being cut off.

**10 any blood** Since Scripture says, “[For it is the blood] that atones for the soul” (next verse), one might think that a person is liable only for [eating] the blood of sanctified things, [which effects atonement]. Scripture, therefore, says here, “any blood” [to include even the blood of ordinary animals]. - [*Kereithoth* 4b]

**I will set my attention** Heb. פָנַי. [The word פָנַי here is to be understood to mean] My פְּנַאי, i.e., My leisure. [God is saying,] “I will make Myself free (פּוֹנֶה) from all My affairs, and I will deal with this person!”- [Torat Kohanim 17:108]

**11** **For the soul of the flesh** of every creature is dependent upon the blood, and therefore, I have given it to atone for the soul of man. [In this way,] one “soul” [namely, the blood of a sacrifice] will come and atone for another soul.

**12 None of you** [This phrase] comes to warn adults regarding minors [not to feed them blood]. - [Torat Kohanim 17:110; Yev. 114a]

**13 who traps** [Had the verse stated only this phrase,] we would know only [that this law applies to] creatures that require trapping. But how would we know [that the law includes also] geese and roosters, [which do not require trapping]? Scripture, therefore, adds [the word] צֵיד—a quarry, meaning in any way [even if not trapped]. But if so, why is it stated, "who traps"? [To teach us] that one should not eat flesh except with this preparation, [meaning, that just as one does not go out to trap every day, neither should one eat meat regularly at all his meals, as if he had to go out and trap it]. - [Torath Kohanim 17:111; Chul. 84a]

**that may be eaten** [This comes] to exclude unclean creatures [which are prohibited to be eaten, that their blood does not require covering]. - [Torat Kohanim 17:112]

**14 its blood is in its soul** Its blood is in the place of its very soul, because the soul is dependent upon it.

**for the soul of any flesh is its blood** [The word הִוא, meaning here “it is,” is feminine in gender.] “For the soul [...] is the blood.” [For] the words דָם and בָָּשָָׂר are masculine in gender, while the word נֶפֶשׁ is feminine in gender. [Hence, the antecedent of הִוא is נֶפֶשׁ.]

**15 who eats carrion or what was torn** Scripture is speaking about the carcass of a clean bird [i.e., a kosher species of bird], which transmits defilement only at the time it is swallowed into the esophagus. And it teaches you here, that it defiles [the person], when he eats it. [The trefah, the bird mortally wounded by a wild beast, or stricken with a terminal illness, however, does not transmit defilement. Consequently,] the torn one mentioned here was written only to expound upon it. Thus, we learned: One might think that the carcass of an unclean bird [also] defiles when it is swallowed into the esophagus. Scripture, therefore, says, “or what was torn,” [referring to a type of bird] that may fall under the category of טְרֵפָה [i.e., a kosher bird, which is prohibited only if it is torn], thus, excluding the case of an unclean bird, which can never fall under the category of טְרֵפָה, [because it is prohibited in any case]. - [Torat Kohanim 17:126]

**16** **he will bear his sin** If he [subsequently] eats holy sacrifices or enters the Sanctuary [in his unclean state], he is punished by excision because of this uncleanness, like all other cases of uncleanness. - [*Torath Kohanim* 17:129]

**[But if he does not] ...immerse his flesh, he will bear his sin** for [not] immersing his body he is punished by excision. However, for [not] immersing his garments, [and entering the Mishkan wearing them,] he is punished by lashes. - [*Torath Kohanim* 17:129]

**Chapter 18**

**2** **I am the Lord, your God** I am the One Who said at Sinai, “I am the Lord, your God” (Exod. 20:2), and you accepted My sovereignty upon yourselves [at that time]; consequently, accept My decrees. Rabbi [Yehudah Hanassi] says: "It is openly known before Him, that they would eventually be scourged by [transgressing the laws of] immoral relations, in the days of Ezra. Therefore, [concerning these laws,] God came to them with the decree: I am the Lord, your God! You should know Who is placing these decrees upon you-the Judge Who exacts retribution (אֱלֹקִים), but Who is faithful also to pay a reward  ('ה)!” - [Torath Kohanim 18:138]"

**3** **Like the practice of the land of Egypt [...and like the practice of the land of Canaan]** [This verse] informs [us] that the deeds of the Egyptians and the Canaanites were more corrupt than those of all other nations, and moreover, that the [Egyptians residing in that] region [of Egypt] in which the Israelites had dwelt, were the most corrupt of all. - [*Torath Kohanim* 18:138]

**and like the practice of the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you** [This verse] informs [us] that those [Canaanite] peoples whom the Israelites conquered, were more corrupt than any other [people, even the Egyptians]. - [*Torath Kohanim* 18: 138]

**and you shall not follow their statutes.**What did Scripture omit [until now] that it did not state [and includes in this clause]? However, these are their social practices, things that assumed the status of law (חָקוּק) for them, for example, [certain days set aside for attendance at] theaters and stadiums. Rabbi Meir says: These [practices referred to here,] are the “ways of the Amorites,” [the superstitious practices] enumerated by our Sages. — [see Shab. 67ab; Torath Kohanim 18: 139]

**4 You will fulfill My ordinances** These are the laws stated in the Torah in justice, [i.e., which human intellect deems proper,] which, had they not been stated [in the Torah], would have been deemed worthy to be stated [e.g., not to steal, not to murder, etc.]. - [*Torath Kohanim* 18:140]

**and observe My statutes** These are the “King’s decrees” [without apparent rationale to man], against which the evil inclination protests, “Why should we keep them?” Likewise, the nations of the world object to them. Examples are: [The prohibition of] eating pig and wearing shaatnez [a mixture of wool and linen] (see Lev. 19:19), and the purification procedure effected by purification water [the mixture including the ashes of the red cow] (see Num., Chapter 19). Therefore, it says, “I am the Lord.” I have decreed [these] upon you; you are not permitted to exempt yourselves [from fulfilling them]. - *Torath Kohanim* 18:140]

**to follow them** Do not take leave from [studying] them, i.e., you will not say, “I have learned the wisdom of Israel—now I will go and learn the wisdom of the [other] nations.”- [*Torath Kohanim* 18:141]

**5 You will observe My statutes and My ordinances** [This comes to include other details of [laws pertaining to] this passage, that Scripture did not mention explicitly.-[Torath Kohanim 18:142] Another explanation: [This clause, “You will observe My statutes and My judgments, which a man will do,” was added,] in order to apply “observance” (שְׁמִירָה) and fulfillment (עֲשִׂיָּה) to statutes, and to apply “observance” (שְׁמִירָה) and “fulfillment” (עֲשִׂיָּה) to ordinances. For [up till now,] Scripture had mentioned only “fulfillment” regarding ordinances and “observance” regarding statutes (see previous verse). - [Torath Kohanim 18: 134]

**and live by them** in the World-To-Come. For if you say [that the verse refers to living] in this world, does he not eventually die? [*Torath Kohanim* 18: 134]

**I am the Lord.**faithful to pay a reward [an attribute represented by the Name 'ה ]. — [*Torath Kohanim* 18:134]

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 81:1-17**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. For the conductor, on the gittith, of Asaph. | 1. For praise; on the lyre that comes from Gath, composed by Asaph. |
| 2. Sing praises to the God Who is our might, sound the shofar to the God of Jacob. | 2. Give praise in the presence of God, our strength; shout in the presence of the God of Jacob. |
| 3. Raise [your voice in] song and give forth [with] a timbrel, a pleasant harp with a lyre. | 3. Lift up the voice in praise, and set out timbrels, the lyre whose sound is sweet with harps. |
| 4. Sound the shofar on the New Moon, on the appointed time for the day of our festival. | 4. Blow the horn in the month of Tishri, in the month in which the day of our festivals is concealed. |
| 5. For it is a statute for Israel, the judgment of the God of Jacob. | 5. For He made a covenant for Israel; it is a legal ruling of the God of Jacob. |
| 6. As a testimony for Jehoseph, He ordained it, when he went forth over the land of Egypt, [when] I understood a language that I had not known. | 6. He made it a testimony for Joseph, **who did not go near the wife of his master;** on that day he went out of the prison and ruled over all the land of Egypt. The tongue I did not know I have taught and] heard. |
| 7. I removed his shoulder from burdens; his hands were removed from the cauldron. | 7. I have removed his shoulder from servitude; his hands were taken away from casting clay into a pot. |
| 8. In distress, you called, and I released you; I answered you-[though you called] in secret- with thunder; I tried you by the waters of Meribah, forever. | 8. In the time of the distress of Egypt, you called and I delivered you; I made you fast in the secret place where My presence is, where wheels of fire call out before Him; I tested you by the waters of Dispute forever. |
| 9. Hearken, My people, and I will admonish you, Israel, if you hearken to Me. | 9. Hear, O My people, and I will bear witness for you, O Israel, if you will accept My word. |
| 10. No strange god will be within you, neither will you prostrate yourself to a foreign god. | 10. There will not be among you worshippers of a foreign idol, and you will not bow down to a profane idol. |
| 11. I am the Lord, your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it. | 11. I am the LORD your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt; open wide your mouth with the words of Torah, and I will fill it with all good things. |
| 12. But My people did not hearken to My voice, neither did Israel desire to [follow] Me. | 12. But My people did not receive My voice; and Israel did not want My word. |
| 13. So I let them go after their heart's fantasies; let them go in their counsels. | 13. And I expelled them for the thoughts of their heart, they went away in their wicked counsel. |
| 14. If only My people would hearken to Me if Israel would go in My ways. | 14. Would that my people had listened to Me that Israel would walk in My ways! |
| 15. In a short time I would subdue their enemies and upon their enemies I would return My hand. | 15. In a little while I will humble their enemies, and I will turn My strong blow against their enemies. |
| 16. The enemies of the Lord would lie to Him, and their time would be forever. | 16. The enemies of the LORD will be false to Him; and their harshness will last forever. |
| 17. Then He would feed them with the fat of wheat, and I would sate you with honey from a rock. | 17. But He will feed him with the best of wheat bread; and I will satisfy you with honey from the rock. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Tehillim (Psalms) 81:1-17**

**1** **on the gittith** A musical instrument that comes from Gath.

**2** **sound the shofar** on Rosh Hashanah.

**3 a pleasant harp with a lyre** Rabbi Chiyya bar Abba says: The “kinnor” and the “nevel” are the same. Rabbi Simon says: The [number of] strings distinguishes one from the other. Why is it called “nevel”? Because it puts all other types of music to shame.

**4** **on the New Moon** When the moon renews itself.

**on the appointed time** The appointed day for it, and so (Prov. 7:20): “on the appointed day (בכסה) he will come home”; to the appointed time that had been fixed.

**and I will fill it** According to whatever you ask I will fill.

**5** **For it is a statute** for Israel from the Holy One, blessed be He, to sound the shofar on that day, the day of the judgment of the Holy One, blessed be He.

**6** **As a testimony for Jehoseph He ordained it** On Rosh Hashanah, Joseph went out of prison.

**[when] I understood a language that I had not known** It is explained in tractate Sotah (36b) that [the angel] Gabriel taught him seventy languages.

**7** **from the cauldron** From slave labor to cook the pots in the manner of other slaves.

**from the cauldron** Heb. מדוד, a pot, as (I Sam. 2:14): “And he would thrust into the fire-pot or into the pot (הדוד).”

**8** **In distress, you called** to Me, all of you. You called from the distress of the labor of the burdens of Egypt, and I released you.

**I answered you in secret with thunder** You called in secret between Me and you, but I answered you with a voice of thunder; I made known My might and My awesome deeds in public.

**I tried you by the waters of Meribah, forever** Although it was revealed and tried before Me that you were destined to provoke Me with the waters of Meribah. So, it was taught in Mechilta (Exod. 19:2).

**9** **Hearken, My people** Since I did all this for you, it is fitting for you to hearken to Me.

**11** **open your mouth wide** to request of Me whatever your heart desires.

**13** **after their heart’s fantasies** Heb. בשרירותלבם, after the views of their heart, as (above 5:9): “because of those who lie in wait for me (שוררי).”

**14** **If only My people would hearken to Me** Still, if they desired to return to Me and to hearken to Me...

**15** **In a short time I would subdue their enemies** In a short time I would subdue their enemies.

**I would return My hand** I would return my blow from upon you to lay it upon them, and then...

**16** **The enemies of the Lord would lie to Him, and their time would be** [The time of] their retribution [would be] forever.

**17** **Then He would feed them** Israel.

**and... from a rock** He sated them with honey when they went in His ways, as the matter that is stated (Deut. 32:13): “He suckled them with honey from the rock.”

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Tehillim (Psalms) ‎‎81:1-17**

Hakham Dr. Hillel ben David

Psalms 81 was composed by Assaf.[[1]](#footnote-1) Let’s take a look at these two VERY INTERESTING psalms. I just wish I had a couple hundred pages to explore several interesting aspects. But, alas, I have room for only a couple of thoughts, sorry.

**Psalms Chapter 81 Intro**

In Psalms chapter 80, Israel beseeched God to redeem His people from exile. Psalms chapter 81 celebrates the Divine salvation which ended our servitude in Egypt. The climax of the redemption from bondage in Egypt oc­curred when the Jews actually left the land on the fifteenth of Nisan, a day which is commemorated by the Passover festival. However, the process of redemption began six months earlier, on the first of Tishri, Rosh HaShanah, when the Israelites stopped working as slaves for their Egyptian taskmasters.[[2]](#footnote-2)

This composition commemorates that event: From the burden I removed his shoulder, I let his hands pass from the kettle (v. 7). This psalm also speaks of the shofar blast (v. 4), a powerful call to celebrate new found freedom and a new year.

This psalm was designated to accompany the Temple sacrifices on Rosh HaShanah.[[3]](#footnote-3) It is also the Song of the Day, for the fifth day of the week and also the song of the day for Rosh HaShanah.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**Psalms Chapter 81 Comments**

Now let’s start with an aspect of Psalms chapter 81. Psalms chapter 81 is the psalm we read on Rosh HaShanah. This has many interesting implications. To approach this topic, lets examine a very interesting pasuk in our first psalm:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 81:6*** *He appointed it in Yehoseph* (יהוסף) *for a testimony, when He went forth against the land of Egypt. The speech of one that I knew not did I hear:*

Yosef,[[5]](#footnote-5) the slave, is made second only to Pharaoh. This means that he has been elevated over all of the other politicians of Pharaoh’s court. Imagine the envy and bitterness of the lifelong politicians in Pharaoh’s court. This envy and bitterness cannot be directly expressed so the displaced politicians must challenge Yosef according to the law. The Talmud records this intrigue:

***Sotah 36b*** *R. Hiyya b. Abba said in the name of R. Johanan: At the moment when Pharaoh said to Yosef, And without thee shall no man lift up his hand etc., Pharaoh's astrologers exclaimed: ‘Wilt thou set in power over us a slave whom his master bought for twenty pieces of silver!’ He replied to them, ‘I discern in him royal characteristics.’ They said to him, ‘In that case he must be acquainted with the seventy languages. Gabriel came and taught [Yosef] the seventy languages, but he could not learn them. Thereupon [Gabriel] added to his name a letter from the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, and he learnt [the languages] as it is said: He appointed it in Yosef for a testimony, when he went out over the land of Egypt, [[6]](#footnote-6) where I [Yosef] heard a language that I knew not. On the morrow, in whatever language Pharaoh conversed with him he replied to him; but when [Yosef] spoke to him in the holy tongue he did not understand what he said. So, he asked him to teach it to him; he taught it to him but he could not learn it. [Pharaoh] said to him, ‘Swear to me that thou wilt not reveal this’; and he swore to him. When [Yosef] later said to him, My father made me swear, saying, he remarked to him, ‘Go, ask [to be released from] thine oath.’ He replied to him, ‘I will also ask [to be released from my oath] concerning thee’. Therefore, although it was displeasing to him, [Pharaoh] said to him, Go up and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.*

Sefer HaYasher also lends us some insight into this passage:

***Yasher 48:42*** *And the king was sitting upon his royal throne in a princely dress girt around with a golden ephod, and the fine gold, which was upon it sparkled, and the carbuncle and the ruby and the emerald, together with all the precious stones that were upon the king's head, dazzled the eye, and Yosef wondered greatly at the king. 43 And the throne upon which the king sat was covered with gold and silver, and with onyx stones, and it had seventy steps. 44 And it was their custom throughout the land of Egypt, that every man who came to speak to the king, if he was a prince or one that was estimable in the sight of the king, he ascended to the king's throne as far as the thirty-first step, and the king would descend to the thirty-sixth step, and speak with him. 45 If he was one of the common people, he ascended to the third step, and the king would descend to the fourth and speak to him, and their custom was, moreover, that any man who understood to speak in all the seventy languages, he ascended the seventy steps, and went up and spoke till he reached the king. 46 And any man who could not complete the seventy, he ascended as many steps as the languages which he knew to speak in. 47 And it was customary in those days in Egypt that no one should reign over them, but who understood to speak in the seventy languages. 48 And when Yosef came before the king he bowed down to the ground before the king, and he ascended to the third step, and the king sat upon the fourth step and spoke with Yosef.* ***49:1*** *After these things the king sent and assembled all his officers and servants, and all the princes and nobles belonging to the king, and they all came before the king. 2 And the king said unto them, Behold you have seen and heard all the words of this Hebrew man, and all the signs which he declared would come to pass, and not any of his words have fallen to the ground. 3 You know that he has given a proper interpretation of the dream, and it will surely come to pass, now therefore take counsel, and know what you will do and how the land will be delivered from the famine. 4 Seek now and see whether the like can be found, in whose heart there is wisdom and knowledge, and I will appoint him over the land. 5 For you have heard what the Hebrew man has advised concerning this to save the land therewith from the famine, and I know that the land will not be delivered from the famine but with the advice of the Hebrew man, him that advised me. 6 And they all answered the king and said, The counsel which the Hebrew has given concerning this is good; now therefore, our lord and king, behold the whole land is in thy hand, do that which seemeth good in thy sight. 7 Him whom thou chooses, and whom thou in thy wisdom knowest to be wise and capable of delivering the land with his wisdom, him shall the king appoint to be under him over the land. 8 And the king said to all the officers: I have thought that since God has made known to the Hebrew man all that he has spoken, there is none so discreet and wise in the whole land as he is; if it seem good in your sight I will place him over the land, for he will save the land with his wisdom. 9 And all the officers answered the king and said, But surely it is written in the laws of Egypt, and it should not be violated, that no man shall reign over Egypt, nor be the second to the king, but one who has knowledge in all the languages of the sons of men. 10 Now therefore our lord and king, behold this Hebrew man can only speak the Hebrew language, and how then can he be over us the second under government, a man who not even knoweth our language? 11 Now we pray thee send for him, and let him come before thee, and prove him in all things, and do as thou see fit. 12 And the king said, It shall be done tomorrow, and the thing that you have spoken is good; and all the officers came on that day before the king. 13 And on that night the Lord sent one of his ministering angels, and he came into the land of Egypt unto Yosef, and the angel of the Lord stood over Yosef, and behold Yosef was lying in the bed at night in his master's house in the dungeon, for his master had put him back into the dungeon on account of his wife. 14 And the angel roused him from his sleep, and Yosef rose up and stood upon his legs, and behold the angel of the Lord was standing opposite to him; and the angel of the Lord spoke with Yosef, and he taught him all the languages of man in that night, and he called his name Jehoseph. 15 And the angel of the Lord went from him, and Yosef returned and lay upon his bed, and Yosef was astonished at the vision which he saw. 16 And it came to pass in the morning that the king sent for all his officers and servants, and they all came and sat before the king, and the king ordered Yosef to be brought, and the king's servants went and brought Yosef before Pharaoh. 17 And the king came forth and ascended the steps of the throne, and Yosef spoke unto the king in all languages, and Yosef went up to him and spoke unto the king until he 146 arrived before the king in the seventieth step, and he sat before the king. 18 And the king greatly rejoiced on account of Yosef, and all the king's officers rejoiced greatly with the king when they heard all the words of Yosef.*

The excerpt from the Talmud teaches us that Yosef received two things from the angel Gabriel: Mastery over all seventy languages of the earth, and an additional letter to his name. Chazal[[7]](#footnote-7) learned these two things from their exegesis of our passage in Tehillim:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 81:6*** *He appointed it in Yehoseph* (יהוסף) *for a testimony, when He went forth against the land of Egypt. The speech of one that I knew not did I hear:*

The verse refers to יהוסף (Yehoseph), that is, יוסף (Yosef) with an extra letter, the letter ה heh. Additionally, the passage refers to his having heard a language he had not understood. These two ideas are combined in the Talmud, producing the concept of Yosef being taught this information by the angel Gabriel.

Yosef’s name change is not as well-known as Avram’s change to Avraham, also by the addition of the letter ה heh. This name change also has repercussions in halacha. The Midrash tells us that the addition to Yosef's name is related to the spurning of the advances of the Potiphar's wife:

***Midrash Rabbah - Leviticus XXIII:10*** *There were three who fled from transgression and with whom the Holy One, blessed be He, united His name. They are: Yosef, Jael, and Palti. How do we know it of Yosef? Because it says, He appointed it in Yosef (Yehoseph) for a testimony (Psalm 81:6). What is the implication of the expression ’Yehoseph’? God (yah) testifies in regard to him that he did not touch Potiphar's wife.*

Yosef's allegiance to HaShem brought about a merger, reflected in the change of Yosef's name. The new form, *Yehoseph*, serves as an ongoing testimony to his faithfulness to HaShem. This association between the name Yehoseph and his rejection of Potiphar's wife’s advances, allows us an insight into another passage in the Talmud, commenting on Bereshit 39:11:

***Sotah 36b*** *How was it with Yosef [that he sanctified the Name]? — As it is written: And it came to pass about this time, that he went into the house to do his work. R. Johanan said: This teaches that both [Yosef and Potiphar's wife] had the intention of acting immorally. ‘He went into the house to do his work’ — Rab and Samuel [differ in their interpretation]. One said that it really means to do his work; but the other said that he went to satisfy his desires. ‘And there was none of the men of the house etc. — is it possible that there was no man in a huge house like that of this wicked [Potiphar]! — It was taught in the School of R. Ishmael: That day was their feast-day, and they had all gone to their idolatrous temple; but she had pretended to be ill because she thought, I shall not have an opportunity like to-day for Yosef to associate with me. And she caught him by his garment, saying etc. At that moment his father's image came and appeared to him through the window and said: ‘Yosef, thy brothers will have their names inscribed upon the stones of the ephod and thine amongst theirs; is it thy wish to have thy name expunged from amongst theirs and be called an associate of harlots?’ (As it is written: He that keepeth company with harlots wasteth his substance.) Immediately his* ***bow****[[8]](#footnote-8) abode in strength*

Yosef's conscience motivates him to reject the advances of Potiphar’s wife, but the connection with the ephod seems a bit obscure. The context of this next Talmudic passage is a discussion of the ephod of the High Priest, which, we are told, is inscribed with exactly fifty letters:

***Sotah 36b*** *SIX TRIBES ASCENDED THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT GERIZIM etc. What means and the half of them? — R. Kahana said: As they were divided here [on the mounts] so were they divided on the stones of the ephod. An objection was raised: The High priest had two precious stones on his shoulders, one on this side and one on the other side; upon them were inscribed the names of the twelve tribes, six on one stone and six on the other, as it is said: Six of their names on the one stone, [and the names of the six that remain on the other stone, according to their birth]. [This indicates that] the second six were to be according to their birth, but the first six were not to be according to their birth; because [the name of] Judah came first, and there were fifty letters, twenty-five on each stone.*

In order to make the equation work, one suggestion in the Talmud is that Yosef's name needs another letter:

***Sotah 36b*** *[It was stated above that on the stones of the ephod] were fifty letters; but there were fifty less one! — R. Isaac said: One letter was added to the name of Yosef, as it is said: He appointed it in Yehoseph for a testimony, when he went out over the land of Egypt.*

Had Yosef sinned, he would have been rejected, excluded from the totality of the twelve tribes, and his name would not have appeared on the ephod. By retaining his purity, Yosef received an extra letter which serves as a testimony to his righteousness.

The starting point of the discussion in the Talmud actually concerned not the ephod, but the blessings and the curses which the tribes performed on Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal:

***Sotah 36b*** *SIX TRIBES ASCENDED THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT GERIZIM etc. What means and the half of them? — R. Kahana said: As they were divided here [on the mounts] so were they divided on the stones of the ephod.*

The ephod is introduced into the discussion here because of the similar division of the tribes. The Talmud describes the events of the day:

***Sotah 36a*** *After that they brought the stones, built the altar, and plastered it with plaster, and inscribed thereon all the words of the Torah in seventy languages; as it is said: Very plainly. Then they sacrificed burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, ate and drank and rejoiced, pronounced the blessings and the curses, packed up the stones, and came and lodged in Gilgal; as it is said: Carry them over with you and lay them down in the lodging place. It is possible [to think that they were to deposit them] in any lodging place; therefore there is a text to state, Where ye shall lodge this night, and then it is written: And those twelve stones, which they took [out of Jordan, did Joshua set up in Gilgal].*

In order to understand the intrinsic connection between these ideas we must explore the nature of speech and the purpose of language. When man was created, he was endowed with numerous capabilities, as the Torah recounts:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 2:7*** *And HaShem God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

The Targum[[9]](#footnote-9) expands on this, and explains that man was endowed with speech. The breath of HaShem with which man was animated gave him the capability of speech. The purpose of speech is for man to manifest the image of HaShem with which he is endowed. Yet Bereshit goes on to tell so many tales of individual and collective failure, that at times it seems the image of HaShem within man has become tarnished. One such event was the rebellion by the generation of the Tower of Babel.

*[JERUSALEM. And all the inhabiters of the earth were (of) one language, and of one speech, and one counsel: for they spake the holy language by which the world was created at the beginning: while their hearts erred afterwards from the Word of Him who spake, and the world was, at the beginning; and they found a plain in the land of Pontos and dwelt there.]*

*And they said, a man to his fellow, Come, we will cast bricks, and put them in the furnace. And they had brick for stone, and slime for cement. And they said, Come, we will build us a city and a tower, and the head of it shall come to the summit of the heavens; and we will make us (an image for) worship on the top of it, and put a sword in his hand to act against the array of war, before that we be scattered on the face of the earth. And the Lord was revealed to punish them for the work of the city and the tower which the sons of men builded.*

*[JERUSALEM. And they said, Come now, and we will build us a city and a tower, and the head of it shall reach to the summit of the heavens, and we will make us in it a house of worship at the top,......and we will put a sword in his hand, lest there be set against him the array of war, before we be scattered upon the face of all the earth.]*

*And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and the language of all of them one: and this they have thought to do: and now they will not be restrained from doing whatever they imagine. And the Lord said to the seventy angels which stand before Him, Come, we will descend and will there commingle their language, that a man shall not understand the speech of his neighbour. And the Word of the Lord was revealed against the city, and with Him seventy angels, having reference to seventy nations, each having its own language, and thence the writing of its own hand: and He dispersed them from thence upon the face of all the earth into seventy languages. And one knew not what his neighbour would say: but one slew the other; and they ceased from building the city. Therefore, He called the name of it Bavel, because there did the Lord commingle the speech of all the inhabitants of the earth, and from thence did the Lord disperse them upon the faces of all the earth.*

In the wake of this sin of rebellion, man, who still possessed the ability to speak, lost the ability to communicate. Not only were there multiple languages, but that thought of man which had been successfully put in words, was not only partially successful. The very essence of man had been limited by his sin. Generations later, Yosef, who has HaShem’s name as a part of his person, is the first individual who is able to reach back to the point before this sin, when man was still able to communicate, when man's soul was still directly in touch with his mission. This is what the Sages convey in the Gemara: Yosef master’s language. Not just seventy languages, but language itself! Yosef, who had been taken from his people, from his own language, found himself in a debased, alien society. Yosef, at seventeen, is imbued with the Spirit of HaShem. He is able to speak clearly, and to effectively communicate.

Ironically, the Zohar explains the origin of Yosef 's greatness:

***Zohar Pinchas 213b*** *Come and see, at the moment when the wife of Potiphar grabbed him, Yosef made believe that he did not understand her language...*

Yosef 's reward for this feigned ignorance which in part saved him from sin was the mastery of all language. We might trace this idea to the mitzva that the Bne Israel, upon entering the land of Israel, were to write the words of the Torah:

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 27:4-8*** *Therefore it shall be when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaister them with plaister. 5 And there shalt thou build an altar unto HaShem thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them. 6 Thou shalt build the altar of HaShem thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto HaShem thy God: 7 And thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before HaShem thy God. 8 And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.*

The Mishna explains:

***Sotah 32a*** *How were the blessings and curses [pronounced]? When Israel crossed the jordan and came to mount gerizim and mount ebal which are by samaria, (this is in the vicinity of shechem which is in the vicinity of the terebinths of moreh, and it is said, are they not beyond jordan etc. And elsewhere it states, and abram passed through the land unto the place of shechem unto the terebinth of moreh; as the terebinth of moreh mentioned in this latter verse is shechem, so the terebinth of moreh mentioned in the former verse is shechem.) Six tribes ascended the summit of mount gerizim, six tribes ascended the summit of mount ebal, and the priests and levites with the ark were stationed below in the centre, the priests surrounding the ark, the levites [surrounding] the priests, and all israel on this side and that side; as it is said, and all israel, and their elders and officers, and their judges stood on this side the ark and on that side etc. They turned their faces towards mount gerizim and opened with the blessing: blessed be the man that maketh not a graven or molten image’, and both parties respond amen. They then turned their faces towards mount ebal and opened with the curse: cursed be the man that maketh the graven or molten image’, and both parties respond ‘amen’. [so, they continue] until they complete the blessings and curses. After that they brought the stones, built the altar and plastered it with plaster, and inscribed thereon all the words of the torah in seventy languages, as it is said, very plainly. Then they took the stones and went and spent the night in their place.*

The Torah must be taught in every language in order to bring the entire world to the point of clarity and communication.

Yosef was the first to set out from his home and become submerged in alien culture. Unlike Abraham, who remained on the edge of other communities and taught morality to individuals, Yosef was positioned in the highest echelons of the most powerful empire of his day, under constant scrutiny, constantly compared and contrasted with the society at large. Despite this challenge, Yosef maintained holiness and purity on a personal level. Despite being pulled by his garments toward a spiritual abyss, Yosef displayed greatness.

Our vision of the future is closely intertwined with this very aspect of Yosef 's greatness: In the future, the confusion in the world will end. The curse of Babel will be undone. People will speak one language with clarity, and the words of Torah will be universally understood:

***Zephaniah 3:8-9*** *Therefore wait ye upon me, saith HaShem, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. 9 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of HaShem, to serve him with one consent.*

On that day, the peoples of the world will grab onto the tzitzit of the Jew; not in an attempt to corrupt, but, this time, in a search for HaShem:

***Zechariah (Zechariah) 8:23*** *Thus saith HaShem of hosts; In those days that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the tzitzit of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard God with you.*

OK, that’s a quick look at an interesting aspect of Psalms chapter 81.

**Ashlamata: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-11**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. So says the Lord, "The heavens are My throne, and the earth is My footstool; which is the house that you will build for Me, and which is the place of My rest? | 1. Thus says the LORD: "The heavens are the throne of My glory and the earth is a highway before Me; what is the house which you would build before Me, and what is the place of the dwelling of My Shekhinah? |
| 2. And all these My hand made, and all these have become," says the Lord. **"But to this one will I look, to one poor and of crushed spirit, who hastens to do My bidding.** | 2. All these things My might has made, did not all these things come to be, says the LORD? **But in this man there is pleasure before Me to regard him, he that is poor and humble in spirit, and trembles at My word.** |
| 3. Whoever slaughters an ox has slain a man; he who slaughters a lamb is as though he beheads a dog; he who offers up a meal-offering is [like] swine blood; he who burns frankincense brings a gift of violence; they, too, chose their ways, and their soul desired their abominations. | 3. He who slaughters an ox is like him who kills a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, like him who bludgeons a dog: he who presents an offering, [like him who offers] swine’s blood; their offering of gifts is a gift of oppression. They have taken pleasure in their own ways, and their soul takes pleasure in their abominations. |
| 4. I, too, will choose their mockeries, and their fears I will bring to them, since I called and no one answered, I spoke and they did not hearken, and they did what was evil in My eyes, and what I did not wish they chose. **{S}** | 4. Even I will wish breaking for them, and from what they dreaded they will not be delivered; because, when I sent My prophets, they did not repent, when they prophesied they did not attend; but they did what is evil before Me, and took pleasure in that which I did not wish. **{S}** |
| 5. **Hearken to the word of the Lord, who quake at His word, "Your brethren who hate you, who cast you out, said, "For the sake of my name, the Lord shall be glorified, " but we will see your joy, and they shall be ashamed.** | 5. **Listen to the word of the LORD, you righteous/ generous who tremble at the words of His pleasure: "Your brethren, your adversaries who despise you for My name's sake say, 'Let the glory of the LORD increase, that we may see your joy'; but it is they who will be put to shame.** |
| 6. There is a sound of stirring from the city, a sound from the Temple, the voice of the Lord, recompensing His enemies. | 6. A sound of tumult from the city of Jerusalem! A voice from the temple! The voice of the Memra of the LORD, rendering recompense to His enemies. |
| 7. When she has not yet travailed, she has given birth; when the pang has not yet come to her, **she has been delivered of a male child.** | 7. Before distress comes to her she will be delivered; and before shaking will come upon her, as pains upon a woman in travail, **her king will be revealed.** |
| 8. Who heard [anything] like this? Who saw [anything] like these? Is a land born in one day? Is a nation born at once, that Zion both experienced birth pangs and bore her children? | 8. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Is it possible that a land will be made in one day? Will its people be created in one moment? For Zion is about to be comforted and to be filled with the people of her exiles. |
| 9. "Will I bring to the birth stool and not cause to give birth?" says the Lord. "Am I not He who causes to give birth, now should I shut the womb?" says your God. **{S}** | 9. I. God, created the world from creation, says the LORD; I created every man; I scattered them among the peoples; I am also about to gather your exiles, says your God. **{S}** |
| 10. **Rejoice with Jerusalem and exult in her all those who love her: rejoice with her a rejoicing, all who mourn over her.** | 10. **Rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who were mourning over her,** |
| 11. In order that you suck and become sated from the breast of her consolations in order that you drink deeply and delight from her approaching glory. **{S}** | 11. that you may be indulged and be satisfied with the plunder of her consolations; that you may drink and be drunk with the wine of her glory." **{S}** |

**Rashi’s Commentary to: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-11**

**1** **The heavens are My throne** I do not need your Temple.

**which is the house** that is fitting for My Shechinah.

**2** **And all these** The heavens and the earth, and for this reason I confined My Shechinah among you when you obeyed Me, for so is My wont, to look at one poor and of crushed spirit, who hastens to do My bidding. But now, I have no desire for you, for whoever slaughters an ox, has smitten its owner and robbed him of it. Therefore, whoever slaughters a lamb seems to Me as one who beheads a dog, and whoever offers up a meal offering is before Me like swine blood, and מַזְכִּיר, he who burns incense. Comp. (Lev. 5:12) “its memorial part (אַזְכָּרָתָהּ).” Also (ibid. 24:7), “and it shall be for the bread as a memorial (לְאַזְכָּרָה).”

**3** **brings a gift of violence** Heb. מְבָרֵךְ, blesses Me with a gift of violence, brings a gift of violence. This is its explanation, and the expression of בְּרָכָה applies to a gift that is for a reception. Comp. (Gen. 33:11) “Please take my gift (בִּרְכָתִי).” Also (supra 36:16), “Make peace (בְרָכָה) with me and come out to me.”

**they, too, chose their ways** They desire these evil ways, and I, too, will choose and desire their mockeries. Now if you ask the meaning of גַּם, too, so is the style of the Hebrew language to say twice גַּם one next to the other. Comp. (Deut. 32: 25) “Both a young man and a virgin (גַּם בָּחוּר גַּם בְּתוּלָה)”; (I Kings 3: 26) “neither mine nor yours (גַּם לִי גַּם לָךְ)”; (Ecc. 9:1) “neither love nor hate אַהֲבָה גַּם שִׂנְאָה) (גַּם”; (Num. 18:3) “and neither they nor you shall die אַתֶּם) (גַּם הֵם גַּם.” Here, too, both they chose, and I will choose.

**4** **their mockeries** Heb. בְּתַעֲלוּלֵיהֶם, to mock them, an expression like (ibid. 22: 29) “For you mocked (הִתְעַלַּלְתְּ) me.”

**and their fears** What they fear.

**since I called** Hearken and return to Me.

**and no one answered** saying, “I heard.”

**5** **who quake at His word** The righteous who hasten with quaking to draw near to His words.

**Your brethren...said** **the transgressors of Israel mentioned above.** Another explanation:

**Your brethren...who cast you out, said** **Who said to you (Lam. 4:15), “Turn away, unclean one.”**

**who hate you, who cast you out** **Who say (supra-65:5), “Keep to yourself, do not come near me.”** [Because of the confusion, we quote other readings. Some manuscripts, as well as K’li Paz, read:]

**Your brethren...said** **the transgressors of Israel mentioned above.**

**who hate you, who cast you out** **who say (supra-65:5), “Keep to yourself, do not come near me.”** Another explanation:

**Your brethren...said** **the children of Esau.**

**who cast you out** **Who said to you (Lam. 4:15), “Turn away, unclean one.”**

**For the sake of my name, the Lord shall be glorified** With our greatness, the Holy One, blessed be He, is glorified, for we are closer to Him than you are.

**but we will see your joy** The prophet says, But it is not so as their words, for “we will see your joy, and they shall be ashamed.” Why? For sound a sound of their stirring has come before the Holy One, blessed be He, from what they did in His city, and a sound emanates from His Temple and accuses those who destroyed it, and then the voice of the Lord, recompensing His enemies.

**7** **When she has not yet travailed** When Zion has not yet travailed with birth pangs, she has borne her children; that is to say that her children will gather into her midst, which was desolate and bereft of them, and it is as though she bore them now without birth pangs, for all the nations will bring them into her midst.

**she has been delivered of a male child** Heb. וְהִמְלִיטָה. Any emerging of an embedded thing is called הַמְלָטָה. And הַמְלָטָה is esmoucer, or eschamocier in O. F., to allow to escape.

**8** **Is a land born in one day?** Can a pain come to a woman in confinement to bear a land full of sons in one day?

**9** **Will I bring to the birth stool and not cause to give birth** Will I bring a woman to the birth stool and not open her womb to bring out her fetus? That is to say, Shall I commence a thing and not be able to complete it? Am I not the One Who causes every woman in confinement to give birth, and now will I shut the womb? This is a question.

**11** **from the breast** Heb. מִשֹּׁד, an expression of breasts (שָׁדַיִם).

**you drink deeply** Heb. תָּמֹצּוּ, sucer in French, to suck.

**from her approaching glory** Heb. מִזִּיז. From the great glory that is moving and coming nearer to her. זִיז means esmoviment in O.F., movement.

**Commentary on the Ashlamata of Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-11**

By: H.Ex. Adon Shlomoh Ben Abraham

This closing chapter is *the summary* of Isaiah’s prophecies as to the last days: we see the similarity of its sentiments with what Isaiah has recorded before, from the blessing to the obedient, to the judgment of the reprobates. Our chapter begins by refuting the notion that the temple and the offerings are necessary for the sake of God. God has no need for our service. Rather, it is the notion that we human benefit by expressing our desire to serve Him and come close to Him. God’s intention is twofold: to reward those who serve him with clarity and humility, and to punish those nations/ individuals that sinned against him. (Radak and Abarbanel).[[10]](#footnote-10)

Malbim tell us that the children of Israel are miserable and operating under a misconception(lies) that has lulled the people into a false sense of security. The people thought, as long as they brought the sacrifices to the temple and did the outward manifestations of religion, that they were fine, they were sure that God would overlook their sins as long as they brought the offerings to the temple. But God's response: He is not confined to a building, and he did not require offerings to be brought, but rather he takes pleasure in the humility and the humbleness of the person who submits his will, to God's will.

Rashi commented on Leviticus 1:9 where it says, “I had spoken and my will was fulfilled” The idea, that God in seeing the burnt offering and smelling the incense, God would see that his children had acknowledged his commands and followed his will. But God himself rebukes this design in the heart of a person who is devoid of any spirit of holiness, and they are warned that mere formal outward worship is an abomination to him if they do not come humbly and with a broken and contrite heart. (verses 1–3). In ver. 4 he tells them of the harvest they are to receive if they continue to plant such seeds. The harvest they are threatened with will be punishment because *they did what was evil in my sight and chose what did not, please me.*

The Rabbis ask the question, Will God redeem his people for his own sake, so that he can have a temple where people can worship him or whether, His intention is solely for the sake of Israel? We see where God juxtaposes the two ideas of the heavens and earth he created and everything in them against the idea of what is the house that you will build for me. In betwixt these two ideas, the heavens and the earth and everything in them I have created, *God says, this is the one to whom I will look. He who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word*. Radak goes on to express; how can you entertain the thought, that a physical structure can contain my glory. *Heaven is merely my throne, and the earth is my footstool.* I commanded you to build the Temple, not to benefit me, but so that the hearts of Israel would focus upon me, as they would have a place for prayer and offerings. This would therefore encourage them to eradicate their faulty values, just as the offerings were consumed on the altar. Again, we have these two ideas juxtaposed against one another. The heaven symbolizes spirituality which is far superior to the material existence that is symbolized by Earth.[[11]](#footnote-11) If we go back to Second Chronicles 2, We see the elements of the temple and the leading religious observances and services of the nation that are summarized and placed before the people. Let us remember and not forget, each of these elements are not in the text as mere suggestions, but divine commands to be associated with temple worship.

*I am now about to build a house for the name of the Lord my God and dedicate it* (“to hallow,” or “to sanctify.”) *to him for offering fragrant incense*(Exo 30) *before him, and for the regular offering of the rows of bread,*(Lev 24:5-9) *and for burnt offerings morning and evening*,(Exo 29:38- 42) *on the sabbaths*(Numb 28:9-10) *and the new moons* (Numbers 28:1)[[12]](#footnote-12) *and the appointed festivals*[[13]](#footnote-13) *of the Lord our God, as ordained forever for Israel. [[14]](#footnote-14)*

The children of Israel, desired to have a material temple as a representation of the presence of God in their midst. However, they were deeply impressed with the feeling that no temple could be worthy of him. Even Solomon said, “Will God,” “indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heavens of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have built?” (1 Kings 8:27). Again, “Who is able to build him a house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? Who am I then, that I should build him a house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?” (2 Chron. 2:6). Thus, Isaiah’s note of warning was no novelty, and might find residence in the hearts and minds of many in the congregation of Israel.

**But to this** man **will I look**, *i.e.,* though I have made all things and all men, I will not equally regard all. Him only will I respect who is of a poor and contrite spirit, etc. We find earlier the same ideal in 57:15 *For thus says the high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with those who are contrite and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite*. [[15]](#footnote-15)

The question is asked, *what is the house that you would build for me? Tell me the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be.* God is telling the people*,* there is nothing you can do for me or give to me. Ibn Ezra, states it as; How can you create something that I already own? If the purpose of the temple were to be a place where Israel could bring offerings and meet God. When Jews would see the offerings consumed upon the altar, they would be inspired to purge inappropriate thoughts and values from their hearts. However, if they performed the temple service while continuing to engage in their depraved and deviant behavior, which was contrary to the law of God they would be undermining the very purpose of meeting with God in the first place.

If we use the analogy of marriage which God so many times uses as his relationship with us. If a man is meeting with his wife but while he is meeting with her, he is still in his deprived state, still doing his deprived behavior and if he is not meeting with her wholeheartedly with humility, sincerity, and truth then his whole life is a lie. The whole relationship is a lie. Although he may be able to continue this type of behavior for some time, he is effectively destroying the relationship at the very root. The very relationship he is trying to preserve and enhance by meeting with his wife, he is sowing the seeds of destruction. Is there no man that has ears to hear and eyes to see? The constant cry of the Prophet.

*But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word*. Like all relationships we experience in life, God’s relationship with each of us is just a reflection of our own relationship that we have with Hashem. If we turn our face toward him, Hashem turns his face towards us. In v. 3, comparisons are made, if one thinks in performing the God ordain sacrifices that it is tantamount to killing a man or offering pig’s blood, they are totally misunderstanding what the prophet is saying. This verse presents four lines in which a legitimate action is paired with an illegitimate one. The prophet condemns people who participate in legitimate or even sacred actions but also commit sins, whether by acting immorally toward other human beings or by practicing idolatrous rites in addition to worshipping the true God. The prophet fights not only outright apostasy but also pious hypocrisy. Cf. 1:10–20; 29:13; 58:1–14.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Which should cause us to question why people, and scholars want to interpret this passage as a proof text to support the position that the sacrifices where never God given. Or that these are proof texts that animal sacrifice is wrong, and we should all become vegetarians. Or to put forth the proposition that the Torah has been changed and it all is just a myth. Why would a progressive thinking individual under the guise of seeking truth undermine the validity of what God has left us? Why would an individual who purposes to seek justice, righteousness, and truth, undermine the very thing that is the standard of truth? Is it due to the working of the Anti-messiah spirit? These and other misappropriation of verses and many other examples are not coming from uneducated people but students of the bible with letters behind their names. So, why would a person wrestle the text to fit their own preconceived ideas, to their own **destruction?** Are these individuals religiously exercising themselves with open unrepentant sin in their lives and not knowing that their time is quickly coming to an end? Are they so openly rebellious against God’s law that they are as a blind man, groping aimlessly in the dark? Malbim says, just as they have deliberately chosen a path of sin, in opposition to God, that he will not leave them to their natural fate but will bring upon then that very evil which they fear.[[17]](#footnote-17)

We must look no further than verse four for the answer to our question. *These have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations.* Isaiah prophesied from 740-680 BCE[[18]](#footnote-18) and Jeremiah came along from 627 – 580 *BCE[[19]](#footnote-19)* and battled the same error of the people. Jer7:22-24 tells us: *For in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.* ***23****But this command I gave them:* ***‘Obey my voice,*** *and I will be your God, and you shall be my people.* ***And walk in all the way*** *that I command you, that it may be well with you.’* ***24****But they did not obey or incline their ear but walked in their own counsels and the stubbornness of their evil hearts and went backward and not forward.* ***25****From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day*. Are you inclining your ear and are you moving forward and not backward?

Sacrifice was already a part of the biblical culture before the children of Israel came out of Egypt. We know of numerous passages, which teach of the sacrifices in the Torah and Tanakh. But what is misunderstood at the Exodus, they were instructed to “Obey my voice and walk in my way.” Going back to Jer.7:1-10 the context is people are depending on the temple to save them instead of ceasing from their evil deeds and wickedness, instead of “*obeying the voice*” and “*walking in the Halakah/way*”. When it came time to punish God’s people what did he remove from them? The “obey my voice and walk in my way,” NO, he removes that thing that became bigger than God’s voice and commandments. Do not think, that it’s Israel’s problem and it was for the Israelites 2,000 years ago, understand it is man’s problem, part of the human condition and unless mankind starts walking in the way that pertains to them and listening to the voice of God that directs their path, it leaves one to wonder…. What is Hashem getting ready to remove from people today? As we learn at Yom Kippur, Jonah was called to service because the wickedness of the people had *“come up before me,”* in other words, it stunk to high heaven! I find it Interesting that the time of Jonahs ministry is just prior to Isaiah and Jeremiahs prophecies. [[20]](#footnote-20)

Radak explains, the Torah does not command an individual to bring a burnt offering or peace offering as they were voluntary. Although there are requirements to bring the daily offering, the Korban Tamid, the continual-offering, as well as the musaf-offerings on Sabbath and Festivals. Those obligations are communal and are brought to bring honor to the temple. Therefore, we can conclude that part of the misunderstanding of Isaiah 66 is that people do not understand the sacrifices. Radak also goes on to comment and say that the first set of commandments, those at Marah, Exodus 15:25ff, these commandments called upon Israel to accept God as the Creator and to be subservient to His will. That is the prerequisite for all of Israel's acceptance of the Torah and its designation as God's chosen people.

Metzudot[[21]](#footnote-21) explains that the bringing of offerings is but one of the many commandments that followed Marah, and the ten commandments and God accepts them with favor if they are brought with submission and dedication to His will. Malbim, goes on to state, the purpose of the offering is to bring the Jew (people of Israel), to remind the Jew to go in Hashim's ways to strengthen and renew his bond with Hashem, and to bring “pleasure to him”, as it were, because God's directives had been fulfilled. None of these directives are accomplished if one acts hypocritically and the rest of his actions contradict this idea, the Torah, and the directives of Hashem. Abarbanel states, there is no mention of offerings made in the Torah until after the sin of the golden calf. The offerings are designated as a means of atonement.[[22]](#footnote-22)

*Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at his word: “Your brothers who hate you and cast you out for my name’s sake have said, Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy; but it is they who shall be put to shame*.v.5 It seems there is an echo in the Nazarene Codicil of this same ideal, repentance and return to Hashem and removing your lying ways and evil deeds out of your life’s action. **Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil. (5:20)** woe against those who confound the distinctions of right and wrong. (Cf. Rom. 1:28), “even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.[[23]](#footnote-23) It seems when a person strives to commit their way to Hashem, their brothers shun the light and gravitate toward the darkness all the while thinking they are doing God’s will. Has anything changed in the last 3,000 years?

*Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before her pain came upon her, she delivered a son*. (v.7) The Targum explains this as referring specifically to the revelation of Messiah. Whereas Malbim interprets this as many years before the coming of Messiah there will be a small ingathering of the exiles to Jerusalem, this small immigration will precede the Messianic era.[[24]](#footnote-24) He goes on to say the birth pangs refer to the war of Gog U’Magog, which erupts suddenly. Here the metaphor for the rebirth of Zion is that of a male child, born as in a single day. God promises that when the birth pains start, he will bring the birth to fruition, just as with a natural childbirth, here also, he will bring to fruition the culmination of his plan for the universe: the rebirth of Zion.[[25]](#footnote-25)

We are nearing the appointed time, and we prayerfully await the redemption and with that redemption we will have unbridled joy when Jerusalem is rebuilt. *“Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,* ***all you who love her****;* ***rejoice with her in joy****, all you* ***who mourn over her****; that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast; that you* ***may drink deeply with delight from her glorious abundance****.”*[[26]](#footnote-26) Here is a most interesting observation. When a child is born it is normal to rejoice with the parents and when a child is hurt, injured, or dies, a normal response is to mourn with the family. It is explained that if one mourns Jerusalem, it means that Jerusalem is not forgotten. If one were to feel that the era of the Temple is over, never to return, and that one must move on and deal with the new reality, it means that for him, Jerusalem is gone forever. But if one still mourns its loss, it means that for him, Jerusalem is still a reality and that should be a comfort to him.[[27]](#footnote-27) When the question was asked, where do we start keeping the 613 laws of Hashem. His Eminence Rabbi Hillel Ben David replied, remove all the lies out of our speech, out of our life’s. That was not a very satisfying answer, but the more I think on that answer, the more I see we must not approach God’s altar while holding on to any lie or falsehood or with one hand still immersed in the filth of the world, our garments must be free of the stains of sin. Only with a pure and contrite heart with humbleness of mind should we approach an awesome God.

**Verbal Tallies**

By: Hakham Dr. Hillel ben David & HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

**Vayikra (Leviticus) 17:1 - 18:5**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 81:1-17**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-11**

**1 Pet 3:8-17, Lk 12:22-34**

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

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Saying / Saith / Say - אמר, Strong’s number 0559.

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

Israel - ישראל, Strong’s number 03478.

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

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Spake - דבר, Strong’s number 01696.

Saying / Saith / Say - אמר, Strong’s number 0559.

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

Thing / Word - דבר, Strong’s number 01697.

**Vayikra (Leviticus) 17:1** And the **LORD <03068> spake <01696> (8762)** unto Moses, **saying <0559> (8800)**, Speak **<01696> (8761)** unto Aaron, and unto his **sons <01121>**, and unto all the **children <01121>** of **Israel <03478>**, and **say <0559> (8804)** unto them; This is the **thing <01697>** which the **LORD <03068>** hath commanded, **saying <0559> (8800)**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1** Thus **saith <0559> (8804)** the **LORD <03068>**, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:2** For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the **LORD <03068>**: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my **word <01697>**.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:4** I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I **spake <01696> (8765)**, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:8** Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her **children <01121>**.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 81:4** For this was a statute for **Israel <03478>**, and a law of the God of Jacob.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 81:10** I am the **LORD <03068>** thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Reading**  **Lev. 17:1 – 18:5** | **Psalms**  **81:1-17** | **Ashlamata**  **Is 66:1-11** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| xa' | brother |  |  | Isa. 66:5 |
| byEao | enemies |  | Ps. 81:14 | Isa. 66:6 |
| vyai | man | Lev. 17:3 Lev. 17:4 Lev. 17:8 Lev. 17:9 Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:13 |  | Isa. 66:3 |
| lk;a' | eats | Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:13 Lev. 17:14 Lev. 17:15 | Ps. 81:16 |  |
| ~yhil{a/ | God | Lev. 18:2 Lev. 18:4 | Ps. 81:1 Ps. 81:4 Ps. 81:10 | Isa. 66:9 |
| rm;a' | saying | Lev. 17:1 Lev. 17:2 Lev. 17:8 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:14 Lev. 18:1 Lev. 18:2 |  | Isa. 66:1 Isa. 66:5 Isa. 66:9 |
| #r,a, | land, earth, ground, country | Lev. 18:3 | Ps. 81:5 Ps. 81:10 | Isa. 66:1 Isa. 66:8 |
| aAB | bring, come, go | Lev. 17:4 Lev. 17:5 Lev. 17:9 Lev. 18:3 |  | Isa. 66:4 Isa. 66:7 |
| tyIB; | house | Lev. 17:3 Lev. 17:8 Lev. 17:10 |  | Isa. 66:1 |
| !Be | sons | Lev. 17:2 Lev. 17:5 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:13 Lev. 17:14 Lev. 18:2 |  | Isa. 66:8 |
| yAG | nations |  |  | Isa. 66:8 |
| rBeDI | spoke, speak, say | Lev. 17:1 Lev. 17:2 Lev. 18:1 Lev. 18:2 |  | Isa. 66:4 |
| rb'D' | thing, word | Lev. 17:2 |  | Isa. 66:2 Isa. 66:5 |
| ~D' | blood, bloodshed | Lev. 17:4 Lev. 17:6 Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:11 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:13 Lev. 17:14 |  | Isa. 66:3 |
| %r,D, | way |  | Ps. 81:13 | Isa. 66:3 |
| xb;z" | offer, sacrifices | Lev. 17:5 Lev. 17:7 |  | Isa. 66:3 |
| rk'z" | male |  |  | Isa. 66:7 |
| bl,x, | fat | Lev. 17:6 | Ps. 81:16 |  |
| dy" | hand |  | Ps. 81:14 | Isa. 66:2 |
| hw"hoy> | LORD | Lev. 17:1 Lev. 17:2 Lev. 17:4 Lev. 17:5 Lev. 17:6 Lev. 17:9 Lev. 18:1 Lev. 18:2 Lev. 18:4 Lev. 18:5 | Ps. 81:10 Ps. 81:15 | Isa. 66:1 Isa. 66:2 Isa. 66:5 Isa. 66:6 Isa. 66:9 |
| ~Ay | day |  | Ps. 81:3 | Isa. 66:8 |
| $l;y" | walk | Lev. 18:3 Lev. 18:4 | Ps. 81:12 |  |
| laer'f.yI | Israel | Lev. 17:2 Lev. 17:3 Lev. 17:5 Lev. 17:8 Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:13 Lev. 17:14 Lev. 18:2 | Ps. 81:4 Ps. 81:8 Ps. 81:11 Ps. 81:13 |  |
| ~yIm; | water | Lev. 17:15 | Ps. 81:7 |  |
| ~yIr;c.mi | Egypt | Lev. 18:3 | Ps. 81:5 Ps. 81:10 |  |
| jP'v.mi | judgments | Lev. 18:4 Lev. 18:5 | Ps. 81:4 |  |
| vp,n< | person, souls one | Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:11 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:14 Lev. 17:15 |  | Isa. 66:3 |
| af'n" | bear, raise | Lev. 17:16 | Ps. 81:2 |  |
| !t;n" | set, give, gave, given | Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:11 | Ps. 81:2 |  |
| rb;[' | pass |  | Ps. 81:6 |  |
| ~l'A[ | forever | Lev. 17:7 | Ps. 81:15 |  |
| hl'[' | offers, brought | Lev. 17:8 | Ps. 81:10 | Isa. 66:3 |
| ~[; | people | Lev. 17:4 Lev. 17:9 Lev. 17:10 | Ps. 81:8 Ps. 81:11 Ps. 81:13 |  |
| hn'[' | answered |  | Ps. 81:7 | Isa. 66:4 |
| hf'[' | offer, do, did, make, made | Lev. 17:9 Lev. 18:3 Lev. 18:4 Lev. 18:5 |  | Isa. 66:2 Isa. 66:4 |
| lAq | voice |  | Ps. 81:11 | Isa. 66:6 |
| ar'q' | called |  | Ps. 81:7 | Isa. 66:4 |
| [b;f' | satisfied |  | Ps. 81:16 | Isa. 66:11 |
| rAv | ox | Lev. 17:3 |  | Isa. 66:3 |
| jx;v' | kills | Lev. 17:3 |  | Isa. 66:3 |
| xl;v' | casting out, gave over |  | Ps. 81:12 |  |
| ~ve | name |  |  | Isa. 66:5 |
| [m;v' | heard, hear |  | Ps. 81:5 Ps. 81:8 Ps. 81:11 Ps. 81:13 | Isa. 66:4 Isa. 66:5 Isa. 66:8 |
| anEf' | haters, hated |  | Ps. 81:15 | Isa. 66:5 |

**Greek:**

| **GREEK** | **ENGLISH** | **Torah Reading**  **Lev. 17:1 – 18:5** | **Psalms**  **81:1-17** | **Ashlamata**  **Is 66:1-11** | **Peshat**  **Mishnah of Mark,**  **1-2 Peter, & Jude**  **1 Pet 3:8-17** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ἀγαπάω | loving |  |  | Isa 66:10 | 1 Pet. 3:10 |
| ἀδελφός | brother |  |  | Isa. 66:5 |  |
| ἀκούω | heard, hear |  | Ps. 81:5 | Isa. 66:4 Isa. 66:5 Isa. 66:8 |  |
| γῆ | land, earth, ground, country | Lev. 18:3 | Ps. 81:5 Ps. 81:10 | Isa. 66:1 Isa. 66:8 |  |
| γίνομαι | happened, became, become |  |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:13 |
| γλῶσσα | tongue |  | Ps. 81:5 |  | 1 Pet. 3:10 |
| δίδωμι | set, give, gave, given | Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:11 | Ps. 81:2 | Isa 66:3  Isa 66:9 |  |
| δοκιμάζω | tried, try |  | Ps. 81:7 |  |  |
| δόλος | treachery, deceit |  |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:10 |
| δόξα | glory |  |  | Isa 66:11 |  |
| ἔθνος | nations |  |  | Isa. 66:8 |  |
| εἴδω | know, known |  |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:9 1 Pet. 3:10 |
| εἷς | one |  |  | Isa 66:8 |  |
| ἔπω | said |  |  | Isa 66:5  Isa 66:9 |  |
| ἐσθίω | eat, ate | Lev 17:10  Lev 17:12 Lev 17:13 Lev 17:14  Lev 17:15 |  |  |  |
| ἔχω | retain, having |  |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:16 |
| ζητέω | seeking |  |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:11 |
| ἡμέρα | day |  | Ps. 81:3 | Isa. 66:8 | 1 Pet. 3:10 |
| θέλω / ἐθέλω | wanted, want |  |  | Isa 66:3 | 1 Pet. 3:10 1 Pet. 3:17 |
| θεός | God |  | Ps. 81:1 Ps. 81:4 Ps. 81:10 | Isa. 66:9 | 1 Pet. 3:15 1 Pet. 3:17 |
| κακός | evil |  |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:9 1 Pet. 3:10 1 Pet. 3:11 1 Pet. 3:12 |
| καλέω | called |  |  | Isa 66:4 | 1 Pet. 3:9 |
| καρδία | heart |  | Ps. 81:12 |  | 1 Pet. 3:15 |
| κύριος | LORD | Lev. 17:1 Lev. 17:2 Lev. 17:4 Lev. 17:5 Lev. 17:6 Lev. 17:9 Lev. 18:1 Lev. 18:2 Lev. 18:4 Lev. 18:5 | Ps. 81:10 Ps. 81:15 | Isa. 66:1 Isa. 66:2 Isa. 66:5 Isa. 66:6 Isa. 66:9 | 1 Pet. 3:12 1 Pet. 3:15 |
| λαλέω | spoke, speak, say | Lev. 17:1 Lev. 17:2 Lev. 18:1 Lev. 18:2 |  | Isa. 66:4 | 1 Pet. 3:10 |
| λέγω | saying | Lev. 17:1 Lev. 17:2 Lev. 17:8 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:14 Lev. 18:1 Lev. 18:2 |  | Isa. 66:1 Isa. 66:5 Isa. 66:9 |  |
| λόγος | words |  |  | Isa 66:2 Isa 66:5 | 1 Pet. 3:15 |
| οὐρανός | heaven |  |  | Isa 66:1 |  |
| πετεινόν | bird | Lev 17:13 |  |  |  |
| ποιέω | offer, do, did, make, made | Lev. 17:9 Lev. 18:3 Lev. 18:4 Lev. 18:5 |  | Isa. 66:2 Isa. 66:4 | 1 Pet. 3:11 1 Pet. 3:12 |
| ποίμνιον | flock |  |  | Isa 66:3 |  |
| πρόσωπον | face, front | Lev 17:10 |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:12 |
| τέλος | director, finally |  | Psa 81:1 |  | 1 Pet. 3:8 |
| φοβέω | fear |  |  |  | 1 Pet. 3:14 |
| ψυχή | person, souls one | Lev. 17:10 Lev. 17:11 Lev. 17:12 Lev. 17:14 Lev. 17:15 |  | Isa. 66:3 |  |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra Of Vayikra (Lev.) Leviticus 17:1 – 18:30**

**“Asher Yishchat - “(He) Who Slaughters”**

By: Hakham Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul**  **Tosefta**  **Luqas (Lk 12:22-34)** | **School of Hakham Tsefet**  **Peshat**  **1 Tsefet (1 Pet. 3:8-17)** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **And he said to his talmidim, “For this** reason, **I tell you, do not be anxious for** your **life, what you will eat, or for** your **body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body** more than **clothing. Consider the ravens, that they neither sow nor reap; to them, there is neither storeroom nor barn, and God feeds them. How much more are you worth than the birds? And which of you with worry can add one cubit to his stature? If you are not even able** to do **a tiny thing, why are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they do not toil or spin, but I say to you, not even Sh’lomo** (Solomon), **in all his glory, was dressed like one of these. But if God clothes the grass in the field in this way,** although it **is** here **today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more** will he do so for **you, you** who are **of minimal faithful obedience? And you, do not worry about what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not be anxious** (do not live in worry)**. For all the Gentiles of the world seek after these** things**, and your Father knows that you need these** things**. But seek his kingdom/governance** (sovereignty) of G-d through the Hakhamim and Bate Din as opposed to human kings and presidents, **and these** things **will be added to your list.**  **“Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father is well pleased to give you the kingdom**/governance (sovereignty) of G-d through the Hakhamim and Bate Din as opposed to human kings and presidents**. Sell your** surplus **possessions and give charitable gifts. Make money bags that do not wear out for yourselves, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven where thieves do not approach or moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** | **But the goal of all this is to be of one mind, being sympathetic, having brotherly love**, being **kindhearted and humble minded. Not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but to the contrary,** giving **blessing because this is the thing we are called to do, so that you might inherit praise**. For ***who is the man that desires life and loves days, that he may see good therein? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous/generous, and His ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil*** (T’hillim Psa. 34:12-16)[[28]](#footnote-28) **And who is the** man **who oppresses you with evil if you are zealous to do good? But even if you suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. *Do not*** *go about* ***proclaiming conspiracies, for everything these people speak of is conspiracies; do not fear what they fear and do not be overwhelmed by it*** (Yesha’yahu – Isa. 8:12)***.***[[29]](#footnote-29) **But sanctify the Lord God in your heart** being **perpetually ready for a verbal defense to all those who ask** of the **hope**, **but let your speech be with gentleness and fear, having a good conscience so when they speak evil** (seeking to defame and condemn or incriminate you) **and disgrace you those who insult your righteous/generous conduct in Messiah will be ashamed, for you are superior when you suffer** unjustly **for doing right if that should be God’s will than to suffer** justly **for doing wrong.** |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Lev. 17:1 – 18:30 | Ps 81:1-17 + 82:1-8 | Isa 66:1-11 | 1 Tsefet (Pet) 3:8-17 | Lk 12:22-54 |  |

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

**The End of the Torah?**

A pasuk (verse) from Hakham Shaul’s Igeret to the Romans will help us understand what Hakham Tsefet is saying in the present pericope.

***Rom. 10:4 For Messiah is the*** *end* ***goal of the Torah for righteousness/generosity to everyone who is faithfully obedient.***

Hakham Tsefet begins his pericope with a word that the scholarly community abuses. In their desire to deprive the reader of truth, they have a way with words. The idea is that they know what the words mean, but will they tell the truth? The answer to the question is if it means the abandonment of their pseudo-doctrines, then NO! This bias is based on their ignorance. Here, we mean no insult. The point is that they do not know what the Torah is or how it functions. Furthermore, they have no idea that they are bound by it. Therefore, let us begin with a bit of lexical information so that we may determine what Hakham Tsefet is saying.

**B*ut the goal of all this…* (δὲ τέλος πάντες), For Messiah is the goal of the Torah (τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸ).**

These two phrases use the Greek word τέλος – *telos*, which scholars love to translate as “end,” having no honest regard for what τέλος – *telos* **really** means. Or, perhaps we should say that they really do know what it means and love to misconstrue its true meaning to sow their doctrines of deceit.

Citing directly from the Strong’s concordance, we see that τέλος – *telos* is defined as follows, “From a primary *tello* (to set out for a definite point or goal).”[[30]](#footnote-30) While the Strong’s concordance is NOT a lexicon, the latest revisions have begun to place it in competition with other lexical works. Unfortunately, works like the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT) lend to the confusion by being a commentary rather than a lexicon about this word. Furthermore, the TDNT butchers the above-cited passage from Romans. To add insult to injury, I believe Delitzsch intentionally butchers the translation of both of our passages.

In both cases, Delitzsch translates τέλος – *telos* as סוֹף meaning “end.” Therefore, this causes one to wonder why he did not use **יעד** with the meaning, objective, goal, aim, target, and destination. Another positive choice would have been **שׁער** – meaning gate, gateway, portal, goal, and wicket. This word would have shown us that the Mesorah is the gate or door to understanding the Torah.

Hakham Tsefet has a “goal” in mind. His materials have an objective concerning his previous thoughts.

Romans 10:4, as translated by Murdock, is as follows…

**Rom 10:4 For Messiah is the aim of the law** (Torah)**, for righteousness/**generosity**, unto every one that believes** (is faithfully obedient) **in** (to) **him.** Bracketed words are our interpretation.

James Murdock’s Translation of the Peshitta above hits the nail on the head. Messiah is NOT the END of the Torah and the halakhic system it establishes. The Torah will stand FOREVER! Messiah is the “Model of Torah Observance!” Therefore, we now have a living example of a Halakhic man in the Master. Hakham Tsefet is telling his audience that we must never resort to the means and methods of the enemy. We MUST follow the pattern and example of the Master. Often, we lose sight of the **goal**. Here, Hakham Tsefet reminds us that there is a goal. From Psalm 34:12-16, Hakham Tsefet asks the question **Who is the man”?**[[31]](#footnote-31) Τέλος – *telos* associates with “power.” Herein is the idea that we can achieve the goal. Or, we should say that the power resident in τέλος – *telos* is the power of achievement.

**Lashon HaRa**

The present pericope teaches us how to deal with lashon hara (evil tongue or evil speech). However, the “Lashon HaRa” seems more profound than just words of malice, hatred, and prejudice. In our present pericope, Hakham Tsefet uses the Greek word καταλαλέω – *katalaleō*. This word means more than just “Lashon HaRa.” This word is associated with the idea of bringing incriminating accusations against someone. These accusations must have been something that suggested that the talmidim (Hakham Tsefet’s talmidim and audience) were not following appropriate halakhic procedure. This damaging (evil speech) was the language of incriminations from a halakhic perspective. We have already seen these accusations in Mordechai (Mark) chapter 7. Yeshua’s talmidim are accused of not following appropriate halakhic practices in that passage. The lesson we learned from that chapter is still relevant here. Bet Shammai did not recognize Bet Hillel’s halakhic procedure and practices.[[32]](#footnote-32) We are told that Bet Shammai may have dominated halakhic life in Eretz Yisrael during the first Century.[[33]](#footnote-33) This evidence is derived from Mishnaic and Talmudic sources. Therefore, This would have caused a sizable rift between the teachings of Hillel and Shammai. However, this “rift” would have been more readily noticeable between the Talmidim of the Master and Bet Shammai. The initial differences between the two schools (Hillel and Shammai) seemed to be the eighteen edicts of Shammai.[[34]](#footnote-34) It appears from Hakham Tsefet’s response to the servants of Cornelius that the halakhic view of Shammai dominated Jewish life.[[35]](#footnote-35) Falk further elaborates on the fact that during a discussion at Hananiah’s home, members from Bet Shammai murdered students from Bet Hillel.[[36]](#footnote-36) Falk further suggests that other groups were equally volatile during this period. He cites the possibility that the group who murdered the students of Hillel was the Zealot group of Sicarii.[[37]](#footnote-37) Regardless of the group, Hakham Tsefet teaches his Talmidim that these methods are unacceptable. They are not consistent with the conduct and character of the Master.

**The Great Conspiracy**

A Christian adage is that some people find a devil under every rock. These witch hunters see a conspiracy in everything. To focus on eschatological myths has a single result. This result instills fear in the reader’s heart, a non-Jewish practice. Selling fear is big business; many constantly buy materials advertising apocalyptic eschatology. Hakham Tsefet cites the Prophet Yesha’yahu, showing that we have no business buying or selling eschatological fear.

***Do not go about proclaiming conspiracies, for everything these people speak of is conspiracies; do not fear what they fear, and do not be overwhelmed by it* (**Yesha’yahu – Isa. 8:12)***.***[[38]](#footnote-38)

Another translation reads…

Isa. 8:12 **You are not to say**, ‘*It is* a conspiracy!’ In regarding all that this people call a conspiracy, And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of *it*. (NAS)

Interestingly, Hakham Tsefet weaves the Lashon HaRa into speaking or selling conspiracies (apocalyptic eschatology). He echoes the Prophet’s words: do NOT speak of it or even talk about it. Your duty is to sanctify Messiah as Master in your heart. The pericope’s vocabulary is interesting. Απολογιαν – *apologian* is a verbal defense given before a judge. The Talmid of the Master must be ready at a moment’s notice to answer for the reason for his actions. However, the answer is not a critical point. The attitude or response is the fundamental virtue being called for. “**Let your speech be with gentleness and fear,**” not with words of bitterness and spite. And not with words of contention or malice. Let your conversation be like that of the Master. Then, they will understand that we are his followers and that he has positively changed our lives.

**Atonement, Messiah, and the Hakhamim**

Hakham Tsefet picks up on the word atonement in the Torah Seder and begins to unfold the meaning of atonement as it is associated with Messiah as a Tsaddiq.

**B’Midbar 20:1. The entire congregation of the children of Israel arrived at the desert of Zin in the first month, and the people settled in Kadesh. Miriam died there and was buried there.**

Rashi’s comment on this pasuk (verse) helps us understand what Hakham Tsefet is saying.

**Miriam died there:** Why is the passage relating to Miriam’s death juxtaposed with the passage of the Red Cow? To teach you that just as sacrifices bring atonement, so the death of the righteous secure atonement. — [M.K. 28a].

Hakham Tsefet begins his pericope by discussing the suffering of the Messiah. Many translations render the Greek word ἔπαθεν – *epathen,* derived from πάσχω – *pascho* as “death.” This translation would then read that the Messiah died for sin. This is an erroneous translation. πάσχω – *pascho* means to “suffer” not to die.

This leaves us with a question. Does the suffering of Messiah atone for sin? The verse suggests that Messiah suffered for the righteous but not for the “unjust.” Furthermore, this leaves us with another question. Was Messiah the only Tsaddiq to suffer for sin? And, if Yeshua was not the only Tsaddiq to die for sin’s sake, what are we to make of all of this?

At the outset of the discussion, let us state that Yeshua is not the only Tsaddiq who dies due to sin. Furthermore, the idea of a Tsaddiq’s death atoning for sin is a commonly held belief among the Jewish people. We see that Moshe Rabbenu ascends the mountain to plead for forgiveness and atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf, willing to give his life as atonement for the sin of the Jewish people. Note what Moshe Rabbenu says as he stands before G-d. “If not, erase me from Your book that You have written.”[[39]](#footnote-39) It is wrong to believe that Moshe Rabbenu was trying to coerce G-d into forgiving the Jewish people for the sin of the Golden Calf by these words. In other words, Moshe Rabbenu was not saying that if G-d was going to destroy the Jewish people, He should ruin him as well. Moshe Rabbenu was offering his own life as atonement for the Jewish people because of the sin of the Golden Calf. From this statement, the Sages of blessed memory deduced that a Tsaddiq’s life atones for sin. **Likewise, we understand that the “blessings and cursing” of a Tsaddiq comes true**. When a Tsaddiq offers his life as atonement before G-d, he (the Tsaddiq) is drawn closer to G-d. This ideology shows us that Hakham Tsefet understood Yeshua as a Tsaddiq atoning for the righteous/generous. Furthermore, many of the benefits we experience result from the Patriarchs and their standard of righteous/generosity. The **Zechut Abot -** The Merit of our Fathers is a perfect example of our being atoned for by the Tsadiqim.

Why, then, or how is it that the death of the Tsaddiq atones? The main reason for the death of the Tsaddiq atones is that sin flows from the body’s physicality, and the soul’s withdrawal from the body signals the removal of physicality and sin. The death of the Tsaddiq atones for the whole world, for the Tsaddiq is the purpose of this world. Undeniably, G-d brings the world into existence for the sake of the Tsadiqim; for whom else would the world be created? When the Tsaddiq parts from the physical, he is the complete good, understanding that this is not a discussion proving that the body is only given to sin. Therefore, we learn that because of one Tsaddiq, the cosmos exists, as it is written, “the Tsaddiq is the eternal foundation (yesod) of the world” Mishlei (Pro.) 10:25.

**Atonement and the Parenthetical Priesthood**

What are we to make of this? From this, we learn that the Tsaddiq can atone for sin while living and in his death. Moshe Rabbenu remained alive when he pleaded for the Jewish people. Yom Kippur, “the day of atonement,” is the result of this petition. However, Moshe Rabbenu and Yom Kippur did not solve the problem of the Golden Calf. The sin of the Golden Calf instituted a parenthetical Priesthood from the Levite line that lasted until Yochanan HaMatvil (John the Baptist) relinquished it to Yeshua (representative of the Priesthood of the firstborn).

Along with the restoration of the Priesthood of the Firstborn, the life of the Master atones for the Tsadiqim in restoring to them to the seminal work of the Oral Torah. His life was about its preservation. Therefore, we see and understand the significant opposition towards the Oral Torah by other religions and anarchists. As we have stated in the recent past, with the destruction of the Temple, the defunct Levitical Priesthood moved to Rome. They leave us a hint of their identity by revealing their character, which remains intact. The defunct Priesthood possessed three characteristics that we note here.

* They did not accept the Oral Torah.
* They remained epicurean in practice.
* They did not believe in the afterlife.

The Tz’dukim (Sadducees) did not believe in the afterlife; therefore, how can we state that they fabricated a pseudo-Nazarean Judaism? The answer is not complex when we realize their religious invention appealed to the Pagan Romans. These priests were masters in weaving bits of paganism, mythology, and Judaism into their new “religion.” Therefore, in their words, they might have said, “Because man cannot resurrect, we will make Messiah a deity.” Mythology is filled with deities dying and coming back to life. Therefore, the Tz’dukim blended mythology into their new religion to mask their disbelief in the afterlife by making Messiah a divine being.

**Atoning clothing?**

We will not belabor what we have discussed in the recent past concerning the atoning function of the vestments of the Hakhamim. However, we will point out that association with the true Tsadiqim brings a measure of righteous/generosity to those who will cleave to them.

**﻿b. Moed Katan 28a** R. Eleazar said, wherefore is [the account of] Aaron’s death closely followed by [the account of the disposal of] the priestly vestments?[[40]](#footnote-40) [To inform you] that just as the priest’s vestments were [means] to effect atonement,[[41]](#footnote-41) so is the death of the righteous/generous [conducive to procuring] atonement.

We can readily see that the garments of the Priest are associated with the atonement by the Tsadiqim. If Aaron’s garments as the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) of the parenthetical priesthood atone, how much the more should the vestments and garments of the Priesthood of the Firstborn atone for the Tsadiqim? Ceremonial robes, hats and regalia are all a means of bringing atonement to the talmidim of the Hakhamim. While we are not here to postulate some firing doctrine concerning the anointing of the Kohanim or others, it is common knowledge that the idea of anointing is the rubbing oil on the recipient. By analogy, we note that those who “rub” gowns, robes, and regalia of the Hakhamim certainly benefit from their connection (rubbing) to G-d. However, this is what the Rambam posits when he shows that “cleaving to G-d” means to “mix and associate” (rub) with the “wise men,” i.e., the Hakhamim.[[42]](#footnote-42)

The topic of these vestments and their functioning should be taken up in Remes. Therefore, we will forego any real discussion on them in our Peshat commentary.

**The Judge**

The idea of judgment is found in our Peshat text and the Tosefta of Luqas (Lk). There is a verbal tally of judge and judged between these materials. In the Peshat text, the Master is the judge of the dead. In the final paragraph of the Peshat text Hakham Tsefet alludes to the idea that the Master is judge of the living and the dead.

**א ¶ The chief part of the Masorah (Tradition/Oral Law) is Yeshuah ‎the Messiah, the Son of God (i.e. Ben Elohim = the King/Judge)[[43]](#footnote-43)**

While we see that, the Master is the son of the “Judge” (Elohim) we can also translate this to mean that he is the sum of the Hakhamim, i.e., Judges. In other words, Messiah qualifies as the “Judge” of the living and dead because he is the repository of the wisdom of the Hakhamim. By being the repository of this collective wisdom, the Master can draw on the infinitesimal wisdom of the Sages to discern every possible case.

**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:**

**“K’Ma’Aseh Eretz Mitsrayim” – “According to the doings of the land of Egypt”**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **כְּמַעֲשֵׂה אֶרֶץ-מִצְרַיִם** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“K’Ma’Aseh Eretz Mitsrayim”** | Reader 1 – Vayikra 18:1-5 | Reader 1 – Vayikra 19:1-3 |
| **“According to the doings of the land of Egypt”** | Reader 2 – Vayikra 18:6-9 | Reader 2 – Vayikra 19:4-8 |
| **“Como hacen en la tierra de Egipto”** | Reader 3 – Vayikra 18:10-13 | Reader 3 – Vayikra 19:9-11 |
| Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:1–30 | Reader 4 – Vayikra 18:14-16 |  |
| Ashlamata:  Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 10:2-11 | Reader 5 – Vayikra 18:17-20 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – Vayikra 18:21-26 | Reader 1 – Vayikra 19:1-3 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 82:1-8 | Reader 7 – Vayikra 18:27-30 | Reader 2 – Vayikra 19:4-8 |
|  | Maftir – Vayikra 18:27-30 | Reader 3 – Vayikra 19:9-11 |
| N.C.: 1 Pet 3:18–4:6, Lk 12:54-59 | Jeremiah 10:2-11 |  |

**Reading Assignment for next Shabbat**

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| --- | --- |
| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yitzchok Magriso, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1989)  **Leviticus – I-Vol. 11– “The Divine Service” pp. 396-419** | **Ramban: Leviticus Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1974)  **pp. 242-280** |



**Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai**

**Hakham Dr. Hillel ben David**

**Hakham Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham**

Edited by HH Paqid Ezra ben Abraham.

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1. Literally, Assaf - אסף means to *gather in*, alluding to the ingathering of Israel from tyranny and exile. (Chazah Zion) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Rosh HaShanah 11a [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Rosh HaShanah 30b – Thus it is no surprise that we encounter Psalms chapter 81 in the Sephardi machzor for Rosh HaShanah. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Tehillim (Psalms) 75:11, These opening remarks are excerpted, and edited, from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rachel conceived Joseph on Rosh HaShana. (*Rosh HaShanah 10b*) *Yevamot 64* [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Joseph was released from prison on Rosh HaShana. *Rosh Hashanah 10b-11a* [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Chazal or Ḥazal (Hebrew: חז"ל‎), an acronym for the Hebrew "Ḥakhameinu Zikhram Liv'rakha" (חכמינו זכרונם לברכה‎, "Our Sages, may their memory be blessed"), refers to all Jewish sages of the Mishna, Tosefta and Talmud eras, spanning from the times of the final 300 years of the Second Temple of Jerusalem until the 6th century CE, or c. 250 BCE – c. 625 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This Shabbat, Heshvan 15 is the Shabbat closest to **Heshvan 18**, which was the first full day of Noach’s flood, according to Rashi. In the bimodality of the months, the corresponding Shabbat would be **Iyar 18**, aka Lag B’Omer. What makes this especially interesting is that HaShem will put his bow (rainbow) one year after the start of the flood. To commemorate HaShem’s bow, children play with bows and arrows on Lag B’Omer. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uziel On the Pentateuch, With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee, By J. W. Etheridge, M.A. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The Milstein Edition, Artscroll Publications, The Prophets. Pg. 493. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. **IBN EZRA** **On your new moons.** Moses Gikatilla (may he rest in Paradise!) says that “your” new moon must refer specifically to the new moon of Nisan, the only month of which we are told, “This month shall mark for *you* the beginning of the months” (Exod. 12:2). Only later will we be told that this shall also be the monthly burnt offering “for each new moon of the year” (v. 14). And his explanation is correct. One might argue that our phrase refers to “new moons” in the plural. But we see (from 1 Sam. 20:5) that *ḥodesh* by itself means “new moon.” So, the *rosh ḥodesh* of our verse must mean the “chief,” most important, new moons—those of Nisan. He is therefore quite correct. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. These were the three great festivals of the year—**the *Passover*** (Exod. 12:3–20, 27, 43; Lev. 23:4–8; Deut. 16:1–8**); the *Feast of Weeks*** (Exod. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:15–21; Numb. 28:26; Deut. 16:8–12); **the *Feast of Tabernacles*** (Exod. 23:16; Lev. 23:33–44; Numb. 29:13–40; Deut. 16:13–15) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. RSV (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), 2 Ch 2:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. RSV (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), Is 57:15. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Adele Berlin, Marc Zvi Brettler, and Michael Fishbane, eds., [*The Jewish Study Bible*](https://ref.ly/logosres/jsb?ref=BibleBHS.Is66.3&off=3&ctx=7.+2%3a+Cf.+57%3a15.+3%3a+~This+v.+presents+fou) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 914. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The Milstein Edition, Artscroll Publications, The Prophets. Pg.495. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Talk thru the Bible, Thomas nelson publishers, 1980, Pg.191, 198. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. ESV (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Introductory comments to the book of Jonah. 2 Kings 14:25 mentions Jonah as living during the time of Jeroboam II (about 793–753 BCE.). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Rabbbi David Altschular of Prague 1687-1769 author of the commentary Metzudot. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The Milstein Edition, Artscroll Publications, The Prophets. Pg. 78 - 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. A. R. Fausset, Commentary on the Old and New Testament: Job- Isaiah, vol. III (London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited, n.d.), 580. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The Milstein Edition, Artscroll Publications, The Prophets. Pg.497. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. ESV (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Is 66:10–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Pri Tsaddik, Devarim 16, Michtav MeEliyahu vol 2, pg. 47. Milstein Edition, Artscroll Publications, The Prophets. Pg.497. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Psalms 34:12-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Isaiah 8:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Strong, J. (1996). *The exhaustive concordance of the Bible : Showing every word of the text of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order.* (electronic ed.) (G5056). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Psalms 34:12-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. For a good example see Mishnah Berachot chapter 8 and related materials [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Harvey Falk, Jesus the Pharisee, A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus, Wipf and Stock Publishers, pg 93ff [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. See Shabbat 13b-17a [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. See Acts 10:28 and related reading [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Harvey Falk, Jesus the Pharisee, A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus, Wipf and Stock Publishers, pg 57ff [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid pg. 57 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Isaiah 8:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Shemot (Ex.) 32.32 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Num. XX, 26, 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Lev. XVI, 4, 24, 32, 33. Cf. Zeb. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. 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-42)
43. Cf. Mk 1:1 our translation [↑](#footnote-ref-43)