**Some Questions to Ponder:**

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

I was touched by the Hakham’s commentary on the needle ‘gate’ for the camels.

1. How is B’Midbar 6:23-27 related to B’Midbar 7:42-47?

The portion opens with the Aharonic benediction which bestows blessing on the Jewish people. The section ends with altar dedication of the tribe who’s name means ‘fortunate’ which suggests that he is declaring the effects of the Aharonic benediction on his tribe.

Each item mentioned in verses 6:23-27 and 7:42-47 brings to remembrance men and situations of holiness and obedience. It is the merits of these things, which causes God to bless the people through the Priestly blessing.

The opening of our Torah Seder deals with the blessing that the Kohanim are to make over the Bne Yisrael. The later verses teach us what the Bne Yisrael is to do with that blessing.

In B’Midbar 6: 23-27 we have the declaration that if HaShem’s name is bestowed upon Israel they will be favored, be granted peace and be blessed. In B’Midbar 7:42-47 we see the culmination of Israel offering acceptable burnt, sin and peace offerings. Had they not been blessed in such a way would their offerings have still been acceptable?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 6:23?

**saying to them** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: אָמוֹר?

**saying to them** – What is the sense of this pasuk?

**saying** – Why is the word אָמוֹר written in its ‘full’ form?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 6:24?

**May [the Lord] bless you** – What is being blessed?

**and watch over you** – What is the effect of this ‘watching’?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 6:25?

**May the Lord cause His countenance to shine to you** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

**and favor you** – How are they favored?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 7:1?

**And it was that on the day that Moses finished** - What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: כַּלּוֹת?

**Moses finished** – Why is Moses explicitly mentioned?

**[On the day] that Moses finished erecting** – What do we learn from this phrasing?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 7:3?

**six covered wagons** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word צָב?

**they presented them in front of the Mishkan** – Why were they presented in this location?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 7:12?

**on the first day** – Why is it called ‘first’? (It was like the first day of creation.)

**of the tribe of Judah** – What doe we learn from this pasuk?

Every New Moon we read: Collosians 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: 17 Which are a shadow of things ***yet to come***; but the body *is* of Christ.

Observing the commandments is the most powerful form of prophecy.

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 7:19?

**He brought his offering -** Why is the word הִקְרִב , “brought [his offering],” used in connection with the tribe of Issachar, but is not used in connection with any of the [other] tribes?

**one silver bowl** – What do we learn from this Hebrew word: קַעֲרַתכֶּסֶף?

**weighing one hundred and thirty shekels** – What does this pasuk allude to?

**one silver sprinkling basin** – What do we learn from this Hebrew phrase: מִזְרָק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף ?

**seventy shekels** - What does this correspond to?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 7:20?

**One spoon** – What does this correspond to?

**ten gold [shekels]** – What does this correspond to?

**filled with incense** – What does this Hebrew word correspond to: קְטֽרֶת?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 7:21?

**One young bull** – What does this offering correspond to? (Abraham)

**one ram** – What does this offering correspond to? (Isaac)

**one lamb** – What does this offering correspond to? (Jacob)

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Numbers 7:23?

**And for the peace-offering: two oxen** - What does this offering correspond to?

**Rams...he-goats...lambs** - What do these offerings correspond to?

1. Why does the priestly blessing follows immediately after the Nazirite chapter in the Torah?

There are, I suppose, multiple reasons: Hakham Magriso teaches that just as the Nazir must abstain from wine, so also the priests must abstain from wine when they administer the blessing.

I also see that the Nazir is working to protect himself from his own weakness. The Aharonic benediction is also intended to strengthen the Jewish people.

There is also the suggestion that the Nazir becomes like a priest by taking the vow.

The Aharonic Benediction follows to teach us that there is a chain of command. We must be happy in the position we were put, rather that being ‘holier than thou’. ONLY the Priest, and a father in his home, can bestow this blessing.

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the Psalmist‎ in Psalm 95:1-11?

The psalmist is speaking the praise of HaShem as he blesses and thanks HaShem for His redemption, just like the tribal leaders. He completes the Psalm by going to the sanctuary which is dedicated in our parsha.

1. What important principles do we learn from G-d’s command for the Kohanim (priests) to bless the people, and for the father to bless his children?

HaShem blesses us through the agency of our Torah teachers. Further, we must all learn that we each have our own responsibilities.

The first born were the Priests, but after the golden calf, the Levites took that position. Never the less, the Priests did not take over the responsibility of fathers in their own homes. This suggests that the Levites were only temporary in this position. In the future, the first born will be restored as Priests.

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the Prophet in ‎1 Kings 8:54-63‎‎ and in ‎1 Kings ‎7:13-26‎?

The Prophet, in both readings, speaks of the work of completing the Beit HaMikdash (the Temple), in the same way that the Torah portion speaks of the completion of the Tabernacle. The Ashlamata also speaks of the King’s blessing which corresponds to the Aharonic benediction. The Ashlamata and the Torah both speak of ‘special’ offerings that are unique and never again brought.

The special Ashlamata also brings the picture of oxen which relates to the oxen that the princes brought for the Tabernacle.

1. How is the reading of Mordechai (Mark) 10:23-31 related to the readings for this Shabbat?

Torah Seder

Countenance, look and face all bear similarities of use in Hebrew. The opening of our Torah Seder begins with the Aaronic blessing where countenance is used twice. Numbers 6:25-26 In our pericope the idea of looking is used twice. Mordechai 10:23 and verse 27 The Torah Seder deals with the gifts of the Chieftains, 7:10ff Mordechai speaks of the order of those chiefs (first ones) in his pericope. Mordechai 10:31 Contextually the Chieftains give elaborate gifts for the construction of the Mishkan. Mordechai deals with the idea of amassing wealth demonstrating its true purpose.

Tehillim

The Psalmist speaks of the “Hardening of the heart” 95:8ff Yeshua draws a parallel demonstrating that wealth can harden the heart, per se. Mordechai 10:24 where the wealthy are mislead by their wealth. Furthermore, those who will not be able to enter into G-d’s resting place (95:11) are paralleled to those who will not enter the Kingdom (Governmet) of G-d and the olam haba Mordechai 10:24-26

Ashlamatah

By inference, Yeshua refers to the idea of relying on G-d for daily sustenance. Solomon mentions this in his prayer verse 59. In verse 61 Solomon prays for the wholeness of the heart implying that those who are whole seek G-d’s mitzvot wholly. Yeshua says this same thing by saying that we must follow the Mesorah zealously. Mordechai 10:30 v63 mentions the generous number of offerings Solomon offered for the Temples consecration like the chieftains and their loaded wagons. This matches the theme of Mordechai throughout.

Special Ashlamatah

The two pillars Jachin and Boaz form a narrow gate that narrows the entire court of the women into the court of the Israelites. 1 Kings 7:14-22 This is paralleled to our Nazarean Codicil where the camel must enter through the eye of the needle. Mordechai 10:25 The twelve oxen that supported the Brazen sea 1Kings 7:25 are a symbol of wealth in its appropriate place, i.e Temple and Torah service.

1. In your opinion, what is the chief purpose that Hakham Tsefet wants to address in Mordechai (Mark) 10:23-31?

Hakham Tsefet is attempting to teach us the dangers of wealth and the absolute requirement that we use it in the service of HaShem if we are to have a part in the governmnet of HaShem.

1. Explain how Hakham Tsefet derived all of his material in Mordechai (Mark) 10:23-31 from the Torah Seder for this Shabbat, Psalm 95, and ‎ the Prophet in 1 Kings 8:54-63‎‎ and in ‎1 Kings ‎7:13-26‎.

See question 17.

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

Use your wealth wisely. Choose to use it to honor HaShem and to further His kingdom.

I think his chief purpose is to stress to the readers that we must keep a proper perspective when God blesses us and that God is first in our hearts and things.

The things we accumulate because of being blessed by the Priestly blessing should be used to further the Kingdom of God. There is nothing wrong with wealth. However, it is imperative that our wealth is used for the good of others not just ourselves.

Hakham Tsefet deals with the blessings of G-d. Like the Torah Seder which invokes the blessing of G-d. We need to know what to do with those blessings. Hakham Tsefet teaches us the most apropos way to deal with such blessings.

I think Hakham Tsfet is asking what Kingdom are you occupied with, this physical one or the World to come. He is showing us that while we are in the here and now (and can gather stuff), we can also pull back the curtain and see the world to come. This is where our investment should go.

As we know this world is transient, but there is no reason not to look toward the eternal and do all we can to build on and support the construction of the body of Messiah, this is the best investment anyone can make. Since this is the world of doing, the only thing we can send ahead is our mitzvoth’s. This is done by our obedience, our torah study, support of Torah teachers, and of those in need.

**The Hakham’s comments:**

The New Moon of Nisan: When Mashiach comes, His tabernacle will be totally erected. His *living stone* (all of the righteos) tabernacle was erected and completed on Nisan 1. This aligns with the fact that Jewish kings are crowned on Nisan 1, while Gentile kings are crowned on Tishri 1.

To properly perform a mitzvot, according to Mainmonides, one must do the following things:

1. Hiddur Mitzvah (Glorifying the Mitzvah). Making the mitzvah elegant. For example: When observing Shabbat one uses a new table cloth with special dishes and food.
2. Chibbur Mitzvah -
3. Kavanah – Intent.
4. Zerizuth – Alertness.
5. Simchat Shel Mitzvah - Joy in the Commandment.
6. Bizui Mitzvah - Treating the commandment with respect.

If these six ingredients are not observed, then the mitzvah has not been observed.