|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Esnoga Bet Emunah****12210 Luckey Summit****San Antonio, TX 78252****United States of America****© 2016**[**https://www.betemunah.org/**](https://www.betemunah.org/)**E-Mail:** **gkilli@aol.com** | **Menorah 5** | **Esnoga Bet El****102 Broken Arrow Dr.****Paris TN 38242****United States of America****© 2016**[**https://torahfocus.com/**](https://torahfocus.com/)**E-Mail:** **waltoakley@charter.net** |

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **First Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Av 11, 5783 July 28/29, 2023** | **First 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:**

This Commentary comes out weekly and on the festivals thanks to the great generosity of:

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 Excellency Adon Luqas Nelson

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

Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family

His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife

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

**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 **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

**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 performing acts of kindness; and there is no maximum amount of Torah that a person must study.**

**These are the Laws whose benefits a person can often enjoy even in this world, even though the primary reward is in the Next World: They are: Honoring one's father and mother; doing acts of kindness; early attendance at the place of Torah study -- morning and night; showing hospitality to guests; visiting the sick; providing for the financial needs of a bride; escorting the dead; being very engrossed in prayer; bringing peace between two people, and between husband and wife; but the study of Torah is as great as all of them together. Amen!**

**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.

**A Prayer for our Beloved Hakhamim**

We would like to ask for prayers on behalf of our three Hakhamim, Hakham Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai, Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David, and Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham for their health, as well as for this work, that it may prosper, be of great benefit to all, and that it may be well supported, and we all say, Amen ve Amen!

**We pray especially, for our beloved Hakham His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai. Mi Sheberach…He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal the sick person HE Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai, 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!**

**Shabbat: “Ke yesh shebar” - “There were provisions”**

**Av 11, 5783 – July 28/29, 2023**

**1st Sabbath of Consolation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **כִּי יֶשׁ-שֶׁבֶר** |  |  **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Ke yesh shebar”** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 42:1-5 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 42:18-21 |
| **“There were provisions”** | Reader 2 – B’resheet 42:6-8 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 42:22-24 |
|  | Reader 3 – B’resheet 42:9-11 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 42:25-28 |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 42:1-23 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 42:12-13 |  |
| Ashlamatah: Amos 8:4-12 + 9:14-15 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 42:14-16 |  **Monday and Thursday Mornings** |
| Special Ashlamatah:Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 40:1-26 | Reader 6 – B’resheet 42:17-19 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 42:18-21 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 36:1-13 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 42:20-21 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 42:22-24 |
|   |  Maftir – B’resheet 42:22-23 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 42:25-28 |
| N.C.: Mk 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21 |  Amos 8:4-12 + 9:14-15 |   |

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

  Ya’aqob sends Yosef’s ten brothers to Egypt – Gen 42:1-5

* Yosef meets his brothers - Gen 42:6-23

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: B’resheet (Genesis) 42:1-23**‎

|  **Rashi** |  **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Ya’aqob saw that food was being sold in Egypt. Yaakov said to his sons, "Why would you have everyone gazing at you?" | 1. And Jakob saw that provisions might be bought and that they brought corn from Mizraim; and Jakob said to his sons, Why are you afraid to go down to Mizraim? |
| 2. He said, "Behold, I have heard that there is food for sale in Egypt. Go down there and buy for us from there, so that we will live and not die. | 2. And he said, Behold, I have heard that corn is sold in Mizraim: go down thither and buy for us from thence, that we may live and not die. |
| 3. Yosef 's ten brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. | 3. And the ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy corn from Mizraim. |
| 4. But Binyamin, Yosef's brother, Yaakov did not send along with his brothers, for he [Yaakov] said, "Misfortune might befall him." | 4. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jakob sent not down with his brethren; for he said, Behold, he is a youth, and I fear lest death should befall him. |
| 5. The sons of Yisrael came to buy among the others who came, for there was famine in the land of Canaan. | 5. And the sons of Israel went every one by one door, lest the evil eye should have sway over them, as they went together to buy among the Kenaanites who went also to buy; because the famine was in the land of Kenaan. |
| 6. Yosef was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. Yosef's brothers came and they prostrated themselves to him with their faces to the ground. | 6. And Joseph was ruler over the land; and he knew that his brethren had come to buy; for he had appointed notaries at the gates of the city to register daily, of everyone who came, his name and the name of his father; and he it was who sold corn to all the people of the land. And the brethren of Joseph came. And they looked through all the streets, and public places, and hospices, but could not find him. And they came unto his house, and worshipped him with their faces to the ground. |
| 7. Yosef saw his brothers and he recognized them, but he acted like a stranger to them. He spoke harshly to them, and said to them, "Where did you come from?" They said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food." | 7. And Joseph saw his brethren, and recognised them; but he made himself as a stranger in their eyes, and spake hard words to them, and said to them, From where do you come? And they said, From the land of Kenaan, to buy corn. |
| 8. Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. | 8. Now Joseph recognised his brethren, because, when separated from them, they had the token of the beard; but they did not recognise him, because (at that time) he had not the token of the beard. |
| 9. Yosef recalled the dreams that he had dreamt about them, and said to them, "You are spies." "You have come to see where the land is exposed." | 9. And Joseph remembered the dreams be had dreamed of them. And he said to them, You are spies: to see the nakedness of the shame of the land are you come. |
| 10. They said to him, "No my master. Your servants have come to buy food. | 10. And they answered him, No, my lord, your servants are come to buy corn: |
| 11. We are all the sons of one man. We are honest [men]. Your servants have never been spies." | 11. we are all the sons of one man; we are true; your servants are not spies. |
| 12. He said to them, "No, You have come to see where the land is exposed." | 12. But he said to them, No, but to see the nakedness of the shame of the land are you come. |
| 13. They said, "Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. Behold the youngest one is this day with our father, and one is no more." | 13. They answered, Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man, in the land of Kenaan; and, behold, the youngest is today with our father, and one went from us, and we know not what has been his end! |
| 14. Yosef said to them, "It is just as I said to you, saying: you are spies." | 14. And Joseph said to them, This is what I have spoken to you, saying, You are spies. |
| 15. You will tested in this manner. By Pharaoh's life, you will not leave from here unless your youngest brother comes here. | 15. By this word you will be proved. (By) the life of Pharaoh you will not go hence unless your youngest brother be brought hither. |
| 16. Send one of you and let him bring your brother. You will remain locked up and your words will be tested whether there is any truth with you. If not, by Pharaoh's life, you are spies." | 16. Send one of you, and bring your brother; but you will be bound, and your words be proved if the truth is with you: and if not, (by) the life of Pharaoh you are spies. |
| 17. He [then] put them together in prison for three days. | 17. And he kept them together in the house of confinement three days. |
| 18. On the third day, Joseph said to them: "Do this and live I fear God. | 18. And Joseph said to them on the third day, This do, that you may live; for I fear the LORD. |
| 19. If you are honest, your one brother will be confined in your prison, and you, go bring the grain for the hunger of your households. | 19. If you are true, let one of your brothers be bound in the house of your confinement and go you, carry the corn, that you may buy for the hunger of your house, |
| 20. And bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified, and you will not die." And they did so. | 20. and bring your youngest brother to me, that your words may be verified, and you may not die. And they did so. |
| 21. And they said to one another, "Indeed, we are guilty for our brother, that we witnessed the distress of his soul when he begged us, and we did not listen. That is why this trouble has come upon us." | 21. And they said, a man to his brother, In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, when we saw the distress of his soul, when he entreated us, and we would not hearken to him; therefore has this affliction come upon us. |
| 22. And Reuben answered them, saying, "Didn't I tell you, saying, 'Do not sin against the lad,' but you did not listen? Behold, his blood, too, is being demanded!" | 22. And Reuben answered them and said, Did I not tell you, saying, Do not sin against the youth? But you would not listen to me; and thus, behold, his blood is required of us. |
| 23. They did not know that Joseph understood, for the interpreter was between them. | 23. But they knew not that Joseph understood (heard) the holy language; for Menasheh was interpreter between them.JERUSALEM: But they knew not that Joseph heard in the holy language; for as an interpreter Menasheh stood between them. |

**Welcome to the World of P’shat Exegesis**

In order to understand the finished work of the P’shat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the P’shat 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>]:

**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.

**Reading Assignment:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez** By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by: Rabbi Aryeh KaplanPublished by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1990) **Vol. 3b – “The Twelve Tribes” pp. 383 - 396** | **Ramban: Genesis Commentary on the Torah**Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc. (New York, 1971) **pp. 508-516** |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎** **B’resheet (Genesis) 42:1-23**

**1** **Jacob saw that there was grain being sold in Egypt** From where did he see it? Is it not true that he did not see it, only that he heard of it, as it is said: “Behold, I have heard, etc.” (verse 2) ? What then is the meaning of “saw”? He saw with the divine “mirror” that he still had hope (שֶׁבֶר) in Egypt, but it was not a real prophecy to explicitly inform him that this was Joseph.-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:6]

**Why do you appear satiated?”** Heb. לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ. Why do you show yourselves before the sons of Ishmael and the sons of Esau as if you are satiated? For at that time they still had grain (*Ta’anith* 10b). (And it appears to me that it should be explained according to its simple meaning: לָמָּה תִּתְרָאוּ-Why should everyone stare at you and wonder at you that you are not seeking food for yourselves before what you have in your hands is depleted.) From others I heard that it (תִּתְרָאוּ) is an expression of emaciation. [Thus:] Why should you become emaciated because of the famine? Similar to this is “And he who emaciates [others] (וּמַרְוֶה)—he too will become emaciated (יוֹרֶא)” (Prov. 11:25)

**2** **Go down there** Heb. רְדוּ. But he did not say, “Go (L’KHU).” He alluded to the 210 years that they were enslaved in Egypt, according to the numerical value of רְדוּ.-[from Gen Rabbah 91:2, Tan. Mikeitz 8]

**3** **So Joseph’s…brothers went down** But Scripture did not write “the sons of Jacob.” This teaches that they regretted selling him and decided to behave toward him in a brotherly manner and to ransom him for whatever amount of money would be demanded of them.-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:6, *Tan. Mikeitz* 8]

**ten** Why is this written? Is it not written, (verse 4) “But Joseph’s brother, Benjamin, Jacob did not send”? [It is therefore obvious that they were only ten.] But [this is what it means:] concerning brotherhood, they were divided into ten, for neither the love they all had for him (Joseph) nor the hate they all had for him was equal, [hence, in the attitude of brotherhood, they were divided into ten.] As concerning buying grain, they all were of one accord (lit., one heart). -[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:2]

**4** **“Lest misfortune befall him.”** And at home, could not misfortune befall him? Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya’akov said: From here [we learn] that Satan accuses [a person] at the time of danger.-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91: 9]

**5** **among those who came** They hid themselves [in the crowd] so that they would not be recognized, because their father had commanded them not to all appear at one entrance, but for each to enter through his own entrance, so that the evil eye would have no power over them, for they were all handsome and strong [and thus would be envied].-[from *Tan. Mikeitz* 8, *Gen. Rabbah* 91:6]

**6** **and prostrated themselves to him, with their faces to the ground** Heb. וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ. They prostrated themselves to him on their faces, and so every [expression of] VAYISHTACHAVA’AH means spreading out hands and feet.-[from *Shev.* 16b]

**7** **but he made himself a stranger** He behaved toward them like a stranger verbally, by speaking harshly.-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:6, *Tan. Mikeitz* 8]

**8** **Now Joseph recognized, etc.** Because he had left them [when they were already] full-bearded.-[from *Yeb.* 88a, *Keth.* 27b, *B.M.* 39b, *Gen. Rabbah* 91:7, *Targum Jonathan*]

**but they did not recognize him** Because when he left them, he was not full-bearded, and now they found him full-bearded. The Aggadic Midrash states: “And Joseph recognized his brothers”—when they were delivered into his hands, he recognized that they were his brothers, and he had compassion on them. But they did not recognize him when he fell into their hands, to behave toward him with brotherhood.-[from*Yeb.* 88a, *Keth.* 27b, *B.M.* 39b, *Gen. Rabbah* 91:7, *Targum Jonathan*]

**9** **that he had dreamed about them** Heb. לָהֶם, lit., to them, [but here it means] about them (*Targum Jonathan*). He knew that they (his dreams) had been fulfilled, for they (his brothers) had prostrated themselves to him.-[from *Zohar*, vol. 1, p. 199b]

**the nakedness of the land** Heb. עֶרְוַת הָאָרֶץ, the exposure of the land, from where it can be easily conquered, similar to “he exposed (הֶעֱרָה) her fountain” (Lev. 20:18), and like “naked and bare (וְעֶרְיָה)” (Ezek. 16:7), and likewise, every [expression of] עֶרְוַה in the Scriptures is an expression of exposure.

**10** **No, my master** Do not say that, but your servants have come to buy food.

**11** **We are all sons of one man** The Holy Spirit flickered within them, and they included him with them, for he too was the son of their father.-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:7]

**honest** Heb. כֵּנִים, truthful, like “You have spoken truthfully (כֵּן)” (Exod. 10:29); “the daughters of Zelophehad speak truthfully (כֵּן)” (Num. 27:7); “[their haughtiness] and their conception are improper (לֹא-כֵן), [as are] their branches” (Isa. 16: 6). -[from *Targum Onkelos*]

**12** **But you have come to see the nakedness of the land** For you have entered by way of the ten gates of the city. Why did you not enter [together] through one gate?-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:7; *Tan. Buber, Mikeitz*17]

**13** **And they said, “We, your servants…”** And for that one who is gone, we scattered in the city to seek him.-[from Tan. Buber, Mikeitz 17]

**14** **This is just what I have spoken** The thing that I have spoken, namely, that you are spies, is true and correct. This is according to its simple interpretation. Its midrashic interpretation is, however: He said to them, “And if you find him (Joseph), and they (his owners) demand a large ransom from you, will you ransom him?” “Yes,” they replied. He said to them, “And if they say that they will not return him for any money, what will you do?” They said, “For this we have come, to kill or be killed.” He said to them, “That is [exactly] what I said to you; you have come to slay the people of the city. I divine with my cup that two of you destroyed the large city of Shechem.”-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:7, *Tan. Mikeitz* 8]

**15** **By Pharaoh’s life** If Pharaoh will live. When he swore falsely, he swore by Pharaoh’s life.-[from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:7, *Tan. Buber, Mikeitz* 17]

**you will not leave this place** Heb. מִזֶּה, lit., from this, from this place.-[from *Targum Onkelos*]

**16** **whether truth is with you** Heb. הַאֱמֶת, if the truth is with you. The “hey” is vowelized with a “pattach,” which is equivalent to an expression of wonderment.-[from *Targum Onkelos*]

**Whether truth is with you** And if you do not bring him, [I swear] by Pharaoh’s life, that you are spies.

**17** **prison** Heb. מִשְׁמָר, lit., watch, [meaning] the prison.- [from *Targum Onkelos*]

**19** **in your prison:** In which you are now imprisoned.

**and you, go bring:** to your father’s house.

**the grain for the hunger of your households:** What you have purchased for the hunger of the members of your households. — [from *Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel*].

**20 so that your words may be verified:** Heb. וְיֵאָמְנוּ, let them be confirmed and fulfilled, like “Amen, amen (אָמֵן)” (Num. 5:22), and like “may Your word now be verified (יֵאָמֵן)” (I Kings 8:26).

**21** **Indeed:** Heb. אִבָל, as the Targum renders: בָּקוּשְׁטָא, in truth. I [also] saw in Genesis Rabbah (91:8): It is the language of the Southerners; אִבָל means בְּרַם, in truth.

**has come upon us:** Heb. בָּאָה. Its accent is on the “beth,” because it is in the past tense, [meaning] that it has already come, and the Targum is אָתַת לָנָא [which is the past tense in Aramaic].

**22** **his blood, too, is being demanded:** The use of the word אֶת or the word גַם denotes inclusion. In this case it means “his blood and also the blood of his aged father.” - [from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:8]

**23** **They did not know that Joseph understood:** Heb. שֹׁמֵעַ, understood their language, and they were speaking in this manner in his presence. — [from Tanchuma Buber Vayigash 7]

**for the interpreter was between them:** For whenever they spoke with him, the interpreter, who knew both Hebrew and Egyptian, was between them, and he would interpret their words for Joseph and Joseph’s words for them. Therefore, they thought that Joseph did not understand Hebrew. — [from *Targum Onkelos*]

**the interpreter:** This was his son Manasseh. — [from *Gen. Rabbah* 91:8, *Targum Jonathan*, *Targum Yerushalmi*]

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms)** ‎‎‎**36:1-13**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **Rashi** |  **Targum** |
| 1. For the conductor. Of the servant of the Lord, of David. | 1. For praise. Of the servant of the LORD, David |
| 2. **The word of the transgression to the wicked man, in the midst of my heart, is that there is no fear of God before his eyes.** | 2. **Rebellion said to the sinner within my heart, "There is no fear of the LORD before his eyes."** |
| 3. For it smoothed the way before him in his eyes, **to find his iniquity to hate [him].** | 3. Because he flatters him with his eyes to find sins, **to hate instruction.** |
| 4. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit; he refrained from learning to improve. | 4. The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; he has ceased to be wise in doing good. |
| 5. He thinks iniquity on his couch; he stands on a way that is not good; he does not reject evil. | 5. Wickedness plots on his bed; he will take his stand in a way not good; he will not reject evil. |
| 6. O Lord, Your kindness is in the heavens; Your faith is until the sky. | 6. O LORD, Your goodness is in the heaven of heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. |
| 7. Your charity is like the mighty mountains; Your judgments are [like] the vast deep. You save both man and beast, O Lord. | 7. Your righteousness/generosity is as high as the great mountains; Your judgments are as deep as the great abyss; You will redeem both the sons of men and beasts, O LORD. |
| 8. How precious is Your kindness, O God, and the sons of man will take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. | 8. How precious is Your goodness, O LORD; and the sons of men will dwell securely in the shadow of Your presence. |
| 9. They will be sated from the fat of Your house, and with the stream of Your delights You give them to drink. | 9. They will drink deeply of the plenteous blessings of Your house; and You will let them drink of Your pleasant fountain. |
| 10. **For with You is the source of life; in Your light we will see light.** | 10. **For with You are streams of living water; in the splendor of Your glory we will see light.** |
| 11. **Extend Your kindness to those who know You, and Your charity to the upright of heart.** | 11. **Extend your goodness over those who know You; and Your generosity over the upright of heart.** |
| 12. Let the foot of haughtiness not come with me, neither shall the hand of the wicked cause me to wander. | 12. May the foot of the proud not reach me; and may the hands of the wicked not make me wander. |
| 13. There the workers of iniquity have fallen; they have been thrust away and were unable to rise. | 13. There fell those who commit falsehood; they will be struck down, and will not rise again. |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Tehillim (Psalms)** ‎‎‎‎**36:1-13**

**2 The word of the transgression to the wicked man, in the midst of my heart, etc.** This is a transposed verse. I feel within my heart that the transgression i.e., the evil inclination says to the wicked man that the fear of God should not be before his eyes.

**in the midst of my heart** Like a person who says, “It seems to me.”

**3 For it smoothed** The transgression made smooth places appear to his eyes in order that the Holy One, blessed be He, find his iniquity to hate him.

**4 he refrained from learning to improve** He refrained from contemplating to improve his deeds.

**5 he stands on a way that is not good** The Holy One, blessed be He, placed before him the good way and the way of death, yet he chooses for himself a way that is not good.

**6 O Lord, Your kindness is in the heavens** Because of these wicked men, You remove [Your] kindness from the earth creatures and raise up Your faith until the sky to remove it from the sons of men.

**7 Your charity is as scarce to the creatures as the mighty mountains** because of the deeds of the wicked, and Your judgments come upon the world until the vast deep. Another explanation:

**Your righteousness/generosity is like the mighty mountains** The one with whom You wish to deal charitably, You raise up and strengthen like the mighty mountains. אל is an expression of strength, as (in Ezek. 17:13): “and he has taken away the mighty of (אילי) the land.”

**Your judgments are the vast deep** Whomever You wish to judge, and wreak vengeance upon, You humble him to the vast deep.

**Your judgments** Heb. משפטיך , joustiza in Old French, justice.

**You save both man and beast** People who are as astute as Adam, but who make themselves as humble as beasts, You save, O Lord.

**8 How precious is Your kindness** It is not fitting that it be extended to these wicked, but the children of men who take refuge in the shadow of Your wingsthey will be sated from the fat of Your house, etc.

**12 Let the foot of haughtiness not come with me** Let the foot of these wicked men not come with me at the time of the reception of reward, [because] their lot should [not] be with the righteous.

**neither shall the hand of the wicked cause me to wander from my place** when I return to inherit a double [portion]: my portion and the portion of the wicked man, in the goodness, as the matter that is stated (in Isa. 61:7): “Therefore, in their land they shall inherit twofold.” And then...

**13 There the workers of iniquity have fallen** There they will understand their downfall, and there they were thrust away and were unable to rise.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 36:1-13**

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

Psalms chapter 36 portrays the stark contrast between those who defy G-d and those who serve Him. According to Radak, the villain of the Psalm is the Yetzer HaRa, the Evil Inclination, which succeeds in convincing the wicked that there is no supreme Master over the affairs of this world. The Psalmist diametrically opposes such a heresy. David proudly calls himself the servant[[1]](#footnote-1) of HaShem, a vassal totally submissive to G-d's will.

Mesillat Yesharim[[2]](#footnote-2) describes the devoted servant of HaShem who lives in awe of His Divine Majesty: he constantly fears lest some trace of the Evil Inclination might have intruded into his actions and rendered them inconsonant with the grandeur of the Blessed One's honor and the glory of His Name. Fear of sin is an essential element of his being and no circumstance in life can shake him from his incessant trembling before G-d.

Such a man is happy and fortunate as Solomon said, Praiseworthy is the man who fears always.[[3]](#footnote-3) King David exulted in his possession of the trait of unshakeable fear, saying, ׳[Even while] Princes pursued me for naught, my heart feared [only] at Your word'.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The superscription of psalm 36 ascribes authorship to David. The antagonist, according to Radak, of this psalm is the Yetzer HaRa, the evil inclination. This psalm is all about the evil deeds which the Yetzer HaRa[[5]](#footnote-5) attempts foist on us, and which the wicked actually carry out.

*Midrash Shocher Tov* describes the spirit which drives the wicked: They search with their eyes and ponder in their hearts to find sins which HaShem will find so hateful so that they can commit them out of spite.[[6]](#footnote-6) This is precisely the attitude behind the actions of the Syrian-Greeks who descretated the altar in the Temple of the Living G-d by slaughtering a pig on it. This is the nature of the evil that we fought against at Chanukah.

In v.7, the psalmist describes two types of miracles: A Nes Nigle -נגלה נס (an *open* or *obvious* miracle) and Nes Nistar - נסתר נס (a *hidden* miracle). He uses the metaphor of a mighty mountain to illustrate a nes nigle, and ‘deep waters’ to illustrate a nes nistar. As a mighty mountain is obvious to all, so also is a nes nigle obvious to all. As deep waters conceal everything in the depths, so also does nes nistar conceal itself from all.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The miracles of Chanukah consisted of both types. The oil in the menora that burned for eight days with the quantity of oil that normally burns for only one day; that was a nes nigle, an obvious miracle. On the other hand, the many victorious battles waged by the Levites, and other tribes, were nesim nistarim, hidden miracles. The strength and cunning of the soldiers effectively concealed the Hand of HaShem as He defeated His enemies.

The nesim nistarim, the hidden miracles, of Purim teach us that ***not*** everything that appears bad, is truly bad. A situation that appeared to spell doom and gloom, was completely turned around. Not only was the evil negated, but “the exact opposite occurred, when the Jews ruled over their enemies”.[[8]](#footnote-8) All we need to do is to look through the situation to see the hand of HaShem. This should also be a clue for us to praise HaShem when even the nesim nistorim seem to be beneficial.

Note the lineage of the protagonists of the Purim story. It is the lineage of hiddenness. Mordechai and Esther are descendants of Rachel. Rachel, the mother of Yosef, is the very essence of hiddenness and concealment. When her sister Leah is substituted for her in marriage to Yaaqov, why does Rachel not cry out and protest that an injustice is being done? Because to do so would have humiliated her sister. Rachel knows how to conceal things, including her bitter disappointment. Rachel's son Yosef is also a master of concealment. His essential qualities of holiness are concealed from his brothers, who do not recognize his greatness because he effectively hides them. And when the brothers come down to Egypt 22 years later, they again fail to recognize him, for he is now concealed behind his garments and his beard.

Contrast this with the miracle of Chanukah. There, the oil that is enough for one day burns instead for eight days, which is a nes nigleh, an open miracle that everyone can see. But the Purim miracle, whereby the entire Jewish community is saved from destruction, is a hidden miracle, a nes nistar. The interceding hand of HaShem is invisible. It could easily be ascribed to happenstance, the way everything else in the story seems to be happenstance. In perek yod, of our psalm we hear David revealing a very profound truth:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 36:10*** *For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light do we see light.*

As we mentioned earlier, the miracle of Chanukah was the buring of the light of the menora for eight days with the oil of one day. The light of that menora is reflected in our psalm. The psalmist declares that when we look at the Chanukah light we are seeing the light of creation, the light of HaShem. The Chanukah lights have a special rule that teaches us that the only use of it’s light is for us to gaze at it. We cannot use it for lighting our house or our table. We must use an addition source of illumination for this purpose. Thus we understand that the Chanukah lights are special.

The Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, is a reflection of Adam’s festival. The festival of Chanukah was instituted by Adam very close to the beginning of time. This early celebration of the Festival of Lights was called “Adam’s festival”. As an aside, it is important to understand that the events which occurred in the days of the Maccabees are NOT the reason for Chanukah. Rather, HaShem designated the twenty-fifth day and the ninth/tenth month as a day which *demands* that lights be lit and celebrated, from the creation of the world! The Gemara tells us about this early “Chanukah”.

***Avodah Zarah 8a*** *GEMARA. Said R. Hanan b. Raba: KALENDA[[9]](#footnote-9) is kept on the eight days following the [winter] equinox. SATURNALIA[[10]](#footnote-10) on the eight days preceding the equinox. As a mnemonic take the verse, Thou hast beset me behind and before.[[11]](#footnote-11)*

*Our Rabbis taught: When primitive Adam saw the day getting gradually shorter, he said, ‘Woe is me, perhaps because I have sinned, the world around me is being darkened and returning to its state of chaos and confusion; this then is the kind of death to which I have been sentenced from Heaven!’ So he began keeping an eight days’ fast. But as he observed the winter equinox and noted the day getting increasingly longer, he said, ‘This is the world's course’, and he set forth to keep an eight days’ festivity. In the following year he appointed both[[12]](#footnote-12) as festivals. Now, he fixed them for the sake of Heaven, but the [heathens] appointed them for the sake of idolatry.*

This idea of a “festival of Lights” is reflected in the ways of the world.

As we go forward in time, from the days of Adam, we find several allusions to Chanukah in the Torah.

1. In the original Hebrew, the twenty-fifth word in the Torah is Ohr - אור, light. We begin lighting the Chanukah lights on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month called Kislev. We continue lighting for eight days till the beginning of Tevet, the tenth month. The last day of the feast is the greatest day of the feast. Therefore, it is the tenth month which is the most important.

2. When the Bne Israel traveled in the desert, on their way from Egypt to the land of Israel, the twenty-fifth place that they camped was Chashmonah. This alludes to the priestly family of Chashmonaim (Hasmoneans) who led the Maccabee armies in the battle against the Greeks, and rested on the twenty-fifth day of Kislev.

3. The 23rd chapter of Vayikra (Leviticus) describes HaShem’s holidays in order, starting with Shabbat. Immediately afterwards, in the beginning of chapter 24, we find the commandment to light the Menorah in the Temple. This is a hint to a holiday connected to the lighting of the Menorah.

4. The 7th chapter of Bamidbar (Numbers) describes the offerings that the tribal leaders brought when the Tabernacle was dedicated. Chapter 8 begins: HaShem spoke to Moshe, saying: “Speak to Aaron and say to him: ‘When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah.’” We thus see a connection between the dedication of the Temple and the lighting of the Menorah. After the Maccabean war ended, the Jews cleaned, repaired and rededicated the Temple, and lit the Menorah once again.

Thus we have additional hints, in the Torah, that Chanukah was in the mind of HaShem when He created the world.

As we go forward in time we find an allusion to Chanukah in the Tanakh.

The Prophet Chaggai alluded to Chanukah in his prophecy:

***Chaggai (Haggai) 2:18*** *Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of HaShem’s temple was laid, consider it. 19 Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless you.*

From this prophecy we see that the first full day of the laying of the foundation for the second Temple was on Kislev twenty-five, the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month. Thus the Temple and its light are associated with Chanukah, The Festival of Light.

This date for the laying of the foundation of the second Temple is so significant that the Syrian-Greeks will specifically choose this day to defile the Temple, in 162 B.C.E. The Temple, built for the glory of HaShem, was defiled by idolaters, transforming it into a place that would combine Jewish faith with a universal, Hellenistic vision. For this reason they placed their idol in the Temple, choosing specifically the twenty-fifth of Kislev as the day for this desecration, so as to correspond with the original day of the laying of the foundation of the Second Temple. This was a deliberate attempt to offend the religious public, which they defined as a group of zealots.

Three years after the desecration of the Temple by the Syrian-Greeks, Yehuda Maccabee and his brothers planned the rededication of the altar and of the Temple as a whole for the anniversary of its defilement, the day of the oil, and they celebrated the festival of Succoth in the ninth month, “with myrtle branches and citron branches and palm branches, for eight days, with joy and festivity”. They thereby instituted for all generations the parallel between the dedication of the Temple in the days of King Solomon, on Succoth, The laying of the foundation for the second Temple, and its rededication in Kislev in the days of the Hasmoneans, with a further parallel between the ingathering of the grain and the wine and the ingathering of the olives, as celebrations of equal weight.

Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, lets continue looking at another allusion to Chanukah, before the days of the Hasmoneans, as detailed by our Sages, in the Mishna.

We see that the Oral Torah given to Moshe on Mount Sinai also has an allusion to Chanukah.

***Bikkurim Chapter 1:6****. HE WHO BUYS TWO TREES [THAT HAD GROWN] IN PROPERTY BELONGING TO HIS FELLOW BRINGS BIKKURIM BUT IS NOT TO MAKE THE RECITAL. R. MEIR SAYS: HE ALSO MAKES THE RECITAL. IF THE WELL DRIED UP, OR THE TREE WAS CUT DOWN, HE BRINGS BUT DOES NOT RECITE. R. JUDAH SAYS: HE BRINGS AND RECITES. FROM PENTECOST TILL SUKKOTH ONE MAY BRING [BIKKURIM] AND MAKE THE RECITAL; FROM SUKKOTH TILL HANUKAH, ONE MAY BRING, BUT DOES NOT MAKE THE RECITAL. R. JUDAH B. BATHYRA SAYS: ONE MAY BRING AND ALSO MAKE THE RECITAL.*

Apparently, while the holiday of Chanukah is a later development, this time of the year is agriculturally significant because the agricultural aspect of first fruits (bikkurim) serves to purify the cosmic festival, instituted by Adam, which had become a pagan celebration. The natural agricultural cycle of the Land of Israel is such that the end of the olive season (and thus the end of the first fruits season) falls in the last week of Kislev. This creates a situation in which the celebration of the first fruits with olive oil coincides with the natural, universally recognized need to create light at this time of darkness. Thus the light of pure olive oil, from the produce of the land brought as first fruits to the Temple, replaces the impure, pagan “light and fire,” thereby illuminating the world with purity emanating from the holiness of the land and of the Temple.

A connection between Chanukah and Succoth is also found among the prophesies of Haggai. He was one of the last prophets and one of the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah, The Men of the Great Assembly. He lived during the reign of King Darius of Persia, who according to the Midrash was the son of Achashverosh and Esther, and he sanctioned and encouraged the construction of the second Beit HaMikdash which had begun in the days of Cyrus but was subsequently discontinued for eighteen years.

Haggai conveyed the following

***Chaggai (Haggai) 2:1,6*** *In the seventh month [Tishre] on the twenty first of the month, the seventh day of Succoth, which is called Hoshana Rabbah, the word of HaShem came through Haggai the prophet saying ... for thus said HaShem, ‘there will be one more; it is a small one, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land’.*

The message of this prophecy was that in addition to the current subjugation under Persia, one more nation would subdue the Jews, the Greeks; but their domination would last only a short time. HaShem was thus saying, “During the Greek rule, I will cause a major upheaval in the land”, a reference to the Hasmonean’s revolt against the Greeks and the miracle of Chanukah.

*Keep in mind that Chanukah is not a monotheistic festival that grew out of a pagan one. Rather, the festival started out as a cosmic, universal one, established by Adam, who “instituted them [the eight-day periods] for the sake of Heaven”. Only afterwards did it become a pagan festival.*

A festival of lights is something that many cultures have in common with the Jews. Hindus have *Diwali*,[[13]](#footnote-13) the Buddhists have *Loy Krathong* (with water-borne and air-borne lanterns), the Chinese have their annual *Lantern Festival*, and I'm sure there are many more. Lighting displays have also been an important aspect for Christmas observers around the world.

Lets look at some of these observances and see how they compare to Chanukah, which has its source in Adam’s festival observance.

**Background**

While I was studying at the University, I met a young woman who told me that she, and other Hindus, in India, celebrated the festival of lights[[14]](#footnote-14) in the *sixth* and *seventh* month of the Hindu calendar, on the day of the new moon. This corresponds to the Gregorian months of October and November. This got me wondering about connections to Chanukah, which is also called The Festival of Lights.

I have known for some time that Christians also celebrate a festival of lights on December 25. *Christmas* is sometimes called in the Latin Church the Feast of Lights, so many candles are used. What is fascinating is that this festival takes place *in the tenth month, yes, the tenth month, on the twenty-fifth day.* While everyone knows that December is the twelfth month of the Gregorian calendar, not so many realize that ***December* means the *tenth month* in Latin**. Thus the name *December* testifies to the fact that this time period was known in earlier times as the *tenth month*. The Biblical calendar does, indeed, call this time period *Tevet*, which is the tenth month of the Biblical calendar. Clearly the ancient Roman calendar also acknowledged that this is the time for the tenth month.

On the twelve days of *Christmas*,[[15]](#footnote-15) Between Christmas and the Epiphany, Christian decorate the outside and inside of their houses with lights.

*Christmas* is also observed as an eight day festival from December 25 through January 1. Note the eight days: Dec. 25, Dec. 26, Dec. 27, Dec. 28, Dec. 29, Dec. 30, Dec. 31, Jan. 1. Many abstain from work during these days. Major manufacturers[[16]](#footnote-16) often give their employees these days as vacation.

Further, some Christians celebrate the Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord, which is a Christian celebration of the Brit milah (ritual circumcision) of Yeshua, eight days after his birth, the occasion on which the child was formally given his name, Yeshua, a name derived from Hebrew meaning *salvation*. The feast day appears on January 1 in the liturgical calendar of the Eastern Orthodox Church. It also appears in the pre-1960 General Roman Calendar, and is celebrated by some churches of the Anglican Communion and virtually all Lutheran churches.

*Christmas* is celebrated by attaching lights to their Christmas trees and to their homes.

*Ganden Ngamcho* is celebrated, by Buddhists, on the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month of the Tibetan calendar. On this night of the day, countless butter lamps are lit on the roofs of every monastery and lay person’s house. Its distinctive mark is the lighting of lamps and bonfires. This Tibetan Buddhist festival commemorates the birth and death of Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), a saintly scholar, teacher, and reformer of the monasteries, who enforced strict monastic rules.

The Tibetan calendar is lunar based and the tenth month corresponds to the Biblical calendar for Kislev (the ninth month). This means that Ganden Ngamcho falls on the first night of Chanukah!

When I realized that these four major religions, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism,[[17]](#footnote-17) all had a major festival called the *festival of lights*, I knew that there had to be a common origin that was based in the Torah and Adam’s festival.

Each of four great religions celebrate their *festivals of lights* to commemorate a great salvation for the people. In our introduction we demonstrated that Adam instituted the Feast of Lights (Chanukah) specifically to commemorate his own salvation from a world that was descending into darkness.

***Avodah Zarah 8a*** *When primitive Adam saw the day getting gradually shorter, he said, ‘Woe is me, perhaps because I have sinned, the world around me is being darkened and returning to its state of chaos and confusion; this then is the kind of death to which I have been sentenced from Heaven!’*

Since the origins of this festival were rooted in a great salvation, we would expect this theme to be picked up in the celebrations for the other great religions.

I would like to look at each of the non-Jewish *great* religions and how they recreate Adam’s salvation.

*Christmas*

*Christmas* is an official Christian holiday, celebrated in every Christian land, that celebrates the birth of Yeshua (Jesus) who was sent to save mankind from their sins. This is very interesting because the Tanakh[[18]](#footnote-18) and the Nazarean Codicil[[19]](#footnote-19) show clearly that Yeshua was born during the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth), in the seventh month (Tishri), as we have shown in the study titled: BIRTH.

Now the Nazarean Codicil shows clearly that Christians regard Yeshua as *The Light of The World*.

***Yochanan (John) 8:12*** *Then spake Yeshua again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*

The connection to Succoth becomes firm when we realize that Yeshua spoke these words in Jerusalem while observing the Light of the World in the Temple, as we saw in the Mishna earlier.

Now we learned earlier that Chanukah was a ‘second chance’ to celebrate Succoth. Thus we understand that there is a clear connection between Christmas and Chanukah.

*Diwali*

*Diwali* is an official holiday in India, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Mauritius, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Fiji. This festival holds an message of salvation since the festival is reckoned with Lord Rama's victory as the King of Ayodhya after his return to the kingdom from 14 years of exile along with his wife Sita and brother Laxman after killing the demon, King Ravana.

The name Diwali is itself a contraction of the word Dīpāvali, which translates into *row of lamps*. Diwali involves the lighting of small clay lamps filled with oil to signify the triumph of good over evil, victory over darkness, knowledge over ignorance.

While Diwali is popularly known as the “festival of lights”, the most significant spiritual meaning is “the awareness of the inner light”.

Central to Hindu philosophy is the assertion that there is something beyond the physical body and mind which is pure, infinite, and eternal, called the Atman. Just as we celebrate the birth of our physical being, Diwali is the celebration of this inner light, in particular the knowing of which outshines all darkness (removes all obstacles and dispels all ignorance), awakening the individual to one's true nature, not as the body, but as the unchanging, infinite, immanent and transcendent reality.

The festival begins on Dhan Teras, the 13th day of the dark half of Asvina,[[20]](#footnote-20) and ends on Yama Dvitiya, the 2nd day of the light half of Karttika.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Diwali, the festival of lights, is on the twenty-fifth. That is the day when crackers burst and rockets soar.

*Ganden Ngam cho*

The name, *Ganden Ngam* *cho,* means “festival of light”, is celebrated in memory of Tsong Khapa,[[22]](#footnote-22) founder of Gelukpa sect who attained complete salvation and internal immortality. This festival of light celebrates the birth, death, and entry to nirvana[[23]](#footnote-23) of Tsong Khapa.

During the festival, thousands of butter lamps (dishes of liquid clarified butter called *ghee,* with wicks floating in them) are lit on the roofs and window sills of homes and on temple altars. At this time people seek spiritual merit by visiting the temples.

Originally *Ganden Ngamcho* was celebrated to honor the Buddha, pleasing the deities, driving out demons, and having fun.

As we mentioned earlier, *Ganden Ngam* *cho*, always falls on the first night of Chanukah. On the Tibetan calendar it occurs on the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month, which is consistent with the allusion to *twenty-five* and the tenth month.

*Ganden* is the Tibetan name for the paradise of the Buddha of the future. This name therefore suggests the salutary wish that Ganden monastery would become a route to the world’s salvation.

*Roman Saturnalia*

In Rome the feast of lights was named Saturnalia,[[24]](#footnote-24) as we saw previously from the Talmud. According to tradition the Saturnalia had been established in honor of Saturn when, all of a sudden, after a lengthy and prosperous reign, “Saturn suddenly disappeared.”

The observation of the Roman Saturnalia festival was originally observed for eight days, from the 25th of December until the first of the New Year.

Macrobius wrote[[25]](#footnote-25) that in celebrating the Saturnalia the Romans used to honor the altars of Saturn with lighted candles . . . sending round wax tapers during the Saturnalia.”

*Yule*

Yule or Yuletide ("Yule-time") is a winter festival that was initially celebrated by the historical Germanic people as a pagan religious festival, though it was later absorbed into, and equated with, the Christian festival of Christmas. The festival was originally celebrated from late December to early January on a date determined by the lunar Germanic calendar. The festival was placed on December 25 when the Christian calendar was adopted.

**Gambling**

There is a tradition of gambling on *Diwali*. Hindu beliefs hold that the G-ddess Parvati played dice against her husband Lord Shiva, declaring “whosoever gambled on Diwali night would prosper throughout the following year”.

There is a tradition of gambling on *Chanukah*. We use the dreidle (a four sided top) with its four Hebrew letters to determine the outcome. This was one of the device that Our Sages used to study the Torah at a time when it was forbidden. They would study Torah till the soldiers came, then they would hide their books and play dreidle. Thus they were able to use gambling as a method of studying Torah.

**The New Moon**

*Chanukah* is the only Jewish festival that occurs during two separate months, from the twenty-fifth of Kislev[[26]](#footnote-26) till the first or second of Tevet.[[27]](#footnote-27)

The twelve days, and the eight days, of *Christmas* both span the months of December and January.

*Diwali* spans the lunar months of Asvina and Karttika, with the main celebration taking place on the new moon.

**Household Celebrations**

*Chanukah* is a festival which is normally celebrated only at home. In the Ashkenazi tradition, every member of the family lights his own Chanukiah. In the Sephardi tradition, only the head of the household lights a Chanukiah. The Chanukiah is placed, outside the house, on the left side, as you enter the home, opposite the mezuzah.

*Christmas* is a family festival celebrated around a Christmas tree in the home. Family members exchange presents and enjoy a festival meal together. The lights on the Christmas tree are lit and the lights on their homes are also lit. Many neighborhoods compete to see who can have the most spectacular display of lights on their homes and in their yards. In fact, other than the gift giving, the lights on the tree and house are the primary manifestations of this Christian festival of lights.

*Diwali* is essentially a festival for householders. The preparations, rituals, and the entire celebration focuses on the home and family, spanning out to cover the community as a natural extension.

*Ganden Ngam* *cho* is also primarily celebrated at home, though they also light lamps in their temples.

Now that we understand the various religious celebrations that are associated with the festival of lights, lets look deeper at the real reasons why folks celebrate these festivals.

**Origin of the Festival of Lights**

There is a deep mystical reason why nearly every major culture celebrates a festival of lights. In addition to continuing the tradition started by Adam, this festival has its roots in the Torah, in Bereshit (Genesis), the first book of the Torah.

In Bereshit, the twenty-fifth Hebrew word of the Torah is אור - Ohr, *light*.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:3*** *And G-d said, Let there be light (yehi Ohr - אור): and there was light.*

In Bereshit 1:3, the Hebrew is *Yehi Ohr -*אור יהי, Let there be light! The gematria of *yehi* is twenty-five, and therefore, on another level the pasuk can be read: *Twenty-five is the light*. No wonder the Mishkan, the tabernacle in the wilderness, was completed on the 25th day of Kislev, 2449. No wonder *aiyekah* can also be read, aiyeh KOH, "Where is twenty-five?" or that there are twenty-five letters in the Shema.

There was a creation of some kind of light on the first day of creation that was altogether different from the light of the sun and the moon that was created on the fourth day. The question is just exactly what was this “light” before light?[[28]](#footnote-28)

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:14-16*** *G-d said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse of heaven to separate between the day and the night. ‘And G-d made two great lights, the greater light for dominion in the day, and the lesser light for dominion at night, as well as the stars.*

In Kabbalah, the epiphany of creation is termed *Ohr aiyn sof*, which means “the appearance of HaShem’s light.” The instant of creation is the birth of relationship, and this birth is expressed by the word “light”. The expression and manifestation of G-d in creation is called “light”.

The *Shema*, *"Hear O Israel, HaShem our Lord, HaShem is One"*,[[29]](#footnote-29) is the ultimate Jewish statement of what life is all about. Life is about the potential relationship with *echad*, with HaShem. It has been observed that the *Shema* contains twenty-five letters, and it just happens that the word “light” is the twenty-fifth word in the Torah. Bear in mind that “light” was also created on the twenty-fifth day of the month of *Elul*, and the holiday of Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, begins on the twenty-fifth day of the month of *Kislev*.

The number twenty-five, it turns out, is a very significant number. As a rule, where you find allusions to twenty-five in the Torah, you also find HaShem and “light”.

**Ashlamatah: Amos 8:4-12 + 9:14-15‎**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| **1** Thus the Lord God showed me, and behold a basket of late figs. | **1** This is what the Lord God showed me: behold, there was a dish full of late summer fruit. |
| **2** And He said: What do you see, Amos? And I said, "A basket of late figs." And the Lord said to me: The end has come to My people Israel. I will no longer pardon them. | **2** And he said, “What do you see Amos?” I said, “A dish full of late summer fruit.” Then the Lord said to me, “The final punishment has come upon my people Israel; I will not forgive them again. |
| **3** And the songs of the temple shall be wailings in that day, says the Lord God: corpses shall increase; everywhere "Cast away, remove!" | **3** They shall be wailing insted of singing in their houses at that time, says the Lord God. The corpses of the slaughtered shall be numerous wherever it is said, 'Throw them down! Hush!”’ |
| **4** Hearken to this, you who swallow up the needy, and to cut off the poor of the land. | **4** Listen to this, you who trample the heads of the needy like״ the dust of the earth, you who think of abolishing the words of the poor from the land; |
| **5** Saying, "When will the month be delayed, so that we will sell grain, and the Sabbatical Year, so that we will open [our stores of] grain, to make the ephah smaller and to make the shekel larger, and to pervert deceitful scales. | **5** who say, “When will the month for corn arrive, so that we can sell corn? And the sabbatical year so that we can open the storehouses, and make the measure small and make the seta greater, dealing dishonestly with deceitful scales? |
| **6** To purchase the poor with money, and the needy in order to inherit them, and the refuse of the grain we will sell." | **6** That we may buy the poor for silver and the needy in order to acquire an inheritance, that we may sell the refuse of the corn. |
| **7** The Lord swore by the pride of Jacob: I will never forget any of their deeds. | **7** The Lord who gave greatness to Jacob swears: “None of their deeds will ever be forgotten.” |
| **8** Shall the land not quake for this, and shall all its inhabitants [not] be destroyed? Yea, it shall rise up wholly like the rain cloud, and it shall cast up and sink like the river of Egypt. | **8** Shall not the land be laid waste for this, and all that dwell in it be desolated? A king shall come up against it with his army which is great like the waters of a river, and he shall cover it all and drive out its inhabitants and it shall sink like the river of Egypt. |
| **9** And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to set at midday, and I will darken the land on a sunny day. | **9** And at that time, says the Lord God, I will cover the sun at noon, and I will darken the earth on a sunny day. |
| **10** And I will turn your festivals into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation, and I bring up sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head, and I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and its end is like a bitter day. | **10** I will turn your feasts into mourning and all your songs into lamentation. I will put sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head. I will make it like mourning for an only child, and the end of it like a bitter day. |
| **11** Behold, days are coming, says the Lord God, and I will send famine into the land, not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water, but to hear the word of the Lord. | **11** Behold the days are coming, says the Lord God, when I will send a famine on the land: not that one will hunger for eating or thirst for drinking**,** but for hearing the words of the Lord. |
| **12** And they shall wander from sea to sea and from the north to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it. | **12** Men shall wander from the sea to the west and from the north to the east; they shall go to seek insruction from the Lord, but they shall not find it. |
| **13** On that day, the beautiful virgins and the young men shall faint of thirst. | **13** At that time, the congregations of Israel, who are like beautiful maidens that in their beauty fornicated with wicked young men, shall be weary and they shall be struck down and prostrated with thirst. |
| **14** Those who swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, "As your god lives, O Dan," and "As the road to Beersheba exists," shall fall and no longer rise. | **14** Those who swear by the guilt of Samaria, saying, "The god who is in Dan lives, and the laws of Beer-sheba endure", shall fall and never rise again. |
| **1** I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said: Strike the lintel, and the sideposts shall quake, and break to pieces those who are at the head of all of them, and their remnant I will slay by the sword; no one of them shall flee, and no one of them shall escape. | **1** The prophet said,' “1 saw the glory of the Lord; it ascended by the cherub and rested on the altar, and he said, ‘If my people Israel will not return to the law, extinguish the tamp; king Josiah shall be slain, the temple shall be laid waste, and the temple courts shall be destroyed; and the vessels of the Sanctuary shall be taken into captivity} The last of them I will kill with the sword; not one of them shall escape, and not one of them shall survive. |
| **2** If they dig down into the grave, from there My hand shall take them, and if they ascend to the heavens, from there I will bring them down. | **2** If they should think to hide as though in Sheol, from there they shall be taken by my Memra; and if they climb high buildings to heaven, from there they shall be brought down by my Memra. |
| **3** And if they hide at the peak of Carmel, from there I will search [them out] and I will take them, and if they hide from before My eyes in the land of the sea, from there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. | **3** If they should think to8 hide themselves on top of city“ towers, there I will command searchers, and they will search them out; and if they hide from my Memra among the islands" of the sea, there I will command nations who are strong like the serpent to slay" them. |
| **4** And if they go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword and it shall slay them, and I will place My eye upon them for evil and not for good. | **4** And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command those who kill with the sword to slay them. I will set my Memra against them for evil and not for good.’” |
| **5** And the Lord God of the Hosts, Who touches the land and it quakes, and all the inhabitants thereof shall be destroyed, and it shall ascend wholly like the river, and it shall sink like the river of Egypt. | **5** It is the Lord God of hosts who rebukes the land and it trembles; all who dwell in it will be desolated. And a king shall come up against it with his army, which is great like the waters of a river, and he shall cover it all and it shall sink like the river of Egypt. |
| **6** Who built His upper stories in Heaven and has founded His company on earth; Who calls the water of the sea and pours it out on the face of the earth, the Lord is His Name. | **6** It is he who made the Shekinah of his glory dwell in the lofty stronghold and established his congregation on the earth; who commanded to assemble armies as numerous as the waters of the sea and scatters them upon the face of the earth; the Lord is his name. |
| **7** Are you not like the children of the Cushites to Me, O children of Israel? says the Lord. Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and Aram from Kir? | **7** “Children of Israel, are you not regarded as beloved children before me?” says the Lord. “Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, the Philistines from Cappadocia, and the Arameans from Cyrene? |
| **8** Behold the eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from upon the face of the earth; but I will not destroy the house of Jacob, says the Lord. | **8** Behold, the works of the sinful kingdom have been revealed before the Lord God and I will destroy it off the face of the earth! But I will not completely destroy the house of Jacob”, says the Lord. |
| **9** For, behold I command, and I will scatter the house of Israel among all the nations; as it is shaken in a sieve, and not a coarse particle falls to the earth. | **9** “For, behold, I will give the order and I will scatter the house of Israel among all the nations, as one shakes with a sieve, and not a stone from it falls through the meshes to the ground. |
| **10** By the sword shall all the sinful of My people perish, those who say, "The evil shall not soon come upon us." | **10** All the sinners of my people shall be killed with the sword, who say, ‘Evil shall neither hasten nor come upon us.’ |
| **11** On that day, I will raise up the fallen Tabernacle of David, and I will close up their breaches, and I will raise up its ruins, and build it up as in the days of yore. | **11** At that time, I will set up again the kingdom of the house of David that has fallen; I will rebuild their cities and set up their congregations anew. It shall rule over all the kingdoms and it shall destroy and make an end of the greatnessa of armies; but it shall be rebuilt and reestablished as in the days of old, |
| **12** In order that they inherit the remnant of Edom and all the nations because My Name is called upon them, says the Lord Who does this. | **12** so that the house of Israel, who are called by my name, may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations, says the Lord. Behold, this is what I will do. |
| **13** Behold days are coming, says the Lord, that the plowman shall meet the reaper and the treader of the grapes the one who carries the seed, and the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. | **13** Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when the ploughman shall meet the reaper, and the presser of grapes him who puts out the seed; and the mountains shall produce sweet wine, and all the hills shall be tilled. |
| **14** And I will return the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall rebuild desolate cities and inhabit [them], and they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their produce. | **14** I will bring back the exiles of my people Israel. They shall rebuild ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine; they shall till gardens and eat their fruit. |
| **15** And I will plant them on their land, and they shall no longer be uprooted from upon their land, that I have given them, said the Lord your God. | **15** And I will establish them upon their land, nevermore to be exiled from their land which I have given them,” says the Lord your God. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Amos 8:4-12 + 9:14-15‎‎‎‎‎ ‎**

4 **you who swallow up:**Heb. הַשֹׁאֲפִים, who swallow up the needy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Special Ashlamatah: Isaiah (Yashayahu) 40:1-26**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **"Console, console My people," says your God.** | 1. **Prophets, prophesy consolations to My people, says your God.** |
| 2. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her, for she has become full [from] her host, for her iniquity has been appeased, for she has taken from the hand of the Lord double for all her sins. | 2. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and prophesy to her that she is about to be filled with people of her exiles, that her sins have been forgiven her, that she has taken a cup of consolations before the LORD as if she suffered two for one for all her sins. |
| 3. **A voice calls, "In the desert, clear the way of the Lord, straighten out in the wilderness, a highway for our God."** | 3. **A voice of one who cries: “In the wilderness clear the way before the people of the LORD, level in the desert highways before the congregation of our God.** |
| 4. Every valley shall be raised, and every mountain and hill shall be lowered, and the crooked terrain shall become a plain and the close mountains a champaigne. | 4. All the valleys will be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground will become a plain and a baked place a vale. |
| 5. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh together shall see that the mouth of the Lord spoke. | 5. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all the sons of flesh will see it together, for by the Memra of the LORD it is so decreed.” |
| 6. A voice says, "Call!" and it says, "What shall I call?" "All flesh is grass, and all its kindness is like the blossom of the field. | 6. A voice of one who says, “Prophesy!” And he answered and said, “What will I prophesy?” All the wicked/Lawless are as the grass, and all their strength like the chaff of the field. |
| 7. The grass shall dry out, the blossom shall wilt, for a wind from the Lord has blown upon it; behold the people is grass. | 7. The grass withers, its flower fades, for the spirit from the LORD blows upon it; surely the wicked/Lawless among the people are reckoned as the grass. |
| 8. The grass shall dry out, the blossom shall wilt, but the word of our God shall last forever. | 8. The wicked/Lawless dies, his conceptions perish; but the Word of our God stands forever. |
| 9. Upon a lofty mountain ascend, O herald of Zion, raise your voice with strength, O herald of Jerusalem; raise [your voice], fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" | 9. Get you up to a high mountain, prophets who herald good tidings to Zion; lift up your voice with force, you who herald good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up, fear not; say to the cities of the house of Judah, “The kingdom of your God is revealed!” |
| 10. Behold the Lord God shall come with a strong [hand], and His arm rules for Him; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense is before Him. | 10. Behold, the LORD God is revealed with strength, and the strength of His mighty arm rules before Him; behold, the reward of those who perform His Memra is with him, all those whose deeds are disclosed before Him. |
| 11. Like a shepherd [who] tends his flock, with his arm he gathers lambs, and in his bosom he carries [them], the nursing ones he leads. | 11. Like the shepherd who feeds his flock, he gathers lambs in his arm, he carries tender ones in his bosom, and leads nursing ewes gently. |
| 12. Who measured water with his gait, and measured the heavens with his span, and measured by thirds the dust of the earth, and weighed mountains with a scale and hills with a balance? | 12. Who says these things? One who lives, speaks and acts, before whom all the waters of the world are reckoned as the drop in the hollow of hand and the length of the heavens as if with the span established, the dust of the earth as if measured in a measure and the mountains as if indeed weighed and the hills, behold just as in the balance. |
| 13. Who meted the spirit of the Lord, and His adviser who informs Him? | 13. Who established the holy spirit in the mouth of all the prophets, is it not the LORD? And to the righteous/ generous who perform His Memra He makes known the words of His pleasure. |
| 14. With whom did He take counsel give him to understand, and teach him in the way of justice, and teach him knowledge, and the way of understandings did He let him know? | 14. Those who besought before Him, He caused to apprehend wisdom and taught them the path of judgment and gave their sons the Law and showed the way of understanding to their son’s sons. |
| 15. Behold the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and like dust on a balance are they counted; behold the islands are like fine [dust] that blows away. | 15. Behold, the peoples are like the drop from a bucket, and are accounted like dust on the scales; behold, the islands are like the fine dust which flies. |
| 16. And the Lebanon-there is not enough to burn, and its beasts-there is not enough for burnt offerings. | 16. The trees of Lebanon will not supply sufficient (wood) for burning, nor are the beasts that are in it enough for a burn offering. |
| 17. All the nations are as nought before Him; as things of nought and vanity are they regarded by Him. | 17. All the peoples, their deeds are as nothing; they are accounted extirpation and destruction before Him. |
| 18. And to whom do you compare God, and what likeness do you arrange for Him? | 18. Why are you planning to contend before God, or what likeness do you prepare before Him? |
| 19. The graven image, the craftsman has melted, and the smith plates it with gold, and chains of silver he attaches. | 19. Behold the image! The workman makes it, and the smith overlays it with gold, and the smith attaches silver chains to it. |
| 20. He who is accustomed to select, chooses a tree that does not rot; he seeks for himself a skilled craftsman, to prepare a graven image, which will not move. | 20. He cuts down a laurel, he chooses the wood that rot does not attack; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an image that will not move. |
| 21. Do you not know, have you not heard has it not been told to you from the **beginning**? Do you not **understand** the **foundations of the earth**? | 21. Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has not the fact of **creation’s orders** been told you from the **beginning**? Will you not **understand**, so as to fear before Him who created the **foundations of the earth**? |
| 22. It is He Who sits above the circle of the earth, and whose inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heaven like a curtain, and He spread them out like a tent to dwell. | 22. It is He who makes the Shekhinah of His glory dwell in the strong height, and all the inhabitants of the earth are reckoned before Him as grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a trifle and spreads them like a tent of glory for His Shekhinah’s house; |
| 23. Who brings princes to nought, judges of the land He made like a thing of nought. | 23. Who hands over rulers to weakness, and makes the judges of the earth as nothing. |
| 24. Even [as though] they were not planted, even [as though] they were not sown, even [as though] their trunk was not rooted in the earth; and also He blew on them, and they dried up, and a tempest shall carry them away like straw. | 24. Although they grow, although they increase, although their sons are exalted in the earth, He sends His anger among them, and they are ashamed and His Memra, as the whirlwind the chaff, will scatter them. |
| 25. "Now, to whom will you compare Me that I should be equal?" says the Holy One. | 25. Whom then will you liken before Me, and compare (Me): says the Holy One. |
| 26. Lift up your eyes on high and see, who created these, who takes out their host by number; all of them He calls by name; because of His great might and because He is strong in power, no one is missing. | 26. Lift up your eyes to the height and see, so as to fear before Him who created these, who brings out the forces of heaven by number, calling to all of them by their names; by an abundance of prodigies and because He is strong in force not one from its order is missing. |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Yeshayahu (Isaiah) ‎40:1-26‎‎**

**1** **Console, console My people** He returns to his future prophecies; since from here to the end of the Book are words of consolations, this section separated them from the prophecies of retribution. Console, you, My prophets, console My people.

**2** **for she has become full [from] her host** Jonathan renders: She is destined to become full from the people of the exiles, as though it would say, “She has become full from her host.” Others interpret צְבָאָה like (Job 7:1), “Is there not a time (צָבָא) for man on the earth?”

**has been appeased**Heb. נִרְצָה, has been appeased.

**for she has taken etc.** [Jonathan paraphrases:] For she has received a cup of consolation from before the Lord as though she has been punished doubly for all her sins. According to its simple meaning, it is possible to explain, ‘for she received double punishment.’ Now if you ask, how is it the standard of the Holy One, blessed be He, to pay back a person double his sin, I will tell you that we find an explicit verse (Jer. 16:18): “And I will pay first the doubling of their iniquity and their sin.”

**3** **A voice** The Holy Spirit calls, “In the desert, the way to Jerusalem.”

**clear the way of the Lord**for her exiles to return to her midst. [The Warsaw edition yields:]

**Clear the way of the Lord** The way of Jerusalem for her exiles to return to her midst.

**4** **Every valley shall be raised** and the mountain shall be lowered, thus resulting in a smooth, even, and easily traversed road.

**and the close mountains** Heb. רְכָסִים, mountains close to each other, and because of their proximity, the descent between them is steep and it is not slanted, that it should be easy to descend and ascend. ([The word] רְכָסִים is translated by Jonathan as ‘banks,’ an expression of height like the banks of a river.)

**close mountains** Heb. רְכָסִים. Comp. (Ex. 28: 28) “And they shall fasten (וְיִרְכְּסוּ) the breastplate.”

**a champaigne** Canpayne in O.F., a smooth and even terrain.

**6** **A voice** from the Holy One, blessed be He, says to me, “Call!”

**and it says** My spirit says to Him, “What shall I call?” And the voice answers him, “Call this, all flesh is grass. All those who are haughty their greatness shall be turned over and become like grass. ([Manuscripts yield:] All the princes of the kingdom their greatness shall be turned over and shall wither away [lit. shall end] like grass.)

**and all its kindness is like the blossom of the field** For “the kindness of the nations is sin” (Prov. 14:34). [Ed. note: We have inverted the order of Rashi and followed the order of K’li Paz and Parshandatha, to connect the second part of the verse with the first. Rashi’s explanation of the second part follows his first explanation of the first part. In the Lublin edition, the second explanation of the first part of the verse interrupts the sequence.] (Another explanation is: All flesh is grass.) A person’s end is to die; therefore, if he says to do kindness, he is like the blossom of the field, that is cut off and dries, and one must not rely on him, for he has no power to fulfill his promise, perhaps he will die, for, just as the grass dries out and the blossom wilts, so is it that when a man dies, his promise is null, but the word of our God shall last for He is living and existing, and He has the power to fulfill. Therefore, “Upon a lofty mountain ascend and herald, O herald of Zion, for the promise of the tidings emanates from the mouth of Him Who lives forever.”

**7** **shall wilt** Heb. נָבֵל, wilt.

**9** **O herald of Zion** Heb. מְבַשֶּׂרֶת. The prophets who herald Zion. [This is the feminine form.] Elsewhere (infra 52:7), he says, “the feet of the herald (מְבַשֵּׂר).” [This is the masculine form.] This denotes that if they are worthy, he will be as swift as a male. If they are not worthy, he will be as weak as a female and will delay his steps until the end.

**10** **shall come with a strong [hand]** to mete out retribution upon the heathens. ([Mss. read:] Upon the nations.)

**behold His reward is with Him** It is prepared with Him for the righteous.

**and His recompense** [lit. His deed,] the recompense for the deed, which He is obliged to give them.

**11** **Like a shepherd [who] tends his flock** Like a shepherd who tends his flock; with his arm he gathers lambs, and he carries them in his bosom.

**the nursing ones he leads** [Jonathan renders:] The nursing ones he leads gently, the nursing sheep.

**he leads** Heb. יְנַהֵל, lit. he shall lead, like מְנַהֵל, he leads.

**12** **Who measured etc.** He had the power to do all this, and surely He has the power to keep these promises.

**with his gait** Heb. בְּשָׁעֳלוֹ, with his walking, as it is said (Habakkuk 3:15): “You trod with Your horses in the sea.” Comp. (Num. 22:24) “In the path (בְּמִשְׁעוֹל) of the vineyards, a path (for walking).” Another explanation is that שַׁעַל is the name of a receptacle. Comp. (Ezekiel 13: 19) “For measures (בְּשַׁעֲלוֹ) of barley.”

**measured** Amolad in O.F., an expression of measure and number. Comp. (Ex. 5:18) “And the number (וְתֹכֶן) of bricks you shall give.”

**and measured by thirds** Heb. בַּשָּׁלִשׁ, and measured by thirds, one third wilderness, one third civilization, and one third seas and rivers. Another interpretation: בַּשָּׁלִשׁ, from the thumb to the middle finger, the third of the fingers. Menahem explains it as the name of a vessel. Comp. (Ps. 80:6) “And You gave them to drink tears with a vessel (שָׁלִישׁ).”

**and weighed mountains with a scale** Everything according to the earth, a heavy mountain He inserted into hard earth, and the light ones into soft earth.

**13** **Who meted** the Holy Spirit in the mouth of the prophets? The Lord prepared it, and He is worthy of belief.

**and His adviser who informs Him** [and the one with whom He takes counsel He informs] of His spirit. So did Jonathan render it. [Who meted out the spirit? The Lord, and the one with whom He takes counsel He informs him, i.e., the righteous in whom God confides, He informs of His plans for the future.] But, according to its context, וְאִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ refers back to the beginning of the verse. Who meted out His spirit and who is His adviser who informs the Holy One, blessed be He, of counsel?

**14** **With whom did He take counsel and give him to understand** With which of the heathens ([mss., K’li Paz:] nations) did He take counsel, as He took counsel with the prophets, as it is said concerning Abraham (Gen. 18:17): “Do I conceal from Abraham...?”

**and give him to understand, and teach him in the way of justice** With which one of the heathens ([mss., K’li Paz:] nations) did He do so, that He taught him wisdom as He did to Abraham, to whom He gave a heart to recognize Him by himself and to understand the Torah, as it is said (ibid. 26:5): “And he kept My charge,” and Scripture states further (ibid. 18:19), “For he commands etc.” And his kidneys would pour forth wisdom to him, as it is said (Ps. 16:7): “Even at night my kidneys chastised me.”

**With whom did He take counsel and who gave Him to understand** [With which man did He take counsel and which] man gave the Holy One, blessed be He, [to understand?] Behold all the nations are like a drop in a bucket, and how could they teach Him?)

**15** **Behold the nations are like a drop from a bucket** And are not worthy to Him to appoint some of them as prophets to reveal His secret.

**like a drop from a bucket** Heb. כְּמַר, like a bitter drop that drips from the bottom of the bucket, bitter from the putrid water that is embedded in the bucket and the decay of the wood, limonede in O.F.

**and like the dust of a balance** for the copper corrodes and wears off.

**like fine** fine dust.

**that blows away** [lit. that will be taken.] Like dust that is picked up and goes up through the wind, like fine dust that is carried away.

**16** **there is not enough to burn** on His altar.

**and its beasts** (the beasts] of the Lebanon there is not enough for burnt offerings. Another explanation is:

**And the Lebanon etc.** to expiate the iniquity of the heathens.

**17** **All the nations are as naught before Him** In His eyes they are as naught, and are not regarded by Him.

**19** **melted** Heb. נָסַךְ, an expression of melting (מַסֵּכָה).

**the craftsman has melted** The ironsmith has cast it from iron or from copper, and then the goldsmith plates it with plates of gold and covers it from above.

**and chains** Heb. וּרְתֻקוֹת, and chains

**20** **He who is accustomed to select**הַמְסֻכָּן תְּרוּמָה. Or, if he comes to make it of wood, one who is accustomed to discern between a durable tree and other trees, chooses a tree that does not decay quickly.

**He who is accustomed** Heb. הַמְסֻכָּן. Comp. (Num. 22:30) “Have I been accustomed  (הַהַסְכֵּן הִסְכַּנְתִּי)?”

**to select** Heb. תְּרוּמָה, separation, selection of the trees.

**21** **Do you not know...the foundations of the earth** Who founded it, and you should have worshipped Him.

**22** **the circle** Heb. חוּג, an expression similar to (infra 44:13) “And with a compass (וּבַמְּחוּגָה),” a circle (compas in O.F.).

**and whose inhabitants** are to Him [lit. before Him] like grasshoppers.

**like a curtain** Heb. כַדֹּק, a curtain, toile in French.

**24** **Even [as though] they were not planted** They are even as though they were not planted.

**even [as though] they were not sown** And still more than this, that they shall be uprooted and plucked out, as if they were not sown. Sowing is less than planting.

**their trunk is not rooted in the earth**When they will be plucked out, the trunk will not take root in the ground that it will grow up anew. Every שֹׁרֶשׁ, root, in Scripture is accented on the first letter, and the ‘reish’ is vowelized with a ‘pattah’ [segol]. This one, however, is accented on the latter syllable and it is vowelized with a ‘kamatz katan’ [tzeireh] because it is a verb, present tense, [enracinant in French] being rooted.

**26** **who created these** All the host that you will see on high.

**because of His great might** that He has, and that He is strong in power, no one of His host is missing, that He does not call by name.

**PIRQE ABOT**

**(Chapters of the Fathers)**

**Introduction**

**By: Hakham Yitschaq ben Moshe Magriso**

**All Israel has a portion in the World to Come. It is thus written [that God told the prophet], "Your people are all righteous/generous; they will possess the land forever. They are a shoot (**Hebrew: Netser**) I have planted, the work of My hands, to dis­play My greatness" *(Isaiah 60:21).***

This Mishnah is not actually part of Pirqe Abot. Rather, it is the begin­ning of the tenth chapter of the tract of *Sanhedrin*(the tract dealing with the judiciary). Still, it is a custom to read this Mishnah before beginning each chapter of Pirqe Abot*.*

When a person undertakes a job, he cannot do it with enthusiasm unless he is aware of the benefits that it will bring. For example, if a person is building a house, he works with enthusiasm, since he knows that when he finishes, he will be able to live in it. Similarly, whenever a person does something, he must be aware of its purpose, so that he will be able to work with will and enthusiasm.

It is therefore customary to read this Mishnah before each chapter of Pirqe Abot*.*It declares that the goal of keeping the Torah and obeying the commandments is to bring a person to life in the World to Come!

We, are thus taught, "All Israel has a portion in the World to Come." A Jewish soul is never lost. Even if a Jew commits a sin punishable by death, if he is executed by the courts, he is granted a por­tion in the World to Come as if he were a righteous/generous man. If one is not punished for his sins in this world, then he is judged in the next world. But, after being punished for his sins, he has a portion in the World to Come. No soul is ever lost.2

It is thus written, "Your people are ***all***righteous/generous; they will possess the land forever." When a Jew sins, he is punished, whether in this world or in the next. But after receiving his punishment, he is considered righteous/ generous. He then can "possess the land forever" - that is, he has a portion in the World to Come.

This Mishnah also reminds one that he should not despair if he has committed many sins. He may fear that he has completely lost his portion in the World to Come due to his sins. The Mishnah therefore comforts the sinner and declares, "All Israel has a portion in the World to Come."

Every Israelite has in him a small portion that is holy and pure. This is his Divine soul, which is a "portion from God on high," originating from beneath the Throne of Glory. This miniscule portion in man must, in the long run, be worthy of the World to Come. One must either pay the penalty for his sins, or else repent them - even in his last moment on earth - and then, he is welcomed into the World to Come.

This is the significance of the ending of the above mentioned verse, where God calls Israel, "A ***shoot*** (Heb.: Netser) I have planted, the work of My hands to display My greatness." God is saying, "The soul in each person's body is the shoot (Heb.: Netser) that I have planted with My own hands, the spirit that I drew from under My Throne of Glory. That is why each soul must be cleansed of sin through receiving its punishment; it is then welcome in the World to Corne."

Although we have noted that a Jewish soul is never lost, and all have a place in the World to Come, there are some exceptions. These are the wicked ones who are punished for their sins eternally. Such people have no portion in the World to Come.

Among those who have no portion in the World to Come are the atheists, agnostics, those who do not believe in Divine revelation and prophecy, those who deny that God rewards good and punishes evil, those who deny the [Torah, which is the] revelation of Moses, and those who claim that God does not know or care about man's deeds."

Also included among the heretics are those who disrespect our Torah sages, as well as those who mock the teachings of the Talmud, the Midrash or the other ancient teachings. It goes without saying that this also includes those who disrespect the Torah itself. All these are considered heretics who are punished forever and have no portion in the World to Come.

Included among those who have no place in the Future World are nonbelievers (***kof’rim***). A nonbeliever is anyone who denies that the Torah was given by God. This is true whether he denies the entire Torah, or any part of it. Even if a person believes in the Divine origin of the entire Torah, but merely denies a single sentence or word, he is considered a nonbeliever.

Also included among the nonbelievers are those deny the Oral Torah (***Torah SheB'al Peh***). The category also includes those who claim that God exchanged the Torah for a new law, as well as those who say that He has abandoned certain commandments.

The category of nonbelievers also includes those who deny the Resurrection (***Techiyath HaMethim***). One who does not believe in the coming of the Messiah is also considered a nonbeliever. Such nonbelievers have no portion in the World to Come.

Also included among those who have no portion in the World to Come is the apostate (***meshumad***). An apostate is one who abandons the Torah and embraces the religion of the gentiles.

He may see the lowly state of the Jews because of the persecutions inflicted upon them by the gentiles, and say to himself, "Why should I endure the persecutions of the gentiles among the Jews? Better I join the gentiles and share the upper hand with .them." Such a person has no portion in the World to Come. [This is, true even when one becomes an apostate due to the suffering and persecution of the Jew.] If a person abandons Judaism without any persecution, he obviously forfeits his portion in the Future World to Come.

A person who abandons even a single commandment of the Torah out of spite is also considered an apostate. This is even true of a minor commandment. Thus, for example, a person may purposely violate the commandments against wearing ***shaatnez***(a garment made of wool and linen), those forbidding the shaving of the sides of the head (***peyoth***) and beard, or the like. Although these are relatively minor commandments, one who purposefully and consistently violates them has no place in the World to Come.

One who causes many to sin (***machte et ha-rabim***) similarly has no portion in the World to Come. Obviously included among those who cause the multitude to sin are those who found heretic sects, such as Jereboam or Tzadok and Bethos. But it also includes those who cause many people to commit even a minor sin or neglect one of the positive commandments (***mitzvath asseh***) of the Torah. Such a person also has no portion in the Future World.

Also among those who have no part in the Future World are those who separate themselves from the community. These are individuals who do not wish to participate in religious functions as part of the com­munity, and do not wish to involve themselves with the community's problems. Although such a person may be an observant Jew, he goes his own way, just as if he were a gentile. He also has no part in the World to Come.

Also included among those who have no portion in the World to Come are those who brazenly affront the Torah *(****megaleh panim ba­Torah***). These are people who sin highhandedly, show­ing respect neither to God nor to man.

An example of this was Yehoyakim king of Judah. Barukh ben Neriah came to him with a copy of the Book of Lamentations, describ­ing the evil that was to come upon Jerusalem. Instead of taking its words to heart, Yehoyakim took the scroll, cut it to pieces, and threw the pieces into the fire in the presence of all the great people who were there at the time (Jeremiah 36). Whether a sin is large or small, if it is committed with such gross disrespect, the person doing it is considered to have brazenly affronted the Torah, and he can lose his portion in the World to Come.

Also included among those who have no portion in the World to Come is the person who gives his Jewish neighbor over to gentiles to be killed or beaten. This is true whenever a person places another in the hands of the wicked.

Those who instill fear in the community for their own pleasure, and not for the sake of heaven, also have no portion in the World to Come.

A murderer can lose his portion in the Future World.

One who despises the covenant of Abraham has no place in the World to Come. This includes the Jewish person who refuses to undergo cir­cumcision.

People who made a practice of destroying the reputations of others *(****baaley lashon ha-ra****),*spreading evil. reports, similarly have no portion in the Future World,

Also included in the category of those who have no portion in the Future World are those who used to make a practice of attempting to heal a wound by occult means, reciting a Biblical verse and then expec­torating.

Obviously, this does not mean that it is forbidden to read Biblical verses while a physician is effecting a normal cure. The primary prohibition is against spitting while reciting God's name. The reason that one loses his portion in the World to Come for this act is that God's name is made part of an occult ritual, and it is desecrated through the act of expectorating.

Some say that the reason for this strong prohibition is that one is making use of Torah verses just as one would a mundane drug or medicine. He is thus treating the Torah as nothing more than a cure for the body. It is true that one who keeps the Torah and its commandments has merit guarding against illness. But to make the/Torah into a superstitious mystical cure is clearly forbidden.

Others give an entirely different reason for this. In Egypt, a rabbi once met an Arab who had a great reputation as a faith healer. While the rabbi was with the healer, the Arabs brought a sick person to be healed. The healer made use of his occult rituals, and, as the rabbi saw, at frequent intervals during the ritual, the healer would spit. When the rabbi inquired as to the reason for the spitting, the healer replied that the sickness is caused by a spirit that entered the patient's body. "In order to heal the patient," he said, "I must get the spirit to leave the body. I speak to the spirit and tell it that since it is a spiritual entity, it should be ashamed to enter a gross, contaminated human body. It is not proper for a spirit to enter a filthy, disgusting human body, the product of a putrid drop of semen."

"But why do you spit?" asked the rabbi.

"Spitting is the only way through which we can communicate with such a spirit," replied the healer.

The rabbi said, "Now I know why it is taught that when one uses verses from our sacred Torah in healing rituals and then spits while praising God's name, he has no portion in the Future Word. The verses are recited and God's name is praised, since we pray that God heal the patient. On the other hand, the purpose of the spitting is to pray to the wicked spirit that it should leave the body. In doing so, then, one equates God and this wicked spirit. When one does this, it is as if he were praying to God and this wicked spirit. When one does this, it is as if he were praying to God and - the spirit equally, and whoever equates God with anything else is torn out of the Future World. Obviously, there is no greater Healer than God. Compared to Him, all mortal physicians are no more than chaff.

Among those who have no portion in the World to Come are those who pronounce God's name as it is written (Yod Hei Vav Hei). ,

There are also sins that are less severe, but nevertheless, our sages have taught that one who commits them habitually has no portion in the Future World. A person must therefore be very careful concerning such matters.

Included among such "minor" sins is calling someone by an embarrassing nickname, or publicly shaming a person. Also included is denigrating the festivals, even by doing forbidden work during the intermediate days (chol ha-moed). A similar sin is being dis-respectful to the sacred.

When our sages teach that certain persons have no portion in the World to Come, they are only speaking of the case when the person dies without repenting. No matter what sins a person may have committed, if he repented during his lifetime and did not repeat the sins, then he has a place in the Future World. There is no sin, no matter how great, that cannot be remedied by repentance.

God thus said, "Peace, peace to those far and near ... and I will heal him" (Isaiah 57:19). Just as God welcomes one who has always been close, He also welcomes one who has been far, but repents. Although a person may have done many sins, if he repents and brings himself close to God, he is welcomed by Him into the World to Come.

**Nazarean Talmud**

Gen. 42:1-23 = 23v.

**כִּי יֶשׁ-שֶׁבֶר**

By: H. Em Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul****Tosefta****(Luqas Lk 8:19-21)** | **School of Hakham Tsefet****Peshat****(Mark 3:31-35)** |
| **Now it happened that his mother and brothers came to him, and they were not able to meet with him because of the congregated people. And it was reported to him, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside wanting to see you.” But he answered and said to them, “These are my mother and my brothers, the ones who do the Torah of God and hear it.”[[30]](#footnote-30)** | **And his mother and his brothers[[31]](#footnote-31) came[[32]](#footnote-32)** (to him)**, and standing outside,[[33]](#footnote-33) they sent word to him to summon[[34]](#footnote-34) him. And people congregated around where he was sitting, and it was told him, “Behold, your mother and your brothers[[35]](#footnote-35) are outside[[36]](#footnote-36) looking for you.” And he answered them and said,[[37]](#footnote-37) “Who is my mother or my brothers?” And looking around at those who were sitting around him in a circle, he said, “Behold, my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God[[38]](#footnote-38)** (follows my Mesorah)**, this person is my brother and sister and mother.”** |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gen 42:1 – 23** | **Psa 36:1-13** | **Amos 8:4-12 + 9:14-15****Is 40:1-26** | **Mk 3:31-35** | **Lk 8:19-21** |

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

**Yosef knew his brethren, but they knew him not**

Building on the contiguity of the last pericope of B’resheet 42:8 with the present one, we see that Yosef recognized his “brethren” (brothers), but they did not know him. Yeshua is in a similar situation where his brothers do not seem to know that he is Messiah. Some scholars quibble over this being those who tried to seize him from the previous pericope or the previous being another party. Regardless of whether they had tried to seize him in a prior pericope or not, the point Hakham Tsefet is making here is that in Messiah there is an inner and outer circle.

Bede[[39]](#footnote-39) correctly suggests that Yeshua did not refuse to speak with his mother and brothers with any disrespect. The contrast drawn here is a mild hyperbole. Yeshua demonstrates the devotion he has for the spiritual community and its dynamic part in life. The present pericope details the notion that Yeshua has a deep connection with those who “do and hear” the Mesorah. He correctly honours his mother and family yet he is better associated with those who have a positive relationship with “the will of G-d” i.e. the Mesorah. The master identifies himself with the Mesorah and those who take it to heart.

Again, this pericope distinguished between those who are “outside” of the house and those who are in the “circle” close to the master. This forwards the truth that the spiritual community is of great importance to its Hakham. The notion of “brotherhood” takes on the Tanakh’s idea of *achim*. The B’ne Yisrael is a nation of brothers per se.

The Jewish way of Torah is the way of peace (shalom). Yeshua shows those in the “inner circle” *chesed* (loving-kindness). *Chesed* is a metonym for Torah. Those who are not a part of the inner circle see the din of the master. Therefore, Yeshua intimately connects with those who share in his Torah. His Torah is the G-d breathed Torah, which existed as the elemental point of creation. We can learn from this pericope that Yeshua shared *chesed*/Torah with those who were outside his “family circle” in order to create a larger circle called community. The Encyclopaedia of Judaism points out the basic “economy” of Jewish family life.

In the view of Rabbinic Judaism, husbands and wives owe one another loyalty to the common task and reliability in the carrying out of their reciprocal obligations, which are sexual, social, and economic. Their relationship finds its definition, therefore its rules and obligations, in the tasks the social order assigns to marriage: child-bearing and child-raising, on the one side, and the maintenance of the political economy of the holy people, Israel, on the other. The purpose of marriage is to produce the next generation and to support it. Marriage thus finds its definition in the larger social contract that the Torah means to set forth for Israel.[[40]](#footnote-40)

The word economy is rooted in the Greek word “*oikos*” meaning house and “*nomos*” meaning Torah. Literally speaking economy means the *nomos*/Torah of the house or the “Law of a house.” When we extend this idea to the “House of Hillel,” we would see the *Nomos*/Torah of Hillel and his talmidim. When this is applied to the current pericope we see that Yeshua is in a house, those who are in this “house” are subjected to his economy.

**For whoever does the will of God[[41]](#footnote-41)** (follows my Mesorah)**, this person is my brother and sister and mother.”**

We can also translate this to say that whoever follows the rules of the Masters house is his family. Therefore, in connecting with Messiah we are directly involved in the “will of G-d.” We discussed in some detail the idea that the cosmos is a structured *Nomos*/Torah. This is a macrocosm of G-d’s cosmological system. By way of analogy, the house is a microcosm of that same cosmology. Contrary to the popular notion of unlimited *chesed*, there are rules and laws, which apply to household conduct. Just as creation follows a structured order so must the family of Messiah. When we reside within the household, the *Nomos*/Torah (*chesed*) protects us. Being outside the household exposes us to the elements of the unrestricted *din* of the structured universe as it demands its exactitude. The economy of the house resolves any conflict therein. The concept of an inner circle suggests greater familiarity with the economy of G-d and his will. Familiarity suggests being acquainted with the intimate workings of the house or family.

**Erubin**

When the family is enlarged, it is encircled by the *erub*. The *erub* now implies the extension of the family into the community. However, the community shares the same ideology concerning *Nomos*/Torah. *Erub* in our present context means the mixing of households. There can be no “mixing” if there is not a common (communal) *Nomos*/Torah. We can also explain *erub* as the conjoining of houses into one singularity.

These matters are of paramount importance when we realize that the Nazarean community (house) was prepared from the beginning to incorporate Gentiles being filled with the Nefesh Yehudi into their circle. The written Torah does not prepare us, nor did it ready the Nazarean community for this situation. This is the occupation of the Oral Torah. It defines the hierarchy and structure with orderly models from the household to village to “all Yisrael.” The Mishnah as the principal element of the Oral Torah draws a full picture of the norms of communal interaction. The Mishnaic models show daily life under the governance of G-d. No place in Eretz Yisrael experienced this transformation like the Galil. The Galil served as the seedbed for preparing the Jewish people for the Great Exile. While we call the present Exile the “Great Exile,” we could also name it the “Exile of Tikun.” Once Yisrael was equipped with all the necessary elements of G-d’s governance it could enter into the Great Exile and affect the “Great Tikun of the cosmos. This is true in all aspects of Jewish life during the First Century C.E.

**Mishnaic Hebrew and the Galil**

Another necessary element was the Galilean language. Rendsburg[[42]](#footnote-42) believes that Mishnaic Hebrew originated in the Galil. The Galil had common isoglosses with Aramaic, Greek, Biblical Hebrew and middle Hebrew,[[43]](#footnote-43) not to mention the Phoenician and Ugaritic languages. Out of these languages, Mishnaic Hebrew was born primarily in the northern part of the Galil. Judah experienced this transformation most likely because of interaction with Northern Yisrael. It makes sense that Judah’s language transformed more slowly because Yerushalayim was given to Biblical Hebrew and Targumaic Aramaic.

Because Mishnaic Hebrew first flourishing in the Galil, we can see how it became the vehicle for transmission of the Oral Torah. Some scholars applaud the Greek language believing it was the primal element for “evangelizing” the west. While there is most certainly a truth in those thoughts, Mishnaic Hebrew is the restoration of a language spoken in the creation of the cosmos. The principle element of creation was the spoken Torah – Oral Torah. “In the beginning” or we should read “the chief element” in creation was the Oral Torah personified (tabernacling) in Yeshua HaMashiach.[[44]](#footnote-44)

Contemporary scholarship has overlooked the insights of Moulton and Turner.[[45]](#footnote-45) Moulton and Turner see the “Style” of the Greek Marqan text having originated from a Hebraic original. Their suggestion is that the present Greek text is a translation from a Hebrew original. Mark, Yochanan (John) Revelation, and Acts are anchored in the dialects of the northern Galil.[[46]](#footnote-46) This is not to exclude other books of the Nazarean Codicil. Turner finds the parallelisms[[47]](#footnote-47) of Hebrew – Aramaic confusing. This is because he is not associated with Mishnaic Hebrew. What we find noteworthy is the fact that Turner and Moulton call the language of Mark a catechetical system of instruction.[[48]](#footnote-48) Turner finds similar structure in the “fourth Gospel.” The structure of the Marqan text bears its closest parallel to the “Fourth Gospel.” In other words, the Peshat of Hakham Tsefet and the So’od Hakham Yochanan have exactly the same sentence structure and grammatical style. The Marqan Mishnah served as a prototype for the subsequent Mesorot (Gospels), the fundamental Mishnah, and most of the Oral Torah. The fact that the Peshat text of Hakham Tsefet and the So’od texts of Yochanan are catechetical means that in those two genres it is imperative to have training by a Hakham, not excluding the Remes and Midrash.

The language of the present pericope is a reminiscent parallel to the Mishnah.

**m. San 4:3** The Sanhedrin[[49]](#footnote-49) was [arranged] in the shape of a half of a round threshing floor [that is, as an amphitheater], so that [the judges] should see one another. And two judges’ Paqidim stand before them, one at the right and one at the left. And they record the arguments of those who vote to acquit and of those who vote to convict. R. Judah says, “Three: one writes the opinion of those who vote to acquit, one writes the opinion of those who vote to convict, and the third writes the opinions both of those who vote to acquit and of those who vote to convict.” **4:4** And three rows of disciples of sages sit before them. Everyone knows his place. [If] they found need to ordain [a disciple to serve on the court], they ordained one who was sitting in the first row. [Then] one who was sitting in the second row joins the first row, and one who was sitting in the third row moves up to the second row. And they select for themselves someone else from the congregation and set him in the third row. [The new disciple] did not take a seat in the place of the first party [who had now joined in the court] but in the place that was appropriate for him [at the end of the third row].[[50]](#footnote-50)

We should note that there were rows of Paqidim. The first row, was termed *Kallah* – Bride and the second row was called *B’ne – Kallah* (the children of the bride).

If we may judge from later arrangements, not only in Babylon, but in Palestine, there were two kinds of public lectures, and two kinds of students. The first, or more scientific class, was designated Kallah (literally, bride), and its attendants Beney-Kallah (children of the bride). These lectures were delivered in the last month of summer (Elul), before the Feast of the New Year, and in the last winter month (Adar), immediately before the Feast of Passover.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Here we see the inner and outer circle or the “Bride” and the “children of the Bride” who stand outside unable to enter because they lack the knowledge and wisdom to interact with Messiah. G-d forbid that we should be deemed incapable of having interaction with the Master. Nevertheless, this demonstrates the great wisdom of Hakham Tsefet the genius and pioneer of Nazarean Judaism. He serves not only as the pioneer of Nazarean Judaism but also he also influences Orthodox Judaism as it follows the Governance of G-d. Hakham Tsefet therefore, exhibits the “Bride of Messiah” as those who are able to join the inner circle of Messiah’s academic class.

**Peroration**

We can stand at the door and wish to see Yeshua. The vocabulary “to stand” has both positive and negative connotations. The positive sense of the word means to hold fast. The negative sense means immobility. Connection with Messiah and being a part of the “inner circle” means always moving forward, pushing the envelope as we say. The Nazarean Jew dedicates himself to being a part of a collegiate group of scholars. Scholars will always find themselves at “home” with other scholars and people who have similar interests.

**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:**

**Av 18, 5783 – August 4/5, 2023**

**Shabbat: “VaYomér Alehém” - “And said unto them”**

**2nd Sabbath of Consolation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם** |  |  **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“VaYomer Alehem”** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 42:18-20 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 43:14-16 |
| **“And said unto them”** | Reader 2 – B’resheet 42:21-25 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 43:17-19 |
| **“Y les dijo”** | Reader 3 – B’resheet 42:26-28 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 43:20-22 |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 42:18 - 43:13 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 42:29-35 |   |
| Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 50:10 – 51:7, 11 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 42:36 – 43:2 |  **Monday and Thursday Mornings** |
| Special Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 49:14-51:3 | Reader 6 – B’resheet 43:3-10 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 43:14-16 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 37:1-17  | Reader 7 – B’resheet 43:11-13 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 43:17-19 |
|  |  Maftir – B’resheet 43:11-13 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 43:20-22 |
|  N.C. Mk 4:1-9, Lk 8:4-8 |  Is 50:10 – 51:7, 11Spec Ashlamath: 49:14 - 51:3 |   |

****

Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

Edited by Paqid Ezra ben Abraham

A special thank you to HH Giberet Giborah bat Sarah for her diligence in proof-reading every week.

1. This word forms the verbal tally with our Torah portion: Servant - עבד, Strong’s number 05650. Clearly this was David’s starting point as he Observed Yosef in our Torah portion. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Chapter 24 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mishlei (Proverbs) 28:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This introduction was 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. – Tehillim (Psalms) 119:161 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Evil Inclination. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid. 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Malbim [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Esther 9:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Festivals of idolaters (Avodah Zarah 6a). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Psalm 139:5.* As an aid to remembering that KALENDA mentioned first in the Mishnah is behind the equinox and SATURNALIA mentioned later is before it. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The eight days preceding and following the equinox. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The name Diwali is itself a contraction of the word Dīpāvali, which translates into row of lamps. Diwali involves the lighting of small clay lamps filled with oil to signify the triumph of good over evil, victory over darkness, knowledge over ignorance. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. called Diwali or Deepavali. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Many Christians begin lighting their homes after Thanksgiving. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. I am aware that Boeing has this tradition. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Sikhism and Jainism also celebrate this festival. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Tanach is an acronym for Torah (Law), Neviim (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The so called New Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. The seventh month of the Hindu luni-solar calendar. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The eighth month of the Hindu luni-solar calendar. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. He formulated a doctrine that became the basis of the Gelug (meaning "virtuous") sect of Buddhism. It became the predominant sect of Tibet, and Tsongkhapa's successors became the Dalai Lamas, the rulers of Tibet. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. it is the state of being free from suffering. The word literally means "blowing out", referring in the Buddhist context, to the blowing out of the fires of greed, hatred, and delusion. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Macrobius, *Saturnalia*I. 7. 24: subito non comparuisset. [It was then, according to Macrobius, that Italy came to be called Saturnia in honor of the planet. Cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquitates Romanorum* I. 6; Ovid, *Fasti,*VI. 1. 31.]  [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *(Saturnalia*I. 7. 31-32, transl. by P. Davies, 1969). Macrobius noted also the opinion of those who “think that the practice is derived simply from the fact that it was in the reign of Saturn that we made our way, as thou to the light, from a rude and gloomy existence to a knowledge of the liberal arts.” [Cf. above, “Tammuz and Osiris,” n. 9 on the Egyptian light festival in honor of Osiris.]  [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The ninth month of the Biblical calendar. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The tenth month of the Biblical calendar. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. This section is based on the writings of Shimon Apisdorf. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. ***Na’aséh V’Nishmá*** “We will do and [then] we will hear.” cf. Exodus 19:8. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Verbal connection to B’resheet 42.19 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Verbal connection to B’resheet 42.29 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. While scholars such as Gundry and Gould suggest that Yeshua’s family members are here to seize him in 3.21 from the congregated group, the text does not specifically lend itself to this interpretation. The maternal visit may have been because the news of his town folk from Tzfat, (Yeshua’s hometown) reached them, they went to see him and see how he was. Therefore, we deduce that the maternal visit is one of genuine concern rather than seizure. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. The Greek phrase καλοῦντες indicates commission. Here the phrase juxtaposes those who Yeshua “called” to leave their families and “follow him.” [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. We cannot find in these passages the Catholic notion of Miriam’s perpetual virginity. These “brothers” are Yeshua’s literal brothers. Other scholars also add “and sisters.” Cf. Marcus, J. (2000). *Mark 1 - 8, A new translation with commentary* (The Anchor Bible Series ed.). New Haven: Doubleday (Yale University). p. 275 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Here the mother and brothers “outside” teaches us that they were initially not a part of his inner circle. His mother certainly believed as the result of many incidents. However, his brothers may not have initially believed in him due to sibling rivalry. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Common Hebraism of the Tanakh [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. ποιήσῃ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, (those who make-do the will of G-d) has a strong connection to **προορίζω** Cf. Eph 1:4 Marcus, J. (2000). *Mark 1 - 8, A new translation with commentary* (The Anchor Bible Series ed.). New Haven: Doubleday (Yale University). p. 277. This may also be explained by saying those who “do the will of G-d” (keep the Master’s Mesorah) do so because they have the ***Nefesh Yehudi*** and that soul was preordained to be deposited within them before the foundations of the earth. This is also a verbal connection to Yesha’yahu (Isaiah) 50:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Aquinas, S. T. (2009). Catena Aurea, Commentary on the Four Gospels; Collected out of the Works of the Fathers (Vol. II Mark). London: Baronius Press Ltd. p. 69 See also Lane, W. L. (1974). *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel According to Mark,*  Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p.147 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Neusner, J., Avery-Peck, A. J., Green, W. S., & Museum of Jewish Heritage (New York, N. Y. (2000). *The encyclopaedia of Judaism*. Vol. 1 p. 280ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. ποιήσῃ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, (those who make-do the will of G-d) has a strong connection to **προορίζω** Cf. Eph 1:4 Also see Marcus, J. (2000). *Mark 1 - 8, A new translation with commentary* (The Anchor Bible Series ed.). New Haven: Doubleday (Yale University). p. 277. This may also be explained by saying those who “do the will of G-d” (keep the Master’s Mesorah) do so because they have the ***Nefesh Yehudi*** and that soul was preordained to be deposited within them before the foundations of the earth. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. The Jewish Seminary of America. (1992). *The Galilee in Antiquity.* (L. I. Levine, Ed.) MA: Jewish Theological Seminary of America. pp. 226ff [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Our rewording of Yochanan 1:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Moulton, J. H., & Turner, N. (1976). *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Style ed., Vol. Style). Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Ibid p. 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Ibid p. 15 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Iibd p. 11 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Etymologically, *Sanhedrin* is a Mishnaic Hebrew representation of the Greek word *synedrion* συνέδριον meaning, "sitting together." [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Neusner, J. (1988). *The Mishnah: A new translation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. p. 590 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Edersheim, A. (1993). *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.* Peabody: Henderson Publishers. Book 2 Chapter 10 p. 171 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)