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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah**  **4544 Highline Dr. SE**  **Olympia, WA 98501**  **United States of America**  **© 2014**  [**http://www.betemunah.org/**](http://www.betemunah.org/)  **E-Mail:** [**gkilli@aol.com**](mailto:gkilli@aol.com) | **C:\Users\Haggai\Pictures\Menorah 5.jpg** | **Esnoga Bet El**  **102 Broken Arrow Dr.**  **Paris TN 38242**  **United States of America**  **© 2014**  [**http://torahfocus.com/**](http://torahfocus.com/)  **E-Mail:** [**waltoakley@charter.net**](mailto:waltoakley@charter.net) |

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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **Second Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Ellul 18, 5774 – Sept. 12/13, 2014** | **Sixth Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:**

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| **Amarillo, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:41 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:35 PM | **Austin & Conroe, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:22 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:15 PM | **Brisbane, Australia**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 5:21 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 6:14 PM |
| **Chattanooga, & Cleveland, TN, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:34 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:29 PM | **Everett, WA. U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:09 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:12 PM | **Manila & Cebu, Philippines**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 5:42 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 6:31 PM |
| **Miami, FL, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:10 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:01 PM | **Murray, KY, & Paris, TN. U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 6:49 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 7:44 PM | **Olympia, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:11 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:13 PM |
| **San Antonio, TX, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:25 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:17 PM | **Sheboygan & Manitowoc, WI, US**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 6:49 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 7:48 PM | **Singapore, Singapore**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 6:47 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 7:35 PM |
| **St. Louis, MO, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 6:56 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 7:52 PM | **Tacoma, WA, U.S.**  Fri. Sept 12 2014 – Candles at 7:10 PM  Sat. Sept 13 2014 – Habdalah 8:11 PM |  |
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**For other places see:** [**http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp**](http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp)

**Roll of Honor:**

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David and beloved wife HH Giberet Batsheva bat Sarah

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham

His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Karmela bat Sarah,

Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family

His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife

Her Excellency Giberet Laurie Taylor

Her Excellency Prof. Dr. Conny Williams & beloved family

Her Excellency Giberet Gloria Sutton & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Yoel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Rivka bat Dorit

His Excellency Adon Tsuriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Gibora bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Gabriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Elisheba bat Sarah

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

His Excellency Adon Ze’ev ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Hadassah bat Sarah

Her Excellency Giberet Whitney Mathison

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

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

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

**Barukh Dayan Emet**

**We pray that the Holy One, most blessed be He, comfort the families of the fallen most brave soldiers of the IDF who have paid the ultimate price in order to preserve and defend our nation. May He also comfort us in our grief and great loss.**

May G-d our Healer, have mercy on all of our soldiers who have been injured and provide a swift and complete healing for their bodies and souls, together with all the sick in Yisrael, and we say amen ve amen!

**Shabbat: “Vayiqach Qorach” – “And now Korah”**

**Shabbat “Nachamu VI” – “Of Our Consolation VI”**

**Sixth of Seven Sabbaths of Consolation/Strengthening**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Vayiqach Qorach”** | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 16:1-7 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 17:16-18 |
| **“And now Korah”** | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 16:8-14 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 17:19-21 |
| **“Y Coré”** | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 16:15-19 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 17:22-24 |
| B’Midbar (Num.) 16:1 – 17:15 | Reader 4 – B’Midbar 16:20-27 |  |
| Ashlamatah: Hos. 10:2-12 | Reader 5 – B’Midbar 16:28-35 | **Monday &**  **Thursday Mornings** |
| Special: Isaiah 60:1-22 | Reader 6 – B’Midbar 17:1-5 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 17:16-18 |
| Psalm 102:13-29 | Reader 7 – B’Midbar 17:6-15 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 17:19-21 |
|  | Maftir – B’Midbar 17:13-15 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 17:22-24 |
| N.C.: Mk 11:20-26; Lk 19:45-48  Rm 3:27-31 | Isaiah 60:1-22 |  |

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**These are the Laws for which the Torah did not mandate specific amounts: How much growing produce must be left in the corner of the field for the poor; how much of the first fruits must be offered at the Holy Temple; how much one must bring as an offering when one visits the Holy Temple three times a year; how much one must do when doing acts of kindness; and there is no maximum amount of Torah that a person must study.**

**These are the Laws whose benefits a person can often enjoy even in this world, even though the primary reward is in the Next World: They are: Honouring 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!**

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* Rebellion of Korach, Dathan, Abiram, and On– Numbers 16:1-15
* Korah and His Company Accept Moses’ Challenge – Numbers 16:16-19
* Moses’ Intercession – Numbers 16:20-24
* Destruction of the Rebels – Numbers 16:25-34
* The Brazen Censers – Numbers 17:1-5
* Israel’s Disaffection With Moses – Numbers 17:6-15

**Reading Assignment:**

**The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez - Vol XIV: Final Wanderings**

By: Rabbi Yitschaq Magrisso, Translated by: Dr. Tzvi Faier

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1983)

Vol. 14 – “Final Wanderings,” pp. 1-44

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: B’Midbar (Num.) 16:1 - 1**‎7:15

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Korah** the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi took [himself to one side] along with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, descendants of Reuben. | 1. **But Korach** bar Tizhar bar Kehath, bar Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On bar Peleth, of the Beni-Reuben, took his robe which was all of blue, |
| 2. They confronted Moses together with two hundred and fifty men from the children of Israel, chieftains of the congregation, representatives of **the assembly**, men of repute. | 2. and rose up boldly, and in the face of Mosheh appointed a (different) observance in the matter of the blue. Mosheh had said, I have heard from the mouth of the Holy One, whose Name be Blessed, that the fringes are to be of white, with one filament of blue; O but Korach and his companions made garments with their fringes altogether of blue, which the LORD had not commanded; and two hundred and fifty men of the sons of Israel, who had been made leaders **of the congregation** at the time when the journeys and encampments were appointed, by expression of their names, supported him. |
| 3. They assembled against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for the entire congregation are all holy, and the Lord is in their midst. So why do raise yourselves above the Lord's assembly?" | 3. And they gathered together against Mosheh and Aharon, and said to them: Let the authority you have (hitherto had) suffice you, for all the congregation are holy, and the LORD's Shekinah dwells among them; and why should you be magnified over the congregation of the LORD? |
| 4. Moses heard and fell on his face. | 4. And Mosheh heard, as if every one of them was jealous of his wife, and would have them drink of the trial-water on account of Mosheh; and he fell on his face for shame. |
| 5. He spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, "In the morning, the Lord will make known who is His, and who is holy, and He will draw [them] near to Him, and the one He chooses, He will draw near to Him. | 5. And he spoke with Korach and all the company who supported him, saying: In the morning the LORD will make known to him whom He has approved, and has consecrated to approach unto His service, and who it has pleased Him should come near in ministering, unto Him. |
| 6. Do this, Korah and his company: Take for yourselves censers. | 6. Do this: Let Korach and all the company of his helpers take censers, |
| 7. Place fire into them and put incense upon them before the Lord tomorrow, and the man whom the Lord chooses he is the holy one; you have taken too much upon yourselves, sons of Levi." | 7. put fire in them, and lay incense upon them before the LORD, tomorrow; and the man whom the LORD will make known, he it is who is consecrated. Let it suffice to you, sons of Levi. |
| 8. Moses said to Korah, "Please listen, sons of Levi. | 8. And Mosheh said to Korach and his kindred: Hear now, you sons of Levi: |
| 9. Is it not enough that the God of Israel has distinguished you from the congregation of Israel to draw you near to Him, to perform the service in the Mishkan of the Lord and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? | 9. Is it too little for you that the God of Israel has set you apart from the congregation of Israel to draw near to do His service to fulfill the ministry of the LORD's tabernacle, and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? |
| 10. He drew you near, and all your brothers, the sons of Levi with you, and now you seek the kehunah as well? | 10. But so has he brought near you and all the sons of Levi with you and now do you demand the high-priesthood also? |
| 11. Therefore, you and your entire company who are assembled are against the Lord, for what is Aaron that you should complain against him?" | 11. Therefore are you and all the company of your helpers gathered together against the Word of the LORD: and Aharon, what is he, that you murmur against him? |
| 12. Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not go up. | 12. And Mosheh sent men to summon Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, to the house of the great judgment; but they said, We will not come up. |
| 13. Is it not enough that you have brought us out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the desert, that you should also exercise authority over us? | 13. Is it a little thing, that you have brought us from Mizraim, a land that produces milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that ruling you may domineer over us? |
| 14. You have not even brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey, nor have you given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Even if you gouge out the eyes of those men, we will not go up." | 14. Neither have you brought us into the land producing milk and honey to give us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you blind the eyes of the men of that land, that you may overcome them? We shall not go up thither. |
| 15. Moses was exceedingly distressed, and he said to the Lord, "Do not accept their offering. I have not taken a donkey from a single one of them, and I have not harmed a single one of them." | 15. And Mosheh was very wroth, and said before the LORD: I beseech you, look not upon their offering, the portion of their hands; for not an ass have I taken from one of them, nor to any of them done an injury, |
| 16. Moses said to Korah, "You and your entire congregation should be before the Lord you, they, and Aaron tomorrow. | 16. And Mosheh said to Korach, you, and all the company of your helpers, come together to the house of judgment before the LORD tomorrow, you, they, and Aharon. |
| 17. Let each man take his censer and place incense upon it, and let each man present his censer before the Lord; [there will thus be] two hundred and fifty censers, and let you and Aaron each [take] his censer. | 17. And take every one his censer, and put incense upon them; and let each offer his censer before the LORD, two hundred and fifty censers; you also, and Aharon, each man his censer. |
| 18. So each man took his censer, and they put fire upon it and placed incense upon it, and they stood at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting with Moses and Aaron. | 18. And they took every one his censer, and put fire in them and sweet incense with it, and stood at the door of the tabernacle of ordinance on one side; but Mosheh and Aharon on the other side. |
| 19. Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord appeared before the entire congregation. | 19. And Korach gathered to them the whole congregation at the door of the tabernacle. And he had brought forth, from his riches, two treasures which he had found among the treasures of Joseph filled with silver and gold, and sought with them to drive the riches of Mosheh and Aharon out of the world; but the glory of the LORD revealed itself to all the congregation. |
| 20. The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron saying, | 20. And the LORD spoke with Mosheh and Aharon, saying: |
| 21. "Dissociate yourselves from this congregation, and I will consume them in an instant. | 21. Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may destroy them quickly. |
| 22. They fell on their faces and said, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, if one man sins, shall You be angry with the whole congregation?" | 22. But they bowed down upon their faces in prayer, and said: El Elohim, who has put the spirit of life in the bodies of the children of men, and from whom is given the spirit of all flesh, - if one man has sinned, wilt You be angry with all the congregation |
| 23. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, | 23. And the LORD spoke with Mosheh, saying: |
| 24. "Speak to the congregation saying, 'Withdraw from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.'" | 24. I have accepted your prayer for the congregation. Now speak you with them, saying: Remove away from the tents of Korach, Dathan, and Abiram. |
| 25. Moses arose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. | 25. And Mosheh arose, and went to remonstrate with Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed. |
| 26. He spoke to the congregation saying, "Please get away from the tents of these wicked men, and do not touch anything of theirs, lest you perish because of all their sins. | 26. And he said to the congregation, Remove now away from the tents of these men of sin, who have been worthy of death from (the days of) their youth in Mizraim, for they betrayed my secret when I slew the Mizraite; they provoked the LORD at the sea; at Alush they profaned the Sabbath, and now are they gathered together against the Word of the LORD; and therefore is it fit that their wealth should be scattered abroad and destroyed. Touch not, then, anything that is theirs, nor be smitten on account of their sins. |
| 27. So they withdrew from around the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and Dathan and Abiram went out standing upright at the entrance of their tents together with their wives, their children, and their infants. | 27. And they went apart from the tents of Korach, Dathan, and Abiram round about. But Dathan and Abiram came out, with reviling words, and arose and provoked Mosheh at the door of their tents, with their wives, their sons, and their little ones. |
| 28. Moses said, "With this you shall know that the Lord sent me to do all these deeds, for I did not devise them myself. | 28. And Mosheh said, By this you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, and that (I do them) not from the thoughts of my heart. |
| 29. If these men die as all men die and the fate of all men will be visited upon them, then the Lord has not sent me. | 29. If these men die after the manner of dying in which all men die, and the (common) account of all men be accounted upon them, the LORD has not sent me. |
| 30. But if the Lord creates a creation, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them and all that is theirs, and they descend alive into the grave, you will know that these men have provoked the Lord." | 30. But if a death which has not been created since the days of the world be now created for them, and if a mouth for the earth, which has not been made from the beginning, be created now, and the earth open her mouth and swallow them and all they have, and they go down alive into Sheol, you will understand that these men have provoked the LORD to anger. |
| 31. As soon as he finished speaking all these words, the earth beneath them split open. | 31. And it came to pass, when he had finished speaking these words, the earth beneath them clave asunder; |
| 32. The earth beneath them opened its mouth and swallowed them and their houses, and all the men who were with Korah and all the property. | 32. and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and the men of their houses, and all the men who adhered to Korach, and all their substance. |
| 33. They, and all they possessed, descended alive into the grave; the earth covered them up, and they were lost to the assembly. | 33. And they went down with all that they had alive into Sheol; and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from the midst of the congregation. |
| 34. All the Israel who were around them fled from their cries, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up [too]!" | 34. And all Israel who were round about them fled from the terror of their voice, as they cried and said, Righteous is the LORD, and His judgment is truth, and the words of His servant Mosheh are truth; but we are wicked who have rebelled against him: and the children of Israel fled when they heard; for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up. |
| 35. A fire came forth from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who had offered up the incense. | 35. And a fire came out in wrath from before the LORD, and devoured the two hundred and fifty men who offered the incense. |
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| 1. The Lord spoke to Moses saying: | 1. And the LORD spoke with Mosheh, saying: |
| 2. Say to Eleazar the son of Aaron the kohen that he should pick up the censers from the burned area (but throw the fire away), because they have become sanctified, | 2. Bid Elazar bar Aharon the priest to take away the censers from among the burnings, and scatter the fire hither and thither; for the censers of these guilty men who have been punished by the destruction of their lives are consecrated; |
| 3. the censers of these who sinned at the cost of their lives, and they shall make them into flattened out plates as an overlay for the altar, for they brought them before the Lord, and have [therefore] become sanctified, and they shall be as a reminder for the children of Israel. | 3. and make of them broad plates for the covering of the altar, because they bare them before the LORD, therefore they are consecrate; and they shall be for a sign to the children of Israel. |
| 4. So Eleazar the kohen took the copper censers which the fire victims had brought, and they hammered them out as an overlay for the altar, | 4. And Elazar the priest took the brazen censers which they who had been burned had carried, and beat them out for a covering for the body of the altar, as they had before used them for the service of the altar: |
| 5. as a reminder for the children of Israel, so that no outsider, who is not of the seed of Aaron, shall approach to burn incense before the Lord, so as not to be like Korah and his company, as the Lord spoke regarding him through the hand of Moses. | 5. for a memorial to the sons of Israel, that no common man, who is not of the sons of Aharon, may offer incense before the LORD; and that no man should behave himself factiously to obtain the priesthood, as did Korach and the company of his helpers; and whose end would be to perish, not (indeed) with a death like that of Korach and his company, by being burned by fire, and being swallowed up by the earth, but punished with leprosy: as when the LORD said to Mosheh, Put your hand into your bosom, and his hand was stricken with leprosy; so would it be with him. |
| 6. The following day, the entire congregation of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron saying, "You have killed the people of the Lord." | 6. But on the following day the whole congregation murmured against Mosheh and Aharon, saying: You have been the occasion of the judgment of death against the people of the LORD. |
| 7. It came to pass while the congregation were assembled against Moses and Aaron, that they turned to the Tent of Meeting, and behold, the cloud had covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. | 7. And it was, that when the congregation had gathered against Mosheh and Aharon to kill them, they looked towards the Tabernacle of Ordinance, and, behold, the Cloud of the Glory of the Shekinah covered it, and the Glory of the LORD was revealed there. |
| 8. Moses and Aaron came to the front of the Tent of Meeting. | 8. And Mosheh and Aharon went from the congregation to the door of the tabernacle. |
| 9. The Lord spoke to Moses saying: | 9. And the Lord spoke with Mosheh, saying: |
| 10. Stand aside from this congregation, and I shall consume them in an instant." They fell on their faces. | 10. Separate from the midst of this congregation, and I will consume them at once. But they bowed themselves on their faces in prayer. |
| 11. Moses said to Aaron, "Take the censer and put fire from the altar top into it. Then take it quickly to the congregation and atone for them, for wrath has gone forth from the Lord, and the plague has begun." | 11. And Mosheh said to Aharon, Take the censer, put fire in it from the altar, and sweet incense on the fire; bear it quickly into the congregation, and make atonement for them: for a destruction like that which consumed them in Horeb, whose name is Burning, has begun by commandment to kill, from the presence of the LORD. |
| 12. Aaron took [it], just as Moses had said, and he ran into the midst of the assembly, and behold, the plague had begun among the people. He placed the incense on it and atoned for the people. | 12. And Aharon took, as Mosheh had said, and ran into the midst of the congregation, and, behold the destructive burning had begun to destroy the people: but he put on incense, and made atonement for the people. |
| 13. He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague ceased. | 13. And Aharon stood in the midst, between the dead and the living with the censer, and interceded in prayer; and the plague was restrained. |
| 14. The number of dead in the plague was fourteen thousand, seven hundred, besides those who died because of the matter of Korah. | 14. But the number who had died by the plague was fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside those who had died in the schism of Korach. |
| 15. Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and the plague was checked. | 15. And Aharon returned to Mosheh at the door of the tabernacle; and the plague was stayed. |
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**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.

**Rashi Commentary for: ‎** **B’Midbar (Num.) 16:1 – 17:15‎**

**1 Korah... took** This portion is beautifully expounded on in the Midrash of R. Tanchuma, [as follows]:

**Korah... took** He took himself to one side to dissociate himself from the congregation, to contest the [appointment of Aaron to the] kehunah. This is what Onkelos means when he renders it וְאִתְפְּלֵג , “and he separated himself.” He separated himself from the congregation to persist in a dispute. Similarly, מַה־יִּקָּחֲךָ לִבֶּךָ , “Why does your heart take you away?” (Job 15:12) meaning, it removes you, to isolate you from others (Midrash Tanchuma Korach 2). Another explanation: He attracted the heads of the Sanhedrin among them with amicable words. Similarly, “Take Aaron [with words]” (20:25); “Take words with you” (Hosea 14:3) (Midrash Tanchuma Korach 1). -[Num. Rabbah 18:2]

**the son of Izhar the son of Kohath the son of Levi** [The verse] does not mention, “the son of Jacob,” because he [Jacob] prayed not to be mentioned in connection with their quarrel, as it is stated, “my honor, you shall not join their assembly” (Gen. 49:6). And where is his name mentioned in connection with Korah? In (I) Chron. (6:22, 23), where their genealogy is traced for the service of the Levites on the platform [in the Temple], as it says, “the son of Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.” -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 4, Num. Rabbah 18:5]

**Dathan and Abiram** Since the tribe of Reuben was settled in the south when they camped, thus being neighbors of Kohath and his children who were also camped in the south, they joined with Korah in his rebellion. Woe to the wicked, and woe to his neighbor! Now what made Korah decide to quarrel with Moses? He envied the chieftainship of Elizaphan the son of Uzziel whom Moses appointed as chieftain over the sons of Kohath by the [Divine] word. Korah claimed, “My father and his brothers were four [in number]” as it says, “The sons of Kohath were...” (Exod. 6:18). Amram was the first, and his two sons received greatness—one a king and one a kohen gadol. Who is entitled to receive the second [position]? Is it not I, who am the son of Izhar, who is the second brother to Amram? And yet, he [Moses] appointed to the chieftainship the son of his youngest brother! I hereby oppose him and will invalidate his word (Midrash Tanchuma Korach 1, Num. Rabbah 18:2). What did he do? He went and assembled two hundred and fifty men, heads of Sanhedrin, most of them from the tribe of Reuben, his neighbors. These were Elitzur the son of Shedeur and his colleagues, and others like him, as it says, “chieftains of the congregation, those called to the assembly.” And further it states, “These were the chosen ones of the congregation” (1: 16). He dressed them with cloaks made entirely of blue wool. They came and stood before Moses and asked him, “Does a cloak made entirely of blue wool require fringes [’tzitzith’], or is it exempt?” He replied, “It does require [fringes].” They began laughing at him [saying], "Is it possible that a cloak of another [colored] material, one string of blue wool exempts it [from the obligation of techeleth], and this one, which is made entirely of blue wool, should not exempt itself? -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 2, Num. Rabbah 18:3]

**descendants of Reuben** Dathan and Abiram and On the son of Peleth.

**3 You take too much upon yourselves** You took by far too much greatness for yourselves.

**are all holy** All of them heard [the] words [of the commandments] at Sinai from the mouth of the Almighty. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 4]

**So why do you raise yourselves** If you have taken kingship for yourself, you should not have chosen kehunah for your brother. Not only you heard at Sinai, “I am the Lord, your God”; the entire congregation heard it. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 4]

**4 and fell on his face** because of the rebellion, for this was already their fourth offense. [When] they sinned with the calf, “Moses pleaded” (Exod. 32:11); by the episode of the complainers, “Moses prayed” (11:2); with the spies, “Moses said to God, ‘But the Egyptians will hear...’ ” (14:13), but now, at Korah’s rebellion, he became disheartened [literally, his hands were weakened]. This is comparable to a prince who sinned against his father, and his [father’s] friend placated the king on his behalf, once, twice, and three times. When he offended the fourth time, the friend became disheartened, and he said, “How much more can I trouble the king? Perhaps he will no longer accept my petition.” -[Midrash Tanchuma 4, Num. Rabbah 18:6]

**5 In the morning, the Lord will make known** Night is a time of drunkenness for us, and it is improper to appear before Him. His real intention was to delay, with the hope that they might retract [their opposition]. -[Midrash Tanchuma 5]

**In the morning, the Lord will make known who is His** For the Levitic services.

**and who is holy** For the kehunah.

**and He will draw** them...

**near to Him** Heb. וְהִקְרִיב אֵלָיו . And the Targum [Onkelos] proves this [that it is referring to both the Levites and the kohanim], for he renders the first phrase, “He will bring them close to Him” [and the second phrase] “He will bring into His service.” The Midrashic interpretation of בּֽקֶר , morning, [rather than מָחָר , tomorrow] is: Moses said to him [Korah], The Holy One, blessed is He, assigned boundaries to His world. Are you able to transform morning into evening? That is how possible it is for you to undo this, as it says, “It was evening and it was morning... and He separated (וַיַּבְדֵּל) ” (Gen. 1:5, 7); similarly, “Aaron was set apart (וַיִּבָּדֵל) to sanctify him...” (I Chron. 23:13). -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 3, Num. Rabbah 4]

**6 Do this!...Take for yourselves censers** Why did he see fit to speak to them thus? He said to them, "Among the nations, there are various forms of worship and many priests, and they do not all gather in one temple. We, however, have only one God, one ark, one Torah, one altar, and one kohen gadol, but you two hundred and fifty men are all seeking the kehunah gedolah! I too would prefer that. Here, take for yourselves the service most dear—it is the incense, more cherished than any other sacrifice, but it contains deadly poison, by which Nadab and Abihu were burnt. Therefore, he warned them, “and it will be the one whom the Lord chooses—he is the holy one” [meaning,] that he is already in his [state of] holiness. Is it not obvious that [the one] who is chosen is the holy one? Rather, Moses told them, “I am telling you this so that you should not be found guilty. For the one He chooses will survive, and the rest of you will perish.” -[Mid. Tanchuma 5, Bamidbar Rabbah 18:8]

**censers** - מַחְתּוֹת , vessels used for stoking (חוֹתִין) coals, which have a handle.

**7 you have taken too much upon yourselves, sons of Levi** Heb. רַב לָכֶם בְּנֵי לֵוִי , [interpreted Midrashically as:] I have told you a very great thing. Were they not fools? For he warned them about it and they [still] took upon themselves to offer [the incense]. They sinned at the cost of their lives, as it says, “the censers of these who sinned at the cost of their lives” (17:3). But what did Korah, who was astute, see [to commit] this folly? His vision deceived him. He saw [prophetically] a chain of great people descended from him: Samuel, who is equal [in importance] to Moses and Aaron. He [Korah] said, "For his sake I will be spared. [He also saw] twenty-four watches [of Levites] emanating from his grandsons, all prophesying through the holy spirit, as it says, “all these were the sons of Heman” (I Chron 25:5). He said, “Is it possible that all this greatness is destined to emanate from me, and I should remain silent?” Therefore, he participated [in the rebellion] to reach that prerogative, for he had heard from Moses that they would all perish and one would escape [death]: “the one whom the Lord chooses—he is the holy one.” He erred in thinking that it referred to him. He, however, did not “see” properly, for his sons repented [and thus did not die at that time]. Moses, however, foresaw this. -[This is found in Mid.] Tanchuma [Korach 5, Num. Rabbah 18:8]

**you have taken too much upon yourselves** [The simple interpretation is:] You have taken too great a task upon yourselves, to rebel against the Holy One, blessed is He.

**8 Moses said...** He began to speak softly to him, but when he saw that he [Korah] was adamant [lit., stiff-necked], he [Moses] thought, “Before the other tribes [other versions: the rest of the tribe] join him and perish with him, I will speak to all of them as well.” He then began exhorting them [saying,], “Listen to me, sons of Levi.” -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 6, Num. Rabbah 18:9]

**9 and to stand before the congregation** to sing on the platform.

**10 He drew you near** to that service from which he has distanced the rest of the congregation of Israel.

**11 Therefore** Because of this, “you and your entire company who are assembled” with you “are against the Lord,” for I acted as His messenger to give the kehunah to Aaron, and this rebellion is not with us [but with the Lord]. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 6, Num. Rabbah 18:9]

**12 Moses sent** From here we derive that one should not persist in a dispute, because Moses sought them out to conciliate them with peaceful words.- [Mid. Tanchuma Korach 10, Sanh. 110a]

**We will not go up** Their own mouths caused them to stumble, [to say] that they would have only a downfall. - [Mid. Tanchuma Korach 6, Num. Rabbah 10]

**14 nor have you given us** This statement refers to the word “not” stated above; meaning, You have not brought us up, and You have not given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. You said to us, “I will bring you up from the affliction of Egypt to a good land...” (Exod. 3:10). You did bring us out of there, but you have not brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey. Instead, you have decreed upon us to kill us in the desert, as you said to us, “your corpses shall fall in this desert” (14:29).

**Even if you gouge out the eyes of those men...** Even if you send [messengers] to gouge out our eyes if we do not go up to you, we will not go up.

**those men** Like a person who attributes his own curse to his fellow.

**15 Moses was exceedingly distressed** Heb. וַיִּחַר לְמשֶׁה מְאֽד , he was very grieved, [not that he was angry].

**Do not accept their offering** According to its simple meaning, [Moses said,] Do not accept the incense that they will sacrifice before You tomorrow. According to its Midrashic interpretation, he said: I know that they have a portion in the daily communal offerings. Let their portions not be accepted favorably before You. Let the fire leave it and not consume it. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 7, Num. Rabbah 10]

**I have not taken a donkey from a single one of them** I did not take a donkey from any one of them. Even when I went from Midian to Egypt, and I placed my wife and sons on a donkey to ride, and I should have taken that donkey from their property, I took only from my own property (Tanchuma Korach 7, Num. Rabbah 10). Onkelos renders it as שְׁחָרִית , ‘expropriated.’ In Aramaic, the king’s service is called שַׁחְוַור .

**16 they** Your company.

**17 and let each man present his censer before the Lord...** The two hundred and fifty men among you.

**19 Korah assembled... against them** with words of mockery. All that night, he went to the tribes and enticed them [saying,] “Do you think I care only for myself? I care for all of you. These [people] come and take all the high positions: the kingship for himself and the kehunah for his brother,” until they were all enticed. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 7, Num. Rabbah 10]

**and the glory of the Lord appeared** He came in a pillar of cloud.

**22 O God, the God of the spirits** [God Who] knows the thoughts [of every man]. Your attributes are not like those of earthly beings. A mortal king against whom part of his country transgresses does not know who the sinner is, and, therefore, when he is angry, he metes out punishment upon them all. But as for You, all thoughts are revealed before You, and You know who the sinner is. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 7, Num. Rabbah 11]

**if one man** [If one man] is the sinner, shall You be angry with the whole congregation? The Holy One, blessed be He, said, “You have spoken well. I know and will make known who sinned and who did not sin.” -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 7, Num. Rabbah 11]

**24 Withdraw** Heb. הֵעָלוּ , as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: Withdraw from around Korah’s tent.

**25 Moses arose** He thought they would show him respect, but they did not. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 8, Num. Rabbah 12]

**27 went out standing upright** Heb. נִצָּבִים , with a haughty bearing, to curse and to blaspheme, as in, “he stationed himself (וַיּתְיַצֵּב) [in an arrogant manner] for forty days” (I Sam. 17:16), said in reference to Goliath. -[Mid. Tanchuma Korach 3, 8, Num. Rabbah 12]

**their wives, their children, and their infants** Come and see the severity of dispute. The earthly courts do not punish until [an accused] has two [pubic] hairs, and the heavenly court does not punish until one reaches the age of twenty, but here even nursing babes were punished. -[Midrash Tanchuma Korach 3]

**28 to do all these deeds** That I did by the word of God: to give Aaron the kehunah gedolah, his sons the deputy kehunah, and Elizaphan the chieftainship of the Kohathites.

**29 the Lord has not sent me** But I did everything on my own, and he [Korah] is in the right for opposing me. - [Mid. Tanchuma Korach 8, Num. Rabbah 12]

**30 But if... a creation** A new one.

**the Lord creates** to kill them through a death by which no man has died until now. And what is this creation? “And the earth will open its mouth and swallow them up.” Then you will know that they have provoked the Holy One, blessed is He, and I [Moses] have spoken by Divine word. Our Rabbis interpret it: If there was a mouth already created to the earth from the time of the six days of Creation, well and good, but if not, let God create [one now]. -[Mid. Tanchuma Korach, Sanh. 110a]

**34 fled from their cries** Because of the sound that emanated when they were swallowed up.

**Chapter 17**

**2 but... the fire** that is in the censers.

**throw... away** [the fire] on the ground, off the censers.

**because they have become sanctified** I.e., the censers [have become sanctified], and it is forbidden to derive personal benefit from them since they made them into service vessels.

**3 these who sinned at the cost of their lives** They have become willful sinners against their own lives for they opposed the Holy One, blessed is He.

**flattened out** Heb. רִקֻּעֵי , thinned out.

**plates** metal sheets beaten flat; in old French, tenves, thinned out, flattened.

**an overlay for the altar** For the copper altar.

**and they shall be as a reminder** A remembrance so that people will say, “These [plates] are from those who disputed the kehunah and were burnt.”

**4 and they beat them out** In Old French, estendre, to extend, to spread, [in modern French &?tendre].

**5 so as not to be like Korah** Heb. וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה כְקֽרַח , lit. and there shall not be like Korach. In order that there shall not be like Korah.

**as the Lord spoke regarding him through the hand of Moses** [The word לוֹ literally means ‘to him.’ Here it] means ‘about him,’ that is, about Aaron, He spoke to Moses that he and his sons would be kohanim. Therefore, no outsider, who is not of the seed of Aaron, shall draw near.... Similarly, every time it says, לִי , לוֹ , or לָהֶם in connection with the verb דִּבּוּר , ‘speech,’ it means ‘regarding.’ Its Midrashic interpretation is that לוֹ refers to Korah. So what is [the meaning of] "by the hand of Moses"? Why not just simply "to Moses"? It alludes to those who rebel against the kehunah. They are stricken with tzara’ath, as it says, “and he [Moses] took it out, and behold, his hand was ‘leprous,’ like snow” (Exod. 4:6). For this reason, Uzziah was stricken with tzara’ath.- [Midrash Tanchuma Tzav 11]

**11 and atone for them** This secret was given over to him by the angel of death when he went up to heaven, that incense holds back the plague... as is related in Tractate Shabbath (89a).

**13 He stood between the dead...** He took hold of the angel and held him against his will. The angel said to him, “Allow me to accomplish my mission.” He [Aaron] said to him, “Moses commanded me to stop you.” He said to him, “I am the messenger of the Omnipresent, and you are the messenger of Moses.” He said to him, “Moses does not say anything on his own volition, but only at the bidding of the Almighty. If you do not believe [me], the Holy One, blessed is He, and Moses are at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting; come with me and ask.” This is the meaning of the statement, “Aaron returned to Moses” (Mid. Tanchuma Tetzaveh 15). Another interpretation: Why with incense? Because the Israelites were slandering and vilifying the incense, saying that it was a deadly poison; through it Nadab and Abihu died; through it two hundred and fifty people were burnt. The Holy One, blessed is He, said, “You shall see that it will stop the plague, and it is sin that caused their death.”-[Mid. Aggadah. See Mechilta Beshallach (Vayassa 6:5, Ber. 33a]

**Ketubim: Psalm 102:13-29**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. A prayer for a poor man when he enwraps himself and pours out his speech before the Lord. | 1. The prayer for the poor man, for he is weary, and will speak his prayer in the presence of the LORD. |
| 2. O Lord, hearken to my prayer, and may my cry come to You. | 2. O LORD, accept my prayer, and let my entreaty come before You. |
| 3. Do not hide Your countenance from me; on the day of my distress extend Your ear to me; on the day I call, answer me quickly. | 3. Do not remove Your presence from me in the day of my distress; incline Your ear unto me; in the day that I call, hasten, answer me. |
| 4. For my days have ended in smoke, and as a hearth my bones are dried up. | 4. For my days are consumed like smoke; and my limbs burn like an oven. |
| 5. Beaten like grass and withered is my heart, for I have forgotten to eat my bread. | 5. My heart is smitten like grass and will dry up; for I have forgotten the Torah of my instruction. |
| 6. From the sound of my sigh my bones clung to my flesh. | 6. Because of the sound of my groaning, my bones have clung to my flesh. |
| 7. I was like a bird of the wilderness; I was like an owl of the wasteland. | 7. I have become like a marsh-bird in the wilderness; I have become like an owl in the parched land. |
| 8. I pondered, and I am like a lonely bird on a roof. | 8. I stay awake all night, and I have become like a bird that flutters and wanders by itself on the roof. |
| 9. All day long my enemies revile me; those who scorn me swear by me. | 9. All the day my enemies will jeer at me; those who mock me have sworn by my word in vain. |
| 10. For ashes I ate like bread, and my drinks I mixed with weeping. | 10. For I have supped on ashes like food, and prepared my drink in weeping. |
| 11. Because of Your fury and Your anger, for You picked me up and cast me down. | 11. Because of your anger and rage, for you have lifted me up and cast me down. |
| 12. My days are like a lengthening shadow, and I dry out like grass. | 12. My days are like a shadow that lengthens; and I will wither like grass. |
| 13. But You, O Lord, will be enthroned forever, and Your mention is to all generations. | 13. But You, O LORD, Your dwelling place is eternal, in heaven You will dwell, and Your memorial is to every generation. |
| 14. You will rise, You will have mercy on Zion for there is a time to favor it, **for the appointed season has arrived**. | 14. You will arise, You will pity Zion, for it is time to have compassion on her, **for the season has come.** |
| 15. For Your servants desired its stones and favored its dust. | 15. For Your servants have desired her stones, and they will have mercy on her dust. |
| 16. And the nations will fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth Your glory. | 16. And the peoples will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth Your glory. |
| 17. For the Lord has built up Zion; He has appeared in His glory. | 17. For the city of Zion was built by the command of the LORD, He was revealed in glory. |
| 18. He has turned to the prayer of those who cried out, and He did not despise their prayer. | 18. He turned to the prayer of those who were made desolate, and did not despise their prayer. |
| 19. Let this be inscribed for the latest generation, and a [newly] created people will praise Yah. | 19. Let this prayer be written for a later generation, and the people yet to be created will praise Yah. |
| 20. For He has looked down from His holy height; the Lord looked from heaven to earth, | 20. For He watched from the high heavens of His holiness; the LORD looked from heaven to earth. |
| 21. To hear the cry of the prisoner, to loose the sons of the dying nation; | 21. To hear the cry of the prisoners; to set loose the children of those handed over to death. |
| 22. To proclaim in Zion the name of the Lord and His praise in Jerusalem. | 22. To tell in Zion the name of the LORD, and His praise in Jerusalem. |
| 23. When peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to serve the Lord. | 23. When peoples are gathered together, and kingdoms to worship in the presence of the LORD. |
| 24. He has afflicted my strength on the way; He has shortened my days. | 24. My strength is harmed by the weariness of the path of exile; my days are shortened. |
| 25. I say, "My God, do not take me away in the middle of my days, You Whose years endure throughout all generations. | 25. I will say in the presence of my God, "Do not remove me from the world at the halfway point of my days; bring me to the world to come, because Your years are throughout generations of generations." |
| 26. In the beginning You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. | 26. In the beginning when all creatures were created, You founded the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hand. |
| 27. They will perish but You will endure, and all of them will rot away like a garment; like raiment You will turn them over and they will pass away. | 27. They will perish but You will endure; and all of them like a garment will wear out; like a mantle You will change them and they will pass away. |
| 28. But You are He, and Your years will not end. | 28. And You are He who created them; and Your years do not come to an end. |
| 29. The children of Your servants will dwell, and their seed will be established before You." | 29. The sons of Your servants will abide in the land; and their offspring will be established in Your presence. |
|  |  |

**Rashi’s Commentary to Psalm 102:13-29**

**13 But You** Who will be enthroned forever, and Who swore to us by Yourself, just as You exist, it is incumbent upon You to fulfill it. Therefore...

**14 You will rise, You will have mercy on Zion for it is time to favor it** For so You promised (Deut. 32:36): “When He sees that their power is gone,” and it is indeed gone.

**15 For Your servants desired** They loved even its stones and its earth. [According to] Midrash Aggadah, when Jeconiah and his exile left, they carried with them some of the stones and the earth of Jerusalem to build a synagogue for themselves there in Babylon. 16

**And the nations will fear** Your name when You save Your people.

**18 He has turned to the prayer of those who cried out** Heb. הערער , who cries out, as (Isa. 15: 5): “a cry of destruction they will raise (יעוערו) .” Another explanation: ערער means devastated and destroyed, as (below 137:7) “who say, ‘Raze it, raze it.’ “

**19 Let this be inscribed** So will those who see the salvation say, “let this salvation be inscribed for the latest generation.”

**and a created people** that became a new creature to emerge from slavery to freedom and from darkness to a great light.

**20 looked...to earth** to see the affliction of His people.

**21 the dying** Heb. תמותה , mortally ill, enmorindes in Old French (as above 79:11).

**24 He has afflicted my strength on the way** He returns to his original complaint, “for You picked me up and cast me down. My days are like a lengthening shadow.” My enemy afflicted my strength on the way.

**25 I say** to the Lord, “You are my God.”

**do not take me away in the middle of my days** Do not take us away to destroy us from the earth in the hands of our enemies in the middle of our days. And what are our days? All the days of all generations, of Your years, You promised to keep us alive before You, as he says at the end of the psalm, “and Your years do not end...and their seed will be established before You.”

**26 In the beginning** Heb. לפנים, from the beginning.

**27 like raiment You will turn them over** like a person who turns his garment inside out to take it off.

**28 But You are He** Who stands and exists.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalms ‎‎102:13-29**

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

As we look at the second half of Psalm 102, I will repeat my introduction from last week to maintain continuity.

David composed this psalm to express the feelings of the poor man enveloped in misery. In a deeper sense these verses describe the tragic state of Israel in exile, impoverished and downtrodden. The nation is poor both financially and spiritually.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Another aspect of Israel's poverty in exile is the poor response which their prayers receive from heaven. In better days HaShem responded generously and in abundance, but now the blessings are meager and few.[[2]](#footnote-2) Similarly we lament:[[3]](#footnote-3) *Though I would cry out and plead, He shut out my prayer*. Rav Eliezer said: *From the day the Temple was destroyed the gates of prayer have been locked tight*.[[4]](#footnote-4)

However, this psalm ends with a prophecy of hope and redemption. Prosperity will return to Israel when they return to their permanent homeland to serve HaShem eternally. Your servants' children shall be settled, and their children will be steadfast before You.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Last week we mentioned that this psalm focused on prayer. In the second half of our psalm we still find that one aspect is still prayer. Since our Torah portion speaks of Qorach, and his band, taking incense and also of Aaron taking incense to stop the plague, I thought that I would look at the point of congregational prayer[[6]](#footnote-6) as found in the incense.

Ketoret is the transliteration of the Hebrew word קטרת, which is translated, in English, as incense. The word *ketoret* means *bonding*; the essence of the *ketoret* is the yearning of the soul of man to cleave to HaShem. This bonding, as we shall see, is necessary to build the unity of the body of Mashiach. Ketoret is a substance which is associated with joy, prayer, and protection. Clearly, ketoret is a most unusual substance!

In this study I would like to take an in-depth look at a substance which is so powerful that it can halt a plague. Because it can halt a plague, those who compound it *incorrectly* will incur the death penalty.[[7]](#footnote-7) Let’s start this study by examining what the Torah teaches us about ketoret, by examining the first use of ketoret:

***Shemot (Exodus) 25:1*** *And HaShem spoke unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that gives it willingly with his heart you will take My offering. 3 And this is the offering which you will take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, 4 And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats’ hair, 5 And rams’ skins dyed red, and badgers’ skins, and shittim wood, 6 Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, 7 Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. 8 And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell in them.*

From this first verse we see that incense is an offering which is associated with HaShem dwelling in us.

The Ketoret, offered up twice a day, symbolized Israel’s desire to serve HaShem in a pleasing way. This offering was brought twice daily, once as part of the Shacharit (morning) service and once as part of the Mincha / Mussaf (afternoon) service. This happened seven days a week, every day of the year, including Shabbat and Yom HaKippurim. Five pounds of *ketoret* was burnt daily, half in the morning and half in the afternoon.

***Shemot (Exodus) 30:7*** *And Aaron will burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresses the lamps, he will burn incense upon it. 8 And when Aaron lights the lamps at even, he will burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before HaShem throughout your generations.*

The incense was compounded from eleven ingredients: balsam, onycha, galbanum, frankincense (in quantities of seventy manehs each in weight), myrrh, cassia, spikenard, saffron (sixteen manehs each), costus (twelve manehs), aromatic bark (three manehs), and cinnamon (nine manehs), altogether 368 manehs, one for each day of the year, half offered in the morning, and half in the evening, and three extra manehs for the Day of Atonement. But in an ordinary lunar year there were eleven manehs over (the lunar year being 354 days); and though these eleven manehs were necessary for supplementing the incense in intercalary years, they had to be bought from the new donations given on the first of Nisan. Some method had to be devised, therefore, of making the remainder of the old incense valid for the new year.

The lye obtained from a species of leek and the Cyprus wine which are mentioned in connection with the incense, were nor actual ingredients, but were used simply for whitening the onycha, and also for making its odor more pungent, as we shall see.

Rabbi Moshe Sofer[[8]](#footnote-8) explains the symbolic meaning of the names of the four main incense spices, as well as the Karshina lye and Cyprus wine:

*The four spices that are written explicitly in the Torah are tzori-balsam, tziporen-onycha, chelbana-galbanum, and levonah zakah-pure frankincense.*

*Tzori alludes to the Torah which is a tzori-balsam and healing for the entire body.*

*Levonah zakah alludes to God’s love for His people through which He me’laven-whitens and bleaches their sins. Between these two are placed the tziporen and chelbenah.*

*As known, chelbana alludes to complete sinners.*

*The tziporen, on the other hand, alludes to the majority of the Jewish people. Like a tziporen-fingernail, they are smooth and unblemished on the inside, and only darkened on the outside... It is for this reason that we are required to rub the tziporen with Karshina lye, to beautify it and remove its external blackness. This alludes to teshuva-repentance and good deeds... Soaking the tziporen in Cyprus wine to make it azah [pungent or strong] alludes to the wine [secret teachings] of the Torah which imbues Israel with the ability to remain firm and unyielding in their faith when they walk among the nations.*

**The Significance of the Amounts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **COUNT** | **NAME** | **WEIGHT** |
| **1** | **balsam** | 70 maneh |
| **2** | **onycha** | 70 maneh |
| **3** | **galbanum** | 70 maneh |
| **4** | **frankincense** | 70 maneh |
| **5** | **myrrh** | 16 maneh |
| **6** | **cassia** | 16 maneh |
| **7** | **spikenard** | 16 maneh |
| **8** | **saffron** | 16 maneh |
| **9** | **costus** | 12 maneh |
| **10** | **aromatic bark** | 3 maneh |
| **11** | **cinnamon** | 9 maneh |
|  |  | **368 maneh** |

What is the significance of the various amounts of each fragrance?

Each of the major four fragrances explicitly mentioned in the Torah contributed seventy maneh. The number seven represents the natural universe, created in seven days. Seven corresponds to the framework of the physical universe, especially the boundaries of time with its seven-day week.

Seventy is the number seven in tens. The number ten represents both plurality and **unity**, so seventy conveys the idea of **unifying** the multitude of forces in the natural world. This is the underlying message of the ketoret. These holy fragrances illuminate and uplift the plurality of natural forces.

After the first level of four fragrances sanctified the dimension of time, the second tier of four fragrances sanctified the dimension of space. The number six corresponds to space, as any location is made up of six vectors (the four directions, up and down). It can also be visualized as a cube, representing all physical objects, which has six faces.

Time is a less physical aspect, and more receptive to spiritual elevation. Thus, for the first four fragrances representing the dimension of time, the number seven was multiplied by ten. Space, on the other hand, is only influenced by its closeness to holiness. Therefore, the unifying quality of ten is only added to the six, so that sixteen maneh were used of each of these fragrances.

The final amounts of twelve, nine, and three represent the limitations of the divided physical realm. Three is the first number to demonstrate *multitude*, and nine is the last number, before the multitude is once again combined into a unit of ten.[[9]](#footnote-9)

**The Death Penalty**

The following narrative is from Meam Loez:[[10]](#footnote-10)

*Also included in the incense was an herb known as maaleh ashan. This herb caused the smoke to go straight up like a pole and not to spread to the right or left. No one knew the identity of this herb except members of the family of the House of Avtinus mentioned earlier. These are the ones who were able to make the incense based on the tradition of their ancestors and they would not reveal it to any other person.*

*This herb had to be placed in the incense even though it did not have any fragrance. This is because it is written, “Speak to Aaron your brother and let him not come at all times to the sanctuary inside the veil which is before the ark.” (Leviticus 16:2) Moses was told to go to Aaron the High Priest and tell him not to go into the Holy of Holies at any time other than Yom HaKippurim. Even on Yom HaKippurim he could not go into the Holy of Holies empty-handed. The Torah therefore continues:*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:2*** *For in cloud I shall be seen on the ark cover.*

*The only time the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies was when he brought incense and the cloud of smoke covered the ark cover. The cloud mentioned here is the smoke of the incense. As the Torah says later:*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:13*** *The cloud of incense shall cover the ark cover.*

*Since the Torah says, “In a cloud I shall be seen on the ark cover” and it does not say, “With incense I shall be seen on the ark cover,” our sages taught that this herb known as maaleh ashan must be placed in the incense. If maaleh ashan was not placed there the incense would burn but there would not be this heavy smoke. Since the Torah speaks of a “cloud” of smoke we learn that there must be smoke. The only substance that makes this heavy smoke is the maaleh ashan, which made this smoke go up straight like a pole.*

*If a different type of herb were used, the smoke would not go directly up; rather, it would spread out to all sides of the Holy of Holies. It would then not be right over the ark cover and the Torah says explicitly, “The cloud of incense shall cover the ark cover.” This cloud of smoke must cover the ark cover so the High Priest does not see the Divine Presence.*

*If the High Priest burned the incense and it did not contain this maaleh ashan he would be worthy of death.*

*Furthermore if he left out any of the ingredients he would be worthy of death. The Torah says:*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:13*** *He should place incense on the fire before HaShem and the cloud of the incense should cover the ark cover which is above the Testimony.*

*The Torah could have simply said, “He should place it on the fire before HaShem.” Why did it say he should place incense on the fire? The word “incense” appears to be redundant because it was already mentioned earlier, “a double handful of incense, finely ground perfumes.” Then the Torah should say, “He should place it on a fire before HaShem,” and we would know that the Torah is speaking about incense.*

*However, the expression, “the incense” (ha-Ketoret) teaches us that the incense must be complete without anything missing. Even a single dram of weight of any of the ingredients cannot be left out.*

*The Torah also teaches us that the smoke of the incense must cover the ark cover. This is why the maaleh ashan is placed in it. The Torah says:*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:13*** *And he shall not die.*

*From this we learn the opposite. If any of the ingredients are left out or if the maaleh ashan was not placed in the incense, the High Priest was worthy of death. It did not matter how small an amount of the maaleh ashan was placed there as long as there was some.*

*One should read the section of the Ketoret out of a Siddur. Saying it verbally is the same as actually burning this incense in the Temple, as is explained earlier. If one says it by heart it is possible that he will leave out one of the ingredients. This is the same as burning incense lacking ingredients for which one is worthy of death. Therefore it should be read from the written page. For the same reason it is good to count the eleven perfumes with one’s fingers, so as not to skip any of them.*

End of Meam Loez.

Ketoret has the power to nullify any evil decree, even that of death. It is for this reason that when a plague broke out among the Bne Israel in the wilderness Moshe ordered Aaron to go through the camp with the ketoret.

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 17:12-13*** *Aaron took the incense pan as Moses had commanded him... He offered the incense to atone for the people... and the plague was checked.*

Thus we see the healing properties of ketoret, especially to alleviate the plague. If the ketoret had not been formulated correctly it would not have ended the plague, thus condemning the people to death. This is why the death penalty is proper for those who leave out any ingredient while compounding the ketoret.

**Ketoret Symbolizes Unity**

Ketoret was a unique substance whose eleven ingredients had the ability to symbolize unity, as we can see from the following Gemara:

***Kirithoth 6b*** *Said R. Johanan: Eleven kinds of spices were named to Moses at Sinai. Said R. Huna: ‘Where is the text? Take unto thee sweet spices, at least two; balsam, and onycha, and galbanum, that makes together five; ‘sweet spices’ means another five, that makes together ten; ‘with pure frankincense’, which is one, that is together eleven. ‘Why not say, ‘sweet spices’ [at the beginning] is a general statement, balsam, and onycha, and galbanum’ a specification, and ‘sweet spices’ [at the end] is again a general statement! [‘We have thus, a generalization followed by a specification and then by a generalization, [in which case] only things sharing the qualities of the specification may be derived. Just as the [items of the] specification are things whose smoke ascends upwards and whose fragrance spreads, so include all things whose smoke ascends upwards and whose fragrance spreads. And should you say in this case only one [item of] specification should have been mentioned, [I would answer] No, all are necessary; for if ‘balsam’ alone was written, I might have said: Only things from the tree [are to be taken], but not things growing on the ground. It was thus necessary to state ‘onycha’. And if ‘onycha’ alone was written, I might have said: Only things from the ground, but not from the tree. It was thus necessary to state ‘balsam’. As to ‘galbanum’, its mention is necessary for its own sake, for its odor is unpleasant if so, it could have been derived from: Take unto thee. But perhaps say: ‘The sweet spices’ in the latter part [of the verse] mean two, as ‘the sweet spices’ in the former part? Then it should have written the two expressions ‘sweet spices’ next to one another, and then write ‘balsam, and onycha, and galbanum’. In the School of R. Ishmael it was taught thus: ‘Sweet spices’ is a generalization, ‘balsam, and onycha, and galbanum’ is a specification, sweet spices’ again is a generalization, and from a generalization followed by a specification and then by another generalization one can derive only things sharing the qualities of the specification. As the [items in the] specification are things whose smoke ascends upwards and whose fragrance spreads, so all things whose smoke ascends upwards and whose fragrance spreads. Perhaps this is not so; but take the generalization with the first generalization, the specification with the first specification? — Say: This cannot be; hence you must not expound according to the latter version but according to the former.*

*The Master said: ‘Perhaps this is not so, but take the generalization with the first generalization and the specification with the first specification? — Say: This cannot be, hence you cannot expound . . . ‘‘What is the question? — This is his difficulty: Let the sweet spices’ in the latter part [of the verse] mean two like ‘sweet spices’ in the former. ‘Whereupon he replied as was answered before: Then it should have written, ‘Sweet spices, sweet spices, balsam, onycha and galbanum’. What is the meaning of ‘and the specification with the first specification’? — This is his difficulty: Things of the tree are derived from ‘balsam’, and things of the ground from ‘onycha’; why not then derive from ‘pure frankincense’ all things which have one quality in common with it [viz.,] that their fragrance spreads, though their smoke does not ascend upwards? Whereupon he replied: If this was so, ‘pure frankincense’ should have been written among the others, so that you could derive therefrom. But if ‘pure frankincense’ was written among the others, we would have twelve spices. — ‘Pure frankincense’ should have been written among the others and ‘galbanum’ at the end. Resh Lakish says: From the word itself it can be inferred; for ketoret [frankincense] means something whose smoke ascends upwards.*

In other words, the incense used in the Bet HaMikdash, the House of the Holy One, consisted of fragrant spices as well as the foul-smelling galbanum, which itself acquired a pleasant aroma when combined with the other spices of the ketoret. The Gemara derives from this composition of the incense a similar phenomenon in the social, religious makeup of the Jewish people: when the wicked and righteous join together, the latter can positively impact upon the former to produce a single, “fragrant” unified community.

Rav Kook explained that the ketoret was a link between the material and spiritual realms. The word *ketoret* comes from the root *kesher*, a tie or knot. The incense rose straight up, connecting our divided physical world to the unified divine realm. From the sublime standpoint of overall holiness, it is impossible to distinguish between the separate, distinct fragrances. Each fragrance represents a particular quality, but at that elevated level, they are revealed only within the attribute of absolute unity. Only in our divided world do they acquire separate identities.

Because ketoret symbolizes the unity of the Bne Israel, when there is a lack of unity, ketoret is used to bring about that unity. In the case of Qorach and his followers, in Bamidbar 16, ketoret was used to bring about the death of Qorach and his followers and thus completely eliminate the heresy which had disrupted the unity of the Bne Israel.

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 16:5*** *And he spake unto Qorach and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow HaShem will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. 6 This do; Take you censers, Qorach, and all his company; 7 And put fire therein, and put incense in them before HaShem to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom HaShem doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.*

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 16:35*** *And there came out a fire from HaShem, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. 36 And HaShem spake unto Moses, saying, 37 Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are hallowed. 38 The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before HaShem, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel. 39 And Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar: 40 To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before HaShem; that he be not as Qorach, and as his company: as HaShem said to him by the hand of Moses.*

Nadab and Abihu, in Vayikra 10, also disrupted the unity of the Bne Israel by offering “strange fire”. Therefore, we also see that the ketoret was instrumental in bringing about their death as a judgment for disrupting this unity.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 10:1*** *And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before HaShem, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from HaShem, and devoured them, and they died before HaShem.*

Rabbi Krohn said that we learn from the ketoretthe need for unity among all Jews. If any one of the eleven ingredients was omitted from the mixture, the ketoret offering was invalid. One of the ingredients, chelbana (galbanum), has a foul odor*.* This undesirable spice symbolizes the sinners in a Jewish congregation. Our Sages state that a public fast day in which at least one sinner does not participate is not considered a fast day: that is, it does not accomplish the purpose for which it was intended, whether relief from a drought or protection from physical threats to the community*.* The requirement to mix chelbana into the ketoret reminds us that we must include those Jews who do not perform every commandment properly in our prayer services and community activities*.*

Shemot (Exodus) 30:1ff introduces us to the “Mizbeach ha-ketoret,” the incense altar, upon which the Kohen would offer incense twice daily:

***Shemot (Exodus) 30:1*** *And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. 2 A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. 3 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. 4 And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. 5 And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. 6 And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. 7 And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. 8 And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before HaShem throughout your generations. 9 Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. 10 And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto HaShem.*

One unique quality of the incense offering emerges from the Gemara in:

***Keritut 6b*** *Any fast day which does not include any sinners from among Yisrael is not a [legitimate] fast day; for galbanum [‘chelbana’ in Hebrew] has a putrid odor, but yet the Scripture included it as one of the ingredients of the ketoret.*

In other words, the incense used in the Mikdash consisted of fragrant spices as well as the foul-smelling galbanum, which itself acquired a pleasant aroma when combined with the other spices of the ketoret. The Gemara derives from this composition of the incense a similar phenomenon in the social, religious makeup of the Jewish people: when the wicked and righteous join together, the latter can positively impact upon the former to produce a single, “fragrant” community.

However, as Rav Meir Simcha Ha-kohen of Dvinsk notes, this blend can occur only when a genuine sense of unity prevails among Bne Israel. The influence of the righteous upon the iniquitous can take effect only when true brotherhood is felt between the different segments of the population.

Bne Israel can survive exposure to HaShem’s revelation only through the joining together of the various elements of the population. The ketoret, the merging of the different sectors of the Jewish people, protects the nation from the potential divine wrath resulting from HaShem’s revelation. Individually, one cannot hope to emerge meritorious from divine judgment, the natural outcome of revelation; only the nation as a whole, through the collective merits of its individual components, can withstand the Shechinah.

Indeed, this theme is a dominant one in the Yamim Noraim, particularly on Yom HaKippurim, the day of revelation. No single Jew can claim sufficient worthiness to stand before the Creator in judgment. We do so only by identifying wholeheartedly with the entirety of the Jewish nation, affording us the merits of one another as well as the national merits of our Patriarchs. Thus we see the three “extra” maneh of Ketoret was burned on Yom HaKippurim to symbolize this unity.

**Ketoret - קטרת as a protection**

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 17:11-13*** *“And Moshe said to Aharon. Take a censer, and put fire in it from off the altar, and put on incense, and take it quickly... and ran... and made atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed”.*

We learn from the Yom HaKippurim service that the cloud of ketoret facilitates a vision of the Shechinah: *For in the cloud I shall appear above the kaporet*.

Like a sort of veil which serves to dull the dazzling revelation. Perhaps, this is indeed the function of the Mizbeach HaKetoret (incense altar) throughout the year: it is meant to allow the Shechinah to dwell in the Mishkan by “screening” the revelation therein!

Ketoret is brought by men to recognize the fact that HaShem is present amongst us. Rashi illustrates this by examining ketoret - קטרת:

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Bamidbar (Numbers) 7:20 filled with incense** - קְטֹרֶת. The *gematria* of קְטֹרֶת [i.e., 613] corresponds to the six hundred and thirteen commandments—provided that you convert the “chaph” into a “daleth” in accordance with the cipher known as, ק“ד ר”ג ש“ב ת” א[in which the first and last letters of the alphabet are interchangeable, the second and the second-to-last letters, etc. Thus, ד = 4 ט = 9 ר =200 ת = 400 totaling 613].

Thus we see that ketoret = 613 commands. These 613 commands also indicate that HaShem is among me.

Furthermore, ketoret has the unique property of protection, which is necessary since as mortals we cannot handle the direct presence of HaShem, so we need the incense and the incense altar to protect us from the glory of HaShem. This is why when in verse 6, when describing where the Mizbeach HaKetoret is put it says:

***Shemot (Exodus) 30:1*** *And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. 2 A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. 3 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. 4 And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. 5 And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. 6 And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony,* ***where I will meet with thee****. 7 And Aaron[[11]](#footnote-11) shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.*

Geographically all it needed to say was to place it before the partition, but the full description connects the incense altar to HaShem meeting Bne Israel, such that the altar serves as a buffer and interface between us and the glory of HaShem.

Not only the actual offering of the ketoret, but even studying and reciting the parasha of ketoret yields remarkable power as the Zohar writes:

***Zohar 2:218*** *This matter is a decree issued by the Almighty, that whoever studies and reads the topic of the constitution of the ketoret every day is saved from all evil things and witchcraft in the world, and from all serious injury, from evil thoughts, from harsh judgment, and from death, and will not be harmed that entire day, for the evil force has no control over him. One must concentrate during this recitation. Rabbi Shimon said, if people would know how exalted the concept of the ketoret is before the Almighty, they would take every single word in it and wear it as a crown on their head like a golden crown. Whoever involves himself in it must delve into the concept of the ketoret. If he concentrates on it every day, he earns a portion both in this world and in the next world, and death will be eliminated from him and from the world, and he will be saved from all prosecution in this world, from impurity, from the judgment of Gehinnom and from subjugation to foreign rule.*

The Yalkut Meam Loez cites a story from the Midrash Haneelam. Rav Aha once arrived in a certain town that had been ravaged by a plague for seven days. The townspeople came to him and told him of their troubles. The plague was only intensifying, and they did not know what to do. He said, “Let us go to the Bet Knesset (House of the Congregation) and pray that it stops.” As they made their way towards the Bet Knesset, people came and told them that the plague had claimed even more victims; others are about to die. He said, “Since the calamity is so severe and time is running out, we will not go to the Bet Knesset. Rather, bring me forty G-d-fearing people and they will divide into groups of ten, each of which should go to one direction of the city and recite ‘pitum haketoret’ (the Talmudic discussion of the ingredients of the ketoret) three times. They should then add, ‘Moshe said to Aharon: Take the fire pan and place fire upon it from the altar and place ketoret, and quickly bring it to the nation and atone on their behalf… ‘until ‘and the plague ended.’” They did as he told, and the plague stopped. All those who had been stricken were cured. A heavenly voice called out to the harmful spirits, “Do no more damage in this town, for the attribute of justice no longer has any control over them!”

Rav Aha was exhausted and fell asleep. He dreamt that it was told to him, “Just as you eliminated the plague from the city, so must you bring them back in teshuva, for one cannot endure without the other, because it was on account of their sins that the plague was decreed”. He told this to the townspeople and they repented. They changed the name of the town to “Mahsiya,” which means “town of compassion”. They kept the town’s name in their minds at all times so as to ensure that they would not return to their sinful ways.

**Ketoret is Associated with Prayer**

The oral law repeatedly compares prayer to incense, which demonstrates the strong connection between these two substances.

***Berachoth 6b*** *R. Helbo further said in the name of R. Huna: A man should always take special care about the afternoon-prayer. For even Elijah was favorably heard only while offering his afternoon-prayer. For it is said: And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening offering, that Elijah the prophet came near and said . . . Hear me, O Lord, hear me. ‘Hear me’, that the fire may descend from heaven, and ‘hear me’, that they may not say it is the work of sorcery. R. Johanan says: [Special care should be taken] also about the evening-prayer. For it is said:* ***Let my prayer be set forth as incense before Thee****, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. R. Nahman b. Isaac says: [Special care should be taken] also about the morning prayer. For it is said: O Lord, in the morning shalt Thou hear my voice; in the morning will I order my prayer unto Thee, and will look forward.*

***Revelation 8:1*** *And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4* ***And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints****, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand. 5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

***Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XIII:4*** *Offerings (muktar)’ alludes to the evening prayer, as is borne out by the text, Let my* ***prayer be set forth as incense*** *(ketoret)4 before Thee, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice (Ps. CXLI, 2).*

*Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XIII:18 Another interpretation: FULL OF INCENSE implies that Reuben was at that moment[[12]](#footnote-12) a penitent, wearing sackcloth, fasting and praying to the Holy One, blessed be He, to pardon him for his iniquity in the affair with Bilhah,[[13]](#footnote-13) and* ***prayer is compared to incense, as is proved by the text, Let my prayer be set forth as incense*** ***before Thee,*** *etc. (Ps. CXLI, 2). Thus we have explained the phrase, FULL OF INCENSE.*

***Soncino Zohar, Shemot, Section 2, Page 219a*** *Thus Scripture says, “a perpetual incense before the Lord” (Ibid.), indicating that it abides in the presence of the Lord, more than all other modes of worship, it being the most precious and beloved to the Holy One, blessed be He. Prayer, indeed, is the highest service of all, yet is incense-burning dear and acceptable to the Almighty. Observe the difference between prayer and incense-offering.* ***Prayer has been instituted to take the place of the sacrifices that Israel used to offer, but none of the sacrifices had the same value as the incense. There is, further, this difference between the two.******Prayer repairs damage which has been done, but incense does more-it strengthens, it binds together, it is the greatest light-bringer****.*

Our prayers are like incense. Thus the incense of our Torah portion inspired King David to pen this psalm. Incense is related to congregational prayer and ‘congregation’ is our verbal tally[[14]](#footnote-14) with the Torah portion. This idea is brought forcefully home by the last pasuk of our psalm:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 102:29****The children of Thy servants shall dwell securely, and their seed shall be established before Thee.'*

The use of ‘seed’ surely causes us to remember that the place where the incense was used on Yom HaKippurim was the Holy of Holies – bedroom, the place of intimacy with HaShem.[[15]](#footnote-15) This is also an allusion to a man’s ‘seed’ which is placed in the womb in the place of intimacy – the Kodesh Kodashim.

**Ashlamatah: Hosea 10:2-12‎**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Israel is a vine devoid of fruit fitting for it. When I increased their good, they increased for the altars; when I increased for their land, they increased pillars. | 1. Israel is a ravaged vine, although it was a choice vine when it fulfilled the Law, the fruits of their deeds have caused them to be exiled. When I increased their harvests they increased the worship at their heathen altars, when I brought goodness to their land, they improved their cult pillars. |
| 2. Their heart has parted; now they shall be desolate. That shall demolish their altars, plunder their pillars. | 2. Their heart is separated from the Law, now they will feel their guilt. Now I will bring an enemy against them, who will shatter their heathen altars, and plunder their cult pillars. |
| 3. For now they shall say, "We have no king, for we did not fear the Lord; now what shall the king do for us? | 3. For lo now they say, "We have no king, for we are not afraid before the Lord, and the king, what can he do for us?" |
| 4. They spoke words, swearing falsely, forming a covenant, and judgment shall spring up like hemlock on the furrows of the field. | 4. They speak words of violence, they swear falsely, they make empty covenants. Now I will bring against them, like the poison of venomous serpents, judgment for their falsehood on the boundaries of the fields. |
| 5. Because of the calves of Beth-aven, the neighbors in Samaria shall be frightened, for its people shall mourn over it, and its priests, would rejoice over it, because of its glory, for it has been exiled from it. | 5. Because they worshipped the calves in Bethel, a king will come up against them with his army and will exile them. They will take the calf of Samaria from them. For its people and worshippers who rejoiced over it will mourn for its glory, for it has departed from it. |
| 6. That too shall be carried off to Assyria, a gift to King Yareb; Ephraim shall take shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his counsel. | 6. It too they shall bring to Assyria as tribute to the king who will come to take revenge for them. O prophet. say to them, "The house of Ephraim will receive shame, and the house of Israel will be dismayed because of the counsels of their advisers ." |
| 7. The king of Samaria is silenced and is like foam on the surface of the water. | 7. Samaria will be ashamed of her king like foam on the surface of the water. |
| 8. The high places of Aven are destroyed, the sin of Israel; thorns and thistles shall come up on their altars, and they shall say to the mountains, "Cover us up," and to the hills, "Fall upon us." | 8. The high places of Bethel will be desolate; the sins of Israel have caused them to be exiled. Thorns and thistles will grow over their heathen altars. Now I will bring on them such distress that they will be as if mountains covered them or hills fell upon them. |
| 9. Since the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O Israel! There they remained; the battle against the haughty did not overtake them in Gibeah. | 9. From the days of Gibea the people of the house of Israel have sinned. There they arose and rebelled against My Memra, by appointing a king over them but they were not worthy that the kingship should be established for them in Gibeah. There warriors came against them for slaughter; fathers with sons went up. |
| 10. With My will, I chastised them, and nations shall gather about them, when they bind them to their two eyes. | 10. By my Memra I brought punishment on them and gathered the Gentiles against them and they exercised dominion over them as one ties a yoke of oxen to its two rings. |
| 11. And Ephraim is a goaded heifer that loves to thresh, and I passed over her fair neck; I will cause Ephraim to ride, Judah shall plow, Jacob shall break his clods. | 11. The congregation of Israel is like a heifer which they teach to plough but it does not learn; she loves to follow her own desires. For I delivered them from the servitude of Egypt; I removed the strong yoke from their necks; I caused the house of Israel to dwell on the fortified land of the Amorites, conquering before them. As for those of the house of Judah, I gave them the inheritance which I promised their father Jacob. |
| 12. **Sow righteousness/generosity for yourselves, reap according to loving-kindness, plow yourselves a plowing, and it is time to seek the Lord, until He comes and instructs you in righteousness/generosity.** | 12. **O house of Israel, perform acts of goodness, walk in the path of righteousness/generosity, establish for yourselves instruction in the Law. Behold, the prophets say to you at all times, “Return to the service of the Lord." Now he will be revealed and bring righteous/ generous deeds for you.** . |
| 13. You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, you have eaten fruit of lies, for you have relied on your way, on the abundance of your mighty men. | 13. You have devised oppression, you have done wickedness, you have received the punishment for your deeds, because you have trusted in your ways, in your many warriors. |
| 14. And a tumult shall rise in your peoples, and all your fortresses shall be plundered, as the plunder of a peaceful people by an ambush on a day of war; the mother with the children was dashed to pieces. | 14. But the tumult of war will arise among your people, and all your fortified cities will be plundered, as the peaceful are plundered in an ambush" on the day of battle, when mothers and children are killed. |
| 15. So has Bethel done to you because of the evil of your wickedness; at dawn, the king of Israel has been silenced. | 15. This is what the sins you committed in Bethel have brought you, because of the wickedness of your deeds. Finally, at dawn; the king of Israel will be shamed and humiliated. |
|  |  |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Hosea 10:2-12**

**2** **Their heart has parted** from Me.

**now they shall be desolate. That** is the thing that shall demolish (וְעָרְפוּ) thier altars, i.e., it will destroy them. This is an expression similar to (Deut. 21: 4) “and they shall dehead (יַעֲרֹף) ”; (Ex. 13:13) “and you shall behead it (וְעֲרַפְתּוֹ).” He will break their neck. Another explanation according to Midrash Aggadah: Peace is great, for, even if Israel worships idols, but there is peace among them, Satan does not bring charges against them, as it is said: (above 4:17) “Ephraim is joined: although he worships idols, let him alone.” Strife, however, is hated, as it is said: “Their heart has parted; now they will be guilty.” Satan can open his mouth to bring charges. [from unknown Midrashic source]

**3** **For now** when evil befalls them.

**they shall say, We have no king,** Our king, upon whom we relied, saying, “He will go forth at our head and will wage our wars,” is of no avail to us.

**4** **swearing falsely** Heb. אָלוֹתשָוְא, swearing falsely. אָלוֹת is, in construction, like כָּרֹת, a present tense.

**forming a covenant** with pagan worship. Therefore, judgment of torments and retribution shall spring up upon them.

**like hemlock** which is a bitter grass, springing up on the furrows of the field. And Jonathan renders:

**on the furrows of the field** for the iniquity that they move back the boundaries of the field.

**the furrows** Heb. תַּלְמֵי. The furrow of a plowshare is called תֶּלֶם. Another explanation:

**on the furrows of the field** where they erect their altars, as it is said (below 12: 12): “like heaps on the furrows of the field.” There the judgment for their iniquity shall spring up on them. Another explanation:

**swearing falsely** Every covenant they form with one another they break.

**and...shall spring up like hemlock** which springs up on the furrows of the field, which is a bitter grass, so do their judgments spring up and bitterness grows for the poor and needy. Amos, too, says: (6:12) “For you have turned judgment into hemlock.”

**5** **Because of the calves of Beth-aven etc.** Because of the retribution destined to befall the calves in Bethel, called Beth-aven in the Book of Joshua (7:2).

**shall be frightened** Heb. יָגוּרוּ. Its neighbors who were in Samaria shall be frightened over it. Why? For its people mourn over it, and its priests, who would constantly rejoice over it will not mourn over its glory, for it has been exiled.

**6** **That too shall be carried off to Assyria** This took place in the twelfth year of Ahaz, “And the Lord (sic) aroused the desire of Pul king of Assyria...and they exiled the Reubenites and the Gadites etc.” (I Chron. 5:26), and he took the golden calves that were in Bethel and went away, to fulfill what was said: “That too shall be carried off to Assyria.” [from Seder Olam ch. 22]

**a gift to King Yareb** This is Sennacherib.

**Ephraim shall take shame** Heb. בָּשְׁנָה. Jeroboam, who was from the tribe of Ephraim, shall take shame for himself, that he erected this calf for a deity.

**and Israel shall be ashamed** of that counsel that they took counsel to make them, as it is said: (I Kings 12:28) “The king took counsel and made two golden calves.”

**7** **The king of Samaria is silenced** Heb. נִדְמֶה. The king of Samaria is silenced, and he is like foam on the surface of the water, which is eskoume (ecume) in Old French.

**8** **The high places of Aven** i.e., the high places of Bethel.

**thorns and thistles shall come up on their altars** for their worshippers have gone into exile, and no one turns to them anymore.

**and they shall say** i.e., Israel shall say.

**to the mountains, Cover us up** lest our enemies see our shame.

**9** **Since the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O Israel!** Heb. חָטָאתָ. This word חָטָאת is punctuated weakly, since it is of the feminine gender and of the past tense. Comp. (Lev. 25:21) וְעָשָת, “and it shall produce”; (Gen. 16:8) בָאת, “have you come”; (Deut. 32:36) אָזְלַת, “their power is gone.” From the days of Gibeah of Benjamin, Israel sinned. Since the incident of the concubine in Gibeah (Jud. 19) took place during the time of Othniel the son of Kenaz, who was the first of the judges, at the time of Cushan-rishathaim, and in whose time the image of Micah existed, and all this we find in Seder Olam (ch. 12).

**There they remained** They adhered to that trait since then.

**the battle...did not overtake them in Gibeah** Since the iniquity of idolatry was with them and they were not concerned about it, they were not victorious in the battle of Gibeah against the Benjaminites. Scripture calls them בְּנֵי עַלְוָה, lit. sons of haughtiness, who made themselves superior (עֶלְיוֹנִים) and did not heed their brethren to deliver the people of Gibeah. Jonathan, however, translates this in reference to their request for a king and their crowning Saul. However this does not appear to me to follow the Hebrew wording. Moreover, the context fits the former interpretation.

**10** **With My will, I chastised them** According to My will, I always chastised them from judge to judge, and I delivered them into the hands of their plunderers.

**and nations shall gather about them, when they bind them to their two eyes** Since Hosea compares them to a heifer as stated further: “Ephraim is a goaded heifer,” he, therefore, compared their chastisement to a cow, which they tire with plowing and they bind it to the yoke of the plowshare, and the pegs of the yoke penetrate it, [i.e., they penetrate the yoke,] one on this side and one on that side, next to the ox’s two eyes. And so did Jonathan render: as one hinds a “padna” on its two eyes. “Padna” is a yoke of oxen.

**11** **And Ephraim is a goaded heifer** Heb. מְלֻמָּדָה, porpojjnte in O.F. punctured, wounded in many places with the oxgoad, which is called agojjlon in O.F. I.e., many chastisements have I brought upon her, yet she has not humbled herself, and he always loves to thresh the grain in a place of food and fat, and she did not subject herself to be plowing, i.e., they did not subject themselves to My Torah, but follow the vision of their heart.

**that loves** Heb. אֹהַבְתִּי. The “yud” is superfluous. Comp. (Gen. 31:39) “stolen by day (גְּנֻבְתִי).”

**and I passed over her fair neck** Therefore, I bring upon them kings who will weaken their strength.

**I will cause Ephraim to ride, Judah shall plow etc.** If you wish that I would cause Ephraim to ride upon the nations, Judah shall plow, and Jacob יְשַּׂדֶד, shall break his clods with a plowing of good deeds, as Hosea explains and says: plow yourselves a plowing etc.

**12** **Sow righteousness for yourselves** But you have plowed wickedness etc.; therefore, a tumult shall rise in your people.

**plow yourselves a plowing** **Engage in the Torah and from there you will learn to go on the good way, to overpower temptation, like a person who plows the field to turn over the roots of grasses which sap the strength of the grain in the summer many days prior to sowing, and you shall set aside a time to seek the Lord, i.e., for the study of the Torah.**

**until He comes and instructs you in righteousness** **When you toil in it, He will give you to understand to let you know its secrets with righteousness.** Another explanation:

**Plow yourselves a plowing** **Do good deeds before oppression comes upon you, and that will cause for you that your prayer will be accepted in time of necessity, and then it will be a time fit for you to seek the Holy One, blessed he He, for all your necessities, for then your cry will be heard, and He will cast down (יוֹרֶה) charity to you; i.e., He will rain down charity to you.** Comp. (Ex. 15:3) “He cast (יָרָה) into the sea.”

**Special Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 60:1-22**

**Shabbat # 6 of Consolation/Strengthening [Yesod - "Secret"]**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
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| 1. Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has shone upon you. | 1. Arise, shine, Jerusalem; for the time of your salvation has come, and the glory of the LORD will be revealed upon you. |
| 2. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and a gross darkness the kingdoms, and the Lord shall shine upon you, and His glory shall appear over you. | 2. For behold, darkness will cover the earth, and gloom the kingdoms; but the Shekhinah of the LORD will settle in you, and His glory will be revealed upon you. |
| 3. And nations shall go by your light and kings by the brilliance of your shine. | 3. And peoples will come to your light, and kings before your brightness. |
| 4. Lift up your eyes all around and see, they all have gathered, they have come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be raised on [their] side. | 4. Lift up, Jerusalem, your eyes round about, and see all the sons of the people of your exiles who are gathered together, they come to your midst; your sons will come from far, and your daughters will be carried on hips. |
| 5. Then you shall see and be radiant, and your heart shall be startled and become enlarged, **for the abundance of the west shall be turned over to you**, the wealth of the nations that will come to you. | 5. Then you will see and be radiant. and you will fear and your heart widen in fear of sins; **because the wealth of the west is transferred to you**. the possessions of the peoples will be brought into your midst. |
| 6. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah, all of them shall come from Sheba; gold and frankincense they shall carry, and the praises of the Lord they shall report. | 6. The caravans of the Arahians will cover you around, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba will come. They will be burdened with gold and frankincense. and those who come with them will be declaring the praises of the LORD. |
| 7. All the sheep of Kedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall serve you; they shall be offered up with acceptance upon My altar, and I will glorify My glorious house. | 7. All the sheep of the Arabians will be gathered into your midst, the rams of Nebat will minister to you; they will be offered up for pleasure upon My altar, and I will glorify My glorious house. |
| 8. Who are these that fly like a cloud and like doves to their cotes? | 8. Who are these that come openly like swift clouds, and (are) not to be checked? The exiles of Israel, who are gathered and come to their land, even like doves which return to the midst of their windows! |
| 9. For the isles will hope for Me, and the ships of Tarshish [as] in the beginning, to bring your sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, in the name of the Lord your God and for the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you. | 9. For islands will wait for My Memra, those who go down in ships of the sea-which spreads its sails first? - to bring your sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, for the name of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because He has glorified you. |
| 10, And foreigners shall build your walls, and their kings shall serve you, for in My wrath I struck you, and in My grace have I had mercy on you. | 10, The sons of Gentiles will build up your walls, and their kings will minister to you; for in My wrath I smote you, but in My pleasure I will have mercy upon you. |
| 11. And they shall open your gates always; day and night they shall not be closed, to bring to you the wealth of the nations and their kings in procession. | 11. Your gates will be opened continually; day and night they will not be shut; that men may bring into your midst the possessions of the Gentiles, with their kings chained. |
| 12. For the nation and the kingdom that shall not serve you shall perish, and the nations shall be destroyed. | 12. For any people and kingdom that will not serve you. Jerusalem. will perish; those peoples will be utterly destroyed. |
| 13. The glory of the Lebanon shall come to you, box trees, firs, and cypresses together, to glorify the place of My sanctuary, and the place of My feet I will honor. | 13. The glory of Lebanon will be brought into your midst, cypresses, planes, and pines together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will make the place of the dwelling of My Shekhinah glorious. |
| 14. And the children of your oppressors shall go to you bent over, and those who despised you shall prostrate themselves at the soles of your feet, and they shall call you 'the city of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.' | 14. The sons of those who subjugated you will come bent into your midst; and all who used to incite you to anger will bow down to beseech from you at your feet; they will call you the City of the LORD, Zion with which the Holy One of Israel is pleased. |
| 15. Instead of your being forsaken and hated without a passerby, I will make you an everlasting pride, the joy of every generation. | 15. Whereas you have been forsaken and cast out, with no one passing through, I will make you glorious forever, a house of joy from generation to generation. |
| 16. And you shall suck the milk of nations and the breast of kings you shall suck, **and you shall know that I am the Lord, your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.** | 16. You will be satisfied with the possessions of the Gentiles, you will be indulged with the plunder of their kings; **and you will know that I, the LORD, am your Saviour and your Redeemer, the Strong One of Jacob.** |
| 17. Instead of the copper I will bring gold, and instead of the iron I will bring silver, and instead of the wood, copper, and instead of the stones, iron, **and I will make your (appointed – Heb. פְקֻדָּתֵךְ) officers peace and your rulers righteousness/generosity.** | 17. Instead of the bronze which they plundered from you, Jerusalem. I will bring gold, and instead of iron, I will bring silver, instead of wood, bronze, instead of stones, iron. **I will make your (appointed – Heb. פְקֻדָּתֵךְ) guardians peace and your rulers in virtue.** |
| 18. Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither robbery nor destruction within your borders, and you shall call salvation your walls and your gates praise. | 18. Violence will no more be heard in your land, spoil and breaking within your border; they will celebrate salvation upon your walls, and upon your gates they will be praising. |
| 19. You shall no longer have the sun for light by day, and for brightness, the moon shall not give you light, but the Lord shall be to you for an everlasting light, and your God for your glory. | 19. You will no longer need the sun for light by day nor even the moon for brightness by night; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. |
| 20. Your sun shall no longer set, neither shall your moon be gathered in, for the Lord shall be to you for an everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be completed. | 20. Your kingdom will no more cease, nor your glory pass away; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning will be ended. |
| 21. And your people, all of them righteous, shall inherit the land forever, a scion of My planting, the work of My hands in which I will glory. | 21. Your people will all be virtuous; they will possess the land for ever, My pleasant plant, the work of My might, that I might be glorified. |
| 22. The smallest shall become a thousand and the least a mighty nation; I am the Lord, in its time I will hasten it. **{S}** | 22. He that is small among them will become a thousand, and he that is faint a strong people: I am the LORD; in its time I will bring it. **{S}** |
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**Rashi’s Commentary on Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 60:1-22**

**4** **shall be raised on [their] side** [Jonathan renders:] on the flanks, the flanks of the kings, they will be raised.

**5** **Then you shall see and be radiant** Heb. וְנָהַרְתָּ, from נְהוֹרָה, [Aramaic for light,] then you shall see and be radiant [from Jonathan].

**and your heart shall be startled and become enlarged** And your heart shall wonder and become enlarged.

**for the abundance of the west shall be turned over to you** for the abundance of the west shall be turned over to you [after Jonathan].

**the wealth of the nations** The possessions of the nations [after Jonathan].

**6** **A multitude** Heb. שִׁפְעַת, A multiplicity.

**the young camels of Midian** Heb. בִּכְרֵי. [Jonathan renders:] הוֹגְנֵי. They are young camels. Comp. (Jer. 2:23) “a swift young camel (בִּכְרָה).”

**and Ephah** They, too, are of the sons of Midian. Comp. (Gen. 25:4) “Ephah and Epher.”

**7** **the rams of Nebaioth** Heb. אֵילֵי, rams of Nebaioth [after Jonathan].

**9** **as in the beginning** Like ‘as in the beginning,’ meaning in the days of Solomon, like the matter that is stated (I Kings 10:22): “For the king had at sea ships of Tarshish, etc.; once in three years, the ships of Tarshish would come, etc.” Tarshish is the name of the sea.

**in the name of the Lord your God** that is called upon you, for they will hear a report of Him and the name of His might, and come.

**for He has glorified you** He has given you glory.

**10** **and in my grace** Because I favored you; in old French, en mon apayemant.

**11** **And they shall open your gates always** Heb. וּפִתְּחוּ. This is an expression of opening in the strong conjugation (פִּעֵל), since their opening is a perpetual opening, a constant opening. Just as שַׁבֵּר is an expression of breaking, so is פִּתְּחוּ an expression of opening. Tresoverts in O.F.

**13** **box trees, firs, and cypresses** Species of trees of the forest of Lebanon.

**14** **Zion of the Holy One of Israel** [Lit. Zion the Holy One of Israel. Jonathan renders:] Zion desired by the Holy One of Israel, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

**16** **and the breast of kings** Heb. וְשֽׁד, an expression of breasts (שָׁדַיִם) and ‘you shall suck’ proves it.

**17** **Instead of the copper** that they took from you.

**and I will make your officers peace** [Jonathan renders:] And I will make your officers peace and your rulers with righteousness. **פְקֻדָּתֵךְ Your appointed officers**. Our Rabbis stated: The officers who came upon you in your exile and the rulers who pressed you will be counted for you as peace and charity (Baba Bathra 9a). [That is, the money they have exacted from you will be counted as charity.]

**19** **You shall no longer have** You shall not require the light of the sun.

**20** **neither...be gathered in** Heb. יֵאָסֵף, an expression similar to (Joel 2:10) “gathered in (אָסְפוּ) their brightness.” Gathered in their light.

**21** **in which I will glory** That I will glory with them. Pourvanter in French.

**22** **in its time I will hasten it** If they are worthy, I will hasten it; if they are not worthy, it will be in its time.

**Pirqe Abot – MeAm Lo’ez**

**Pereq Dalet**

**Mishnah 4:7**

**By: Rabbi Yitschaq (ben Mosheh) Magriso**

**Rabbi Tzaddok said: Do not make [words of Torah] a crown with which to make yourself great, nor a pick with which to dig. Hillel thus taught, "He who makes use of the Crown shall pass away" This teaches that everyone who derives personal gain from words of Torah, takes his life from the world.**

This master also teaches that the study of Torah must be for its own sake (***li-sh'mah***) and not for any other motive (***mekhuvan***). He thus says, ***"Do not make [words of Torah] a crown with which to make yourself great."*** Do not study Torah so that people will give you honor, stand up before you, or make you head of the academy (***rosh yeshivah***). Rather, your study of Torah should be for the sake of heaven, and if honor comes to you, it will come automatically.

Also, do not make words of Torah "a spade with which to dig." You should not even use the Torah as a tool with which to earn a living. Your motive in studying Torah should not be for monetary gain. The Torah should not be the tool through which you work to earn a living. If you do, it is as if you are using the Torah as the instrument through which you do your work.

Recall that Hillel taught, ***"He who makes use of the Crown shall pass away"*** (1:13). If a person makes personal use of the Crown of the Torah he destroys himself. One who uses the Torah as his instrument of trade, takes him own life. The reward that he would normally obtain in the Word to Come for his Torah study is used up in this world, and nothing is left over the World to Come.

**Verbal Tallies**

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

**& HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah**

**B’midbar (Numbers) 16:1 – 17:15**

**Hoshea (Hosea) 10:2-12**

**Special Ashlamata: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 60:1-22**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 102:13-29**

**Mk 11:20-26, Rm 3:27-31**

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

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

Rose up / Arise - , Strong’s number 06965.

Before /upon - פנים, Strong’s number 06440.

Congregation / Set time - מועד, Strong’s number 04150.

Name / Renown - שם, strong’s number 08034.

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

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

Took / Receive - לקח, Strong’s number 03947.

Before /upon - פנים, Strong’s number 06440.

**Bamidar (Numbers)** ‎ **16:1** Now Korah, the **son <01121>** of Izhar, the **son <01121>** of Kohath, the **son <01121>** of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the **sons <01121>** of Eliab, and On, the **son <01121>** of Peleth, **sons <01121>** of Reuben, **took <03947> (8799)** men:

2  And they **rose up <06965> (8799)** **before <06440>** Moses, with certain of the **children <01121>** of **Israel <03478>**, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the **congregation <04150>**, men of **renown <08034>**:

**Tehillim (Psalms) 102:13** Thou shalt **arise <06965> (8799)**, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set **time <04150>**, is come.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 102:15** So the heathen shall fear the **name <08034>** of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 102:20** To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are **appointed <01121>** to death;

**Tehillim (Psalms) 102:28** The **children <01121>** of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before <06440> thee.

**Hoshea (Hosea) 10:6** It shall be also carried unto Assyria for a present to king Jareb: Ephraim shall **receive <03947> (8799)** shame, and **Israel <03478>** shall be ashamed of his own counsel.

**Hoshea (Hosea) 10:7** As for Samaria, her king is cut off as the foam **upon <06440>** the water.

**Hoshea (Hosea) 10:9** O **Israel <03478>**, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah: there they stood: the battle in Gibeah against the **children <01121>** of iniquity did not overtake them.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Seder**  **Num 16:1 – 17:13** | **Psalms**  **Ps 102:13-28** | **Ashlamatah**  **Hos 10:2-12** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **lae** | God | Num. 16:22 | Ps. 102:24 |  |
| **rm;a'** | say,  speak | Num. 16:3 Num. 16:5 Num. 16:8 Num. 16:12 Num. 16:15 Num. 16:16 Num. 16:20 Num. 16:22 Num. 16:23 Num. 16:24 Num. 16:26 Num. 16:28 Num. 16:34 Num. 16:36 Num. 16:37 Num. 16:41 Num. 16:44 Num. 16:46 Num. 17:1 Num. 17:10 Num. 17:12 | Ps. 102:24 | Hos. 10:3 Hos. 10:8 |
| **#r,a,** | land,  earth,  ground | Num. 16:13 Num. 16:14 Num. 16:32 Num. 16:33 Num. 16:34 | Ps. 102:15 Ps. 102:19 Ps. 102:25 |  |
| **aAB** | come,  go,  brought | Num. 16:14 Num. 16:43 Num. 17:8 | Ps. 102:13 | Hos. 10:12 |
| **!Be** | son | Num. 16:1 Num. 16:2 Num. 16:7 Num. 16:8 Num. 16:10 Num. 16:12 Num. 16:27 Num. 16:37 Num. 16:38 Num. 16:40 Num. 16:41 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:5 Num. 17:6 Num. 17:9 Num. 17:12 | Ps. 102:20 Ps. 102:28 | Hos. 10:9 |
| **~G"** | also | Num. 16:10 Num. 16:13 |  | Hos. 10:6 |
| **rb;D'** | speak,  spoke,  said | Num. 16:5 Num. 16:20 Num. 16:23 Num. 16:24 Num. 16:26 Num. 16:31 Num. 16:36 Num. 16:40 Num. 16:44 Num. 16:47 Num. 17:1 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:6 |  | Hos. 10:4 |
| **rb'D'** | words | Num. 16:31 Num. 16:49 |  | Hos. 10:4 |
| **aWh** | who | Num. 16:7 | Ps. 102:27 |  |
| **[r'z<** | descendants  seed | Num. 16:40 | Ps. 102:28 |  |
| **aj'x'** | sins | Num. 16:22 |  | Hos. 10:8 Hos. 10:9 |
| **dy"** | through,  hands | Num. 16:40 | Ps. 102:25 |  |
| **hwhy** | LORD |  |  |  |
| **~Ay** | day |  | Ps. 102:23 Ps. 102:24 | Hos. 10:9 |
| **laer'f.yI** | Israel | Num. 16:2 Num. 16:9 Num. 16:25 Num. 16:34 Num. 16:38 Num. 16:40 Num. 16:41 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:5 Num. 17:6 Num. 17:9 Num. 17:12 |  | Hos. 10:6 Hos. 10:8 Hos. 10:9 |
| **yKi** | that,  for when,  since | Num. 16:38 | Ps. 102:14 | Hos. 10:3 Hos. 10:5 |
| **lKo** | all,  entire,  whole,  every | Num. 16:3 Num. 16:5 Num. 16:6 Num. 16:10 Num. 16:11 Num. 16:16 Num. 16:19 Num. 16:22 Num. 16:26 Num. 16:28 Num. 16:29 Num. 16:30 Num. 16:31 Num. 16:32 Num. 16:33 Num. 16:34 Num. 16:41 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:6 Num. 17:9 Num. 17:12 Num. 17:1 | Ps. 102:15 Ps. 102:26 |  |
| **hs'K'** | closed,  covered | Num. 16:33 Num. 16:42 |  | Hos. 10:8 |
| **bt;K'** | write | Num. 17:2 Num. 17:3 | Ps. 102:18 |  |
| **ble** | my doing | Num. 16:28 |  | Hos. 10:2 |
| **xq;l'** | took, taken | Num. 16:1 Num. 16:6 Num. 16:17 Num. 16:18 Num. 16:39 Num. 16:46 Num. 16:47 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:9 |  | Hos. 10:6 |
| **hm'** | who | Num. 16:11 |  | Hos. 10:3 |
| **d[eAm** | assembly | Num. 16:2 Num. 16:18 Num. 16:19 Num. 16:42 Num. 16:43 Num. 16:50 Num. 17:4 | Ps. 102:13 |  |
| **x;Bez>mi** | altar | Num. 16:38 Num. 16:39 Num. 16:46 |  | Hos. 10:2 Hos. 10:8 |
| **%l,m,** | kings |  | Ps. 102:15 | Hos. 10:3 Hos. 10:6 Hos. 10:7 |
| **hx'n>mi** | offering | Num. 16:15 |  | Hos. 10:6 |
| **hf,[]m;** | deeds | Num. 16:28 | Ps. 102:25 |  |
| **lp;n"** | fall, fell | Num. 16:4 Num. 16:22 Num. 16:45 |  | Hos. 10:8 |
| **db;['** | do, make | Num. 16:9 | Ps. 102:22 |  |
| **l[;** | above,  over,  upon | Num. 16:3 Num. 16:11 Num. 16:13 Num. 16:19 Num. 16:33 Num. 16:41 Num. 16:42 Num. 16:49 Num. 17:5 Num. 17:10 |  | Hos. 10:5 Hos. 10:9 Hos. 10:10 Hos. 10:11 |
| **hl'['** | brought | Num. 16:12 Num. 16:13 Num. 16:14 Num. 16:24 Num. 16:27 | Ps. 102:24 | Hos. 10:8 |
| **dm;['** | stand,  stood | Num. 16:9 Num. 16:18 Num. 16:48 | Ps. 102:26 | Hos. 10:9 |
| **t[e** | time |  | Ps. 102:13 | Hos. 10:12 |
| **hP,** | mouth | Num. 16:30 Num. 16:32 |  | Hos. 10:12 |
| **hn"P'** | regard | Num. 16:15 Num. 16:42 | Ps. 102:17 |  |
| **~ynIP'** | before, face | Num. 16:2 Num. 16:4 Num. 16:7 Num. 16:9 Num. 16:16 Num. 16:17 Num. 16:22 Num. 16:38 Num. 16:40 Num. 16:43 Num. 16:45 Num. 17:4 Num. 17:7 Num. 17:9 Num. 17:10 | Ps. 102:25 Ps. 102:28 | Hos. 10:7 |
| **~Wq** | rise, rose | Num. 16:2 Num. 16:25 | Ps. 102:13 |  |
| **ha'r'** | see,  appeared | Num. 16:19 Num. 16:42 Num. 17:9 | Ps. 102:16 |  |
| **~v'** | where | Num. 17:4 |  | Hos. 10:9 |
| **~ve** | renown,  name | Num. 16:2 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:3 | Ps. 102:15 Ps. 102:21 |  |
| **[m;v'** | hear, heard | Num. 16:4 Num. 16:8 | Ps. 102:20 |  |
| **~yIn"v.** | twelve | Num. 17:2 Num. 17:6 | Hos. 10:10 |  |
| **~m;T'** | completely | Num. 17:13 | Ps. 102:27 |  |
| **ar'B'** | about | Num. 16:30 | Ps. 102:18 |  |
| **arey"** | fear |  | Ps. 102:15 | Hos. 10:3 |
| **dAbK'** | glory | Num. 16:19 Num. 16:42 | Ps. 102:15 Ps. 102:16 | Hos. 10:5 |
| **~[;** | people | Num. 16:41 Num. 16:47 | Ps. 102:18 Ps. 102:22 | Hos. 10:5 Hos. 10:10 |
| **hf'['** | do, done  make | Num. 16:6 Num. 16:28 Num. 16:38 Num. 17:11 |  | Hos. 10:3 |
| **xr'P'** | sprout | Num. 17:5 Num. 17:8 |  | Hos. 10:4 |
| **xt;P'** | opened | Num. 16:32 | Ps. 102:20 |  |

**Greek:**

| **Greek** | **English** | **Torah**  **Num 16:1 – 17:13** | **Psalms**  **Psa 102:13-29** | **Prophets**  **Hos 10:2-12** | **Peshat**  **Mk/Jude/Pet**  **Mk 11:20-26** | **Remes**  **Acts/Romans**  **Rm 3:27-31** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ἀκούω | hear,  heard | Num. 16:4 Num. 16:8 | Ps. 102:20 |  |  |  |
| ἄνθρωπος | man | Num 16:14 Num 16:22 Num 16:26  Num 16:29  Num 16:30  Num 16:32 Num 17:5 |  |  |  | Rom. 3:28 |
| ἀποκρίνομαι | answering |  | Psa 102:23 |  | Mk. 11:22 |  |
| γίνομαι | come,  became | Num 16:16 Num 16:38 Num 16:42 Num 16:49\*  Num 17:8 |  |  | Mk. 11:23 |  |
| ἔθνος | nation |  | Psa 102:15 |  |  | Rom. 3:29 |
| εἷς | one | Num 16:22 Num 17:3 Num 17:6 |  |  |  | Rom. 3:30 |
| ἔργον | works | Num 16:28 | Psa 102:25 |  |  | Rom. 3:27 Rom. 3:28 |
| ἔχω | having | Num 16:3 |  |  | Mk. 11:22 Mk. 11:25 |  |
| θεός | GOD | Num 16:5 Num 16:9 Num 16:11 Num 16:22 |  |  | Mk. 11:22 | Rom. 3:29 Rom. 3:30 |
| ἵστημι | stand,  stood | Num. 16:9 Num. 16:18 Num. 16:48 |  | Hos. 10:9 |  | Rom. 3:31 |
| καρδία | heart |  |  | Hos 10:2 | Mk. 11:23 |  |
| λαλέω | spoke,  speak | Num. 16:5 Num. 16:20 Num. 16:23 Num. 16:24 Num. 16:26 Num. 16:31 Num. 16:36 Num. 16:40 Num. 16:44 Num. 16:47 Num. 17:1 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:6 |  | Hos. 10:4 | Mk. 11:23 |  |
| λαμβάνω | take,  took | Num 16:6 Num 16:15 Num 16:17 Num 16:18 Num 16:39 Num 16:46 Num 16:47 Num 17:2 Num 17:9 |  |  | Mk. 11:24 |  |
| λέγω | saying | Num 16:5 Num 16:20 Num 16:23  Num 16:24  Num 16:26 Num 16:34 Num 16:36 Num 16:41 Num 16:44 Num 17:1 Num 17:12 |  |  | Mk. 11:21 Mk. 11:22 Mk. 11:23 Mk. 11:24 |  |
| ὁράω | see, appear | Num. 16:19 Num. 16:42 Num. 17:9 | Ps. 102:16 |  | Mk. 11:20 |  |
| ὄρος | mountains |  |  | Ho 10:8 | Mk. 11:23 |  |
| οὐρανός | heavens |  | Psa 102:19  Psa 102:25 |  | Mk. 11:25 Mk. 11:26 |  |
| πᾶς | all,  whole,  entire,  every | Num. 16:3 Num. 16:5 Num. 16:6 Num. 16:10 Num. 16:11 Num. 16:16 Num. 16:19 Num. 16:22 Num. 16:26 Num. 16:28 Num. 16:29 Num. 16:30 Num. 16:31 Num. 16:32 Num. 16:33 Num. 16:34 Num. 16:41 Num. 17:2 Num. 17:6 Num. 17:9 Num. 17:12 Num. 17:1 | Ps. 102:15 Ps. 102:26 |  | Mk. 11:24 |  |
| πίστις | Faithful  Obedience |  |  |  | Mk. 11:22 | Rom. 3:27 Rom. 3:28 Rom. 3:30 Rom. 3:31 |
| πρόσωπον | front, before, face | Num. 16:2 Num. 16:4 Num. 16:7 Num. 16:9 Num. 16:16 Num. 16:17 Num. 16:22 Num. 16:38 Num. 16:40 Num. 16:43 Num. 16:45 Num. 17:4 Num. 17:7 Num. 17:9 Num. 17:10 |  | Hos. 10:7 |  |  |
| χωρίς | apart from | Num 6:21  Num 16:49 |  |  |  | Rom. 3:28 |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of B’midbar (Numbers) 16:1 – 17:15**

**“Vayiqach Qorach” “And now Korah”**

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

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

|  |
| --- |
| **School of Hakham Tsefet’s Peshat**  **Mordechai (Mk)**  **Mishnah א:א** |
| **And in the morning they** (Yeshua and his talmidim) **were passing beside** the fig tree, **and they saw the fig tree withered from the roots.** **And Hakham Tsefet remembering said to him** (Yeshua), **"Rabbi** (Hakham), **look, the fig tree which you cursed has dried up." And Yeshua responded saying to them,** “you must **have faithful obedience** (Heb. *Emunah*) **to G-d.**” **Amen ve’amen for I say to you, whoever should say to this mountain, be lifted up and be thrown into the sea, and is not divided in his heart, if** he is **faithfully obedient to G-d whom he is asking**, **he will have it** if he is to have it. **By this, I am saying to you, all that you pray for and you are requesting,** be **faithfully obedient that you** may **have it** and **grasp a hold of** what you petition G-d for, **and it will be granted** to **you.** **And whenever you** recite **the Standing Prayer** (Heb. Amidah), **forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in** (the) **heavens may forgive you your transgressions**. **But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in** (the**) heavens forgive your transgressions.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Remes**  **Romans**  **Mishnah א:א** |
| Seeing that we Jews have every advantage,[[16]](#footnote-16) **What, then, can you boast[[17]](#footnote-17) about?** Your boasting **is nullified. By what kind of principle** (nomos/law)**? Of your own achievements** (works)(**ἔργον** – *ergon*)**?**[[18]](#footnote-18) **No, but by faithful obedience to the Torah** (nomos/law). **For we maintain that a man is justified by faithful obedience apart from personal attempts to keep the Torah** without the guidance of a Torah teacher (i.e. Hakham). **Or is God of the Jews only?[[19]](#footnote-19) Is He not** the God of the **Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also,** **since God is one Who will justify the circumcised by their faithful obedience** to the Torah **and the uncircumcised through the same faithful obedience**. **Do we nullify the Torah** by being **faithfully obedient** to the Hakhamim**?** **It will never come to be! On the contrary, we make Torah stand by our faithful obedience** (cleaving to the Sages and Torah Teachers)**!** |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **\*Num 16:1 – 17:15** | **Psalm 102:13-29** | **Hosea 10:2-12** | **Mordecai 11:20-26** | **Romans 3:27-31** |

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

**A Dead Fig Tree**

Once again, we have an analogous picture of the death of a fig tree. This analogous picture shows that there are those who will not have their share in the Y’mot HaMashiach and the Olam HaBa. However, this time the fig tree represents another rebellious group. We should note here that the fig tree is used in the previous pericope as a rebellious generation. Therefore, we have two occasions where Hakham Tsefet draws and analogy of the fig tree using it to represent a rebellious people or generation.

And, once again, the pericope of Mordechai solidly connects with the Torah Seder both verbally and thematically.

**Mar 11:22** **And Yeshua responded saying to them,** “you must **have faithful obedience** (Heb. *Emunah*) **to G-d**

This passage demands faithfulness to G-d.

The Greek εχετε – *echete* (have) is imperative rather than indicative. Therefore, the language demands faithfulness to G-d. The phrase πίστιν θεοῦ (*pistin theou*) indicates the object of faithfulness. Consequently, we see Yeshua’s demand for faithfulness to G-d. This brings us to a question. Since our pericope is connected to the Torah Seder of B’Midbar (Num.) 16:1-17:15 we must apply the hermeneutic of **Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano**: Interpretation deduced from the context, we must realize that this means being faithful to G-d and faithful to his agent. During the times of the Nazarean Codicil we would say that it meant being faithful to Yeshua as a Hakham. In present times we must realize that it means being faithful to the agent of G-d in our lives at present. i.e. our Hakham.

**Mark 11:23 Amen ve amen for I say to you, whoever should say to this mountain, be lifted up and be thrown into the sea, and is not divided in his heart, if** (he is) **faithfully obedient to G-d who he is saying** (asking), **he will have it** if he is to have it.

This set of passages is one of the most abused passages in all the Nazarean Codicil. The key to understanding this passage is the “divided heart.” The “divided heart” represents a student who has more than one teacher or one who does not trust his Hakham. This passage is used by the so called Faith Teacher to say that whatever you say you will receive if you just have “faith.” The Greek word “*pistis*” parallels the Hebrew word *emunah*, which means faithfulness (faithful obedience). Our next passage will clarify this point more clearly.

**Mark 11:24 By this, I am saying to you, all that you pray for and you are requesting,** be **faithfully obedient that you** may **have it,** and **grasp a hold of** what you petition G-d for, **and it will be granted** to **you.**

Verse 24 contains a measure of doubt in the final clause. In other words, it questions if it will be or if it is to be. This would leave room for a request to be determined by G-d rather than the will of man. Furthermore, the verse demands faithfulness to G-d as a condition for a petition to be accepted. Likewise, the speech should be seen as analogous rather than a literal request.

**Mar 11:25** **And whenever you** recite **the Standing Prayer** (Heb. Amidah), **forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in** (the) **heavens may forgive you your transgressions**. **But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in** (the**) heavens forgive your transgressions.**

*Pardon us, our Father, for we have sinned, forgive us, our King, for we have transgressed. For You are a good and forgiving Almighty. Blessed are You, Adonai, Gracious One, Who pardons abundantly.[[20]](#footnote-20)*

Materials are beginning to surface which would suggest that Hakham Tsefet played a part in helping to assemble parts of the Siddur and the Machzor.

Hakham Tsefet is making a subtle hint that we are approaching Rosh HaShannah and Yom Kippur.

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

**Connection to the Torah Seder**

B’Midbar (Num.) 16:28 Moses said, “By this you will know that the LORD has sent me to **do all these works**; for this is not my doing.”

**Faith**

The commonality between the Peshat portion of Hakham Tsefet and Remes of Hakham Shaul is found in the Greek word **πίστις** – *pistis* generally translated as “faith.” However, because the Torah is our conductor we must look to possible Hebrew equivalents to understand the meaning of the word **πίστις** – *pistis*. The Hebrew word **אמוּנה** *emunah* is associated with faithfulness and obedience. **אמוּנה** - *emunah* addresses the living tension between trust, obedience and unremitting loyalty.

The phenomenon denoted by **אמוּנה** – *emunah*, evident in the Tanakh’s concept of faith, is richer than the phenomenon denoted by **πίστις** – *pistis* and the Greek concept of “faith.” However, the Greek **πίστις** – *pistis* has a nuance of obedience meaning, “to obey.” This “faith in G-d” is not just general trust. It is grounded in what G-d has done in the past.﻿ Hence, it has its own firm relation to the past and is faithfulness. The “trusting man” (מַאֲמִין – πιστεύων) is also the faithful man (נֶאֱמָן – πιστός).

A key to our Remes pericope is that faithfulness destroys anxiety and self-confidence, self-reliance. This means that the “boasting,” is excluded by the “principle” of faithful obedience.” Hakham Shaul is perfectly aware of this fact. And, his response to boasting shows that those who have to resort to such devices are not being faithful and or obedient. When a man has become faithfully obedient, he becomes to that place that he realizes that he must be obedient to G-d by making his life commitment to obedience. Many (Gentiles) who believe that they have arrived at the truth of the Torah without the help or guidance of JEWISH Torah teacher will cry that they are faithful to G-d etc. These “self-made men” (Gentiles) boast of their accomplishments by standing independently form a Jewish mentor. This is not to say that these men are not intelligent, learned or genuine in their motive. Hakham Shaul will take up this argument latter in his Igeret to the Romans.

**Romans 13:1 Let every** Gentile **soul be subject to the governing authorities** of the Jewish Synagogue. **For there is no** legitimate **authority except** that of the Jewish Bet Din **from God, and the authorities** of the Bet Din **that exist are appointed by God.**

The information stands for itself. Hakham Shaul will bring Abraham to be the first prototype for Gentile who interacts with a Torah Teacher soon enough. Suffice it to say, that Abraham not only submitted to a very specific Torah teacher that he also paid tithes to him. His (Abraham’s) example of “faith” is faithful obedience. His “faith” was a commitment of obedience. What G-d asked him to do he did without hesitation. We have seen that Hakham Tsefet uses the Greek word **εὐθύς** (*euthus*)[[21]](#footnote-21)immediately, in the sense of moral immediacy. In light of the meaning of **εὐθύς** (*euthus*), the inferred meaning of “faith” is then faithful immediacy. A vague summary of Philo’s concept of “faith” **πίστις** – *pistis* it is a disposition of the Soul. Furthermore, when he speaks of the Gentile and “faith,” Philo sees them turning from the corruptible to the eternal.[[22]](#footnote-22) In this sense, “faith” is a “faithful commitment to obedience.” Hakham Shaul’s Igeret to the Romans is a specific call for Gentiles to accept and commit themselves to the Torah as a means of meriting the Olam HaBa. Their “faith” is then “faithful commitment of obedience” to G-d and His Torah. In his opening pericope, he calls for Gentile’s “faithful obedience.”

**Romans 1:5 I have received chesed[[23]](#footnote-23) and an Igeret Reshut[[24]](#footnote-24) to bring** Messiah’s **authority[[25]](#footnote-25)** **over all the Gentiles** turning to God**, and** bringing them **into faithful obedience[[26]](#footnote-26)** (Talmudizing them in the Torah)

He repeats the mission near the end of the Igeret saying…

**Romans 15:18 For I will not dare speak of anything except what Messiah has accomplished through me, resulting in the faithful obedience of the Gentiles in word** (Torah) **and works** (halakhah).

Again in his closing Hakham Shaul says…

**Romans 16:26 but now is manifested, and by the Torah, writings of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations,** resulting in **faithful obedience** (to the Torah)

The message is clear.

Gentiles are subject to the Torah as Jewish Hakhamim teach it! Therefore, because we have every advantage they have no place to boast! In this, they are dependent on G-d’s chesed. Bultmann shows that the “Tsadiq is not dependent on G-d’s chesed (grace) however; chesed (grace) must be extended to the convert.”[[27]](#footnote-27)

Fear, trust, hope and obedience all shows us just how reliant on G-d we really are. In the Tanakh, “faith” means fidelity (faithfulness) and faithfulness is obedience to the “law” (Torah) and mitzvoth. In this the object of “faith” (faithful obedience) are the mitzvoth and halakhot. In Rabbinic writings, “belief” is obedience and faithfulness.[[28]](#footnote-28) Keeping the mitzvoth is parallel to trusting G-d.

**Questions for Yeshiva Students**

1.      How does Hakham Tsefet’s Peshat connect with the Torah Seder this week?

2.      How does Hakham Shaul’s Remes connect to…

a.      Torah Seder

b.      Hakham Tsefet’s Peshat

3.      Explain how cross-linguistic hermeneutics helps us solve the mystery of “faith” vs “faithful obedience.”

4.      What hermeneutic principle does Hakham Shaul use to negate the possibility of Gentile boasting?

5.      What is one of the major purposes for Hakham Shaul’s Igeret to the Romans?

**Questions for Understanding and Reflection**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat which verse or verses impressed your heart and fired your imagination?
2. What relationship is there between verses 16:1-2 and 17:6-15 of our Torah Seder and what lessons can we learn from this juxtaposition?
3. What are some of the symbolic meanings of the ingredients of the Ketoret?
4. Why is it advisable **“not to make [words of Torah] a crown with which to make ourselves great, nor a pick with which to dig”**? And what are the implications of this advice?
5. What does the Prophet Yeshayahu means allegorically when he says: **“because the wealth of the west is transferred to you”?**
6. What does the Prophet Hoshea allegorically means when he states: **“establish for yourselves instruction in the Law”?** And what are some of the implications of this statement?
7. ‎Taking into consideration all the readings for this Shabbat what is the prophetic statement for this ‎week?‎

**Blessing After Torah Study**

**Barúch Atáh Adonai, Elohénu Meléch HaOlám,**

**Ashér Natán Lánu Torát Emét, V'Chayéi Olám Natá B'Tochénu.**

**Barúch Atáh Adonái, Notén HaToráh. Amen!**

**Blessed is Ha-Shem our God, King of the universe,**

**Who has given us a teaching of truth, implanting within us eternal life.**

**Blessed is Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!**

**“Now unto Him who is able to preserve you faultless, and spotless, and to establish you without a blemish,**

**before His majesty, with joy, [namely,] the only one God, our Deliverer, by means of Yeshua the Messiah our Master, be praise, and dominion, and honor, and majesty, both now and in all ages. Amen!”**

**Next Shabbat:**

**Shabbat: “V’Qach Meitam Mateh” – “And take of them a rod”**

**Shabbat “Nachamu VII” – “Of Our Consolation VII”**

**Seventh of Seven Sabbaths of Consolation/Strengthening**

**Shabbat Mevar’chin HaChodesh Tishri**

**Sabbath of the Proclamation of the New Moon of the Month of Tishri**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וְקַח מֵאִתָּם מַטֶּה** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“V’Qach Meitam Mateh”** | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 17:16-24 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 18:25-28 |
| **“And take of them a rod”** | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 17:25-28 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 18:29-32 |
| **“y toma de ellos una vara”** | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 18:1-7 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 17:25-32 |
| B’Midbar (Num.) 17:16 – 18:24  B’Midbar (Num.) 28:9-15 | Reader 4 – B’Midbar 18:8-10 |  |
| Ashlamatah: Is. 11:1-10 | Reader 5 – B’Midbar 18:11-16 | **Monday &**  **Thursday Mornings** |
| Special: Isaiah 61:10 - 63:9  1 Samuel 20:18,42 | Reader 6 – B’Midbar 18:17-20 | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 18:25-28 |
| Psalm 103:1-22 | Reader 7 – B’Midbar 18:21-24 | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 18:29-32 |
|  | Maftir – B’Midbar 18:21-24 | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 17:25-32 |
| N.C.: Mk 11:27-33; Lk 20:1-8  Rm 4:1-8 | Isaiah 61:10 - 63:9  1 Samuel 20:18,42 |  |



Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

1. Radak; Ibn Ezra Maharam Armaah [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Maggid of Koznitz [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Eicha (Lamentations) 3:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Berachot 32b; Alshich [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Tehillim (Psalms) 102:29; These opening remarks are excerpted, and edited, from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Congregation / Set time - מועד, Strong’s number 04150, is our verbal tally with the Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Our Torah portion has Aaron saving the lives of the Bne Israel by using the incense to stop the plague. If the incense was compounded incorrectly, then the plague would have continued to kill people. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Chatam Sofer, Derashot 18; quoted in Siddur Chatam Sofer ad. loc. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Adapted from Olat Ri’iah 136-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Meam Loez on Ki Tissa: The Incense Spices [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ramban’s comments to Shemot (Exodus) 30:**7. AND AARON WILL BURN THEREON INCENSE**. This commandment [of burning the incense] did not devolve upon the High Priest alone, but was also incumbent upon the common priests, as is the law of the lighting of the lamps mentioned right beside it, [***every morning, when he dresses the lamps***], although of that too it says, ***And when Aaron lights the lamps***, and yet it does not apply to the High Priest alone, as He said above, ***Aaron and his sons shall set in order***. Therefore I do not know why He mentioned Aaron in both of them, and did not say "the priest" [which would signify any — even a common-priest]. Perhaps it is because of Scripture's statement further, ***And Aaron will make atonement upon the horns of it once in the year***, which was done by Aaron only, [because the reference there is to the Service on the Day of Atonement which could be performed only by the High Priest — therefore He also mentioned the name of Aaron in the verse before us and in the following verse]. Or it may be that He hinted that it was to be Aaron who [at the first time] was to begin the burning of the incense and the lighting of the lamps. Similarly at the end of Seder Emor ***el hakohanim*** He said, ***Aaron will set in order***, and He did not mention his sons, because it was Aaron who performed it first. The phrase ***a statute forever*** mentioned there, refers to the commandment [of kindling the lamps, and does not mean that it is a statute forever that only the High Priest do it]. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. When Joseph's fate was being discussed. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Cf. Beresheet (Genesis) 35:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Congregation / Set time - מועד, Strong’s number 04150. A ‘moed’ is normally translated as an ‘appointment’. The set times, or appointments to prayer and the times for HaShem to act are brought out in our psalm: **Tehillim (Psalms) 102:13** Thou shalt arise <06965> (8799), and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set **time <04150>**, is come. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Kodesh Kodashim = Holy of Holies [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Following the conclusion of the previous three pericopes, we can see that Hakham Shaul turns with the question of boasting. This address is most likely to the recent convert. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Hakham Shaul has shown that the path to redemption is through the gift of the Torah, as we have shown (Rm. 3:21-26). “Therefore, humans (Gentiles) cannot bring about their salvation by wisdom in any ordinary or natural sense through allegiance to human beings or by their accomplishments. This admonition amounts to a critique of boasting, because it is all too human and relies too much on **human achievement**, whereas real Nazarean ministry must be very theocentric and serve the edification and building up of God. The warning that Hakham Shaul includes now addresses all human beings (Gentiles) about the dangers of self-deception and trusting in one’s own thinking and judging, which is misleading as a form of human wisdom.” Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *First Corinthians*. 1 St. Edition. New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2008. p. 206

    Boasting of one’s level of competence in Torah is a negative trait. “For Philo self-glorying is wrong because in it we do not acknowledge God as the Giver of all good but forget Him and usurp His glory. The righteous, by humbly submitting to divine grace, stand high with God and thus achieve true glory.” Cf. Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964. 3:647 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. By your own “works.” Note: This is also a verbal connection with B’Midbar 16:28. The Greek word **ἔργον** – *ergon* is the equivalent of Hebrew מַעֲשֶׂה *ma’aseh*.

    Hakham Shaul is speaking about Gentiles who have embraced the Torah. However, they believe that they know and understand what the Torah is saying without the guidance of a Torah Teacher. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The rhetorical question is based on the previous Torah Seder and Remes pericope where we learned that there is one Law/Torah for the Jewish people and the same Torah/Law applies to the Gentiles who would turn to G-d. However, the question is aimed at showing us that the Gentile is subject to the Torah and Mitzvoth because G-d is the is the Master of the Jewish people and Gentiles as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Siddur Lev Eliezer, Eastern Book Press Inc (Siddur Linear Transliteration with English Translation for Weekdays) p.144 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. As we have shown, it carries the connotation of being straight. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that it also carries a sense of immediacy and urgency. In brief, **εὐθύς** (*euthus*) bears the weight of moral urgency. This moral urgency is demonstrative of those who hear and obey. Acceptance of the Torah and Oral Torah is not conditional. When we hear we MUST obey with immediate moral acceptance and urgency. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964. 6:201ff [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. **Chesed:** It is G-d’s loving-kindness, to bring Gentiles into faithful obedience of the Torah and Oral Torah through G-d’s appointed agent of Yeshua our Messiah. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. **Igeret Reshut:** “**Letter of Permission**.” The Bet Din of Yeshua’s three pillars, Hakham Tsefet, Hakham Ya’aqob and Hakham Yochanan, would have issued this Igeret Reshut. This would have been very important to the Jewish Synagogues of the first century. Furthermore, we can see that Hakham Shaul must have followed this practice in all of his interactions with Jewish Synagogues. In the second Igeret to Corinthians Hakham Shaul asks if he needs an Igeret Reshut. Cf. 2 Co 3:1. Hakham Shaul’s Igeret Reshut is his letter of acceptance as a Chaber among the “Apostles.” His office is subjected to the Three Pillars rather than the Bat Kol. We find **b. B.M. 59b** as a precedent for understanding that a Bat Kol does not usurp the authority of the Bet Din. In this case, the Bet Din is composed of the chief Nazarean Hakhamim. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. **Name:** **ὄνομα** – *onoma,* (name) meaning authority [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. **Faithful Obedience:** ὑπακοὴν πίστεως – *upakonen pisteos*, faithful obedience.” πίστις – *pistis* is paralleled to the Hebrew word אמוּנה – *emunah*, meaning faithfulness, faithful obedience.

    Faithful Obedience to G-d

    Acceptance of the Mesorah (Orally breathed and written Torah)

    Acceptance and obedience to the authority of the Nazarean Hakhamim [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964. 6:201ff [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum NT aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 1922 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)