**Questions for Understanding and Reflection**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat which verse or verses impressed your heart and fired your imagination?

I was fired by a line from the Nazarean commentary: “Largely Judaism is a paradox. To fail to appreciate paradox is to misunderstand Judaism.”

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

**Now it came about at that time -** Why was this section placed here, where it interrupts the section dealing with Joseph?

**and he turned away** – Who did he turn away from?

**to an Adullamite man** – How did he turn to him?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:2?

**merchant** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: כְּנַעֲנִי?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:7?

**was evil in the eyes of the Lord** – What was his evil deed?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:9?

**he wasted [his semen] on the ground** – How did he waste his seed?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:11?

**for he said, etc.** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

**for he said, “Lest he too die…”** – What did he mean?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:14?

**and covered her face** – Why did she cover her face?

**at the crossroads** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew phrase: בְּפֶתַח עֵינַיִם?

**for she saw that Shelah had grown up, etc.** – What was her plan?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:17?

**a pledge** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: **עֵרָבוֹן?**

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:23?

**Let her take [them] for herself** – What did he intend?

**lest we become a laughingstock** – How would he become a laughingstock?

**Behold, I sent this kid** – What is the significance of the kid?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 38:25?

**She was taken out** –Why was she being taken out?

**and she sent to her father-in-law** – Why did she send them to her father-in-law?

**Please recognize** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew phrase: הַכֶּר-נָא?

1. In Gen. 38:17 Tamar asks Yehudah for an ***“Eravon”*** (a pledge – Strong’s # H6162). This term is equivalent to the Greek ***Arrabon*** (a pledge, an earnest = Strong’s # G728) in Ephesians 1:14. Since we are in Ephesians which is a Remes text, if we apply the rule of **Binyan ab,** then it follows that what applies as a pledge in Gen 38:17 ff. also applies to the pledge in Ephesians 1:13ff – i.e. ‎"Your signet, your cloak, and the staff that is in your ‎hand."‎ If these pledges are the same, at least in their allegorical substance, what is exactly that which we have received as “pledge” of our inheritance?

The pledge (signet ring) is like a Paqid that certifies that this is authentic. It is NOT like tefillin which are symbolic of marriage for a Jew. The signet applies to all men, not just Jews. The signet is a signature of authority.

The cloak is telling us that it is a talit which indioctaes that I am responsible for my immediate and my greater family.

A staff (oral law) indicates that you have some authority and that you are have the priesthood of the firstborn.

We were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. This is a part of HaShem that Identifies Him as the owner.

We are like Tamar. Nazareans are of the royal house, serving in the King’s palace, according to Ephesians!

1. According to our Sages what does the name of a person indicate?

Their name indicates the future, it indicates their destiny.

1. In Gen. 38:9 we read: **וַיֵּדַע - “And 'knew' Onan”.** What exactly is the Torah hinting at when it uses the word “knew” (Heb. ***Da’at***)‎?

Ramban says that this hints to the transmigration of the soul. Onan had some sort of phrophecy that he *connected* with in a very meaningful way.

1. Why did Yehudah dictate the “death penalty by burning” for Tamar even though she was guilty at most of stripes‎? And what does this has to say about Nazarean Jews?

He was angered by her harlotry since she was the daughter of a priest. This suggest that those who serve in the King’s palace (Nazarean Jews) are subjected to a stricter standard than those who serve outside the palace.

1. What is “Tob” according to Psalm 31? Further, how does Yochanan state in the So’od in John 1:7-9 explains this Tob?

The *tob* is the light – the presence of HaShem. Yochanan indicates that he was not the light, but that he bore witness of that light, i.e. Yeshua the Mashiach.

There is nothing good apart from the primordial light. Since Mashiach is this primordial light, we learn that there is nothing good apart from Mashiach.

1. In Isaiah 37:32 Rashi comments: **“We learn that the merit of the Patriarchs has been depleted.”** Is this so, in our days? And if so, how come does our Siddur pray claiming the merit of the Patriarchs on our behalf? Please explain your answer.

It could be that the merit was depleted for this particular cause, but not for all causes. It could also be that this merit was re-invigorated and made valuable again. Thus it was depleted at one time, but it is no longer depleted today.

1. In Yehudah 19 we read about men who “are devoid of the **“Nefesh Yehudi”**, destitute of genuine spiritual ‎life‎.” But in Ephesians 1:13 ff. it is said that the **“Nefesh Yehudi”** was given to us as a **“pledge”** for accepting the commandments and the kingdom of G-d, and being faithfully obedient to them. What is so important about this **“Nefesh Yehudi”**?

The “nefesh Yehudi”, the pledge for emunah, seems to be the key to the Righteous/Generous being able to approach HaShem and dwell with Him and His Mashiach (‘tob’ – light).

The signet (a paqid), the staff (oral law), and the cloak (talit) – These are the pledge, the arabon.

1. We know that the Written and Oral Torah are very economical with words, and makes every word count. Taking this into consideration, of what benefit is it for us to be informed according to Christian translations of the Nazarean Codicil that the Ethiopian officer met by Peresh was an “eunuch”? Does it make more sense to translate based on the Aramaic that the Ethipian Officer was a “proselyte”? Please explain your rationale.

It seems that the translation as “proselyte” is more appropriate because he was studying Torah – the expected action of a proselyte. This is *not* the normal action of a Eunuch. A eunuch could not enter the Temple. Therefore, a eunuch could not be a priest. Never the less, even a eunuch is encouraged to study the Torah and to have a place with HaShem.

1. Taking into consideration all the readings for this Shabbat, what hints do these texts provide to show that the New Moon is coming soon upon us?

Zerah – Shining – like the emerging moon.

Peretz – the breaking forth of the new moon,

The “End of Days” (Yehudah 17-19) hints to the restoration of the moon to its former glory.

The Psalm speaks of ‘tob’ the light for the righteous (Israel) who are represented by the moon.

1. ‎Taking into consideration all the readings for this Shabbat what is the prophetic statement for this ‎week?‎

This is a time for bold actions that rely on HaShem and His oral Torah.