**Some Questions to Ponder:**

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

Two things caught my attention:

1. His Eminence’s translation and commentary on Tzefet 1:13-14 where he notes that a succah is being referenced rather than a Mishkan. The idea of the body being a succah is quite intrigueing.
2. Rashi’s comment on Vayikra 19:2 where he notes that most of the fundamental teachings of the Torah are contained in this parasha which is introduced with, “**Speak to the entire congregation of the children of Israel”.** This suggests that this parasha needs to be looked at a lot closer than I have previously.
3. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:2?

**Speak to the entire congregation of the children of Israel** – What do we learn from this wording?

**You shall be holy** – How are we to become holy?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:3?

**Every man shall fear his mother and father** – What does this mean?

**[Every man] shall fear his mother and his father** – What do we learn from the order of the mother and father?

**and you shall observe My Sabbaths** - Why are these passages juxtaposed?

**I am the Lord, your God** – What does “your” mean?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:5

**When you slaughter...** – What do we learn from this passage?

**you shall slaughter it for your acceptance** – What do we learn from this phrasing?

**for your acceptance** – What do we learn from this passage?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:9

**You shall not fully reap the corner of your field** – What does this phrasing mean?

**gleanings of your harvest** – What does לֶקֶט (leket) refer to?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:10?

**And you shall not glean** – What does this word, לא תְעוֹלֵל, refer to?

**the [fallen] individual grapes** - What does this word, וּפֶרֶט, refer to?

**I am the Lord, your God** – Why is “God” used in this passage? What is meant by “I am the Lord, your God?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:11?

**You shall not steal** – What items are meant in this passage?

**You shall not deny falsely** - Where do we find the admonition [against denying a rightful claim]?

**You shall not lie** - How is the phrase “swears falsely” compared to the word “lie”?

**You shall not steal. You shall not deny falsely. You shall not lie,... You shall not swear [falsely]**  - Why are these admonitions listed together?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:13?

**You shall not oppress** – What does this word, לא־תַעֲשֽׁק, refer to?

**shall not remain... overnight** - What does this word, לא־תָלִין, refer to?

**until morning** – What is this verse speaking about?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:14?

**You shall not curse a deaf person** – Who is included in this admonition?

**You shall not place a stumbling block before a blind person** - What is included in this admonition?

**and you shall fear your God** - Why is this mentioned here?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:15?

**You shall not commit no injustice in judgment** – What does this say of a Judge who judges in a corrupt fashion?

**You shall not favor a poor person** – What does this mean?

**or show respect to the great** - What does this mean?

**Judge your fellow with righteousness** – Does this only mean judge with righteousness, or can it also mean, in judgement see the litigant(s) in a favorable manor?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:16?

**You shall not go around as a gossipmonger** - What do these words, לא־תֵלֵךְ רָכִיל, refer to?

**I am the Lord** – What does this phrase mean?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:18?

**You shall neither take revenge** – What constitutes revenge?

**You shall love your neighbor as yourself** – What is the importance of this phrase? What is love and who is my neighbor?

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

**You shall observe My statutes** – What are these statutes?

**and a garment which has a mixture** - Why is this stated?

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of Asafph (our Psalmist)?

The Torah teaches that we ought not to lie, steal or deny falsely in v.11 (11. You shall not steal. You shall not deny falsely. You shall not lie, one man to his fellow.) and the Psalmist starts his Psalm by complaining about these liars who are plotting to steal from the Bne Israel in: 4. Against Your people they plot cunningly, and they take counsel against Your protected ones.

In addition, Rashi’s explanation of v6 where the agenda of the Aamalek is revealed. Amalek believes that everything belongs to him.

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the Prophet Yeshayahu this week?

The Torah’s statement in v.2 (2. Speak with the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, and say to them: You, will be holy, for I the LORD your God am Holy.) is the focus of Yeshayahu who speaks of the reward for this group of folks. (3. And it will come to pass that he who is left will return to Zion and who has performed the Law will be established in Jerusalem; he will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for eternal life will see the consolation of Jerusalem.)

1. How is the reading of Hakham Tsefet (2 Peter 1:12-15) related to the readings for this Shabbat?

Hakham Tsefet is reminding his readers to remember the truths of the Torah’s (Mashiach is the Living Torah) admonitions regarding the mitzvot and being holy.

TORAH SEDER: The Greek words skenomati and σκηνώματός skenomatos are paralleled by two Hebrew words. The first being Ohel used in the Torah Seder and Ashlamatah. The other word “Sukkah” is used by the Psalmist.

If the “Lights of Messiah” are placed in their natural order and we align Hakham Tsefet’s lights in that order Yesod is φιλαδελφίᾳ philadelphia (brotherly love) or love for our neighbour. Here we can see that the idea of loving ones neighbour as self would perfectly align itself with the “truths” that Hakham Tsefet’s audience was to have learned.

TEHILLIM: The Psalmist uses the Hebrew word Ohel for the “tents” of Edom... The Hebrew word “ohel” is a synonym of Sukkah. This is interesting because this week Rashi uses similar grammatical rules to derive Halacha. (see 19:5&6 where two separate rules are applied to the Torah to derive commentary and halacha.)

ASHLAMATAH: Hakham Tsefet uses σκηνώματι (skenomati) to describe his body as a temporary dwelling place for the soul. The Prophet uses the temporary shelter (Sukkah) as a refuge from heat, stem and rain. This language is reminiscent of Sukkot and a reference to the coming festival of Chanukah.

1. What is the chief purpose that Hakham Tsefet wants to address in 2 Peter 1:12-15?

He wants his audience to, “remember / be reminded of the truth about the ten lights/virtues of the Messiah”.

It is important to understand and teach concerning the Lights of Messiah. Our bodies are a temporary dwelling place used only as a means of conveyance to reveal the lights of Messiah to others which merits blessings in this world and in the world to come.

1. Explain how Hakham Tsefet derived all of his material in 2 Peter 1:8-11 from the Torah Seder for this Shabbat, Pslam 83, and Isaiah 4:3ff.?

12 ¶ Wherefore, I will not neglect always to remind you concerning these things *(the lights of the Messiah),* though, having known them, and having been established in this unveiled truth, -

(Vayikra 19:2 Speak with the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, and say to them: You, will be holy, for I the LORD your God am Holy.)

The Targum to Yeshayahu also picks up on the holiness issue: 3. And it will come to pass that he who is left will return to Zion and who has performed the Law will be established in Jerusalem; he will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for eternal life will see the consolation of Jerusalem.

13 But I deem it right, so long as I am in this Sukah *(tabernacle),* to stir you up by reminding *[you],*

(Vayikra 19:18. You shall neither take revenge from nor bear a grudge against the members of your people; **you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord**.)

The Targum to the Psalm also infers that we should care because we want HaShem to care: Psalm 83:2. God, do not become silent; do not be uncaring, and do not be quiet, O God.

14 Knowing that speedily is the putting off of my Sukah *(tabernacle),* as also our Master Yeshua *[the]* Messiah did show to me,

The Targum to Yeshayahu also looks forward to a permanent dwelling raher than a temporary succah: 4:3. And it will come to pass that he who is left will return to Zion and who has performed the Law will be established in Jerusalem; he will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for eternal life will see the consolation of Jerusalem.

15 And I will be diligent also at every time you have, after my outgoing, these things *(the lights of the Messiah)* to have in remembrance.

The Targum to Yeshayahu also contains this theme of rememberance: 5:1. The prophet said, I will sing now for Israel - which is like a vineyard, the seed of Abraham, My friend - My friend's song for his vineyard: My people. My beloved Israel, I gave them a heritage on a high hill in fertile land.

1. How are the readings for this Shabbat communicating that the people of G-d must be a separate people not imitating any of the traditions, laws and customs of the Gentiles?

The Torah’s command in: 19:2 Speak with the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, and say to them: You, will be holy, for I the LORD your God am Holy.

The Targum to Yeshayahu in: 4:3. And it will come to pass that he who is left will return to Zion and who has performed the Law will be established in Jerusalem; **he will be called holy**, everyone who has been recorded for eternal life will see the consolation of Jerusalem.

The Psalmist also speaks of “His people”, “His protected Ones”: Psalm 83:4 Against Your people they plot cunningly, and they take counsel against Your protected ones.

Hakham Tsefet picks up this issue in: 12 ¶ Wherefore, I will not neglect always to remind you concerning these things *(the lights of the Messiah),* though, having known them, and having been established in this unveiled truth, -

Scripture show us that HaShem has provided special treasures for His people, and because we stray, our enemies try to steal them. We need to be vigilant of our behaviour to keep the treasures and blessings reserved for us only.

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

Be holy and walk in His light, his mitzvot.

Re-double efforts to be removed away from, and to remove from our midst, that which is not proper in the eyes of Heaven.

Life is short. What we have made of ourselves and what we leave behind is what counts.

Dr. Eliyahu ben Avraham: Before the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab, passed away, he told his chasidim: "I am going to Heaven but I leave my writings with you. Through my writings, you can take me into your homes and into your shuls, and we will be together."

HaShem has given us all we need to produce good fruits. Strive not be like the vineyard that produced bad fruit. Be holy, be separate.