**Some Questions to Ponder:**

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

Several things caught my attention:

1. Rashi’s description of the five “corners” of the beard, in our Torah portion. Four I might have expected, but, not five. I have been interested in the Torah’s view of hair for some time.

2. The Targum’s explanation of Yeshayahu (Isaiah) ‎65:22 as being ‘The Tree”, that is “The Tree of Life”. Thus when he says that the days of His people will be like the days of The Tree of Life, he is indicating eternal life by relating it to this particular tree – The Torah, The Mashiach.

3. The “Mount” in Tsefet as be Safed. This gives an almost kabbalistic tone to this portion.

1. How is Vayiqra 19:23 related to Vayiqra 20:27?

They both speak of forbidden things: Fruit of the first three years and divination and necromancy.

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:25?

**to increase its produce for you** – What produce is increased if we forgo produce for three years it seem like we are losing produce?

**I am the Lord** – What godly attribute is portrayed in this phrase?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:26?

**You shall not eat over the blood** – How is this verse expounded?

**You shall not act on the basis of omens** – What is an example of an omen?

**You shall not act on the basis of...lucky hours** – What does this denote?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:28

**[You shall not make] cuts [in your flesh] for a person [who died]** – Who practiced this?

**etch a tattoo** – What is the meaning of this?

**Etched** – What is the meaning of thisHebrew word, קַעְקַע?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:30

**And revere My Sanctuary** – How does one revere the Sanctuary?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:32?

**You shall rise before a venerable person** – What does this command refer to?

**and you shall respect the elderly -** What is meant by “respecting” [the elderly]?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 19:33?

**you shall not taunt him** – What does this refer to?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 20:2?

**And to the children of Israel, you shall say** – What are we to enumerate?

**shall surely be put to death** – Who is to put him to death?

**the people of the land** What does this Hebrew word: עַם הָאָרֶץ mean?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 20:3?

**And I will set my attention** – What does this Hebrew word: פָּנַי mean?

**[that] man**- Who is excluded by this command?

**because he gave of his offspring to Molech** - Are not this phrase here, and the phrase in the next verse, “when he gives of his offspring to Molech” superfluous?

**In order to defile My holy ones** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew word: מִקְדָּשִׁי?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 20:4?

**But if [the people of the land] ignore [that man**] – What is the meaning of thisHebrew double expression: הַעְלֵם יַעְלִימוּ ?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 20:5?

**and upon his family** – [In] what [way] did the family sin [that they are punished]?

**and I will cut him off** - Why is this stated?

**to stray after Molech** - What does this phrase include?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 20:23?

**and so I was disgusted with them** – What is denoted by “disgust”?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 20:25?

**And you shall distinguish between clean animals and unclean ones** – What does this command mean by “distinguish”?

**that I have distinguished for you to render unclean** – What does this phrase mean?

**And I have distinguished you from the peoples, to be Mine** – What does this phrase mean?

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

The Torah’s repeated us of the phrase: “I am HaShem”.

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 view of the fruit tree and the repeated use of the word “HaShem”.

1. How is the reading of Hakham Tsefet (2 Peter 1:16-21) related to the readings for this Shabbat?

TORAH SEDER: I believe that the verses 19:31-32 and 20:27 from the Torah Seder have especially inspired the writings of Hakham Tsefet this week.

TEHILLIM: Hakham Tsefet speaks of Yeshua haMashiach (the anointed) which matches verse 10 of the Psalm. The Psalm further discusses the “day” as does Hakham Tsefet. The sun is seen and Hakham Tsefet sees the “day Star” knowing that the sun is soon to follow. I believe that all of this is a play on the ritual of the morning Tamid as elaborated in Yoma 3

Psalm 84:2 also seems to fit our pericope especially given the fact that Torah Seder calls upon us to revere the House of G-d.

Likewise, the sons of Korach who repented accept the Torah of Moshe and Oral Torah as acceptable. V 11 possibly describes the tents of Korach the wicked.

THE ASHLAMATAH: Yeshayahu discusses those who will not hearken to the voice of G-d in verse Yeshayahu 66:4. Hakham Tsefet alludes to the idea that men will not listen to the voice of G-d. They would rather fabricate their own ideas than follow the things of Scripture and Oral Torah.

1. What is the chief purpose that Hakham Tsefet wants to address in 2 Peter 1:16-21?

The importance of a teacher and his chain of tradition.

1. Explain how Hakham Tsefet derived all of his material in 2 Peter 1:16-21 from the Torah Seder for this Shabbat, Psalm 84, and Isaiah 65:22ff.?

V.16 is derived from the Torah in 19:23-25 where human wisdom would not dictate that we wait three years before we enjoyed the fruits of our labor. V.65:22 of our Ashlamata gives a hint to this royal man by calling the tree “The Tree of Life”.

V17 + 18. Continues to look at The Tree of Life and reaches to v.65:24 to see the Bat Kol as an answer to prayer.

V.19 looks at v.66:1-2, of our Ashlamata, for support. These magnificent verses speak of the Shechina as a comparative brilliance to the morning star.

V.20-21 speaks against the private interpretation which can be understood from our Torah’s command to rise before a Torah scholar in v.32 – who instructs you. These same Torah scholars are repeating what they learned from their teachers and from the Ruach HaChodesh.

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?

Vayikra 19:31 speaks against following heathen practice, as does Vayikra 20:23.

The Psalmist tells us the fate of the wicked and of the glory of students of the Torah in v.7+8.

The Ashlamata in v.66:2 speaks of the pleasure HaShem has in those who adhere to His Word.

1. In your opinion and following the above question, would sending our children to public schools or homeschooling them with a wrong curriculum can be said to be as offering our children to Molech?

Yes! Sending them to Molech is equivalent of destroying their best chance to cleave to HaShem rather than the false gods of secular humanism.

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

Rise before your Torah teacher and seek their wisdom.