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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah****12210 Luckey Summit****San Antonio, TX 78252****United States of America****© 2023**[**https://www.betemunah.org/**](https://www.betemunah.org/)**E-Mail:** **gkilli@aol.com** | **Menorah 5** | **Esnoga Bet El****102 Broken Arrow Dr.****Paris TN 38242****United States of America****© 2016**[**https://torahfocus.com/**](https://torahfocus.com/)**E-Mail:** **waltoakley@charter.net** |

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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **First Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Iyar 8, 5783 – April 28/29, 2023** | **First Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:** [**https://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm**](https://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm)

**Roll of Honor:**

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

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

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

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His Excellency Adon Brad Gaskill and beloved wife Cynthia Gaskill

His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham

His Excellency Adon Ya’aqob ben David

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

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

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

**A Prayer for Israel**

Our Father in Heaven, Rock, and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel, the first manifestation of the approach of our redemption. Shield it with Your lovingkindness, envelop it in Your peace, and bestow Your light and truth upon its leaders, ministers, and advisors, and grace them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land, grant them deliverance, and adorn them in a mantle of victory. Ordain peace in the land and grant its inhabitants eternal happiness.

Lead them, swiftly and upright, to Your city Zion and to Jerusalem, the abode of Your Name, as is written in the Torah of Your servant Moses: “Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you. And the Lord your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it, and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers.” Draw our hearts together to revere and venerate Your name and to observe all the precepts of Your Torah, and send us quickly the Messiah son of David, agent of Your vindication, to redeem those who await Your deliverance.

**A Prayer for our Beloved Hakhamim**

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

**Shabbat: “Vayiten L’kha” - “And give you”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וְיִתֶּן-לְךָ** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Vayiten L’kha”** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 27:28-40 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 29:31-33 |
| **“And give you”** | Reader 2 – B’resheet 27:41-46 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 29:34-35 |
| **“Y te dé”**  | Reader 3 – B’resheet 28:1-9 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 30:1-4 |
| **B’resheet (Genesis) 27:28 – 29:30** | Reader 4 – B’resheet 28:10-15 |   |
| **Ashlamatah**: **Hosea 14:6-10 +** **Joel 1:1-3 + 2:12-13** | Reader 5 – B’resheet 28:16-22 | **Monday and Thursday Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – B’resheet 29:1-8 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 29:31-33 |
| **Tehillim (Psalms) 23:1-6 + 24:1-10** | Reader 7 – B’resheet 29:9-14 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 29:34-35 |
|   |     Maftir – B’resheet 29:15-30 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 30:1-4 |
| **N.C. Mk. 3:11-12** **+ 3:13-19b** **Luke 6:19** **+ 6:12-16** |  Hosea 14:6-10 + Joel 1:1-3 & 2:12-13  |   |

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* The Blessing of Isaac – Gen. 27:28 - 28:9
* Jacob’s Dream – Genesis 28:10-22
* Jacob & Laban – Genesis 29:1-30

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: B’resheet (Genesis)**‎**27:28 – 29:30**‎

| **Rashi’s Translation** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
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| 27:28. **And** may the Lord **give you** of the dew of the heavens and [of] the fatness of the earth and an abundance of corn and wine. | 28. **Therefore** the Word of the LORD **give you** of the good dews which descend from the heavens, and of the good fountains that spring up, and make the herbage of the earth to grow from beneath, and plenty of provision and wine. |
| 29. Nations shall serve you and kingdoms shall bow down to you; you shall be a master over your brothers, and your mother's sons shall bow down to you. Those who curse you shall be cursed, and those who bless you shall be blessed." | 29. Let peoples be subject to you, all the sons of Esau, and kingdoms bend before you, all the sons of Keturah; a chief and a ruler be you over your brethren, and let the sons of your mother salute you. Let them who curse you, my son, be accursed as Bileam bar Beor; and them who bless you be blessed as Mosheh the prophet, the scribe of Israel.JERUSALEM: Let peoples serve before you, all the sons of Esau: all kings be subject to you, all the sons of Ishmael: be you a chief and a ruler over the sons of Keturah: all the sons of Laban the brother of your mother will come before you and salute you. Who soever curses you, Ya’aqob, my son, will be accursed as Bileam ben Beor; and whosoever blesses you will be blessed as Mosheh the prophet and scribe of Israel. |
| 30. And it came to pass, when Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and it came to pass Jacob had just left his father Isaac's presence, that his brother Esau came from his hunt. | 30. And it was when Yitschaq had finished blessing Ya’aqob, and Ya’aqob had only gone out about two handbreadths from Yitschaq his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. |
| 31. And he too had made tasty foods, and he brought [them] to his father, and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of the game of his son, so that your soul will bless me." | 31. And the Word of the LORD had impeded him from taking clean venison; but he had found a certain dog, and killed him, and made food of him, and brought to his father, and said to his father, Arise, my father, and eat of my venison, that your soul may bless me. |
| 32. And his father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." | 32. And Yitschaq his father said to him, Who are you? And he said, I am your firstborn, Esau. |
| 33. And Isaac shuddered a great shudder, and he said, "Who then is the one who hunted game and brought it to me, and I ate of everything while you had not yet come, and I blessed him? He, too, shall be blessed." | 33. And Yitschaq was moved with great agitation when he heard the voice of Esau, and the smell of his food rose in his nostrils as the smell of the burning of Gehinnom; and he said, Who is he who has got venison, and come to me, and I have eaten of all which he brought me before you came, and I have blessed him, and he will, too, be blessed? |
| 34. When Esau heard his father's words, he cried out a great and bitter cry, and he said to his father, "Bless me too, O my father!" | 34. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a cry exceeding great and bitter, and said to his father, Bless me, me also, my father! And he said, |
| 35. And he said, "Your brother came with cunning and took your blessing." | 35. Your brother has come with subtlety, and has received from me your blessing. |
| 36. And he said, "Is it for this reason that he was named Jacob? For he has deceived me twice; he took my birthright, and behold, now he has taken my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" | 36. And he said, His name is truly called Ya’aqob; for he has dealt treacherously with me these two times: my birthright he took, and, behold, now he has received my blessing! And he said, Have you not reserved a blessing for me? |
| 37. And Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Behold, I made him a master over you, and I gave him all his brothers as servants, and I have sustained him with corn and wine; so for you then, what shall I do, my son?" | 37. And Yitschaq answered and said to Esau, Behold, I have appointed him a ruler over you, and all his brethren have I made to be his servants, and with provision and wine have I sustained him: and now go, leave me; for what can I do for you, my son? |
| 38. **And Esau said to his father, "Have you [but] one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father."** And Esau raised his voice and wept. | 38. **And Esau answered his father, Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, me also, my father.** And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. |
| 39. And his father Isaac answered and said to him, "Behold, your dwelling place shall be the fat places of the earth and of the dew of the heaven from above. | 39. And Yitschaq answered and said to Esau, Behold, among the good fruits of the earth will be your habitation, and with the dews of the heavens from above. |
| 40. And you shall live by your sword, and you shall serve your brother, and it will be, when you grieve, that you will break his yoke off your neck." | 40. And upon your sword will you depend, entering at every place: yet you will be supple and credulous, and be in subjection to your brother; but it will be that when his sons become evil, and fall from keeping the commandments of the Law, you will break his yoke of servitude from off your neck.JERUSALEM: And by your weapons you will live, and before your brother be subject. And it will be when the sons of Ya’aqob labour in the Law, and keep the commandments, they will set the yoke of subjection on your neck; but when the sons of Ya’aqob withdraw themselves and study not the Law, nor keep the commandments, behold, then will you break their yoke of subjection from off your neck. |
| 41. And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing that his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, "Let the days of mourning for my father draw near, I will then kill my brother Jacob." | 41. And Esau kept hatred in his heart against Ya’aqob his brother, on account of the order of blessing with which his father had blessed him. And Esau said in his heart, I will not do as Kayin did, who slew Chebel in the life (time) of his father, for which his father begat Shet, but will wait till the time when the days of mourning for the death of my father come, and then will I kill Ya’aqob my brother, and will be found the killer and the heir. |
| 42. And Rebecca was told of the words of Esau, her elder son, and she sent and called Jacob, her younger son, and she said to him, "Behold, your brother Esau regrets [his relationship] to you [and wishes] to kill you. | 42. And the words of Esau her elder son, who thought in his heart to kill Ya’aqob, were shown by the Holy Spirit to Rivqah, and she sent, and called Ya’aqob her younger son, and said to him, Behold, Esau your brother lies in wait for you, and plots against you to kill you. |
| 43. And now, my son, hearken to my voice, and arise, flee to my brother Laban, to Haran. | 43. And now, my son, hearken to me: arise, escape for your life, and go unto Laban my brother, at Haran, |
| 44. And you shall dwell with him for a few days until your brother's wrath has subsided. | 44. and dwell with him a few days, until the wrath of your brother be abated, |
| 45. Until your brother's rage subsides from you, and he forgets what you did to him, and I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereft of both of you on one day?" | 45. until your brother's anger have quieted from you, and he have forgotten what you have done to him; and I will send and take you from thence. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day: you being slain, and he driven forth, as Hava was bereaved of Habel, whom Kain slew, and both were removed from before Adam and Hava all the days of the life of Adam and Hava?JERUSALEM: Until the time when the bitterness of your brother will be turned away from you. |
| 46. And Rebecca said to Isaac, "I am disgusted with my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth like these, from the daughters of the land, of what use is life to me?" | 46. And Rivqah said to Yitschaq, I am afflicted in my life on account of the indignity of the daughters of Heth. If Ya’aqob take a wicked wife from the daughters of Heth, such as these of the daughters of the people of the land, what will life be to me? |
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| 28:1. And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and he commanded him and said to him, "You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. | 1. And Yitschaq called Ya’aqob, and blessed him, and commanded him, and said to him, You will not take a wife from the daughters of the Kena’an |
| 2. Arise, go to Padan aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take yourself from there a wife of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. | 2. Arise, go to Padan of Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take you from thence a wife from the daughters of Laban mother's brother. |
| 3. And may the Almighty God bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and you shall become an assembly of peoples. | 3. And El Shadai will bless you with many possessions, and increase you and multiply you into twelve tribes, and you will be worthy of the congregation of the sons of the Sanhedrin, the sum of which is seventy, according to the number of the [Gentile] nations. |
| 4. And may He give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your seed with you, that you may inherit the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham." | 4. And He will give the blessing of Abraham to you, and to your sons with you, and cause you to inherit the land of your sojourning, which he gave unto Abraham. |
| 5. And Isaac sent Jacob, and he went to Padan aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebecca, the mother of Jacob and Esau. | 5. And Yitschaq sent Ya’aqob away, and he went to Padan Aram unto Laban bar Bethuel the Aramaite, the brother of Rivekah the mother of Jakob and Esau. |
| 6. And Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan aram, to take himself a wife from there, and that when he blessed him, he commanded him, saying, "You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan." | 6. And Esau considered that Yitschaq had blessed Ya’aqob, and had sent him to Padan Aram to take to him from thence a wife, when he blessed him, and commanded him, saying, You will not take a wife of the daughters of the Kenaanites; |
| 7. And Jacob listened to his father and his mother, and he went to Padan aram. | 7. and that Ya’aqob obeyed the word of his father, and the word of his mother, and was gone to Padan Aram: |
| 8. And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing to his father Isaac. | 8. and Esau considered that the daughters of Kenaan were evil before Yitschaq his father, |
| 9. So Esau went to Ishmael, and he took Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, the sister of Nebaioth, in addition to his other wives as a wife. | 9. and Esau went unto Ishmael, and took to wife Mahalath, who is Besemath the daughter of Ishmael bar Abraham, the sister of Nebaioth from his mother, besides his other wives. |
| 10. **And Jacob left** Beer sheba, and he went to Haran. | 10. **Five miracles were wrought for our father Ya’aqob at the time that he went forth from Beersheba. The first sign: the hours of the day were shortened, and the sun went down before his time, forasmuch as the Word had desired to speak with him. The second sign: the four stones which Ya’aqob had set for his pillow he found in the morning, had become one stone. Sign the third: the Stone which, when all the flocks were assembled, they rolled from the mouth of the well, he rolled away with one of his arms. The fourth sign: the well overflowed, and the water rose to the edge of it, and continued to overflow all the days that he was in Haran. The fifth sign: the country was shortened before him, so that in one day he went forth and came to Haran.****JERUSALEM:**Five signs were wrought for our father Ya’aqob at the time he went forth from Beersheba to go unto Haran. The **first sign**: the hours of the day were shortened for him, and the sun was hidden from him before its time, because His Word had desired to speak with him. The **second sign**: after our father Ya’aqob had lifted up his feet from Beersheba, the country was shortened before him, and he found himself sitting in Haran. The **third sign**: the stones which Ya’aqob our father had taken in the evening, and set as the resting-place of his head, when he had risen in the morning he found had all become one stone; and that is the stone which he set up in the first covenant, pouring oil upon the top of it. The **fourth sign**: when all the shepherds had gathered together at the stone to roll it from the mouth of the well, and could not, then came our father Ya’aqob and lifted it with one hand, and watered the flock, of Laban his mother's brother. The **fifth sign**: after our father Ya’aqob had lifted the stone from the mouth of the well, the well overflowed, and was overflowing twenty years; all the days that our father Ya’aqob dwelt in Haran. These five signs were wrought for our father Ya’aqob in the time when he departed from Beersheba to go to Charan. |
| 11. And he arrived at the place and lodged there because the sun had set, and he took some of the stones of the place and placed [them] at his head, and he lay down in that place. | 11. And he prayed in the place of the house of the sanctuary, and lodged there, because the sun had gone down. And he took four stones of the holy place, and set his pillow, and slept in that place. |
| 12. And he dreamed, and behold! a ladder set up on the ground and its top reached to heaven; and behold, angels of God were ascending and descending upon it. | 12. And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder was fixed in the ground, and the top of it reached to the height of heaven. And, behold, the two angels who went unto Sedom, and who had been expelled from the midst of them, because they had revealed the secrets of the LORD of the world; and being cast forth they had walked till the time that Ya’aqob went out from the house of his father, and had accompanied him with kindliness unto Bethel, in that day had ascended to the high heavens, and said, **Come, see Ya’aqob the pious, whose likeness is inlaid in the throne of glory, and whom you have so greatly desired to behold**. Then the rest of the angels of the holy LORD descended to look upon him.**JERUSALEM: And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder was fixed in the earth, and the summit of it reached to the height of heaven. And, behold, the angels who had accompanied him from the house of his father, ascended to make known to the angels on high, saying, Come, see Ya’aqob the pious, whose likeness is in the throne of glory, and whom you have been desirous to see! And, behold, the holy angels from before the LORD ascended and descended, and looked upon him.** |
| 13. And behold, the Lord was standing over him, and He said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac; the land upon which you are lying to you I will give it and to your seed. | 13. And, behold, the Glory of the LORD stood above him, and He said to him, I am the LORD the GOD of Abraham your father, and the GOD of Yitschaq, The land on which you are lying I will give to you and to your sons. |
| 14. And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall gain strength westward and eastward and northward and southward; **and through you shall be blessed all the families of the earth and through your seed**. | 14. And your sons will be many as the dust of the earth, and will become strong on the west and on the east, on the north and on the south: and **all the kindred of the earth will through your righteousness / generosity and the righteousness / generosity of your sons be blessed**. |
| 15. And behold, I am with you, and I will guard you wherever you go, and I will restore you to this land, for I will not forsake you until I have done what I have spoken concerning you." | 15. And, behold, My Word is for your help, and will keep you in every place where you will go, and will bring you (again) to this land; for I will not leave you until the time when I have performed all that I have told you. |
| 16. And Jacob awakened from his sleep, and he said, **"Indeed, the Lord is in this place, and I did not know [it]."** | 16. And Ya’aqob awoke from his sleep, and said, **Verily the Glory of the LORD's Shekinah dwells in this place, and I knew it not.** |
| 17. And he was frightened, and he said, **"How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."** | 17. And he was afraid, and said, **How dreadful and glorious is this place! This place is not common, but the sanctuary of the Name of the LORD, the proper spot for prayer, set forth before the gate of heaven and founded beneath the throne of glory.** |
| 18. And Jacob arose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had placed at his head, and he set it up as a monument, and he poured oil on top of it. | 18. And Ya’aqob arose in the morning, and took the stone which he had placed for his pillow, and set it standing, and poured oil on the top of it. |
| 19. **And he named the place Beth El, but Luz was orignally the name of the city.** | 19. **And he called the name of that place Beth El; but Luz was the name of the city at the first.** |
| 20. And Jacob uttered a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and He will guard me on this way, upon which I am going, and He will give me bread to eat and a garment to wear; | 20. And Ya’aqob vowed a vow, saying, If the Word of the LORD will be my Helper, and will keep me from shedding innocent blood, and from strange worship, and from impure converse, in this way that I am going; and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to wear, |
| 21. And if I return in peace to my father's house, and the Lord will be my God; | 21. and will bring me back in peace to my father's house; the LORD will be my GOD: |
| 22. Then this stone, which I have placed as a monument, shall be a house of God, **and everything that You give me, I will surely tithe to You.** | 22. and this stone which I have set (for) a pillar will be ordained for the house of the sanctuary of the LORD, and upon it will generations worship the Name of the LORD; **and of all that You may give me, the tenth will I separate before You.** |
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| 29:1. Now Jacob lifted his feet and went to the land of the people of the East. | 1. And Ya’aqob lifted up his feet lightly to proceed, and he came to the land of the children of the cast. |
| 2. And he looked, and behold! a well in the field, and behold! three flocks of sheep lying beside it, because from that well they would water the flocks, and a huge rock was upon the mouth of the well. | 2. And he looked and saw, and behold (there was) a well in a field, and behold there three flocks of sheep lying near it; because from that well they watered the flocks; and a great stone was laid upon the mouth of the well. |
| 3. And all the flocks would gather there, and they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and [then] they would return the rock onto the mouth of the well, to its place. | 3. And they gathered the flocks there, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and set the stone on the mouth of the well in its place. |
| 4. And Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." | 4. And Ya’aqob said to them, My brethren, from where are you? And they said, From Haran are we. |
| 5. And he said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know [him]." | 5. And he said to them, Do you know Laban bar Nachor? And they said, We know. |
| 6. And he said to them, "[Are things going] well with him?" And they said, "[Things are going] well, and behold, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep." | 6. And he said, Has he peace? And they said, Peace; and, behold, Rachel his daughter comes with the sheep. |
| 7. And he said, "The day is yet long; it is not the time to take in the livestock. Water the sheep and go, pasture." | 7. And he said, Behold, the time of the day is great; it is not time to gather home the cattle; water the sheep, and let them go (again) to pasture.JERUSALEM: It is not time to gather? |
| 8. And they said, "We cannot [do that], until all the flocks are gathered together, and they will roll the rock off the mouth of the well, and we shall [then] water the sheep." | 8. And they said, We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and we roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep. |
| 9. While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. | 9. While they were speaking with him, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she was a shepherdess at that time, because there had been a plague from the LORD among the sheep of Laban, and but few of them were left, and he had dismissed his shepherds, and had put the remaining (flock) before Rachel his daughter. |
| 10. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, that Jacob drew near and rolled the rock off the mouth of the well, and he watered the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother. | 10. And it was when Ya’aqob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother that Ya’aqob went near, and rolled the stone with one of his arms from the mouth of the Well; and the well rose up, and the waters ascended to the top of it; and he watered the sheep of Laban his mother's brother; and it uprose for twenty years. |
| 11. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and he raised his voice and wept. | 11. And Ya’aqob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. |
| 12. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman and that he was Rebecca's son, and she ran and told her father. | 12. And Ya’aqob told unto Rachel, that he was come to be with her father to take one of his daughters. And Rachel answered him You cannot dwell with him, for he is a man of cunning. And Ya’aqob said to her, I am more cunning and wiser than he; nor can he do me evil, because the Word of the LORD is my Helper. And when she knew that he was the son of Rivqah, she ran and made it known to her father. |
| 13. Now it came to pass when Laban heard the report of Jacob, his sister's son, that he ran towards him, and he embraced him, and he kissed him, and he brought him into his house. He told Laban all these happenings. | 13. And it was when Laban heard the account of the strength and piety of Ya’aqob the son of his sister; how he had taken the birthright and the order of blessing from the hand of his brother, and how the LORD had revealed Himself to him at Bethel; how the stone had been removed, and how the well had up-flowed and risen to the brink; he ran to meet him and embrace him, and kissed him and led him into his house; and he related to Laban all these things. |
| 14. And Laban said to him, "Indeed, you are my bone and my flesh." And so he stayed with him a full month. | 14. And Laban said to him, Truly you are my near one and my blood; and he dwelt with him a month of days. |
| 15. And Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you work for me gratis? Tell me what your wages shall be." | 15. And Laban said to Ya’aqob, Though you are reputed my brother, should you serve me for nothing? Tell me, what will be your wages? |
| 16. Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. | 16. And Laban had two daughters, the name of the elder Leah, and the name of the younger Rachel. |
| 17. Leah's eyes were tender, but Rachel had beautiful features and a beautiful complexion. | 17. **And the eyes of Leah were moist, (or dropping, running,) from weeping and praying before the LORD that He would not destine her for Esau the wicked**; and Rachel was beautiful in appearance, and of a fair countenance.**JERUSALEM: And the eyes of Leah were tender, for she had wept and prayed that she might not be brought up in the lot of Esau;** and Rachel was beautiful in appearance, and of fair countenance. |
| 18. And Jacob loved Rachel, and he said, "I will work for you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter." | 18. And Ya’aqob loved Rachel; and he said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter. |
| 19. And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than I should give her to another man. Stay with me." | 19. And Laban said with deceit, It is better that I give her to you, than to another man abide with me. |
| 20. So Jacob worked for Rachel seven years, but they appeared to him like a few days because of his love for her. | 20. And Ya’aqob served for Rachel seven years; and they seemed in his eyes as a few days, because he loved her. |
| 21. And Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are completed, that I may come to her." | 21. And Ya’aqob said to Laban, Give me my wife: for the days of my service are completed, and I will go in with her. |
| 22. So Laban gathered all the people of the place, and he made a feast. | 22. And Laban gathered all the men of the place, and made them a feast. Answering he said to them, Behold, **seven years since Ya’aqob came to us the wells have not failed and the watered places are multiplied**: and now come, let us counsel against him cunning counsel, that he may remain with us. And they gave him cunning counsel that he should take Leah to him instead of Rachel.JERUSALEM: And Laban gathered all the people of the place, and made a feast. And Laban answered and said to them, **Behold seven years are from the coming of this just man to us; our waterings have not failed, and our springs are many:** and now come, give me counsel how we may settle (or subject) him among us yet seven years. And they gave him cunning counsel to take Leah to him instead of Rachel. |
| 23. And it came to pass in the evening that Laban took his daughter Leah, and he brought her to him, and he came to her. | 23. And it was in the evening that he brought Leah his daughter, and introduced her to him, and he went in with her.JERUSALEM: And it was in the evening that he brought Leah his daughter, and introduced her to him, and he went in with her. |
| 24. And Laban gave Zilpah his maidservant to his daughter Leah as a maidservant. | 24. And Laban gave to him Zilpha his daughter, whom his concubine had borne to him, and he delivered her to Leah his daughter to be her handmaid. |
| 25. And it came to pass in the morning, and behold she was Leah! So he said to Laban, "What is this that you have done to me? Did I not work with you for Rachel? Why have you deceived me?" | 25. And it was the time of the morning and he saw her, and behold, she was Leah, whom all the night he had thought to be Rachel; because Rachel had delivered to her all the things with which Ya’aqob had presented her. But when he saw this, he said to Laban, what is this that you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served with you? Why have you deceived me? |
| 26. And Laban said, "It is not done so in our place to give the younger one before the firstborn. | 26. And Laban said, It is not so done in our place, to give the younger before the elder. |
| 27. Complete the [wedding] week of this one, and we will give you this one too, for the work that you will render me for another seven years." | 27. Fulfil now the seven days of the feast of this, and I will give you also that for the service which you will serve with me yet seven other years.JERUSALEM: Fulfil the seven days of this feast of Leah, and I will give ... |
| 28. And Jacob did so, and he completed the week of this one, and he gave his daughter Rachel to him as a wife. | 28. And Ya’aqob did so, and fulfilled the seven days of the feast of Leah, and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife. |
| 29. And Laban gave his daughter Rachel his maidservant Bilhah, for a maidservant. | 29. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah, whom his concubine bare him, and he delivered her unto her to be her handmaid. |
| 30. And he came also to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah; and he worked with him yet another seven years. | 30. And he went in also unto Rachel; and he loved Rachel also more than Leah. And he served with him for her yet seven other years. |

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

In order to understand the finished work of the P’shat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the P’shat is intended to produce a catechetical output, whereby a question/s is/are raised and an answer/a is/are given using the seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel and as well as the laws of Hebrew Grammar and Hebrew expression.

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

[cf. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=472&letter=R>]:

**1. Ḳal va-ḥomer:** "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.

**2. Gezerah shavah:** Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.

**3. Binyan ab mi-katub eḥad:** Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.

**4. Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim:** The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.

**5. Kelal u-Peraṭ and Peraṭ u-kelal:** Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.

**6. Ka-yoẓe bo mi-maḳom aḥer:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.

**7. Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.

**Welcome to the World of Remes Exegesis**

Thirteen rules compiled by Rabbi Ishmael b. Elisha for the elucidation of the Torah and for making halakic deductions from it. They are, strictly speaking, mere amplifications of the seven Rules of Hillel, and are collected in the Baraita of R. Ishmael, forming the introduction to the Sifra and reading as follow:

**1. Ḳal wa-ḥomer**: Identical with the first rule of Hillel.

**2. Gezerah shawah**: Identical with the second rule of Hillel.

**3. Binyan ab**: Rules deduced from a single passage of Scripture and rules deduced from two passages. This rule is a combination of the third and fourth rules of Hillel.

**4. Kelal u-Peraṭ**: The general and the particular.

**5. u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The particular and the general.

**6. Kelal u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The general, the particular, and the general.

7. The general which requires elucidation by the particular, and the particular which requires elucidation by the general.

8. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it for pedagogic purposes elucidates the general as well as the particular.

9. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of the special regulation which corresponds in concept to the general, is thus isolated to decrease rather than to increase the rigidity of its application.

10. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of some other special regulation which does not correspond in concept to the general, is thus isolated either to decrease or to increase the rigidity of its application.

11. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of a new and reversed decision can be referred to the general only in case the passage under consideration makes an explicit reference to it.

12. Deduction from the context.

13. When two Biblical passages contradict each other the contradiction in question must be solved by reference to a third passage.

Rules seven to eleven are formed by a subdivision of the fifth rule of Hillel; rule twelve corresponds to the seventh rule of Hillel, but is amplified in certain particulars; rule thirteen does not occur in Hillel, while, on the other hand, the sixth rule of Hillel is omitted by Ishmael. With regard to the rules and their application in general. These rules are found also on the morning prayers of any Jewish Orthodox Siddur.

**Reading Assignment:**

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| --- | --- |
| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez** By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by: Rabbi Aryeh KaplanPublished by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1988)**Vol. 2 – “The Patriarchs,” pp. 506-523** **Vol. 3a – “The Twelve Tribes” pp. 3 - 62** | **Ramban: Genesis Commentary on the Torah**Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc. (New York, 1971) **pp. 340 - 365** |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎** **B’resheet (Genesis) ‎‎‎‎‎27:28 – 28:9**

**28 And may the Lord give you**-May He give and repeatedly give (Gen. Rabbah 66:3). According to its simple meaning, it refers back to the previous topic: “Look, the fragrance of my son” which God has given him, “is like the fragrance of a field, etc.,” and furthermore, “May He give you of the dew of the heavens, etc.”

**of the dew of the heavens** [It is to be interpreted] according to its simple meaning, and there are Midrashic interpretations of many kinds. (Another explanation: What is the meaning of ?הָאֱלֽהִים [I.e., why is the Divine Name which signifies God’s attribute of Justice used here? To teach that He will treat you] with justice. If you deserve it, He will give to you, and if not, He will not give to you. But to Esau he said, “The fat places of the earth shall be your dwelling place.” Whether righteous or wicked, He will give to you. And from him [Isaac], Solomon learned; when he built the Temple, he arranged his prayer, [saying that] an Israelite, who has faith and justifies the Divine decree upon himself, will not complain about You; therefore (I Kings 8:39): “and give to every man [Israelite] according to his ways,” for You know what is in his heart. But a gentile lacks faith; therefore [Solomon] said (ibid. verse 43): “You shall hear in heaven, etc., and do according to all that the stranger calls upon You for,” i.e., whether he is deserving or undeserving, give to him, so that he should not complain about You. [This is found] in an old and correct edition of Rashi.) [From Tanchuma Buber, Toledoth 14]

**29 your mother’s sons**But Jacob said to Judah, “your father’s sons” because he [Jacob] had sons from many mothers, but here, since he [Isaac] had married only one wife, he said, “your mother’s sons” (Gen. Rabbah 66:4).

**Those who curse you shall be cursed, and those who bless you shall be blessed**But concerning Balaam, Scripture says (Num. 24:9): “Those who bless you shall be blessed, and those who curse you shall be cursed” (Gen. Rabbah ibid.). [The reason for this is that, for] the righteous—their beginning is suffering and their end is tranquillity; and thus, those who curse them and cause them pain precede those who bless them. Isaac therefore mentioned the curse of those who curse before the blessing of those who bless. As for the wicked, however, their beginning is tranquility, and their end is suffering; Balaam, therefore, mentioned the blessing before the curse. [From Gen. Rabbah 66:4]

**30 had just left** Heb. יָצֽא יָצָא , [lit., going out, had gone out.] This one was leaving, and that one was coming in. [From Gen. Rabbah 66:5]

**33 And Isaac shuddered** [ וַיֶּחֱרָד is to be explained] as the Targum, וּתְוָה , an expression of bewilderment. According to the Midrash, however, he [actually shuddered because] he saw Gehinnom open beneath him. [From Tanchuma, Vezoth Haberachah 1]

**Who then** [the word] אֵפוֹא is an expression by itself, which has many usages. Another explanation: אֵפוֹא is a combination of אַיּה [where] and פּֽה [here], [so that מִי אֵפוֹא means]: Who is he and where is he, who hunted game?

**and I ate of everything**Any flavors I wished to taste, I tasted in it (Gen. Rabbah 67:2).

**He, too, shall be blessed** That you should not say that had Jacob not deceived his father, he would not have received the blessings. Therefore, he concurred and blessed him intentionally (Gen. Rabbah 67:2).

**35 with cunning** with cleverness. [From Targumim]

**36 And he said, “Is it for this reason that he was named Jacob** - הֲכִי is an expression denoting the interrogative, as in (below 29:15): “Is it because (הֲכִי) you are my kinsman…?” Was he named Jacob (יַעֲקֽב) because of the future, because he was destined to deceive me (לְעָקְבֵנִי) ? Midrash Tanchuma (Buber, Toledoth 23) [asks]: Why did Isaac shudder? He said, “Perhaps I am guilty of an iniquity, for I have blessed the younger son before the older one, and thus altered the order of the relationship.” [Thereupon], Esau started crying, “He has already deceived me twice!” His father said to him, “What did he do to you?” He replied, “He took my birthright.” He [Isaac] said, “That is why I was troubled and shuddered, for [I was afraid that] perhaps I [had] transgressed the line of strict justice, [but] now [that I know that] I actually blessed the firstborn, ‘he too shall be blessed’.”

**for he has deceived me** Heb. וַיַעְקְבֵנִי . [To be explained] according to the Targum וּכַמַנִי [meaning]: and he lay in wait for me. [The word] וְאָרַב [(Deut. 19:11): “and he lies in wait,”] is translated by the Targum asוּכְמַן Others read in the Targum [not וּכַמַנִי , but] וְחַכְּמַנִי [meaning]: he outwitted me.

**reserved** [ אָצַלְתּ ] an expression of separation, as in וַיָּאצֶל (“and he separated”) (Num. 11:25). (Other editions read: וַיַַּצֵּל (below 31:9). [From Targum Onkelos]

**37 Behold...a master** This is the seventh blessing [given to Jacob] and yet he puts it first? Rather, he said to him, “What use will a blessing be to you? If you acquire property, it will be his, for I have made him a master over you, and whatever a slave acquires, belongs to his master.” [From Gen. 67:5]

**so for you then, what shall I do** Where will I seek for something to do for you?

**38 Have you [but] one blessing** The “hey” [in הַבֲרָכָה ] indicates an interrogative expression, as in (Num. 13:19): “are they in open cities (הַבְּמַחֲנַיִם) ?”; “is it fat (הַשְּׁמֵנָה) ?”; (II Sam. 3:33): “[Should Abner die] like the death of (הַכְּמוֹת) a wicked man?”

**39 Behold...the fat places of the earth** **This is the part of Italy belonging to Greece** (from Gen. Rabbah 67:6).

**40 And...by your sword** - וְעַל חַרְבְּךָ is the same as בְּחַרְבְּךָ [by your sword]. Sometimes עַל takes the place of the letter “beth,” as in (Ezek. 33:26); “You stood by your sword (עַל חַרְבְּכֶם) ,” [which is the same as]בְּחַרְבְּכֶם (Exod. 6:26); “by their hosts (עַל צִבְאוֹתָם) ” [is the same as] בְּצִבְאוֹתָם .

**and it will be, when you grieve** [ תָּרִיד ] is an expression of pain, as in (Ps. 55:3): “I will lament (אָרִיד) in my speech”; i.e., when the Israelites will transgress the Torah, and you will have cause to grieve about the blessings that he took, “you will break his yoke,” etc. [From Targum Onkelos]

**41 Let the days of mourning for my father draw near**As its apparent meaning, “that I should not grieve my father,” and there are various Midrashic explanations.

**42 And Rebecca was told of** She was told by Divine Inspiration what Esau was thinking in his heart. [From Gen. Rabbah 67:9]

**regrets [his relationship] to you** Heb. מִתְנַחֵם . He regrets the brotherly relationship, to consider other [than brotherly] thoughts, to behave towards you as a stranger and to kill you. The Midrash Aggadah (Gen. Rabbah 67:9), however, explains [it as an expression of consolation]: In his eyes, you are already dead, and he has drunk a cup of consolation [a cup of wine customarily drunk in the house of mourning] over you. But according to its simple meaning, it is an expression of consolation. By killing you he consoles himself about [losing] the blessings (Tanchuam Buber, Vayetzei 1).

**44 a few days** Heb. אֲחָדִים , few.

**45 Why should I be bereft** Heb. אֶשְׁכַּל . I will be bereft of both of you. [This teaches that] one who buries his children is called שָׁכוּל , bereft. And so, concerning Jacob, it is said (below 43:14): “As I am bereft (שָׁכֽלְתִּי) , I shall be bereft (שָׁכָלְתּי) .”

**of both of you** If he rises up against you and you kill him, his sons will rise up and kill you. And the Divine Spirit poured itself upon her and she prophesied that they would die on the same day, as is delineated in the chapter entitled הַמְּקַנֵּא לְאִשְׁתּוֹ (Sotah 13a).

**46 I am disgusted with my life** Heb. קַצְתִּי , I am disgusted with my life.

**Chapter 28**

**2 to Padan** Heb. פַּדֶּנָה like לְפַדָּן . [From Targum Onkelos]

**to the house of Bethuel** Heb. בֵּיתָה to the house of (לְבֵית) Bethuel [Targum Onkelos]. Any word that requires a “lamed” at the beginning may take a “hey” at the end instead. [From Yev. 13b]

**3. And...the Almighty God** Heb. שַׁדַּי . May He Who has enough (שֶׁדַָּי) blessings for those who are blessed from His mouth, bless you.

**4 the blessing of Abraham that He said to him** (above 12:2): “And I will make you into a great nation”; (above 22:18): “[And all the nations of the world] will bless themselves with your seed.” May those aforementioned blessings be for you. May that nation and that blessed seed emanate from you. [From Tanchuma, Vezoth Haberachah 1]

**5 the mother of Jacob and Esau** I do not know what this teaches us. [I. e., We already know from the narrative that Rebecca was their mother.]

**7 And Jacob listened**This is connected to the aforementioned topic: When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed [Jacob] and that he had sent him off to Padan-aram, and that Jacob listened to his father and went to Padan-aram, and that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing [to his father], then he, too, went to Ishmael.

**9 the sister of Nebaioth** Since it says, “the daughter of Ishmael,” do I not know that she was the sister of Nebaioth? But this teaches us that Ishmael died after he had betrothed her to Esau, before her marriage, and her brother Nebaioth gave her hand in marriage. This also teaches us that Jacob was sixty- three years old at that time, for Ishmael was seventy-four years old when Jacob was born. Ishmael was fourteen years older than Isaac, and Isaac was sixty years old when they were born, hence [Ishmael was] seventy-four. He lived one hundred and thirty seven years, as it is stated (above 25:17): “and these are the years of the life of Ishmael,” etc. Consequently, Jacob was sixty-three at Ishmael’s death. We learn from here that he hid for fourteen years in the house of Eber and afterwards went to Haran. [This can be deduced from the fact that] he stayed in Laban’s house before Joseph’s birth only fourteen years, as it is said (below 31:41): “I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your sheep,” and the payment for the sheep took place after Joseph was born, as it is said (below 30:25): “And it came to pass when Rachel had given birth to Joseph, etc.,” and Joseph was thirty years old when he became ruler, and from then until Jacob descended to Egypt were nine years: seven of plenty and two of famine. And Jacob said to Pharaoh (below 47:9): “The days of the years of my sojournings are one hundred and thirty years.” Go forth and figure 14 years before Joseph was born, plus the 30 years of Joseph’s age, plus the 9 years from the time he became ruler until Jacob came. The total is 53. And when he [Jacob] left his father, he was 63, totaling 116. Yet he said [to Pharaoh, “I am] one hundred and thirty years old.” Hence, there are fourteen years missing. Thus, you learn that after he had received the blessings, he hid in the house of Eber for fourteen years. [From Meg. 17:1] (However, he was not punished [for these fourteen years] because of the merit [of having studied] Torah, for Joseph was separated from his father only twenty-two years, i.e., from age seventeen until age thirty-nine, corresponding to the twenty-two years that Jacob was separated from his father [when] he did not honor him. These are the twenty years in Laban’s house, plus the two years that he spent traveling [home], as it is written (below 33:17): “And he built himself a house, and for his cattle he made booths.” Our Rabbis of Blessed Memory inferred from this verse that he spent eighteen months on the road, for the house was for the rainy season, and the booths were for the summer. And, according to the calculation of the verses, which we calculated above, from the time he left his father until he went down to Egypt, at the age of one hundred and thirty, we find an additional fourteen years, **therefore, it is certain that he hid in the house of Eber to learn Torah while on his way to the house of Laban.**And because of the merit of the Torah, he was not punished for them [those fourteen years], and Joseph was separated from him for only twenty-two years-measure for measure. The above is from an old Rashi text).

**to his other wives** He added wickedness upon his wickedness, for he did not divorce the first ones. [From Gen. Rabbah 67:13]

 **Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎** **B’resheet (Genesis) ‎‎‎‎‎‎28:10 – 29:30‎‎‎**

**10 And Jacob left**Because, it was due to the fact that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing in the eyes of his father Isaac, that Esau went to Ishmael, Scripture interrupted the account dealing with Jacob and it is written (above verse 6): “When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed [Jacob], etc.” And as soon as Scripture finished [the account of Esau’s marriage], it returned to the previous topic.

**And Jacob left**-Scripture had only to write: “And Jacob went to Haran.” Why did it mention his departure? **But this tells [us] that the departure of a righteous man from a place makes an impression, for while the righteous/generous man is in the city, he is its beauty, he is its splendor, he is its majesty. When he departs from there, its beauty has departed, its splendor has departed, its majesty has departed. And likewise (Ruth 1:7): “And she went forth from the place,” stated in reference to Naomi and Ruth.** -[From Gen. Rabbah 68:6]

**and he went to Haran** He left in order to go to Haran.-[From Gen. Rabbah 68:8,]

**11 And he arrived at the place** Scripture does not mention **which place**, but [it means] **the place** mentioned elsewhere, **which is Mount Moriah**, concerning which it is said (Gen. 22:4): “**And he saw the placefrom afar**.” [From Pes. 88a]

And he arrived Heb. וַיִפְגַע , as in (Josh. 16:7): “and it reached (וּפָגַע) Jericho”; (ibid. 19:11): “and it reached (וּפָגַע) Dabbesheth.” Our Rabbis (Gen. Rabbah 88:9, Ber. 26b) interpreted it [the word וַיִפְגַע ] as an expression of prayer, as in (Jer. 7:16): “And do not entreat (תִּפְגַּע) me,” **and this teaches us that he [Jacob] instituted the evening prayer.** [Scripture] did not write וַיִתְפַּלֵּל , [the usual expression for prayer], to teach that the earth sprang toward him [i.e. the mountain moved toward him], as is explained in the chapter entitled הַנָּשֶׁה גִיד (Chullin 91b).

**because the sun had set**Heb. כִּי בָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ [Scripture] should have written [in reverse order]: “And the sun set (וַיָּבֽא), and he stayed there overnight.” [The expression] כִּי בָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ implies **that the sun set suddenly for him, not at its usual time, so that he would have to stay there overnight.** [From Gen. Rabbah 68:10, Chullin 91b]

**and placed [them] at his head** He arranged them in the form of a drainpipe around his head because he feared the wild beasts. They [the stones] started quarreling with one another. One said, “Let the righteous/generous man lay his head on me,” and another one said, “Let him lay [his head] on me.” Immediately, the Holy One, blessed be He, made them into one stone. This is why it is stated (verse 18): “and he took the stone [in the singular] that he had placed at his head.” [From Chullin 91b]

**and he lay down in that place** [The word הַהוּא ] is a restrictive expression, meaning that [only] in that place did he lie down, **but during the fourteen years that he served in the house of Eber, he did not lie down at night, because he was engaged in Torah study.** [From Gen. Rabbah 68:11]

**12 ascending and descending** Ascending first and afterwards descending. **The angels who escorted him in the [Holy] Land do not go outside the Land, and they ascended to heaven, and the angels of outside the Holy Land descended to escort him.** [From Gen. Rabbah 68:12]

**13 And behold, the Lord was standing over him** to guard him.

**and the God of Isaac** Although we do not find in Scripture that the Holy One, blessed be He, associates His name with that of the righteous during their lifetimes by writing “the God of so-and-so,” for it is said (Job 15:15): “Lo! He does not believe in His holy ones,” **[i.e., God does not consider even His holy ones as righteous/generous until after their deaths, when they are no longer subject to the evil inclination,]** nevertheless, here He associated His name with Isaac because his eyes had become dim, and he was confined in the house, and he was like a dead person, the evil inclination having ceased from him (Tanchuma Toledoth 7).

**upon which you are lying** -(Chullin ad loc.) The Holy One, blessed be He, folded the entire Land of Israel under him. He hinted to him that it would be as easily conquered by his children (as four cubits, which represent the area a person takes up [when lying down]). [From Chullin 91b]

**14 and you shall gain strength** Heb. וּפָרַצְ תָּ , as in וְכֵן יִפְרֽץ , “and so did they gain strength” (Exod. 1:12). [after targumim]

**15 And behold, I am with you** [God promised Jacob this] because he was afraid of Esau and Laban.

**until I have done** - אִם is used in the sense of כִּי , [meaning that].

**I have spoken concerning you** Heb. לָךְ , for your benefit and concerning you. What I promised to Abraham concerning his seed, I promised in reference to you and not in reference to Esau, for I did not say to him, “for Isaac will be called your seed,” [which would signify that all of Isaac’s descendants would be regarded as Abraham’s] but “for in Isaac,” [meaning part of Isaac’s descendants] but not all [the descendants] of Isaac (Nedarim 31a). Likewise, wherever לִי , לוֹ , לָךְ and לָהֶם are used in conjunction with a form of the verb “speaking” (דִּבּוּר) they are used in the sense of “concerning.” This [verse] proves it, because heretofore, He had not spoken to Jacob.

**16 and I did not know [it]**For had I known, I would not have slept in such a holy place. [from Beresheet Rabbathi, attributed to Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan]

**17 than the house of God**Said Rabbi Eleazar in the name of Rabbi Jose ben Zimra: This ladder stood in Beer-sheba and the middle of its incline reached opposite the Temple, for Beer-sheba is situated in the south of Judah, and Jerusalem [is situated] in its north, on the boundary between Judah and Benjamin, and Beth-el was in the north of the territory of Benjamin, on the boundary between Benjamin and the sons of Joseph. Consequently, a ladder whose foot is in Beer-sheba and whose top is in Beth-el-the middle of its slant is opposite Jerusalem. This accords with what our Sages said, that the Holy One, blessed be He, said, “This righteous/generous man has come to My lodging place [i.e., the Temple Mount]. Shall he leave without lodging?” And furthermore, they said: Jacob called Jerusalem Beth-el. But this place [which he called Beth-el] was Luz, and not Jerusalem. So, from where did they learn to say this? [i.e., that Luz was Jerusalem.] I believe that Mount Moriah was uprooted from its place, and it came here, [to Luz, i.e., at that time, Luz, Jerusalem and Beth-el were all in the same place], and this is the “springing of the earth” mentioned in Tractate Chullin, i.e., that the [site of the] Temple came towards him until Beth-el. This is the meaning of ויפגע במקום “And he met the place.” Now if you ask, “When Jacob passed by the Temple, why did He not detain him there?” [The answer is:] If he did not put his mind to pray in the place where his forefathers had prayed, should they detain him from heaven? He went as far as Haran, as it is stated in the chapter entitled, “Gid HaNasheh” (Hullin 91b), and the text, “and he went to Haran” (verse 10) supports this. When he arrived in Haran, he said, “Is is possible that I have passed the place where my forefathers prayed, and I did not pray there?” He decided to return, and he went back as far as Beth-El, and the earth “sprang toward him.” [This Beth-El is not the one near Ai, but the one near Jerusalem, and because it was the city of God, he called it Beth-El, the house of God, and that is Mount Moriah where Abraham prayed, and that is the field where Isaac prayed, and so did they say in Sotah (sic.) (Pes.88a) [concerning the verse] (Micah 4:2): “Come, let us go up to the Mount of the Lord, to the House of God of Jacob.” [It is] not [called] as did Abraham, who called it a mountain, and not as did Isaac, who called it a field, but as did Jacob, who called it the House of God. An exact edition of Rashi.

**How awesome**The Targum renders: How awesome (דְְּחִילוּ) is this place! דְּחִילוּ is a noun, as in (Targum Exodus 31: 3): “understanding” סוּכְלָתָנוּ ; (below verse 20): “a garment (וּכְסוּ) to wear.”

**and this is the gate of heaven** A place of prayer, where their prayers ascend to heaven (Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 35). And its midrashic interpretation is that the Heavenly Temple is directed exactly towards the earthly Temple. [From Gen. Rabbah 69:7]

**20 If God will be with me** If He keeps these promises that he promised me to be with me, as He said to me, “And behold, I am with you.” [from Gen. Rabbah 70:4]

**and He will guard me** As He said to me, “and I will guard you wherever you go.”

**and He will give me bread to eat**As He said, “for I will not forsake you,” for if one must seek bread, he is called “forsaken,” as it is said, (Ps. 37:25): “and I have not seen a righteous/generous man forsaken and his seed seeking bread.” [from Gen. Rabbah 69:6]

**21 And if I return**As He said to me, “and I will restore you to this land.”

**in peace** Perfect from sin, that I will not learn from the ways of Laban.

**and the Lord will be my God** that His name will rest upon me from beginning to end, that no disqualification should be found among my seed, as it is written: “[I will do] that which I have spoken concerning you.” And this promise He promised to Abraham, as it is said (17:7): “to be a God to you and to your seed after you.” (“Your seed” [means that they should be] of pure lineage, that no disqualification should be found in him.) [from Sifrei Va-etchanan 31]

**22 Then this stone** Heb. וְהָאֶבֶן הַזּֽאת , lit., and this stone. This “vav” of וְהָאֶבֶן is to be explained as follows: If You will do these things for me, I too will do this: “And this stone, which I have placed as a monument, etc.” As the Targum paraphrases: “I will worship upon it before the Lord.” And so he did when he returned from Padan-aram, when He said to him, (35:1): “Arise, go up to Beth-el.” What is stated there? (ibid. verse 14): “And Jacob erected a monument, etc., and he poured a libation upon it.” [from Mishnath Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 14]

**Chapter 29**

**1 Now Jacob lifted his feet** As soon as he was given the good tidings that he was assured protection, his heart lifted his feet, and he became fleet-footed. So it is explained in Gen. Rabbah (70:8).

**2 they would water the flocks** The shepherds would water the flocks. The verse is elliptical.

**3 would gather there** They were accustomed to gather because the rock was huge.

**and they would roll** Heb. וְגָלְלוּ [like] וְגוֹלְלִין . The Targum renders: וּמְגַנְדְרִין , and they would roll. Every present tense [i.e. every verb expressing continuous action] changes to speak [sometimes] in the future tense and [sometimes] in the past tense, because everything that occurs constantly has already transpired and is destined to transpire [again].

**and [then] they would return** Heb. וְהֵשִׁיבוּ , which the Targum renders: וּמְתִיבִין , and they would return.

**6 is coming with the sheep** Heb. בָָּאָה . The accent is on the “aleph,” and the Targum renders אַתְיָא . [In verse 9,] “and Rachel came בָּאָה ,” the accent is on the first syllable, on the “beth,” and the Targum renders. The former is in the present tense, whereas the latter is in the past tense.

**7 The day is yet long** Since he saw them lying down, he thought that they wished to gather the livestock to return home and that they would no longer graze. So he said to them, “The day is yet long,” i.e., if you have been hired for the day, you have not completed the day’s work, and if the animals are yours, it is, nevertheless, not the time to take in the livestock, etc. (Gen. Rabbah 70:11).

**8 We cannot water [them]** because the stone is huge.

**and they will roll** Heb. וְגָלְלוּ . This is translated וִיגַנְדְרוּן , and they will roll, because it is the future tense.

**10 that Jacob drew near and rolled** **As one who removes the stopper from a bottle, to let you know that he possessed great strength** (Gen. Rabbah 70:12).

**11 and wept** Since he foresaw with the holy spirit that she (Rachel) would not enter the grave with him. Another explanation: Since he came empty- handed, he said, “Eliezer, my grandfather’s servant, had nose rings, and bracelets and sweet fruits in his possession, and I am coming with nothing in my hands. [He had nothing] because Eliphaz the son of Esau had pursued him to kill him at his father’s orders; he (Eliphaz) overtook him, but since he had grown up in Isaac’s lap, he held back his hand. He said to him (Jacob), “What shall I do about my father’s orders?” Jacob replied, “Take what I have, for a poor man is counted as dead.”-[from Bereishit Rabbathi by Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan]

**12 that he was her father’s kinsman** Heb. אֲחִי אָבִיהָ , lit., her father’s brother. Related to her father, as (above 13:8): “we are kinsmen (אַחִים) ” (Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 36). Its midrashic interpretation is: If he (Laban) comes to deceive me, I, too, am his brother in deception, and if he is an honest man, I, too, am the son of his honest sister Rebecca. [from Gen. Rabbah 70:13]

**and told her father** Since her mother was dead, she had no one to tell but him.[from Gen. Rabbah 70:13]

**13 that he ran towards him** He thought that he (Jacob) was laden with money, for the servant of the household (Eliezer) had come here with ten laden camels.[from Gen. Rabbah 70:13]

**and he embraced**When he (Laban) did not see anything with him (Jacob), he said, “Perhaps he has brought golden coins, and they are in his bosom.” [from Gen. Rabbah 70:13]

**and he kissed him**He said, “Perhaps he has brought pearls, and they are in his mouth.” [from Gen. Rabbah 70:13]

**He told Laban**that he had come only because he was compelled to do so because of his brother (Esau), and that they had taken his money from him.-[from Gen. Rabbah 70:13]

**14 Indeed, you are my bone and my flesh**-“In view of this, I have no reason to take you into the house, because you have nothing. Because of kinship, however, I will put up with you for a month’s time.” And so he did, but this too was not gratis, for he (Jacob) pastured his sheep.-[from Gen. Rabbah 70:14]

**15 Because you are my kinsman** Heb. הֲכִי , an interrogative expression: Because you are my kinsman, should you work for me gratis?-[from Targum Onkelos]

**should you work for me** Heb. וַעֲבַדְתַּנִי like וְתַעַבְדֵנִי , and likewise, any word that is in the past tense, [Scripture] prefixes to it a “vav,” which converts the word to the future tense.

**17 tender** **Because she expected to fall into Esau’s lot, and she wept, because everyone was saying, “Rebecca has two sons, and Laban has two daughters. The older [daughter] for the older [son], and the younger [daughter] for the younger [son]"** (B.B. 123a).

**features** Heb. תּֽאַר . That is the form of the countenance, an expression similar to (Isa. 44:13) “he fixes it (יְתָאֲרֵהוּ) with planes (בַשֶׂרֶד) ,” conpas in Old French, outline, shape.

**complexion** That is the shine of the countenance.

**18 I will work for you seven years** - (Gen. Rabbah 67:10, 70:17) **They are the few days of which his mother said, “And you shall dwell with him for a few days.”** (27:44 above) You should know that this is so, because it is written: “and they appeared to him like a few days.” (verse 20)

**for Rachel, your younger daughter** Why were all these signs necessary? Since he (Jacob) knew that he (Laban) was a deceiver, he said to him, “I will work for you for Rachel,” and lest you say [that I meant] another Rachel from the street, Scripture states: “Your daughter.” Now, lest you say, “I will change her name to Leah, and I will name her (Leah) Rachel,” Scripture states: “[your] younger [daughter].” Nevertheless, it did not avail him, for he (Laban) deceived him.-[from Gen. Rabbah 70:17]

**21 for my days are completed** [The days] of which my mother told me. Moreover, my days are completed, for I am already eighty-four years old. When will I raise up twelve tribes? This is what he [meant when he] said, “that I may come to her.” Now, isn’t it true that even the most degenerate person would not say this? But he (Jacob) meant [that he intended] to beget generations.-[from Gen. Rabbah 70:18]

**25 And it came to pass in the morning, and behold she was Leah** But at night, she was not Leah, because Jacob had given signs to Rachel, but when she saw that they were bringing Leah, she (Rachel) said, “Now, my sister will be put to shame. So she readily transmitted those signs to her.”-[from Meg. 13b]

**27 Complete the [wedding] week of this one** Heb. שְׁבֻעַ . This is the construct state, because it is vocalized with a chataf (a sheva), [and means] the week of this one, which are the seven days of feasting [celebrated by a newly wedded couple]. [This appears in the] Talmud Yerushalmi , Mo’ed Katan (1:7). It is impossible to say [that it means] really a week [in the absolute state and should be rendered: this week,] because, if so, the “shin” would have to be vowelized with a “patach,” (he means to say a “kamatz” שָׁבֻעַ ). Furthermore, שָׁבֻעַ is in the masculine gender, for it is written: (Deut. 16:9) ”You shall count seven weeks (שִׁבְעָה שָׁבֻעֽת) .” Therefore, it does not signify a week but seven [days], septaine in Old French.

**and we will give to you** [This is] a plural expression, similar to (above 11;3,7), “Let us descend and confuse”; “and let us fire them.” This, too, is an expression of giving.

**this one too** immediately after the seven days of feasting, and you will work after her marriage.-[from Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 36]

**30 yet another seven years** -(Gen. Rabbah 70:20) Scripture compares the other ones to the first ones. Just as [he worked for him during] the first ones faithfully, so [did he work for him during] the other ones faithfully, although he (Laban) had dealt with him deceitfully.

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 23:1 - 24:10**

| **JUDAICA PRESS TRANSLATION** | **TARGUM** |
| --- | --- |
| 23:1. A song of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I will not want.  | 1. A psalm of David. It is the LORD who fed His people in the wilderness; they did not lack anything. |
| 2. He causes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters. | 2. In a place of thirst He will settle me in pleasant grass; He led me to the waters of rest. |
| 3. He restores my soul; He leads me in paths of righteousness/generosity for His name's sake. | 3. He will restore my soul with manna; He led me in the paths of righteousness/generosity for the sake of His name. |
| 4. Even when I walk in the valley of darkness, I will fear no evil for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff-they comfort me. | 4. Indeed, when I go into exile by the plain of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Your Word is my help, Your straight staff and Your Torah, they will comfort me. |
| 5. You set a table before me in the presence of my adversaries; You anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows. | 5. You have set before me a high table of manna in front of my oppressors; You have fattened my body with stuffed fowl, and with anointing oil [You have fattened] the heads of my priests; my goblet is wide. |
| 6. May only goodness and kindness pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for length of days. | 6. Indeed grace and favour will follow me all the days of my life, while I sit in the sanctuary of the LORD for length of days. |

| **JUDAICA PRESS TRANSLATION** | **TARGUM** |
| --- | --- |
| 24:1. Of David, a song. The land and the fullness thereof are the LORD's; the world and those who dwell therein. | 1. Of David. A Psalm. Behold, the earth and its creatures are the LORD’s, the world and those who dwell in it. |
| 2. For He founded it upon seas and established it upon rivers. | 2. For He set a foundation on the seas and fixed it firmly on the rivers. |
| 3. **Who will ascend upon the Lord's mount and who will stand in His Holy place?** | 3. **Who will ascend the mount of the LORD’s sanctuary? And who will stand in His Holy place?** |
| 4. He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not taken My name in vain and has not sworn deceitfully. | 4. One with clean hands and a pure mind, who has not sworn to a lie to make himself guilty, and who has not made an oath in guile. |
| 5. He will receive a blessing from the LORD and charity from the God of his salvation. | 5. He will receive blessings from the presence of the LORD, and generosity from God his redemption. |
| 6. This is the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your presence - Jacob, forever. | 6. This is the generation that seeks Him, that looks for His countenance, O Jacob, forever! |
| 7. [You] gates, lift your heads and be uplifted, [you] everlasting portals, so that the King of Glory may enter. | 7. Lift up, O sanctuary gates, your heads; and stand erect, O eternal entrances, that the glorious king may enter. |
| 8. Who is this King of Glory? The LORD, Who is strong and mighty, the LORD Who is a mighty warrior. | 8. Who is this glorious king? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, a mighty ruler and one who wages battle. |
| 9. [You] gates, lift your heads and lift up, [you] everlasting portals, so that the King of Glory may enter. | 9. Lift up your heads, O gates of the Garden of Eden; and stand erect, O eternal entrances, and the glorious king will enter. |
| 10. Who is this King of Glory? The LORD of Hosts - He is the King of Glory forever. | 10. Who is this glorious king? The LORD Sabaoth, He is the glorious king forever. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Tehillim (Psalms) 23:1-6**

**1** **A song of David** The Rabbis said: Wherever it says: “A song of David,” he would play [his musical instrument] and afterwards the Shechinah would rest on him. It is a song to bring the holy spirit upon David. And, wherever it says: “Of David, a song,” the Shechinah rested on him [first] and then he recited a song.

**The Lord is my shepherd** In this desert where I am going, [therefore] I am confident that I will lack nothing.

**2** **in green pasture** In grassy pastures. Since he commences to compare his sustenance to the pasture of an animal by saying, “The Lord is my shepherd,” “green pastures” is appropriate for the expression, “the Lord is my shepherd.” David recited this psalm in the forest of Hereth (I Sam. 22:5). Why was it called Hereth? Because it was as dry as a potsherd and the Holy One, blessed be He, moistened it with the good of the world to come (Mid. Ps. 23:6).

**3** **He restores my soul** My spirit, which has been weakened by troubles and haste, He will restore to its previous status.

**in paths of righteousness** In straight paths, so that I should not fall into the hands of my enemies.

**4** **in the valley of darkness** Heb. צַלְמָוֶת, in a land of darkness. He alludes to the desert of Ziph (I Sam. 23:13 28). Every [mention of] צַלְמָוֶת is an expression of darkness. Dunash ben Labrat defined it [in this manner].

**Your rod and Your staff** The pains that came upon me, and the support, that I rely upon Your loving kindness both of them will comfort me, for they will serve to expiate my iniquity/Lawlessness, and I am confident that You will set a table before me. That is the throne.

**5** **You anointed my head with oil** I have already been anointed king by Your orders.

**my cup overflows** Heb. רְוָיָה, an expression of fullness.

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Tehillim (Psalms) 24:1-10**

**1** **The land...are the Lord’s** The land of Israel.

**the world** The other lands.

**2** **founded it upon seas** Seven seas surrounded Eretz Yisroel and four rivers: the Jordan, Yarmuk, Karmion, and Pigah.

**3** **Who will ascend upon the Lord’s mount** Although all the inhabitants of the world are His, not everyone deserves to come near to Him, except these: he who has clean hands, etc.

**4** **who has not taken My name in vain** Who has not sworn with My name and My soul in vain. We find an expression of an oath used with the soul (ytp), as it is stated (in Amos 6:8): “The Lord God swore by Himself (eytpa).”

**6** **This**[generation,] whose deeds are such - this is the generation of those who seek him.

**7** **[You] gates, lift your heads** In the days of Solomon his son, when he comes to bring the Ark into the Holy of Holies and the gates cling to each other, he [Solomon] recited twenty-four praises, but he was not answered until he said (II Chron. 6:42): “Do not turn back the face of Your anointed; remember the kind deeds of David, Your servant.”

**9** **everlasting portals** Portals whose sanctity is everlasting.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Tehillim (Psalms) ‎‎23:1-6**

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

David composed this famed psalm during one of the most dangerous and discouraging periods of his life. He was a forlorn fugitive, fleeing from King Saul and his army. In desperation, David hid himself in a barren, desolate forest called ‘*forest of Hereth’* - חרת יער,[[1]](#footnote-1) so named because it was parched and dry, like חרס, ‘baked earthenware.’ But God did not forsake David. He soaked this dry forest with a moisture which had the flavor of the World to Come, making even the grass and leaves of the forest succulent and edible.[[2]](#footnote-2) This showed David that God supports and nourishes at all times even when their chances of survival seem to be non-existent.

This pictures Gan Eden and suggests that the end is like the beginning. The Midrash, however, sees the entire psalm as speaking to how HaShem treated the Bne Israel in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land.

David does not confine his inspiration to himself; he utilizes it to sing for all of Israel, recalling how God provided for the entire nation throughout its forty-year sojourn in the wilderness.

Mishnah Berurah[[3]](#footnote-3) cites a custom to recite this psalm between נטילת ידים, the washing of the hands before the meal, and the recital of the blessing over bread.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Arizal explains the connection between Psalms chapter 23 and the meal. The psalm contains fifty-seven words, the numerical equivalent of the word זן ‘nourishes’. Furthermore, it contains 227 letters, the numerical equivalent of ‘blessing’ - ברכה. Arizal concludes that those who recite this psalm and live by its message will always be blessed with ample provisions.[[5]](#footnote-5)

“He restores my soul”, in v.3, is referring to Torah study, as David also wrote: “The Torah of HaShem is whole, restoring the soul”.[[6]](#footnote-6) According to the Midrash, the words, “He restores my soul”, are alluding to the Torah that HaShem taught us when we were journeying through the wilderness.

The Midrash teaches us that Psalm 23 speaks about the journeys of the Bne Israel in the Wilderness. The wilderness journeys are concisely detailed in a parasha called *Masei* – מַסְעֵי*.*

The whole trip the Bne of Israel take from Mitzrayim (Egypt) to the Promised Land is understood spiritually as a metaphor for the journey that we all take from leaving the straits of the birth canal, to the many years of our life that we spend trying to do the right thing (traveling in the desert and messing up for forty years), to the moment of our own death (The Promised Land). The forty-two journeys, therefore, relate to forty-two states of leaving Mitzrayim (personal or national restrictions and confinements), before we reach the true and ultimate freedom of Jericho, the Messianic redemption. These stages are not only a record of the past, but also an allusion to the future exiles and the ultimate redemption throughMashiach. This seems to be David’s vision as he penned this psalm. Now this begs the question: If David is commenting on our Torah portion, then how are *Yaaqov’s journeys* related to the journeys mentioned in Parashat *Masei* – מַסְעֵי?[[7]](#footnote-7) One answer might be that Yaaqov is beginning his journeys with this parasha. He is going out without wealth of any kind because Eliphaz, the father of Amalek and the son of Esav, stole his wealth.[[8]](#footnote-8) It is this journey that reminded David of the journeys in Bamidbar 33.

Our chapter of Psalms has many points of congruency with the Torah portion. In our Torah portion we see Yaaqov going to Haran to shepherd sheep for Laban. Our psalm opens with David declaring that HaShem is his shepherd.

Our Torah portion speaks of Yaaqov getting wives and becoming complete. David speaks, then, about HaShem restoring his soul. Additionally, David speaks of goodness and mercy following him. We see from Proverbs that Yaaqov’s wives are a good thing:

***Mishlei (Proverbs) 18:22*** *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of HaShem.*

Our Torah portion speaks of Yaaqov dwelling, and eating at his table, with Laban who deceives him in our Torah portion. We will see, next week, that Laban repeatedly demonstrates that he is Yaaqov’s enemy and is out to defraud him as often as possible. David then speaks of a table prepared in the midst of his enemies.

David speaks of his head being anointed while Yaaqov anoints his pillow and sets it up as a pillar.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Finally, David speaks of dwelling in the *House of HaShem* forever, while Yaaqov sleeps in the awesome place, which was none other than the *House of G-d*. Thus we can clearly see that King David is giving us a commentary on the Torah portion in front of him. Now that we have had this introduction, lets look more closely at Gan Eden, the Garden of Eden.

Adam and Eve were created and then placed in the Garden of Eden -  גַּן עֵדֶן. They lived in Eden until they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. I believe the scriptures indicate that the righteous / generous will, one day, return to the Garden of Eden. **We will literally go “back to the future”.**

Solomon said:

***Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:9*** *What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.*

This prophetic statement seems to indicate that, in the end, righteous / generous men will return to Eden to walk with HaShem. This coincides with the statement of Sefer Yetzirah, “the end is enwedged in the beginning”.

***Sefer Yetzirah 3:1*** *Ten* ***Sefirot*** *out of nothing. Stop your mouth from speaking, stop your heart from thinking, and if your heart runs (to think) return to a place of which it is said “they ran and returned”; and concerning this thing the covenant was made; and they are ten in extent beyond limit. Their end is infused with their beginning, and their beginning with their end like a flame attached to a glowing ember. Know, think [reflect, meditate] and imagine that the Creator is One and there is nothing apart from Him, and before One what do you count?*

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 46:10*** *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

The first use of a Hebrew word in the Torah is the place where that concept is created. The first time the word *Eden* is used in the Torah, is in:

***Beresheet (Genesis) 2:8-10*** *Now HaShem God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And HaShem God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters.*

From this passage we learn that the garden was planted by HaShem in Eden. The implications are that Eden is bigger than the garden. We also see that HaShem’s place for man was Eden. That was the place He put them first. The garden was watered by a river which flowed from Eden. The Talmud indicates that all of the water in the world originated in Eden.[[10]](#footnote-10) I believe that this earthly Eden is a copy of the heavenly Eden even as the Tabernacle was a copy of the heavenly tabernacle.

Eden is a very mysterious place: [[11]](#footnote-11)

***Daniel 2:21-22*** *He changes the times and appointed moments... He reveals the deep and mysterious things...*

***Beresheet Rabba 1:6*** *mysterious things...* this means Gan Eden.

***Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs) 6:11*** *I went down to the garden of nuts...*

Why did the Holy One call Gan Eden (above), “*the garden of* nuts”?

***Midrash HaNe’elam, Beresheet*** *Just as the nut has one shell within the other with the core in the center, so too is Eden: there is world within world, and it is the core.*

The Tree of Life, in the middle of the garden, is more than just an ordinary tree. HaShem said that the one who eats from this tree will live forever:

***Beresheet (Genesis) 3:22*** *And HaShem God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”*

HaShem wanted to prevent fallen man from eating from this tree (until man had completed his tikkun, his correction) and preserve it for the righteous / generous when they are ready, so He put a special guard at the tree:

***Beresheet (Genesis) 3:24*** *After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.*

The Midrash Rabbah also indicates that the Tree of Life is Torah:

***Midrash Rabbah - Vayikra (Leviticus) IX:3*** *For R. Shmuel (Samuel) b. Nahman said: [The duty of] derek-eretz preceded the Torah by twenty-six generations.[[12]](#footnote-12) This is [implied in] what is written, To keep the way to the tree of life (Gen. III, 24). [First Scripture mentions] the way (derek) which means derek-eretz, and afterwards [does it mention] ‘ The tree of life’, which means the Torah.*

***Midrash Rabbah - Devarim (Deuteronomy) I:1*** *The Holy One, blessed be He, said: ‘See how beloved is the language of the Torah; it is healing for the tongue.’[[13]](#footnote-13) Whence do we know this? For so Scripture says: A soothing [lit. ‘healing’] tongue is a tree of life (Prov. XV, 4); and ‘tree of life’ is but another term for Torah, as it is written, She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her (Prov. III, 18). That the language of the Torah lends fluency to the tongue you can learn from the fact that in the time to come God will bring from the Garden of Eden excellent trees. And wherein consists their excellence-In that they are soothing to the tongue. As it is said, And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow*

One day the righteous / generous will have the right to eat from this tree:

***Revelation 2:7*** *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.*

Paradise is the English transliteration of the Greek “παράδεισος - paradiso”, which is how the Septuagint translates the “Garden of Eden”. So, Revelation 2:7 indicates that we will one day be able to eat from the tree of life in the Garden of Eden! We find later on, in the book of Revelation, that the tree of life is in the new Jerusalem:

***Revelation 22:1-2*** *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb Down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.*

We have now traveled full circle back to the tree of life and the river which are in the Garden of Eden. Remember that the river provided our only link with Eden after we were evicted for sinning. This connection provides the reason for the mikveh (baptism). It is also noteworthy to notice that the meaning of the “Jordan” river is: “that which descends from Eden or the Judge”. “What has been before will be again, there is nothing new under the sun”. The ideal that HaShem created for man has been preserved for the day that we can enter without sin.

The flood, in Noah’s day removed all traces of the rivers associated with Eden, in Beresheet (Genesis). There is no reason to believe that the Tigris and Euphrates rivers are the same as the post diluvian rivers by those same names. This, I believe, ended the existence of the earthly garden of Eden. This would account for the fact that we can not find it, or the cherubim, today.

*The Garden of Time[[14]](#footnote-14)*

***Pesikta Rabbati, 23:1*** *As the Holy One created Adam HaRishon, He first left him still unformed, stretching from one end of the world to the other. And the Holy One passed before him each generation and its righteous / generous, each genera­tion and its wicked, each generation and its ex­pounders, each generation and its leaders...*

Gan Eden was a womb for the world, determining the essence and potential of each thing yet to exist, but it was also much more. It was a true garden: a garden of *eden*—a garden of *time. A* botanical garden gathers to one site all manner of flora, a zoological garden provides easy access to animals from widely different places, and a garden of time is a locus cultivating all times, displaying them before the eyes-to-be of Man. This Is why those who live in Gan Eden, such as EliyahuHaNavi,[[15]](#footnote-15) have access to all times, appearing throughout the centuries at will. What is even more startling, is that the display is open in both directions, allowing a connection of all existence to the garden in all times! In fact, the garden continues to perennially provide life through the portals of time:

***Ta’anit 10a*** *All the world drinks from the surplus of Gan Eden…*

This means that not only was the potential of all life and history assigned in Gan Eden, but there is an ongoing attachment of our lives to the womb which brought us life. We are not something apart from ma’aseh Beresheet, we exist only as direct expressions of the singular, original, act of Creation as it continues through what we see as our times: *He renews every day, continuously, the act of Creation?* The Garden of Time Is the environment within which all shattered time exists. Even our experiences share some element of the primal experiences in the microcosm called Gan Eden, marking our lives with the freshness and import of the first day. Still today, we bless our own beginnings of love and life with the original!

What blessings are said [at a wedding]?

***Ketuvot 8a*** *...Be happy, make happy, beloved friends, just as your Creator made you happy in Can Eden from before...*

It Is fascinating that Chazal find the same Edenic character in the human womb, completing the correlation of garden to womb, and touching on an important pattern in the cycle of our lives.

**In The Tabernacle[[16]](#footnote-16)**

There are four famous parallels linking God’s Garden of Eden with the desert Tabernacle and its successor, the Jerusalem Temple, both constructed by humans.

**1.** God walks in both the Garden of Eden and the Tabernacle.

***Beresheet (Genesis) 3:8*** *And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden...*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:11-12*** *And I will set my tabernacle among you...And I will walk among you...*

**2.** Water flowed out of the Garden of Eden and also out of the Temple.

***Beresheet (Genesis) 2:10*** *And a river went out from Eden..*.

***Yoel (Joel) 4:18*** *...and a fountain shall issue from the house of the Lord...*

**3.** Cherubs appear in both places to guard and protect.

***Beresheet (Genesis) 3:24*** *...and he placed cherubs at the east of the garden of Eden...to guard the way to the tree of life.*

***Shemot (Exodus) 25:20*** *And the cherubs shall stretch out their wings on high to cover the covering with their wings...*

**4.** Special garments [ketonet[[17]](#footnote-17)] are required in both places

***Beresheet (Genesis) 3:21*** *For Adam and for his wife the Lord God made leather coats [ketonet]...*

***Shemot (Exodus) 28:4*** *And these are the garments which they shall make...an embroidered coat [ketonet]*

Recounting the four parallels, we see:

**1.** God walks in His garden and in the places we create.

**2.** Water flows out of His garden and out of the places we create.

**3.** Spiritual forces protect the way to the Tree of Life and to the Tablets of the Covenant.

**4.** God made clothing for humans in His garden; we emulate Him in our holy places.

Today, in our current conditions, we are obviously unable to locate the Garden of Eden let alone enter it. However, God did provide us with blueprints to create our own substitute. Moses and the Israelites used them to build the Tabernacle and later Solomon used them to create the Temple.

Thus both the Tabernacle and the Temple were human replicas of the Garden of Eden.

Rabbi Chaim Volozhin[[18]](#footnote-18)  teaches us that the Mishkan was a miniature model of reality, every element of creation was represented in it.[[19]](#footnote-19) Given this idea, I propose that the tree of life was and will be planted where the Ark of the Covenant was and will be placed, in the Holy of Holies. Remember that the only thing in the Ark were the tablets of stone with the summation of Torah. These tablets represented the Torah which is the tree of life. Now, since we know that everlasting life is only found in Yeshua from:

***I Yochanan (John) 5:11-12*** *And this is the testimony: HaShem has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

There is yet one more connection between the Garden of Eden and the Temple mount. In this passage we will see HaSatan (the Satan) in both places:

***Yehezekel (Ezekiel) 28:12-15*** *“Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: ‘This is what the Sovereign HaShem says: “‘You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.*

**We can see that Yeshua is the Living Torah and the tree of life!** Both of these symbols accurately describe Yeshua. But wait, there is more! Notice:

***Luqas (Luke) 23:39-43*** *One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Mashiach? Save yourself and us!” But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Yeshua, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Yeshua answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”*

Wherever the earthly Garden of Eden (paradise) was, Yeshua and the thief went to the garden of Eden on the day of their death.

According to R. Isaac Nappaha the fact that the Temple was built on the site of the Akeida[[20]](#footnote-20) is the basis of the saying that “whoever is buried in the land of Israel is as if he were buried beneath the altar”.[[21]](#footnote-21) This, I believe, is where the saints are in:

***Revelation 6:9*** *When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.*

But, I digress. Paul indicates that the heavenly Garden of Eden (paradise) is “**up**”:

***II Corinthians 12:2-4*** *I know a man in Mashiach who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—HaShem knows. And I know that this man--whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but HaShem knows-- Was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.*

If the heavenly garden of Eden is “up”, then it makes sense that it will come ‘down’ with the New Jerusalem. I believe that HaShem will show us the heavenly Garden of Eden (paradise) after He renews the earth at the end of the seventh millennium.

In this next passage we see Zion and its current wilderness as they will be transformed:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 51:3*** *HaShem will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of HaShem. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.*

Since this has not yet happened, we can look forward to this day!

Now, lets look at a comparison between Gan Eden and the New Jerusalem.

Eden was a sanctuary, without sin, where HaShem dwelt with men. This is a copy of the heavenly Eden. After the fall, the Temple was the sanctuary, without sin, where HaShem dwelt with men. The new Jerusalem, in Eden, will be a sanctuary, without sin, where HaShem will dwell with men, on earth.

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| --- | --- |
| **The Garden of Eden** | **The New Jerusalem (heavenly Eden)** |
| Planted eastward in Eden. Gen. 2:8 | Planted in Abraham’s land. Gen 13:15 |
| In the garden was the tree of life. Gen. 2:9 | The tree of life, bearing twelve crops. Rev. 22:2 |
| A river watering the garden flowed from Eden. Gen.2:10 | The river of the water of life. Rev 22:1 |
| HaShem walked in the garden. Gen.3:8 | The dwelling of God is with men. Rev 21:3 |
| The ground is cursed. Gen. 3:17 | No more curse. Rev. 22:3 |
| He may not eat from the tree of Life. Gen. 3:22 | They may eat of the tree of life. Rev. 22:14 |
| Cherubim guard the tree of life. Gen. 3:24 | Cherubim guard the Ark. Exo.25:20, 1Ki.6:23 |

**Interesting Connections**[[22]](#footnote-22)

How was the world created? When HaShem created the world, He didn’t create it as a vast expanse of existence all at once. Rather, He created a single point, and from there, He drew out the entire universe. We know where that place, that first point, is. It’s about a mile from where I’m writing this. Behind the Kotel, the “Western Wall,” on a hill where now sits a Mosque, there is a stone. That stone is called the *Even Shetiya*, literally the Foundation Stone.[[23]](#footnote-23) From that stone the entire Universe was drawn out. In other words, when HaShem created the world, there was a single point of contact between the world above and this world. The site of that stone was the place where HaShem tested Abraham by commanding him to bring up his son Isaac as a sacrifice; that stone is the site where Yaakov dreamed of a ladder connecting Heaven and Earth and angels going up and down on it. Around that stone stood the two Holy Temples. In the first Temple, the Holy Ark – with the Torah tablets - sat on top of that Foundation Stone, and around it was the Holy of Holies; around the Holy of Holies was the Sanctuary; around the Sanctuary was the Courtyard of the Temple; around that was Jerusalem; and around Jerusalem -- the universe. Thus the tablets represent the Tree of Life, and the Garden of Eden was recreated in the Temple. And it is around that stone that we long to see the Third and final Temple inaugurated in the month of Cheshvan.

**In The Synagogue**

The rollers that hold a Torah scroll are known by Jews, as the “Tree of Life”. The tree of life is also known as Torah:

***Mishlei (Proverbs) 3:13-20*** *Blessed is the man who finds wisdom* (Torah)*, the man who gains understanding, For she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed. By wisdom HaShem laid the earth’s foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place; By his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.*

We can now understand why the following is recited when the Torah scroll is returned to the ark:

“Return O HaShem, to the myriads of Israel’s families. Arise HaShem to Your resting place, You and Your mighty ark. Clothe Your priests with righteous / generousness. May those who have experienced Your faithful love shout for joy. For the sake of Your servant David, don’t delay the return of Your Messiah.”

“I give you good instruction; do not forsake My Torah. A tree of life it is for those who take hold of it, and blessed are the ones who support it. It’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all it’s paths are peace. Long life is in it’s right hand, in it’s left are riches and honor. HaShem was pleased for the sake of His righteous / generousness, to render the Torah great and glorious.”

This prayer clearly portrays the Torah as the “tree of life”. This tree is mentioned a couple of times in the book of Mishlei (Proverbs) as pertaining to Torah.[[24]](#footnote-24) This tree still exists!

We see Gan Eden recreated a third time when looking at the synagogue and it’s arrangement.

The following diagram depicts the synagogue AND it also depicts the Garden of Eden. The synagogue walls around Gan Eden. The Tebah, or Bimah for the Ashkenazi, is an elevated platform in the center of the synagogue, just as the Tree of Life was in the center of the garden, so also is the grasping and the reading of the Torah done in the center of the synagogue. The wooden rollers for a Torah scroll are called “the Tree of Life”. The book of Mishlei (Proverbs) calls the Torah the Tree of Life.

***Mishlei (Proverbs) 3:13*** *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. 14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. 15 She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. 16 Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. 18* ***She is a tree of life*** *to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.*

Here is the layout of the synagogue:

A = Hechal (the Permanent Ark) – storage for the Torah scroll.

B = Small Tebah (Lectern) from where the Chazzan leads the services.

C = Seats for the Officers of the Congregation (most synagogues have the seating either horizontally with some inclination or vertically).

D = Seats for men who sit on the first floor and women in the second floor or atrium.

E = The greater Tebah, or Bimah, (raised platform) on which the Torah is read and the Hakham delivers his Sermon. **Here is where we grasp the Tree of Life and read the Torah!**

Behind the greater Tebah usually there are seats reserved for the Hakhamim and this seating is also known as the seat of Moshe.

**Machpelah (מערת המכפלה),** **The Entrance to Gan Eden**

If the center of the Garden contained the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, as well as the Tree of Life, then the entrance to Gan Eden is the cave at Machpelah (in Hebron[[25]](#footnote-25) - חֶבְרוֹן), as we can see from the Zohar:

***Soncino Zohar, Beresheet, Section 1, Page 57b*** *God also decreed that he should die. Taking pity on him, however, God allowed him when he died to be buried near the Garden of Eden. For Adam had made a cave near the Garden, and had hidden himself there with his wife. He knew it was near the Garden, because he saw a faint ray of light enter it from there, and therefore he desired to be buried in it; and there he was buried, close to the gate of the Garden of Eden.*

***Soncino Zohar, Beresheet, Section 1, Page 127a*** *R. Judah said: ‘Abraham recognized the cave of Machpelah by a certain mark, and he had long set his mind and heart on it. For he had once entered that cave and seen Adam and Eve buried there. He knew that they were Adam and Eve because he saw the form of a man, and whilst he was gazing a door opened into the Garden of Eden, and he perceived the same form standing near it. Now, whoever looks at the form of Adam cannot escape death. For when a man is about to pass out of the world he catches sight of Adam and at that moment he dies. Abraham, however, did look at him, and saw his form and yet survived. He saw, moreover, a shining light that illumined the cave, and a lamp burning. Abraham then coveted that cave for his burial place, and his mind and heart were set upon it.*

The Cave of the Patriarchs, Machpelah (literally the cave of doubling), contains the graves (Hebrew: kever[[26]](#footnote-26)) of four couples (eight people), husbands and wives who *connected*: Adam and Chava, Avraham and Sarah, Yitzchak and Rivka, Yaaqov and Leah. The term *kever* (which typically means *grave*), may also signify uterus or womb. From this we learn that a *kever* is a portal, or connection, to the higher world. We come through this portal when we are put in the womb and we go through this portal when we are put in the grave. Thus we learn that the kever at Machpelah is a portal to Gan Eden.

It is interesting to note that this was the first place in Israel acquired by Avraham. It represents the beginning of HaShem’s promise to give Avraham, and his descendants, the land of Israel. In the same way, Gan Eden is the ultimate beginning, and we know that “all things go after the beginning”, as it is the most potent moment. All beginning starts from beyond! Our understanding commences only from after that beginning point and onwards. But that first point, the beginning of knowledge itself, is beyond, beyond our understanding, beyond our grasp. That first point is the basis of all understanding; without it we have nothing on which to build knowledge, but it itself cannot be understood. It is hidden. It is something that HaShem gives.

**First in Creation, First in Importance**[[27]](#footnote-27)

***Ta’anit 10a*** *Eretz Yisrael[[28]](#footnote-28) was created first and afterwards the rest of the world, as the passage states (Mishlei 8:26): “Before He made Eretz (land) and Chutzot (outlying areas).”*

*The term “Eretz” applies to Eretz Israel which was the main purpose of creation and therefore created first. All the other lands are considered secondary in importance as they were in the sequence of creation and are therefore referred to as “Chutzot.”*

*Even today we refer to the land we love simply as “Eretz”[[29]](#footnote-29) while the rest of the world is “Chutz”[[30]](#footnote-30), outlying areas of secondary importance.*

**Ashlamatah: Hoshea (Hosea) 14:6-10 + Yoel (Joel) 1:1-3 + 2:12-13**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| 2. Return, O Israel, to the LORD your GOD, for you have stumbled in your iniquity.  | 2. Return, O Israel, to the fear of the LORD your GOD, for you have fallen because of your sin. |
| 3. Take words with yourselves and return to the LORD. Say, "You shall forgive all iniquity and teach us [the] good [way], and let us render [for] bulls [the offering of] our lips. | 3. Bring with you words of confession and return to the worship of the LORD. Say before Him, “It is near for You to forgive iniquities,” then we will be accepted as good. Let the words of our lips be accepted before You with favor like bullocks on Your altar! |
| 4. Assyria shall not save us; we will not ride on horses, nor will we say any longer, our gods, to the work of our hands, for **in You, by Whom the orphan is granted mercy.**" | 4. The kings of Assyria will not save us, We will not put our trust in horsemen, and no more will we say, “Our god” to the works of our hands. For it was from before You that mercy was shown to our forefathers when they were like orphans in Egypt. |
| 5. I will remedy their backsliding; I will love them freely, for My wrath has turned away from them. | 5. I will accept them in their repentance. I will forgive their sins. I will have compassion on them when they freely repent, for My anger has turned away from them. |
| 14:6. I will be **like dew** to Israel, they shall blossom **like a rose**, and it shall strike its roots **like the Lebanon**. | 6. My Memra will be **like dew** to Israel; they will bloom **like the lily**, and they will dwell in their fortified land **like the tree of Lebanon that puts forth its branches**. |
| 7. Its branches shall go forth, and its beauty shall be **like the olive tree**, and its fragrance **like the Lebanon**. | 7. Sons and daughters will multiply, and **their light will be like the light of the candelabrum**, and **their fragrance like the fragrance of incense**. |
| 8. Those who dwelt in its shade shall return; they shall revive **[like] corn and blossom like the vine**; its fragrance shall be **like the wine of Lebanon**. | 8. **They will be gathered from among their exiles**, they will dwell in the shade of the Anointed One. **The dead will be resurrected** and goodness will increase in the land. The mention of their goodness will go in and not cease, **like the memorial of the blast of the trumpets** made over the matured wine when it was poured out in the Sanctuary. |
| 9. Ephraim; What more do I need the images? I will answer him and I will look upon him: I am **like a leafy cypress tree**; from Me your fruit is found. | 9. The House of Israel will say, “Why should we worship idols anymore?” I, by My Memra will hear the prayer of Israel and have compassion on them. I, by My Memra, will make them **like a beautiful cypress tree**, because forgiveness for their waywardness is found before Me. |
| 10. Who is wise and will understand these, discerning and will know them; for the ways of the LORD are straight, and the righteous/generous shall walk in them, and the rebellious shall stumble on them. | 10. Who is wise and will consider these things? Who is prudent and will take note of them? For the ways of the LORD are right, and the righteous/generous who walk in them will live in everlasting life through them, bu the wicked (lawless) will be delivered to Gehinnom because they have not walked in them. |
| **Joel 1:1-3 + 2:12-13** |  |
| 1. The word of the LORD, which came to Joel son of Pethuel. | 1. The word of prophecy from the LORD which was with Joel son of Pethuel. |
| 2. Hear this, you elders, and hearken, all you inhabitants of the land. Did this come about in your days or in the days of your forefathers? | 2. Hear this, O elders; listen, all you inhabitants of the land! Has **the like of this** happened in your days or in the days of your fathers? |
| 3. Tell your children about it, and your children to their children, and their children to another generation. | 3. Tell your children about it, and let your children tell their children, and their children the next generation. |
|  |  |
| 11. And the LORD gave forth His voice before His army, for His camp is great, for he who performs His word is mighty, for the day of the LORD is great and very awesome; who can abide it? | 11. The LORD has raised His Memra before His army, for His army is immense indeed; for those who carry out His Memra are mighty. For great is the day which will come from the LORD, and exceedingly terrible, who can bear it? |
| 12. And even now, says the LORD, return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with lamentation. | 12. “Even now”, says the LORD, “return to My worship with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning.” |
| 13. And rend your hearts and not your garments, and return to the LORD your GOD, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and He repents of the evil.  | 13. Remove the wickedness (lawlessness) of your heart, but not with tearing of your garments, and return to the worship of the LORD your GOD, for He is gracious and merciful. He removes anger, and multiplies blessings, and He draws back His Memra from bringing evil. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Hosea (Hoshea) 14:6-10 + Yoel (Joel) 1:1-3 + 2:12-13**

**14:2** **Return, O Israel** You, who are in the land of Judah, lest what happens to Samaria happens to you. Therefore, the topics are juxtaposed. This can be compared to a king against whom a province rebelled. The king sent a general and commanded him to destroy it. That general was expert and deliberate. He said to them, “Take for yourselves days (sic); otherwise, I will do to you as I have done to such-and-such a province and to its allies, and to such-and-such a prefecture and to its allies.” Therefore it says, “Samaria shall be accounted guilty,” and then Scripture says: “Return, O Israel.” As is found in Sifrei in the section commencing. (Num. 25:1), “And Israel abode in Shittim.”

**to the Lord your God** One taught in the name of Rabbi Meir: Return, O Israel, while He is still יהוה, with the Divine Attribute of Mercy; otherwise, He is אֶלֹהֶיךָ with the Divine Attribute of Justice, before the defense becomes the prosecution. [from Pesikta d’Rav Kahana, p. 164a]

**for you have stumbled in your iniquity** Obstacles have come to you because of your iniquity.

**3** **You shall forgive all iniquity** Heb. כָּל-תִּשָׂא עָוֹן. Forgive all our iniquities.

**and teach [us the] good [way]** Heb. וְקַח-טוֹב. And teach us the good way. Another explanation: The few good deeds in our hands take in Your hand and judge us accordingly. And so does David say (Psalms 17:2): “Let my sentence come forth from before You, may Your eyes behold the right.” Another explanation: And accept good And accept confession from us, as it is said (Psalms 92:2): “It is good to confess to the Lord.”

**and let us render [for] bulls** that we should have sacrificed before you, let us render them with the placation of the words of our lips.

**4** **Assyria shall not save us** Say this also before Him, “We no longer seek the aid of man, neither from Assyria nor from Egypt.”

**we will not ride on horses** This is the aid from Egypt, who would send them horses, as they said to Isaiah (30: 16), “No, but on horses will we flee... And on swift steeds will we ride.”

**nor will we say any longer** to the work of our hands that they are our gods.

**for in You** alone shall our hope be, You Who grant mercy to the orphans.

**5** **I will remedy their backsliding** Said the prophet: So has the Holy Spirit said to me. After they say this before Me, I will remedy their backsliding, and I will love them with My charitable spirit. Although they do not deserve the love, I will love them charitably since My wrath has turned away from them.

**6** **and it shall strike** I.e. the dew shall strike its roots and cause them to prosper.

**like the Lebanon** like the roots of the trees of the Lebanon, which are large.

**7** **Its branches shall go forth** Sons and daughters shall increase.

**and it shall be** Their beauty shall be like the beauty of the menorah of the Temple, and their fragrance like the fragrance of the incense.

**like the Lebanon** Like the Temple.

**8** **Those who dwelt in its shade shall return** Those who already dwelt in the shade of the Lebanon, to which He compared Israel and the Temple, and now were exiled there from, shall return to it.

**its fragrance shall be like the wine of Lebanon** Jonathan renders: Like the remembrance of the blasts of the trumpets over the old wine poured for libations in the Temple. For they would blow the trumpets over the libations when the Levites would recite the song.

**9** **Ephraim** will say, “What more do I need to follow the images?” And they will turn away from idolatry.

**I will answer him** I will answer him from his trouble.

**and I will look upon him** I will look upon his affliction.

**I am like a leafy cypress tree** I will bend down for him to hold his hand on Me as the leafy cypress which is bent down to the ground, which a man holds by its branches; i.e., I will be accessible to him.

**from Me your fruit is found** Am I not He? For all your good emanates from Me.

**10** **Who is wise and will understand these** Who among you is wise and will ponder to put his heart to all these and return to Me?

**and the rebellious shall stumble on them** i.e., because of them, because they did not walk in them. Jonathan renders in this manner.

**Joel** **Chapter 1**

**1** **to Joel son of Pethuel** -The son of Samuel the prophet who persuaded God with his prayer (פִתָּה לְאֵל). Some say that this prophecy was said in those seven years in which Elisha said: “For the Lord has decreed a famine etc.” and they took place during the days of Jehoram son of Ahab.

**2** **Did this come about** -I.e., what is mentioned below.

**Chapter 2**

**13** **and not your garments** -for I do not pay heed to the rending of your garments. Another explanation: Rend your hearts and you will not need to rend your garments because of mourning.

**and He repents of the evil** -I.e., He turns to another thought.

**PIRQE ABOT**

**Pereq Vav**

**Mishnah 6:0 – 6:1**

Hakham Yitschaq (ben Moshe) Magriso

**6:0 The Sages taught the following in the language of the Mishnah: “Blessed be He who chose them and their teaching.”**

The sixth chapter of Pirqe Abot that we will now discuss is not part of the Mishnah of Pirqe Abot. Rather it is a Baraitha [a teaching contemporary to the Mishnah that was not included in the Mishnaic canon]. Therefore, before beginning this chapter, the introductory phrase: **“The Sages taught the following in the language of the Mishnah”** is included.

This chapter is a Baraitha which the Sages taught in the same language as the Mishnah in the previous chapter of Pirqe Abot. Blessed be G-d who chose the Sages and their teachings to be representative of His will.

This chapter is known as **“The Attainment of Torah” (Heb.: Kinyan Torah)**. Here the Sages discuss all the methods through which the Torah may be attained, as well as the advantages (He.: Ma’a lot) that a person can attain through the Torah.

**6:1 Rabbi Meir said: Everyone who occupies himself with the Torah for its own sake becomes worthy of many things. Not only that, but all the world is worthy of him. He is called a companion, friend, and one who loves G-d, one who loves man, one who gladdens G-d, one who gladdens man. The Torah clothes him with humility and reverence. It enables him to be a righteous, saintly, upright and trustworthy person. It keeps him from sin and draws him to merit. People benefit from him through advice, acumen, understanding and strength. It is thus written that the Torah said: “I have understanding and strength. I am understanding, I have strength” (Prov. 8:14). The Torah gives him sovereignty, dominion and a deep understanding of the Law. The secrets of the Torah are revealed to him. He becomes like an overflowing spring, like a river that flows and never fails. Let him be modest, patient, and forgiving of insults. The Torah will then make him great, and raise him over all things that were created.**

We are now told of the **advantages (Heb.: ma’alot)** that can be gained by the person who studies Torah **for the sake of heaven (Heb.: LeShem Shamayim).**This paragraph thus refers to the person who devotes his life to the Torahwith a absolutely no ulterior motives. Auch a person is not studying so that he will attain status, and honor, or so that people will admire him. Nor is he interested in any monetary benefits. Rather his study is for the sake of G-d who is in heaven.

Such a person becomes worthy of many benefits. In addition, it can be said that the entire world was created for his sake. The world was created only for the sake of the Torah. It is thus written, **"[Fear God and keep His commandments.] for this is all of man"** (Ecclesiastes 12:13). This indicates that all people were created only to serve the saint who studies God's Torah. He is the source of all the goodness and blessing that comes to the world. Therefore, the entire world is beholden to him because Of his Torah knowledge.

Such a person is called a companion of God, a partner **(shutaf)** with God. Just as God sustains the world, so does the person who studies Torah for the sake of Heaven. He is therefore considered God's partner in creation **(ma'aseh Beresheet).**

He is also called a friend and companion of God because when he studies the Torah for the sake of Heaven, he becomes attached to God. He thus becomes like a friend of God, and God also becomes his Friend. God then keeps a watchful eye over him, and His specific Providence **(hashgachah peratit)** protects him and keeps him from

evil.

This brings joy to the Creator, since it is God's attribute (middah) to have pleasure when He does good for the world. The world need not worry about danger, since when such a person studies Torah, God grants good to the entire world for his sake. Thus, God's will is fulfilled and the person brings joy to God and man.

The Torah also clothes such a person in humility (anavah) and the fear of Heaven **(yirath Shamayim)**. It directs him to be a righteous **(tzaddik),** saintly **(chasid)** person, upright and trustworthy **(ne'eman).**

When a person studies for the sake of Heaven, the Torah endows him with all sorts of good traits. This prevents him from sinning, even accidentally **(be-shogeg)**. The Torah draws him to merit **(zekhuth),** because one good deed leads to another. Therefore, as long as a person continues to devote himself to Torah study, it will lead him to other good deeds.

The world also benefits from such a person. People are able to seek advice from him, even with regard to worldly matters. Because he is studying for the sake of Heaven, the Heavens open up new avenues of wisdom to him. All the wisdom in the world is included in the Torah.

The Torah therefore says, "I have advice and acumen; I am understanding, I have strength" (proverbs 8:14). The Torah itself is saying, "In me there is all sorts of wisdom, good advice, understanding, learning and strength."

The Torah also gives a person stature, sovereignty and authority, elevating him in status, so that he becomes great and assumes leadership. He also becomes able to judge people though probing **(chakirah)** and analysis **(derishah**). Providence never allows a false litigant **(baal din ramai)** fool him with spurious arguments **(ta'anoth).** The Heavens also reveal to such a person all the secrets of the Torah. His wisdom thus increases like an overflowing fountain, and like a river that never stops running.

However, the master advises that such a person must be modest, patient and forgiving of insult. All these advantages only belong to the person who is modest **(tzanua).** All the good that he does must be done secretly. Moreover, he must be patient **(erekh ruach)** and not impetuous. He must also be "forgiving of insults" - even if another person insults him, he is quick to forgive.

When a person has these traits, the Torah will make him even greater, and raise him over all the creatures **(ma'asim)** that were created in the Six Days of Creation. He is greater than everything in heaven and earth, even the angels **(malakhim).**

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra Of B’resheet (Genesis) 27:28 – 28:9**

**“Vayiten L’kha” “And give you”**

By: H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hakham Shaul’s School of Tosefta****(Luke 6:19) Mishnah**  | **Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat****(Mark 3:11-12) Mishnah** |
| **¶ And everyone in the congregation was trying to touch him** (Yeshua), **because healing virtue came from him and he healed everyone.** | **¶ And the spirits** (shedim) **of uncleanness, when they saw him, would fall down before him,** giving him[[31]](#footnote-31) **honour saying — “You are a Ben Elohim** (a Son of GOD = a Torah Judge)**”; but he charged them not make his identity** (as Messiah) **known.** |
| **Luke 6:12-16****And it happened in those days that he left and went out into the mountain to pray, and he was spending the night in prayer to G-d. And when it was day, he called his talmidim. And he appointed twelve of them, who he also named his emissaries: Shim’on, whom he also surnamed Tsefet, and Adam his brother; Ya’aqov and Yochanan; Peresh and Bar-Telem; Matityahu and T’om; Ya’aqov ben Chalfai, and Shim’on who was called HaK’na’ani; Y’hudah the brother of Ya’aqov, and Y’hudah Ish Q’riyot who also became the betrayer.** | **Mark 3:13-19a****Yeshua left and he went up into the mountain and appointed** (Yif’qod) **those whom he would have near him. And they turned towards him** as their Hakham and source of Wisdom. **And he appointed twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might** send them out **as emissaries to herald** (the Mesorah)**, and to have the authority to heal sicknesses, and to cast out shedim** (demons)**. And as the chief he appointed Shim’on** bar Yonah **whom he surnamed Tsefet** (Peter). **And he appointed Ya’aqov** ben Zabdeyel**, and Yochannan** ben Zabdeyel **the brother of Ya’aqov, he surnamed both B'ne Rogaz which is sons of short temper. And he appointed Adam** (Andrew)bar Yonah, **and Peresh** (Philip), **and Bar-Telem** (Bartholomew), **and Matityahu** (Matthew)ben Chalfai HaLevi, **and T’om** (Thomas) ben Chalfai HaLevi, **and Ya’aqov** ben Chafai HaLevi, **and Yehudah** (Thaddeus)ben Ya’aqob, **and Shim’on HaK’na’ani** (Simon the Cananite), **And Y’hudah Ish Q’riyot, who also betrayed him.** |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gen. 27:28 – 28:9 | Ps. 22:1-32 | Hos 14:6-10 + Joel 1:1-3 + 2:12-13 | Mk 3:11-12+ 3:13-19a | Lk 6:19, 12-16 |

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

**A Son of G-d – Mark 3:11-12**

It should be evident now to our readers that Yeshua was first of all “Jewish.”[[32]](#footnote-32) Secondly, as Messiah his title is the “King of Yisrael” and therefore “a Son of G-d” (i.e., a Judge). EVERY King of Yisrael was titled the (a) “Son of G-d.”[[33]](#footnote-33) Furthermore, we must remember that Kings were often anointed as an act of consecration to their office as “King of Yisrael. Thus, the King like the Kohanim was seen as a Messianic, anointed figure. Consequently, Yeshua does not have to be “Deity” in order to qualify as Messiah, and King of Yisrael a “Son of G-d” (i.e., a Judge). Another key point that we must assert here is that we do NOT accept shedim (demons) as any type of authority on any particular subject matter. In other words, just because a shadé says something does not mean that he has admitted the truth. WE do not believe that the shedim were wrong on this particular account. Our point is that the shedim are not a source of authority on any subject. This bears a great deal of commentary and elucidation but, we will abbreviate our thoughts here.

**1 Pe. 1:12 It was not revealed to them, but to us, they for whom they ministered the things, which are now reported to you by those who have handed down the Mesorah to you in the Ruach HaKodesh,** breathings of the Oral Torah **sent from the Heavens; which things the holy messengers** (angels) **desired to understand.**

Angels – the heavenly messengers are entrusted with a mission and a message. That is the sum of their duties per se. Therefore, the shedim are no different. They may see the spiritual dimension from a different perspective, but we cannot take their words to be “theologically” sound.

However, for some the question still lingers as to where in Scripture do we find support for the interpretation that a “ben Elohim” can be interpreted as “a son/disciple of the Torah Judge/s” or simply a “Torah Judge.” The Hebrew term **בְנֵי-הָאֱלֹהִים (“B’ne HaElohim”)** appears for the first time in the Torah in Genesis 6:2, where we read:

**וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי-הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת-בְּנוֹת הָאָדָם, כִּי טֹבֹת הֵנָּה; וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים, מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרוּ.**

“that the **sons of God** saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives, whomsoever they chose.”[[34]](#footnote-34) [The Keter Crown Bible has **“sons of the powerful.”**[[35]](#footnote-35)]

Rashi translates this term as “sons of the nobles” but he admits in his commentary on Gen 6:2 –

**the sons of the nobles** Heb. בְָּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, the sons of the princes (*Targumim*) and **the judges (*Gen. Rabbah* 26:5).** Another explanation: בָּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים are the **princes who go as messengers of the Omnipresent**. They too mingled with them (*Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer*, ch. 22). Every אֱלֹהִים in Scripture is an expression of authority, and the following proves it (Exod. 4:16): “And you shall be to him as a lord (לֵאלֹהִים)”; (ibid. 7:1): “See, I have made you a lord (אֶלֹהִים ).”

Rabbi Ya’aqov ben Rabbenu Asher (R’osh) comments on this title:

**“The sons of GOD saw, etc.”** The expression “B’ne HaElohim”, refers to the elite of the society in those days, **the law enforcers and judges.”[[36]](#footnote-36)**

Note also that in Psalm 82:1, we read:

**אֱלֹהִים, נִצָּב בַּעֲדַת-אֵל;    בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט.**

“GOD stands in the congregation of GOD; in the midst of **the gods (i.e., judges)** He judges.”

And Rashi comments:

**GOD stands in the congregation of GOD** **to see whether they [the judges] judge fairly,** and you judges, how long will you judge unjustly?

By this rational we can see that the Messiah as “chief Torah judge/legislator” and “chief Torah law enforcer” receives the title of “Ben HaElohim” (“son/disciple of the judges”) par excellance![[37]](#footnote-37)

**He charged them not make his identity** (as Messiah) **known - The Messianic Secret**

The above passage deals with the so called “messianic secret.”[[38]](#footnote-38) Scholars have tried to make heads or tails of the enigma for ages. They are no closer to understanding this great “secret” today than they were yesterday. Why is it that they are unable to discern simple Peshat? They call it a mystery or an enigma. These are not the words of Peshat. As we have learned, they “see men as trees.” When you label a Peshat pericope with the title “Mystery,” you have already lost the battle of interpretation. This is tantamount to reading the “Revelation” from a Peshat, literal perspective. Furthermore, if it was such a great “secret” why do we know about it. Yes, we perfectly understand that Yeshua expelled *shedim*, (demons/spirits) from those who were miraculously healed and even his talmidim were warned not to tell the “secret.” In every case where Yeshua commands someone not to tell the secret, they have come in close personal contact with the Master and are perfectly aware of his spiritual identity. Whenever the Master’s identity as Messiah, “G-d’s Anointed King” is revealed he silences the revelation.

Scholars erroneously believe that Yeshua told them to be silent as reverse psychology. We cannot accept the thought that the Master would need to stoop to such aberrant means. If we resort to making the Master play mind-games with his talmidim and others we have berated him. Furthermore, we would fall into the trap of not being able to discern his words and true intent.

Firstly, the Master was not a petty pseudo-prophet who needed to resort to these devious methods. His commands are sincere. Do not tell anyone in Peshat terms means, “do not tell anyone,” not the reverse. As a true Tsaddiq – Hakham his true piety was in his study of the Torah and the traditions passed down by his ancestors. As “Ben HaElohim” (Son of the Judges) his life and mission was the “Sum of the Judges.” In other words, Yeshua could only be what the Sages of blessed memory made of him. His personification of the Torah, specifically the Oral Torah governed every moment of his life. When Hakham Tsefet records that he arose a great while before day[[39]](#footnote-39) to seclude himself in prayer, it was because the Hakhamim ordered him (and all our Jewish brethren) to recite the Shema early in the morning.

**Mk 1:35-37And early in the morning, long before daylight[[40]](#footnote-40) he** (Yeshua) **got up[[41]](#footnote-41) and went out to an isolated place and prayed there. And Shim’on** (Hakham Tsefet) **and those** (talmidim) **who were with him** (Hakham Tsefet) **followed[[42]](#footnote-42) him** (Yeshua)**. And having discovered[[43]](#footnote-43) from him** the true halakhic practice concerning the recital morning Shema and Amidah, **they said to him, “everyone is searching[[44]](#footnote-44) for you.”**

**m. Ber 1:2** From what time do they recite the ﻿Shema﻿ in the morning? From the hour that one can distinguish between [the colors] blue and white. R. Eliezer says, “Between blue and green.” And one must complete it before sunrise. R. Joshua says, “Before the third hour. “For it is the practice of royalty to rise [at] the third hour. [Thus we deem the third hour still to be ‘morning.’]” One who recites later than this [i.e., the third hour] has not transgressed [by reciting a blessing at the wrong time, for he is viewed simply] as one who recites from the Torah.[[45]](#footnote-45)

**b. Ber 2b** *It has been taught on Tannaite authority along these same lines:*  The old-timers would complete the recitation of Shema exactly at dawn so as to place the prayer for redemption[[46]](#footnote-46) [with which the Shema closes] right next to the Prayer [of supplication], and one will turn out to say the Prayer in daylight.”[[47]](#footnote-47)

Consequently, we can see that the Master was the sum of the Hakhamim. To qualify as “Messiah” he must be a walking Torah Scroll. Hakham Tsefet reveals the true crux of the dilemma in saying **“everyone is searching[[48]](#footnote-48) for you.”** The question is then raised, what or who were they looking for? It was not a man that they were looking for. They were looking for the quintessential expression of the Torah. What does the talmid of the Master want to know the most? What we desire the most is how to fulfill the expectations of G-d as expressed in the Torah. How do we learn to be a living expression of the Torah? By following a Hakham who is a living Torah.

We have been reading in the Torah Seder repetitive accounts of the Mishkan’s (Tabernacle) construction. Why does the Torah devote some 50 chapters to tell us about the construction and operation of the Mishkan? The Mishkan is a detailed description of:

1. Communion with G-d

2. Abodah – worship and service

3. Halakhah – how we are to walk

While we will offer only a partial list of what it means to be in “service” (*abodah*) to HaShem we will note that these aspects speak of a greater whole.

1. Berakhot

2. Birkat Ha-Mazon (Bendigamos)

3. **K’riat Shema**

We have selected these specific items because they represent an organic whole, furthermore they are the beginning point for service as described in the Mishnah. Our fascination is with the K’riat Shema. This because the recital of the Shema is not the simple recital of a few verses of the Torah associated with D’barim (Deut) 6:4. The Shema as an organic whole stands for commitment to the whole of the Torah, Oral and Written and subjection to the Malkuth HaShamayim.[[49]](#footnote-49) Therefore, “K’riat Shema” represents complete commitment to talmud Torah (Torah Study). As an act of worship, K’riat Shema stands for prayer. Therefore, the Shema represents a life that is devoted to talmud Torah and Prayer. Through K’riat Shema and talmud Torah we rectify the damage we have committed against the earth.

Arriving at the conclusion that Yeshua is the Messiah is not a great revelation. Those who Yeshua silenced were those who either saw him as a Messianic King, who would overthrow the Roman regime, put an end to the angelic rage and rebellion or be the quintessential Torah Scholar that would bring Y’mot HaMashiach, (the days of Messiah). Interestingly Yeshua was none of the above. He was a Hakham, a living Torah. His Mesorah/message was to emulate his life of Mesorah observance. Through this lifestyle, the world would find healing that would indeed produce the Messianic Age. Yeshua demonstrates a powerful truth. The truth that the Messianic figure we have conjured will not be a “Messiah” to usher in the “Days of Messiah” as we would expect is daunting. While we have oversimplified the whole idea, the title to Rabbi Levine’s books says it all, “**there is no Messiah and you’re it**.” We are not promoting his work; we are simply stating a powerful truth. Each of us has a seed of Messiah. If we have to cry Messiah with every breath, again we have missed the point. What we need to learn from this thought is that collectively we are Messiah.

So, what lesson do we learn from Yeshua silencing those who seem to know who he is? The wrong Messianic picture needs to be hushed. If this wrong message is not terminated, we will be left with a “false Messiah.”

**Chief of the Nazarean Movement**

**Mark 3:13-19**

Concurring with Mann, the Greek text of the present pericope is confusing[[50]](#footnote-50) and strained. What is evident from the text is that Yeshua selects and appoints those who will be essential for the dissemination and proclamation of the Mesorah. Their occupation is superficially stated as those who would proclaim the Mesorah with authority over sickness and *shedim* (demons). However, the chief thing is the proclamation of the Mesorah. The declaration of the Mesorah is an essential way of life. All who are sick and controlled by shedim (demons) are not able to conduct themselves according to the Mesorah. Therefore, Yeshua authorizes his talmidim with the appropriate tools for this proclamation. What scholars fail to understand is that these men are all essential to the master plan of Yeshua. Their inability to find these names in other places does not minimize anyone on the list of appointment.[[51]](#footnote-51) Each Talmid was significant to the overarching plan of the Master.

**The Chief of the Nazarean Movement**

Concurring with Taylor[[52]](#footnote-52) we find the text should read “**And** as the **chief** he **appointed Shim’on** bar Yonah **whom he surnamed Tsefet** (Peter)**.**” This is attested to in various manuscripts and most importantly, in the order of selection and appointment.

Gal 2:8—9 For he who worked in Tsefet (Peter) in that he was sent of the Jews also worked in me and sent me to the Gentiles. And when they knew of the mercy that was given to me, Ya’aqov and Tsefet and Yochanan, those who were considered to be pillars, gave to me and to Bar-Nabbi the right hand of fellowship that we [should work] among the Gentiles and they among the circumcision.

Throughout the Greek Nazarean Codicil, Hakham Tsefet is called by three titles. Simon, Peter and Cephas. When we look at the Peshitta, Hakham Tsefet is NEVER called Cephas but an Aramaic translation of the Greek/Latin word “Petros” – i.e. Kepha. We will not, at present, deal with the arguments concerning the possibility of the two names referring to two individuals. However, we will rest on the fact that the Peshitta never calls Hakham Tsefet “Cephas” as evidence of the singularity of person. And, it is not the focus of this document to argue these points at the present time. Our question is what does the name “Tsefet” mean, and how does this relate to his being the Chief of the Nazarean Jews of his time.

Yeshua makes the following statement about Hakham Tsefet.

**Yochanan** (Jn) **1:42 And he brought him** (Shim’on, Bar Yona) **to Yeshua. And Yeshua looked at him and said, "You are Shim’on, Bar Yona. You will be called Tsefet** (Peter)."[[53]](#footnote-53)

That Hakham Tsefet must have been “Shim’on,” is clear but Yeshua says that he would be called Tsefet (Peter). Why does Yeshua call Shim’on “Tsefet”? And, why is the name not found in scripture for any other individual? While the name “Tsefet” does not appear as a proper name, it does appear in the Tanakh.

2Ch 3:15 Also he made before the house **two pillars** of thirty and five cubits high, and the **chapiter** (*v’ha’tzephet*) that *was* on the top of each of them *was* five cubits.[[54]](#footnote-54)

We will include the Hebrew text of the cited passage for clarification.

15 **וַיַּ֜עַשׂ לִפְנֵ֤י הַבַּ֙יִת֙ עַמּוּדִ֣ים שְׁנַ֔יִם אַמּ֕וֹת שְׁלֹשִׁ֥ים וְחָמֵ֖שׁ אֹ֑רֶךְ וְהַצֶּ֥פֶת אֲשֶׁר־עַל־רֹאשׁ֖וֹ אַמּ֥וֹת חָמֵֽשׁ׃ ס**

The highlighted Hebrew text reads ***v’ha’tzephet***. The phrase ***v’ha’tsefet*** would read “and the cha**piter**.” The word cha**piter** is translated “tsefet” which is not the pillar itself. The “tsefet” is the cap or head (chief) of the pillar. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet is not only seen as a “pillar” himself, but also as the cap or head (chief) of the pillar. The “tsefet” is the upper portion of the pillar, which supports the edifice. Consequently, Hakham Tsefet is not only one of the “pillars” of the Nazarean Community; he is also the primary support for the whole community.

Tsefet is also the name of a Biblical and modern city in Eretz Yisrael.

**Jud. 1:17 And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited** **Tz’fat** (צְפַת **Tz’phath** – watchman or watch-tower), **and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.**

Tz’fat is so titled because it is one of the highest “mountains” **within** Eretz Yisrael. Please note that I said “within” Eretz Yisrael. We realize that Mount Hermon is higher than Tz’fat.

**Holy Mountains**

There are “mountains” in the northern part of Yisrael. However, we are concerned with only those places which we would deem “Holy.” The three names which serve as the most prominent in terms of “holiness” are Har Sinai (Mount Sinai) which is not located in Eretz Yisrael. The Har HaBayit (Mountain of the House) is where the Temple is located and finally Har Tz’fat situated in the Northern part of the Galil. Each mountain bears significance and from each we have received spiritual instruction. From Har Sinai we received the gift of the Torah. From Har HaBayit we received instruction on how to conduct ourselves and Kohanim (Priests). From Har Tz’fat we received the fullness of the Oral Torah. Therefore, we find strong evidence for the setting of the present pericope. It is from this mountain that the River that parted and became four “Heads,” PaRDes that flows into Eretz Yisrael (Gan Eden) and thereby the entire world.

**Gen. 2:10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.**

**Structured Nomos of the Esnoga (Synagogue)**

The Nazarean Codicil gives us a peek into the structure of the Esnoga (Synagogue) in various passages. While there is a specific need for understanding the structured universe as a *Nomos* – Torah, there is a greater need to understand the Esnoga as a microcosm of that structure. The **seven** officers are superficially alluded to in our Remes of 2 Luqas.

* Masoret – Catechist (father and president of the Congregation)
* Sheliach – Chazan/Bishop (Hazan, disciplinarian of the Congregation)
* Darshan – Magid Prophet (Angel of the Congregation)
* Parnas – Pastor I (Bitahon Confidence)
* Parnas – Pastor II (Temimut Sincerity)
* Parnas – Pastor III (Emet Truth/Honesty)
* Meturgeman – Moreh/Zaqen (Teacher/Elder)

We will not endeavour to delve into legitimate ecclesiology at this present juncture. Suffice it to say that the Master believed in corporate structure. Theses Rabbinic qualities may be seen as mimicry of G-d’s character demonstrated in the ordered creation of the universe. As it is our duty to study the *Nomos* – Torah to be best educated in how to conduct ourselves within that structured nomos, we need to understand with clarity the structure of the Esnoga.

**Peroration**

The selection of the Nazarean Paqidim is very intentional. It is also the infrastructure for the Nazarean community that will soon be birthed. The Torah Seder tells us that Ya’aqov “went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.” This is preparatory activity for becoming the nation of Israel. In similar fashion Yeshua’s appointment of Nazarean Paqidim is preparatory of the Nazarean community which would disseminate the Masters Mesorah. Just as Ya’aqov’s sons became the Nation of Priests, the Nazarean Paqidim became the heralds of the Mesorah on a global level. The importance of proclaiming the Mesorah has been stated in the previous commentary. Nevertheless, we will reiterate the point for further clarification. The Mesorah is the *Nomos* - Torah for the perfected community. It has been the salvation of Judaism in the diaspora to this present day. In the future it will be the infrastructure for the community of Messiah and the eventual structure for the Olam HaBa. If we are to be principle agents of those communities we need to begin study, implementation and practice now. This means that Messiah needs what he established in this pericope to be re-established and fully developed now in the present preparatory age. We need Paqidim, Rabbis and Esnogas in every place. This process may begin in strategic areas of the globe. Nevertheless, **we need to begin NOW!**

**Determinate Halakhah**

* **It is the duty of the Nazarean Community to fully develop the Esnoga in their place.**
* **Each Esnoga should work to develop the appropriate infrastructure of Bate Din and Paqidim for the propagation of the Mesorah on a global level.**

**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this week, which particular verse or passage caught your attention and fired your heart and imagination?
2. In your opinion, and taking into consideration all of the above readings for this Sabbath, what is the prophetic message (the idea that encapsulates all the Scripture passages read) for this week.

**Blessing After Torah Study**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Next Shabbat: “VaYar’ Adonai” - “And saw HaShem”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וַיַּרְא יהוה** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“VaYar’ Adonai”** | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 29:31-33 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 30:22-24 |
| **“And saw Ha-Shem”** | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 29:34-30:2 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 30:25-27 |
| **“Y vió Ha-Shem”** | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 30:3-5 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 30:28-30 |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 29:31 - 30:21 | Reader 4 – B’Midbar 30:6-8 |   |
| Ashlamatah: I Samuel 1:2-11 + 2:28 | Reader 5 – B’Midbar 30:9-13 |  **Monday and Thursday Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – B’Midbar 30:14-16 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 30:22-24 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 25:1-22 | Reader 7 – B’Midbar 30:17-21 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 30:25-27 |
|   |      Maftir – B’resheet 30:19-21 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 30:28-30 |
| N.C.: Jude1-2; Luke 6:19-23 |  I Samuel 1:2-11 + 2:28 |   |



Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

Edited by Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham

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1. I Samuel 22:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Midrash Rabbah - Numbers 19:26 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Orach Chaim 166:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. cf. Eliyahu Rabba ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. This introduction was edited and excerpted 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. Psalm 19:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Starting in Bamidbar (Numbers) 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Rashi to Beresheet (Genesis) 29:11 - **11** **and wept** Since he foresaw with the holy spirit that she (Rachel) would not enter the grave with him. Another explanation: Since he came empty-handed, he said, “Eliezer, my grandfather’s servant, had nose rings, and bracelets and sweet fruits in his possession, and I am coming with nothing in my hands. [He had nothing] because Eliphaz the son of Esau had pursued him to kill him at his father’s orders; he (Eliphaz) overtook him, but since he had grown up in Isaac’s lap, he held back his hand. He said to him (Jacob), “What will I do about my father’s orders?” Jacob replied, “Take what I have, for a poor man is counted as dead.”- [from *Bereshit Rabbati* by Rabbi Moshe HaDarshan] [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. One might reasonably ask: If Eliphaz stole all his possessions, then where did Yaakov get the oil to anoint his pillow stone? The Midrash answers by telling us that That night Yaakov had a dream about angels descending and ascending a ladder stretched to the heavens. One of the angels gave Yaakov a miraculous Pach Katan (a small jug). This jug contained pure olive oil that when empty, suddenly became full again. Yaakov used his jug to obtain the funds necessary to finance his trip to Lavan. That was the miraculous jug that Yaakov left on the banks of the river and returned to retrieve, and it is the small bottle that was found to relight the menorah in the days of the Maccabees. (How come all the “good stuff” is in the footnotes?) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Bechorot 55a. See Malbim on Genesis 2:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. This section is an excerpt from: **Patterns in Time**, Vol.1 - Rosh Hashanah, by Matis Weinberg [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Since the duty of derek-eretz commenced with the very first man created, while the Torah was not given until Moses, twenty-six generations later. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. It gives it fluency even where one normally stammers, as the Midrash proceeds to explain. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. This section is an excerpt from: **Patterns in Time**, Vol.1 - Rosh Hashanah, by Matis Weinberg. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Elijah the Prophet [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. I heard the following section from Rabbi Daniel Lapin. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The priestly tunic (Hebrew ketonet כֻּתֹּנֶת) was as an undergarment or shirt worn by the High Priest and priests when they served in the Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. A talmid of the Vilna Gaon. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Nefesh HaChayim 1:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Zevachim62a [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Tosefta, Av.Zar.3:3; ARN 26:41; S.Lieberman, ‘Hellenism in Jewish Palestine (1950), p.163 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. This excerpt is taken from: “Seasons of The Moon” written by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The Foundation Stone (Hebrew: אבן השתייה, transliterated as *Even haShetiya*) or Rock is the name of the rock at the heart of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. It is also known as the Pierced Stone because it has a small hole on the southeastern corner that enters a cavern beneath the rock, known as the Well of Souls. It is the holiest site in Judaism (Midrash Tanchuma, chapter 10); Jewish tradition views it as the spiritual junction of Heaven and Earth. Jews traditionally face it while praying, in the belief that it was the location of the Holy of Holies in the Temple. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Mishlei (Proverbs) 3:18, 11:30, 13:12, 15:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Hebron comes from the Hebrew root “chibbur”, which means *connection*. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Kever is not only the Hebrew word for a grave, but it is also the word for a womb. A kever is literally a portal to and from another world. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ohr Somayach, Torah Weekly - Vayeshev 5758, Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The land of Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. The **Land of Israel** (Hebrew: אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל *ʼÉretz Yiśrāʼēl*, *Eretz Yisrael*) [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. **Chutz La'Aretz**. Jewish. Literally: Outside of the Land (of Israel). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. The shedim “gave” Yeshua honor as A son of G-d. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Yochanan (John) 4:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. See 2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 2:7-9 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *The Tanakh*, 1917, Jewish Publication Society. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Rabbi Mordechai Breuer, 2006, *The Keter Crown Bible*, Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Rabbi Ya’aqov ben Rabbenu Asher, 2005, TUR on the Torah, Translated by ELiyahu Munk, Jerusalem: Lambda Publishers, Vol. I, p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. According to our Sephardi customs and nomenclature, a chief Rabbi of distinction is called a “Gaon” (Aramaic for “prince”, pl. “Geonim”). However, the Messiah is a degree higher than a “prince (“Gaon”), for he is the King of Israel. From this we derive that all Rabbis and Hakhamim are embodiments not only of the Written and Oral Torah, but an embodiment of the Messiah, King of Israel, peace be upon him! [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. **Mk 1:21-28, 29-34, 40-45; 3:7-12; 4:10-12, 33-34; 5:21-43; 7:31-37; 8:22-26, 27-30; 9:2-13, 30-32; and 13:3-4.**  [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. **Mk 1:25-39** [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. From three to six a.m. The temporal expression echoes Mark 1:32 where Yeshua must have recited the Habdalah. Now we see Yeshua “**early in the morning, long before daylight**” reciting the Morning Shema and The Amidah. see Mark 1:32, Luke 6:12, 11:1 and others where it seems that temporal markers suggest either halakhic practices or halakhah concerning prayer, i.e. Zemanim [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Verbal connection to Psa 12:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. **καταδιώκω** (*katadioko*) v. From 2596 and 1377; GK 2870; AV translates as “**follow after**” once. 1 **to follow after, follow up**. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. “The term may sometimes apply to ordinary earthly and possibly contingent facts, but its reference is predominantly to the surprising discovery and mysterious understanding of human existence and historical occurrence in their hidden relationships as seen from the standpoint of and with an ultimate view to the kingdom of God.” *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.(2:769). The Lukan text, Luke 11:1 could be an elucidation of this passage. **Luke 11:1** It happened that while Yeshua was praying in a certain place, after he had finished, one of his talmidim said to Him, "master, teach us to pray just as Yochanan (the immerser) also taught his talmidim." [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. The Greek term clearly indicates that people are looking for Yeshua. We have two things to note. 1. They must be looking for him “early in the morning.” And, they must be looking for him to determine the true halakhic practice concerning recital of the morning Shema. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Neusner, J. (1988). *The Mishnah: A new translation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. p. 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. “Our Redeemer! Adonai, [Master] of Hosts is His Name, Holy One of Israel. Blessed are You Adonai, who redeems Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Neusner, J. (2005). *The Babylonian Talmud, A Translation and Commentary* (Vol. 1 Berakhot). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. p. 54 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The Greek term clearly indicates that people are looking for Yeshua. We have two things to note. 1. They must be looking for him “early in the morning.” And, they must be looking for him to determine the true halakhic practice concerning recital of the morning Shema. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. **Kingdom/governance** (sovereignty) **of G-d** through the Hakhamim and Bate Din as opposed to human kings and presidents, wwhereas until that time Israel had been under kings appointed by G-d, a new dispensation, for lack of a better word, of the governance of G-d was about to be inaugurated after the fall of the Temple and the discontinuance of the Sanhedrin whereby G-d’s people would be ruled by judges and Rabbinic tribunals as it was after Joshua. This system of Judges and Rabbinic Tribunals (Bate Din) required a legal tradition (body of oral Law) which is the “good news” that Yeshua was proclaiming. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Mann, C. (1986). *Mark, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (The Anchor Bible).* New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group Inc. p. 248 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Marcus, J. (2009). *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Mark 8-16, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary.* Yale University. p262ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Taylor, V. (1955). *The Gospel According to Mark.* New York St Martin's Press: MacMillian & Co LTD. pp. 230-1 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. My modification of the Magiera, J. M. (2006). *Aramaic Peshitta New Testament Translation.* Light Of The Word Ministry. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. KJV [↑](#footnote-ref-54)