**Some Questions to Ponder:**

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

The Ashlamata where Jephthah is killed for no good reason. I was impressed, again, with the importance of consulting a Hakham whenever we have a difficult situation.

2 Peter 3:17-18...this confirms that we have been warned to be ever vigilant against false teachers and false doctrines and lawlessness, and this warning is still relevant these two millenia later, and in a strange way, this warning comforts me.

I was touched by the concept of misjudging the fulfillment of a vow found within the Ashlamatah portion (specifically Judges 11:35 and 39). The righteous generosity found within our Father’s justice, is not that which can possibly be understood without redemption. It is therefore our job to seek atonement through the ways prescribed as proper by our Maker, in order to move the Divine Presence to the proper fulfillment of His vow, especially with mind to the innocent burned by the overly zealous misguided.

a. There are so many commandments and explanations of law which rely upon the Jubilee, but there was never a Jubilee declared, and we do not know when the Jubilee will be celebrated.

b. In this last chapter of 2 Tsefet, we are brought through conversion, sanctification and smikha!

c. One cannot exchange a better sacrifice (i.e., HRH King Yeshua) for a worse one (i.e., me). If one is given in place of another, both the original and its replacement shall be consecrated.

The variance of the Shekalim valuation of the redeemed, and His Eminence’s question’s on Mashiach ben Yosef as opposed to Mashiach ben David’s valuation. Most intriguing.

I enjoyed the thought that everyone has a value in the community. Yet, the varied value does not in any diminish who and what we are.

Rabbi Bulka’s explanation of the Mishna and the Commentary of 2 Tsefet.

1. How is Variqra 27:2 related to Vayiqra 27:34?

We start off with the valuation of a person and ends with the declaration that this valuation, along with all of the other commands in this book, are the commandments of HaShem. This suggests that even something as that values an infant (fairly trivial) is still the command of HaShem.

Vayiqra 27:2 is one of the commandments that G-d told Moses to give to the children of Israel in verse 34. Verse 34 is the conclusion and ratification of the discourse of the previous verses. It tells me that according to Targum that God is very serious about what He commands and that not one thing He says is without result whether it is a blessing or a curse. When Hashem speaks it is a commandment.

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:3?

**the [fixed] value... shall be** – What particular value is being used here?

**the value** - What is the meaning of the unusual spelling of this Hebrew word: הָעֶרְכְּךָ?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:7?

**And if [the person is] sixty years old [or over]** – Why is an old man of less value than an old woman? Why does a man decreases [in value] in his old age [to] beyond a third of his value?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:8?

**But if he is [too] poor** – What is “too poor”?

**he shall stand him up** – Who is stood up and before whom?

**according to how much [the one who is vowing his value] can afford** – Who evaluates the value and on what basis is he valued?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:16?

**the valuation shall be according to its sowing** – What are the details that we learn from this pasuk? How is the value of a inherited fields value determined?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:18?

**But if he consecrates his field after the Jubilee, [the kohen should calculate the money for him....** – Does this method apply only in this limited case?

**the kohen shall calculate the money for him, according to the remaining years [until the (next) Jubilee year]** **according to the rate.** - How?

**thereby deducting from the [full] valuation [amount]** – What is deducted?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:25?

**Every valuation shall be made according to the holy shekel** - What valuations are affected by this pasuk?

**one shekel is the equivalent of twenty gerahs** - Has this always been true?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:28?

**However, anything that a man devotes...** – What is devoted property?

**shall not be sold, nor shall it be redeemed** – What is to be done with it?

**all devoted things are holy of holies** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

**[Anything that a man devotes... from any of his property -] whether it be a person** – Can you provide an example?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 27:31?

**[redeem] some of his tithe [... he shall add its fifth]]** – Does this apply when it is redeemed by a friend of the owner?

1. Why did the apostate priests in Jerusalem correctly valued the life of Mashiach ben Yosef as equal to thirty Temple Shekalim of silver – i.e. the valuation of a woman? (cf. Lev. 27:4 & Zechariah 11:12)

Mashiach is the head of the ‘congregation’, speaking of a woman (Ephesians 5:22-33). The head must also be female. Additionally, ‘Mashiach’, the word, is a feminine gendered word, as are Shekinah and Chakma. Mashiach also exhibits the feminine quality of unconditional love.

1. Taking into consideration your findings on the above question, what do you think will be the valuation of Mashiach ben David? Please explain why.

I’d suggest that the value of 30 shekels applies to both Meshichim because they are both the head of the cangregation that is ‘female’ (Ephesians 5:22-33). Both Meshichim are feminine (the word ‘Mashiach’ is still a feminine word).

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the Psalmist‎ in Psalm 89:39-53‎?

The valuation of a female was clearly on his mind as he applied it to Mashiach, as the Psalmist seems to be speaking exclusively about the Mashiach.

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the author of the book of Shofetim in Judges 11:30-40‎?

In Shoftim we see the regret that occurred when Jephthah failed to do a proper evaluation based on the declaration of the Kohen. Clearly, the author wanted to connect this tragedy with the proper action as decreed by our Torah portion.

1. How is the reading of Hakham Tsefet (2 Peter 3:17-18) related to the readings for this Shabbat?

Hakham Tsefet related to the Torah portion with the admonition that we study so that we do not become lawless. He relates to Shoftim by suggesting that as Jephthah could kill his own daughter, we too could come to regret out ordination without diligent study. Finally, Hakham Tsefet relates to the Psalmist by speaking of our connection with Mashiach.

1. In your opinion, what is the chief purpose that Hakham Tsefet wants to address in 2 Peter 3:17-18?

Hakham Tsefet seems to suggests that we should study Torah diligently so that we do not come to regret our ordination.

Remain steadfast by increasing your knowledge of Messiah. The Greek γνώσει gnosei word is often a substitute for דעת da’at. Da’at is the marriage of wisdom and understanding. These two characteristics are not easy to come by. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet suggests that the talmid of the Master must increase in the knowledge of Messiah. There are many facets of Messiah hard to comprehend. The way we will apprehend those subtle aspects is through steadfast diligence.

1. Explain how Hakham Tsefet derived all of his material in 2 Peter 3:17-18 from the Torah Seder for this Shabbat, Psalm 89:39-53, and ‎ Judges 11:30-40?

**Torah Seder**

The entire Torah Seder plays on the value of men, beasts and fields. It seems that Hakham Tsefet looks at all of this data and looks at the real worth of a man. He values the real worth of a man by his commitment to the Torah. What man is the man that is valued beyond all men? The Hakham! Therefore, we should all seek to be Hakhamim not withdrawing from our Ordination.

And, Hakham Tsefet must have known well the argument that was used to cause the defection from Ordination.

Vayikra 27:52. Which Your enemies disgraced, O Lord, which they disgraced the ends of Your anointed.

Targum Vayikra 27:52. For Your enemies have scorned, O LORD, for they have scorned the delay of the footsteps of your Messiah, O LORD.

**Tehillim**

Hakham Tsefet connects with Tehillim through the idea of hiding and forever. Verses 89:46-47

It also seems evident to me that Hakham Tsefet was inspired to this notion from the Psalmist.

Psalms 89:39. But You abandoned and You rejected; You became wroth with Your anointed. (v17 withdrawing from your own ordination)

**Ashlamatah**

Judges11:30. And Jephthah vowed a vow to the Lord, and said, If you shall without fail deliver the Ammonites into my hands,

This vow was not a valid vow. Jephthah acts improperly when he makes this vow. His act is actually an act of lawlessness. He should have gone to Phinehas to have this vow annulled. His pride and position as a Judge caused him to err . Therefore, like the Ordained who defected because of his lack of wisdom and knowledge of Messiah, Jephthah errs in his rash vow.

1. How are the readings for this Shabbat communicating that a new Book of the Torah is coming upon us?

The Torah portion ends with a declaration that all of the commands of this book are the commands of HaShem as a summation. The Ashlamata closes a chapter on Jephthah’s daughter as an ending. The Psalmist finishes with Amen V’Amen which signifies a closing with an agreement.

Leviticus 27 is the last chapter of the book. It ends with a discussion of vows, words which change people’s lives. After reading Leviticus 27, it is customary for some congregations to proclaim: Chazak! Chazak! Venischazeik! (Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!)

Psalm 89 is a transitional psalm. It does not “resolve” the issues surrounding Mashiach, but alludes to the transformative/age changing “footsteps of Mashiach.”

Judges 11 is not the end of the book, but it is the end for Jephthah’s daughter as she is sent into lifelong seclusion, and the beginning of a tradition of mourning with her by the daughters of Israel for four days each year (a foreshadowing of the four fasting/mourning days of the year), and a turning point for both Jephthah and Phinehas, because of what occurred.

The letter of 2 Peter is also finished. It closes with a warning of transitory and treacherous times ahead and the need for heightened awareness and maturity in the coming transition.

1. From the reading of Leviticus 27:34 what important principle is disclosed here?

It is extremely important that we do not perform the commandments according to what seems right to us, rather we should consult a Hakham so that we can learn and be carefull to perform the commandments correctly. As Moshe conveyed, so the Hakham should convey. As there was a written and an oral portion given to Moshe, so it is also for us. We come to HaShem because ***we*** were at Sinai.

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

Be very careful to consult the Hakham when we encounter halachic questions or difficult circumstances.

You can choose your worth for both worlds by how you apply Torah Study to your life now.

Sincerity of heart comes from diligent Torah Study and being disciple by a Hakham that understands authentic halakha…………………..Study, listen…………..obey,

Put into practice and guard that which we have received from on High.

“Make a [Torah] teacher for yourself, acquire a study-companion for yourself and judge all individuals charitably.” This will “translate theory into reality and abstract knowledge into human wisdom.” Work together with all the others in the group to become a “learned congregation that not only knows well, but also practices what it knows individually and as a group.”

We should be very careful in learning/living the Torah to avoid the traps of this world.

We must form our commitment in mind and of heart to be set to the task. Let us be then committed to seeking the footsteps of His Anointed. For these, Father, we ask.

We are to strive to find, and keep, true Torah teachers. We are to study Torah, but not without a trusted, true teacher of Torah. We are not to lean to our own understanding during our studies, but we are to seek Godly counsel in the spiritual matters, as well as life in general. If we try to be a lone wolf, and study it without a rabbi, we will not understand and we will err in how we apply it to our lives and walk it out.

It is not enough to just study scriptures on your own, and not even enough to have just any teacher/pastor teach you about the scriptures, because we are warned that many, many, MANY are false teachers, and they will destroy us and mislead us with their deceptions, and sometimes they KNOWINGLY do this by leaning to their own reasoning of how and why they perverse/twist/change the word of G-d. Many times, though, false teachers are simply misled themselves. Either way, false teachers are more numerous than true teachers and you have to be wary and diligent about fining a true teacher of Torah. We are to be on our guard so we are not deceived by false teachers and prophets. We are to study Torah under true Torah teachers, so we may grow in G-dly grace and wisdom and stay on the right path.

The prophetic message for this week is to remember G-d in all we do. We should know that God places value on us. We should live our live everyday to Hashem.