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**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** |
| **Sivan 28, 5783 – June 16/17, 2023** | **First Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

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

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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](mailto:gkilli@aol.com%20) **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

**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!**

**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!

**We pray for our beloved Hakham His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai. Mi Sheberach…He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal the sick person HE Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai, May the Holy One, Blessed is He, be filled with compassion for him to restore his health, to heal him, to strengthen him, and to revivify him. And may He send him speedily a complete recovery from heaven, among the other sick people of Yisrael, a recovery of the body and a recovery of the spirit, swiftly and soon, and we will say amen ve amen!**

**Shabbat: “VaYeshev” - “And dwelt”**

**Sivan 28, 5783 -** **June 16/17, 2023**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וַיֵּשֶׁב** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“VaYeshev”** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 37:1-3 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 38:1-3 |
| **“And dwelt”** | Reader 2 – B’resheet 37:4-8 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 38:4-6 |
| **“Y habitó”** | Reader 3 – B’resheet 37:9-11 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 38:7-10 |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 37:1-36‎ | Reader 4 – B’resheet 37:12-17 |  |
| Ashlamatah:  Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 32:18 – 33:6, 15 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 37:18-22 | **Monday and Thursday Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – B’resheet 37:23-27 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 38:1-3 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 31:1-25 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 37:28-36 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 38:4-6 |
| Yehudah 14-16, Luke 7:18-23 | Maftir – B’resheet 37:34-36 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 38:7-10 |
|  | Isaiah 32:18 – 33:6, 15 |  |

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

 The Story of Jacob’s Family – Gen. 37:1-4

 Joseph and his Dreams – Gen. 37:5-11

 Joseph is Commanded by his Father to Visit his Brothers – Gen. 37:12-22

 A Plot Carried Out Against Joseph – Gen. 37:23-30

 Joseph’s Brothers Try to Deceive Their Father – Gen. 37:31-36

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan** **for: B’resheet (Genesis) 37:1-36‎**

| **Rashi’s Translation** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Jacob **dwelt in the land** of his father’s sojournings, in the land of Canaan. | 1. And Ya’aqob **dwelt in peace in the land** of the sojourning of his fathers, in the land of Kenaan. |
| 2. These are the generations of Jacob: when Joseph was seventeen years old, being a shepherd, he was with his brothers with the flocks, and he was a lad, [and was] with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives; and Joseph brought evil tales about them to their father. | 2. These are the generations of Ya’aqob. Yosef was a son of seventeen years. He had come forth from the school, and was a youth brought up with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpha his fathers wives. And Yosef brought their evil report; for he had seen them eat the flesh that had been torn by wild beasts, the ears and the tails; and he came and told it to his father. |
| 3. And Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was a son of his old age; and he made him a fine woolen coat. | 3. And Israel loved Yosef more than all his sons, because the likeness of Yosef resembled his own, and he made him a figured robe. |
| 4. And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, so they hated him, and they could not speak with him peacefully. | 4. And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, and they cherished enmity against him, and were unwilling to speak peacefully with him. |
| 5. And Joseph dreamed a dream and told his brothers, and they continued to hate him. | 5. And Yosef dreamed a dream, and declared it to his brethren, and they added yet to keep enmity against him. |
| 6. And he said to them, “Listen now to this dream, which I have dreamed: | 6. And he said to them, Hear now this dream which I have dreamed. |
| 7. Behold, we were binding sheaves in the midst of the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright, and behold, your sheaves encircled [it] and prostrated themselves to my sheaf.” | 7. Behold, we were binding sheaves in the midst of the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves surrounded and bowed to my sheaf. |
| 8. So his brothers said to him, “Will you reign over us, or will you govern us?” And they continued further to hate him on account of his dreams and on account of his words. | 8. And his brothers said to him, Are you thinking to reign over us, or do you expect to have rule over us? And they added yet to keep enmity against him, for his dream and for his words. |
| 9. And he again dreamed another dream, and he related it to his brothers, and he said, “Behold, I have dreamed another dream, and behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were prostrating themselves to me.” | 9. And he dreamed again another dream, and told it to his brothers, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream, and lo, the sun, and the moon, and eleven stars, bowed to me. |
| 10. And he told [it] to his father and to his brothers, and his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Will we come I, your mother, and your brothers to prostrate ourselves to you to the ground?” | 10. And he related it to his father and to his brethren: but his father rebuked him, and said to him, What dream is this that you have dreamed? Will I, and your mother, and your brethren, really come and bow before you to the ground? |
| 11. So his brothers envied him, but his father awaited the matter. | 11. And his brothers envied him; yet his father kept the saying in his heart. |
| 12. And his brothers went to pasture their father’s flocks in Shechem. | 12. And his brothers went to feed their father’s flock in Shekem. |
| 13. And Israel said to Joseph, “Are your brothers not pasturing in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them.” And he said to him, “Here I am.” | 13. And it was at the time of days that Israel said to Yosef, Do not your brethren feed in Shekem? But I am afraid lest the Hivaee come and smite them, because they smote Hamor and Shekem and the inhabitants of the city. Come now; and I will send you to them And he said, Behold me. |
| 14. So he said to him, “Go now and see to your brothers’ welfare and the welfare of the flocks, and bring me back word.” So he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. | 14. And he said, Go, see the welfare of your brethren, and the welfare of the flock, and return me word to the deep Counsel. But he sent him according to the deep counsel which was spoken to Abraham in Hebron; for on that day began the captivity of Mizraim. And Yosef arose, and came to Shekem. |
| 15. Then a man found him, and behold, he was straying in the field, and the man asked him, saying, “What are you looking for?” | 15. And Gabriel in the likeness of a man found him wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, What do you seek? |
| 16. And he said, “I am looking for my brothers. Tell me now, where are they pasturing?” | 16. And he said, I seek my brothers; show me, pray, where they feed. |
| 17. And the man said, “They have traveled away from here, for I overheard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’ “ So Joseph went after his brothers, and he found them in Dothan. | 17. And the man said, They have journeyed from here: for I heard beyond the Veil, that behold from today would begin the servitude to the Mizraee; and it was said to them in prophecy, Hivaee would seek to set battle in array against them. Therefore said they, we will go unto Dothan. |
| 18. And they saw him from afar, and when he had not yet drawn near to them, they plotted against him to put him to death. | 18. And Yosef went after his brothers, and found them in Dothan. And they saw him from afar, before he had come near to them, and plotted against him to kill him. |
| 19. So they said one to the other, “Behold, that dreamer is coming. | 19. And Shim’on and Levi, who were brothers in counsel, said each man to his brother, Behold, this master of dreams comes. |
| 20. So now, let us kill him, and we will cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, ‘A wild beast devoured him,’ and we will see what will become of his dreams.” | 20. And now come let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits and say that an evil beast has devoured him; and we will see what will be the interpretation of his dreams. |
| 21. But Reuben heard, and he saved him from their hand[s], and he said, “Let us not deal him a deadly blow.” | 21. And Reuben heard, and delivered him from their hands, and said, We will not kill him nor become guilty of his blood. |
| 22. And Reuben said to them, “Do not shed blood! Cast him into this pit, which is in the desert, but do not lay a hand upon him,” in order to save him from from their hand[s], to return him to his father. | 22. And Reuben said, Let us not shed innocent blood. Throw him into this pit in the wilderness, but the hand of the slayer stretch not forth against him; because he would deliver him from their hand, and restore him to his father. |
| 23. Now it came to pass when Joseph came to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his shirt, of the fine woolen coat which was upon him. | 23. And when Yosef came to his brothers, they stripped him of his garment, the figured garment that was on him, |
| 24. And they took him and cast him into the pit; now the pit was empty there was no water in it. | 24. and took and threw him into the pit; but the pit was empty, no water was therein, but serpents and scorpions were in it. |
| 25. And they sat down to eat a meal, and they lifted their eyes and saw, and behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, and their camels were carrying spices, balm, and lotus, going to take [it] down to Egypt. | 25. And they sat around to eat bread. And they lifted up their eyes, and looked, and behold a band of Arabians were coming from Gilead with their camels, carrying wax, resin, balsam and stacte, proceeding to go into Mizraim. |
| 26. And Judah said to his brothers, “What is the gain if we slay our brother and cover up his blood? | 26. And Jehuda said to his brethren, What profit of mammon should we have if we killed our brother, and covered his blood? |
| 27. Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, but our hand shall not be upon him, for he is our brother, our flesh.” And his brothers hearkened. | 27. Come, let us sell him to the Arabians, and our hands will not be upon him to kill him; for our brother is our own flesh. And his brethren agreed. |
| 28. Then Midianite men, merchants, passed by, and they pulled and lifted Joseph from the pit, and they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty silver [pieces], and they brought Joseph to Egypt. | 28. And the Midianite men, masters of business, passed by; and they drew and brought up Yosef out of the pit, and sold Yosef to the Arabians for twenty mahin of silver; and they bought sandals of them. And they brought Yosef to Mizraim. |
| 29. And Reuben returned to the pit, and behold, Joseph was not in the pit; so he rent his garments. | 29. And Reuben returned to the pit; for he had not been with them to assist when they sold him, because he had sat fasting on account that he had confounded the couch of his father; and he had gone and sat among the hills, that he might return to the pit and bring him up for his father, if haply he might avert his anger. But when he had returned, and looked, and, behold, Yosef was not in the pit, he rent his clothes, |
| 30. And he returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is gone! And I where will I go?” | 30. and returned to his brethren, and said, The youth is not; and I, where will I go, and how will I see the look of my father’s face? |
| 31. And they took Joseph’s coat, and they slaughtered a kid, and they dipped the coat in the blood. | 31. But they took the garment of Yosef, and killed a kid of the goats, because his blood is like the blood of a man, and they dabbled the garment in the blood. |
| 32. And they sent the fine woolen coat, and they brought [it] to their father, and they said, “We have found this; now recognize whether it is your son’s coat or not.” | 32. And they sent it by the hand of the sons of Zilpha and of the sons of Bilhah the figured garment; and they brought it to their father, and said, This have we found; know now, whether it be your son’s garment, or not. |
| 33. He recognized it, and he said, “[It is] my son’s coat; a wild beast has devoured him; Joseph has surely been torn up.” | 33. And he recognised it and said, It is my son’s garment: a beast of the wilderness has not devoured him, neither has he been slain by the hand of man; but I see by the Holy Spirit, that an evil woman stands against him. |
| 34. And Jacob rent his garments, and he put sackcloth on his loins, and he mourned for his son many days. | 34. And Ya’aqob rent his clothes, and wrapped sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. |
| 35. And all his sons and all his daughters arose to console him, but he refused to be consoled, for he said, “Because I will descend on account of my son as a mourner to the grave”; and his father wept for him. | 35. And all his sons and all the men of his house arose and went to console him; but he refused to receive consolation, and said, For I will go down to my son mourning to the house of the grave. And Yitzchaq his father also wept for him. |
| 36. And the Medanites sold him to Egypt, to Potiphar, Pharaoh’s chamberlain, chief of the slaughterers. | 36. But the Midianites sold him in Mizraim to Potiphar a captain of Pharoh, a captain of the guards. |

**Reading Assignment:**

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| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1990)  **Vol. 3a – “The Twelve Tribes” pp. 271 - 298** | **Ramban: Genesis Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1971)  **pp. 463 - 479** |

**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 follows:

**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.

**Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎** **B’resheet (Genesis) ‎‎‎‎**‎‎‎‎‎‎‎**37:1-36**

**1 Jacob dwelt** Scripture described Esau’s settlements and his generations, [but only] briefly, because they were not distinguished nor important enough to elaborate on [in detail] how they settled and the order of their wars, [or] how they drove out the Horites. [In contrast] it (Scripture) elaborates at length on the settlements of Jacob and his generations, and all the events that brought these about, since they were [considered] important [enough] to the Omnipresent to dwell upon at length. Similarly, you find regarding the ten generations from Adam to Noah: So-and- so begot so-and-so, but when it (Scripture) reached Noah, it dwelt upon him at length. Likewise, with the ten generations from Noah to Abraham, it dealt [only] briefly with them, but when it reached Abraham, it dwelt upon him at length. This can be compared to a pearl that falls into the sand: A person searches in the sand and sifts it with a sieve until he finds the pearl, and when he finds it, he casts the pebbles from his hand and keeps the pearl. (Another interpretation of “Jacob dwelt”—The camels of a flax dealer [once] entered [a town], laden with flax. The blacksmith wondered, “Where will all this flax go?” One clever fellow answered him, “One spark will come out of your bellows, which will burn it all.” **So did Jacob see all the chieftains [of Esau] mentioned above (36:15-19, 40-43). He wondered and said, “Who can conquer them all?” What is written below? “These are the generations of Jacob: Joseph” (verse 2), only, and it is written: “And the house of Jacob shall be fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau shall become stubble” (Obadiah 1:18). One spark will emerge from Joseph, which will destroy and consume them all. From an old Rashi.) [From Tanchuma Vayeshev 1]**

**2 These are the generations of Jacob** And these are those of the generations of Jacob. These are their settlements and their wanderings until they came to settle. The first cause [of their wanderings]: when Joseph was seventeen years old, etc. Through this [the events that unfolded], they wandered and descended to Egypt. This is according to the plain explanation of the verse, putting everything in its proper perspective. The Midrash Aggadah, however, interprets [the passage as follows]: Scripture bases the generations of Jacob on Joseph because of many things: one is that, with his entire being, Jacob served Laban only for Rachel [and Rachel bore Joseph]. In addition, Joseph’s features resembled his (Jacob’s), and whatever happened to Jacob happened to Joseph. This one (Jacob) was hated, and that one (Joseph) was hated. This one—his brother (Esau) sought to kill him, and that one his brothers sought to kill him, and likewise many [other similarities related] in Genesis Rabbah (84:6). It is further expounded upon [as follows]: “dwelt” (verse 1) When Jacob sought to dwell in tranquility, the troubles of Joseph sprang upon him. **The righteous/generous seek to dwell in tranquility. Said the Holy One, blessed be He, “What is prepared for the righteous/generous in the world to come is not sufficient for them, but they seek [also] to dwell in tranquility in this world!”**

**and he was a lad** He behaved childishly, fixing his hair and touching up his eyes so that he would appear handsome. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:7]

**with the sons of Bilhah** That is to say, he was frequently with the sons of Bilhah, because his [other] brothers would demean them, while he acted friendly toward them. [From Tanchuma Vayeshev 7]

**evil tales about them**-Any evil he saw in his brothers, the sons of Leah, he would tell his father: **1) that they ate limbs from living animals, 2) that they demeaned the sons of the handmaids by calling them slaves, and 3) that they were suspected of illicit sexual relationships. For these three [tales] he was punished: For [the report that his brothers ate] limbs from living animals, “they slaughtered a kid” (Gen. 37:31) when they sold him, and did not eat it alive. For the report that he told about them that they called their brothers slaves, “Joseph was sold as a slave” (Ps. 105:17), and concerning the illicit sexual relationships that he told about them, “his master’s wife lifted her eyes, etc.”** (Gen. 39:7).

**Tales about them** Heb. דִּבָּתָם Every expression of דִּבָּה denotes parlediz in Old French, gossip, slander. Whatever evil he could tell about them he told. **דִּבָּה is an expression of making the lips of the sleeping speak**(דוֹבֵב) .

**3 a son of his old age** Heb. – בֶן זְקֻנִים , for he was born to him in his old age (Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 38). Onkelos rendered: for he was a wise son to him. **Whatever he had learned from Shem and Eber he gave over to him.** Another explanation: for his (Joseph’s) features (זִיו אִיקוֹנִין) resembled his own (those of Jacob). [From Gen. Rabbah 84:8]

**fine woolen** Heb. פַּסִים , a term meaning fine woolen garments, like “green wool (כַּרְפַּס) and blue wool” (Esther 1:6), and like the fine woolen coat (כְתֽנֶת פַּסִים) of Tamar and Amnon (II Sam. 13:18). The Midrash Aggadah, however, explains that it was called פַּסִים because of his (Joseph’s) troubles, namely, that he was sold to Potiphar (פּוֹטִפַר) , to the merchants (סוֹחֲרִים) , to the Ishmaelites (יִשְׁמְעִאלִים) , and to the Midianites (מִדְיָנִים) . [From Gen. Rabbah 84:8]

**4 and they could not speak with him peacefully** From what is stated to their discredit, we may learn something to their credit, that they did not say one thing with their mouth and think differently in their heart. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:9]

**speak with him** Heb. דַבְּרוֹ , [the equivalent of] לְדַבֵּר עִמוֹ , to speak with him. [From Targum Onkelos]

**7 binding sheaves** Heb. מְאַלְּמִים אֲלֻמִים , as the Targum renders: מְאַסְרִין אֱסָרִין , sheaves, and likewise, carrying his sheaves (אֲלֻמוֹתָיו) (Ps. 126:6). The same is found in the Mishnah: But [if one finds] large sheaves (וְהָאֲלֻמוֹת) , one must take [them] and announce [them] (Baba Mezia 22b).

**my sheaf arose** It stood erect.

**And also stood upright** It remained standing erect in its place.

**8 and on account of his words** Because of the evil tales that he would bring to their father.

**10 And he told [it] to his father and to his brothers** After he told it to his brothers, he told it again to his father in their presence.

**His father rebuked him** because he was bringing hatred upon himself.

**Will we come** Isn’t your mother (Rachel) already dead? But he (Jacob) did not know that the matters referred to Bilhah, who had raised him (Joseph) as [if she were] his mother (Gen. Rabbah 84:11). **Our Rabbis, however, derived from here that there is no dream without meaningless components (Ber. 55a/b).** Jacob, however, intended to make his sons forget the whole matter, so that they would not envy him (Joseph). Therefore, he said, “Will we come, etc.” Just as it is impossible for your mother, so is the rest meaningless.

**11 awaited the matter** Heb. שָׁמַר . He was waiting and looking forward in expectation of when it (the fulfillment) would come. Similarly, “awaiting (שׁוֹמֵר) the realization [of God’s promise]” (Isa. 26:2), [and] “You do not wait (תִשְׁמוֹר) for my sin” (Job 14:16). You do not wait. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:12]

**12 to pasture their father’s flocks** Heb. לִרְעוֹת אֶת-צֽאן . There are dots over the word אֶת , for they went only to “pasture” [i.e., feed] themselves. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:13]

**13 “Here I am.”** An expression of modesty and eagerness. He went with alacrity to fulfill his father’s command although he knew that his brothers hated him. [From Mechilta Beshallach, second treatise, introduction]

**14 from...Hebron** But is not Hebron on a mountain? It is stated: “And they ascended in the south, and he came as far as Hebron” (Num. 13:22). But [it is to be understood that he sent him] from the deep counsel of the righteous man who is buried in Hebron (i.e., Abraham), to fulfill what was said to Abraham between the parts (Gen. 15:13). [From Gen. Rabbah 84:13]

**and he came to Shechem** a place destined for misfortune. There the tribes sinned, there Dinah was violated, there the kingdom of the house of David was divided, as it is said: “And Rehoboam went to Shechem” (I Kings 12:1). [From Sanh. 102a]

**15 Then a man found him** This is [the angel] Gabriel, as it is said: “And the man Gabriel” (Dan. 9:21). [From Tanchuma Vayeshev 2]

**17 They have traveled away from here** They removed themselves from brotherhood.

**‘Let us go to Dothan.’** Heb. נֵלְכָה דֽתָינָה , to seek regarding you legal pretexts (נִכְלֵי דָתוֹת) , by which they could put you to death. According to its simple meaning, however, it is a place- name, and a Biblical verse never loses its simple sense.

**18 they plotted** Heb. וַיִתְנַכְּלוּ . They were filled with plots and cunning.

**Against him** Heb. אֽתוֹ , similar to אִתּוֹ or עִמוֹ , i.e. אֵלָיו , to him.

**20 and we will see what will become of his dreams** Rabbi Isaac said, This verse says: “Expound on me.” [I.e., this verse demands a midrashic interpretation.] The Holy Spirit says thus: They (the brothers) say, “Let us kill him,” but the verse concludes: “and we will see what will become of his dreams.” Let us see whose word will stand up, yours or Mine. It is impossible that they (the brothers) are saying, “and we will see what will become of his dreams,” because, since they will kill him, his dreams will come to nought. [From Tan. Buber, Vayeshev 13]

**21 “Let us not deal him a deadly blow.”** Heb. לֹא נַכֶּנוּ נָפֶשׁ . Literally, let us not smite him the soul. [This is equivalent to] מַכַּת נֶפֶשׁ , [let us not deal him] a deadly blow, which means death. [From Targum Onkelos]

**22 to save him** The Holy Spirit testifies for Reuben that he said this only to save him, so that he would [be able to] come and take him out of there. He said, “I am the firstborn and the eldest of them all. The sin will be attributed only to me.” [from Gen. Rabbah 84:15]

**23 that they stripped Joseph of his shirt** This is the shirt.

**Of the fine woolen coat which was upon him** This is what his father gave to him, more than his brothers. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:16]

**24 now the pit was empty—there was no water in it** Since it says: “now the pit was empty,” do I not know that there was no water in it? For what purpose did the Torah write, “there was no water in it”? [To inform us that] there was no water in it, but there were snakes and scorpions in it. [From Shab. 22a, Chag. 3a]

**25 a caravan** Heb. אֽרְחַת , as the Targum renders שְׁיָרַת , [ אֽרְחַת ] because of those who travel on the way (אֽרַח) .

**and their camels were carrying, etc.** Why did Scripture publicize their burden? To let you know the reward of the righteous/generous, for it is customary for Arabs to carry only naphtha and tar, whose odor is foul, but for this one (Joseph) it was arranged [that they should be carrying] spices, so that he should not be afflicted by a foul odor. [Mechilta Beshallach, treatise 2, section 5]

**spices** Heb. נְכֽאת . Any collection of many spices is called נְכֽאת . Similarly, “and he showed them his entire storeroom of spices (בֵּית נְכֽתֽה) ” (II Kings 20:13), the compounding of his spices. Onkelos, however, renders it as a word meaning wax.

**Balm** Heb. וּצְרִי , a sap that drips from balsam trees, and this is נָטָתּ , sap, which is enumerated with the ingredients of the incense [used in the Temple] (Exod. 30:34-38).

**And lotus** Heb. וָלֽט . This is called לוֹטִיתָא in the language of the Mishnah (Shevi’ith 7:6). Our Sages defined it as a root of an herb, called aristolochie, birthwort, in Tractate Niddah (8a).

**26 What is the gain** What money [will we profit]? As the Targum renders.

**And cover up his blood** And conceal his death.

**27 And… hearkened** Heb. וַיִשְׁמְעוּ , [which the Targum renders:] וְקַבִּילוּ מִינֵיהּ , and they accepted from him. Every instance of שְׁמִיעָה that signifies acceptance, such as this one and such as “And Jacob listened (וַיִשְׁמַע) to his father” (Gen. 28:7), “We will do, and we will listen (וְנִשְׁמָע) ” (Exod. 24:7), is translated נְקַבֵּל . Every instance that means the hearing of the ear, [however,] such as “And they heard (וַיִשְׁמְעוּ) the voice of the Lord God going in the garden” (Gen. 3:8), “But Rebecca overheard (שׁוֹמַעַת) ” (ibid. 27:5), “and Israel heard (וַיִשְׁמַע) [of it]” (ibid. 35:22), “I have heard (שָׁמַעְתִּי) the complaints” (Exod. 16:12), are all rendered [respectively]: וּשְׁמַע , וּשְׁמָעַת , וּשְׁמָעוּ , שְׁמִיעַ קֳדָמַי .

**28 Then Midianite men, merchants, passed by** This is another caravan, and Scripture informs you that he was sold many times. [From Tanchuma Buber, Vayeshev 13]

**and they pulled** The sons of Jacob [pulled] Joseph out the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites, and the Ishmaelites to the Midianites, and the Midianites to Egypt. [From Midrash Asarah Harugei Malchuth]

**29 And Reuben returned** But when he (Joseph) was sold, he (Reuben) was not there, for his day to go and serve his father had arrived (Gen. Rabbah 84:15). Another explanation: He was busy with his sackcloth and his fasting for disarranging his father’s bed (Peskikta d’Rav esieged. 25.

**30 …where will I go?** Where will I flee from Father’s pain?

**31 and they slaughtered a kid** Its blood resembles that of a human. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:19, Targum Jonathan]

**the coat** Heb. הַכֻּתּֽנֶת . This is its name. [I.e. this is the absolute state.] But when it is connected to another word [i.e. in the construct state], as in “Joseph’s coat” (כְּתֽנֶת יוֹסֵף) , “a fine woolen coat” (כְּתֽנֶת פַּסִים) (above, verse 3), [and] “a linen shirt” (כְּתֽנֶת בַּד) (Lev. 16:4), it is vowelized כְּתֽנֶת .

**33 and he said, “[It is] my son’s coat…”** It is [my son’s coat]. [From targumim]

**a wild beast has devoured him** [This means that] the Holy Spirit flickered within him: Potiphar’s wife will ultimately provoke him (Gen. Rabbah 84:19). Now why did the Holy One, blessed be He, not reveal it (the truth) to him? Because they (the brothers) excommunicated and cursed anyone who would reveal [it], and they included the Holy One, blessed be He, with them, but Isaac, however, knew that he was alive [but] he said, “How can I reveal it if the Holy One, blessed be He, does not wish to reveal it to him?” [from Tanchuma Miketz]

**34 many days** Twenty-two years from the time he (Joseph) left him until Jacob went down to Egypt, as it is said: “Joseph was seventeen years old, etc.” (verse 2), and he was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh, and the seven years of plenty, “For this is already two years of the famine” (Gen. 45:6) when Jacob came to Egypt. Here are 22 years corresponding to the 22 years that Jacob did not fulfill [the mitzvah] to honor his father and mother: 20 years that he was in Laban’s house, and two years that he was on the road when he returned from Laban’s house, one and a half years in Succoth and six months in Beth-el. This is what he [meant when he] said to Laban, “This is twenty years for me in your house” (Gen. 31:41). They are for me, upon me, and I will ultimately suffer [for twenty years], corresponding to them. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:20, Meg. 16b-17a]

**35 and all his daughters** Rabbi Judah says: Twin sisters were born with every tribe, and they married them. Rabbi Nehemiah says: They were Canaanite women. But what is the meaning of “and all his daughters”? A person does not hesitate to call his son-in-law his son and his daughter-in-law his daughter. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:21]

**but he refused to be consoled** No one accepts consolation for a person who is really alive but believed to be dead, for it is decreed that a dead person should be forgotten from the heart, but not a living person. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:21, Pes. 54b]

**I will descend on account of my son** Heb. אֶל-בְּנִי . There are many instances of אֶל that serve as an expression of עַל , “on account of,” e.g. “on account of (אֶל) Saul and on account of (וְאֶל) the bloody house” (II Sam. 21:1); “because (אֶל) the Ark of God had been taken and because of (וְאֶל) (the death of) (sic) her father-in-law and her husband” (I Sam. 4:21).

**As a mourner to the grave** Heb. שְׁאֽלָה . According to its simple meaning, it is a term denoting the grave. In my mourning I will be buried, and I will not be consoled all my days (Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel). [According to] its midrashic interpretation, however, [ שְׁאוֽל means] Gehinom. This sign was given into my hand from God, that if none of my sons dies within my lifetime, I am assured that I will not see the face of Gehinnom. [From Tanchuma Vayigash 9, Midrash Yelammedenu]

**and his father wept for him** This refers to Isaac. He was weeping over Jacob’s distress, but he did not mourn [for Joseph], for he knew that he was alive. [From Gen. Rabbah 84:21]

**36 chief of the slaughterers** Those who slaughter the king’s animals.

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Tehillin (Psalms)** ‎‎‎**31:1-25**

| **Rashi’s Translation** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. To the conductor, a song of David. | 1. For praise; a psalm of David. |
| 2. I took refuge in You, O Lord; let me not be shamed forever; rescue me with Your righteousness. | 2. In your word, O LORD, I have placed my hope; I will never be disappointed; by your generosity save me. |
| 3. Incline Your ear to me, quickly rescue me; be a rock of strength to me, a stronghold to save me. | 3. Incline your ear to me, in haste save me. Be for me a strong fortress, a fortified stronghold to redeem me. |
| 4. For You are my Rock and my Stronghold, and for Your name’s sake, You shall lead me and guide me. | 4. For you are my strength and trust; and for the sake of your name, guide me and sustain me. |
| 5. You shall free me from this net which they have hidden for me, for You are my stronghold. | 5. Take me out of this net that they spread for me, for you are my strength. |
| 6. In Your hand I entrust my spirit; You have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth. | 6. Into your hand I will place my spirit; you have redeemed me, O LORD, true God. |
| 7. I hated those who await worthless vanities, but I hoped for the Lord. | 7. I hate those who observe practices that are like vanity and lies; but I have relied on the LORD. |
| 8. I will exult and rejoice in Your kindness, for You have seen my affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul. | 8. I will rejoice and be glad in your kindness, for you have seen my affliction, you know the troubles of my soul. |
| 9. And you did not deliver me into the hands of an enemy; You have placed my feet in a broad place. | 9. And you have not handed me over to the hand of my enemy; you have made my feet stand in a broad place. |
| 10. Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye is dimmed from anger, my soul and my belly. | 10. Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in distress. My eye is wasted from agitation; my soul and my belly are destroyed. |
| 11. For my life is spent in grief and my years in sighing; my strength has failed because of my iniquity, and my bones have decayed. | 11. For my life is ended in misery, and my years in sighing; my strength has failed because of my sin, and my limbs are used up. |
| 12. From all my tormentors I have become a reproach-and very much so to my neighbors-and fright to my acquaintances; those who see me outside avoid me. | 12. I have become a more shameful thing than all my oppressors, and more so to my neighborsÐ a fearful thing to those who know me, those who see me in the street flee from my presence. |
| 13. I was forgotten like a dead person, out of mind; I was like a lost utensil. | 13. I am forgotten like a dead man from the mind; I have become like a broken vessel of the potter. |
| 14. For I heard the gossip of many, terror from all sides when they take counsel together against me; they plotted to take my soul. | 14. Because I have heard an evil report which many peoples say about me; terror is all around when they gather together against me; they have planned to take my soul. |
| 15. But I trusted in You, O Lord; I said, “You are my God.” | 15. But I have put my trust in you, O LORD; I said, “You are my God. |
| 16. My times are in Your hands; rescue me from the hands of my enemies and from my pursuers. | 16. In your hand are the times of my redemption; save me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. |
| 17. Cause Your countenance to shine upon Your servant; save me with Your kindness. | 17. Shine your countenance on your servant; redeem me by your goodness. |
| 18. O Lord, let me not be shamed because I called out to You; let the wicked be shamed, let them be silenced to the grave. | 18. O LORD, I will not be disappointed, for I have called upon you; let the wicked be disappointed, let them be silent and descend to Sheol. |
| 19. Let lying lips become mute, those that speak against a righteous man falsely, with haughtiness and disdain. | 19. Let the lips of falsehood be stopped up, the lips that speak slander against the righteous in pride and contempt. |
| 20. **How great is Your goodness that You have laid away for those who fear You, that You have worked for those who take refuge in You, in the presence of the sons of men!** | 20. **How great is your goodness that you have hidden for those that fear you; you have acted for those who hope in you, to pay them a good reward in front of the sons of men.** |
| 21. **You shall hide them in the secrecy of Your countenance, from bands of men; protect them in a shelter from the strife of tongues.** | 21. **You will hide them in a hiding place in the time of your anger from troops of warriors; you will conceal them as in a shelter from the strife of tongues.** |
| 22. Blessed is the Lord for He has been wondrously kind to me in a besieged city. | 22. Blessed be the LORD, for he has exhibited his kindness to me in the walled city. |
| 23. But I said in my haste, “I have been cut off from before Your eyes,” but You heard the voice of my supplications when I cried out to You. | 23. And I thought when I sought to flee, I have been eliminated from the presence of your glory; but in truth you heard the sound of my prayer when I made supplication to you. |
| 24. **Love the Lord, all His pious ones. The Lord guards those who believe [in Him] and He pays with a bowstring him who works with haughtiness.** | 24. **Love the LORD, all his devotees; the LORD keeps the faithful from harm, and pays back the haughty who act proudly.** |
| 25. **Strengthen yourselves, and He will give your heart courage, all who hope to the Lord.** | 25. **Be strong, and let your mind be sturdy, all you who have confidence in the word of the LORD.** |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Tehillim (Psalms)** ‎‎‎‎**31:1-25**

**3 a stronghold** Pleysiz in Old French, **a fortress.**

**4 You shall lead me** Heb. תנחני , mene moi in French, lead me, as (in Exod. 32:34): “go lead (נחה) the people.”

**6 I entrust** Heb. אפקיד , komondere in Old French, I will entrust. I always entrust my spirit because You redeemed me from trouble.

**7 those who await worthless vanities** Who await the salvation of pagan deities.

**9 deliver me** Heb. הסגרתני , livras moi in French, but Menachem (p. 125) associated it as an expression of closing, and likewise every expression of סגר .

**10 is dimmed** Heb. עששה , an expression of a lantern, עששית . If a person puts glass in front of his eyes to see something on the other side of the glass, the appearance (of that thing) is unclear.

**11 and my bones have decayed** Heb. עששו , an expression of decay, as though a moth (עש) had eaten them.

**12 From all my tormentors** From all my tormentors [not because of my tormentors].

**I have become a reproach** Heb. חרפה , a reproach.

**To my neighbors** I am very much a reproach.

**And fright to my acquaintances** A mes connaissances in French, to my acquaintances. They are frightened by what happens to me.

**13 like a lost utensil** Which is in the process of becoming lost. Any expression of אבדה , loss, does not refer to the owner of the lost article, saying that he lost it, but that the lost article is lost from him, as is stated (in Deut. 22: 3): “which will be lost from him”; (in Ezek. 34:4), “the lost one you did not seek.”

**14 the gossip of many** Heb. דבת , the counsel of many. דבת is an expression of (Song 7:10): “making the lips of the sleeping speak (דבב) .” Likewise, every דבת in Scripture, parledic in Old French, gossip (so Gen. 37:2, Num. 14:36, Ezek. 36:3).

**Terror from all sides** that they scare and frighten me.

**When they take counsel** Heb. בהוסדם , when they take counsel.

**They plotted** Heb. זממו , an expression of thought.

**16 My times are in Your hands** **The times that pass over me are through Your orders and by Your decrees.**

**18 let me not be shamed because I called out to You** Since I called You, it is not fitting that I should be shamed.

**Let them be silenced to the grave** Heb. ידמו , let them be silenced and made dumb to die.

**19 that speak against a righteous man falsely** That say to Saul concerning me, “David seeks to harm you.”

**Falsely** Heb. עתק , untruth, something unfounded, as (Gen. 12:8): “And he moved (ויעתק) from there” [i.e., something removed from the truth]. Dunash (pp. 17f.) however, interpreted it as an expression of a great and strong thing, as (in Job 21:7): “grow strong (עתקו) and powerfully rich”; (Prov. 8:18), “powerful (עתק) wealth”; (Isa. 23: 18), “and for stately (עתקו) clothing.”

**20 How great is Your goodness** I knew that those who fear You have good reward in the world to come, nevertheless, in this world, because the wicked surround them, I pray for them that You hide them in the secrecy of Your countenance.

**21 from bands of men** Heb. מרכסי , from the groups of wicked men who group together to harm them.

**22 for He has been wondrously kind to me in a esieged city** In Keilah, when Saul said concerning me (I Sam. 23:7): “for he has been shut in by coming into a city with doors and bars.”

**23 But I said in my haste** When I left Keilah and came to the desert of Maon, I was hastening to leave because Saul and his men were surrounding me and my men, to seize us.

**I said** in my heart.

**I have been cut off** Heb. נגרזתי , I have been cut off, an expression of an ax (גרזן) which cuts the tree. Because of its cutting (גרזתו) , it is called גרזן , an ax. This is how Dunash explained it (p. 57). (Menachem, however, defined it like נגרשתי , I have driven out, but it has no parallel in the Torah. (p. 59).

**24 The Lord guards those who believe in His salvation** **and rely on Him.**

**With a bowstring** Heb. יתר (with measure for measure and with exactitude, like an arrow on a bowstring. Not in all editions.) Or, יתר can be interpreted as a rope for a rope, a line for a line. Another interpretation:יתר is an expression of haughtiness, as (in Isa. 15:7): “Because of the haughtiness (יתרה) with which they acted.”

**25 Strengthen yourselves, and He will give your heart courage** as you see that He did for me, to save me because I hoped for Him.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Tehillim (Psalms) ‎‎31:1-25**

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

David composed this psalm while he was fleeing from the wrath of Saul,[[1]](#footnote-1) who pursued him relentlessly. Although the psalm does not specify particular episodes, the commentators find in it allusions to various instances when David was in mortal danger at Saul’s hands.

Once while playing music to soothe Saul’s troubled spirit, David was the target of a spear hurled at him by the king. It missed him only by a hair’s-breadth.[[2]](#footnote-2) The persecution forced David to flee from Eretz Israel. The prophet Gad called upon him to return to the Land.[[3]](#footnote-3) Then, a divine message sent David to the town of Ke’ila to save its inhabitants from the invading Philistines. The townspeople treacherously betrayed David to Saul and planned to lock him inside their fortified walls to prevent his flight. Divinely forewarned, David escaped this trap and hid in the Desert of Ziph. Once again his whereabouts were betrayed to Saul[[4]](#footnote-4) this time by the inhabitants of this wilderness.[[5]](#footnote-5)

David’s most precarious plight was when he was trapped by Saul’s army while on the rock of division[[6]](#footnote-6) again HaShem intervened to save him.

In each of these episodes David sought aid and refuge in HaShem alone. In gratitude, he dedicated this psalm to HaShem, his Savior.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Purim is a feast celebrated in gratefulness to HaShem for preserving us in the midst of great danger. It seems fitting, therefore, that we should examine the many festivals associated with Purim.

I have studied for a long time, but this is the first time that I have been struck by the seemingly pervasive nature of Purim; and that it seems to suffuse the entire year. Because of the pervasive nature of Purim, I am convinced that there is a whole lot more to the story than I have previously seen.

Purim seems to serve as the revelation of Mashiach ben David,[[8]](#footnote-8) the destruction of wickedness, and the wedding feast of Mashiach.

Purim is a very profound festival with cosmic implications! In case you have not noticed, Purim and its counterparts will tap you on the shoulder at regular intervals and demand your attention. If you are sensitive to her call, Purim will reveal Mashiach and the end of days.

**Buckle your seatbelt, it is about to get really interesting!**

On Purim we read the Megillah of Esther. The Megillah, as we shall see, is the blueprint for the end of days.

Esther is related to the word “nistar”, which means hidden, and the word *Megillah[[9]](#footnote-9)* which is related to the word “megaleh”, which means “to reveal”. Thus the Megillah of Esther can be literally translated as “*Revelation of the Hidden*”.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Purim has been held in high esteem by the Jewish community at all times. This high esteem is unusual given that Purim is Rabbinically ordained based on the Megillah of Esther. What is even more unusual is that we have so many major and minor holy days that have ‘purim’ as part of their name.

*The story of Purim is, essentially, another chapter in the ongoing conflict between the Bne Israel and Amalek*.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Chazal, our Sages, teach that, “All festivals will one day cease, but the days of Purim will never cease”.[[12]](#footnote-12) Since Purim contains within it the major themes and influences of all the other festivals, the influence of *Purim is a concentrated culmination of them all*. Once the final redemption occurs, all the festivals of the Torah will be observed through their portended progeny, Purim.

This is actually alluded to in Megillat Esther itself:

*Esther 9:28 And these days of Purim shall never pass from among the Jews nor shall their commemoration ever cease from among their seed.*

After the final redemption, Purim’s miracles will be seen as being greater than all the earlier miracles, for by means of Purim’s miracles our nation *remained* in existence to witness the final redemption.

The Gemara makes a curious statement that may be apropos to this study:

*Megillah 2a R. Shaman b. Abba replied in the name of R. Johanan: Scripture says, To confirm these days of Purim in their times.[[13]](#footnote-13) [which indicates that] they laid down many ‘times’ for them. But this text is required for its literal meaning?[[14]](#footnote-14) — If that were all, Scripture could say simply ‘at the [appointed] time’. What then is implied by ‘their times’? A large number of ‘times’! But still I may say that [the expression ‘their’ times’] is required to indicate that the time of one is not the same as the time of the other?[[15]](#footnote-15) — In that case, Scripture should say [simply], ‘their time’. Why does it say ‘their times’? So that you may infer from this all of them. But cannot I say that ‘their times’ means ‘numerous times’?*

It seems the Gemara hints that there are many ‘purims’.

The following lists shows the major and minor festivals which have ‘purim’ as part of their name. I have carefully arranged them in the order in which they are encountered. Because they are ‘festivals’, they are arranged according to the months. This order is very important, as we shall see.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yom Kippurim Katan Nisan | Yom Kippurim Katan Iyar | Yom Kippurim Katan Sivan |
| Yom Kippurim Katan Tammuz | Yom Kippurim Katan Av | Yom Kippurim Katan Elul |
| Yom Kippurim Katan Tishri | Yom Kippurim Katan Heshvan | Yom Kippurim Katan Kislev |
| Yom Kippurim Katan Tebet | Yom Kippurim Katan Shevat | Yom Kippurim Katan Adar I |
| Yom Kippurim Katan Adar II | Yom Kippurim – יוֹם כִּפּוּר | Purim Katan |
| Shushan Purim Katan | Purim | Shushan Purim |

Some great Hakhamim[[16]](#footnote-16) have said that Purim is as great as the day on which the Torah was given on Sinai.[[17]](#footnote-17) How can this be?

How can a relatively minor holiday, which many think of as a kind of Jewish Halloween, be afforded this measure of veneration? According to the Talmud, it derives from a line in the Megillah: “The memory of Purim will never cease from among their descendants.”[[18]](#footnote-18)

The reason for this lies with Esther, the heroine of the Megillah of Esther. Her name, in Hebrew, also means “hidden”. In the Megillah, the word “HaShem” is never mentioned. HaShem, during the festivities of Purim, is hidden.

Purim is strange because Jews are called to learn and to know Torah. We are supposed to discern between the clean and the unclean, between the good and the bad, and between the holy and secular, except on Purim! On Purim we are commanded to drink strong drink until *Ad d’lo Yada*, which means that we drink until we no longer know the difference between *blessed in Mordecai* and *cursed in Haman*.

1. Judaism makes it a *mitzvah* (only on this one day) to be drunk on Purim.
2. The name of HaShem is never mentioned in the Megillah of Esther.
3. The Megillah of Esther is a book of happenstance, of coincidence.

Hidden but not absent. That is why Jews will always celebrate Purim. No matter how many Hamans, Hitlers, and Ahmadinejads come our way, a miraculous hidden power is always there to redeem us. The Jewish role in the ever-unfolding drama of civilization continues now and forever.

Let’s take a brief, generalized look at each of these ‘purims’ in order to understand their importance.

Yom Kippurim Katan (“little Yom Kippurim”) refers to the day before Rosh Chodesh, of each month, as this is likened to a beginning[[19]](#footnote-19) and therefore, more of an opportunity to do teshuva.[[20]](#footnote-20) This minor festival originated among the Safed Kabbalists in the 16th century and is referred to by a disciple of Hakham Moshe Cordovero,[[21]](#footnote-21) Abraham Galante, who states that it was a local custom in Safed for men, women, and older children to fast on this day and to spend the whole day in prayer, and confession of sin. He called it Yom Kippurim Katan because on it the sins of the entire month are atoned for.

Why do we have a Purim Katan and a Yom Kippurim Katan, but not a Shavuot Katan, Succoth Katan, or a Chanukah Katan?

These two days are the extremes of the festivals. Yom Kippurim is the extreme of deprivation, and Purim is the extreme of indulgence. It is specifically these two great days, Yom Kippurim Katan and Purim Katan, to remind us that both ways of life have to be lived in moderation, not in extreme.

According to the Shulchan Aruch, the miracles of Purim differ from the other festivals. On Pesach, Shavuot, and Succoth, the miracles were obvious, and no one could deny them. By contrast, Purim’s miracles were done in a hidden manner. To topple Haman, and bring the Bne Israel[[22]](#footnote-22) back to HaShem, HaShem brought many different elements into play, orchestrating everything so that one might think that salvation “came” to Israel by chance, in a “natural” way. Thus if a person seeks to avoid the truth, he is given leeway, and he can deny the miracles of Purim.

In leap years on the Hebrew calendar, Purim is celebrated in the second month of Adar. The 14th of the first Adar is then called Purim Katan (“Little Purim” in Hebrew), for which there are no set observances but there is a minor holiday aspect to it.

Purim Katan is celebrated by those who live in cities which did *not* have a wall, around them, in the days of Yehoshua.[[23]](#footnote-23)

The day of Purim Katan (the 14th day of Adar I) should be viewed as a relatively rare event, because in the 19-year Metonic cycle[[24]](#footnote-24) of regular years and leap years we have nineteen Purims (which occurs on the 14th day of the second Adar), but only seven Purim Katans (which occurs on the 14th day of the first Adar), according to the Jewish calendar.

The day of Purim Katan (the 14th of Adar I) should be viewed as a precious guest.

Purim Katan is the only time we have a minor festival preceding the actual festival. This suggests that there is something special about a leap year which demands a Purim Katan. Since Purim Katan is a time to prepare for Purim, we learn that Purim is an extremely important festival.

*Purim Katan* contains an allusion to Mashiach, a descendent of King David, about whom it states:

*1 Shmuel (Samuel) 17:14 And David was the smallest* (katan)*: and the three eldest followed Saul.*

Although we use the term *small* (katan) with regard to Purim Katan, therein lies its greatness, “this small one (alluding to Purim Katan and King David) will be great,” with the true and complete redemption.

Other occasions when the Jews have been delivered from mass destruction sometimes get the title *Purim Katan* (minor or small Purim). The celebration was modeled after that of Purim with fasting the day before, reading a Megillah that recounted the story of salvation, reciting the *al Hanassim* prayers, and holding a special fast. One well known *Purim Katan* was the Wintz Purim of 1614, when the Jews of Frankfurt-am-Main were driven from the city by a mob led by Wintz Fettmilch. When the emperor intervened, the Jews were allowed to return to their homes. The Encyclopedia Judaica lists more than 100 special Purims.

According to the Midrash, any man or city for whom a miracle has occurred, may make a Purim. Some of these are Purim Fettmilch, Purim of Tiberias, Purim of Shiraz, Curtain Purim, Purim of Bandits, Purim of the Poisoned Sword, Purim of the Bomb.

In leap years on the Hebrew calendar, Shushan Purim is celebrated in the 15th day of the *second* month of Adar. The 15th of the *first* Adar is then called Shushan Purim Katan (“Little Shushan Purim” in Hebrew), there are no set observances but it does have a minor festival aspect to it.

Shushan Purim Katan is celebrated by those who live in cities which had a wall around them in the days of Yehoshua.[[25]](#footnote-25) Today the only city that we are certain had walls in Yehoshua’s time is Jerusalem. This is despite the fact that in the days of Yehoshua, under whose leadership the Bne Israel first entered and conquered the Land of Israel, Shushan was not yet surrounded by a wall, and hence enjoyed only minor status as a city. This suggests that there is something *very special* about a wall which is essentially *unrelated to the time* of Shushan Purim Katan!

*Therefore, most people do not celebrate Shushan Purim Katan.*

The day of Shushan Purim Katan (the 15th day of Adar I) should be viewed as a relatively rare event, because in the 19-year Metonic cycle of regular years and leap years we have nineteen Shushan Purims (which occurs on the 15th day of the second Adar), but only seven Shushan Purim Katans (which occurs on the 15th day of the first Adar), according to the Jewish calendar.

The day of Shushan Purim Katan (the 15th of Adar I) should be viewed as a precious guest.

Shushan Purim Katan is the only time, with the exception of Purim Katan, we have a minor festival preceding the actual festival. This suggests that there is something special about a leap year which demands a Shushan Purim Katan. Since Shushan Purim Katan is a time to prepare for Shushan Purim, we learn that Shushan Purim is an extremely important festival.

*Shushan* *Purim Katan* contains an allusion to Mashiach, a descendent of King David, about whom it states:

*1 Shmuel (Samuel) 17:14 And David was the smallest* (katan)*: and the three eldest followed Saul.*

Although we use the term *small* (katan) with regard to Shushan Purim Katan, therein lies their greatness, “this small one (alluding to Shushan Purim Katan and King David) will be great,” with the true and complete Redemption.

Purim is a Rabbinically ordained Jewish festival that commemorates the deliverance of the Jewish people from Haman’s plot to annihilate all of them in the ancient Persian Empire as recorded in Megillat Esther.

The festival of Purim has been held in high esteem by Judaism at all times. The Talmud teaches that when all the prophetical and hagiographical works will be nullified, the Book of Esther will still be remembered, and, accordingly, the Feast of Purim will continue to be observed.[[26]](#footnote-26)

The four main mitzvot of the day are:

1. Listening to the public reading, usually in synagogue, of Megillat Esther in the evening and again in the following morning.
2. Sending food gifts to friends (*Mishloach Manot*).
3. Giving charity to the poor (*matanot l’evyonim*).
4. Eating a festive meal (*Seudah*)

Shushan Purim is celebrated by those who live in cities which had a wall, around them, in the days of Yehoshua. Today the only city that we are certain had walls in Yehoshua’s time is Jerusalem. This is despite the fact that in the days of Yehoshua, under whose leadership the Bne Israel first entered and conquered the Land of Israel, Shushan was not yet surrounded by a wall, and hence enjoyed only minor status as a city.

This suggests that there is something *very special* about a wall which is essentially *unrelated to the time* of Shushan Purim!

*Therefore, most people do not celebrate Shushan Purim.*

When the main Purim date, the 14th of Adar, comes out on a Friday, then in Jerusalem there is a situation called Purim HaMeshulash,[[27]](#footnote-27) a three part Purim celebration. Shushan Purim is then on the 16th day, rather than the 15th day, of Adar. Each day has a different focus. The giving of money can’t occur on Shabbat and since it would be unfair to make the poor wait a day, so it is moved to the 14th of Adar. The Megillah reading in Jerusalem takes place on the 14th as well.

This “triple” Purim is a chance to strengthen the celebration even outside of Israel, since on Friday the Purim meal cannot be carried over after dark, as is usually done. These are not very common; they cluster (about every 2-3 years) and then they leave gaps as large as thirteen years.

Yom Kippurim,[[28]](#footnote-28) יוֹם כִּפּוּר, is the festival of the Day of Atonement. It falls on the tenth day of the Hebrew month of Tishri, the seventh month of the calendar.[[29]](#footnote-29)

The Talmud hints to a connection between Haman and the sin of Adam and Chava. The Gemara asks, “What is the source for Haman in the Torah?” The Gemara answers with the quote from HaShem to Adam after the sin:

*Chullin 139b Where is Haman indicated in the Torah? — In the verse: Is it [hamin] from the tree?[[30]](#footnote-30)*

The Sages, in their subtle fashion, are pointing out to us that the evil of Haman has its roots in the very first sin of Adam and Chava in Gan Eden, which means that the victory over Haman should connect to the situation of Adam and Chava before the effects of their sin. This makes it especially appropriate that Yom Kippurim, the Day of Atonement, should have a strong connection to Purim. Yom Kippurim is the day when the sin of Adam and Chava is atoned and it is the day when Haman, and therefore evil, is eliminated from the world.

In what other way is Yom Kippurim similar to Purim? In the same way that on Purim we see that even what appears to be coincidence, is under the direct instruction of HaShem. On Purim we destroy Amalek, after reading the Megillah, after reading events that took place over nine years in forty-five minutes, it becomes clear that there is no such thing as coincidence, on Purim all doubt is destroyed. In the same way on Yom Kippurim having previously established Hashem as King, we are like angels, totally spiritual, there is no doubt, there is no questioning. It is only at the end of Yom Kippurim that we can truly exclaim “HaShem Hu HaElokim”. It is not enough to crown HaShem; we must confirm the coronation of Rosh HaShana on Yom Kippurim by removing all doubts.

The opening prayer of Yom Kippurim, the *Kol Nidrey*, literally “All Vows”, prayer is chanted to a beautiful melody at the opening of Yom Kippurim. It is an ancient appeal to HaShem to forgive any vows made to him that are impossible to fulfill, thus preparing the worshiper to meet him on this holiest of Biblical festivals. As the cantor chants the prayer, it is customary for two people to stand on either side of him or her, just as Aharon and Hur stood on either side of Moshe during the battle against Amalek.

What is the connection between Amalek and the opening prayer of Yom Kippurim? Throughout the Days of Awe from Rosh HaShana through Yom Kippurim, we pray for HaShem to establish his sovereignty in our midst, and that we would be fit subjects of his reign. Rabbi Soloveitchik notes, however, that “HaShem’s sovereignty is not absolute as long as Amalek continues to exist”. He goes on to ask, “Who then is Amalek, whose presence somehow inhibits HaShem’s sovereignty?”

In a remarkable insight, Rabbi Soloveitchik places Amalek in the context of the Creation story, when “HaShem created the earth from tohu vavohu, chaos and void”.[[31]](#footnote-31) At the Creation, HaShem did not completely eliminate chaos, but allowed some to remain. “Amalek represents this leftover chaos, identified with sin, which remained behind so man himself can actively play a role in destroying it.”

Yom Kippurim also has many similarities to Purim. This can even be seen by the name “Yom Ki-Purim” which means, “a day like Purim.”[[32]](#footnote-32) If Yom Kippurim is *like* Purim, the implication is that Purim is even greater than the Day of Atonement.

Yom Kippurim is only *like* Purim, similar to Purim, but not exactly the same as Purim, the Arizal[[33]](#footnote-33) said, because the celebration of Purim contains within it some aspects that are *loftier* than Yom Kippurim. It is as if to say: Yom Kippurim is the appetizer, but the real meal is Purim!

The following table details some comparisons between Purim and Yom Kippurim:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Purim | Yom Kippurim |
| Techelet, crimson, gold, silver of King Achashverosh’s palace.[[34]](#footnote-34) | Techelet, crimson, gold, silver of HaShem’s palace.[[35]](#footnote-35) |
| Wine in the palace.[[36]](#footnote-36) | No wine in His palace.[[37]](#footnote-37) |
| Disobedience leads to the death of Achashverosh’s wife. | Disobedience leads to the death of HaShem’s wife. |
| Achashverosh is in an inner room.[[38]](#footnote-38) | HaShem is in an inner room (Holy of Holies).[[39]](#footnote-39) |
| No one allowed without an invitation.[[40]](#footnote-40) | No one allowed without an invitation.[[41]](#footnote-41) |
| Achashverosh keeps books of deeds.[[42]](#footnote-42) | HaShem keeps books of deeds.[[43]](#footnote-43) |
| Esther wears special clothes to see Achashverosh.[[44]](#footnote-44) | Kohen Gadol wears special clothes to see HaShem.[[45]](#footnote-45) |
| Haman’s daughter lays feces on his head.[[46]](#footnote-46) | Kohen Gadol lays sins on goat’s head.[[47]](#footnote-47) |
| Lots used to determine good day to destroy the Jews.[[48]](#footnote-48) | Lots used to determine which goat is for HaShem.[[49]](#footnote-49) |
| Fasting before feasting.[[50]](#footnote-50) | Feasting before fasting.[[51]](#footnote-51) |
| Feasting to serve HaShem. [[52]](#footnote-52) | Fasting to serve HaShem. [[53]](#footnote-53) |

On Yom Kippurim the Jews fast to attain atonement for the transgressions of the body. On Purim one achieves the same through different means, by feasting and rejoicing (physical pleasures become sanctified from above on Purim). If on one festival one attains holiness through affliction and on another festival one attains holiness through pleasure, which is the greater of the two? It may be said that the one who attains holiness through pleasure is the greater, for the attainment of holiness through pleasure requires a much greater degree of effort.

Rabbi Soloveitchik found two similarities between these two days which only superficially are really very different. He says, “Perhaps the feature common to both Purim and Yom Kippurim is that aspect of Purim which is a call for Divine compassion and intercession, a mood of petition arising out of great distress.” On Yom Kippurim too, “the prayerful mood of Yom Kippurim emerges out of a sense of spiritual anxiety and the desperate need for reconciliation with HaShem.”

Both Purim and Yom Kippurim “involve the casting of lots (goral) characteristic of games of chance. As for the Purim goral it determined the date chosen by Haman for the destruction of the Jews.” For the Yom Kippurim Temple service, two male goats, identical in appearance, size, and value, were brought, one marked “for HaShem”, and the other was hurled to its destruction.[[54]](#footnote-54)

Just as Yom Kippurim contains a mitzva of eating and drinking followed by the mitzva of fasting, so too, Purim also contains these two mitzvot. However, the order of the mitzvot are inverted. First is the mitzva of fasting and then the mitzva of eating and drinking.

Just as one says Selichot[[55]](#footnote-55) before Yom Kippurim and on Yom Kippurim, so too we say Selichot before Purim, on the Fast of Esther, and there are even those that say one should say Selichot on Purim itself.

In the Megillah, we find reference to fasting day and night. And we also find the wording HAMELECH YOSHEIV AL KISEI... The king is sitting on his throne, in the Megillah. This reminds us of the phrase from the morning prayers of Yom Kippurim (and Rosh HaShana) of the same wording, referring to HaShem. (Of course, the phrase exists for Shabbat and all festivals as well, but the image it conjures up is more like Yom Kippurim.)

The Tikunei Zohar point out striking parallels between Esther’s approach to Achashverosh and the High Priest’s service in the Temple on Yom Kippurim: The fasting Queen Esther, dressed in special garments, entered the King’s inner chamber at the risk of her life in order to bring salvation to the Jewish people and the fasting High Priest, dressed in special white vestments, entered the normally off-limits inner sanctum of the Temple also at the risk of his life to pray for the people’s forgiveness.[[56]](#footnote-56)

This Yom Kippurim – Purim dichotomy is alluded to at the beginning of Bereshit. Adam and Eve are placed in the Garden of Eden, surrounded by unmatched beauty. They are seemingly given but one command, *not to eat* from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

As several commentaries point out, however, there was, in fact, yet an additional command: “From all the trees in the garden *you shall eat*”.[[57]](#footnote-57) Not just granting permission, an actual command, rather, to enjoy the magnificent delicacies placed before them. This mitzva is the source for the intriguing statement of the Talmud Yerushalmi: “In the future we will all have to answer to HaShem for all that our eyes saw [in His world, with all it has to offer] and did not partake of”.[[58]](#footnote-58)

As we all know, Adam and Eve failed to heed the command to abstain from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But they also failed to regard the positive instruction of eating from all other trees as an actual mitzva. Perhaps we can suggest that HaShem’s precious gift to us of the double-sided coin of Yom Kippurim and Purim provides us with the opportunity to atone for those two grave errors.

On Yom Kippurim we learn how to refrain from food and drink, in addition to other mundane delights. There is a time and a place for everything, we learn and try our utmost to apply, and certain things are indeed off limits. We elevate ourselves to become like Adam in Gan Eden, and attempt to rectify his grave error of disobeying HaShem’s command. Simply put, it’s a time for transcending the physical world around us.

We flip to the other side of the coin and find Purim, a day providing us with an opportunity to expiate for the sin of disobeying HaShem’s positive command to partake of all the other magnificent trees. On Purim we are credited with mitzvot for eating a festive meal and drinking plenty of wine. HaShem made us human with human needs and desires, but our attitude must be that we do our best to partake and enjoy, to consume and imbibe, because that is also the will of HaShem. Enjoy His world and its delightful treasures. But only if you recognize Who the source of it all is, and that HaShem gave mortal man these gifts as a means of getting close to Him through His physical world as well.

Purim vs. Shushan Purim

Why do we have two festivals on two adjacent days, which commemorate essentially the same event? Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner[[59]](#footnote-59) suggests the following answer:

There were two times that the Bne Israel were involved in battles with Amalek.

1. When we came out of Egypt, Amalek attacked the weak at the edge of the camp.[[60]](#footnote-60)
2. When HaShem commanded King Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites.[[61]](#footnote-61)

There are essentially two different scenarios with the two battles:

1. *Amalek attacked* us and we were in danger.
2. *We attacked* Amalek and we were *not* in danger.

We had the same scenarios in Megillat Esther:

1. On Purim, *Amalek attacked* us and we were fighting for our lives.
2. On Shushan Purim, we were no longer in danger and *we were attacking* to wipe out Amalek.

These two scenarios are also behind the fact that Shushan Purim is celebrated by those who live in cities that were walled in the days of Yehoshua. The walls suggest a city that is not in danger. An unwalled city suggests a city in danger. It was only in Yehoshua’s days that the command to destroy Amalek took effect. The third and final fulfillment of the destruction of Amalek will occur at the *end of days*, and it is then that Amalek will be entirely destroyed and erased from memory forever.

Interestingly, Purim is compared not only to Yom Kippurim but also to the other holidays as well. Hakhamim of previous times have noted the following allusions:

Purim is like Pesach in that on both occasions the Jews were delivered from bondage to freedom.

Purim is like Shavuot in that the Jews reaffirmed their acceptance and commitment to the Torah.

Purim is like Rosh Hashanah[[62]](#footnote-62) in that the existence of the Jewish People hung in the balance as a result of the King’s decree.

Purim is like Yom Kippurim in that the Jews were expiated of their sins.

Finally, Purim is like Succoth whose commemoration of the protective Divine Clouds of Glory[[63]](#footnote-63) parallels HaShem’s providential protection of the Jews against their enemies in Persia.

**The End of Days**

Amalek represents evil in the world. When Amalek is destroyed there will be no more evil in the world. This will take place in the end of days.

The Talmud[[64]](#footnote-64) clarifies the process of the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash (the holy Temple). It states that the nation of Israel is commanded to perform three commandments *sequentially* after they occupy the land of Israel:

1. They are to appoint a king,
2. They are to eradicate the offspring of Amalek.
3. They are to construct the holy Temple.

The eradication of Amalek comes after we have a King who is a descendant of Rachel (Either from the tribe of Yosef or from the tribe of Benyamin).[[65]](#footnote-65) Only AFTER Amalek is destroyed can Mashiach ben David, the King, restore the Beit HaMikdash.

Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh said: “The most frequently mentioned sefirotic termin the book of Esther is *malchut* (kingship). No other Biblical text contains such a concentration of references to the term *malchut*. Out of a total of 167 verses in the book, there are over 240 appearances of the root *Melech* (king). In one verse (Esther 4:11), the word *HaMelech* (The King) actually appears five times. In another verse (Esther 5:1), the root *Melech* appears in variant forms a full six times! This itself is a major indication of the Book of Esther’s strong Kabbalistic character, as *malchut* is the key to understanding the entire drama of creation according to the Kabbalah.”[[66]](#footnote-66)

We had a *precursor* of the end of days, in the days of king Saul. King Saul was the first king after the Bne Israel conquered the land of Israel, in the days of Yehoshua. King Saul disobeyed HaShem’s command to completely destroy Amalek. Because of his mis-placed mercy, Amalek survived. Amalek will not be so fortunate in the days of Mashiach. In the end of days, Amalek will be destroyed. We know this because of what is recorded in Megillat Esther.

In Megillat Esther, we see that Mordechai is the Benjamite[[67]](#footnote-67) who destroyed Amalek. He is also the one who laid the foundation of the Temple by teaching the children about the mincha offering and by encouraging the teshuva[[68]](#footnote-68) and fasting that caused the people to cleave to HaShem. In the end he is crowned as king, second only to The King.[[69]](#footnote-69) The story of the complete destruction of Amalek, is the story of Purim as found in Megillat Esther. The complete repentance of the Bne Israel, in the days of Mordechai, speaks of the repentance of the Bne Israel in the end of days. Megillat Esther lays out the script for the end of days.

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 32:18 – 33:6, 15**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. ¶ Behold for righteousness shall a king reign, and over princes who rule with justice. | 1. Behold, the king will reign for truth, and the righteous/generous will be exalted to take just retribution from the Gentiles. |
| 2. And the man shall be as a hiding- place from the wind and a shelter from the rain, as rivulets of water in an arid land, as the shade of a huge rock in a weary land. | 2. The righteous/generous who hide ‎themselves from the wicked will be like those who hide themselves from a tempest; they will return and be exalted and their teaching will ‎be accepted in haste like streams of water that flow in a thirsty land, like the shadow of a cool rock in a weary land. |
| 3. And the eyes of them that see shall not be sealed, | 3. Then the eyes of ‎the righteous/generous will not be closed, and the ears of those who listen to teaching will hearken. |
| 4. And the heart of the hasty shall understand to know, and the ears of them that hear shall attend, and the tongue of the stammerers shall hasten to speak clearly. | 4. The mind of the dreamers will have good ‎judgment, and their tongue, which was dumb, will speak readily and distinctly. |
| 5. A vile person shall no longer be called generous, nor shall a deceitful person be said to be noble. | 5. The wicked will no more be called righteous/ generous, nor will ‎those who transgress His Memra be said to be noble. |
| 6. For a vile person speaks villainly, and his heart works iniquity, to practice flattery, and to speak lies about the Lord, to empty the soul of the hungry, and the drink of the thirsty he causes to fail. | 6. For the wicked speak wickedness, and in their mind they conceive oppression: ‎to practise deceit, to utter error before the LORD, to weary the soul of the righteous/generous, who desire teaching as a hungry person [desires] ‎bread, and the words of the Law, which they desire as a thirsty person [desires] water, they think to void. |
| 7. As for the deceitful person, his instruments are evil; he plans wicked plots, to destroy the poor with false words, and when the needy speaks a plea. | 7. The deeds of the wicked ‎are evil; they devise over sinful plans to ruin the poor with lying words and the pleas of the needy in judgment. |
| 8. **But the generous person plans generous deeds, and he, because of generous deeds, shall stand. {S}** | 8. **But the righteous/generous devise ‎truth, and they will be established by their truth.** ‎**{S}** |
| 9. Complacent women, rise, harken to my voice, confident daughters, bend your ears to my speech. | 9. Rise up, you provinces who dwell contentedly, hear My voice; you fortresses that lie in safety, give ear to My Memra. |
| 10. Year after year, shall you be troubled, you confident ones, for the vintage has failed; the ingathering shall not come. | 10. Days with ‎years those who lie in safety will shudder; for the grain has ceased, there is no produce to gather. |
| 11. Tremble, complacent ones, to be troubled, confident ones, to undress and to bare, and to gird on the loins. | 11. Those who dwell contentedly are ‎shattered, those who lie in safety shudder; they strip, and make themselves bare, and gird [sackcloth] upon loins. |
| 12. [They shall beat] on the breasts, lamenting, for the desirable fields, for the fruitful vines. | 12. They beat upon ‎breasts for the pleasant fields, for bearing vines, |
| 13. On my people’s soil thorns and briers shall come up, for on all the houses of joy, the joyful city. | 13. for the land of My people which will bring‎ up briers and thorn; yea, for all the joyous houses in the strong city. |
| 14. For the palace has been forsaken, the multitude of the city has been abandoned, rampart and tower are amidst ruins forever, a joy for wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks. | 14. For the sanctuary is desolate, the multitude of the cities which ‎were its service are devastated; our stronghold and our hiding place has been searched, now it is desolate and devastated for a time; a ‎place that was a house of joy, a pleasure for kings, now has become a plundering of armies; |
| 15. Until a spirit be poured us from on high, and the desert shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be regarded as a forest. | 15. all this until a spirit comes for us from ‎Him whose Shekhinah is in the heavens of the height, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field causes many cities ‎to be inhabited. |
| 16. And justice shall dwell in the desert, and righteousness shall reside in the fruitful field. | 16. Then those who perform judgment will dwell in the wilderness, and those who do righteousness/generosity abide in the fruitful ‎field. |
| 17. And the deed of righteousness shall be peace, and the act of righteousness [shall be] tranquility and safety until eternity. | 17. And those who do righteousness/generosity will be quiet and dwell in safety for ever. |
| 18. And My people **shall dwell in a dwelling of peace, and in secure dwellings and in tranquil resting-places**. | 18. **My people will abide in their habitations at ‎ peace, upon their land in safety, and in their cities contentedly.** |
| 19. And He shall hail down the hailing of the forest, and into the low state shall the city be humbled. | 19. And hail will come down and kill the armies of the Gentiles, and ‎their residents will be devastated and come to an end. |
| 20. **Fortunate are you who sow by all waters, those who send forth the feet of the ox and the donkey.** ‎**{S}‎** | 20. **Happy are you, the righteous/generous; you have made good deeds for yourselves, you ‎who resemble those who sow beside irrigation, who send the oxen to thresh and the asses to gather.** **{S}‎** |
|  |  |
| 1. Woe to you who spoil and you are not spoiled, and who deal treacherously, and they did not deal treacherously with you. When you finish your spoiling, you shall be spoiled, when you finish dealing treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with you. **{S}‎** | 1. Woe to you, who comes to plunder-will they not plunder you? Who comes to rob-will they not rob you? When you come to plunder, they ‎will plunder you; and when you tire of robbing, they will rob you. **{S}‎** |
| 2. O Lord, be gracious to us! We have hoped for You. Be their arm every morning, also our salvation in time of trouble. | 2. LORD, be gracious to us; we wait for Your Memra. Be our ‎stronghold on every day, our saviour in the time of trouble. |
| 3. From the sound of roaring peoples have wandered; from Your exaltation, nations have scattered. | 3. At the thunderous noise the peoples are shattered, at many prodigies the ‎kingdoms are scattered; |
| 4. And your booty shall be gathered like the gathering of the locusts, like the roaring of the cisterns does he roar therein. | 4. and the house of Israel will gather the possessions of the Gentiles, their adversaries, just as those who gather ‎the caterpillar; setting afire weaponry just as those who set kindling a fire. |
| 5. The Lord is exalted, for He dwells on high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness. | 5. The LORD is strong who makes His Shekhinah dwell in the ‎heavens of the height, who promises to fill Zion with those who perform true judgment and virtue. |
| 6. **And the faith of your times shall be the strength of salvations, wisdom and knowledge; fear of the Lord, that is his treasure.** **{P}** | 6. **And that which You promised, to ‎do good to those who fear You, will happen, You will bring and establish in its time, strength and salvation, wisdom, and knowledge for ‎those who fear the LORD, the treasure of His goodness is about (to come).** **{P}** |
| 7. ¶ Behold [for] their altar they have cried in the street; ambassadors of peace weep bitterly. | 7. Behold, when it will be revealed to them, the messengers ‎of the Gentiles will cry out in bitterness; those who went to announce peace return to weeping in soulful bitterness. |
| 8. Highways have become desolate, the wayfarer has stopped; he has abrogated the treaty, despised cities, considered no man. | 8. The highways ‎lie waste, the wayfaring men cease. Because they changed the covenant, they will be cast away from their cities; the sons of men did not ‎regard that the evil was coming upon them. |
| 9. The land mourns, it has been cut off; he disgraced the Lebanon, it was cut off; the Sharon became like the plain, and Bashan and Karmel have become emptied. **{S}** | 9. The land mourns and is desolate; Lebanon is dried up and fades; Sharon is like the desert; ‎and Bashan and Carmel are devastated. **{S}** |
| 10. “Now I will rise,” says the Lord. “Now I will be raised; now I will be exalted. | 10. ‎”Now I will be revealed,” says the LORD, “now I will lift Myself up; now I will be exalted. |
| 11. You shall conceive chaff; you shall bear stubble. Your breath is fire; it shall consume you.” | 11. You conceive for yourselves wicked ‎conceptions, you Gentiles, you make yourselves evil deeds; because of your evil deeds My Memra. As the whirlwind the chaff, will‎destroy you. |
| 12. And the peoples shall be as the burnings of lime; severed thorns, with fire they shall be burnt. **{P}** | 12. And the peoples will be burned with fire; thorns cut down are burned in the fire.” **{P}** |
| 13. ¶ Hearken, you far-off ones, what I did, and know, you near ones, My might. | 13. Hear, you righteous/generous, who have ‎kept My Law from the beginning, what I have done; and you penitent, who have repented to the Law recently, acknowledge My might. |
| 14. Sinners in Zion were afraid; trembling seized the flatterers, ‘Who will stand up for us against a consuming fire? Who will stand up for us against the everlasting fires?’ | 14. Sinners in Zion are shattered; fear has seized them. To the wicked whose ways are thieving they say. “Who can dwell for us in Zion, ‎where the splendour of the Shekhinah is like a devouring fire? Who can sojourn for us in Jerusalem. Where the wicked are about to be ‎judged and handed over to Gehenna, everlasting burning?” |
| 15. **He who walks righteously, and speaks honestly, who contemns gain of oppression, who shakes his hands from taking hold of bribe, closes his ear from hearing of blood, and closes his eyes from seeing evil.** | 15. **The prophet said. The righteous/generous will sojourn in it, everyone who walks ‎in innocence and speaks uprightly, who despises mammon of deceit, who removes his soul from oppressors. Who withholds his hands, lest ‎they accept a bribe, who stops his ears from hearing those who spill innocent blood and averts his eyes from looking upon those who do evil,** |
| 16. **He shall dwell on high; rocky fortresses shall be his defense; his bread shall be given [him], his water sure.** | 16. **he, his camping place will be in a high and exalted place, the sanctuary; his soul will amply provide his food; his water will be sure ‎as a spring of waters whose waters do not cease.** |
| 17. The King in His beauty shall your eyes behold; they shall see [from] a distant land. | 17. Your eyes will see the glory of the Shekhinah of the Eternal King in His celebrity; ‎you will consider and behold those who go down to the land of Gehenna. |
| 18. Your heart shall meditate [in] fear; where is he who counts, where is he who weighs, where is he who counts the towers? | 18. Your mind will reckon up great things: ‎‎”Where are the scribes, where are the reckoners?” Let them come if they are able to reckon the number of the slain heads of the armies ‎of the mighty ones. |
| 19. A people of a strange tongue you shall not see, a people of speech too obscure to comprehend, of stammering tongue, without meaning. | 19. You will no more see the mastery of a strong people, the people whose obscure speech you cannot comprehend,‎scoffing with their tongue because there is no understanding among them. |
| 20. See Zion, the city of our gathering; your eyes shall see Jerusalem, a tranquil dwelling, a tent that shall not fall, whose pegs shall never be moved, and all of whose ropes shall not be torn. | 20. You will look upon their downfall, Zion, city of our‎assemblies!‎ Your eyes will see the consolation of Jerusalem in its prosperity, in its contentedness, like a tent which is not loosed, whose stakes are ‎never plucked up, nor will any of its cords be broken. |
| 21. But there, the Lord is mighty for us; a place of broad rivers and streams, where a galley with oars shall not go, and a great ship shall not pass. | 21. But from there the might of the LORD will be revealed to do good for us, ‎from a place of rivers going forth, overflowing, broad, where no fishermen s ship can go, nor any great sailboat can pass through. |
| 22. **For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our ruler; the Lord is our king; He shall save us.** | 22. **For the LORD is our judge, who brought us by His might out of Egypt, the LORD is our teacher, who gave us the teaching of His law ‎from Sinai, the LORD is our king; He will save us and take just retribution for us from the armies of Gog.** |
| 23. Your ropes are loosed, not to strengthen their mast properly; they did not spread out a sail; then plunder [and] booty were divided by many; the lame takes the prey. | 23. In that time the Gentiles ‎will be broken of their strength, and will resemble a ship whose ropes are cut, which has no strength in their mast, which has been cut,‎and it is not possible to spread a sail on it. Then the house of Israel will divide the possessions of the Gentiles, booty and spoil in ‎abundance; although there are blind and lame among them, even they will divide booty and spoil in abundance. |
| 24. And the neighbor shall not say, “I am sick.” The people dwelling therein is forgiven of sin. **{S}** | 24. From now on ‎they will not say to the people who dwell in safety all around the Shekhinah, “From you a stroke of sickness has come upon us”; the ‎people, the house of Israel, will be gathered and return to their place, forgiven of their sins.‎ **{S}** |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) ‎32:18 – 33:6,15‎‎‎‎ ‎**

Chapter 32

**1 Behold, for righteousness shall a king reign** Behold a king has no right to reign except to execute righteous/ generous judgment.

**And over princes who rule with justice** And over whom should he reign? Over princes who rule with justice. The prophet says this concerning Ahaz, who was a wicked man, but Hezekiah his son shall rule, and he is worthy. ([Manuscripts read:] And he is worthy of reigning.)

**2 And the man shall be** The hero in the fear of the Holy One, blessed be He – that is Hezekiah – shall be for Israel.

**As a hiding place from the wind** As a shelter of a rock, where people hide because of the wind, and they hide there because of the heat ([mss. Read:] because of the rain), so will those remaining from the ten tribes trust in him.

**In an arid land**. (בְּצָיוֹן) an expression of dryness, desolation (צִיָּה) .

**as the shade of a huge rock in a weary land** In a sunny place, where the earth is weary and dry and yearning for shade.

**3 And the eyes of them that see shall not be sealed** (Heb. תִשְׁעֶינָה ) Not as they are now, that “his ears are becoming heavy, and his eyes are becoming sealed (הָשַׁע) ” (supra 6:10), an expression of sealing.

**4 And the heart of the hasty shall understand to know** Not like now, that “this people’s heart is becoming fat” (ibid.).

**and the tongue of the stammerers, etc.** Not like now, “for with distorted speech” (supra 28:11).

**Stammerers** Anyone who does not know how to direct his speech to be clear is termed עִלֵּג or נִלְעַג .

**5 deceitful** (כִּילַי) a plotting deceiver, who plots evil.

**Noble** (שׁוּעַ) an expression of a lord, to whom everyone turns (שׁוֹעִין) .

**6 speaks villainy** (יְדַבֵּר) like מְדַבֵּר , a present tense.

**Works iniquity** (יַעֲשֶׂה) Gathers thoughts of iniquity. Comp. (Deut. 8:17) “Gathered (עָשָׂה) for me this wealth.”

**To practice flattery** (לֲַעֲשׂוֹת) He thinks thoughts how he can practice flattery. חֽנֵף is a noun; therefore, the accent is on the first syllable, it is vowelized with a ‘pattah’ (now called a ‘segol’).

**And the drink of the thirsty he causes to fail** According to the simple meaning, they rob the poor. The Targum, (however, paraphrases😊 The words of the **Torah, which are like water to the thirsty, they plan to nullify.**

**7 and when the needy speaks a plea** (מִשְׁפָּט) To destroy the needy in his plea (מִשְׁפָּטוֹ) . This word מִשְׁפָּט is an expression denoting the initial presentation of the case; when the needy presents his pleas, this one plans wicked plots to trap him with his devices. The word מִשְׁפָּט has three meanings: the initial pleas (derajjsnement in O.F.), the sentence (joujjment), and the execution of the verdict, that they discipline him with chastisement (joustize in O.F.).

**8 because of generous deeds, shall stand** **Because of his generous acts, he will have preservation.**

**9 Complacent women** Provinces that dwell in tranquility [from Jonathan].

**Confident daughters** Walled cities that dwell confidently [from Jonathan].

**10 Year after year** (lit., ‘days upon a year.’) Comp. (supra 29:1) “Add year to year,” and your sins are constantly becoming more serious, until eventually you shall be troubled, those who are now confident, for the vintage of the grapes shall be over for them, and the ingathering of the grain shall not come into the house.

**The ingathering** (אֽסֶף) This is a noun; therefore, its accent is on the first syllable and it is vowelized with a ‘pattah’ (now called a ‘segol’).

**11 to be troubled** (רְגָזָה) to be troubled. (This is an infinitive despite the absence of the ‘lammed.’)

**to undress** (פְּשֽׁטָה) to undress. (This too is an infinitive with the ‘lammed’ missing.)

**and to bare** (וְעֽרָה) An expression of ‘naked’ (עֶרְיָה) (Micah 1:11).

**And to gird** (וַחֲגוֹרָה) Therefore, the accent is before the last syllable, and so did Jonathan render: Undress and bare yourselves and gird on your loins. Since they will undress and bare themselves of their garments, they will not gird on their garments but on their loins.

**12 on the breasts, lamenting** They shall beat their heart.

**For the desirable fields** For the fields of their desire. The Midrash Aggadah (See twenty-fourth poem to Lamentations Rabbah) states: For the sages of the Sanhedrin, who are like breasts that nurture, they will lament, and for the city of their desire that will be plowed up like a field, and for the fruitful – vine that is Israel, called a vine, as it is said (Psalms 80:9): “You plucked a vine out of Egypt.”

**13 Thorns and briers** The Targum renders: הוּבֵאִי וּבוּר various types of thorns, for all this destruction shall be on all houses of joy, and on

**the joyful city Jerusalem**, which is “the joy of all the land” (Lamentations 2:15).

**14 For the palace** The king’s palace has been forsaken.

**The multitude of the city** has been exiled.

**Rampart and tower** My Temple, which was a fortification for them.

**Are amidst ruins** (הָיָה בְּעַד מְעָרוֹת) , shall be amidst ruins. מְעָרוֹת is an expression similar to (Psalms 137:7) “Raze it, raze it (עָרוּ עָרוּ) .” בְּעַד is like “(Job 22:13) Can He judge through (הַבְעַד) a thick cloud?”

**forever** Until the time of the end.

**A joy for wild donkeys** **For the lust of Ishmael and his hosts.**

**15 Until...be poured upon us** (יֵעָרֶה) He shall pour upon us. Comp. (Gen. 24:2) “And she emptied (וַתְּעַר) her pitcher.” An expression of pouring applies to spirit. Comp. (Zech. 12:10) “And I will pour upon the house of David...a spirit of grace.” Comp. also (Joel 3:1) “I will pour My spirit upon all flesh.”

**Shall be regarded as a forest** (Jonathan renders😊 Great cities, like this forest, which is full of trees.

**16 And justice shall dwell in the desert** In Jerusalem, which is like a desert.

**And righteousness shall reside in the fruitful field** That is the land of Israel, which in those days shall be like a fruitful field.

**19 And He shall hail down the hailing of the forest** (וּבָרַד בְּרֶדֶתהַיָּעַר) Perforce, this word וּבָרָד is not a noun, since half of it is vowelized with a ‘kamatz’ and half of it with a ‘pattah’ in an expression of פָּעַל . (Rashi distinguishes בָּרַד from בָּרָד , the noun denoting hail.) And so is its interpretation, an expression of an action, like ‘and he shall wash’ (וְרָחַץ) , ‘and he shall sit’ (וְיָשַׁב) , ‘and he shall stand’ (וְעָמַד) . Here too,וּבָרַד ‘and He shall hail down the hailing of the forest.’ Then the ‘beth’ of בְּרֶדֶת is a radical, like עֲטֶרֶת , ‘a crown,’ עֲקֶרֶת ‘a barren woman.’ That is to say that the Holy One, blessed be He, shall rain down the rain of the coals of the wicked, those who are now built up and full of cities like a forest.

**And into the low state** Into which Israel has been humbled until now, **shall the metropolis of Persia (Seir, Edom, [according to various mss.]) be humbled. In a similar manner** did Jonathan render it: And hail will come down and kill the camps of the nations.

**20 Fortunate are you Israel**, **that the sowing of your righteousness has succeeded like those who sow by all waters. From now on, you shall reap and gather the grain of your good reward; you shall send forth the feet of the ox to thresh the grain, and the donkey to bring it into the house. So did Jonathan render it: You shall receive the reward of your good work.**

**Chapter 33**

**1 Woe To the enemy, that you constantly spoil,** but you are not spoiled, and you constantly deal treacherously, but no man deals treacherously with you or spoils you.

**When you finish being a spoiler,** when you finish your spoiling of those upon whom it was decreed to be spoiled by you, you shall be spoiled.

**When you finish dealing treacherously** (כַּנְּלֽתְךָ) Menahem classified כַּנְלֽתְךָ with (Job 15:29) “And their destruction (מִנְלָם) shall not fall to the earth,” in one group (Machbereth Menahem, p. 123). In the word מִנְלָם , the first ‘mem’ is a radical which sometimes is absent, like the ‘mem’ of מַאֲמָר , a statement, and of מַדָּע , knowledge, and it is possibly an expression of ending, according to the context. כַּנְּלֽתְךָ is an expression of ‘when you finish.’ “And מִנְלָם shall not fall to the earth,” the destruction decreed upon them shall not fall to the earth to become progressively void, but will become progressively stronger.

**2 Be their arm of the spoiled ones in the hand of the spoiler.** (Note that we followed other editions of Rashi. Nach Lublin is erroneous in this passage.)

**every morning** Daily, when they are in straits, also You be our salvation in time of trouble.

**3 From the sound of roaring that emanated from before You**, peoples wandered until here when You performed wondrous miracles for us.

**4 And your booty shall be gathered** This refers back to “when you finish dealing treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with you,” and your booty, you, who spoil My people, when your reckoning comes, the remnant of My people shall plunder you and gather your booty like the gathering of locusts, each one of whom gathers grain for himself in summer; here too, each one will plunder for himself.

**Like the roaring of the cisterns** Like the sound of the roar of water gathering and falling into the cisterns in the river, so will those coming to plunder and pillage, roar. מַשַּׁק is an expression of roaring. Comp. (Prov. 28:15) “A roaring lion and a growling (שׁוֹקֵק) bear.” Also (Zeph. 2:9), “The noise (מִמְשַׁק) of the thorns.” When the wind blows on the thorns, and they knock against one another, they produce a sound. Comp. also, (Joel 2:9) “In the city they roar (יָשֽׁקּוּ).”

**cisterns** (גֵּבִים) like (supra 30:14) “or to scoop water from a cistern (מִגֶּבֶא) .” Our Sages expounded it in the Aggadah of Chapter Chelek (San. 94b) as referring to the booty of Sennacherib’s soldiers.

**5 for He dwells on high** He demonstrated His might, that He is exalted above all, and He has the upper hand.

**6 And the faith of your times, etc**. And it shall be for you for strength of salvations and for wisdom and knowledge, that you will be faithful to your Creator concerning the times that He set for you for terumoth and tithes at the time of their separation, for gleanings, forgotten sheaves, and the corner of the field in their time, to leave them over for the poor, to keep release years and jubilee years in their time. Another explanation is:

**faith of your times** What you believed in the Holy One, blessed be He, in times that passed over you, and you hoped for salvation, shall become your strength.

**Fear of the Lord** That you shall fear Him – that is a good treasure to open up for you from before Him.

**7 Behold [for] their altar they have cried in the street** The prophet was prophesying consolations and saying that the retribution had already been completed, and from now I will rise and exalt Myself to redeem them. Behold for their Arel – that is the altar (see above 29:1) – they have already cried and lamented in their streets and in their squares with weeping and wailing.

**Ambassadors of peace** And the ambassadors whom they send, who were wont to bring tidings of peace, cry bitterly and say, “Highways have become desolate, the wayfarer has stopped.”

**8 he has abrogated the treaty** The enemy has abrogated the treaty he made with Israel.

**Despised cities** He despised in his eyes; no enemy considers any man.

**9 mourns** (אָבֵל) an expression of mourning.

**It was cut off** Dried and cut off.

**Became** ( הָיָה , lit. was.) This is the past tense.

**The Sharon** The name of a region of pasture for animals, as we learned (Men. 87a): Rams from Moab, calves from Sharon.

**Like the plain** a ruin.

**Have become emptied** (וְנֽעֵר) An expression of shaking out. Comp. (Ex. 14: 27): “And the Lord shook (וַיְנַעֵר) .”

**10 Now I will rise** Because of the many evils the enemy perpetrated against My people, I will no longer restrain Myself; now I will rise, be raised and be exalted.

**11 chaff** (חֲשַׁשׁ) a kind of chaff, something that is easily ignited. Your

**breath is fire** From your body shall emanate breath of fire and will consume the chaff and the stubble.

**12 severed** (כְּסוּחִים) Comp. (Lev. 25:4) “You shall not prune.” Onkelos renders: לָא תִכְסָח .

**13 you far-off ones** Those who believe in Me and do My will from their youth.

**You near ones** Repentant sinners who have recently drawn near to Me.

**14 Sinners in Zion were afraid** How they would find an opening to repent.

**Who will stand up for us against a consuming fire?** (lit., Who will live for us a consuming fire?) I.e., who will stand up for us to appease burning wrath? Alternatively, who among us will dwell, i.e., who among us will dwell in Zion with the Rock, Who is a consuming fire? And he replies, “He who walks righteously, etc.”

**15 He who walks righteously** Who will be found? One who walks righteously.

**Who shakes his hands** (eskot in O.F.).

**closes his ear** (אֽטֵם) Comp. (I Kings 6:4) “transparent but closed (אֲטֻמִים) .”

**and closes** (וְעֽצֵם) Comp. (supra 29:10) “And He has closed (וַיְעַצֵּם) your eyes.”

**16 his bread shall be given** He will not seek bread, for it will be supplied to him from heaven.

**His water sure** The source of his water will not fail. I.e., his seed will become great, and all his wants will be supplied.

**17 The King in His beauty shall your eyes behold** (The Holy One, blessed be He, Who is a King, Him you shall see from a distant land where you are standing. You shall see the miracles and the greatness that I will perform for you, and a people of a strange tongue, of obscure speech, shall not see the Shechinah of the King in His beauty. [This does not appear in many editions.]) The King in His beauty shall your eyes behold. To you, O righteous man, I say that you shall merit to see the splendor of the Shechinah of the Omnipresent.

**They shall see [from] a distant land** Jonathan renders: You shall look and see those who go down to the land of Gehinnom.

**18 Your heart shall meditate [in] fear** When you see the princes and the savants of the heathens, who ruled during their lifetime, and who are now being judged in Gehinnom, your heart will meditate in terror, and you will say, “Where is the wisdom and the greatness of these men? Where is the one who, during his lifetime, would count and weigh every word of wisdom, for they would ask him every counsel of the kingdom?

**Where is he who counts the towers** This too is a matter of the kingdom. He is appointed over the houses of the kingdom, how many they are, and how many towers a certain city requires. Comp. (Ps. 48:13) “Encircle Zion and surround it, count its towers,” how many towers it requires.

**19 A people of a strange tongue** (נוֹעָז) like לוֹעֵז . These are all the heathens, whose language is not the holy tongue. ([Other editions read:] These are Assyria and Babylon, whose language is not the holy tongue.) ([Manuscripts read:] These are all the nations whose language is not the holy tongue.)

**you shall not see** You shall not esteem in your heart, for they shall all be dark and humble.

**Speech...obscure** ( שָׂפָה , lit. lip.) Comp. (Gen. 11:1) “And all the land was one speech (שָׂפָה) .”

**of stammering tongue** (נִלְעָג לָשׁוֹן) . Comp. (32:4) “The tongue of the stammerers עִלְּגִים) (לְשׁוֹן ,” (and of obscure speech. All this is a foreign language, for they do not understand the holy tongue.)

**20 See Zion** But whom will you see in your heart to be regarded as a kingdom and a ruling power? Zion, which is the city of our meeting place.

**That shall not fall** (יִצְעָן) shall not be lowered. Comp. (Jud. 4:11) “Elon-bezaanannim בְּצַעֲנַנִּים) (אֵלוֹן ,” which is rendered as: the plain of pits (מִישׁוֹר אַגְנַיָּא) , which are pits in the fields, called kombes in O.F. Comp. (Baba Kamma 61b) “The pits of the earth (אַגְנֵי דְאַרְעָא) they are considered,” where water gathers from the mountains and the hills. I believe that the ‘beth’ of the word בְּצַעֲנַנִּים is not radical, but is a prefix.

**Whose pegs shall never be moved** (יִסַּע) The pegs with which they tie the ropes of the tent he shall not move them from the earth, from the place into which they are thrust. Comp. (I Kings 5:31) “And they quarried (וַיַּסִּעוּ) great stones.” Also (Jud. 16: 3), “And he plucked them (וַיִּסּעֵם) together with the bolt,” an expression of uprooting.

**21 But there** ‘But’ refers back to ‘whose pegs shall never be moved,’ and ‘shall not be torn.’ The evil shall not be, only the good. There the Lord shall be mighty for us, and the city shall be a place of rivers and streams, in the manner it is said in Ezekiel (47: 4f.): “And He measured a thousand (cubits), and He led me...a stream that I could not cross.” And so did Joel prophesy (4:18) “And a spring shall emanate from the house of the Lord,” that it shall become progressively stronger.

**A galley with oars** a ship that floats on the water.

**And a great ship** (וְצִי אַדִּיר) and a great ship [from Jonathan].

**22 For the Lord is our judge** Our prince and judge.

**23 Your ropes that draw the ship**, you sinful city. ([Mss. Yield:] you, sinful Rome.)

**properly prepared** well.

**A sail** Heb. נס , the sail of a ship.

**They did not spread out a sail** They will not be able to spread the sail that guides the boat.

**Then plunder [and] booty were divided** (עד) related to עֲדָאָה , plunder, in Aramaic.

**By many** Many will divide the plunder of the heathens. ([Mss. Yield:] the plunder of Edom.) ([Others:] the nations.) ([Still others:] Sennacherib.)

**lame** Israel, who were weak until now.

**24 And the neighbor shall not say** (I.e., the neighbor of) Israel.

**“I am sick” Because of this nation**, this misfortune has befallen me, for

**The people Israel,** who is called a people, that dwells in Jerusalem, shall be forgiven of sin.

**Hakham’s Reflection on the Ashlamatah**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 32:18 – 33:6, 15**

The Torah’s catch phrase for this week is the word **“VaYeshev”** (And dwelt) – Gen. 37:1. The same verb is mentioned at the beginning of our Ashlamatah in Is. 32:18 – “**וְיָשַׁב עַמִּי**” (“VaYashav Ami” – And my people will dwell”). However, both the prophet Yeshayahu, the Psalmist, and the Nazarean Codicil find another connection to our Torah Seder. In Gen. 37:2 (at the beginning of our Seder and close to the end of the verse) we find the phrase: **“אֶת-דִּבָּתָם רָעָה”** (Et-**Dibatam Ra’a** – **evil report** of them). The Psalmist in 31:13 speaks about **“דִּבַּת רַבִּים”** (Dibat Rabim) which the JPS Tanakh renders as: “the **(evil) whispering** of many.” Our Ashlamatah in Is. 33:15 has **“וְעֹצֵם עֵינָיו מֵרְאוֹת בְּרָע”** (V’O’otsem Einai M’Reot B’Ra – “”and shuts his eyes from looking upon **evil”**). Consequently Hakham Yehuda in the Nazarean Codicil for this week speaks of **“Οὗτοί εἰσιν γογγυσταί,”** (“These are (evil) whisperers”[[70]](#footnote-70)) – Judah 16. Therefore, the theme binding all readings for this week is the topic of **“Lashon HaRa” – “Gossip/evil” speech/slander”**.

This, ties with the concept that we can’t **dwell** in Shalom if there is **“Lashon HaRa”** going around our dwellings. For, a peaceful and harmonious society and human coexistence requires the non-existence of “Slander”!

**Verbal Tallies**

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

& HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

**Beresheet (Genesis) 37:1-36,** **Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 32:18 – 33:6, 15, Tehillim (Psalms) 31**

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the chapter of Psalms are:**

Years – שנה, Strong’s number 08141.

Son – בן, Strong’s number 01121.

Report / Slander – דבה, Strong’s number 01681.

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Aslamata are:**

Dwelt / Dwell – ישב, Strong’s number 03427.

Evil – רע, Strong’s number 07451.

**Beresheet (Genesis) 37:1** And Jacob **dwelt <03427> (8799)** in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen **years <08141>** **old <01121>**, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the **sons <01121>** of Bilhah, and with the **sons <01121>** of Zilpah, his father’s wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their **evil <07451>** **report <01681>**.

**Tehillim (Psalm) 31:10** For my life is spent with grief, and my **years <08141>** with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.

**Tehillim (Psalm):13** For I have heard the **slander <01681>** of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

**Tehillim (Psalm) 31:19** Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the **sons <01121>** of men!

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 32:18** And my people shall **dwell <03427> (8804)** in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 33:15** He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth he gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing **evil <07451>**;

**Hebrew:**

| Hebrew | English | Torah Reading  Gen. 37:1-36 | Psalms  31:1-24 | Ashlamatah  Is 32:18 – 33:6, 15 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **bhea’** | loved | Gen. 37:3 Gen. 37:4 | Ps. 31:23 |  |
| **!z<ao** | ear |  | Ps. 31:2 | Isa. 33:15 |
| **vyai** | man, men | Gen. 37:15 Gen. 37:17 Gen. 37:19 Gen. 37:28 | Ps. 31:20 |  |
| **la;** | no, not | Gen. 37:22 | Ps. 31:1 |  |
| **~l;a’** | binding, mute | Gen. 37:7 | Ps. 31:18 |  |
| **rm;a’** | say, said | Gen. 37:6 Gen. 37:8 Gen. 37:9 Gen. 37:10 Gen. 37:13 Gen. 37:14 Gen. 37:16 Gen. 37:17 Gen. 37:19 Gen. 37:20 Gen. 37:21 Gen. 37:22 Gen. 37:26 Gen. 37:30 Gen. 37:32 Gen. 37:33 Gen. 37:35 | Ps. 31:14 Ps. 31:22 |  |
| **rv,a]** | which, who | Gen. 37:6 | Ps. 31:7 Ps. 31:19 |  |
| **!Be** | ages,sons | Gen. 37:2 Gen. 37:3 Gen. 37:32 Gen. 37:33 Gen. 37:34 Gen. 37:35 | Ps. 31:19 |  |
| **[c;B,** | profit | Gen. 37:26 |  | Isa. 33:15 |
| **hB’DI** | evil report, slander | Gen. 37:2 | Ps. 31:13 |  |
| **rb;D’** | speak | Gen. 37:4 | Ps. 31:18 | Isa. 33:15 |
| **~D’** | blood | Gen. 37:22 Gen. 37:26 Gen. 37:31 |  | Isa. 33:15 |
| **hy”h’** | become, came, am | Gen. 37:20 Gen. 37:23 Gen. 37:27 | Ps. 31:11 Ps. 31:12 |  |
| **%l;h’** | come, go, went | Gen. 37:12 Gen. 37:13 Gen. 37:14 Gen. 37:17 Gen. 37:20 Gen. 37:25 Gen. 37:27 |  | Isa. 33:15 |
| **dy”** | hands | Gen. 37:21 Gen. 37:22 Gen. 37:27 | Ps. 31:5 Ps. 31:8 Ps. 31:15 |  |
| **hwhy** | LORD |  | Ps. 31:1 Ps. 31:5 Ps. 31:6 Ps. 31:9 Ps. 31:14 Ps. 31:17 Ps. 31:21 Ps. 31:23 Ps. 31:24 | Isa. 33:2 Isa. 33:5 Isa. 33:6 |
| **dr’y”** | bring, come, go | Gen. 37:25 Gen. 37:35 |  | Isa. 32:19 |
| **bv;y”** | lived, sat | Gen. 37:1 Gen. 37:25 |  | Isa. 32:18 |
| **lKo** | all, every, whole, entire | Gen. 37:3 Gen. 37:4 Gen. 37:35 | Ps. 31:11 Ps. 31:23 Ps. 31:24 | Isa. 32:20 |
| **xq;l’** | took, take, taken | Gen. 37:24 Gen. 37:31 | Ps. 31:13 |  |
| **hm’** | what | Gen. 37:10 Gen. 37:15 Gen. 37:20 Gen. 37:26 | Ps. 31:19 |  |
| **tWm** | put to death, dead man | Gen. 37:18 | Ps. 31:12 |  |
| **~yIm;** | water | Gen. 37:24 |  | Isa. 32:20 |
| **!mi** | more than | Gen. 37:3 Gen. 37:4 | Ps. 31:11 | Isa. 33:15 |
| **dd’n”** | flee |  | Ps. 31:11 | Isa. 33:3 |
| **vp,n<** | life, soul | Gen. 37:21 | Ps. 31:7 Ps. 31:9 Ps. 31:13 |  |
| **lc;n”** | rescued | Gen. 37:21 Gen. 37:22 | Ps. 31:2 Ps. 31:15 |  |
| **!yI[;** | eyes | Gen. 37:25 | Ps. 31:9 Ps. 31:22 | Isa. 33:15 |
| **l[;** | over, above | Gen. 37:8 | Ps. 31:13 Ps. 31:18 Ps. 31:23 | Isa. 32:20 |
| **t[e** | times |  | Ps. 31:15 | Isa. 33:2 Isa. 33:6 |
| **hq’d’c.** | righteousness |  | Ps. 31:1 | Isa. 33:5 Isa. 33:15 |
| **lAq** | voice |  | Ps. 31:22 | Isa. 33:3 |
| **ha’r’** | see, saw | Gen. 37:4 Gen. 37:14 Gen. 37:18 Gen. 37:20 Gen. 37:25 | Ps. 31:7 Ps. 31:11 | Isa. 33:15 |
| **lAav.** | Sheol | Gen. 37:35 | Ps. 31:17 |  |
| **~Alv’** | friendly, welfare, peaceful | Gen. 37:4 Gen. 37:14 |  | Isa. 32:18 |
| **xl;v’** | send, sent | Gen. 37:13 Gen. 37:14 Gen. 37:22 Gen. 37:32 |  | Isa. 32:20 |
| **[m;v’** | listen, hear | Gen. 37:6 Gen. 37:17 Gen. 37:21 Gen. 37:27 | Ps. 31:13 Ps. 31:22 | Isa. 33:15 |
| **rm;v’** | keep, kept | Gen. 37:11 | Ps. 31:6 |  |
| **anEf’** | hated | Gen. 37:4 Gen. 37:5 Gen. 37:8 | Ps. 31:6 |  |
| **hn”v’** | years | Gen. 37:2 | Ps. 31:10 |  |
| **!n”x’** | gracious |  | Ps. 31:9 | Isa. 33:2 |
| **ry[i** | city, cities |  | Ps. 31:21 | Isa. 32:19 |
| **hf’[‘** | make, did, do, done | Gen. 37:3 | Ps. 31:23 |  |
| **hr’c’** | troubles, distress |  | Ps. 31:7 | Isa. 33:2 |
| **br’** | many, great | Gen. 37:34 | Ps. 31:13 Ps. 31:19 |  |

**PIRQE ABOT**

**Pereq Vav**

**Mishnah 6:7**

**Hakham Yitschaq (ben Moshe) Magriso**

**Rabbi Shimeon ben Menasia said in the name of Rabbi Shimeon ben Yochai: Beauty, strength, wealth, fame, wisdom, old age with hoariness, and children are good for saints and good for the world. It is thus written, *"The hoary head is a crown of glory; it is found in the path of righteousness"* (Proverbs 16:31). It is also written, *"The crown of the elderly is grandchildren, and the beauty of children is their parents"* (Proverbs17:6). It is also writ­ten, *"The glory of young men is their strength, while the beauty of old men is a hoary head"* (Proverbs20:19)*.* It is also written, *"The moon shall be confounded and the sun will be ashamed, for God of Hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders there will be glory"* (Isaiah24:23).**

**PIRQE ABOT**

**Pereq Vav**

**Mishnah 6:8**

**Hakham Yitschaq (ben Moshe) Magriso**

**Rabbi Shimeon ben Menasia said: These seven/qualities which the sages enumerated for saints were all realized in Rabbi and in his sons.**

**There are seven qualities which are helpful for the person who wants to be good. However, if a person wants to be evil, these qualities will also help him advance along his evil path. The master teaches us that the person who uses these qualities for good is fortunate. On the other hand, one who misuses them will ultimately suffer, since he uses God's gifts in the wrong way.**

**The master therefore said that these gifts are “good for saints and good for the world." The things enumerated here are good for the person who wishes to follow the way of saints, but they are also useful for the person who wishes to follow a bad path, and enjoy the vanities of the world.**

The seven qualities are as follows:

1.      Good looks. If God gives a person good looks, it can be very helpful toward his reaching spiritual heights both in this world and the next. A good-looking person has to work hard to subjugate his desires, since he is given more than ample opportunity to sin. We "thus find that because Joseph was so handsome, his master's wife wanted to sin with him. However, he was strong enough to resist his desires, and as a result, he gained the important position that he did. Because he resisted temptation, he is referred to as Joseph the Saint (Yosej Ha'Tzaddik). He is referred to as a "saint" (Tzaddik) because of the unique manner in which he fought his desires. Because he was so handsome, and temptation was so near at hand, his merit for fighting it was all the greater.

If a person is ugly and not attractive to the opposite sex, he is not subject to such strong temptations. Therefore, his reward for resisting temptation is not nearly as great as that of a good-looking person. Thus, when a good-looking person resists temptation, his spiritual level ima'alah*,* is all the greater. Of course, it goes without saying that if a person wants to sin, his good looks will also help him.

2.      Strength*.*If a person has physical strength and stamina, it is of great help when he wants to do good. He has the strength to spend long hours in Torah study without tiring, as well as to do other good deeds. In many cases, his strength will be a distinct advantage, as for example in burying the dead.

On the other hand, one who wishes to do evil will also find that his strength gives him an advantage. Because of his strength, he can dominate people, and even take their property by force. Strength can thus be used for both good and evil; it is all up to the individual's decision.

3.      Wealth. Wealth is also a great help when a person wishes to keep the commandments and do good deeds. When a person has wealth, he is able to give much charity and do many deeds of kindness. He can lend money to people, and thus help those who do not want to accept charity start a new life. He can also devote himself to Torah study, occupying himself with it day and night, without any need to interrupt to earn a livelihood. On the other hand, if a person wishes to do evil, his money helps him realize his desires. He can commit many sins without being concerned about the cost, and thus can satisfy all his evil appetites.

Wealth can also be a force for both good and evil. The master thus includes it among the things that are "pleasant both for saints - and for [the rest of] the world."

4.      Fame. A person may be honored and respected, and enjoy an excellent reputation; If the person wishes to do good, his fame is of great help, since it causes people to listen to what he says. He therefore has the opportunity to lead many others to do good. A famous person also must constantly fight his urge to be proud. Therefore, when he is truly humble, his merit is all the greater. He has reason for pride, and yet he resists it. However, if a famous person wishes to do bad, he can also make use of his reputation. He can be proud and arrogant, lording it over others. He can do all sorts of arrogant things, and because of his fame, no one will dare criticize him.

5.      Wisdom. If a person wants to be good, a keen intellect is of great use. The intelligent person will be able to keep the rites of Judaism with a deeper insight, and will thus be able to serve God more perfectly. On the other hand, however, if a person wants to be wicked, he can use his intellect as a rod to strike people and dominate them. He thus mocks the. world.

It is thus written, "They are intelligent when it comes to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jeremiah 4:22). The prophet was speaking of people who only know how to use their intellect to do evil; when it comes to doing good, their intelligence is of no avail.

6.      Old age and white hair. If a person wants to be good, then longevity is a great advantage. With the extra years, he can increase his knowledge of the Torah. and rectify his bad deeds. But if a person wants to be wicked, he will use the extra years allotted to him to satisfy his evil desires and lusts all the more, and thus increase the number of his sins.

7.      Children. When a person leaves behind good children in this world, he is worthy of an enhanced portion in the World to Come. He is rewarded for raising good children who follow the right path and serve God. On the other hand, when a person wants to be wicked, he will use his children to increase his power and dominance over people, and become proud and haughty because of his offspring.

These are the seven things that can serve both for good and for evil.

A person is fortunate if he can use them all for good.

Rabbi Shimeon ben Menasia says that all these seven qualities were realized in Rabbi Yehudah the Prince and his children. They had all these qualities, and used them all for good.

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra Of B’resheet (Gen.) 37:1-36**

**“VaY’shev Ya’aqob” “And Ya’aqob dwelled”**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hakham Shaul’ School of Tosefta**  **(Luke Lk 7:18-23)** | **Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat**  **(Yehudah 14-16)** |
| **And the talmidim** (disciples) **of Yochanan reported to him about all the things** Yeshua was doing**. And summoning two of his talmidim, Yochanan sent them to the master, saying, “Are you he who is the Coming One, or do we look for someone else?” And when the men had come to him, they said, “Yochanan HaMitvil has sent us to you, saying, Are you he who is the Coming One,[[71]](#footnote-71) or do we look for someone else?” At that very hour, he cured many** people**of diseases and afflictions and expelled evil shedim** (demons)**; and he gave sight to many** who were**blind. And he answered and said to them, “Go and report to Yochanan what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor** (Am HaAretz – "the people of Land" i.e. the uneducated Jews) **have the Mesorah[[72]](#footnote-72) proclaimed to them. And blessed is he who keeps from stumbling over me.”** | **Now it was of these** pseudo-prophets/teachers**, that Enoch[[73]](#footnote-73) in the seventh** generation **from Adam prophesied about when he said, “Behold, the Lord comes with myriads of His holy ones** (ten thousands of His Tsadiqim **–** saints) **to execute judgment upon all and to convict every impious** **soul** **of all their ungodly deeds,** **which they have committed** in such an **ungodly** way**, and of all the abusive, things which** these **ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. These are inveterate murmurers[[74]](#footnote-74)** (complainers) **who criticize** their lot in life**, following** only **their personal desires[[75]](#footnote-75)** controlled by their passions**; their talk is boastful** and **arrogant,** and they claim to **admire men's persons and pay people flattering compliments to gain advantage.** |

**Nazarean Codicil to be read in conjunction with the following Torah Seder:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **\*Gen 37:1-36** | **Psa 31** | **Is 32:18 – 33:6, 15** | **Jude 14-16** | **Lk 7:18-23** |

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

Hakham Yehudah continues his discourse and judgment concerning the pseudo-prophets/teachers who have “crept” in stealthily. In the previous pericope, Hakham Yehudah cited three Biblical characters, which personified judgment and evil. In the present pericope, Hakham Yehudah appears to cite a phrase that originated in the ancient work of 1 Enoch. Scholars debate exactly which version Hakham Yehudah may have used if he used that work at all. Regardless of the debate Hakham Yehudah does make mention of the Biblical character Enoch. And, while a great deal can be said about this Biblical persona, we are limit ourselves to Peshat and will not discuss more abstract issues here.

Hakham Yehudah argues proof that there will be a final judgment. This is something that the pseudo-prophets/teachers have been trying to negate and avoid. Hakham Yehudah shows that G-d will return to judge the earth with great power and a prodigious company of angels.

There are three points we wish to draw from Hakham Yehudah’s present pericope concerning Lashon HaRa. We realize that this does not exhaust the thoughts presented here. However, for the sake of space and time we have limited our comments.

**Lashon HaTob or Lashon HaRa**

The power of speech is often unrealized. It contains both positive and negative aspects, which should be carefully guarded. Through the Lashon Kodesh (Holy Tongue) G-d created the cosmos. Like the mitzvot, speech either builds the world or destroys it. The mysteries of G-d are hidden inside the mind of man. He can speak positively building a constructive world or he can speak negatively denigrating the cosmos. The tongue is also hidden until man begins to speak. His speech always betrays his true feelings.

The greatest affront to G-d is for a man to speak Lashon HaRa. This is because the composite nature of man and the cosmos is the Oral Torah. Man is constructed and animated by the words of the Oral Torah. Speaking Lashon HaRa is contrary to his true nature. Therefore, speaking Lashon HaRa is not only an affront to G-d it is the denigration of his own soul.

**Murmurs**

Hakham Yehudah’s text refers to the pseudo-prophets/teachers as murmurs. This murmuring is the most subtle form of Lashon HaRa used by these deceitful subversives. They do not have the courage to confront authority face to face. They must use subversive tactics as a means of subversive undermining authority. They whisper their oppositions and complaints. The Greek **γογγυστής –** *goggustes* is used of the cooing of doves.[[76]](#footnote-76) It refers, not to a loud, outspoken dissatisfaction, but to an undertone muttering of detention. These people never address issues with authority directly. Their subversion is carried out somewhere outside the hearing of authority. This guile sounds like the words of the Nacash Kadmon (primeval serpent *nachash*) who questions the words of G-d in saying, “has G-d said” to Havah outside the earshot of Adam.

On the day of Yom HaKippurim the Kohen Gadol enters the Kodesh HaKodeshim (Holy of Holies) to make atonement for the sins of the B’ne Yisrael. He enters this “secret place,” where he can atone for the sins of Lashon HaRa which are spoken in secret.[[77]](#footnote-77)

**b. Arachin 15b** ﻿ Further said R. Hisda in the name of Mar Ukba: About one who slanders, the Holy One, blessed be He, says to the prince of Gehinnom: I shall be against him from above, you be against him from below, and we shall condemn him, as it is said: Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of broom. Arrow means nothing else but the evil tongue, as it is said: Their tongue is a sharpened arrow, it speaks deceit; and mighty means only the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said: The Lord will go forth as a mighty man; and cools of broom is Gehinnom.

**complainers**

It is these who criticize their lot in life, following only their personal desires controlled by their passions. This activity shows their disdain for authority, which is ultimately the authority of G-d Himself.

Hakham Yehudah notes that these complainers are unhappy with their “lot” in life. They are not happy with the “stars” that G-d has given them. They always want what someone else has and begrudge their present state of affairs. Our ancestors suffered in the wilderness because of the evil tongue. Their crime was more a crime of speaking evil as opposed to evil actions.[[78]](#footnote-78)

Rather than seek the will of G-d for their lives they pursue their own pleasures. These souls are perfectly aware of their occupation in the scheme of G-d’s overall plan. However, because they have been dealt a plan, which is not conducive to their idea of how things should be done, they defect and try to take others with them.

Their ungodly deeds and abusive words will not go unpunished.

**Flattery**

Flattery is not usually considered Lashon HaRa by some people. However, flattery is one of the most destructive forms of Lashon HaRa. How so? This is because it gives a negative or false report concerning an individual true status. Flattery’s destructive power causes people to follow deadly advice into denigrating circumstances. True growth can only occur when the *(mazal – angel)* strikes the blade of grass.[[79]](#footnote-79) This is true of humans as well as grass. We do not move forward in a positive way unless we are shown our deficiency. When we see what we are and what we are to become we can work on our lack. However, when we are told the lie of flattery we are stunted, diminished and misguided. Therefore, flattery is a heinous crime against its hearer.

Do not confuse “flattery” with genuine praise. Praise is the verbal reward for hard work and accomplishment. However, when praise is given as flattery it is especially destructive.

**Peroration**

Lashon HaRa is not only speaking evil against someone. Lashon HaRa can be withholding truth, which needs to be addressed. This does not mean that we should not use discretion. Nor does it mean that we cannot give praise where praise is due. What it means is that we must carefully articulate those things, which will encourage growth and forward momentum.

**Commentary to Of Hakham Shaul’s Tosefta**

**Doctor or Messiah?**

The present Tosefta of Luqas posits an important question that we feel needs to be addressed. **“Are you he who is the Coming One, or do we look for someone else?”**

This question has kept scholars in a quandary for centuries. This is because they do not have the correct understanding of the writings of Yeshua’s talmidim. The question posited by Yochanan the immerser is interesting and important. We need to have a clear understanding of the question so that we can have the correct answer.

Yochanan initially portrayed Yeshua in the following terms when Yeshua came for immersion.

**Luqas 3:16** **“I immerse you in** (living) **water but the one greater than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will immerse you with the Ruach HaKodesh** (holy breath of the Mesorah) **and fire.**

There are those scholars who believe that Yochanan was wavering in his G-dly trust. While we realize that Yochanan was human, we also believe that he had perfect confidence in the prophecy cited above. Furthermore, Yeshua declared Yochanan to be the Messianic Harbinger, Eliyahu (Elijah).

The difficulty for any prophet is that he can see his prophecy in such a way that he sees “from one end of the world to the other” as the Hakhamim say. In other words, he sees every facet of his prophecy. It is inescapable. Yochanan could see Yeshua as Messiah ben David and Messiah ben Yosef at the same time. Therefore, **the real question is** **which Messiah are you?** Or, we might rephrase the question by asking **are you a doctor or Messiah?**

Yeshua’s response is important. It would appear at first that the answer is that he was a physician, answering, the lame walk, the blind see etc. And, from a cursory reading of the text we have difficulties to solve.

We must understand how Yeshua – Messiah was healing, in order to be able to see the answer given to Yochanan. Yeshua did not look at his audience and see a blinded eye or a lame cripple. He looked at the spiritual character of the person he was ministering in order to see their spiritual deficiency. By looking at the deeper aspects of a person’s being, he could correct their spiritual problem. Once the spiritual problem was solved, the physical problem fixed itself.

The answer **“Go and report to Yochanan what you have seen and heard:** the **blind receive sight,** the **lame walk,** the **lepers are cleansed, and** the **deaf hear,** the **dead are raised up,** the **poor** (Am HaAretz – "the people of Land" i.e. the uneducated Jews) **have** received **the Mesorah proclaimed to them”** is summed in the key word “Mesorah.” The problems that Yeshua was dealing with were a lack of understanding of the Mesorah. When this is corrected, healing comes naturally.

Furthermore, the Mesorah MUST be the principle tool to qualify Yeshua as Messiah. This is because Messiah MUST be a “**prophet like Moshe**.” Had Yeshua not upheld the Torah Written and Oral he would not have qualified as Messiah.

**Ben David or “Like Moshe, which comes first?**

Scholars struggle with the problem of the Davidic prototype of Messiah. Many have disqualified Yeshua because he did not appear as a Davidic Messiah. Logic demands that Messiah must first be “like Moshe” before he can appear as a Davidic Messiah. How so? The Messiah like Moshe must come first to establish and undergird the rules for a Theocratic Society. In other words, he must establish a connection with the Mesorah – Torah, which is the power of a Theocratic social rule. He must then appear as a Davidic Messiah to challenge and punish all those who have refused the Mesorah. This is the Messiah portrayed by Hakham Yehudah in our Peshat pericope.

אמן ואמן סלה

**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 Sabbath:**

**Shabbat: “VaY’hi BaEt Hahi” - “And it came to pass at that time”**

**Tammuz 5, 5783 – June 23/24, 2023**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **וַיְהִי בָּעֵת הַהִוא** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“VaY’hi BaEt Hahi”** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 38:1-5 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 39:1-4 |
| **“And it came to pass at that time”** | Reader 2 – B’resheet 38:6-8 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 39:5-7 |
| **“Y aconteció en aquel tiempo”** | Reader 3 – B’resheet 38:9-11 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 39:8-10 |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 38:1-30 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 38:12-14 |  |
| Ashlamatah: Hoshea 12:1-9 + 14:9 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 38:15-19 | **Monday and Thursday Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – B’resheet 38:20-23 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 39:1-4 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 32:1-11 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 38:24-30 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 39:5-7 |
|  | Maftir – B’resheet 38:27-30 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 39:8-10 |
| N.C.: Jude 17-19; Luke 7:24-30 | Hoshea 12:1-9 + 14:9 |  |



Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

Edited by Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham

A special thank you to HH Giberet Giborah bat Sarah for her diligence in proof-reading every week.

1. Radak [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Sforno [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. I Shmuel (Samuel) 22:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. I Shmuel (Samuel) 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Malbim [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid. 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. This introduction was excerpted and edited 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-7)
8. The Messiah who is the Son of David, the conquering King. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Based upon the root *gilah.* [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This can also be understood as ‘the revealing of secrets’. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Purim: Season of Miracles***, By** Z. Fendel. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Yalkut Mishlei 944 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Esther 9:31. E.V. ‘their appointed times’. The plural form ‘times’ is stressed. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Lit., ‘for itself’; viz., the 14th and 15th mentioned in the text. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Viz., the time for the villages is not the same as that for the walled towns. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Hakhamim = Rabbis [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. “Pachad Yitzchak”, *s.v.* *Purim*. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Esther 9:27 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Otzar Hatefillot; Seder Yom Kippurim Katan [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Repentance [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Pri Chadash; Laws of Rosh Chodesh 417 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The Children of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Joshua [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. the *Metonic cycle* is a period of very close to 19 years which is remarkable for being very nearly a common multiple of the tropical year and the synodic (lunar) month. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Joshua [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Talmud Yerushalmi, Megillah I 5a; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Megillah [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Lit. ‘The Triangle’. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Day of Atonement [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:27-28 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:11 Heb. המן The first word can be read as Haman, and the second can refer to the tree or gallows upon which Haman was hanged; cf. Esth. 7:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Bereshit (Genesis) 1:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. The Tikunei Zohar [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Isaac Luria (July 25, 1572), aka as “The Ari”, “Ari-HaKadosh”. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Esther 1:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Shemot (Exodus) 25:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Esther 1:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Vayikra (Leviticus) 10:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Esther 4:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. 1 Melachim (Kings) 6:27 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Esther 4:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Esther 6:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Shemot (Exodus) 32:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Esther 5:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:32 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Esther 6:12, Megillah 16a [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Esther 3:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. The Fast of Esther takes place before the Purim seuda. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Berachoth 8b – We feast on Tishri 9 and fast on Tishri 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. The Fast of Esther takes place before the Purim seuda. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Berachoth 8b – We feast on Tishri 9 and fast on Tishri 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Rabbi Soloveitchik [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Penitential prayers. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Tikkun 21 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Bereshit (Genesis) 2:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Tractate Kiddushin, 4:12, commentary of the Meshech Chachmah [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. “Pachad Yitzchak”, *s.v.* *Purim*. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Shemot (Exodus) 17:8ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. I Shmuel (Samuel) 15:1ff [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Yom Teruah [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Shemot (Exodus) 13:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Sanhedrin 20b [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. I have dealt with this topic extensively in the study titled “Esther”. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Kabbalah literally means “receiving”. This is the study of Torah at the *sod* level. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Esther 2:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Repentance [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Esther 10:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Evil murmuring is a very subtle way of undermining authority. The Greek **γογγυστής –***goggustes* is used of the cooing of doves. It refers, not to a loud, outspoken dissatisfaction, but to an undertone muttering. See (Wuest, K. S. (1997, c1984). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English reader* (Jud 16). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.) The Greek **γογγυστής –***goggustes* coupled with **ὑπέρογκος**– *huperogkos* shows a subversive mechanism that lacks true courage to challenge genuine G-d appointed authority. Their murmurings are subtle and hidden from the powers (authorities) of the Esnoga (Synagogue). They use subversive tactics to undermine authority because of their lack of courage. Therefore, their speech is **ὑπέρογκος**– *huperogkos* excessive and verbose. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Cf. Mal 3:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Plummer accurately notes that this is the sign that Yochanan needed. More than any “sign” Yochanan needed to know that Yeshua proclaimed the Mesorah and the Kingdom – Governance of G-d through the Bate Din and Hakhamim. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Citing 1 Enoch 1:9. Schreiner suggests that Hakham Yehudah is citing an oral version of 1 Enoch. This makes perfect sense in that the first century was given to the verbal expression of the Torah i.e. Mesorah. See – Schreiner, T. R. (2003). *An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of the Holy Scriptures, 1,2, Peter & Jude* (The New American Commentary ed., Vol. 37). (E. R. Clendenen, Ed.) Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Evil murmuring is a very subtle way of undermining authority. The Greek **γογγυστής –** *goggustes* is used of the cooing of doves. It refers, not to a loud, outspoken dissatisfaction, but to an undertone muttering. See (Wuest, K. S. (1997, c1984). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English reader* (Jud 16). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.) The Greek **γογγυστής –** *goggustes* coupled with **ὑπέρογκος** – *huperogkos* shows a subversive mechanism that lacks true courage to challenge genuine G-d appointed authority. Their murmurings are subtle and hidden from the powers (authorities) of the Esnoga (Synagogue). They use subversive tactics to undermine authority because of their lack of courage. Therefore, their speech is **ὑπέρογκος** – *huperogkos* excessive and verbose. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. We must not be confused here with the idea being purported in the word **ἐπιθυμία –** *epithumia* translated “personal desires.” Other translations make these desires personal lusts possibly implying immoral sexual desire. The word Greek word **ἐπιθυμία** – *epithumia* here demonstrates contrast between the desires of G-d for man and man’s personal desire for himself. In the present case, we see that the desire of the grumblers **γογγυστής –** *goggustes* is to be free of any restraint i.e. Torah. Therefore, we see their alliance with the fallen ones who oppose Jews and Nazarean Jews who have received the Torah and Mesorah of the Master. Therefore, Hakham Yehudah brings a two-fold charge against these pseudo-prophets/teachers. 1. They rebel against Divine order. This applies to the cosmic order i.e. “lot-fate” and local Esnoga’s (Synagogue’s) organization, which is a mirror of the cosmic order. And 2. Their teachings are immoral and destructive because they flatter to gain personal advantage. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. This can be determined simply by saying the word *goggustes.* Wuest, K. S. (1997, c1984). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English reader*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Jud 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Cf. b. Yoma 44a [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Cf. ﻿b. Arachin 15a [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Cf. **Midrash Rabbah - Genesis X:6** [↑](#footnote-ref-79)