**Some Questions to Ponder:**

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

I liked the translation of Hakham Tsefet. Particularly v.9 where we are waiting patiently for the Goyim to convert.

1. How is Variqra 25:35 related to Vayiqra 26:1-2?

They are both concerned with “standing up”. One concerns standing up a brother, who is loved by HaShem, who is falling and the other concerns not standing up an idol which HaShem hates.

Verse 25:35 opens with a mitzvah of helping a Jewish brother. The Torah Seder closes (Vayikra 26:1-2) with a command (aimed at these brother who may have been purchased by Non-Jew) not to be involved in idolatrous practices and remain faithful to keep Shabbat and venerate the Sanctuary.

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:36?

**interest or increase** – Why are two terms used

**and you shall fear your God** – Why does the Scripture deem it necessary to state, “and you shall fear your God” in conjunction with the commandment not to require interest upon loaning money to a fellow Jew?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:38?

**Who took [you] out [of the land of Egypt]** – Why are we reminded of this now?

**to give you the land of Canaan** – Why are we being given the land of Canaan?

**[To give you the land of Canaan,] to be a God to you** – What is the the meaning of this pasuk?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:40?

**As an employee or a [hired] resident** – What special treatment is implied by this pasuk?

**until the Jubilee year** – Why is this pasuk inserted at this point?

1. What question was asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:42?

**For they are My servants** – What do we learn from this pasuk?

**They shall not be sold in the way a slave is sold** – How is a slave sold?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:46?

**You shall hold onto them as an inheritance for your children** – Can I bequeath them to my children?

**[But as for... children of Israel,] a man [shall not work] his brother [with rigor]** – Why is this pasuk repeated?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:47?

**a resident non-Jew** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew phrase גֵּר וְתוֹשָׁב?

**If a resident non-Jew gains wealth with you** - What caused him to become wealthy?

**and your brother becomes destitute with him** - What caused his destitution?

**the family of a non-Jew** – What do we learn from this word לְעֵקֶר ?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:53?

**he shall not enslave him with rigor in your sight** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:54?

**And if he is not redeemed through [any of] these [ways]** – What “ways” are excluded?

**he, and his children with him -** [But are his children also sold, that Scripture finds it necessary to state here that his children go free together with him?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Leviticus 25:55?

**For the children of Israel are servants to Me** – What do we learn from this pasuk?

**I am the Lord, your God** – What do we learn from this pasuk?

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

**You shall not make idols for yourselves** – To whom is this addressed?

**a pavement stone** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew phrase: אֶבֶן מַשְׂכִּית? What is a pavement stone?

**on which to prostrate yourselves** – What is denoted by ‘prostration’?

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the the Psalmist‎ in Psalm 89:1-15‎?

The fact that HaShem owns the Jews and He desires that slavery be a merciful thing which benefits the slave. Note 89:4, 6, 7, 8. The fear of God is also a common theme.

1. On reading the Torah Seder for this week what touched the heart and fired the imagination of the prophet Isaiah 35:3-10‎?’

The strengthening of the hands of the weak v.3 matches perfectly with the Torah’s v.35. The Prophet also equates exile to slavery v.6. The fear of God is also a common theme.

1. How is the reading of Hakham Tsefet (2 Peter 3:8-10) related to the readings for this Shabbat?

To a slave time seems to stand still. Hakham Tsefet comes to declare that the time we wait is beneficial for those who will repent.

Torah

Vayikra 25:35. If your brother becomes destitute and his hand falters beside you, you shall support him [whether] a convert or a resident, so that he can live with you.

Hakham Tsefet tells us how patient G-d is waiting for everyone to “convert.” v9 Hakham Tsefet uses this play on words to refute the hypocrisy of the pseudo-teachers and prophets.

The vocabulary of the Prophet tells us …

Yeshayahu 35:5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Here this seems to thematically be what Hakham Tsefet noticed to initiate the words…

2 Tesefet 3:8. Beloved, do not let this one thing escape your notice (remain hidden),

The Psalmist says…

Tehillim 89:10. You rule over the pride of the sea; when it raises its waves, You humble them.

This fits perfectly with Hakham Tsefet’s choice of words…

2 Tesefet 3:9. The LORD does not delay the proclamation as some consider delay, but ruling patiently, not wanting to cut off anyone, but making room for everyone to convert.

1. In your opinion, what is the chief purpose that Hakham Tsefet wants to address in 2 Peter 3:8-10?

To ‘stand up’ the righteous with Torah and good deeds for the end is coming soon enough.

He wants to bring the subject of Idolatry to light and how God feels about it. In his discourse, he encourages people to be quick to repent by using the negative aspect of what happens when people are slow to convert or simply refuse to convert all together. His overall lecture deals with a definite time when the ability to repent is no longer viable; that time will sneak upon mankind like a “thief in the night”.

That G-d is not on our time table, but His own. We are to remember this, and not try to use scriptures to box Him in on a timeline regarding prophecy.

To encourage diligent awareness/attention/study/faithful obedience in the face of deceivers; to remind and confirm that the promises of Ha-Shem are sure; and to enlighten as to how justice will be meted in the end time.

It is not for us to calculate when will be the end of days, if Hashem appears to delay it is because He wants to give every person a chance to accept or reject Him so as not to lose anyone. When He comes, it will be swift, and final.

By clearly instructing us on what G-d's people should do, verses what they should not do, whether it is because that is what the 'nations' do, or simply because G-d said so. In our ways of worship, as well as our ways of day to day conduct with believers and non-believers we are held to a higher, different standard.

1. Explain how Hakham Tsefet derived all of his material in 2 Peter 3:8-10 from the Torah Seder for this Shabbat, Psalm 89:1-15, and ‎ Isaiah 35:3-10?

V.8 is derived through the eyes of a Torah slave who sees time standing still.

V.9 seems to be the theme of the Prophet.

V.10 effectively sums up the Psalm.

1. How are the readings for this Shabbat communicating that the people of G-d (particularly Nazarean Jews) must be a separate people not imitating any of the traditions, laws and customs of the Gentiles but should be faithful to observe the commandments of the Sages?

We are to treat our slaves with a view towards helping them, not exploiting them(Torah portion). We are to strengthen the weak (Isaiah 35:3)

Lawless men will find no favor with God. Idolatry will gradually eat away all of the blessings that have been bestowed to man; and as the scripture says in Mat 13:12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Those men that will not repent, and follow the teachings of Torah and the Hakhamim become like a desert wasteland. Those who study Torah, obey the judgments of the Hakhamim, and do righteous/generous acts will see their blessings flourish. Servitude to another person will be almost impossible.

1. How does Hakham Yitschaq Magrisso, in the Me’am Lo’Ez for this week, define the expression “a touch of interest”?

Interest permitted by the Torah but forbidden by our Hakhamim.

“A touch of interest” is making interest on money that is not prohibited by the Torah but has been forbidden by rabbinical legislation in order to prevent a person from violating a Torah commandment, which is “true interest.” Since the sages forbade a “touch of interest” by legislation, they also have the power to permit it. They did permit it in the case of the money of orphans. However, even in such a case they only permit it in the case of minor orphans. This is true whether they have lost their mother or their father. This exemption does not apply to the money of widows. Even in the case of orphans’ money, it is not permitted unless “Mr. A” says specifically that the orphans’ money will be kept separately and it will be invested. He may not mix the orphans’ money with his own money. He may also not spend the orphans’ money for his own needs or to pay his debts and then repay them with other money. Rather, he must keep the orphans’ money separate and from that money the orphans can make the profit. (holding funds in trust; escrow)

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

Look around and notice those who are wobbling (in their Torah studies, financially, or any other way). Reach out and strengthen them!

The study of Torah, righteous/generous acts and cleaving to their Hakhamim will bring purity of spirit, soul and body. We should cling to that which is good and shun all forms of evil.

Treat brothers with absolute compassion and do not forsake the Torah wisdom of the Hakhamim. Pursue excellence in all that we do by remaining mentally asture.

Stay alert, be given to faithful obedience, and trust in Ha-Shem’s promise. Expect Mashiach today!

We do not profit from another’s misfortune, we are to attend to our brothers with kindness, and be careful to be fair in all of our dealings so that we do not transgress the law and cheat another.

We are to hold to Torah, and uphold/care for our brothers and sisters, and be careful and merciful with gentiles...be in the world by not OF the world, as evidenced by our day to day conduct with believers and non-believers we are held to a higher, different standard.