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

Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings	Third Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle
Ab 16, 5778 – July 27/28, 2018	Third Year of the Shmita Cycle

Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:

Please go to the below webpage and type your city, state/province, and country to find candle lighting and Habdalah times for the place of your dwelling.

See: <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
His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah
His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham
His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Karmela bat Sarah,
His Honor Paqid Adon Tsurriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Gibora bat Sarah
Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family
His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family
His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife
Her Excellency Giberet Leah bat Sarah & beloved mother
His Excellency Adon Yehoshua ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Rut bat Sarah
His Excellency Adon Michael ben Yosef and beloved wife HE Giberet Sheba bat Sarah
Her Excellency Giberet Prof. Dr. Emunah bat Sarah & beloved family
His Excellency Adon Robert Dick & beloved wife HE Giberet Cobena Dick
His Excellency Adon Aviner ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Chagit bat Sarah
His Excellency Adon Ovadya ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Mirit bat Sarah
His Excellency Adon Brad Gaskill and beloved wife Cynthia Gaskill
His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham
His Excellency Adon Ya'aqob ben David
Her Excellency Giberet Eliana bat Sarah and beloved husband HE Adon James Miller

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 benhaggai@GMail.com with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!

Please pray for this work that it may be successful touching many lives, well financed; and that it may be for much blessing to all concerned. Amen ve Amen!

We pray for Adon Aviner ben Abraham's 95 year old mother who is quite sick and suffering mental decline. **Mi Sheberach** – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless the elderly mother of HE Adon Aviner and send her a complete recovery and strengthening of body and soul. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Cure her, strengthen her, make her healthy and return her to her original strength, together with all the sick of Yisrael. And may it be so willed, and we will say, Amen ve Amen!

We pray that by the grace and mercy of G-d towards His people Yisrael, that HE Giberet Leah bat Sarah be allowed speedily soon to sell her properties or rent them at a reasonable price, for the sake of her finances, health, and Torah study schedule amen ve amen!

We also pray about a litigation case in which HE Adon Ya'aqob ben David is involved in the civil courts, praying that G-d who sees all things who knows all things, and justly superintends the whole universe, bring a favorable and prompt resolution to this matter for HE Adon Ya'aqob, amen ve amen!

We pray for Her Honor Ha Rabbanit Giberet Elisheba bat Sarah who is suffering from bouts of loss of equilibrium. **Mi Sheberach** – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless Her Honor Ha Rabbanit Giberet Elisheba bat Sarah and send her a complete recovery and strengthening of body and soul. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Cure her, strengthen her, make her healthy and return her to her original strength, together with all the sick of Yisrael. And may it be so willed, and we will say, Amen ve Amen!

We pray also for H.E. Giberet Rachel bat Batsheva who is afflicted with systemic mastocytosis. **Mi Sheberach** – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless Her Excellency Giberet Rachel bat Batsheva and send her a complete recovery and strengthening of body and soul. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Cure her, strengthen her, make her healthy and return her to her original strength, together with all the sick of Yisrael. And may it be so willed, and we will say, Amen ve Amen!

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 favour 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 doing 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!

Shabbat: “Rav Lakhem” – Sabbath: “Long [enough] to you” & 1st Sabbath of Nachamu (Consolation)

Shabbat	Torah Reading:	Weekday Torah Reading:
שַׁבָּת		Saturday Afternoon
“Rav Lakhem”	Reader 1 – D’barim 2:2-4	Reader 1 – D’barim 2:31-33
“Long [enough] to you”	Reader 2 – D’barim 2:5-9	Reader 2 – D’barim 2:34-36
“Harto habéis”	Reader 3 – D’barim 2:9-13	Reader 3 – D’barim 2:31-37
D’barim (Deut.) 2:2-30	Reader 4 – D’barim 2:14-16	
Ashlamatah: Obad 1:21 + Micah 3:9 – 4:5	Reader 5 – D’barim 2:17-19	Monday and Thursday Mornings
Special: Isaiah 40:1-26	Reader 6 – D’barim 2:20-23	Reader 1 – D’barim 2:31-33
Psalms: 107: 33-43	Reader 7 – D’barim 2:24-30	Reader 2 – D’barim 2:34-36
	Maftir: D’barim 2:28-30	Reader 3 – D’barim 2:31-37
Mk 13:14-20; Luke 21:20-24; James 1:2-4	Obad 1:21 + Micah 3:9 – 4:5 Isaiah 40:1-26	

Contents of the Torah Seder

- Round Mount Seir – Deuteronomy 2:2-8a
- On the Border of Moab – Deuteronomy 2:8b-12
- The Crossing of Zered – Deuteronomy 2:13-15
- Ammonites and Amorites – Deuteronomy 2:16-25
- Victory over Sihon – Deuteronomy 2:26-30

Reading Assignment:

The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me'Am Lo'Ez - Vol 15: Deuteronomy – I – Admonition

By: Rabbi Yitzchaq Behar Arguiti

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1984)

Vol. 15 – “Deuteronomy – I – Admonition,” pp. 158-201.

Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: D'barim (Deuteronomy) 2:2 – 2:30

Rashi	Targum Pseudo Jonathan
2. And the Lord spoke to me, saying,	2. And the LORD spoke to me, saying:
3. You have circled this mountain long enough ; turn northward.	3. It is enough for you to have dwelt about this mountain: turn you to the north,
4. And command the people saying, You are about to pass through the boundary of your kinsmen, the children of Esau, who dwell in Seir, and they will be afraid of you. Be very careful.	4. and command the people, saying, You are to pass by the border of your brethren, the children of Esau, who dwell in Gebala, and they will be afraid of you; be very heedful therefore;
5. You shall not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land not so much as a foot step, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau for an inheritance.	5. provoke them not; for of their land I have not given you as much as the sole of the foot; for I have given Mount Gebal an inheritance unto Esau on account of the honour which he did unto his father.
6. You shall buy food from them with money, that you may eat, and also water you shall buy from them with money, that you may drink.	6. You will buy fresh provision of them for silver, that you may eat, and water will you buy with silver, to drink.
7. For the Lord, your God, has blessed you in all the work of your hand; He knows of your walking through this great desert; these forty years that the Lord your God has been with you, you have lacked nothing.	7. Be careful that you vex them not : for the LORD your God has blessed you in all the works of your hands, He hath supplied your wants in your journeying in the great wilderness; these forty years has the Word of the LORD your God been your helper; you have not wanted anything.
8. And we departed from our kinsmen, the children of Esau, who dwelt in Seir, by way of the plain from Elath and from Etzion Geber, and we turned and passed	8. So we passed by our brethren the sons of Esau, who dwell in Gebala, from Elath and the fortress of Tarnegola and turned and went by the way of the

Rashi	Targum Pseudo Jonathan
through the way of the desert of Moab.	wilderness of Moab
9. And the Lord said to me, Do not distress the Moabites, and do not provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land [as] an inheritance, because I have given Ar to the children of Lot [as]an inheritance.	9. And the LORD spoke to me, saying: You will not aggrieve the Moabaeae, nor make war against them; for I have not given you their land to inherit, because I have given Lachaiath for a possession to the children of Lot.
10. The Emim dwelt there formerly, a great and numerous people, and tall [in stature], as the Anakim;	10. The Emthanaia dwelt in it of old, a people great and many, and mighty as the giants.
11. They also are considered Rephaim, as the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim.	11. The giants who dwelt in the plain of Geyonbere were also reputed as the giants who perished in the Flood; but the Moabites called them Emethanee.
12. And the Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, and the children of Esau were driving them out, and they exterminated them from before them and dwelt in their stead, just as the Israelites did to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord gave them.	12. And in Gebala dwelt the Genosaia in old times, and the Bene Esau drove them out and destroyed them, and dwelt in their place; as did Israel in the land of their inheritance, which the LORD gave to them.
13. Now get up and cross the brook of Zered. So we crossed the brook of Zered.	13. Now arise, and pass over the stream of Tarvaja. And we crossed the stream of Tarvaja.
14. And the days when we went from Kadesh Barnea, until we crossed the brook of Zered, numbered thirty eight years, until all the generation of the men of war expired from the midst of the camp, just as the Lord swore to them.	14. And the days in which (from the time) we came from Rekem Giah till we crossed the stream of Tarvaja, were thirty and eight years, until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from the camp, as the LORD had sworn to them.
15. Also the hand of the Lord was upon them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp, until they were consumed.	15. But a plague also from the LORD had scourged them to consume them from the host, until they were brought to an end.
16. So it was, when all the men of war finished dying from among the people,	16. And when all the men of war, the makers of the high places, were consumed by dying out of the host,
17. that the Lord spoke to me saying,	17. the LORD spoke with me, saying:
18. Today you are crossing the boundary of Moab at Ar.	18. You are this day to pass the border of Moab towards Lechaiath.
19. And when you approach opposite the children of Ammon, neither distress them, nor provoke them, for I will not give you of the land of the children of Ammon as an inheritance, because I have given it to the children of Lot as an inheritance.	19. But coming near over against the children of Ammon, you are not to vex, nor provoke them to war; for I have not given you the land of the Bene Ammon for a possession: I have given it an inheritance to the children of Lot, for the sake of Abraham's righteousness/generosity.
20. It too is considered a land of Rephaim; Rephaim dwelt therein formerly, and the Ammonites call them Zamzummim.	20. That also was accounted a land of giants; in old time the giants dwelt in it, and the Ammonites called them Zimthaneae,
21. A great, numerous and tall people as the Anakim, but the Lord exterminated them before them, and they drove them out and dwelt in their stead.	21. a people great and mighty as giants: but the Word of the LORD destroyed them, and drove them out before them, and they dwelt in their place;
22. As He did to the children of Esau, who dwell in Seir, when He exterminated the Horites from before them; and they drove them out and dwelt in their stead even to this day.	22. {as He did for the Bene Esau who dwell in Seir: for He destroyed the Horaee before them, and drove them out, and they dwell in their place} to this day.
23. But the Avim, who dwell in open cities, up till	23. And the rest of the escaped of the Kenaanah which

Rashi	Targum Pseudo Jonathan
Gazathe Caphtorites, who came forth of Caphtor, exterminated them, and dwelt in their stead.	dwelt in the cities of Dephia to Gaza, the Kapotkaee who came out of Kapotkaia destroyed them, and dwelt in their place.
24. Get up, journey, and cross the river Arnon. Behold, I have delivered into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: Begin to possess it, and provoke him to war.	24. Arise, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnona; behold, I have delivered into your hands Sihon the king of Heshbon and the Amoraah, and his land: begin to drive them out, and to provoke him to wage war.
25. Today I will begin to put the dread of you and the fear of you upon the nations that are under the entire heaven, who will hear reports of you and shake and be in trepidation because of you.	25. Today I will begin to put your terror and fear upon the faces of all the peoples which are under the whole heavens who will hear the report of your virtue, that the sun and moon have stood still, and have ceased from speaking (their) song for the space of a day and a half, standing still in their habitation until you have done battle with Sihon; and they will shiver and tremble before you.
26. So I sent messengers from the desert of Kedemoth to Sihon, king of Heshbon, with words of peace, saying,	26. And I sent messengers from Nehardea, which is by the wilderness of Kedemoth, to Sihon king of the Amorites, with words of peace, saying,
27. Allow me to pass through your land: I will go along by the highway, I will turn neither to the right nor to the left.	27. I would pass through your land; by the way which is the beaten road will I go; I will not turn aside to do you harm on the right hand or the left.
28. You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat; and give to me water for money, that I may drink; I will only pass through by my feet.	28. I will buy fresh provision with silver, to eat, and you will give me water for silver, to drink; I will only pass through:
29. Just as the children of Esau who dwell in Seir, and the Moabites who dwell in Ar, did for me; until I cross the Jordan to the land which the Lord our God is giving us.	29. as the Bene Esau, who dwell in Gebal, and the Moabae, who dwell in Lechaiath have done to me, until the time that I pass over the Jordan into the land which the LORD our God gives us.
30. But Sihon, king of Heshbon, did not wish to let us pass by him, for the Lord your God caused his spirit to be hardened and his heart to be obstinate, in order that He would give him into your hand, as this day.	30. But Sihon the king of Heshbon was not willing to allow us to pass through his borders; for the LORD our God had hardened the form of his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, to deliver him into your hand as at this day.

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. **Kal 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 ehad:** 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-yoṣe bo mi-maḳom aher:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.
 7. **Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.
-

Rashi's Commentary for: D'barim (Deuteronomy) 2:2-30

3 turn northward Turn along the eastern side [of Moab], from the south to the north, facing northward. Consequently, they were traveling in an easterly direction, and this is what is meant by "And they came from the sun rise [i.e., east side] to the land of Moab" (Jud. 11:18).

4 Be very careful And what is this "being careful"? "You shall not provoke them."

5 not so much as a foot step meaning, even only for the sole of the foot to tread a single step, I do not permit you to enter their land without permission. An Aggadic interpretation is: [I will not give you of their land] until the day arrives when the foot will tread upon the Mount of Olives [the Messianic era], as it said: "And His [God's] feet will [figuratively] stand [on that day upon the Mount of Olives]" (Zech. 14:4).

[I have given Mount Seir] to Esau for an inheritance from Abraham. I gave ten nations to Abraham, seven of them for you [the seven of Canaan], and the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites (Gen. 16:18-21), who are Ammon, Moab, and Seir. One of them is for Esau, and the other two are for the children of Lot (Gen. Rabbah 44). As a reward [for Lot] for going with him [Abraham] to Egypt and for keeping silent when Abraham said, regarding his wife, "She is my sister," He treated him [Lot] as his [Abraham's] son [to inherit part of the land promised to Abraham] (Gen. Rabbah 44).

6 you shall buy Heb. תִּקְרֶה. This is an expression of purchase. Similar is (Gen. 50:5), "which I have purchased (כָּרִיתִי) for myself." In the coastal cities, for "selling" (מְכִינָה), they use the word "כִּינָה" (Rosh Hashanah 26a).

7 For the Lord, your God, has blessed you Therefore you should not be ungrateful for His goodness [to you] by acting as though you were poor. Rather, show yourselves as rich people.

8 and we turned and passed towards the north; we turned to proceed on the eastern side.

9 and do not provoke them to war God forbade Israel only to wage war against Moab. However, Israel did frighten them, appearing before them, armed for battle. Therefore, it is written, "And Moab was very frightened of the people" (Num. 22:3) because Israel plundered and looted them. Regarding the children of Ammon, however, it says (verse 19), "Do not provoke them"—with any kind of provocation, as a reward for the modesty shown by their ancestress [Lot's younger daughter], who did not publicize her father's conduct, as did his elder daughter, who named her son Moab [מֹאָב like מֵאָב, from the father] (Baba Kamma 38b).

Ar The name of the province.

10 The Emim dwelt there formerly- You might think that this is the land of Rephaim which I gave [promised] to

Abraham (Gen. 15:20), because the Emim, who are Rephaim, dwelt there before, but this is not that one, for those Rephaim I drove out and made the children of Lot settle there in their stead.

11 They... are considered Rephaim... These Emim were considered Rephaim, just as the Anakim, who were called Rephaim, because whoever beheld them—his hands became weak (מִתְרַפּוּת) (Gen. Rabbah 26).

Emim so called, because their fear (אִימָה) was cast over mankind. And similarly (verse 12), "The Horites dwelt in Seir" and [just as I gave the Rephaim over to the children of Lot,] I gave them [the Horites] over to the children of Esau.

12 were driving them out Heb. יִרְשׁוּם [This is expressed in] the present tense, as if to say, I gave them power to go on constantly driving them out.

15 [Also the hand of the Lord] was against them to quickly destroy them within a period of forty years, so that they would not cause their children to tarry any longer in the desert.

16 So it was, when [all the men of war] finished...

17 that the Lord spoke to me But since the spies were sent until now, the word וַיְדַבֵּר [denoting God's speaking to Moses with endearment] is not mentioned in [this] section, only וַיִּאמֶר [denoting a less endearing form of communication], to teach us that during those entire thirty-eight years during which time the Israelites were under ban by God, the Divine speech was not directed towards him in an expression of affection, face to face, and with peace of mind—to teach us that the Divine Presence rests upon the prophets only for Israel's sake (Sifrei, Lev. 6).

the men of war [i.e.,] men from twenty years of age, who go forth to war.

18-19 Today you are crossing the boundary of Moab... And when you approach opposite the children of Ammon from here [we deduce] that the land of Ammon was towards the north.

20 It too is considered a land of Rephaim It too is considered a land of Rephaim because the Rephaim dwelt there formerly, but this is not the one I gave to Abraham.

23 But the Avim who dwell in open cities The Avim are of the Philistine people, for they are listed together with them in the Book of Joshua (13:3), as it says, "The five Philistine lords." The Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, the Ekronites, and the Avim." But because of the oath which Abraham had sworn to Abimelech, (Gen. 21: 23-24), the Israelites were unable to take their land away from them; so I brought the Caphtorites against them, and they destroyed them and dwelt in their stead. Now, you are permitted to take it [the land of the Avim] from their [the Caphtorites'] possession (Chullin 60b).

25 under the entire heaven This [statement that nations under the whole heaven will fear the Israelites] teaches that the sun stood still for Moses on the day of the battle with Og, [Other editions: Sihon,] and the matter became [consequently] known under the entire heaven [that is, to the whole world] (Avodah Zarah 25a).

26 [And I sent messengers] from the desert of Kedemoth Even though the Omnipresent had not commanded me to call to Sihon in peace, I learned to do so from the incident at the desert of Sinai, i.e., relating to the Torah which preceded (קִדְמָה) the world. When the Holy One, blessed be He, was about to give the Torah to Israel, He took it to Esau and Ishmael. Although it was clear to Him that they would not accept it, nevertheless, He began with them in peace. So too, I first called to Sihon with words of peace. Another explanation קִדְמוֹת מִמֶּנִּי מִדְּבַר מֹשֶׁה said

to God, "I learned this from You, Who preceeded (תְּחִלָּתְךָ) the world. You could have sent one flash of lightning to consume the Egyptians, but instead, You sent me from the desert to Pharaoh. saying, (Exod. 5:1) 'Let my people go' patiently." (Midrash Tanchuma)

29 Just as the children of Esau...did for me This is not referring to permission to pass through their land, [for Edom refused,] rather it refers to the selling of food and water.

until I cross the Jordan This refers to [Moses' earlier request] "Allow me to pass through your land." (verse 27)

Ketubim: Psalm 107:33-43

Rashi	Targum
1. Give thanks to the Lord because He is good, for His kindness is eternal.	1. Sing praise in the presence of the LORD, for He is good, for His goodness is forever.
2. Those redeemed by the Lord shall say it, those whom He redeemed from the hands of an oppressor.	2. The redeemed of the LORD will say it, whom He redeemed from the hand of the oppressor.
3. And gathered them from lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the sea.	3. And whom He gathered from the lands, from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the sea in the south.
4. They strayed in the desert, on a road of desolation; they did not find an inhabited city.	4. Concerning the people of the house of Israel He prophesied and said, "The people of the house of Israel have wandered in the wilderness in a desolate path; they did not find an inhabited city."
5. Hungry as well as thirsty, their soul enwraps itself in them.	5. Thirsty, yes, and hungry, their souls will grow weary.
6. And they cried out to the Lord in their distress; from their straits He rescued them.	6. And they prayed in the presence of the LORD when it went ill with them; He delivered them from their distress.
7. And He led them on a straight road, to go to an inhabited city.	7. And He guided them on a straight way, to come to Jerusalem, the inhabited city.
8. They shall give thanks to the Lord for His kindness, and for His wonders to the children of men.	8. Let them give thanks in the presence of the LORD because of His kindness, and tell His wonders to the sons of men.
9. For He sated a yearning soul, and a hungry soul He filled with goodness.	9. For He has satisfied the soul of the empty, and filled with good things the soul of the hungry.
10. Those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, prisoners of affliction and iron.	10. Concerning Zedekiah and the leaders of Israel He prophesied and said, "O Zedekiah and the leaders of Israel, who were exiled to Babylon and dwelt in darkness and the shadow of death, and became prisoners in the pain of iron fetters."
11. For they rebelled against the words of God, and they scorned the counsel of the Most High.	11. For they rebelled against the word of God, and rejected the counsel of the Most High.
12. And He humbled their heart with toil; they stumbled with no one to help them.	12. And He broke their heart with toil; they stumbled, and there was none to help.
13. And they cried out to the Lord in their distress; from their straits He saved them.	13. And they prayed in the presence of the LORD when it went ill with them; He redeemed them from their distress.

Rashi	Targum
14. He took them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and He broke open their bonds.	14. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death; and He will break their chains.
15. They shall give thanks to the Lord for His kindness, and for His wonders to the children of men.	15. They will give thanks in the presence of the LORD because of His kindness, and tell His wonders to the sons of men.
16. For He broke copper doors, and cut off iron bars.	16. For He shattered the doors of bronze, and cut down the bars of iron.
17. Fools, because of the way of their transgression and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.	17. Concerning Hezekiah, king of the tribe of the house of Judah, He prophesied and said, "Hezekiah, king of the house of Judah, who refused to take a wife, was punished as the fools are punished because of their rebellious way and because of their iniquities."
18. Their soul despises all food, and they reach the portals of death.	18. Their soul will reject all food, and they arrive at the portals of death.
19. And they cried out to the Lord in their distress; from their straits He saved them.	19. And they prayed in the presence of the LORD when it went ill with them, and He will redeem them from their distresses.
20. He sent His word and healed them, and extricated them from their pit.	20. He will send the words of His healing and will heal them, and deliver them from being harmed.
21. They shall give thanks to the Lord for His kindness, and for His wonders to the children of men.	21. They will give thanks in the presence of the LORD because of His kindness, and tell His wonders to the sons of men.
22. And they shall slaughter sacrifices of thanksgiving, and they shall tell of His deeds with song.	22. And they will sacrifice thanksgiving sacrifices, and will tell of His deeds in gladness.
23. Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do work in mighty waters.	23. Concerning the sailors of Jonah son of Amittai, he prophesied and said, "The sailors, those who go down to the sea in ships, those who do work on many waters.
24. They saw the deeds of the Lord and His wonders in the deep.	24. They saw the deeds of the LORD, and His wonders in the deep."
25. He spoke, and He set up a tempest, and it raised its waves.	25. And He gave command by His word, and raised up the storm and the gale, and its waves were lifted up high.
26. They went up to the heavens, they came down to the depths; their soul melted with trouble.	26. They go up towards heaven, they go down to the depths of the abysses; their souls will melt in misery.
27. They were frightened and staggered like a drunkard, and all their wisdom was destroyed.	27. They will tremble, they will totter like a man drunk with wine; and all their wisdom is destroyed.
28. They cried out to the Lord from their distress, that He take them out of their straits.	28. And they prayed in the presence of the LORD when it went ill with them, and He will bring them out of their troubles.
29. The tempest He had set up [settled] into a calm, and their waves were stilled.	29. He will make the wind cease to quietness, and their waves will be silent.
30. They rejoiced that they were stilled, and He led them to the region of their desire.	30. And they rejoiced, for they are silent; and He led them to the harbor they desired.
31. They shall thank the Lord for His kindness, and for His wonders to the children of men.	31. They will give thanks in the presence of the LORD because of His kindness, and tell His wonders to the sons of men.
32. And they shall exalt Him in an assembly of people,	32. And they exalt Him in the assembly of the people,

Rashi	Targum
and in a sitting of elders, praise Him.	the house of Israel; and in the Sanhedrin of the wise they will praise Him.
33. He makes rivers into a desert, and springs of water into an arid place;	33. Concerning the generation of Joel son of Pethuel He prophesied and said: "When the house of Israel rebelled in the days of Joel the prophet, He brought a drought into the world; He made the rivers like the desert, and the sources of water like thirst."
34. A fruitful land into a salty waste, because of the evil of its inhabitants.	34. The land of Israel that produces fruit became a waste like Sodom, which was overthrown because of the evil of its inhabitants.
35. He makes a desert into a pool of water, and a wasteland into springs of water.	35. When they returned to the Torah, He made the desert like a channel of water, and the parched land became sources of water.
36. And He settles the hungry there, and they establish an inhabited city.	36. And He made the hungry dwell there, and they set up an inhabited city.
37. And they sow fields and plant vineyards, which produce fruits and grain.	37. And they sowed fields and planted vineyards, and they yielded fruit of produce.
38. And He blessed them, and they multiplied exceedingly, and their animals did not decrease.	38. And He blessed them and they multiplied greatly, and their livestock will not diminish.
39. Whereas they were few and they sank down from dominion, trouble, and sorrow.	39. And when they sinned, they diminished and became poor because of the affliction of misery and pain.
40. He pours contempt upon princes and leads them astray in a wasteland where there is no path.	40. He pours contempt on the leaders, and made them wander in a void without a path.
41. And He strengthened the needy from poverty and made him families like flocks.	41. But when they returned to the Torah, He exalted the needy from poverty, and made them like the flocks of the well-born families.
42. The upright see and rejoice, and all injustice shuts its mouth.	42. The upright will see and rejoice, but every liar's mouth is closed and sealed.
43. He who is wise will keep these in mind, and they will ponder the kind deeds of the Lord.	43. Would that the wise man keep these things, and discern the kindnesses of the LORD!

Rashi's Commentary for: Psalm 107:1-43

33 He makes rivers into a desert That is to say that He makes the settlements of the nations into ruins.

34 into a salty waste To be like a salty land insofar as it does not produce fruit.

35 He makes a desert into a pool of water He makes a ruined settlement into a building and restores it to its original state.

39 Whereas they were few and they sank down But they, from the beginning, sank down and were few because of dominion, trouble, and sorrow.

41 and made him families like flocks He made [for] the needy the families of his children as numerous as flocks.

42 shuts Heb. קִפְצָה, closes up, like (Deut. 15:7): “and not close up (תִּקְפֹּץ) your hand.”

Meditation from the Psalms **Psalms 107: 1-43** **By: H.Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David**

This hymn of thanksgiving opens the fifth and final Book of Psalms. Primarily, this composition expresses the thanks of those who were in places of danger but were rescued and arrived home safely. As such, these verses relate to a number of historical settings. *Alshich* says that the Psalmist is amplifying the thanks which Israel offered to G-d when they were redeemed from the dangers of Egyptian bondage, where they were threatened by the hazards of both the scorched wilderness¹ and the deep sea.

Ibn Yachya relates this work to David's life.² The Philistines captured the Holy Ark, and it was endangered in countless ways. When David returned the Ark to a haven of safety and sanctity, he composed this hymn of thanks.

Sforno says that the Psalmist echoes those who will be redeemed from the present exile. Throughout the centuries they have endured all kinds of danger, only to be ultimately confronted with the greatest danger of all — the war of Gog and Magog, which will threaten to tear the entire world asunder.

The Talmud³ derives a practical rule of Jewish conduct from this psalm: Four people must offer thanks to God — he who traveled over the sea; he who journeyed through the desert; he who was sick and then healed; and he who was jailed and then released. All four of these perilous situations are vividly described in this psalm.⁴

Psalms chapter 107 contains a summation of history, therefore, let us continue what we started last week, and look a bit more at how the process is playing out in our days.⁵

As we see today, the media speak about the terrible cruelty and killings which Islamic extremists are performing around the world, even within their own people. Of course, there is the focus of carrying out these atrocious acts in Israel. It appears that we are now in the fifth galut: Galut Ishmael, the Arab exile. As Rav Chaim Vital⁶ continues and writes, that this will be the worst of all exiles. The situation will get so bad that our only salvation will be for us to cry out to HaShem and HaShem will listen and bring the redemption. This last statement was always puzzling. how is it possible that all Israel will put their differences aside and unite as one people to cry out to HaShem? Now we can see that brutality will bring us together.

The situation that is responsible for current events is that the satan⁷ is dying. When we do mitzvot, the kedusha

¹ Wilderness - , Strong's number 04057, is our verbal tally with the Torah portion.

² Our psalm is not ascribed to a particular author. Never the less some commentators suggest that it speaks of David's life.

³ Berachot 54b

⁴ These opening remarks are 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.

⁵ Much of this study is based on a Tisha B'Av shiur, and others, by Rabbi Mendel Kessin.

⁶ Hayyim ben Joseph Vital (Safed, October 11, 1542) was a rabbi in Safed and the foremost disciple of Isaac Luria. He recorded much of his master's teachings. After Vital's death his writings spread having a "powerful impact on various circles throughout the Jewish world".

⁷ The first time a form of the word 'Satan' appears is in Bamidbar 22:22 where an angel of G-d stood in front of Bilam and his donkey to obstruct them, to block their path. The word "I'satan", therefore, means to be an obstacle, an obstruction, a roadblock, an adversary, etc. The rabbis teach in the Talmud that Satan basically resides inside of us, and it's called the Yetzer

comes to Klal Israel,⁸ and we grow thereby. If we sin, the kedusha goes to the satan, and he grows thereby. When Israel is up, then Esav and the satan are down, and vice versa.

To rectify creation, the tikkun, we must take back all of the kedusha from the satan. This will kill the satan. At this time, the satan is dying. Let's look at some of the pieces that are used in the tikkun.

There are two **Meshichim**⁹ with two different missions:

1. Mashiach ben Yosef – Take back the kedusha by eliminating sin.
2. Mashiach ben David – To bring down the rest of the kedusha by encouraging mitzvot.

The **tikkun**, the correction, is accomplished using the following methods:

1. Teshuva – repentance.
2. Doing the mitzvot. This was supposed to be the main vehicle for tikkun, but, we failed.
3. Suffering will undo our sins and bring Klal Israel strength. This is now the main path for tikkun.

There are three **strategies**, in war, when supplies are running low. All of them have been employed by the satan as he has lost kedusha due to the suffering of the Jewish people.

1. **The big bluff using shock and awe.** The holocaust is an example where the nations of the world ganged up to kill the Jews. The goal was to discourage other Jews and cause them to sin. This failed.
2. **Discourage the enemy.** Using dissidents, the Erev Rav¹⁰ to discourage the Jews. This also failed.
3. **Call in an ally for replenishments.** Ishmael, the Arabs, the Muslim, are the only other nation which can draw down kedusha. Avraham said, "may Ishmael live before you". HaShem said, "I have heard". Ishmael wants to be the Bechor, the firstborn. The Maharal of Prague says that Ishmael does not belong to the four kingdoms - Medes, Babylonians, Persians and Edomites. According to the Maharal, Ishmael comes after them. He is not part of the four kingdoms because he has extremely powerful spiritual strength that he inherited from Abraham. Precisely for this reason he is probably the hardest and most threatening of them all.

These three strategies were employed beginning in approximately 1990 (5750). At that time, the world began to change. This was 'Friday noon of the sixth day of creation'. This is when the sun begins to set. September of 1989 is when this began. This is when the Berlin wall collapsed.¹¹ The Soviet Union collapsed shortly thereafter.¹² This is when the intifada began.¹³ When Ishmael (Arabs) takes over, Edom begins to collapse.

Now the Arabs / Islam are taking over Europe and beginning to rise in the United States, the greatest part of

Hara (Inclination Toward Evil). The rabbis say that this Satanic force is the greatest blessing that G-d ever gave us! Satan is the loyal opposition. It helps us build our spiritual muscles by giving us resistance to our spiritual progress.

⁸ Klal Israel means: "All of Israel".

⁹ Meshichim: anointed ones = Messiahs.

¹⁰ The Jews that want to destroy Judaism, the leaders of the liberal political parties in Israel, the leaders of the conservative and reform movements. They are like a cancer, like a group of cells proliferating to the destruction of the body. Like cancer cells, the Erev Rav are not recognized as enemies of the body. Therefore, the body does not defend itself against them. The Erev Rav always become great along with the rise of the Mashiach, like a counter-balanced force.

¹¹ The Berlin wall was 'officially' opened in November of 1989.

¹² On December 25, 1991, the Soviet hammer and sickle flag lowered for the last time over the Kremlin, thereafter replaced by the Russian tricolor.

¹³ The first intifada lasted from December 9, 1987 until the Madrid Conference in 1991. From 1989-1992, the *intifada* claimed the lives of nearly 1,000 Palestinians.

Edom. Islam (AKA Ishmael) is the fastest growing religion.¹⁴

Edom is represented by the pig, which is NOT KOSHER now, but will become kosher in the future:

*Why is the pig called [in Hebrew] chazir? Because in the future, G-d will return [le-hachazir] it to Israel.*¹⁵

Bereshit Rabbah 63:8 Rabbi Isaac said: "[God declared]: 'You have given a name to your swine [Esau]; then I too will name My firstborn, as it says, Thus says the Lord: Israel is My son, My firstborn.

Bereshit Rabbah 65:1 Why does he compare it [the Roman State] to a swine? For this reason: when the swine is lying down it puts out its hoofs, as if to say, "I am clean," so does this wicked State rob and oppress, yet pretend to be executing justice. So for forty years Esau used to ensnare married women and violate them, yet when he attained forty years he compared himself to his father, saying, "As my father was forty years old when he married, so I will marry at the age of forty".¹⁶

The pig is an allusion to Edom [Rome]... And why is the last-named called *hazir*? Because it will yet restore (hazar) the crown to its owner. This is indicated by what is written:

Ovadia (Obadiah) 1:21 And saviors shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

Thus, if the pig becomes kosher, then so also does Esav become kosher. Thus, Esav, and specifically the United States, will eventually have a purification. This idea is brought into further clarification by the following Targum:

Targum Yonatan, Genesis 50:13 In the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron (the burial place of the Patriarchs) . . . Esau's head lies in the bosom of Isaac.

This indicates that there is part of Edom which is good, and it is the place where Chakma, wisdom, resides. The head of any organization is the leader. The United States is the undisputed leader of the world today. Thus, the good part of Esav, the head, seems to be the United States.

In the era of Mashiach the world at large will be purified and achieve a higher spiritual level, so that the pig will become permissible for food. (How does this square with one of the basic beliefs of Judaism, that the laws of the Torah will never change? Rabbi Chaim ibn Attar¹⁷ suggests that G-d will alter the pig's physiology so that indeed it chews its cud and therefore bears both kosher signs.)

Esav (Edom), and western civilization, has four characteristics:

1. **Arrogance and atheism.** Russia took on these attributes. Russia has begun to fall. The czar has fallen and communism is in decline. There may be some good left as Russia loses its anti-Semitism and works with America.
2. **He was a fraud.** Europe took on this attribute. Europe's Muslims are causing the end of the Schengen

¹⁴ 23% of the global population are known as Muslims.

¹⁵ This idea appears in various medieval biblical and Talmudic commentaries, but is not found anywhere in any Talmudic-era source. See Likutei Sichot 29:128, where several versions of this adage are cited.

¹⁶ Midrash Rabbah – Leviticus 13:5

¹⁷ Ohr ha-Chaim, Leviticus 11:7.

zone;¹⁸ they are causing it to fall. Brexit¹⁹ is destroying their unity.

3. **Materialism and pleasure seeking.** The United States took on this attribute. The good part of Esav. America will flourish under Donald Trump.
4. **Parents are honored.** The United States and Esav both honored parents²⁰ (Mother's Day and Father's Day is unique to America). They have also given tremendous charity and foreign aid. Their charity sponsors much Torah study.

The goal of the Christians is to convert the Jews. This makes them an ally of the Arabs (Ishmael) to make the Jews sin. Obama became the king of Edom and he was a Muslim or at least a very strong sympathizer of the Muslims. Obama's election in 2008 was a miracle given that he had no particular talent or background that qualified him. He was a community organizer. His friends were mostly radical communists and Muslims.

The gematria of Obama is the gematria of Mashiach and of nachash (serpent).²¹ This means that he has a role in the messianic process, to bring the Mashiach. His role is to destroy the Mashiach and derail the messianic process. Obama has designated the end-of-time; this is one of the main reasons that he rose to power. Mashiach ben David *has to come* by 5790. Mashiach ben Yosef has to come earlier. In July, of 2015 (5775), Obama gave Iran the right to build an atomic bomb through an agreement. The agreement legitimizes their right to have atomic bombs within 15 years. This means that they will have a legal atomic bomb in 2030 (5790), right on time according to the midrash. This will lead to the last war, as designated by Obama. This will lead to a clash of civilizations.

Yaaqob was to bring down kedusha. Esav's job was to subdue evil. Trump will play Esav's role to subdue evil. Additionally, he will undo the legacy of the democratic party. At the same time, he is destroying the media and the leftist liberals.

Obama, as a concealed Muslim in a Christian nation, had six jobs:

1. **Allow the satan to survive.**
2. **Destroy the United States (Edom).** His meteoric rise was indicator that He was HaShem's choice.
3. **Defend Moslems:** Raise and empower Ishmael. Empower extremist Muslims. (by giving Iran the atomic bomb and designating the end-of-time.)
4. **Designate the end of time.**
5. **He initiated Gog u'Magog.**
6. **Destroy Israel.**

We can see that Obama's mission was laying the groundwork for the *final war* with Iran (Persia):

Yalkut Shimoni Remez Yeshayahu 499: *Rabbi Yitzchak said: In the year that Melech HaMashiach will be revealed, all the kings (leaders) of the nations will be struggling against each other. The leader of Iran will contest with the leader of Arabia, and the leader of Arabia will go to Aram or Edom (depending on the edition) to get council from them. The leader of Persia will respond and destroy the entire world. All the*

¹⁸ The Schengen Area is an area comprising 26 European states that have officially abolished passport and all other types of border control at their mutual borders. The area mostly functions as a single jurisdiction for international travel purposes, with a common visa policy.

¹⁹ Brexit is the prospective withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU). In a referendum on 23 June 2016, 51.9% of the participating UK electorate voted to leave the EU, out of a turnout of 72.2%. On 29 March 2017, the UK government invoked Article 50 of the Treaty on the European Union. The UK is thus due to leave the EU at 11 pm on 29 March 2019 UTC.

²⁰ Devarim Rabbah 1:15. For further sources indicating the high esteem the Sages held for Esav in the performance of this command, i.e. honoring parents, see Ishei HaTanach, Esav, Kavod Aviv.

²¹ Trump is the gematria of Mashiach ben David.

nations of the world will be trembling and shaking and falling on their faces. They will be seized by pains like labor pains.

The Jewish people will be trembling and quaking and saying: "Where can we go? Where can we go?" And [HaShem] will say to them: My children, do not fear! Everything I did I did only for you! Why are you frightened? Don't be afraid--the time of your redemption has arrived!"

Talmud Yoma 10a - *"Rebbi states that Rome is destined to fall at the hands of Persia. Rav states that Persia is destined to fall at the hands of Rome. Question: Can the builders (Persia [Iran], who permitted the rebuilding of the Holy Temple) fall before the destroyers (Rome, who destroyed the Temple)? The sages answer: If the King (Hashem) so decrees."*

Rearranging the Hebrew letters of the word "Islam" gives you the word "Samael",²² the angel of death.

The Talmud,²³ states that the nation of Edom (which, according to the mystics, refers to the Western nations such as the U.S. etc.) and the nation of Paras (Persia/Iran) will be the last two powerful nations standing just before the coming of the Messiah. And the Talmud²⁴ discusses whether Edom will fall into the hands of Paras during the wars preceding the coming of the Messiah, or vice-versa.

The Middle East Arabic nations are imploding: Somalia,²⁵ Tunisia,²⁶ Egypt,²⁷ Yemen,²⁸ Libya,²⁹ Iraq,³⁰ Afghanistan,³¹ Syria,³² and Lebanon.³³ This is the collapse of Ishmael. This situation is compounded by the use of fracking in America. As we reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil, so we reduce their income and hasten their collapse. This situation is further exacerbated by the finding of natural gas³⁴ and oil³⁵ in Israel. As Israel gains energy independence, Ishmael is further weakened and the collapse is hastened.

Since the Arabs have contributed almost nothing to the world, in the last 1500 years, except oil. If they lose this oil they become expendable. In Saudia Arabia, for example, the current oil fields are predicted to run out in 5782AM (2022). This is driving the satan crazy as he watches his resources decline. He starts to exploit the baseless hatred that exists between Jews.³⁶ The rise of Yair Lapid, with his 19 seats in the Knesset and his influence has brought

²² Samael (Hebrew: שָׂמַאֵל "Venom of God "or" Poison of God," or "Blindness of God" Samael or Samil) is an important archangel in Talmudic and post-Talmudic lore, a figure who is an accuser (satan), seducer, and destroyer, and has been regarded as both good and evil. Rabbinical writings describe Samael as the guardian angel of Esau and a patron of Edom. He is considered in Talmudic texts to be a member of the heavenly host (with often grim and destructive duties). One of Samael's greatest roles in Jewish lore is that of the main archangel of death. He remains one of HaShem's servants even though he condones the sins of man. As an angel, Samael resides in the seventh heaven, although he is declared to be the chief angel of the fifth heaven, the reason for this being the presence of the throne of glory in the seventh heaven.

²³ Avodah Zarah 2b

²⁴ Yoma 10a

²⁵ 1990s

²⁶ Within two years of 2011.

²⁷ Within two years of 2011.

²⁸ Within two years of 2011.

²⁹ Within two years of 2011.

³⁰ 1990s

³¹ 1978 to present.

³² March of 2011.

³³ The great Sunni Arab implosion that began with the 2011 "Arab Spring" was unforeseen in its suddenness, violence, and extent.

³⁴ In the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Israel.

³⁵ In the Golan.

³⁶ Baseless hatred caused the destruction of Temple.

about a "spiritual holocaust" as he attempts to divert Haredim³⁷ from their Torah studies, and into the army. He also is attempting to take away government funds from the kollels,³⁸ which will cause them to collapse as the Haredim have to go to work. Finally, he is attempting to make the Jewish day schools teach secular topics and cease, or minimize, their Torah studies. HaShem sees that we want to hate each other, so He sent Lapid (Erev Rav) to deepen the hatred and force us to abandon the mitzvot. This will benefit the satan and provide his kedusha. Lapid coming out of nowhere is a signal of the hand of HaShem moving in this matter.

Once Lapid and his 19 seats became available, the ruling coalition no longer needed the religious parties to enable them to rule. This diminished their influence and revealed the deep antipathy that existed toward them. As the rulers increased their sins, so the satan was nourished from their sins. Lapid, as one of the greatest anti-Semites in history, was used by HaShem to bring about His will.

Lapid's negative force on Klal Israel was balanced when the Palestinians kidnapped three teenagers.³⁹ This crime touched the hearts of Jews everywhere and produced unity and love amidst the Jewish people. This was an effective counter-balance to the baseless hatred being fostered by Lapid and his cohorts. The end result is that New elections were called where Netanyahu expelled Lapid and his seats from the ruling coalition.

When Lapid fell, the satan sought a new source of nourishment. He caused the rise of the reform movement (Erev Rav) in Israel. This was manifest by the legitimizing of the "Women of the Wall". The goal of the reform movement is to distance Jews from the Torah, to bring sins instead of mitzvot.

Now let's look at more recent events and how they play into the events of the last days.

Trump came on the political scene and was treated as a joke. He was universally disparaged in the press and he became the fodder for late night comedians. His selection as the Republican candidate was nothing short of a miracle. He displaced sixteen well known heavy weights in the Republican party. His election was a miracle of miracles. All the polls showed him losing, yet he became the winner. Why did he win?

Donald Trump won because he was not part of the administration, Democrats and Republicans, who had lied to the people and made promises that they never intended to keep. The Republicans advanced the Democrat's goals to the detriment of the people who elected them. They wanted an outsider who would look at the country as they looked at it. They wanted someone who was not a liar. Someone who sees the problems that they see. Trump is a business man who has become the champion of the common man. As a billionaire he is not dependent on contributions from influence peddlers. Because he can be his own man and do what he wants to do without losing his financing, he has great power.

Trump is a real estate guy in New York and has developed many relationships with Jews because there are many Jews in the real estate business. This has given him a desire to assist Jews. This desire has been enhanced by the

³⁷ Haredim are members of any of various Orthodox Jewish sects characterized by strict adherence to the traditional form of Jewish law and rejection of modern secular culture, some of whom do not recognize the modern state of Israel as a spiritual authority.

³⁸ A kolel or kollel (a "gathering" or "collection" [of scholars]) is an institute for full-time, advanced study of the Talmud and rabbinic literature. Like a yeshiva, a kollel features shiurim (lectures) and learning sederim (sessions); unlike a yeshiva, the student body of a kollel consists of married men for the most part. A Kollel generally pays a regular monthly stipend to its members.

³⁹ On June 12, 2014, three Israeli teenagers were kidnapped at the bus/hitchhiking stop at the Israeli settlement of Alon Shvut in Gush Etzion, in the West Bank, as they were hitchhiking to their homes. The three teens were Naftali Frenkel (16, from Nof Ayalon), Gilad Shaer (16, from Talmon), and Eyal Yifrah (19, from Elad).

fact that his daughter, son-in-law (Jared Kushner),⁴⁰ and grandchildren are Jewish. His appreciation of Jews is also reflected in the advisers that he has surrounding him. However, there is a down side: Those who hate him or his policies will transfer that hate to Jews. This will almost certainly lead to a rise in anti-Semitism.

Trump has made overtures to the Arabs to bring them together for peace. As a deal maker, he will, or already has, realized that they don't want a compromise, they want the whole enchilada. They will settle for nothing less than the complete destruction of the Jews and of Israel. The Arabs, and specifically the Muslims, cannot make peace for the following reasons:

1. Theologically (in the Koran) they are forbidden from giving up land that they have once inhabited, and this includes Israel.
2. If an Arab leader makes peace his own people will kill him the next day. This is no idle threat.
3. The peace will become international law and then when they want to renege, the nations of the world will be united against them because now Israel has become a recognized state. So, if they attack Israel, then Israel has the full backing of international law to destroy them. They no longer need to restrain themselves.

A Middle East peace is therefore impossible.

The primary reason that HaShem chose Trump appears to be his big ego. He is an ego maniac. Every organization or building is called 'Trump'. This ego gives him the strength to defy everybody. He will do what he wants, regardless of what people say or do. He is the epitome of defiance. This gives him the strength that very few ever have. He does what he wants to do and nothing stands in his unapologetic way. His essential role as President, is to defy the world and do the job that only the defiant can do. He will do the jobs that intimidated the politicians and frustrated the diplomats by being neither a politician nor a diplomat, but being an ego centric, self-willed, defiant leader.

The Republicans hate Donald Trump because they cannot control him. The Democrats hate him because they cannot control or even influence him. When he decides to act, he is accountable to no one but himself.

America is the good side of Esav. Japan is a great country because they rescued and saved Jews during world war two, despite being Hitler's Axis powers.⁴¹ Japan is now the third largest economy of the world.⁴² Why did they save Jews? Why did they treat the Jews with such kindness? The answer to both questions is that they were grateful to Jacob Henry Schiff for his loan many years earlier.⁴³

Trump is perfect for America (Edom) because he wants to make it great again. HaShem wants them to be great because they sponsor the Jews to learn Torah and America provides support for Torah to spread around the world. Further, they are the greatest distributors of foreign aid in the world. Their tzedaka benefits the entire

⁴⁰ Jared Kushner's merit to receive his high position comes from his family's merit. The entire Kushner clan were the sole sponsors of the ArtScroll Nusach Ashkenaz SUKKOT MACHZOR, the machzor in whose pages we read about the final chapters of GogUMagog at the end of the nine months of when the 70 nations, at least, try to gather against Yerushalayim! They named the Sukkot Machzor: Machzor Beit Yosef in the merit of their father and grandfather Yoseph Kushner zt"l. Think of the Torah they are responsible for spreading in this Machzor which are contained in its very pages!

⁴¹ Look at what the Jews of Kobe did and how they provided extreme chesed at a time when the Jews needed it the most. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Kobe

⁴² The economy of Japan is the third largest in the world by nominal GDP, the fourth largest by purchasing power parity and is the world's second largest developed economy. According to the International Monetary Fund, the country's per capita GDP (PPP) was at \$36,899, the 22nd-highest in 2013.

⁴³ This is a fantastic story that is well worth reading in: *Pepper, Silk & Ivory*, by Rabbi Marvin Tokayer and Ellen Rodman Ph.D.

world. Because of these merits, HaShem wants to restore their fortunes and provide the wherewithal to continue these good works. It is like a traveling salesman who gets an expense account as long as he makes good deals. He can eat fancy foods, wear the best clothes, and live in the best hotels as long as he brings home the deals. In the same way, as long as America provides for the Jews and for the world, HaShem will give America what she needs to continue her good works.

Trump will:

1. Overturn all of Obama's negativity.
2. Destroy the Clintons for their sins.
3. Be the champion to destroy Iran and the Arabs. HaShem needs a champion to defend and protect Israel from the rest of the world.

To understand what HaShem is doing it is necessary to review a bit of history. Let's start with Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor. Why did they do this, given that their top advisor warned them against doing it because it would awaken the sleeping giant who was avoiding the war. The bombing of Pearl Harbor surprised even Germany. Although Hitler had made an oral agreement with his Axis partner Japan that Germany would join a war against the United States, he was uncertain as to how the war would be engaged. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor answered that question. On December 8, 1941, Japanese Ambassador Oshima went to German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop to nail the Germans down on a formal declaration of war against America. Von Ribbentrop stalled for time; he knew that Germany was under no obligation to do this under the terms of the Tripartite Pact, which promised help if Japan was attacked, but not if Japan was the aggressor. Von Ribbentrop feared that the addition of another antagonist, the United States, would overwhelm the German war effort. But Hitler thought otherwise. He was convinced that the United States would soon beat him to the punch and declare war on Germany. The U.S. Navy was already attacking German U-boats, and Hitler despised Roosevelt for his repeated verbal attacks against his Nazi ideology. He also believed that Japan was much stronger than it was, that once it had defeated the United States, it would turn and help Germany defeat Russia. So, at 3:30 p.m. (Berlin time) on December 11, the German charge d'affaires in Washington handed American Secretary of State Cordell Hull a copy of the declaration of war.⁴⁴

Thus, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor led directly to the war with Germany and the ultimate liberation of Jews from the death camps and the establishment of Israel as a place to take care of the Jews. To put it another way, Edom's good side was forced to save the Jews.

If we look at what happened with the attack on the World Trade towers we can also see the hand of HaShem. What was the point? Ultimately, this attack alerted America to the danger of the Arabs (Ishmael) and Islam and awoke the sleeping giant to begin a war with Israel's enemies, thereby aiding the Jews in their war with Ishmael.

These two historical examples illustrate that HaShem is manipulating history in favor of His plan. He is moving the world to its final conclusion, slowly, but surely. These historical precedents suggest that HaShem has put Trump in place to aid the Jews against the Arabs (Ishmael).

Trump is a man of truth. It would be nearly impossible to become a billionaire if you were dishonest. We are also seeing his honesty in the opening days of his presidency where he has faithfully acted according to his campaign words. Because of his ego it is likely that he will go down as the greatest president that this country has ever had. The man who wants his name on every building and casino surely wants to make America great again and have this accomplishment ascribed to him. Further, there is much anecdotal evidence that he has a great deal of

⁴⁴ This last part was excerpted from the History channel's web site.

chesed, kindness, towards his fellow man. This will go a long way towards endearing him to HaShem.

Anyone who visited Israel in the 1970's found the Arabs to be cordial and not at all antagonistic. Today, quite the opposite is true. The Arabs are openly hostile and antagonistic towards the Jews. The Arabs no longer fear the Jews. Why?

The election of Bill Clinton led to the Oslo accords. Why did HaShem want scandal ridden Bill Clinton to be President? The answer is that HaShem needed a womanizer and Bill Clinton was tailor made to fill this role. Clinton's rival, George H.W. Bush had an 88% approval rating. For him to lose to Clinton was an open miracle. Clinton won because he understood that the primary issue concerning the citizens was the economy. Bush did not understand this. So, Clinton the womanizer gets himself embarrassed and degraded in the incident with Monica. A degraded man always looks for a way to make a positive mark on the world to attempt to erase their degradation. Clinton's degradation led him to seek a legacy, and peace between the Israelis and Arabs was the low hanging fruit.

In this regard, Clinton attempted to give the Arabs everything, via the Oslo Accords, and the Israelis nothing. In the end he legitimizes Arafat and brings him to the White House more than any previous President. Thus, HaShem wanted Bill Clinton to be degraded so that he would seek a legacy to cover his degradation. This, in turn, led to the Oslo peace process that elevated the Arabs and lowered the Jews. The lowered Jews, then began to fear America and let the Arab's run over the Jews with impunity. Thus, the Arabs lost their fear of the Jews and reverted to rebellious behavior.

The Oslo accords gave the Arabs half of the land of Israel, and Rabin agreed to this! This was the first time that Jews ceded land to the Arabs, thereby legitimizing their claim of ownership. Fortunately, Arafat refused to accept the extensive land area that was offered. This shows HaShem's protection for His land.

Each subsequent war with the Arabs led to a decrease in their fear of the Jews, as the Americans pressured Israel to do a sub-standard job in their war effort. As the Arabs sent missiles into Israel, the Jews fled before them. In the end, the Arabs no longer feared the IDF. These actions brought a sense of equality between the Arabs and the Jews, to the extent that the Israeli Atomic bomb is now going to be balanced by the Iranian atomic bomb. Thus, step-by-step the Arabs lose their fear of the Jews so that they will feel able to initiate a final war with the Jews where they have confidence in their strength and the support of America.

Techiyat HaMetim (Resurrection of the Dead)

The duration from death to resurrection will be the same for everyone, but the time of death will not be the same for everyone, and thus the period of time of the deaths and resurrections for the entire generation will continue for a long period of time. However, righteous people who have died previously will resurrect immediately after the 40 years from Kibbutz Galiot, the ingathering of the exiles.⁴⁵ This is what it says in Midrash Ne'elam:⁴⁶ There will be many resurrections, and the duration of time will be, according to Rabbi Yehudah, from 40 years after Kibbutz Galiot, at which time the first resurrection will occur, and the resurrections will continue from then until the last resurrection for 210 years. According to Rabbi Yitzchak, 214 years ...⁴⁷

According to the Zohar, the entire period of time allotted for Techiyat HaMetim is between 210-214 years in advance of 6000 (2240 A.D.). These are not the opinions of obscure rabbis, but of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi, the

⁴⁵ The conquest and development of Eretz Yisrael by the Jewish People is one of the main responsibilities of Mashiach ben Yosef.

⁴⁶ Zohar, Parashat Toldot 140a

⁴⁷ Drushei Olam HaTohu, Chelek 2, Drush 4, Anaf 12, Siman 9

author of the Mishna, and Rebbi Yitzchak, a central figure of the same time period. They are, therefore, mainstream opinions, with which no one argues, at least not in the Zohar. As hard as this may be to fathom, that Techiyat HaMetim may be only 8 to 12 years away (in 5778), there really is no reason not to believe it.

Mashiach ben Yosef comes first, then Mashiach ben David comes and brings Techiyat HaMetim. The more materialism a person has absorbed, the longer it takes before he is resurrected. Thus, not all the righteous will stand immediately, but rather they will be resurrected over a long period of time.

Given this scenario, the following events have to take place before 5790 (2030):

1. The clash of civilizations between Ishmael and Edom and Ishmael and the Jews.
2. The entrance of Mashiach ben Yosef to bring the Jews back to Israel, rebuild the Temple, reveal the messianic light, and engage in the war between Gog u'Magog.

All these events have to take place in the next 12 years!

Next, Mashiach ben David appears and wipes out Gog u'Magog. (Hezekiah and Senacharib could have been the war of Gog u'Magog, except Hezekiah did not sing a song. There was another attempt in the days of Purim. Ezra would have been Mashiach ben Yosef. Chanukah was another attempt. Germany could also have been the war of Gog u'Magog. Rabbi Wasserman said the Gog u'Magog is divided into three parts. WWI, WWII, and the final war.

Because the time period is so short, we are going to see many events going on at the same time. We will see the steep descent into immorality and immoral behavior. This is manifest as transgenders in the army and having general acceptance, the move to allow either gender into bathrooms and locker rooms, the open and legal acceptance of gays and forcing others to accept their behavior.⁴⁸

At the same time, Kabbala and the mystical study of the Torah will become increasingly popular and will proliferate through secular culture.

We will also see the proliferation of the internet and technology to every land so that Mashiach can teach the whole world.

Brexit

Britain is the second largest European economy after Germany, and the greatest militarily. The exit of Britain, from the European union, diminishes many aspects of Europe. With the exception of France and Germany, the rest of the states are all bit players. What is HaShem doing by Brexit and the diminishment of Europe? This is a punishment for Europe's anti-Semitism. This will severely diminish their clout vis-à-vis Israel.

There also appears to be a great deal of interest, by the French, to leave the European Union. If that happens it is unlikely the EU will survive. The collapse of the EU suggests that the wickedness of Europeans towards the Jews is about to be punished, thus providing a tikkun. This represents a partial collapse of Edom.

Russia

Russia has killed a lot of Jews and destroyed Judaism. This has been Russia's heritage for many generations. This was the communist plan. They wanted to destroy religion. The history of Russia is the history of anti-Semitism.

⁴⁸ One of the main reasons for the Mabul (the flood) was because of homosexuality.

Vladimir Putin is a very interesting man. He has *suppressed* violent anti-Semitism. He has *passed* laws to *promote* Judaism and *against* anti-Semitism. He has been attending Jewish functions, like Chanukah, and committed both state funds and his own funds to Jewish causes. He hangs out with rabbis. Thus, Putin is a non-typical Russia. There is no rational explanation for Putin's attitude towards the Jews. Russia, now, has a very low incidence of anti-Semitism.

In Putin's youth he was befriended by a frum family and treated like a son. His judo teacher, for fifteen years, was also Jewish. He also had a teacher who was Jewish. His attachment to this teacher was so strong that when he visited her in Israel and saw that she lived in a run-down building, he bought her a new home in the heart of Tel Aviv. Thus, the tremendous chesed of the Jews of his youth had a profound impact on him and gave him a special affinity for the Jews.

Putin has many of the same characteristics of President Trump. Both are very defiant, strong-willed men who have a special relationship with Jews.

Why the Russian turn-around? Clearly Putin has been chosen for a very special mission, just as Trump was chosen for his mission. Their mission is to defy the world. Why? Israel will war with Iran that will involve most Arabs including the Israeli Arabs. The rest of the world will condemn Israel. Then Israel will evict the Arabs for their own survival. With the EU diminished, they will have diminished ability to condemn Israel when they start to defend themselves. America (Trump) will defend Israel. And for the first time, Russia will not obstruct Israel, as she has done for 50 years, till about the year 2000.⁴⁹ Instead Russia will defend Israel! What a turnaround, HaShem is weakening the enemies of the Jews.

Esav will eventually have a purification.

What is going to happen? (Speculations on the future of HaShem's plan.)

*Yalkut Shimoni*⁵⁰

What is "by your light we see light" (Psa 36:10)? This is the light of Messiah, as it is said, "God saw the light, that it was good" (Genesis 1:4).

This teaches that before the world was created, the Holy One, blessed is he, looked forward to the generation of Messiah and its deeds. He hid [the primordial light] for Messiah and his generation beneath his throne of glory.

Satan said to the Holy One, blessed is he, "Master of the universe, for whom is the light that you hid beneath your throne of glory?"

He responded, "It is for him who will ultimately refute and shamefully rebuke you."

"Master of the universe, show him to me," he said.

⁴⁹ They were the ones who came up with the saying that "Zionism is the same as racism". The third edition of the thirty-volume Great Soviet Encyclopedia (Большая Советская энциклопедия, БСЭ), published in 1969-1978, qualifies Zionism as racism. Paul Johnson and other historians have also argued that United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379 of 10 November 1975 that equated "Zionism" with "racism" was orchestrated by the Soviet Union. Resolution 3379 was pioneered by the Soviet Union and passed with numerical support from Arab, Muslim and African states amidst accusations that Israel was supportive of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

⁵⁰ Yalkut (ii. p. 66 c, end)

He responded, "Come and see him."

As soon as he saw him he became frightened and fell on his face, saying, "Certainly this is Messiah, who will ultimately cause my downfall, as well as all of the princes of the idolaters in Gehinnom. As it is said, 'He will swallow up death forever, and the HaShem God will wipe away the tears from every face' (Isaiah 25:8)."

On this the Messiah says: Lord of the world, with gladness and joy of heart I take it upon Me, on condition that not one of Israel should perish, and that not only those alone should be saved who are in My days, but also those who are hid in the dust; and that not only the dead should be saved who are in My days, but also those who have died from the days of the first Adam till now; and not those, but also those who have been prematurely born. And only these, but also those who have come into Thy knowledge to create them, but have not yet been created. Thus I agree, and thus I take all upon Me.

In the hebdomad⁵¹ when the Son of David comes, they shall bring beams of iron, and shall make them a yoke to His neck, until His stature is bent down. But He cries and weeps, and lifts up His voice on high, and says before Him: Lord of the world, what is My strength, My spirit, and My soul, and My members? Am I not flesh and blood? In that honor David (the Son of David) weeps, and says: 'My strength is dried up like a potsherd.'

In that hour the Holy One, blessed be His Name, says: Ephraim the Messiah, My righteous one, Thou hast already taken this upon Thee before the six days of the world, now Thy anguish shall be like My anguish; for from the time that Nebuchadnezzar, the wicked one, has come up and destroyed My house, and burned My Sanctuary, and I have sent into captivity My children among the children of the Gentiles, by My life, and by the life of Thy head, I have not sat down on My throne. And if Thou wilt not believe Me, see the dew which is on My head, as it is said (Cant. v. 2) 'My head is filled with dew.'

In that hour the Messiah answers Him: Lord of the world, now I am quieted, for it is enough for the servant that he is as his Master.⁵²

Yalkut Shimoni⁵³ states:

"Rabbi Yitzchak said that the year the Messiah will arrive when all the nations of the world will antagonize each other and threaten with war. The king of Persia (Iran antagonizes the King of Arabia - Saudi Arabia) with war. The King of Arabia goes to Edom (The Western Countries, headed by USA) for advice. Then the King of Persia destroys the world (and since that cannot be done with conventional weapons it must mean nuclear which can destroy most of the world). And all the nations of the world begin to panic and are afraid, and Israel too is afraid as to how to defend from this. G-d then says to them, 'Do not fear for everything that I have done is for your benefit, to destroy the evil kingdom of Edom and eradicate evil from this world so that the Messiah can come, your time of redemption is now'." [Persia and Ishmael are one people according to the Maharal. Persia⁵⁴ represents the Syrians, Lebanese, and Arabians.]

In this next part we see that Mashiach ben Ephraim will take on the sins of the Jews who were unable to obtain an atonement through suffering, dying, or any other method. The mechanism that Mashiach ben Ephraim uses to

⁵¹ "group of seven", a reference to the sabbatical years.

⁵² his reminding us of our Yeshua's saying, Matthew 10:25

⁵³ Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 60

⁵⁴ Ultimately, Paras will keep pushing to be a superpower and come into conflict with Russia. In the end, both nations will crumble in an ensuing war between them, which is the Edom vs. Paras war referenced in the Talmud.

suffer for the sins of others is the fact that all Jews (Israel) are really parts of a whole. We are all responsible for each other. Thus, Mashiach ben Ephraim can take on the sins of those who are unable to obtain an atonement for themselves.

"The iniquities of those who are hidden with you will ultimately bring you into an iron yoke, and they will do to you like this calf, darkening its eyes; they will choke your breath with the yoke and with their iniquities. Your tongue will ultimately cling to the roof of your mouth. Are you willing on these terms?"

Messiah said before the Holy One, blessed is he, "Master of the universe, will this suffering last for many years?"

The Holy One, blessed is He, said to him, "By your life and the life of your head, I have decreed a week upon you; if your soul is in pain, I will expel the suffering at this time."

He said to him, "Master of the universe, with a joyful and glad heart, I will accept upon myself on condition that not one of Israel will perish."

In the following pasuk we see that Mashiach ben Ephraim died for all those who were responsible for the tikkun between Adam HaRishon and Avraham.

"Great will be the suffering the Messiah of the tribe of Ephraim has to undergo for seven years at the hand of the nations, who lay iron beams upon him to crush him so that his cries reach heaven; but he willingly submits for the sake of his people, not only those living, but also the dead, for all those who died since Adam; and G-d places the four beasts of the heavenly throne-chariot at his disposal to bring about the great work of resurrection and regeneration against all the celestial antagonists".⁵⁵

Sanhedrin 98b 'Ulla said; Let him [The Messiah] come, but let me not see him. Rabbah said likewise: Let him come, but let me not see him. R. Joseph said: Let him come, and may I be worthy of sitting in the shadow of his ass's saddle.⁵ Abaye enquired of Rabbah: 'What is your reason [for not wishing to see him]? Shall we say, because of the birth pangs [preceding the advent] of the Messiah?⁶ But it has been taught, R. Eleazar's disciples asked him: **'What must a man do to be spared the pangs of the Messiah?' [He answered,] 'Let him engage in study and benevolence; and you Master do both.'**

Tehillim (Psalms) 107:41 Yet sets He the needy on high from affliction, and makes his families like a flock. **42** The upright see it, and are glad; and all iniquity (Lawlessness) stops her mouth. **43** **Whosoever is wise, let him observe these things, and let them consider the mercies of HaShem.**

Ashlamatah: Ashlamatah: Obad 1:21 + Micah 3:9 – 4:5

Rashi	Targum
1. The vision of Obadiah; So said the Lord God concerning Edom; We have heard tidings from the Lord, and a messenger has been sent among the nations,	1. The prophecy' of Obadiah. Thus says the LORD God concerning Edom: We have heard tidings from the LORD, and an envoy has been sent out among the

⁵⁵ Pesachim R. 36

Rashi	Targum
"Arise and let us rise up against them in war!"	nations. rise up! Let us stand against her in battle.
2. Behold I have made you small among the nations; you are very despised.	2. Behold I have made you weak among the nations! You are most despised.
3. The wickedness of your heart enticed you, who dwell in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high, who says to himself, "Who will bring me down to the earth?"	3. The wickedness of your heart has led you astray; for you are like the eagle, which dwells in the clefts of the rock, whose abode is on high, who says in his heart: "Who can bring me down to the ground?"
4. If you go up high like an eagle, and if you place your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down, says the Lord.	4. Though you soar as high as the eagle, and set your dwelling among the stars, even from there I will bring you down by My Memra says the LORD.
5. Did thieves come upon you, did plunderers of the night? How were you silent? Will they not steal till they have enough? If vintagers came upon you, would they not leave over some gleanings?	5. If thieves were to come to you, plunderers by night, how would you sleep until they had stolen all they wanted? If robbers like vintagers came to you, would they not leave some gleanings?
6. How Esau was searched out, how his hidden things were revealed!	6. How Esau is ransacked, how his hidden things are uncovered!
7. Until the border all your allies escorted you; your friends enticed you, yea prevailed against you; your food they lay as a wound under you; there is no discernment in them.	7. All you allies have banished you beyond the frontier; your confederates have duped and overcome you; those who ate at your table have planted a snare under you; for there is no understanding in you!
8. Shall I not in that day-says the Lord-destroy wise men from Edom and discernment from the mountain of Esau?	8. At that time, says the LORD, will I not destroy the wise from Edom and the man of intelligence from Esau's citadel?
9. And your mighty men shall be dismayed, O dwellers of the southland, in order that every man be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter.	9. Your warriors, O inhabitants of the south shall be crushed, so that every man who has need will be wiped out from Esau's citadel because of the slaughter.
10. Because of the violence of your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever.	10. For the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you and you shall be wiped out for ever.
11. On that day you stood from afar, on the day strangers captured his possessions, and foreigners came into his cities, and on Jerusalem they cast lots; you, too, are like one of them.	11. On the day when you stood aloof, on the day when Gentiles plundered his goods, and foreigners entered his cities" and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them.
12. And you should not have looked on the day of your brother on the day of his being delivered, and you should not have rejoiced about the children of Judah on the day of their destruction, and you should not have spoken proudly on the day of distress.	12. How you gloated over the day of your brother, on the day of his destruction, and how you rejoiced over the people of Judah on the day of their destruction. How you excelled in boasting in the time of distress.
13. You should not have come into the gate of My people on the day of their misfortune; you too should not have looked at their affliction on the day of their misfortune, and you should not have stretched out [your hand] upon their possessions on the day of their misfortune.	13. How you entered the gates of My people on the day of their destruction, how you too gloated over their disaster on the day of their destruction, and laid your hands on their goods on the day of their destruction.
14. And you should not have stood by the gap to cut off their fugitives, neither should you have delivered their survivors on the day of distress.	14. How you stood at the crossroads to wipe out their fugitives and how betrayed their refugees in the time of distress.
15. For the day of the Lord over all the gentiles is close;	15. For the day that will come from the LORD against all

Rashi	Targum
as you have done shall be done to you; your recompense shall be returned upon your head.	the Gentile nations is at hand. As you did, so shall it be done to you. Your deeds will return on your own head.
16. For, as you drank on My Holy Mount, shall all the gentiles drink constantly, and they shall drink and be stunned, and they shall be as though they were not.	16. For as you rejoiced over the laying low of My holy mountain, so all the peoples shall drink the cup of their punishment unceasingly, and they shall drink and be swallowed up and become as though they have never been.
17. And on Mount Zion there shall be a remnant, and it shall be holy, and the house of Jacob shall inherit those who inherited them.	17. But on Mount Zion there shall be survivors and they shall be holy. And the people of the house of Jacob shall take possession of the goods of the goods of the Gentiles who were dispossessing them.
18. And the house of Jacob shall be fire and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau shall become stubble, and they shall ignite them and consume them, and the house of Esau shall have no survivors, for the Lord has spoken.	18. The people of the house of Jacob shall be strong as fire, and the people of the house of Joseph as mighty as flame, but the people of the house of Esau shall be as weak as straw; and they shall have dominion over them and slaughter them, and there shall be no survivor left of the house of Esau, for through the Memra of the Lord it has been decided thus.
19. And [the inhabitants of] the southland shall inherit the mountain of Esau, and [the inhabitants of] the plain, the Philistines, and they shall inherit the field of Ephraim and the field of Samaria, and Benjamin [with the inhabitants of] Gilead.	19. The inhabitants of the south shall possess the citadel of Esau, and the inhabitants of the Shephelah the land of the Philistines. And they shall possess the cities of Ephraim and the cities of Samaria, and the people of the house of Benjamin shall possess the cities of the inhabitants of the land of Gilead.
20. And this exiled host of the children of Israel who are [with] the Canaanites as far as Zarephath and the exile of Jerusalem which is in Sepharad shall inherit the cities of the southland.	20. Exiles of this people of the Israelites (shall possess) what is in the land Canaan as far as Zarephath, while the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Spain shall possess the cities of the land of the south.
21. And saviors shall ascend Mt. Zion to judge the mountain of Esau, and the Lord shall have the kingdom. {P}	21. Liberators shall go up to Mount Zion to judge the citadel of Esau, and the kingdom of the LORD shall be revealed over all the inhabitants of the earth.
9. Hearken now to this, you heads of the house of Jacob and you rulers of the house of Israel, who condemn justice and pervert all that is straight.	9. Hear this, you leaders of the house of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel, who corrupt the ways of justice and pervert all that is right,
10. Each one builds Zion with blood and Jerusalem with injustice.	10. who build their houses in Zion with shed blood and Jerusalem with deceit.
11. Its heads judge for bribes, and its priests teach for a price; and its prophets divine for money, and they rely on the Lord, saying, "Is not the Lord in our midst? No evil shall befall us."	11. Her leaders judge for bribes, her priests give instruction for money and her prophets teach for silver; yet they rely on the Memra of the LORD, saying, "Is not the Shekinah of the LORD in our midst? Evil will not come upon us", they say.
12. Therefore, because of you, Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the Temple Mount like the high places of a forest. {P}	12. Therefore on account of your sins Zion shall be ploughed as a field and Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the Sanctuary mount shall be a thicket of the forest.

Rashi	Targum
1. And it shall be at the end of the days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be firmly established at the top of the mountains, and it shall be raised above the hills, and peoples shall stream upon it.	1. It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's Sanctuary shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. All the kingdoms shall turn to worship upon it.
2. And many nations shall go, and they shall say, "Come, let us go up to the Lord's mount and to the house of the God of Jacob, and let Him teach us of His ways, and we will go in His paths," for out of Zion shall the Torah come forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.	2. And many Gentiles shall come and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD's Sanctuary and to the house of the Shekinah of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us ways which are right before Him, and that we may walk in the teaching of His Law. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the teaching Of the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
3. And he shall judge between many peoples and reprove mighty nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift the sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore.	3. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate for mighty kings forever. They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles. Nation shall not raise arms against nation, nor shall they learn war any more.
4. And they shall dwell each man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them move, for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts has spoken.	4. But every man shall sit under the fruit of his vines and under the fruit of his fig-trees with no one to frighten him. For by the Memra of the LORD of Hosts has it been decreed so.
5. For all peoples shall go, each one in the name of his god, but we will go in the name of the Lord, our God, forever and ever. {P}	5. Though all the peoples shall be guilty because they worshipped idols, we, however, shall rely on the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

Rashi's Commentary on Obad. 1:21+Mic. 3:9-4:5

21 shall ascend -Princes of Israel as saviors on Mt. Zion.

to judge the mountain of Esau -to exact retribution from the mountain of Esau for what they did to Israel.

to judge Heb. טַשֵּׁט. *joustiser* in O.F.

the mountain of Esau - *Jonathan* renders: the great city of Esau.

and the Lord shall have the kingdom -This teaches you that His kingdom will not be complete until He exacts retribution from Amalek.

Micah Chapter 3

12 Jerusalem shall become heaps Heb. יָיִן.

Micah Chapter 4

1 shall stream Heb. וְנָהָרוּ. And they shall gather there together like rivers flowing into the sea.

3 And he shall judge -This judgment is an expression of reproof, *derajjnement* in O.F. [Isa 2:4]

4 for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts has spoken -Now where has He spoken? (Lev. 26:6) "And I will place peace in the land, etc." [from *Mechilta* to Exodus 12:25]

5 For all peoples shall go, each one in the name of his god -Shall go to destruction because they worshipped idols. So did *Jonathan* render it.

Special Ashlamatah Isaiah 40:1-26 Shabbat # 1 of Consolation/Strengthening

Rashi	Targum
1. ¶ "Console, console My people," says your God.	1. ¶ Prophets, prophesy consolations to My people, says your God.
2. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her, for she has become full [from] her host, for her iniquity has been appeased, for she has taken from the hand of the Lord double for all her sins. {S}	2. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and prophesy to her that she is about to be filled with people of her exiles, that her sins have been forgiven her, that she has taken a cup of consolations before the LORD as if she suffered two for one for all her sins. {S}
3. A voice calls, "In the desert, clear the way of the Lord, straighten out in the wilderness, a highway for our God."	3. A voice of one who cries: "In the wilderness clear the way before the people of the LORD, level in the desert highways before the congregation of our God."
4. Every valley shall be raised, and every mountain and hill shall be lowered, and the crooked terrain shall become a plain and the close mountains a champaigne.	4. All the valleys will be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground will become a plain and a baked place a vale.
5. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh together shall see that the mouth of the Lord spoke. {P}	5. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all the sons of flesh will see it together, for by the Memra of the LORD it is so decreed." {P}
6. ¶ A voice says, "Call!" and it says, "What shall I call?" "All flesh is grass, and all its kindness is like the blossom of the field.	6. ¶ A voice of one who says, "Prophecy!" And he answered and said, "What will I prophesy?" All the wicked/Lawless are as the grass, and all their strength like the chaff of the field.
7. The grass shall dry out, the blossom shall wilt, for a wind from the Lord has blown upon it; behold the people is grass.	7. The grass withers, its flower fades, for the spirit from the LORD blows upon it; surely the wicked/Lawless among the people are reckoned as the grass.
8. The grass shall dry out, the blossom shall wilt, but the word of our God shall last forever. {S}	8. The wicked/Lawless dies, his conceptions perish; but the Word of our God stands forever. {S}
9. Upon a lofty mountain ascend, O herald of Zion, raise your voice with strength, O herald of Jerusalem; raise [your voice], fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"	9. Get you up to a high mountain, prophets who herald good tidings to Zion; lift up your voice with force, you who herald good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up, fear not; say to the cities of the house of Judah, "The kingdom of your God is revealed!"
10. Behold the Lord God shall come with a strong [hand], and His arm rules for Him; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense is before Him.	10. Behold, the LORD God is revealed with strength, and the strength of His mighty arm rules before Him; behold, the reward of those who perform His Memra is with him, all those whose deeds are disclosed before

Rashi	Targum
	Him.
11. Like a shepherd [who] tends his flock, with his arm he gathers lambs, and in his bosom he carries [them], the nursing ones he leads. {S}	11. Like the shepherd who feeds his flock, he gathers lambs in his arm, he carries tender ones in his bosom, and leads nursing ewes gently. {S}
12. Who measured water with his gait, and measured the heavens with his span, and measured by thirds the dust of the earth, and weighed mountains with a scale and hills with a balance?	12. Who says these things? One who lives, speaks and acts, before whom all the waters of the world are reckoned as the drop in the hollow of hand and the length of the heavens as if with the span established, the dust of the earth as if measured in a measure and the mountains as if indeed weighed and the hills, behold just as in the balance.
13. Who meted the spirit of the Lord, and His adviser who informs Him?	13. Who established the holy spirit in the mouth of all the prophets, is it not the LORD? And to the righteous/generous who perform His Memra He makes known the words of His pleasure.
14. With whom did He take counsel give him to understand, and teach him in the way of justice, and teach him knowledge, and the way of understandings did He let him know?	14. Those who besought before Him, He caused to apprehend wisdom and taught them the path of judgment and gave their sons the Law and showed the way of understanding to their son's sons.
15. Behold the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and like dust on a balance are they counted; behold the islands are like fine [dust] that blows away.	15. Behold, the peoples are like the drop from a bucket, and are accounted like dust on the scales; behold, the islands are like the fine dust which flies.
16. And the Lebanon-there is not enough to burn, and its beasts-there is not enough for burnt offerings. {P}	16. The trees of Lebanon will not supply sufficient (wood) for burning, nor are the beasts that are in it enough for a burn offering. {P}
17. ¶ All the nations are as nought before Him; as things of nought and vanity are they regarded by Him.	17. ¶ All the peoples, their deeds are as nothing; they are accounted extirpation and destruction before Him.
18. And to whom do you compare God, and what likeness do you arrange for Him?	18. Why are you planning to contend before God, or what likeness do you prepare before Him?
19. The graven image, the craftsman has melted, and the smith plates it with gold, and chains of silver he attaches.	19. Behold the image! The workman makes it, and the smith overlays it with gold, and the smith attaches silver chains to it.
20. He who is accustomed to select, chooses a tree that does not rot; he seeks for himself a skilled craftsman, to prepare a graven image, which will not move. {S}	20. He cuts down a laurel, he chooses the wood that rot does not attack; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an image that will not move. {S}
21. Do you not know, have you not heard has it not been told to you from the beginning ? Do you not understand the foundations of the earth ?	21. Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has not the fact of creation's orders been told you from the beginning ? Will you not understand , so as to fear before Him who created the foundations of the earth ?
22. It is He Who sits above the circle of the earth, and whose inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heaven like a curtain, and He spread them out like a tent to dwell.	22. It is He who makes the Shekhinah of His glory dwell in the strong height, and all the inhabitants of the earth are reckoned before Him as grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a trifle and spreads them like a tent of glory for His Shekhinah's house;
23. Who brings princes to nought, judges of the land He made like a thing of nought.	23. Who hands over rulers to weakness, and makes the judges of the earth as nothing.
24. Even [as though] they were not planted, even [as	24. Although they grow, although they increase,

Rashi	Targum
though] they were not sown, even [as though] their trunk was not rooted in the earth; and also He blew on them, and they dried up, and a tempest shall carry them away like straw. {S}	although their sons are exalted in the earth, He sends His anger among them, and they are ashamed and His Memra, as the whirlwind the chaff, will scatter them. {S}
25. "Now, to whom will you compare Me that I should be equal?" says the Holy One.	25. Whom then will you liken before Me, and compare (Me): says the Holy One.
26. Lift up your eyes on high and see, who created these, who takes out their host by number; all of them He calls by name; because of His great might and because He is strong in power, no one is missing. {S}	26. Lift up your eyes to the height and see, so as to fear before Him who created these, who brings out the forces of heaven by number, calling to all of them by their names; by an abundance of prodigies and because He is strong in force not one from its order is missing. {S}

Rashi's Commentary for: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 40:1-26

1 Console, console My people He returns to his future prophecies; since from here to the end of the Book are words of consolations, this section separated them from the prophecies of retribution. Console, you, My prophets, console My people.

2 for she has become full [from] her host Jonathan renders: She is destined to become full from the people of the exiles, as though it would say, "She has become full from her host." Others interpret אָבָהּ (Job 7: 1), "Is there not a time (אָבָהּ) for man on the earth?"

has been appeased Heb. נִרְצָה, has been appeased.

for she has taken etc. [Jonathan paraphrases:] For she has received a cup of consolation from before the Lord as though she has been punished doubly for all her sins. According to its simple meaning, it is possible to explain, 'for she received double punishment.' Now if you ask, how is it the standard of the Holy One, blessed be He, to pay back a person double his sin, I will tell you that we find an explicit verse (Jer. 16:18): "And I will pay first the doubling of their iniquity and their sin."

3 A voice The Holy Spirit calls, "In the desert, the way to Jerusalem."

clear the way of the Lord for her exiles to return to her midst. [The Warsaw edition yields:]

Clear the way of the Lord The way of Jerusalem for her exiles to return to her midst.

4 Every valley shall be raised and the mountain shall be lowered, thus resulting in a smooth, even, and easily traversed road.

and the close mountains Heb. רִבְסִים, mountains close to each other, and because of their proximity, the descent between them is steep and it is not slanted, that it should be easy to descend and ascend. ([The word] רִבְסִים translated by Jonathan as 'banks,' an expression of height like the banks of a river.)

close mountains Heb. רִבְסִים. Comp. (Ex. 28:28) "And they shall fasten (וְרִבְסִים) the breastplate."

a champagne Canpayne in O.F., a smooth and even terrain.

6 A voice from the Holy One, blessed be He, says to me, "Call!"

and it says My spirit says to Him, "What shall I call?" And the voice answers him, "Call this, all flesh is grass. All those who are haughty their greatness shall be turned over and become like grass. ([Manuscripts yield:] All the princes of the kingdom their greatness shall be turned over and shall wither away [lit. shall end] like grass.)

and all its kindness is like the blossom of the field For "the kindness of the nations is sin" (Prov. 14:34). [Ed. note: We have inverted the order of Rashi and followed the order of K'li Paz and Parshandatha, to connect the second part of the verse with the first. Rashi's explanation of the second part follows his first explanation of the first part. In the Lublin edition, the second explanation of the first part of the verse interrupts the sequence.] (Another explanation is: All flesh is grass.) A person's end is to die; therefore, if he says to do kindness, he is like the blossom of the field, that is cut off and dries, and one must not rely on him, for he has no power to fulfill his promise, perhaps he will die, for, just as the grass dries out and the blossom wilts, so is it that when a man dies, his promise is null, but the word of our God shall last for He is living and existing, and He has the power to fulfill. Therefore, "Upon a lofty mountain ascend and herald, O herald of Zion, for the promise of the tidings emanates from the mouth of Him Who lives forever."

7 shall wilt Heb. נָבַל, wilt.

9 O herald of Zion Heb. מְבַשֵּׂרֵת. The prophets who herald Zion. [This is the feminine form.] Elsewhere (infra 52:7), he says, "the feet of the herald (מְבַשֵּׂר)." [This is the masculine form.] This denotes that if they are worthy, he will be as swift as a male. If they are not worthy, he will be as weak as a female and will delay his steps until the end.

10 shall come with a strong [hand] to mete out retribution upon the heathens. ([Mss. read:] Upon the nations.)

behold His reward is with Him It is prepared with Him for the righteous.

and His recompense [lit. His deed,] the recompense for the deed, which He is obliged to give them.

11 Like a shepherd [who] tends his flock Like a shepherd who tends his flock; with his arm he gathers lambs, and he carries them in his bosom.

the nursing ones he leads [Jonathan renders:] The nursing ones he leads gently, the nursing sheep. he leads Heb. יְנַהֵל, lit. he shall lead, like מְנַהֵל, he leads.

12 Who measured etc. He had the power to do all this, and surely He has the power to keep these promises.

with his gait Heb. בְּשִׁעָלוֹ, with his walking, as it is said (Habakkuk 3: 15): "You trod with Your horses in the sea." Comp. (Num. 22:24) "In the path (בְּמַשְׁעוֹל) of the vineyards, a path (for walking)." Another explanation is that שִׁעַל is the name of a receptacle. Comp. (Ezekiel 13:19) "For measures (בְּשִׁעָלוֹ) of barley."

measured Amolad in O.F., an expression of measure and number. Comp. (Ex. 5:18) "And the number (וּתְקוֹן) of bricks you shall give."

and measured by thirds Heb. בְּשִׁלְשֵׁי, and measured by thirds, one third wilderness, one third civilization, and one third seas and rivers. Another interpretation: בְּשִׁלְשֵׁי, from the thumb to the middle finger, the third of the fingers. Menahem explains it as the name of a vessel. Comp. (Ps. 80:6) "And You gave them to drink tears with a vessel (שִׁלְיֹשׁ)." ."

and weighed mountains with a scale Everything according to the earth, a heavy mountain He inserted into hard earth, and the light ones into soft earth.

13 Who meted the Holy Spirit in the mouth of the prophets? The Lord prepared it, and He is worthy of belief.

and His adviser who informs Him [and the one with whom He takes counsel He informs] of His spirit. So did Jonathan render it. [Who meted out the spirit? The Lord, and the one with whom He takes counsel He informs him, i.e., the righteous in whom God confides, He informs of His plans for the future.] But, according to its context, עֲצָתוֹ אֵינִי מְעַצֵּב refers back to the beginning of the verse. Who meted out His spirit and who is His adviser who informs the Holy One, blessed be He, of counsel?

14 With whom did He take counsel and give him to understand With which of the heathens ([mss., K'li Paz:] nations) did He take counsel, as He took counsel with the prophets, as it is said concerning Abraham (Gen. 18: 17): "Do I conceal from Abraham...?"

and give him to understand, and teach him in the way of justice With which one of the heathens ([mss., K'li Paz:] nations) did He do so, that He taught him wisdom as He did to Abraham, to whom He gave a heart to recognize Him by himself and to understand the Torah, as it is said (ibid. 26:5): "And he kept My charge," and Scripture states further (ibid. 18:19), "For he commands etc." And his kidneys would pour forth wisdom to him, as it is said (Ps. 16:7): "Even at night my kidneys chastised me."

(With whom did He take counsel and who gave Him to understand [With which man did He take counsel and which] man gave the Holy One, blessed be He, [to understand?] Behold all the nations are like a drop in a bucket, and how could they teach Him?)

15 Behold the nations are like a drop from a bucket And are not worthy to Him to appoint some of them as prophets to reveal His secret.

like a drop from a bucket Heb. כְּמִרְ, like a bitter drop that drips from the bottom of the bucket, bitter from the putrid water that is embedded in the bucket and the decay of the wood, limonede in O.F.

and like the dust of a balance for the copper corrodes and wears off.

like fine fine dust. that blows away [lit. that will be taken.] Like dust that is picked up and goes up through the wind, like fine dust that is carried away.

16 there is not enough to burn on His altar.

and its beasts (the beasts) of the Lebanon there is not enough for burnt offerings. Another explanation is:

And the Lebanon etc. to expiate the iniquity of the heathens.

17 All the nations are as naught before Him In His eyes they are as naught, and are not regarded by Him.

19 melted Heb. הִמָּלַח, an expression of melting (מִמְלָחָה) .

the craftsman has melted The ironsmith has cast it from iron or from copper, and then the goldsmith plates it with plates of gold and covers it from above.

and chains Heb. וּרְתִיקוֹת, and chains.

20 He who is accustomed to select הַמְסִכֵּן תְרוּמָה. Or, if he comes to make it of wood, one who is accustomed to discern between a durable tree and other trees, chooses a tree that does not decay quickly.

He who is accustomed Heb. הַמְסִכֵּן. Comp. (Num. 22:30) "Have I been accustomed (הֲהִסְכֵּנִי הִסְכַּנְתִּי)?"

to select Heb. תְרוּמָה, separation, selection of the trees.

21 Do you not know...the foundations of the earth Who founded it, and you should have worshipped Him.

22 the circle Heb. חוּג, an expression similar to (infra 44:13) "And with a compass (וּבִמְחוּגָה)," a circle (compass in O.F.).

and whose inhabitants are to Him [lit. before Him] like grasshoppers.

like a curtain Heb. כַּדֵּק, a curtain, toile in French.

24 Even [as though] they were not planted They are even as though they were not planted.

even [as though] they were not sown And still more than this, that they shall be uprooted and plucked out, as if they were not sown. Sowing is less than planting.

their trunk is not rooted in the earth When they will be plucked out, the trunk will not take root in the ground that it will grow up anew. Every שָׁרֵשׁ, root, in Scripture is accented on the first letter, and the 'reish' is vowelized with a 'patah' [segol]. This one, however, is accented on the latter syllable and it is vowelized with a 'kamatz katan' [tzeireh] because it is a verb, present tense, [enracinant in French] being rooted.

26 who created these All the host that you will see on high.

because of His great might that He has, and that He is strong in power, no one of His host is missing, that He does not call by name.

Verbal Tallies

By: H.Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David
& H.H. Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

Debarim (Deuteronomy) 2:2-30
Tehillim (Psalms) 107:33-43
Obadia 1:21 + Micah 3:9 - 4:5
Mk 13:14-20, Lk 21:20-24, Jam. 1:2-4

The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Psalm are:

LORD - יְהוָה, Strong's number 03068.

Dwell - יָשַׁב, Strong's number 03427.

Good / Greatly - מָאֵד, Strong's number 03966.

Heed / Observe - שָׁמַר, Strong's number 08104.

The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:

LORD - יהוה, Strong's number 03068.
Mountain / Mount - חר, Strong's number 02022.
Spake / Say / Saying - אמר, Strong's number 0559.
Long Enough / Many - רב, Strong's number 07227.

Debarim (Deuteronomy) 2:2 And the LORD <03068> spake <0559> (8799) unto me, saying <0559> (8800),
3 Ye have compassed this mountain <02022> long enough <07227>: turn you northward.
4 And command thou the people, saying <0559> (8800), Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell <03427> (8802) in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good <03966> heed <08104> (8738) unto yourselves therefore:

Tehillim (Psalms) 107:34 A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell <03427> (8802) therein.

Tehillim (Psalms) 107:38 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly <03966>; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

Tehillim (Psalms) 107:43 Whoso is wise, and will observe <08104> (8799) these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD <03068>.

Obadia 1:21 And saviours shall come up on mount <02022> Zion to judge the mount <02022> of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S <03068>.

Micah 3:11 The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD <03068>, and say <0559> (8800), Is not the LORD <03068> among us? none evil can come upon us.

Micah 4:2 And many <07227> nations shall come, and say <0559> (8804), Come, and let us go up to the mountain <02022> of the LORD <03068>, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD <03068> from Jerusalem.

Hebrew

Hebrew	English	Torah Reading Deut. 2:2-30	Psalms 107:33-43	Ashlamatah Obad 1:21 + Micah 3:9 – 4:5
אֱלֹהִים	God	Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:29 Deut. 2:30		Mic. 4:2 Mic. 4:5
אָמַר	saying	Deut. 2:2 Deut. 2:4 Deut. 2:9 Deut. 2:17 Deut. 2:26		Mic. 3:11 Mic. 4:2
אָרֶץ	land, earth	Deut. 2:5 Deut. 2:9 Deut. 2:12 Deut. 2:19 Deut. 2:20 Deut. 2:24 Deut. 2:27 Deut. 2:29	Ps. 107:34 Ps. 107:35	

Hebrew	English	Torah Reading Deut. 2:2-30	Psalms 107:33-43	Ashlamatah Obad 1:21 + Micah 3:9 – 4:5
בֵּרַךְ	blessed	Deut. 2:7	Ps. 107:38	
דִּבֶּר	spoke	Deut. 2:17		Mic. 4:4
דְּבַר	nothing, words	Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:26		Mic. 4:2
דֶּרֶךְ	road, way	Deut. 2:8 Deut. 2:27	Ps. 107:40	Mic. 4:2
הֵלֵךְ	come	Deut. 2:14		Mic. 4:2
הַר	mountain, mount	Deut. 2:3 Deut. 2:5		Obad. 1:21 Mic. 3:12 Mic. 4:1 Mic. 4:2
יְהוָה	LORD	Deut. 2:2 Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:9 Deut. 2:12 Deut. 2:14 Deut. 2:15 Deut. 2:17 Deut. 2:21 Deut. 2:29 Deut. 2:30	Ps. 107:43	Obad. 1:21 Mic. 3:11 Mic. 4:1 Mic. 4:2 Mic. 4:4 Mic. 4:5
יוֹם	time, day	Deut. 2:14 Deut. 2:18 Deut. 2:22 Deut. 2:25 Deut. 2:30		Mic. 4:1
יָלַךְ	trudging, keep, walk	Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:27		Mic. 4:2 Mic. 4:5
יָצָא	came, come	Deut. 2:23		Mic. 4:2
יָשַׁב	live, dwell	Deut. 2:4 Deut. 2:8 Deut. 2:10 Deut. 2:12 Deut. 2:20 Deut. 2:21 Deut. 2:22 Deut. 2:23 Deut. 2:29	Ps. 107:34 Ps. 107:36	Mic. 4:4
יָשָׁר	righteous		Ps. 107:42	Mic. 3:9
יִשְׂרָאֵל	Israel	Deut. 2:12		Mic. 3:9
כִּוֵּן	establish		Ps. 107:36	Mic. 4:1
כֶּסֶף	money	Deut. 2:6 Deut. 2:28		Mic. 3:11
מְאֹד	carefully, greatly	Deut. 2:4	Ps. 107:38	
מִדְבָּר	wilderness	Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:8 Deut. 2:26	Ps. 107:33 Ps. 107:35	
מַיִם	water	Deut. 2:6 Deut. 2:28	Ps. 107:33 Ps. 107:35	
מִלְחָמָה	battle, war	Deut. 2:9 Deut. 2:14 Deut. 2:16 Deut. 2:24		Mic. 4:3
עוֹל	iniquity		Ps. 107:42	Mic. 3:10

Hebrew	English	Torah Reading Deut. 2:2-30	Psalms 107:33-43	Ashlamatah Obad 1:21 + Micah 3:9 – 4:5
עַם	people	Deut. 2:4 Deut. 2:10 Deut. 2:16 Deut. 2:21 Deut. 2:25		Mic. 4:1 Mic. 4:3 Mic. 4:5
עָשָׂה	do,did, done, make, made	Deut. 2:12 Deut. 2:22 Deut. 2:29	Ps. 107:37	
עֵשָׂו	Esau	Deut. 2:4 Deut. 2:5 Deut. 2:8 Deut. 2:12 Deut. 2:22 Deut. 2:29		Obad. 1:21
פֶּה	mouth		Ps. 107:42	Mic. 4:4
קִרְבֵּי	midst, among	Deut. 2:14 Deut. 2:15 Deut. 2:16		Mic. 3:11
רָאָה	look, see	Deut. 2:24	Ps. 107:42	
רַב	enough, numerous, many	Deut. 2:3 Deut. 2:10 Deut. 2:21		Mic. 4:2 Mic. 4:3
רַע	wickedness, affliction, harm		Ps. 107:34 Ps. 107:39	Mic. 3:11
שָׂדֵה	fields		Ps. 107:37	Mic. 3:12
שָׁמַע	hear	Deut. 2:25		Mic. 3:9
שָׁמַר	watch, observe	Deut. 2:4	Ps. 107:43	

Greek:

GREEK	ENGLISH	Torah Reading	Psalms	Ashlamatah	Peshat Mishnah of Mark, 1-2 Peter, & Jude	Tosefta of Luke	Remes/Gemara of Acts/Romans and James
ἀγρός	fields		Ps 107:37	Mic. 3:12	Mk. 13:16		
ἀδελφός	brother	Deu 2:4 Deu 2:8					Jas. 1:2
γαστήρ	pregnant				Mk. 13:17	Lk. 21:23	
γῆ	land, earth	Deut. 2:5 Deut. 2:9 Deut. 2:12 Deut. 2:19 Deut. 2:20 Deut. 2:24 Deut. 2:27 Deut. 2:29	Ps 107:34 Ps 107:35			Lk. 21:23	
γινώσκω	know					Lk. 21:20	Jas. 1:3
ἔθνος	nation	Deu 2:10 Deu 2:21 Deu 2:25		Mic 4:2 Mic 4:3		Lk. 21:24	
εἶδω	knows				Mk. 13:14	Lk. 21:20	
εἰσερχομαι	entered			Mk. 13:15		Lk. 21:21	

GREEK	ENGLISH	Torah Reading	Psalms	Ashlamatah	Peshat Mishnah of Mark, 1-2 Peter, & Jude	Tosefta of Luke	Remes/Gemara of Acts/Romans and James
ἐξέρχομαι	went out, came forth	Deu 2:23 Deu 2:32		Mic 4:2			
ἐπιστρέφω	turn	Deu 2:3 Deu 2:8			Mk. 13:16		
ἔργον	work	Deu 2:7					Jas. 1:4
ἐρημωσις	desolation				Mk. 13:14	Lk. 21:20	
έρχομαι	came, come						
ἡγεομαι	leaders count it			Mic 3:9 Mic 3:11			Jas. 1:2
ἡμέρα	time, day	Deut. 2:14 Deut. 2:18 Deut. 2:22 Deut. 2:25 Deut. 2:30		Mic. 4:1	Mk. 13:17 Mk. 13:19 Mk. 13:20	Lk. 21:22 Lk. 21:23	
θεός	God	Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:29 Deut. 2:30		Mic. 4:2 Mic. 4:5	Mk. 13:19		
θηλάζω	nursing babies				Mk. 13:17	Lk. 21:23	
θλιψις	affliction		Ps107:39		Mk. 13:19		
κυκλω	encircled	Deu 2:3 [Lk. 21:20	
κύριος	LORD	Deut. 2:2 Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:9 Deut. 2:12 Deut. 2:14 Deut. 2:15 Deut. 2:17 Deut. 2:21 Deut. 2:29 Deut. 2:30	Ps 107:43	Obad. 1:21 Mic. 3:11 Mic. 4:1 Mic. 4:2 Mic. 4:4 Mic. 4:5	Mk. 13:20		
λαός	people	Deut. 2:4 Deut. 2:10 Deut. 2:16 Deut. 2:21 Deut. 2:25		Mic. 4:1 Mic. 4:3 Mic. 4:5		Lk. 21:23	
λογος	nothing, words	Deut. 2:7 Deut. 2:26		Mic. 4:2			
μεγας	great	Deu 2:7 Deu 2:10 Deu 2:21				Lk. 21:23	
μεσος	midst	Deu 2:15 Deu 2:16				Lk. 21:21	
όνομα	name	Deu 2:25		Mic 4:5			
όρος	mountain, mount	Deut. 2:3 Deut. 2:5		Obad. 1:21 Mic. 3:12 Mic. 4:1 Mic. 4:2	Mk. 13:14	Lk. 21:21	
ουαί	woe				Mk. 13:17	Lk. 21:23	
πιπτω / πέτω	fell, fall	Deu 2:16				Lk. 21:24	
πληρω	fulfilled					Lk. 21:22 Lk. 21:24	
προφήτης	prophet			Mic 3:11	Mk. 13:14		

GREEK	ENGLISH	Torah Reading	Psalms	Ashlamatah	Peshat Mishnah of Mark, 1-2 Peter, & Jude	Tosefta of Luke	Remes/Gemara of Acts/Romans and James
στόμα	mouth, edge		Ps 107:42	Mic. 4:4		Lk. 21:24	
τοπος	place			Mic 3:12			
φευγω	flee				Mk. 13:14	Lk. 21:21	

Abarbanel On Pirke Abot – Chapters of the Fathers Pereq 2, Mishnah 1

Rabbi said: What is the upright path that a man should choose for himself? One that is an honor to him that does (i.e., follows) it and (brings) him honor from (other) men. Be as careful with a light *mitzvah* as with a severe *mitzvah*, because you do not know the giving of the reward of the *mitzvot* and calculate the loss (suffered in observing) a *mitzvah* against its rewards and the profit (gained by performing) a transgression against its loss. Consider three things and you will not come to sin: Know what is above you, a seeing eye and a listening ear and all your actions are written in the book.

Before Abarbanel plumbs the depth of this significant Mishnah, he reminds us that the other commentaries on *Pirke Abot* do not really approach the task of interpretation correctly in that they see no relationship or connection between the various statements of the sages and, instead, view them as a loosely organized group of dicta. According to him, all the dicta are interrelated and should be treated as such.

All the other commentators are of the opinion that Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi (he is known as Rabbi, as much as to say *the Rabbi par excellence*, and also as Rabbenu ha-Kadosh, "our holy teacher") is advocating three ways in which a person can elevate himself to a higher spiritual plateau. First, that he must weigh on the scales of his intellect what constitutes a commendable act and what is deplorable one. Secondly, he must assess the performance of a mitzvah and lastly, he should recognize the vital importance of faith and trust in God.

The Mishnah is thus teaching that the proper path to follow is the path of centrism. Charity is given as an example. If a man is miserly he will profit from that attitude because he will retain for himself what he should give to others; others - the poor and the needy - will, however, suffer and so his behavior will not bring him honor from other people. If, on the other hand, he is unreasonably generous, he will be acclaimed by society, but he may be doing himself harm by squandering what he needs for his own sustenance. Therefore, the only logical solution is to avoid extremes and follow a middle course - a course which is creditable to him and will gain him respect from others.

Thus, the word: "O'oseh" in the Mishnah refers to the *person* who is advised how to conduct himself, as we have translated it. Abarbanel, however, interprets this word differently and says that it refers to God. In other words, by taking the centrist path he will gain the respect of "O'oseh" - the Creator.

The second way of improving oneself is to be very cautious in the performance of both significant and commonplace *mitzvot*. We are referring here to positive commandments because the Torah is explicit in detailing the various penalties for the violation of negative commandments. On the other hand, only on very rare occasions does the Torah mention the punishment for ignoring a positive commandment. It is in this area of positive

commandments that Rabbi warns us not to appraise their importance and not to perform only those *mitzvot* which appear to us more significant than others.

Abarbanel chooses the *mitzvah* of the *sukkah* as an example. The Talmud (Avodah Zarah 3a) relates that the nations of the world, becoming aware that God was going to present the Children of Israel with the Torah, pleaded with Him to give them the first option. God said to them that there was one *mitzvah* in the Torah - a *mitzvah kalah*, an easy commandment - which He would ask them to fulfill, that of *sukkah*. The nations accepted. They erected their *sukkot* on the roofs of their homes. God then unleashed the glowing heat of the sun and the flight from the *sukkot* became inevitable. The Talmud then asks, "What is considered a *mitzvah kalah*?" The answer: A *mitzvah* that does not entail the expenditure of a sizeable amount of money.

The underlying theme is that a man should not prefer one *mitzvah* over another since he really does not know what the actual reward for the commission of any *mitzvah* is. If the Torah did not specify these rewards, man surely is in no position to assess them.

The commentaries to which Abarbanel is referring also quote a passage from the Talmud (Sanhedrin 91b) which asks why the Torah did not give a rationale for the *mitzvot*. It becomes quite evident that the Torah deliberately avoids any indication as to the reasons for specific *mitzvot*. The rabbis reply that there are two commandments in Torah (Deuteronomy 17:16) concerning a king for which explicit reasons are given: He must not take a large number of wives, so that his heart turn not away from God, and nor may he have a great number of horses, so that he does not return the Jews to Egypt. King Solomon defied these commandments and did increase his wives and his horses, saying that *he* would not be misled. The result was that he did fall victim to the pitfall that surely awaited him. All this demonstrates that the Torah was prudent in not disclosing the true rationale for *mitzvot*.

But is there not a contradiction in the thinking of these commentaries when they entreat us to follow the middle path and caution us not to attempt to fathom the significance of a *mitzvah*? How can one be centrist when he does not know what measure is extreme? The reply they propose is that in every facet of life one must use his intellect and choose the center except in the domain of *mitzvot*, where he must act with faith because he does not know what a major *mitzvah* is and what is a minor one.

When those commentaries advise us to use our intellectual judgment they are referring to the evil inclination; the intellect must supersede or dominate the impulse. For example, if a man's heart dictates that he should perform a certain *mitzvah*, but some driving impulse warns him that he will be injured financially or physically, let his intellect take over and show him that the loss he will suffer is insignificant compared to the reward he will receive in another world. Also, if he has a strong propensity to commit some transgression that will afford him financial gain or physical pleasure, let his intelligence confirm that these pleasures are transitory compared to the dire consequences that he will suffer. We just do not know, and it was never meant for us to know, what will be our reward either in this mundane world or in the World to Come for the performance of a *mitzvah*.

In this vein we can understand the rule of the rabbis of the Talmud (Sukkah 25a) that when a man is occupied in the performance of one *mitzvah* he is exempt from the performance of another *mitzvah*. Who knows whether the *mitzvah* that I am performing, albeit seemingly of lesser importance, is truly not more significant and rewarding than the other *mitzvah*? Along the same lines, the rabbis taught (Yoma 33a) that we must not pass over an imminent *mitzvah* in favor of carrying out another *mitzvah*.

Abarbanel accepts all these interpretations, albeit reluctantly. However, the reasoning of Rambam he rejects. Rambam argues that there is a way to gauge the value of each *mitzvah*. This can be done if we appraise the reward of the positive commandment in contrast to the penalty for the negative commandment connected to it. The Torah is quite precise in informing us of the exact punishment for the negative commandments. We then

evaluate the merits of a positive *mitzvah* according to the penalty of the comparable transgression. For example, circumcision, the Paschal Lamb and the erection of a parapet on the roof of a house are all positive commandments.

Violating the Sabbath is a negative commandment. Now, if one defies the laws of circumcision or the rules of the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb he is culpable and receives the punishment of karet (usually translated as extirpation; either an untimely death or death without leaving issue). The one who violates the law of the parapet is punished with lashing. Violating the laws of the Sabbath is punishable by stoning and hanging. Thus, in the commission of a *mitzvah*, one should consider what the violation of that *mitzvah* will entail in the way of punitive measures. In other words, all our good deeds, esoteric as they are to us, are measured by the corresponding violations whose penalties we do know.

On the other side of the coin, a Jew must address himself to the divine beneficence he will receive for not doing wrong on the basis of the consequences of doing that wrong. Rambam takes his cue for this thought from the Talmud (Kiddushin 39b) which states that he who refrains from committing a transgression is rewarded as if he had performed a *mitzvah*. According to him, there is no other way to fathom the value of a *mitzvah* except in its relative position to the penalties for transgressions.

According to the Torah, there are eight degrees of culpability and retribution. They are, according to severity: execution by stoning and hanging, by burning, by the sword, by strangulation, extirpation, death by divine decree ("accidental death," as it seems to humans), lashes and those wrongs that are considered immoral but are not punishable. All negative commandments fit under one of these eight degrees of punishment. The award for the *mitzvot* correspond to the severity of the punishment of violators.

Abarbanel cannot accept Rambam's interpretation of the *Mishnah* for several reasons. Firstly, Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi was attempting to persuade the reader to comply with all *mitzvot* equally and not to assess them according to what appears to him to be important and unimportant; we simply do not know what is important and what is unimportant in the realm of *mitzvot*. How, then, can Rambam propose that it is possible to gauge reward and punishment relative to *mitzvot*. Furthermore, why should the reward for performing a *mitzvah* be dependent upon the severity of the penalty for a wrongdoing? What has one to do with the other? Then again, there are a vast number of positive commandments which have no corresponding punishment for their violation and cannot be assessed in an equation with a negative commandment. Lastly, Abarbanel takes Rambam to task for misreading the Talmudic dictum that he who refrains from committing a sin receives a reward comparable to the fulfillment of a *mitzvah*. This, cries out Abarbanel, is untenable, It is impossible that a man who sits passively and does not actively engage in a *mitzvah* should be compensated by God simply because during that period he did not violate a religious law. The Torah warns that anyone spilling the blood of his fellow man will have his blood shed in retaliation, shall we say that one who does not kill is entitled to an accolade from God.

After all this, Abarbanel begins his own interpretation. According to him, the central thread that runs through this Mishnah is the theological problem whether man can achieve perfection by using his intellect only or by following the dictates of the Torah? Perhaps a combination of both is necessary. He comes straight to the point: he totally rejects the centrist concept of Rambam and others - a product of the intellect - because the Torah is quite clear in teaching what is the proper way. There is no need for the philosophical and logical premises that the intellect conceptualizes; all that is required is dedication and commitment to the Torah.

Since man is but man - flesh and blood - it is logical that he will seek out beauty over ugliness; expediency over tardiness. He will avoid extremism because it leaves him little room for maneuverability. All this is the product of his finite intellect. The Jew, on the other hand, is required to rise above this limited capacity of intelligence and permit himself to be guided solely by the Torah and *mitzvot*. When we follow the reasoning of our intellect we are

prone to choose a less serious mitzvah over a more serious one. Those that follow the dictates of the Torah, however, know no differentiation between the two. A *mitzvah* is a *mitzvah* and the Torah does not refer to them as serious or not. We should not be concerned with the favorable or unfavorable reaction of society to our deeds; what should occupy us is the question whether we are doing what is right in the eyes of God.

Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi, the author of this Mishnah, was not only outstanding in Torah, but also erudite in Greek, Egyptian and Chaldean languages and cultures. Yet, it is that very same Rabbi who, in the question, "What is the upright path *a man* should choose for himself?", uses the word *ha-adam*. That term signifies man at his most basic level and, indeed, it is basic man who will, by exercise of his intellect, choose a path satisfactory to himself and to the community. Jews, however, stand on a higher plane than mere man. We are committed to God and not to our faulty intellect. The Torah is our measuring rod for perfection. Speaking in comparative terms, Abarbanel draws our attention to the various levels of existing phenomena. The animal kingdom is higher than the vegetable. At the head of the animal kingdom stands human man with his superior intellect, towering over all other forms of creatures. But, above all else stands the Jew who is the only creature whose life is oriented by the Torah and *mitzvot*.

The word "Adam" is derived from the word "Adamah" - earth or soil. It thus refers to a simple person who is bereft of higher intelligence. It is for that reason that Rabbi uses the word **Adam** rather than any of the other terms for man. In other words, an **Adam** will seek a way of life that will bring him satisfaction and respect in the community. The Jew is above **Adam** and must seek to comply with the Torah and the *mitzvot*.

Abarbanel then proceeds to give us his own conceptualization of this *Mishnah* but with measured caution. According to him the word Zahir, which is commonly translated as "careful," really means "enthusiastic." That is to say, **there must be an element of enthusiasm in the performance of a *mitzvah***. The actual performance of a *mitzvah* is certainly significant; **but what is of paramount importance is the degree of our eagerness in performing it**. What is important is not whether a *mitzvah* is *kalah* or *hamurah*, **but rather the warmth and excitement with which the *mitzvah* is executed**. When one performs a *mitzvah* eagerly, one is apt to be more careful and meticulous. However, since we do not know whether the reward for *mitzvot* is based on actual performance or on the attitude on the part of the performer, he adds that **a person should make every effort both to perform the *mitzvah* and do so enthusiastically**.

On this premise, he interprets the rationale given by the Mishnah, "because you do not know the reward of the *mitzvot*," to mean that we do not know precisely and definitively whether our major interest should lie in the commission of a *mitzvah* or in the spirit with which it is performed, **and whether the reward awaiting the righteous person will be for the *mitzvah per se* or for the loving delight devoted to its performance**.

Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi continues: If the evil inclination should prompt a Jew to say that there is more personal and physical benefit from a sin than there is from a *mitzvah*, let him make a calculation: The satisfaction he will derive from the transgression is transitory compared to the everlasting joys that will be his in the World to Come. To Rabbi, according to Abarbanel, the word "**A'avirah**" in our *Mishnah* is synonymous with *yetzer ha-ra*, the evil inclination. Following this theme, Abarbanel detects the signs of a contradiction between Rabbi of this *Mishnah* who says that we do not know the reward for *mitzvot* and the Mishnah of Antigonus (Chapter I, Mishnah 31 where it is stated that one should not perform a *mitzvah* for the purpose of receiving a reward, i.e., reward should not be taken into consideration. Abarbanel solves this contradiction by proposing that Antigonus was speaking about reward while man is alive in this world, whereas Rabbi was referring to reward in The World to Come.

Abarbanel continues: In this esoteric labyrinth of theological conjecture, whether there is a reward for a *mitzvah* and a punishment for its violation, or not, one can easily fall victim to a state of doubtfulness concerning the whole concept of reward and punishment. To avoid this confusion, Rabbi entreats us to continually keep before

our eyes that there is an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent power who continuously keeps an eye on us and takes note of every move that we make. With this in mind we will not come to sin, i.e., we will not be misled into heretical beliefs.

Miscellaneous Interpretations

Rashi: Rabbi, in his two-pronged statements on the right way a person should choose for himself, first offers the advice that if an act which one is about to perform will cause him to feel very guilty, it should be avoided. The ideal hallmark for a proper deed is the experience of joy and satisfaction. Thus, the correct course of action is "one that is an honor to him ... " Secondly, when society decrees one act to be correct, that is the one to perform. In his analysis of Rabbi's warning to be as careful with an insignificant *mitzvah* as with an important one, Rashi relies on an analogy of a king who engaged gardeners to work on the trees in his orchard. The one who works on the better trees will be better paid. However, he did not identify which were the productive trees and which were not. His feeling was that if he informed them, they would all hasten to the better trees which would bring them a better financial return. So, it is with the performance of *mitzvot*. If God had disclosed what *mitzvot* brought a greater reward, everyone would devote himself to those. This would not be so harmful but for the fact that it would prevent the Jew from becoming a complete and evenhanded observer of the *mitzvot*.

Rashi continues: The frailty of man causes him to neglect the performance of good deeds, he will lose out on gainful opportunities in his efforts in the marketplace. From a pragmatic point of view, this may appear to be a legitimate grievance. Rabbi of our *Mishnah*, however, admonishes us not to view life in short terms of immediate success. What is essential is the long-term view in which the Jew looks forward to his place in Heaven. He may lose out somewhat in his mundane interests, but he will definitely gain an assured place in the World to Come.

Rashbatz: What is meant by "One that is an honor to him that does it?" It means that a person should be his own critic. If he himself feels that he is doing the right thing, it is all that counts. There are occasions when a person is not proud of himself but others, endeavoring to flatter him, applaud him. This is certainly undesirable. It is in that light that Rabbi suggests that the ideal situation is when one does a deed and it meets with his own approval and the approval of society. He can then rest assured that he has done the right thing.

Rashbatz also suggests that the word **L'O'oseh**, (the one who does it) refers to God who made man. In other words, one must do deeds that are acceptable to God. Then, society will be proud of him too.

Finally, Rashbatz treats the ticklish question of *mitzvah kalah* and *mitzvah hamurah*. He gives us an exercise in the theological background of punishment. There are transgressions that call for lashes - 39 of them. There are sins that are punishable by *karet* (extirpation) and death at the hands of God. A transgressor can also be subject to capital punishment in four different ways. For good deeds the Torah, with rare exceptions, does not announce what the rewards will be for their performance.

We may assume that the reason why the Torah specifies penalties for transgression is to intimidate man and out of fear help him to avoid violating them. In dealing with good deeds, Rashbatz quotes the Rabbis (*Midrash Tanhuma*, Ekev, 2) which elaborates on the verse in Proverbs (5:6), "She does not chart a path of life; her course meanders for lack of knowledge," and interprets it as meaning, "You shall not sit and weigh the *mitzvot* of the Torah to see which one of them has a greater reward."

Rashbatz continues to augment his position by two other illustrations. "He who is occupied with the performance of a *mitzvah* is excused from attending to other *mitzvot*" (*Sukkah* 25b). There is no mention made of less or more important *mitzvot*. The Talmud (*Pesachim* 64b) also dictates that we are not allowed to selectively pass over *mitzvot*. The rationale behind these statements is given to us by Rabbi in our *Mishnah*. We do not know the actual

table of rewards for good deeds. Perhaps the unimportant *mitzvah* that one thinks is occupying his time is really more rewarding than the presumed important one.

Rabbenu Yonah gives an entirely different slant on doing something that will be an honor to himself and to the community. "Honor to him that does" implies taking pride in the performance of a *mitzvah*. For example, if you are to don a *talit*, choose a beautiful *talit*; if you are to hold a lulav, pick an attractive *Julav*. In that way, the community will take pride in you.

Rabbenu Yonah does not hesitate to deal with the delicate theological questions of man's efforts to conceptualize God in human terms. Commenting on our *Mishnah*, "Consider on three things and you will not come to sin: know what is above you, a seeing eye, a hearing ear...," Rabbenu Yonah is ambivalent as to the meaning of this maxim. How does man really know what is above him? If "a seeing eye and a hearing ear" applies to God, does God really have an ear and an eye? Rabbenu Yonah is persuaded that man born of a woman, living in the physical world and finite in his intelligence, cannot conceive of God except by attributing to Him attributes that he, himself, possesses and in circumstances in which he himself is living. It is degrading for a person to stand before a high government official and to speak unintelligently and demeaning. So, must man's relationship be with God. Every moment of the day he must visualize himself standing before an outstanding personality; he must act accordingly. Of course. God has no eye nor ear and man cannot grasp the esoteric intricacies of God's existence. What he can do is to conduct himself in a manner that will make him believe that an eye is watching, and an ear is listening all the time.

Rabbi Moshe Alshakar claims that Rabbi is imparting the following message, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Do you want to know what is the right course that a man should follow in life? The path that will lead him to think of the welfare of others and not only of himself. There is nothing more rewarding in social contacts than to avoid doing to others what one would not have done to himself.

Midrash Shemuel raises several questions about our *Mishnah*. When Rabbi asks, "What is the upright path that a man should choose for himself", Midrash Shemuel is ready to challenge that query. Since when does a person have a choice but to follow the way of life as laid down by the Torah? There is no alternative. Moreover, the adjective, upright (*yesharah*), is superfluous. With rare exceptions no one would think of choosing an unrighteous way of life in preference to an upright one. Furthermore, Rabbi contradicts himself when he states that no one knows the actual reward for the performance of good deeds, yet prior to that he states that one should give equal consideration to a less important *mitzvot* and to important ones. If he knows what *mitzvah* is important and which is not, it follows logically that he also knows the rewards for keeping them, otherwise how can he know which is important and which is not? Finally, the word "**Matan**" (giving) which we find in the context of rewards, is also superfluous. He should have simply stated, "You do not know the reward of *mitzvot*," instead of "You do not know the giving of the reward of *mitzvot*."

Rabbi wishes to correct a misleading and misunderstood fact. He is stressing that one has no choice between a Torah oriented life and any other mode of living. However, within the framework and structure of Torah, he does have a right to choose which *mitzvot* appeal to him most and to devote himself to them.

On this premise Rabbi counsels the Jew not to favor and show preference for one *mitzvah* over another. Hence, the first part of our *Mishnah* will read as follows: "Which is the upright path, within the confines of Torah living, that one should choose for himself?" Answer: "The one that will bring honor to himself and to his fellow-man." But, says Rabbi, "I advise that you be as careful with a *mitzvah* of lesser importance as you are with a *mitzvah* of major importance.

Midrash Shemuel proceeds to deal with the general concept of "honor to yourself and honor to your fellowman". He adopts the position that there are two types of *mitzvot*. One bears a direct relationship between man and God,

and has nothing what-so-ever to do with his fellow-man. The *mitzvot* of *sukkah*, *mezuzah* and *tefillin* are examples. The second category of *mitzvot* are those that involve the Jew in his commitment to God and his sympathetic devotion to his fellowman. Such *mitzvot* as visiting the sick and giving charity would come under this heading. Rabbi is teaching us that the second classification is preferable to the first as he states, "That will be an honor to you and to your fellow-man."

According to Midrash Shemuel. Rabbi of our *Mishnah* continues to convey the idea that although a man has a license to select his *mitzvot* within the scope of Torah, the best course for him to follow is to equate the value of a significant *mitzvah* with that of a less significant one. It is best that he does not choose at all and observe the *mitzvah* as it presents itself.

Midrash Shemuel offers another interpretation of our *Mishnah*. He detects an element of *hasidut* (exceptional piety) in the beginning of our *Mishnah* which, he hastens to alert us, is not meant to be practiced by all. Often a person obsessed with a passionate yearning for righteousness will act and do things that are not in his character. It may be something that many other people in the community are doing, yet for him it is ridiculous to follow suit. He may even believe that his behavior is the epitome of righteousness, whereas, in truth, it is the height of foolishness. For this reason, Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Nasi gives us guidelines on the proper conduct of the Jew: He must behave in manner which is righteous not only in his own deluded image of what constitutes a good deed (*le-oseh*), but in one which will also meet with the approval of his peers (*min ha-adam*).

Midrash Shemuel focuses in on the theme of important and unimportant *mitzvot*. Accordingly, Rabbi admonishes us not to seek out the more momentous *mitzvot* and not to ignore the less significant ones because we have no factual knowledge of their rewards. Midrash Shemuel is convinced that what prompted Rabbi to pronounce this statement is a provocative comment in the Talmud, "If one sits and does not violate a law, he is credited with a reward as if he had fulfilled a *mitzvah*" (Kiddushin 39b).

The question arises, why can a person not distinguish between "heavyweight" *mitzvot* and "lightweight" ones. Perhaps he would have difficulty in judging the *mitzvot* penalty wise when evaluating the positive commandments because the Torah does not usually specify rewards for *mitzvot*. However, when one analyzes the negative commandments, regarding which the Torah clearly specifies the precise punishments for their violation, it is quite simple to calculate what the reward for every *mitzvah* will be.

All one has to do is to observe the punishment for a negative *mitzvah* and correspondingly arrive at an idea of the reward for a positive *mitzvah*. For example, if one offends the law and commits a wrong which calls for the penalty of excision, he can anticipate that the reward for not committing the error will be commensurate with the penalty. This approach by Midrash Shemuel is based on the Talmudic adage, "If one sits and does not violate a law, he is credited with a reward as if he had fulfilled a *mitzvah*," and was already suggested by Rambam and rejected by Abarbanel.

In making these calculations a man can argue further that this special arrangement and concession by God is a *matanah*, a gift. Hence, he has a right to evaluate the uniqueness of each *mitzvah* and devote himself to some at the expense of others. It is at this point that Rabbi enters the picture and points out that while you *do* know the penalties of the negative *mitzvot*, you cannot conclude what the award of a positive *mitzvah* will be. Perhaps, the penalty and the rewards are not commensurate with each other. Perhaps the assumption that an apparently insignificant *mitzvah* will only bring in its wake an insignificant reward is a miscalculation. Only God knows the true and authentic levels of reward.

Midrash Shemuel continues with his rationale. Why will God award a person a substantial prize for an insignificant *mitzvah*? Why will God punish a person slightly even if his offense is serious? Herein lies the element of

motivation. When a person commits a serious sin his pangs of guilt leaves him no rest; his anguish tortures him. He repents and is rewarded. But, his repentance is out of fear of the consequences resulting from his deviation. Were it not for that fear, he probably would not repent. On the other hand, when one violates an insignificant law, he can be expected to ignore the whole matter. The fact that he does repent is a sign of a dedication to the word of God. For that, he is entitled to a major beneficence by God.

Midrash Shemuel offers a second approach to our *mishnah*. There are *mitzvot* that present themselves every day of the year; there are others that appear once in a lifetime. Let us envision a scenario where one has a choice of performing a *mitzvah* associated with the Jubilee year and a daily commonplace *mitzvah*. A person may be tempted to choose the former because of its significance and rarity. The everyday *mitzvah*, although important, does not hold the fascination for him that an extremely infrequent one does. On this point, according to Midrash Shemuel, Rabbi cautions us not to attempt to gauge the *mitzvot* because if you do, you may become lax and unconcerned about the performance of the lesser *mitzvot*.

Relative to the question whether God possesses an eye and an ear that we posed at the beginning of this treatise, Midrash Shemuel has the following to say: A person deludes himself when he believes that it is the eye that sees when, in truth, the eye is an instrument which requires the addition of an outside element which is essential to sight - the light and, without it, the eye is powerless to function. Similarly, in the case of hearing, the element of distance enters the picture and has a direct bearing on the function of the ear. If the source of the sound is too far. the ear will not hear, if too close, the sound may be outlandish. This dependence upon exterior factors for the eye and the ear is applicable only to a human being. Speaking of God, it is an elementary conclusion that He does not possess an ear and an eye in our concept because the essence of God is light and voice. He is in no need of "a helping hand" to see and hear. This is what Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi meant by, "Know what is above you: an eye that sees and an ear that listens" - under all conditions!

Midrash Shemuel concludes his analysis of this Mishnah with a word of encouragement. Not only can a person avoid sin by continually acknowledging the presence of a seeing eye and a listening ear, but there is another effective way, that of following the *mitzvot* of the Torah. A Jew does not have to trouble himself to discover which is the right path in life, "A book is always open for your deeds." All one has to do is open the book, study it and follow its dictates.

NAZAREAN TALMUD

SIDRA OF D'BARIM 2:2-30

"RAV LAKHEM" "LONG [ENOUGH] TO YOU"

BY: H. EM RABBI DR. ELIYAHU BEN ABRAHAM

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM SHAUL'S TOSEFTA
LUQAS (LK)

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM TSEFET'S PESHAT
MORDECHAI (MK)

"But when you see Yerushalayim surrounded by armies, then you know that its desolation has come near. Then **those in Yehudah must flee to the mountains**, and those inside it must depart, and those in the fields must not enter into it, because these are **days of vengeance**, so that all the things that are written can be fulfilled. Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing their babies in those days! For **there will be great distress on the Land** and wrath against this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations, and Yerushalayim will be trampled down by the Gentiles **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled**.

¶ But when you see the desolation of sacrilege standing where it is illegal (contrary to the Torah), **let the reader understand**,⁵⁶ **then those in Judea escape to the mountains**.⁵⁷ Then the one on the housetop should not go down into the house to remove anything from his house: And the (one) in the field should not turn back to remove his clothing. Woe to those expecting a child, and those nursing (infants) in those days! Petition (G-d) that this does not occur during the winter rains. **For in those days (there will) be violent persecution (and anguish) such as has not been from the beginning of creation, which G-d created until now and (will) not be again.** If the LORD had not created (short) those days, no **flesh**⁵⁸ would survive; only for the elect (the Jews) which He (the LORD) has chosen, has He created (short) those days.

HAKHAM YA'AQOB'S SCHOOL OF REMES – "YA'AQOB"
JAMES 1:2-4

My brethren be governed⁵⁹ by (with) refreshing joy,⁶⁰ when you encounter numerous and various tests,

⁵⁶ This is one of the various texts in the writings of Hakham Tsefet by the hand of his scribe Mordechai that shows clearly that this body of literature was to be read in public on a weekly basis.

⁵⁷ This Peshat reference has allegorical implications. Allegorically speaking the mountain refers to the Governments of the Nations. Therefore, we could read this verse to say: "when the Government of the Jewish people collapses, you will need to flee into the nations." This fits our allegorical pericope well.

⁵⁸ Cf. Ashlamatah – Isaiah 49:26

⁵⁹ Lexical information: G2374 ἡγέομαι 1. to lead, i. e. a. to go before; b. to be a leader; to rule, command; to have authority over: in the N. T. so only in the present participle ἡγούμενος, a prince, of regal power) Ezek. 43:7 for ἡγεῖ; Sir. 17:17 (, Matt. 2:6; a (royal) governor, viceroy, Acts 7:10; chief, Luke 22:26 (opposed to ὁ διακονῶν); leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel, ἐν τισί, among any, Acts 15:22; with the genitive of the person over whom one rules, so of the overseers or leaders of congregations:

Strong's G2233 - 1 to lead. 1a to go before. 1b to be a leader. 1b1 to rule, command. 1b2 to have authority over. 1b3 a prince, of regal power, governor, viceroy, chief, leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel, overseers or leaders of the congregations. 1b4 used of any kind of leader, chief, commander. 1b5 the leader in speech, chief, spokesman.

⁶⁰ The Hebrew concept of "joy" related to Hebrew vocabulary. Thus, several possibilities are present such as, "Rina" (Hebrew: רינה), a term used to describe a "refreshing happiness," or possibly Ditzza (Hebrew: דיצה), a "sublime joy."

Of these choices we opt for "Rina" which means that from time to time, or test to test we are to refresh our joy and happiness. Yet, "Ditzza" is a sublime spiritual joy that is superior to natural happiness. However, Simcha (שִׂמְחָה), joy. It **is one of the fundamental themes of Deuteronomy as a book**. Thus, we have translated χαρὰν as ἡμψ "refreshing joy" based on the

knowing that the testing of your faithful obedience (in the great exile) produces endurance.⁶¹ As such, let the virtue of endurance have perfect work⁶² in making you fully equipped⁶³ lacking nothing.⁶⁴

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

145 – Deut. 2:2-30	107:33-43	Obad 1:21 + Micah 3:9 – 4:5	Mk 13:14-20	Lk 21:20-24	Jam. 1:2-4
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COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM TSEFET'S SCHOOL OF PESHAT

THE DIVINE PRESENCE AND THE RUACH HAKODESH

But, whenever you are brought to (trial), do not worry beforehand what you should say; answer honestly in that time according to the divine presence (breathing out of my mesorah – i.e., the oral torah), and not with your own answer.

Last week's pericope gave instruction on how to answer in the Gentile courts of law. This week Hakham Shaul picks up on what Hakham Tsefet has taught about being filled with the spirit and the "spirituality" of the Torah

The vocabulary reveals the author. **προμεριμνάω** *promerimnao* is the invention of Hakham Tsefet. Mann suggests Markan invention,⁶⁵ which is all the same. Here we have noted his comment because in the past we have purported Hakham Shaul to have been a talmid of Hakham Tsefet.⁶⁶ This is important because the phrase **προμεριμνάω** – *promerimnao* is Hakham Tsefet's invention. The word does not appear in the LXX nor does it appear in other classic sources. ONLY Hakham Shaul follows this example of inventing Greek compound words to convey his Hebrew thoughts.⁶⁷ We purport that he has learned this technique from Hakham Tsefet and the Sofer, Silvanus (Luke) given to Hakham Shaul by Hakham Tsefet.

The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament describes the Greek word for abomination, **βδέλυγμα** *bdelugma* derived from the stem **βδελυρ**, in the following way.

The constructions deriving from the stem **βδελυρ**— are not found in the Bible because the Bible is not

family of Hebrew words and their interrelated meaning. The root **נָחַם** appears only once in each of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, but no less than twelve times in Deuteronomy. It lies at the heart of the Mosaic vision of life in the land of Israel. Here we opine that we must find the same "joy" in the Diaspora.

⁶¹ ὑπομονή [hupomone], The ability to persevere.

⁶² Here *ergon* (work) relates to integrity and faithful commitment.

⁶³ D'barim (Deut) 18:13 You must be perfect before the Lord your God. Being fully trained TDNT 3.766

⁶⁴ λειπόμεινοι - to leave off in the middle. As we will see in verse 5 the person who is "deficient in wisdom" must desire it and with faithful obedience seek it at the feet of his teachers. The idea of lacking something (λειπόμεινοι) means that the person deficient is lacking because they were not committed to the full search for wisdom. This may be because they have disdained the teachings of the Sages and tried to accomplish the search by their own intellect. This leaves the student, λειπόμεινοι, (lacking) and deficient. All instances of λείπω means that there is a deficiency as the result of abandonment.

Thus, "lacking" shows that not being in possession of "wisdom" the soul is lacking everything. Wall, Robert W. Community of the Wise: The Letter of James. The New Testament in Context. Valley Forge, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1997. p. 51

⁶⁵ Mann, C. (1986). *Mark, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (The Anchor Bible)*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group Inc. pp. 518

⁶⁶ See [Silvanus the Scribe of Peter and Paul](#). Exactly how long he was his talmid remains a matter of conjecture. Hakham Shaul says (in Remes) that he spent fifteen days with Tsefet. (Gal. 1:18) Here we realize that the word "fifteen" is Remes, a hint to something deeper. It is not the scope of this commentary to venture into Remes.

⁶⁷ Here I would further note that Hakham Shaul follows this practice as the author of Luke. For arguments that Hakham Shaul was the author of Luke see, Wyman & Sons, 1884

concerned to emphasize the abhorrent nature of things but to describe in a plastic and anthropomorphic expression the attitude and judgment of God in relation to things, which He hates. Fundamental to the concept **βδέλυγμα, βδελύττεσθαι** in the LXX is the fact that God has a contrary mind and rejects; this is the guiding rule for the people Israel. In the legal parts of the Bible the reference may be to things, which are cultically (aesthetically) “unclean,” “repugnant” or “abhorrent,” and especially to certain pagan things which are particularly abominable to the God of the OT. Thus idols themselves may be called **βδελύγματα**. This usage is found in the writing prophets (Isa. 13:27; 39:35; 51:22; Ez. 5:9, 11; 6:9 etc.), but in them there is an extension, which makes **βδέλυγμα** parallel to **ἀνομία** (Jer. 4:1; Ez. 11:18; 20:30; Am. 6:8; ψ 5:7; 13:1; 52:1; 118:163; Job 15:16). In the Wisdom literature this development leads to the point where the opposition to paganism disappears and the word simply denotes God’s hostility to evil (Prov. 8:7; 11:1, 20; 12:22; 15:8 f., 26; 20:17; 21:27).

Therefore, anything in a place of holiness that does not belong there is an abomination. While the intended events of Mordechai 13:14 have NOT taken place, we understand that the edifice standing over the “Eben shitiach”⁶⁸ is an abomination. Likewise, the Church that was originally built over that spot was also an abomination. The reason that the present edifice does NOT qualify as the **DESOLATION OF SACRILEGE** is that there is no Temple or edifice of G-d in that place at present. Gentile authority presently occupies the whole of the Temple mount. While this is a complex issue, we must understand that anything there beside an edifice of G-d is an abomination.

An abomination of sacrilege equal in status would be for someone to bring a ham and cheese sandwich into a Synagogue. Or, I might say that it would be an abomination of sacrilege for a Jew to eat a ham and cheese sandwich under normal circumstances.

DAYS CUT SHORT

Here we must first begin with a preemptory statement. The things alluded to in these passages **took place as a rehearsal**⁶⁹ when the Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. Just as all the Festivals (Moedim – Divine Appointments) reoccur each year at the appointed time, and are rehearsals for future events, the Great Tribulation will occur in the future right on schedule. In other words, the Festivals are a rehearsal of the eventual Festival we will keep with the Master, so is the Great Tribulation, which will be the birth of a new Era. Furthermore, as we stated last week, the birth pangs are the birthing of the new era and must take place for it to begin.

C. Mann notes that the language, and the inclusion of the description of creation chaos is to demonstrate the magnitude of the calamity that will occur when these events occur. He further understands the language to be eschatological.⁷⁰

The construction of Mordechai is always climatic. In the previous pericope, we saw only the “prominent” sing of birth pangs. In this conclusory statement, we see the violence of beginnings and birth. Birth is such a violent event that it jeopardizes two lives at the same time. Consequently, Hakham Tsefet notes the extreme measure of the violence, which will accompany the Great Tribulation, nevertheless though what happens to the Gentiles will influence the Jewish people, G-d most blessed be He declares in the Ashlamatah – “and your (Jewish) **sons** I will save” (Is. 49:25)

⁶⁸ Even shitiach – foundation stone

⁶⁹ Our comments should not be understood to say that there was an idol or any pagan deity set up in the Temple courtyards. This happened before with Antiochus IV. However, the courts of the Temple complex was breached and the Roman hoards, invading sanctified areas destroyed the sanctuary of G-d. Therefore, in rehearsal, the scene as is as it is seen today.

⁷⁰ Mann, C. (1986). Mark, *A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (The Anchor Bible)*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group Inc. p. 524

THE ELECT

ONLY FOR THE ELECT (THE JEWS) WHICH HE (THE LORD) HAS CHOSEN

The language of this final verse in our pericope is very impressive and loaded with content. The phrase **ἐκλεκτοῦς οὓς ἐξελέξατο** *eklektous ous exelexato* is profound.

Out of the endless stream of Adam HaRishon's seed, G-d selected and chose the Jews for Himself. Both Greek words *eklektous* and *exelexato* are better understood when the lexical information is detailed. Both words are profound without their dissection. However, when they are dissected they reveal their true meaning.

Both words are given the Greek prefix **εκ - εξ** (ek ex). This Greek prefix **εκ - εξ** (ek ex) is defined as follows by the Strong's Concordance.

G1537 εκ - εξ (ek ex)

Etymology: a primary preposition denoting origin (the point whence action or motion proceeds), from, out (of place, time, or cause; literal or figurative; direct or remote);

Therefore, we understand the prefix εκ εξ (ek ex) to determine the point of origin which an even took place. The latter part of the first word ἐκλεκτοῦς *eklektous*, when its etymological root is traced is the Greek word "logos".

G3004 λέγω (legō)

properly, to "lay" forth, i.e. (figuratively) relate (in words (usually of systematic or set discourse; whereas G2036 and G5346 generally refer to an individual expression or speech respectively; while G4483 is properly to break silence merely, and G2980 means an extended or random harangue); - by implication, to mean;

The fascinating point is that both words follow the exact same etymological root. Hence, we must explain the selection and choosing of the Jews from the vocabulary at present. This is not to say that the Hebrew or Aramaic would not reveal these points.

At what point of history did G-d speak to or give "discourse" to the Jews? At what point in history did G-d choose by "discourse and conversation" the Jewish people? We do not need to circumvent Peshat for an answer. At Har Sinai G-d spoke to the B'ne Yisrael. There, at Har Sinai G-d selected and chose His "Elect," through the discourse of Matan HaTorah.⁷¹ Midrashic maxims further explain the details. However, we cannot deal with Midrashic content at present. Hakham Shaul suggests that these events took place "before the foundation of the earth (Land)."⁷² If we translate "Land" rather than "earth" it is obvious that the foundation refers to the events at Har Sinai which gave the Israelites a passport to the "Land".

Ezra Gould notes that the language of our two verses is an event that already existed in "Divine decree."⁷³ The beauty of the passage notes a bimodal aspect of the selection and election. That aspect looks to the "beginning of creation" where G-d was able to see that He would create the world and "sow light for the righteous" (i.e. the elect).⁷⁴ The other aspect of this verse looks at Har Sinai where G-d, through "Divine decree" established Yisrael as His Elect and Chosen special treasure.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Giving the Torah, the gift of the Torah.

⁷² Cf. Eph. 1:4

⁷³ Gould, E. P. (1922). *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark.* . New York: C. Scribner's sons. p. 248

⁷⁴ Cf. Ps. 97:11

⁷⁵ Cf. Ex. 19:5

COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM YA'AQOB'S SCHOOL OF REMES

In D'barim (Deuteronomy) we are given a mitzvah to serve G-d joyfully.⁷⁶ The mitzvah is stated in the "negative" so to speak. This means that when we do not serve G-d in joyfulness we are punished for our negativity and lack of obedience. How does this mitzvah relate to the present pericope of Hakham Ya'aqob? The Hebrew word שמחה (Simcha), joy occurs more often in D'barim than any other Book of the Torah.⁷⁷ It is a fundamental theme of Deuteronomy. The root שמח s-m-ch appears only once in each of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, but **twelve** times in D'barim. Thus, it is the center of the Moshe Rabbenu's teachings in this book. Therefore, we are to serve God with joy. And, when we have a precedent in the Torah we must also understand it dominates Nazarean Life. Consequently, the command to serve G-d with joy relates to the present pericope by way of subordination to the Torah and its mitzvot. This mitzvah related to the laws termed "*avodat Hashem*" love of G-d.

IDENTIFY THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THIS GEMARÁ WAS CRAFTED;

Nazarean Mitzvot ...

This pericope continues with an assumption that we understand a practice previously mentioned. Therefore, this pericope also asserts that the already mentioned mitzvot are imperatives to be kept.

Thus, Cleaving to G-d is obeyed as it is said ... "**be governed.**" Mitzvah #6⁷⁸ Cleaving to G-d. And, Walk in His Ways as Hakham Ya'aqob said... "**be governed.**" Mitzvah #8 Walking in G-d's ways, "liken ourselves to the Blessed One as far as possible."⁷⁹

We are to Sanctify G-d's name⁸⁰ as it is said ... **when you encounter numerous and various tests**, Mitzvah #9. Sanctifying G-d's name. Thus, this mitzvah requires us to proclaim the truth of the Torah to the cosmos. This must be done without fear of retribution, to the extent that even if a powerful despot tries to force us to deny G-d (exalted be He), we may not obey him.

MY BRETHREN

Practice of Torah is not a life of singularity. Being a Torah observant person means belonging to a community of

⁷⁶ Cf. D'barim 28:47 See also Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Lulav 8:15.

Whoever is expert in the Mishneh Torah knows how much Maimonides appreciated that special "joy of mitzvah" that comes not merely to ordinary people but especially to those who know the deeper nature of the commandments. It is enough to cite his closing words concerning the Festivals of Joy ("Laws of the Lulav" 8:15): "The joy that a person feels in performing the commandment and in love Of Who commanded it, this is great worship. And whoever keeps himself from this joy ought to be punished, as it is written: 'Inasmuch as you did not worship the Lord your God in joy and with a good heart.'" Heinemann, Yizhak. The Reasons for the Commandments in Jewish Thought: From the Bible to the Renaissance. Academic Studies Press, 2008. p.104

⁷⁷ This is evidence that Ya'aqob and D'barim are meant to be read together.

⁷⁸ Count according to the Rambam. Sifrei 10:20; 11:22. Maimonides, Moses. Mishneh Torah: The Book of Mitzvot, A New Translation with Commentaries and Notes. Yerushalayim; Nyu York: Moznayim, 752. P.101-109, Maimonides, Moses. The Commandments: The 613 Mitzvot of the Torah Elucidated in English. Vol. 1. 2 vols. New York: Soncino, 2003. p.11

⁷⁹ Cf. D'barim (Deut.) 11:22 28:9

"Just as G-d is called merciful, so too, you must be merciful. Just as G-d is called kind, so too, you must be kind. Just as G-d is called righteous, so too, you must be righteous. Just as G-d is called pious, so too, you must be pious." Mishneh Torah: The Book of Mitzvot, A New Translation with Commentaries and Notes. Yerushalayim; Nyu York: Moznayim, p. 106.

⁸⁰ This mitzvah requires us to publicize the true religion to the masses. This must be done without fear of retribution, to the extent that even if a powerful tyrant tries to force us to deny G-d (exalted be He), we may not obey him.

Jewish people who love the Torah. Thus, we have stated that we must “cleave to G-d” through the Torah Scholars as a means of drawing close to G-d as it is said “**My brethren.**”

BE GOVERNED

This is the most logical order given by Hakham Ya'aqob. Being “governed” by the Torah Scholars and Hakhamim can only take place when we “cleave” to them and hear their words of wisdom.

CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP

It falls to Midrash to examine Moses' words and not only offer interpretations of his meanings, but to construct leadership principles based on what he has said and done. Many midrashim (Hebrew plural of midrash) taken together, use Moses as an example of what constitutes ideal leadership. In his address to the people, Moses tells them that he was not able, by himself, to bear the burden of acting as judge in all cases. He required that additional judges be appointed to have a more manageable case-load. A midrash turns this necessity into a virtue. It states that, as a matter of settled law, a rabbi or judge of a community may not administer justice alone.⁸¹

Being “**governed**” as stated here is not just referring to a personal state of mind. “Being governed” means that to experience true “joy” means that we are Torah observant and we have attached ourselves to the Sages/Torah Scholars and their teachings as they help us understand G-d's intent in the Torah. Thus, D'barim 28 teaches us how to experience this joy. Why are we commanded to select leaders, Sages, Torah Scholars or Hakhamim? The present pericope gives us ample reason to see that we must associate and follow the guidance of qualified leaders. First the leader must be a Sage, Torah Scholar or a Hakham. This means that the Sage has devoted his life to learning and understanding. Furthermore, the leader must have the heart of a father, meaning he wants to see his disciples mature and “able to stand.”⁸²

These qualifications teach us the importance of Torah study. We seek the wisdom of the Torah Scholar because he has devoted his life to Torah for the sake of itself and for the sake of helping others.

REFRESHING JOY

b. Ta'anit 20b Our Rabbis have taught: A man should always be gentle as the reed and never unyielding as the cedar. Once R. Eleazar son of R. Simeon was coming from Migdal Gedor,⁸³ from the house of his teacher, and he was riding leisurely on his ass by the riverside and was feeling joyful and elated because he had studied much Torah.

We should take great joy in our Torah study and practical application as it is said ... **by (with) refreshing joy.** R. Eleazar son of R. Simeon we should leave the place of Torah study with great joy. The book of D'barim is built on the foundation of those who love Torah and its unlimited beauties. In chapter 28 we are given two options.

THE POSITIVE BLESSINGS OF G-D ...

D'barim 28:1 IF YOU will listen diligently to the voice of the Lord your God, being watchful (shomer – guard) to do all His commandments which I command you this day, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. 2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake (with joy)⁸⁴ you if you heed

⁸¹ https://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Weekly_Torah_Portion/devarim_jts.shtml

⁸² Abot 1:1

⁸³ Yehoshua (Josh.) 10:13

⁸⁴ My insertion from context

the voice of the Lord your God.⁸⁵

THE "CURSE" OF G-D FOR NOT SERVING IN JOYFULNESS ...

D'barim 28:47 Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness of [mind and] heart [in gratitude] for the abundance of all [with which He had blessed you], 48 Therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord shall send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and in want of all things; and He will put a yoke of iron upon your neck until He has destroyed you.⁸⁶

ENCOUNTERING TRIALS⁸⁷

Every trial is a test of our abilities related to Torah observance. How can we keep the Torah if we do not know the Torah, become intimately associated with it through the words of the Hakhamim? Thus, that trials are only a step to greater obedience and love filled with joy in accepting the truth of the Torah.

b. Shabbat 30b And I said of laughter, it is to be praised': that refers to the laughter which the Holy One, blessed be He, laughs with the righteous in the world to come. 'Then I commended joy': this refers to the joy of a precept.⁸⁸ 'And of joy [I said], what doeth it': this refers to joy [which is] not in connection with a precept.⁸⁹ This teaches you that the Divine Presence rests [upon] man] neither through gloom,⁹⁰ nor through sloth, nor through frivolity, nor through levity, nor through talk, nor through idle chatter,⁹¹ save through a matter of joy in connection with a precept, as it is said, But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.⁹²

THE TEST OF FAITHFULNESS

We must be intimately aware of our walk with G-d as it is said ... "**knowing** (Da'at – Intimate awareness) **that the testing of your faithful obedience ...**" The model for study is our father Abraham. The tests he experienced

⁸⁵ The amplified Bible, containing the amplified Old Testament and the amplified New Testament. 1987 (Dt 28:1-2). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

⁸⁶ Ibid 28:47-48

⁸⁷ Think of Abraham the father of the Jewish people was tested in 10 trials

1. G-d tells him to leave his homeland to be a stranger in the land of Canaan.
2. Immediately after his arrival in the Promised Land, he encounters a famine.
3. The Egyptians seize his beloved wife, Sarah, and bring her to Pharaoh.
4. Abraham faces incredible odds in the battle of the four and five kings.
5. He marries Hagar after not being able to have children with Sarah.
6. G-d tells him to circumcise himself at an advanced age.
7. The king of Gerar captures Sarah, intending to take her for himself.
8. G-d tells him to send Hagar away after having a child with her.
9. His son, Ishmael, becomes estranged.
10. G-d tells him to sacrifice his dear son Isaac upon an altar.

⁸⁸ The celebrations of such, e.g., a marriage.

⁸⁹ The Rabbis frowned upon this. But probably, this does not apply to a simple and harmless gathering, but to attendance at theatres

⁹⁰ Judaism does not encourage asceticism; cf. Ned. 10a.

⁹¹ Or, vain pursuits.

⁹² II Kings III, 15. Maharsha observes that the verse is quoted merely to show that the Divine Presence does not rest on a man plunged in gloom, Elisha requiring the minstrel to dissipate the gloom occasioned by Jehoram's visit.

The Rabbis frowned upon this. But in all probability, this does not apply to a simple and harmless gathering, but to attendance at theatres and circuses, at which the Jewish authorities looked askance, perhaps because they originated in idolatry and also because images of royalty were placed there. — Lev. R. XXXIV. The early Christians too were opposed to this, Tertullian (De Spectaculis, X) describing the theatre as a place of sexual immorality,

brought him great joy. So much so that he named his son "Laughter" because of the refreshing and overwhelming joy he experienced in the blessing of G-d's promises to the faithfully obedient.

ENDURANCE BRINGS MATURITY

Those who endure to the end will find redemption⁹³ and their place in the Days of Messiah and the Olam HaBa as it is said ... **"produces endurance."**

Mark 13:13 And you will be hated *and* detested by everybody for my name's sake, but he who patiently perseveres *and* endures to the end will be saved (²made a partaker of the redemption of Messiah and delivered from spiritual death).⁹⁴

Hakham Ya'aqob is telling us that to be a Nazarean we must keep in fellowship with the Sages and be faithful to our Congregation, "lead by" the Sages, study with refreshing joy, endure testing with faithful obedience because only those who can endure these things will have their part in the Y'mot HaMashiach and the Olam Ha Ba. This fellowship is for the sake of training, as it said, **"let the virtue of endurance ..."** meaning that we must complete what we have begun in relation to our training to become a Sage, Torah Scholar or Hakham. As it is said, **"have perfect work ..."** the "perfected work" is directly related to the Hebrew word Shalom, as it is said, **fully equipped lacking nothing.**

Despite what we might think about Hakham Ya'aqob's words he is making an appeal to seek maturity. His repetitious use of the idea of perfection Greek *teleois* is a constant badger for the pursuit of maturity towards wisdom or becoming s a Torah Scholar, Sage or Hakham. As Allison has noted **τέλειος** here refers to the life work of a person which will be judged by G-d.⁹⁵

THREE MITZVOTH ARE IMPLICIT HERE.

Being governed by the Hakhamim ...
Faithful obedience
Being trained for an office in the community.

Questions for Understanding and Reflection

- 1. From all the readings for this week, which verse or verses touched your heart and fired your imagination?**
 - 2. In your opinion what is the prophetic statement for this week?**
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⁹³ Mat 2 Tim 2.10

² Joseph Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon*.

⁹⁴ *The Amplified Bible, containing the amplified Old Testament and the amplified New Testament*. 1987 (Mk 13:13). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

⁹⁵ Allison, Dale C. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James*. The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013. Kline Werk 54-56

Blessings 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 honour, and majesty, both now and in all ages. Amen!”

Next Sabbath:

Shabbat: “R’eh HaChiloti” – Sabbath: “See, I have begun”

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2nd Sabbath of Nachamu (Consolation)

Shabbat	Torah Reading:	Weekday Torah Reading:
ראה החלתי		Saturday Afternoon
“R’eh HaChiloti”	Reader 1 – D’barim 2:31-35	Reader 1 – D’barim 3:23-25
“See, I have begun”	Reader 2 – D’barim 2:36-38	Reader 2 – D’barim 3:26-29
“He aquí yo he comenzado ”	Reader 3 – D’barim 3:1-4	Reader 3 – D’barim 3:23-29
D’barim (Deut.) 2:31- 3:22	Reader 4 – D’barim 3:5-7	
Ashlamatah: Josh 10:12-21	Reader 5 – D’barim 3:8-11	Monday and Thursday Mornings
Special: Is. 49:14 – 51:3	Reader 6 – D’barim 3:12-17	Reader 1 – D’barim 3:23-25
Psalms: 108:1-14	Reader 7 – D’barim 3:18-22	Reader 2 – D’barim 3:26-29
	Maftir: D’barim 3:20-22	Reader 3 – D’barim 3:23-29
Mk 13:21-23; Luke 17:27-37; James 1:5-8	Josh 10:12-21 Is. 49:14 – 51:3	

שבת שלום

Shabbat Shalom!

Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham