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

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| Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings | Fourth Year of the Reading Cycle |
| Ab 23, 5772 – August 23/24, 2019 | Fourth Year of the Shmita Cycle |

Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:

For other places see: <http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp>

Roll of Honor:

This Torah commentary comes to you courtesy 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
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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
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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 G-d’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!

Shabbat: “V’Abraham Zaqen”

| Shabbat | Torah Reading: | Weekday Torah Reading: |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן | | |
| “V’Abraham Zaqen” | Reader 1 – B’resheet 24:1-9 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 24:42-44 |
| “And Abraham was old” | Reader 2 – B’resheet 24:10-14 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 24:45-47 |
| “Y Abraham [era] anciano” | Reader 3 – B’resheet 24:15-18 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 24:42-47 |
| B’resheet (Gen.) 24:1-41 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 24:19-21 | |
| Ashlamatah: Isaiah 51:2-11 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 24:22-26 | |
| Special Isaiah 1:1-27 | Reader 6 – B’resheet 24:27-33 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 24:42-44 |
| Psalms 17:1-15 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 24:34-41 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 24:45-47 |
| | Maftir – B’resheet 24:39-41 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 24:42-47 |
| N.C.: Mark 2:18-20 Luke 5:33-35 & Acts 12:12 -13:12 | Isaiah 51:2-11 | |

Blessing Before Torah Study

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

Please Ha-Shem, our G-d, 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 desire. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem,
 Who teaches Torah to His people Israel. Amen!

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

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

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

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

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

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

These are the Laws for which the Torah did not mandate specific amounts: How much growing produce must be left in the corner of the field for the poor; how much of the first fruits must be offered at the Holy Temple; how much one must bring as an offering when one visits the Holy Temple three times a year; how much one must do when 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!

Contents of the Torah Seder

- Rebekah – Genesis 24:1-41
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-

Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: B’resheet 24:1-41

| Rashi’s Translation | Targum Pseudo Jonathan |
|--|--|
| 1. And Abraham was old, advanced in days, and the Lord had blessed Abraham with everything . | 1. And Abraham was old with days, and the Word of the LORD had blessed Abraham with every kind of blessing. |
| 2. And Abraham said to his servant, the elder of his house, who ruled over all that was his, "Please place your hand under my thigh. | 2. And Abraham said to Eliezer his servant, the senior of his house, who had rule over all his property, Put now your hand upon the section of my circumcision. JERUSALEM: And Abraham said to his servant, the ruler who had rule over all that was his, Put now your hand under the thigh of my covenant. |
| 3. And I will adjure you by the Lord, the God of the heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose midst I dwell. | 3. And swear to me in the name of the Word of the LORD God, whose habitation is in heaven on high, the God whose dominion is over the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Kenaanites among whom I dwell; |
| 4. But you shall go to my land and to my birthplace, and you shall take a wife for my son, for Isaac." | 4. but that you will go to the land and the house of my kindred, and take a wife for my son, for Izhak. |
| 5. And the servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman will not wish to go after me to this land. Shall I return your son to the land from which you came?" | 5. And the domestic said to him, suppose the woman may not be willing to come after me to this land; will I, returning make your son return to the land from whence you came? |

| Rashi’s Translation | Targum Pseudo Jonathan |
|---|---|
| 6. And Abraham said to him, "Beware, lest you return my son back there. | 6. And Abraham said to him, Beware, lest you make my some return thither! |
| 7. The Lord, God of the heavens, Who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth, and Who spoke about me, and Who swore to me, saying, 'To your seed will I give this land' He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. | 7. The LORD God, whose seat is in heaven on high, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my birth; and who spoke to me, and swore to me, saying, To your son will I give this land; He will seasonably send His angel, and you will take a wife for my son from there. |
| 8. And if the woman will not wish to go after you, you will be absolved of this, my oath; only do not return my son back there." | 8. But if the woman be not willing to come after you, you will be innocent from this my oath; only make not my son return there. |
| 9. And the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and he swore to him concerning this matter. | 9. And the servant put his hand upon the circumcised part of Abraham his lord, and swore to him according to this thing. |
| 10. And the servant took ten camels of his master's camels, and he went, and all the best of his master was in his hand; and he arose, and he went to Aram naharaim, to the city of Nahor. | 10. And the servant took ten camels from the camels of his lord, and went: for all the goodly treasures of his lord were in his hand; and he arose and went unto Aram, which was by the Pherat, to the city of Nachor. JERUSALEM: And all the goodly treasures of his lord were in his hand; and he arose and went to Aram, which is by Pherat Naharaim. |
| 11. And he made the camels kneel outside the city beside the well of water, at eventide, at the time the maidens go out to draw water. | 11. And he made the camels lie down without the city by the fountain of waters, at the time of evening, the time when the fillers (of water) come forth. |
| 12. And he said, "O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, please cause to happen to me today, and perform loving kindness with my master, Abraham. | 12. And he said, LORD God of my master Abraham, prepare a proper woman before me today, and deal graciously with my master Abraham. |
| 13. Behold, I am standing by the water fountain, and the daughters of the people of the city are coming out to draw water. | 13. Behold I stand at the well of waters, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming forth to fill waters. |
| 14. And it will be, [that] the maiden to whom I will say, 'Lower your pitcher and I will drink,' and she will say, 'Drink, and I will also water your camels,' her have You designated for Your servant, for Isaac, and through her may I know that You have performed loving kindness with my master." | 14. Let the damsel to whom I say, Reach me now your pitcher, that I may drink, and she say, Drink, and I will also make your camels drink, be she whom you have provided to go to your servant Izhak; and herein will I know that You have dealt graciously with my master. |
| 15. Now he had not yet finished speaking, and behold, Rebecca came out, who had been born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, and her pitcher was on her shoulder. | 15. And it was in that little hour, while he had not ceased to speak, that, behold, Rivkah came forth, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcha, the wife of Nachor, the brother of Abraham, and her pitcher was upon her shoulder. |
| 16. Now the maiden was of very comely appearance, a virgin, and no man had been intimate with her, and she went down to the fountain, and she filled her pitcher and went up. | 16. And the damsel was a virgin, very beautiful to behold, and she descended to the fountain and filled her pitcher, and came up. |

| Rashi's Translation | Targum Pseudo Jonathan |
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| 17. And the servant ran toward her, and he said, "Please let me sip a little water from your pitcher." | 17. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me taste now a little water from your pitcher. |
| 18. And she said, "Drink, my lord." And she hastened and lowered her pitcher to her hand, and she gave him to drink. | 18. And she said, Drink, my lord; and hastened to let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. |
| 19. And she finished giving him to drink, and she said, "I will also draw for your camels, until they will have finished drinking." | 19. And she finished giving him drink, and said, Also for your camels I will fill until they be satisfied with drinking. |
| 20. And she hastened, and she emptied her pitcher into the trough, and she ran again to the well to draw water, and she drew for all his camels. | 20. And she hastened and emptied the pitcher into the canal, the place of drinking, and ran again to the well to fill; and she filled for all his camels. JERUSALEM: And she made haste, and poured out her vase into the midst of the trough, and filled, and gave drink to all the camels. |
| 21. And the man was astonished at her, standing silent, [waiting] to know whether the Lord had caused his way to prosper or not. | 21. But the man waited, and was silent, to know whether the LORD had prospered his way or not. |
| 22. Now it came about, when the camels had finished drinking, [that] the man took a golden nose ring, weighing half [a shekel], and two bracelets for her hands, weighing ten gold [shekels]. | 22. And it was when the camels had been satisfied with drink, that the man took an earring of gold, of a drachma in weight, the counterpart of the drachma of the head (money) which her children presented for the work of the sanctuary; and he set two golden bracelets upon her hands, in weight ten sileen of gold; the sum of their weight being the counterpart of the two tables on which were inscribed the Ten Words. |
| 23. And he said, "Whose daughter are you? Please tell me. Is there place for us for lodging in your father's house?" | 23. And he said, Whose daughter are you? Tell me now, if in your father's house there be room for us to lodge. |
| 24. And she said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." | 24. And she said, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcha, whom she bare to Nachor. |
| 25. And she said to him, "Both straw and fodder are plentiful with us; [there is] also a place to lodge." | 25. And she told him, saying, There is also straw and provender in plenty with us, as also proper room to lodge. |
| 26. And the man kneeled and prostrated himself to the Lord. | 26. And the man bowed and worshipped before the LORD, who had thus prepared before him a suitable wife. |
| 27. And he said, "Blessed is the Lord, the God of my master, Abraham, Who has not forsaken His loving kindness and His truth from my master. As for me, the Lord led me on the road to the house of my master's kinsmen." | 27. And he said, Blessed be the Name of the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not restrained His mercy and His truth from my master; for the sake of his righteousness/generosity in the right way has the LORD led me to the house of my master's brother. |
| 28. And the maiden ran, and she told her mother's house what had happened. | 28. ____ |
| 29. Now Rebecca had a brother whose name was Laban, and Laban ran to the man outside, to the fountain. | 29. And Rivkah had a brother whose name was Laban. And Laban ran towards the man without at the fountain. |

| Rashi's Translation | Targum Pseudo Jonathan |
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| 30. And it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebecca, saying, "So did the man speak to me," that he came to the man, and behold, he was standing over the camels at the fountain. | 30. And when Laban saw the ring and the bracelets upon the hands of his sister, and heard the words of Rivkah his sister, saying, Thus has the man spoken with me; he came to the man, and behold, he stood by the camels at the fountain. |
| 31. And he said, "Come, you who are blessed of the Lord. Why should you stand outside, when I have cleared the house, and a place for the camels?" | 31. And Laban thought that this was Abraham, and said, Come in, you blessed of the LORD: wherefore stand you without, when I have purified the house from strange worship, and have prepared a place for the camels? |
| 32. So the man came to the house and unmuzzled the camels, and he gave straw and fodder to the camels and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. | 32. And the man entered the house, and Laban undid the gear of the camels, and gave the camels straw and provender; and water (to Eliezer) to wash his feet, and the feet of the men who were with him. |
| 33. And [food] was set before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have spoken my words." And he said, "Speak." | 33. And he set in order before him to eat, prepared food in which was poison to kill; but he objected to it, and said, I will not eat, until I have spoken my words. And he said, Speak. |
| 34. And he said, "I am Abraham's servant. | 34. And he said, I am the servant of Abraham. |
| 35. And the Lord blessed my master exceedingly, and he became great, and He gave him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, man servants and maid servants, camels and donkeys. | 35. And the LORD has blessed my master greatly, and has increased, and given him sheep and oxen, silver and gold, servants and handmaids, and camels and asses. |
| 36. And Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master after she had become old, and he gave him all that he possesses. | 36. And Sarah; my master's wife, bare a son after she was old, and he has given to him all that he has. |
| 37. And my master adjured me, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell. | 37. And my master made me swear, saying, You will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Kenaanites in whose land I dwell, |
| 38. Instead, you must go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.' | 38. but will go to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. |
| 39. And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me?' | 39. But I said to my master, Perhaps the woman will not come after me. |
| 40. And he said to me, 'The Lord, before Whom I walked, will send His angel with you and make your way prosper, and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house. | 40. And he said to me, The Lord before whom I worship will appoint His angel to be with you, and will prosper your way; and you will take a wife for my son from my household, from the race of my father's house. |
| 41. You will then be absolved from my oath, when you come to my family, and if they do not give [her] to you, you will be absolved from my oath.' | 41. Then will you be free from my oath: if, when you come to the house of my kindred, they give [her] not to you, you will be free from your oath. |

Welcome to the World of P'shat Exegesis

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

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

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

1. **Ḳal va-ḥomer**: "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.
2. **Gezerah shavah**: Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.
3. **Binyan ab mi-katub eḥad**: Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.
4. **Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim**: The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.
5. **Kelal u-Perat and Perat u-kelal**: Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.
6. **Ka-yoze bo mi-maḳom aḥer**: Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.
7. **Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano**: Interpretation deduced from the context.

Reading Assignment:

The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me'Am Lo'Ez - Vol II: The Patriarchs

By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by: Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1988)

Vol. 2 – “The Patriarchs,” pp. 378-414

Rashi's Commentary for: B'resheet (Genesis) 24:1-41

1 had blessed Abraham with everything [The word] בְּכֹל is numerically equal to בֶּן [son]. Since he had a son, he had to find him a wife.

2 the elder of his house Since [the word] בְּיָדוֹ] is in the construct state, it is vowelized בְּיָדוֹ .

under my thigh -(Shev. 38) Since one who swears must take with his hand an article related to a mitzvah such as a Torah scroll or Tefillin, and circumcision was his first mitzvah, and he had fulfilled it with pain, it was dear to him; so he took it.

7 The Lord, God of the heavens, Who took me from my father's house But he did not say, “and the God of the earth,” whereas above (verse 3) he said, “And I will adjure you [by the Lord, the God of the heaven and the God of the earth].” He said to him, “Now He is the God of the heaven and the God of the earth, because I have made Him familiar in the mouths of the people, but when He took me from my father's house, He was the God of the heavens but not the God of the earth, because mankind did not acknowledge Him, and His name was not familiar on the

earth.”

from my father’s house from Haran. and from the land of my birth from Ur of the Chaldees.

and Who spoke about me [Here לי means] “concerning me,” like אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר , “who spoke concerning me.” Similarly, every לי , לו , and לְהֶם used in conjunction with the verb דָּבַר —speak—is to be interpreted in the sense of על , “concerning,” and their Aramaic translation is עָלֵי , עָלוּהִי , עָלֵהוּן . For in conjunction with דְּבִיר , the use of the terms לי , לו , and לְהֶם is inappropriate, but rather אֵלֵי , אֵלֵי and אֵלֵיהֶם [are to be used], and their Aramaic translation is עָמִי , עָמִיהַּ . However, following the expression אָמִירָה [saying], the terms לי , לו , and לְהֶם are appropriate.

and Who swore to me At the Covenant Between the Parts.

8 you will be absolved of this, my oath And take him a wife from the daughters of Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre.-[From Gen. Rabbah 49:8]

only...my son -“Only” is restrictive. My son will not return, but Jacob, my grandson, will ultimately return.

10 of his master’s camels -(Gen. Rabbah 59:11). They were distinguishable from other camels by the fact that they would go out muzzled to prevent robbery, that they should not graze in strangers’ fields.

all the best of his master was in his hand -(Gen. Rabbah ad loc.) He wrote a gift deed to Isaac for everything he owned, so that they would hasten [lit., jump] to send him their daughter.

Aram-naharaim [lit., Aram of the two rivers.] It is situated between two rivers.

11 And he made the camels kneel He made them lie down.-[Gen. Rabbah 59:11, Targum Jonathan]

14 her have You designated She is worthy of him, for she will perform acts of kindness, and she is fit to enter the house of Abraham; and the expression הִבְחַחְתָּ means “You chose,” esprover in Old French.

and through her may I know An expression of supplication: “Let me know through her.”

that You have performed loving-kindness If she will be from his family and fit for him, I will know that You have performed loving-kindness.

16 a virgin from the place of her virginity.-[Gen. Rabbah 60:5]

and no man had been intimate with her in an unnatural way. Since the daughters of the gentiles would preserve their virginity but were promiscuous in unnatural ways, Scripture attests that she was completely innocent.-[Gen. Rabbah ad loc.]

17 And the servant ran toward her Because he saw that the water had risen toward her.-[Gen. Rabbah ad loc.]

Please let me sip An expression of swallowing, humer in Old French.

18 and lowered her pitcher from her shoulder.

19 until they will have finished drinking Here the word אָם is used in the sense of אָשָׁר , that

they will have finished - Onkelos renders: until they have had enough, because that is the end of their drinking, when they have drunk their fill.

20 and she emptied - וְתָעַר is an expression of emptying. There are many examples in the language of the Mishnah: “One who empties (הִמְעָרָה) from one vessel to another.” It is also found in Scripture (Psalms 141: 8): “Do not cast out (תָּעַר) my soul”; (Isa. 53:12): “That he poured out (הִמְעָרָה) his soul to death.”

the trough A hollow stone from which the camels drink.

21 was astonished Heb. מִשְׁתַּאֲזָה , an expression of desolation, as in (Isa. 6:11): “[until] the cities become desolate (שָׁאוּ) ...and [the ground] lies waste (תִּשְׁאָזָה) and desolate.”

was astonished - מִשְׁתַּאֲזָה [means that] he was astonished and startled because he saw his efforts on the verge of succeeding, but he did not yet know whether she was of Abraham’s family or not. Do not be surprised by the letter “tav” in the word תִּשְׁאָזָה [since the root is שָׂאָה], because there is no word [verb] whose first root-letter is a “shin,” which is used in the reflexive [Hitpa’el] form, in which a “tav” does not separate the first two letters of the root, e.g. מִשְׁתַּאֲזָה [here]; or (Isa. 59:15) מִשְׁתּוֹלֵל which is from the same root as תִּשְׁוֹלֵל or (ibid. 59:16) וַיִּשְׁתּוֹמֵם , from the same root as שָׂמָה or (Micah 6:16): “And the statutes of Omri shall be observed (וַיִּשְׁתַּמְרוּ) ,” from the same root as וַיִּשְׁמַר . Here too, מִשְׁתַּאֲזָה is from the same root as תִּשְׁאָזָה . And just as you find the expression מְשׁוֹמֵם used concerning a person who is astonished, dumbfounded, and engrossed in thought, as in (Job 18:20): “Those who come after shall be astonished (נִשְׁמוּ) at his day”; or (Jer. 2:12): “O heavens, be ye astonished (שׁוּמוּ) ”; or (Dan. 4:16): “He was bewildered (אֶשְׁתּוֹמֵם) for awhile”; so can you explain the expression אֶשְׁתּוֹמֵם as referring to a person who is astonished and engrossed in thought. Onkelos, however, renders it as an expression of waiting (שָׁהָה) : “and the man waited (שָׁהָה) ,” [meaning that] he waited and stood in one place to see “whether the Lord had made his way prosper.” However, we cannot translate מִשְׁתַּאֲזָה as meaning שָׁתָה , “to drink,” because [the word מִשְׁתַּאֲזָה] does not mean drinking, for the “aleph” does not occur in the verb “to drink” (שָׁתָה) .

was astonished at her - [לָהּ means] he was astonished about her, as in [above 20:13]: “Say about me (לִי) , ‘He is my brother’ ”; and as in [26:7]: “The people of the place asked about his wife (לְאִשְׁתּוֹ) .”

22 half [a shekel] This alludes to the shekels of Israel, half a shekel per head.- [Targum Jonathan]

and two bracelets An allusion to the two Tablets paired together.-[Gen. Rabbah (60:6), Targum Jonathan]

weighing ten gold [shekels] An allusion to the Ten Commandments [inscribed] on them.-[Gen. Rabbah 60:6]

23 And he said, “Whose daughter are you? He asked her this after giving her [the gifts] because he was confident that in the merit of Abraham, the Holy One, blessed be He, had caused his way to prosper.

for lodging - לַיָּנוּחַ means one night’s lodging. - לַיָּנוּחַ is a noun. But she replied, לַיָּנוּחַ , meaning many lodgings.-[Gen. Rabbah 60:6] [Since לַיָּנוּחַ is a verb, it does not limit the number of lodgings.]

24 the daughter of Bethuel She answered his first question first and his last question last.

25 fodder All camel food is called מקפוא , such as straw and barley.

27 on the road on the designated road, the straight road, on the very road that I needed. Likewise, every “beth,” “lammed,” and “hey,” that serve as a prefix and are vowelized with a “pattach” refer to something specific, already mentioned elsewhere, or of [some object] where it is clear and obvious about what one is speaking. [i.e., The “pattach” under the prefix denotes the הַ הַיְדִיעָה , the definite article.]

28 her mother’s house It was customary for women to have a house in which to stay to do their work, and a daughter confides only in her mother.- [Gen. Rabbah 60:7]

29 and Laban ran Why did he run and for what did he run? “Now it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring,” he said, “This person is rich,” and he set his eyes on the money.-[Gen. Rabbah 60:7]

30 over the camels to guard them, as (above 18:8): “And he was standing over them,” in order to serve them.

31 when I have cleared the house of idolatry.-[Gen. Rabbah 60:7]

32 and unmuzzled the camels He loosened their muzzles, for he would shut their mouths so that they would not graze along the way in fields belonging to others.-[Gen. Rabbah 60:8, Targum Jonathan]

33 until I have spoken Here אֵם serves as an expression of אֲשֶׁר , [that] and as an expression of כִּי , as in (below 49:10): “Until (כִּי) Shiloh will come.” This is what our Sages of blessed memory said (Rosh Hashanah 3a): The word כִּי serves for four meanings. One of these is [the Aramaic] אֵם , which is equivalent to [the Hebrew] אֵם .

36 and he gave him all that he possesses He showed them a gift deed.

37 You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites unless you first go to my father’s house, and she will not wish to follow you.

39 Perhaps the woman will not follow me It [the word אֲלִי (perhaps)] is written [without a “vav” and may be read] אֲלִי (to me). Eliezer had a daughter, and he was looking for a pretext so that Abraham would tell him, to turn to him, to marry off his daughter to him (Isaac). Abraham said to him, “My son is blessed, and you are cursed [Eliezer was a descendant of Canaan who had been cursed by Noah], and an accursed one cannot unite with a blessed one.”

Ketubim: Psalms 19:1-15

| Rashi’s Translation | Targum |
|---|--|
| 1. For the conductor, a song of David. | 1. For praise; a psalm of David. |
| 2. The heavens recite the glory of God, and the sky tells of the work of His hands. | 2. Those who behold the heavens tell of the glory of the LORD; those who gaze at the sky recount the works of his hands. |
| 3. Day to day utters speech, and night to night tells knowledge. | 3. Day to day tells more of the word; but night to night tells less knowledge. |

| Rashi’s Translation | Targum |
|---|--|
| 4. There is neither speech nor words; their voice is not heard. | 4. There is no utterance of complaint, and there are no words of confusion, for their voice is not heard. |
| 5. Their line goes forth throughout the earth, and their words are at the end of the world; for the sun He made a tent therein. | 5. The line of their conversation reaches through the whole earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them the heavens he placed a splendid dwelling for the sun. |
| 6. And it is like a bridegroom emerging from his chamber; it rejoices like a mighty man running a course. | 6. And he, in the morning, when he comes forth, will come forth like a groom who comes out of his canopy, and in splendor will rejoice like a warrior to run the course. |
| 7. From the end of the heavens is its source, and its circuit is to their ends, and none is hidden from its heat. | 7. His rising is at the ends of the earth, and his might reaches to all their edges; and there is none who can hide from his heat. |
| 8. The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is faithful, making the simple one wise. | 8. The Torah of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is reliable, making wise the fool. |
| 9. The orders of the Lord are upright, causing the heart to rejoice; the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes. | 9. The commands of the LORD are upright, gladdening the heart; the command of the LORD is bright, enlightening the eyes. |
| 10. The fear of the Lord is pure, existing forever; the judgments of the Lord are true, altogether just. | 10. The fear of the LORD is pure, lasting forever; the judgments of the LORD are faithfulness; they are altogether just. |
| 11. They are to be desired more than gold, yea more than much fine gold, and are sweeter than honey and drippings of honeycombs. | 11. More desirable than gold or than much fine gold; and more pleasant than honey or the sweet honeycombs. |
| 12. Also Your servant was careful with them; for in observing them there is great reward. | 12. Truly Your servant has been careful for them, to observe them; because of this, he was made ruler of Israel. |
| 13. Who understands errors? Cleanse me of hidden [sins]. | 13. Who knows unwitting sins? And from secret faults make me innocent. |
| 14. Also withhold Your servant from willful sins; let them not rule over me; then I will be perfect and I will be cleansed of much transgression. | 14. Truly from the arrogant deliver Your servant, that they may not rule over me; then I will be without blemish, and I will be innocent of great sin. |
| 15. May the sayings of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable before You, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer. | 15. Let the utterances of my mouth and the thought of my mind be acceptable in Your presence, O LORD, my strength and my redeemer. |

Rashi’s Commentary on Psalms 19:1-15

Chapter 19

2 The heavens recite the glory of God The Psalmist himself explains the matter: There is neither speech nor words. They do not speak with people but since “their line goes forth throughout the earth” and they give light to the people, thereby the creatures recite the glory of God and give thanks and bless [Him] for the luminaries.

and the sky tells of the work of His hands The stars and planets, which are the work of the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He, and which are there, as it is stated (in Gen. 1:17): "And God placed them in the firmament of the heavens," whence they proclaim His glory.

3 Day to day utters speech The Creation is renewed from day to day. In the evening, the sun sets, and in the morning it rises. Thereby, the people utter sayings of praise throughout these days and nights, for they teach the people to praise and to give thanks. (Menachem interprets [the word] יביע as an expression of a gushing fountain (מעין נובע) .

tells knowledge Heb. יחה , an expression of telling.

5 Their line goes forth throughout the earth The line of the heavens, which are stretched out over the face of the entire earth, and because of which their words are at the end of the world, for all speak of the wonders they see.

for the sun He made [i.e.,] the Holy One, blessed be He.

a tent therein In the heavens. From here it is derived that the sun is placed within its case. Tanchuma.

6 And it is like a bridegroom emerging from his chamber every morning. This is what is meant by "The heavens recite the glory of God."

7 and its circuit is to their ends The circuit of its orbit is from one end to the other.

and none is hidden from its heat Had the sun been placed in the lowest sky, no man would be able to hide from its heat (Mid. Ps. 18:13) for the sun and the moon are in the second sky, as is stated (in Hagigah 12b): There are seven skies Vilon, Rakia, Shehakim, Zevul, Machon, Ma'on, Aravoth and he counts them in order: Vilon does not serve for anything; in Rakia are the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets, etc.

8 The law of the Lord is perfect That too illuminates like the sun, as is written at the end of the topic: "enlightening the eyes," and Scripture states (in Prov. 6: 23): "For a commandment is a candle and the Torah is light." Another explanation:

and none is hidden from its heat on the Day of Judgment, [as is stated in Malachi 3:19]: "And the sun that comes shall burn them up." But the law of the Lord is perfect; it restores the soul to ways of life and it protects those who study it from that burning, as is stated (ibid. verse 20): "And the sun of mercy shall rise with healing...for you who fear My Name."

the testimony of the Lord is faithful It is faithful to testify for those who study it.

restoring the soul It [the law] restores it [the soul] from the ways of death to the ways of life. **The law, the testimony, the orders, the commandments, the fear, and the judgments total six, corresponding to the six orders of the Mishnah.** Between each name [of God] are five words including the name itself, corresponding to the Five Books of the Pentateuch. And so [the Psalmist] concludes: "true, altogether just." They are altogether devised with kindness and truth.

making the simple one wise It gives wisdom to the simple.

9 clear Shining.

11 and drippings of honeycombs Heb. וּנְפֹת צוּפִים , sweetness of honeycombs; breche, or bresches, honeycombs. Menachem interprets וּנְפֹת as an expression of a drop, and so (in Prov. 5:3): “drip sweetness (נִפְת)”; (ibid. 7:17), “I sprinkled (נִפְתִי) my couch.”

12 for in observing them there is great reward I was careful in its observance because of Your great good that You have hidden away, and according to this usage, עֲקֵב is like (Gen. 26:5): “because (עֲקֵב) Abraham hearkened to My voice.” Another explanation of עֲקֵב : **The end of the Torah scholars is that they will come to greatness.** עֲקֵב is an expression of the end, and there is a similar expression in the language of the Mishnah (Sotah 9:15): “At the end (בְּעֲקֵבוֹת) of the exile, prior to the coming of the Messiah.”

13 Who understands errors? I was careful with them but it is impossible to be so careful that one does not err in them, and You cleanse me of hidden sins, which were hidden from me; of which I was unaware when I sinned inadvertently.

14 Also...from willful sins Heb. מְזִדִּים , from willful sins.

then I will be perfect Heb. אֵיתָם will be perfect. The Sages said (Mid. Ps. 19:17, Lev. Rabbah 5:8): To what can David be compared? To a Cuthite who goes from door to door, and they are more cunning in this matter than any other people. “Give me a drink of water,” something that costs no money. After drinking, he says, “Perhaps you have a small onion?” After he gives it to him, he says, “Is there an onion without salt?” After he gives it to him, he says, “Give me a little bread, so that the onion does not harm me.” So did David say at first concerning the inadvertent sins, and then concerning the willful sins, and afterwards concerning the rebellious sins. פְּשָׁעִים are rebellious sins, with which one intends to provoke, and so Scripture says (II Kings 3:7): “The king of Moab rebelled (פָּשַׁע) against me.”

15 be acceptable To appease and placate You.

Meditation from the Psalms Psalm 19:1-15

By: HH Rosh Paqid Adon Hillel ben David

August 24, 2019 - Ab 23, 5779

Bereshit (Genesis) 24:1-41

Tehillim (Psalms) 19

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 51:2-11

Mk 2:18-20, Lk 5:33-35, Acts 12:12:13:12

The vast heavenly bodies orbiting with flawless precision in the skies are a clear manifestation of the infinite wisdom and power of the Creator. Nevertheless, the celestial panorama is not the ultimate form of divine

revelation. It is the study of G-d's will as revealed in the Torah which presents the clearest available perception of the Creator.

Malbim¹ assures the diligent scholar that if his quest for G-d is sincere, he will be assisted in his studies by a holy spirit, a divine ecstasy which resembles prophecy. In this chapter, the Psalmist proves in six ways that the comprehension of G-d gained through Torah scholarship surpasses the perception gained through scientific research. Moreover, even the astronomical secrets of the heavens are unlocked before the Torah sage.

Shmuel bar Abba² said, 'I know the pathways of the skies as well as I know the streets of my own city, Nehardea'. Did Shmuel fly up to the heavens to learn this? Rather, because he toiled incessantly in the study of Torah, all of the wisdom of the skies was revealed to him.³

The study of Torah reveals not only the pathways of heaven, but man's way on earth, as well. Before his sin, Adam led a life which was straight and pure; as predictable as the orbit of the sun and stars. Sin warped man. Only Torah study can right him once again.

First the Psalmist extols the unerring precision of the heavenly spheres. Then he turns to man and exhorts him to follow the example he sees in the sky, saying in effect: 'Learn Torah and return to what you should be!' The Torah of HaShem is perfect, it brings back the soul. The Torah is 'upright' and 'it enlightens the eyes' and 'it is pure'. Accept the Torah and imitate Adam before the sin.

¹ Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser (March 7, 1809 – September 18, 1879), better known as The Malbim (Hebrew: מלבי"ם), was a rabbi, master of Hebrew grammar, and Bible commentator. The name "Malbim" was derived from the Hebrew initials of his name, and became his nickname by frequent usage.

² Samuel of Nehardea or Samuel bar Abba (Hebrew: שמואל ירחינאה or שמואל) was a Jewish Talmudist who lived in Babylonia, known as an Amora of the first generation; son of Abba bar Abba and head of the Yeshiva at Nehardea. He was a teacher of halakha, judge, physician, and astronomer. From the little biographical information gleaned from the Talmud, we know that Samuel was never ordained as a Tanna, that he was very precise with his words (Kidd. 70), and that he had a special affinity for astronomy. He was born about 165 CE at Nehardea, in Babylonia and died there about 257 CE.

³ Midrash Shocher Tov - Midrash Tehillim (Hebrew: מדרש תהלים) or Midrash to Psalms is a haggadic midrash known since the 11th century, when it was quoted by Nathan of Rome in his Aruk (s.v. סחר), by R. Isaac ben Judah ibn Ghayyat in his Halakot (1b), and by Rashi in his commentary on I Sam. 17:49, and on many other passages. This midrash is called also "Agadat Tehillim" (Rashi on Deut. 33:7 and many other passages), or "Haggadat Tehillim" (Aruk, s.v. סער, and in six other passages). From the 12th century it was called also Shocher Tov (see Midrash Tehillim, ed. S. Buber, Introduction, pp. 35 et seq.), because it begins with the verse *Prov. 11: 5 Because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*

Small wonder that the Vilna Gaon⁴ designated this psalm to be the שיר של יום, ‘the Song of the Day’ for the festival of Shavuot⁵ when we celebrate the presentation of the Torah to Israel at Mount Sinai.⁶

The superscription of this psalm ascribes authorship to David. The events in David’s life which led to the writing of this psalm are unknown.

Psalms chapter 19 is the first of nine additional psalms, which are recited during our Shacharit⁷ prayers on Shabbat and on festivals. Shabbat is a “memorial to the creation of the universe”. Jewish observance of the seventh day of the week as the holy day of Shabbat, with complete cessation from creative work, business, and the routine activities of the preceding six days of the week, is living testimony to the fact that HaShem created the world in six days and *rested* on the seventh day, which He blessed and sanctified as a holy day. In light of the above, it is appropriate that psalms chapter 19 is the first of the special psalms which have been added in the Morning Prayers because it speaks of the praise given by the creation.

Tehillim (Psalm) 19:2 The heavens declare the glory of G-d; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

This psalm also has another connection to our prayers:

Berachot 9b Seeing that this verse, ‘Let the words of my mouth be acceptable etc.’ is suitable for recital either at the end or the beginning [of the tefillah], why did the Rabbis institute it at the end of the eighteen benedictions? Let it be recited at the beginning? — R. Judah the son of R. Simeon b. Pazzi said: Since David said it only after eighteen chapters [of the Psalms],⁸ the Rabbis too enacted that it should be said after eighteen blessings. But those eighteen Psalms are really nineteen? — ‘Happy is the man’ and ‘Why are the nations in an uproar’⁹ form one chapter.

⁴ Ma’aseh Rav 196 - Elijah ben Shlomo Zalman, known as the Vilna Gaon, Elijah of Vilna, by his Hebrew acronym HaGra (“HaGaon Rabbenu Eliyahu”), or Elijah Ben Solomon, (Vilnius April 23, 1720 – Vilnius October 9, 1797), was a Talmudist, halakhist, kabbalist, and the foremost leader of mitnagdic (non-hasidic) Jewry of the past few centuries. He is commonly referred to in Hebrew as ha-Gaon he-Chasid mi-Vilna, “the saintly genius from Vilnius”.

⁵ Shavuot means ‘Weeks’.

⁶ This introduction was excerpted and edited from: The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman.

⁷ Shacharit = Morning

⁸ It comes at the end of Psalm 19.

⁹ The opening verses of Psalms 1 and 2. Thus we understand that psalm one originally included both psalm one and two. Now they are two separate psalms.

The above Gemara teaches us that in the siddur, this prayer,¹⁰ from Psalm 19:15, is also added (in a slightly altered form) at the end of every Amidah. The Amida is the prayer that we use at the end of the eighteen benedictions, and is also the prayer of David after eighteen psalms. And just as the Amida now has nineteen benedictions, so also has Psalm one been split so that David’s prayer comes after nineteen psalms.

Since the Vilna Gaon has said that this is the psalm of the day for the festival of Shavuot, lets delve to a greater depth of the festival. Let’s start by looking at the various terms that apply to this day:

| | |
|--|---|
| Feast of Weeks - Shavuot | Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:10 |
| Feast of harvest (cutting) - Chag HaKazir | Shemot (Exodus) 23:16 |
| Day of Firstfruits - Yom HaBikkurim | Bamidbar (Numbers) 28:26 |
| Pentecost | II Luqas (Acts) 20:16 |
| Day of the Congregation - Yom HaKahal | Devarim (Deuteronomy) 18:16 |
| The Sixth Day | Bereshit (Genesis) 1:31 |
| Rosh HaShanah of the fruit of the trees.¹¹ | Megillah 31b |
| Chag HaAtzeret¹² | Pesachim 68b, Shabbath 87b, Mo’ed Katan 19a |
| The Solemn Assembly | Pesachim 68b |

הג שבועות, Chag Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks, is a major festival. It’s the second of the three Shalosh Regalim¹³ that comes exactly fifty days after Passover. It marks the giving of the Torah, by HaShem, to Israel on Mount Sinai 3,328 (in 5776) years ago.

Upon examination, one would find that the Torah usually lists exactly what day a festival begins. For example, by Pesach the Torah tells us that:

Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:6 On the fifteenth day of this month is the Festival of Matzot.

However, come Shavuot we find something different. The Torah writes:

¹⁰ **Tehillim (Psalm) 19:15** *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.*

¹¹ *Megillah 31b It has been taught: R. Simeon b. Eleazar says: Ezra made a regulation for Israel that they should read the curses in Leviticus before Pentecost and those in Deuteronomy before New Year. What is the reason? — Abaye — or you may also say Resh Lakish said: So that the year may end along with its curses. I grant you that in regard to the curses in Deuteronomy you can say, ‘so that the year should end along with its curses’. But as regards those in Leviticus — is Pentecost a New Year? — Yes; Pentecost is also a New Year, as we have learnt: ‘On Pentecost is the new year for [fruit of] the tree’.*

¹² ‘Atzeret’ means detention, gathering, concluding feast. ‘Atzeret in general designates ‘Atzeret Pesach’, i.e., Shabuoth (the Feast of Weeks, Pentecost) to be distinguished from Shemini ‘Atzeret, the concluding festival of Succoth. Atzeret, lit., ‘the closing’; the Feast of Weeks being regarded as the closing festival to Passover.

¹³ Pilgrimage festivals.

Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:15 and you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Shabbat . . . you shall count fifty days and you shall bring a new Mincha offering to HaShem . . . and you shall convoke on this very day - there shall be a holy convocation for yourselves.

Why does the Torah not tell us the date of Shavuot? Why does the Torah force us to calculate fifty days from the start of our counting of the Omer to figure out when Shavuot is?

The Torah does this to illustrate the centrality of the Oral Law.¹⁴ The Torah terms the starting date for the count of the fifty days “the day after the Shabbat.” The Oral law tells us that this is the second day of Pesach, the ‘Shabbat’ referred to in the verse being the first day of Pesach. The Tzedukim, Sadducees,¹⁵ who did not give credence to the Oral law, explained this verse differently. They explained it to mean literally the day after the weekly Shabbat. So, they began counting from the first Sunday after Pesach. Now, nowhere does the Torah say to count from the Shabbat **during Pesach!** So, The Tzedukim had to make up a *guess* as to when the Shabbat is, after all we have fifty, or so, Shabbats¹⁶ during the year. When we celebrate Shavuot on the day that we do, we are simultaneously affirming our belief in the Oral law. After all, it is only with the clarification that the Oral law provides that we know when Shavuot falls. Shavuot, the festival on which we celebrate the fact that we have the Torah, is the day on which we acknowledge that we received all of the Torah, both oral and written. To be sure that we recognize the entirety of the Torah, HaShem omitted the exact date on which we celebrate from the written Torah. Only by relying upon the Oral law can we celebrate Shavuot in its proper time.

During these seven weeks the children of Israel prepared themselves for the giving of the Torah. During this time they rid themselves of the scars of bondage and empowered to become a holy nation ready to stand before HaShem. Let's read what HaShem has to say about it:

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:9-10 Count off seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain.¹⁷ Then celebrate the Feast of Weeks to HaShem your G-d by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings HaShem your G-d has given you.

¹⁴ Rabbi Akiva is the essence of the Oral Law. Moses brings the written Law down to the world; Rabbi Akiva is the nucleus around which the Oral Law is transmitted and generated within the world.

There are many parallels between Moses and Rabbi Akiva (Sifrei, Devarim 357; both lived 120 years...); but Moses comes from within, Rabbi Akiva from without (he is the offspring of converts; Moses descends from Jacob, Rabbi Akiva from Esau). Jacob is the root of the Written Law; Esau is the root of the Oral Law (Genesis 25:28 *ki tzayid b'piv*). Jacob and Esau are twins; at one level Esau is the firstborn, at another Jacob fulfils that destiny. (This is also the root of Moses' apparent inability to understand the Torah of Rabbi Akiva and his suggestion that the Torah be given through Rabbi Akiva; in fact, in a very deep way, it was.)

¹⁵ There were several groups who followed the lead of the Sadducees in denying the Oral Torah including the Karaites.

¹⁶ Sabbath – Shabbat is how we would transliterate the Hebrew word - שבת.

¹⁷ The standing grain that is cut is barley.

The celebration of this feast begins with the word, *count*. This word immediately connects this festival with Chag HaMatza, the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Our Sages understood that Shavuot is the Atzeret, or conclusion of Chag HaMatza. The celebration, therefore, begins with an obvious command: COUNT. So, the first part of the celebration is for us to physically count, every day, out loud, with the proper blessing, the number of weeks, and the number of days.

Shemot (Exodus) 34:22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end.

Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:9-21 HaShem said to Moshe, “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. He is to wave the sheaf before HaShem so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath. On the day you wave the sheaf, you must sacrifice as a burnt offering to HaShem a lamb a year old without defect, Together with its grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil--an offering made to HaShem by fire, a pleasing aroma--and its drink offering of a quarter of a hin of wine. You must not eat any bread, or roasted or new grain, until the very day you bring this offering to your G-d. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live. “From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven complete weeks. Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to HaShem. From wherever you live, bring two loaves made of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour, baked with yeast, as a wave offering of firstfruits to HaShem. Present with this bread seven male lambs, each a year old and without defect, one young bull and two rams. They will be a burnt offering to HaShem, together with their grain offerings and drink offerings--an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to HaShem. Then sacrifice one male goat for a sin offering and two lambs, each a year old, for a fellowship offering. The priest is to wave the two lambs before HaShem as a wave offering, together with the bread of the firstfruits. They are a sacred offering to HaShem for the priest. On that same day you are to proclaim a sacred assembly and do no regular work. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live.

On the sixth of Sivan falls the festival of Shavuot, after the counting of the omer for forty-nine days which are seven weeks. This is why it is called “the festival of weeks,” as it says in the Torah:

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:9-10 Seven weeks you will count... and you will make Shavuot for HaShem, your G-d”

The book of Bamidbar (Numbers) starts off with a count of the Israelites, in the wilderness of Sinai. Our Sages understood that HaShem counted His people to show us how precious we are to Him. In the same way, we count items of value because they are precious to us. The Midrash¹⁸ records that HaShem has

¹⁸ Tanchuma, Ki Tissa, 9; Bamidbar Rabbah 2, 11; Pesikta de Rav Kahana, Parshat Shekalim.

counted His people nine times so far. The Midrash says that HaShem will count His people one more time in the days of Mashiach ben David.

Shavuot, which commemorates HaShem's giving of the Torah to Israel, is called the wedding, or betrothal, of Israel to HaShem;¹⁹ and on the Shabbat before his wedding, the bridegroom is called to the Torah as a preparation for the wedding.

Why is Shavuot also referred to as Chag HaAtzeret? The *Ta'amei Haminhagim*²⁰ explains that on all other festivals, there are two types of service to HaShem that we perform. One type of performance is doing the commandments specifically associated with that festival, such as eating matzot on Pesach. The other service is that which we find on all festivals, refraining from creative "work" or "melacha." On Shavuot, there really is only one type of service being performed, that being the cessation of work. One of the meanings of the word "atzeret" is "a cessation, a stopping". Shavuot is called Chag HaAtzeret because this means that it is the Festival of "Cessation" and cessation only, while all other festivals have observances specific to it as well.

The Ramban explains that Shavuot is to Pesach as Shemini Atzeret is to Succoth.²¹ Just as Succoth has a festival called "atzeret" at its end, so too does Pesach have a festival called "atzeret" at its "end". Hence, the name "atzeret" for Shavuot.²²

Those who carefully read the Torah can see that there are hints that the reason for a festival is NOT because of a certain historical event. In fact, it appears that the historical events that took place on a festival, took place because that was the time of the year dedicated to that type of event! Let's consider a few examples: Lot fed the two angels matza. Then at midnight, Lot and his family were delivered from Sodom while the enemies of HaShem were destroyed. Doesn't this sound a bit like Pesach? (Despite happening more than 400 years before Sinai!) In the same way, the giving of the Ruach HaKodesh, the Holy Spirit, in II Luqas (Acts) 2, seems to indicate that Sivan 6, is the time when HaShem has decreed that events like the giving of the Torah, and its associated manifestations, are to occur. This spiral of time is repeated over and over again. Each year we again see events that are associated with that particular time of the year. This means that every year we should look for events related to the giving of the Torah and its covenant, to happen at the time of Shavuot! It is for this reason that I have often wondered if the events of Jeremiah 31:30ff, would take place at Shavuot.

¹⁹ Taanit, 26b.

²⁰ Abraham Isaac Sperling

²¹ Shemini Atzeret is what might be called the eighth day of Succoth, although technically, it is a festival separate from Succoth.

²² It is important to note that there is no such thing, in scripture, as the "Feast of Firstfruits". Notice also that the only feast associated with firstfruits is Shavuot. If you read the scriptures carefully, you will notice that the day of the firstfruits is also a Sabbath. This is another clue as to the date of this day (Shavuot).

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 31:30** Behold, the days come, saith HaShem, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; 31 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; forasmuch as they broke My covenant, although I was a lord over them, saith HaShem. 32 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith HaShem, I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people; 33 and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying: 'Know HaShem'; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith HaShem; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.*

Shavuot is a "Mikra" a rehearsal meeting.

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 28:26-27** "On the day of firstfruits, when you present to HaShem an offering of new grain during the Feast of Weeks, hold a sacred assembly (mikra) and do no regular work. Present a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram and seven male lambs a year old as an aroma pleasing to HaShem.*

4744 miqra', mik-raw'; from 7121; something called out, i.e. a public meeting (the act, the persons, or the place); **also a rehearsal**:-assembly, calling, convocation, reading.

Shavuot is a divine appointment in which we meet with our community to rehearse in preparation for a future event. When we celebrate Shavuot according to halacha, we will find ourselves in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing when G-d comes down to visit us.

The Mishna²³ says that the world is judged at four periods in the year: On Pesach, for grain; on Shavuot, for the fruit of the trees; on Rosh Hashanah, all the inhabitants of the world pass before Him, like flocks of sheep, as it is said, "He Who fashions the hearts of them all, Who understands all their doings"; and on Succoth, they are judged for water.

On Rosh HaShana we can begin to appreciate **moed as an appointment with time** itself, not with events; moed relives the primal potential of which the event was only an expression. The Din, the judgment, of potential on Rosh HaShana is consummated in its details at the nexus of moed:

All the Din²⁴ is on Rosh HaShana, but the decree of the Din is sealed at the proper time: on Pesach regarding the grain, on Shavuot regarding the fruit, on Succoth regarding the water...²⁵ For each festival touches

²³ Rosh HaShana 1, Mishna 2

²⁴ Judgment

²⁵ Rosh HaShana 16a

potential embodied in a particular section of the Garden of Possibilities, a Garden of Time whose totality we revisit on Rosh HaShana.²⁶

What Shall We Do?
What Does It Mean To Be A Nazarean Jew?
By Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

One of the unknown correlations between the festival of Shavuot and the events that transpired in 2 Luqas (Acts) Chapter 2, is an obscure but pivotal bridge Torah passage which many seem to miss or even discount. However, in this Shiur, I shall point to the tremendous underpinnings that 2 Luqas Chapter has upon this particular Torah text, as well as being one of the main themes projected through page after page in the Nazarean Codicil. Let us for a moment systematically describe the events that lead to the account of 2 Luqas Chapter 2, the events that took place, and the outcomes of that event. In doing so, I remind all to understand that this approach is of a necessity a Judaic one and viewed from an entirely Hebraic rabbinical perspective.

The reason for the event: Just before the ascension of His Majesty King Yeshua Ha-Mashiach to the Heavens (2 Luqas 1:9-11), His Majesty the Master Hakham commands his Talmidim Hakham (Rabbinical Students) to:

2 Luqas (Acts) 1:4-5 And being synagogued with him, he commanded them from Yerushalayim not to depart, but to await the promise of the Father, which you heard of me. For Yochanan indeed immersed you with water, but you will be immersed with the spirit of Holiness not after many days.

Now, if I have trained diligently and thoroughly a group of Talmidim Hakham (Rabbinical Students) and I am about to depart for a long, long time, what would be expected of me? Of course, Smikha (Rabbinical Ordination)! So from a strictly logical perspective we would expect that this immersion in the spirit of Holiness would be equivalent to a Rabbinical Ordination.

Now, if my calculations do not fail this was said on or very close to Lag B’Omer which we celebrated not many days ago. Thus the expression “not after many days” (2 Luqas 1:5) indeed would have been understood clearly as a Gemara hint pointing to the coming festival of Shavuot. Therefore, a connection is established between Smikha (Rabbinical Ordination) and the festival of Shavuot.

Now the Talmidim (Rabbinical students) interject, Master, we have been your faithful Rabbinical students but please tells us before you leave “will you as Mashiach restore again self-rule to Bne Israel?” (2 Luqas 1:6) The question hints also at “What will be our place as Hakhamim in the Messianic Kingdom that you are about to establish now?”

²⁶ This section is an excerpt from: **Patterns in Time**, Vol.1 - Rosh Hashanah, by Matis Weinberg

The answer from the Master Hakham is swift to his Talmidim Hakham -

2 Luqas (Acts) 1:7 And he said to them, not yours it is to know the duration of time or ages which the father placed in his own authority.

This reminds us of the Torah text “The secret things belong HaShem, our G-d” (Devarim 29:28). In other words the kingdom certainly will be restored to Israel. When? That is none of your business. As Hakhamim you will bring this process about by teaching Torah (Matityahu 28:19-20) and by establishing reputable courts of Torah justice, Batei Din (Matityahu 6:33) throughout all the world. This is important since from these two passages we understand what the office of a Rabbi (Hakham) is, not a Pastor, not a Priest, but a Torah Scholar and a Judge.

After this brief interruption of what the Master Hakham was saying. The Master Hakham continues explaining:

2 Luqas (Acts) 1:8 but you will receive power, having come the spirit of Holiness upon you, and you will be to me witnesses both in Yerushalayim and in all Judaea and Samaria and to uttermost part of the earth.

Now instead of your ruling the world as the Gentiles do by the power of the gun, or by political power, you will rule the earth through both a didactic and judiciary program starting in Yerushalayim. But first you will need to receive power from the spirit of Holiness. Now, question: Do we have a precedent in the Tanach where a Prophet shares of the spirit by which he was anointed as a confirmation of Smikha (Rabbinical ordination)?

The Pivotal Torah Passage

I propose that undergirding this brief introduction in 2 Luqas Chapter 1 and the whole of Chapter 2, is none other than Bamidbar 11:24-30. In this portion we read about the Smikha (ordination) of the seventy Elders (the Hebrew word Elder always denote the modern term Hakham) and how the spirit that had been imparted on Moshe Rabbeinu was caused to emanate from him and be bestowed upon the Seventy Hakhamim (a whole Sanhedrin).

Let us look and compare some of the phrases used in this passage and those used in 2 Luqas, Chapter 2.

a) The miracle of HaShem’s presence.

Bamidbar 11:25 - HaShem descends in the cloud and it envelops Moshe Rabbeinu and the seventy Elders.

2 Acts 2:2 - a sound from heaven like as a rushing mighty wind envelops the Temple.

On this pasuk (verse) from the Torah Hakham Samson Raphael Hirsch comments: “and HaShem descended ... and spoke with him” The text does not tell us the words that HaShem uttered to Moshe on this occasion.

Was this omission, perhaps intended to make clear to all further Sanhedrins that not everything that HaShem said to Moshe is recorded in Scripture? Was this meant to remind them that the field of competence for which they had been appointed at that moment was the Oral Law, that Word of HaShem which was to remain unwritten, handed down only by word of mouth?

b) The Emanation of the spirit from one Hakham to many.

***Bamidbar (Numbers) 11:25** He caused the spirit that had been imparted on Moshe to emanate, and He (HaShem) bestowed it upon the seventy Elders.*

***2 Luqas (Acts) 2:3** And appeared to them divided tongues of as fire, and sat upon each one of them*

Now there may well be a connection here with the beginning of Parasha Beha’alotekha²⁷ concerning the lighting of the Menorah and the tongue of fire coming out of each candlestick. But also the connection here of the spirit emanating from Moshe towards the seventy elders, contrasted with the spirit that was in Mashiach emanating from the heavens, now towards his Talmidim Hakham.

c) The Result

Bamidbar 11:25 - When the spirit rested on them (the 70 Elders) they began (Hebrew: YITNABEU - “were made” or “were impelled”) to prophesy without ceasing.

***2 Luqas (Acts) 2:4** And they were all filled with the spirit of Holiness and began to speak with other languages as the as the spirit gave them to utter forth.*

Now it is important to note that one of the requirements according to Chazal, our Sages, of members of the Sanhedrin was the ability to speak not only in Ivrit, but also in several other languages of the seventy Gentile Nations. This point again reconfirms that the major theme of this event at the Beit HaMikdash (the Temple) was a Smikha, and with this Mashiach indicating to the people of Israel that the legal authority amongst the Jewish people was to be transferred from the Kohanim (Priests) to the Rabbinat until his return.

What other important theme also undergirds this event at the Temple? The clue to this most important question is given to us in Bamidbar (Numbers) 11:29:

“I only wish that all of HaShem’s people would have the gift of prophecy! Let HaShem grant His spirit to them all!”

In other words, that the pedagogic objective of the miracle at the Temple, by which the Talmidim of His Majesty King Yeshua HaMashiach received Smikha indicated that the goal of every Nazarean should be to

²⁷ Bamidbar 8:1ff.

be indentured under a Hakham, become a Talmid Hakham and at some point become Hakhamim themselves. Look at this statement of Hakham Shaul:

“Faithful is the Torah, if any stretches forward (makes sacrifice and studies) to attain overseership (the Rabbinite) a good work he is desirous.”

Now, this is evidence enough that what Hakham Shaul is alluding with the phrase “if any stretches forward” is an echo of Moshe’s words “would G-d that all of HaShem’s people were prophets.” That is, the intention here is that every man ought to keep stretching forward towards the goal of receiving Smikha.

A further piece of evidence leading to this conclusion are the words of Hakham Yochanan as recorded in:

1 Yochanan (John) 3:1 “See what Ahavah (steadfast love) has given to us the Father that Bne Elohim we should be called.”

Now, again the phrase “Bne Elohim” has been literally translated as “Children of G-d,” but the title of a Hakham is also “Ben Elohim” (son of G-d to indicate his role as a Judge), a title which is also given by G-d to Melech David and to His Majesty King Yeshua HaMashiach as Chief of all Hakhamim. Thus the above pasuk states that Ha-Shem, Most blessed be He, has given to us so much Ahavah that he calls and expects every Nazarean Jew to become a Hakham a genuine Ben Elohim.

And after this Event They Started a Church, Nu?

Good question, Christians teach so, but we know that the church started at Sinai (Acts 7:38). So what did the Nazareans start, a new religion, a new denomination, or what? In 2 Luqas 3:41 we read that by the end of Shavuot that year at the Temple 3,000 male Jews and Converts were added. But the question still remains added to what?

Again we have many hints in 1 Luqas 2:42, which when carefully read, more aptly describes a Yeshiva to train future Hakhamim than it does a Church, a new religion, or a new Jewish denomination. Yes 3,000 Jews that day decided to drastically turn their lives around and matriculate in that Great Nazarean Yeshiva using as their classrooms the various courts within the Temple grounds.

Conclusion

In summary, Shavuot is not only a festival by which we receive the Torah afresh from HaShem, Most Blessed be He, but also a festival that reminds us year by year what should be our goal in life, to sit at the feet a genuine Jewish Rabbi (Hakham) a Torah Scholar like Gamaliel²⁸, and work hard, stretching ourselves

²⁸ II Luqas(Acts) 22:3

towards receiving Smikha²⁹ and becoming Hakhamim.³⁰ Truly then we shall gradually see the fulfillment of the words of the prophet Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah), “They will no longer teach each man his fellow, each man his brother saying, ‘Know HaShem!’ For all of them will know Me, from their smallest to their greatest, the Word of HaShem, when I will forgive their lawlessness and will no longer recall their sin”.³¹

Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 51:2-11)

| Rashi | Targum |
|---|---|
| 4. ¶ The Lord God gave me a tongue for teaching, to know to establish times for the faint [for His] word; He awakens me every morning, He awakens My ear, to hear according to the teachings. | 4. ¶ The LORD God has given me the tongue of those who teach, to make [me] know [how] to teach with wisdom the righteous/generous who faint for the words of His Law. Therefore morning by morning He rises early to send His prophets so perhaps the sinners’ ears might be opened and they might listen to teaching [of His Law]. |
| 5. The Lord God opened my ear, and I did not rebel; I did not turn away backwards. | 5. The LORD God has sent me to prophesy, and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward. |
| 6. I gave my back to smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I did not hide my face from embarrassments and spitting. | 6. I gave my back to smiters, and my cheeks to them that pluck out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. |
| 7. But the Lord God helps me, therefore, I was not embarrassed; therefore, I made my face like flint, and I knew that I would not be ashamed. | 7. For the LORD God helps me; therefore I have not been confounded; therefore I have set my face strong like rock, and I know that I will not be put to shame; |
| 8. He Who vindicates me is near, whoever wishes to quarrel with me-let us stand together; whoever is my contender shall approach me. | 8. My innocence is near. Who will go to judgment with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my enemy? Let him come near to me. |
| 9. Behold, the Lord God shall help he that will condemn me, behold all of them shall wear out like a garment, a moth shall consume them. {S} | 9. Behold, the LORD God helps me; who will declare me a sinner? Behold, all of them are like the garment that wears out, that the moth eats. {S} |
| 10. Who among you is God-fearing, who hearkens to the voice of His servant, who went in darkness and who has no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord and lean on his God. {S} | 10. Who among you of those who fear the LORD obeys the voice of His servants the prophets, who performs the Law in distress as a man who walks in the darkness and has no light, trusts in the name of the |

²⁹ *Smikha* (Hebrew: סמיכה, “leaning [of the hands]”), also *semichut* (Hebrew: סמיכות, “ordination”), or *semicha lerabbanut* (Hebrew: סמיכה לרבנות, “rabbinical ordination”) is derived from a Hebrew word which means to “rely on” or “to be authorized”. It generally refers to the ordination of a rabbi within Judaism. In this sense it is the “transmission” of rabbinic authority to give advice or judgment in Jewish law. Although presently most functioning synagogue rabbis hold *Smikha* by some rabbinical institution or academy, this was until quite recently not always required, and in fact many Haredi rabbis may not be required to hold a “formal” *Smikha* even though they may occupy important rabbinical and leadership positions.

³⁰ Hakhamim (plural of Hakham) is the title Sephardim give to their Rabbis.

³¹ Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 31:33

| Rashi | Targum |
|--|---|
| | LORD and relies upon the salvation of his God? {S} |
| 11. Behold all of you who kindle fire, who give power to flames; go in the flame of your fire, and in the flames you have kindled; from My hand has this come to you, in grief you shall lie down. {S} | 11. Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who grasp a sword! Go, fall in the fire which you kindled and on the sword which you grasped! This you have from My Memra: you will return to your stumbling. {S} |
| 1. Hearken to Me, you pursuers of righteousness, you seekers of the Lord; look at the rock whence you were hewn and at the hole of the pit whence you were dug. | 1. Attend to My Memra, you who pursue the truth, you who seek teaching from the LORD; consider that as the hewn stone from the rock you were hewn and as the rubble from an empty pit you were hacked. |
| 2. Look at Abraham your father and at Sarah who bore you, for when he was but one I called him, and I blessed him and made him many. | 2. Consider Abraham your father and Sarah who was pregnant with you; for when Abraham was but one. single in the world. I brought him near to My service, and I blessed him and made him many. |
| 3. For the Lord shall console Zion, He shall console all its ruins, and He shall make its desert like a paradise and its wasteland like the garden of the Lord; joy and happiness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and a voice of song. {S} | 3. For the LORD is about to comfort Zion and to comfort all her waste places, and He will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, those offering thanksgiving and the voice of those singing. {S} |
| 4. Hearken to Me, My people, and My nation, bend your ears to Me, when Torah shall emanate from Me, and My judgment [shall be] for the light of the peoples, I will give [them] rest. | 4. Attend to My Memra, My people, and give ear to My service, My congregation; for the Law will go forth before Me, and My judgment as a light; to it the peoples will join. |
| 5. My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth, and My arms shall chasten peoples; islands shall wait for Me, and on My arm shall they trust. | 5. My virtue draws near, My salvation has gone forth, and by the strength of My mighty arm peoples will be judged; islands wait for My Memra, and for the strength of My mighty arm they hope. |
| 6. Raise your eyes to heaven and look at the earth from beneath, for the heavens shall vanish like smoke, and the earth shall rot away like a garment, and its inhabitants shall likewise die, and My salvation shall be forever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished. {P} | 6. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and consider the earth beneath; for the heavens will pass as the smoke which passes, the earth will wear out as a covering wears out, and they who dwell in it, even they, will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My virtue will never be abolished. {P} |
| 7. Hearken to Me, you who know righteousness, a people that has My Torah in their heart, fear not reproach of man, and from their revilings be not dismayed. | 7. Attend to My Memra, you who know the truth, people in whose heart is the teaching of my Law; fear not from the reproaches of the sons of men, and be not shattered at their self-exaltation. |
| 8. For, like a garment, the moth shall consume them, and like wool, the worm shall consume them, but My righteousness shall be forever, and My salvation to all generations. {S} | 8. For [they are] like a garment which the moth eats, and like wool which rot attacks; but my virtue will be forever, and My salvation to all generations." {S} |
| 9. Awaken, awaken, dress yourself with strength, O arm of the Lord, awaken, awaken like days of old, generations of yore; are you not the one that hewed | 9. Be revealed, be revealed, put on strength, O might from before the LORD; be revealed as in the days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not for your |

| Rashi | Targum |
|---|--|
| Rahab and slew the sea monster? | sake, congregation of Israel, that I shattered the mighty men, destroyed Pharaoh and his armies. which were strong as the dragon? |
| 10. Are you not the one who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep? Who made the depths of the sea a road for the redeemed ones to pass? | 10. Was it not for your sake, congregation of Israel, that I dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep? I made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass through. |
| 11. And the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and they shall come to Zion with song, and [with] everlasting joy on their heads; gladness and joy shall overtake them; sorrow and sighing shall flee. {S} | 11. And the ransomed of the LORD will be gathered from among their exiles, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy will be theirs. that does not cease. and a cloud of glory will cover their heads; they will find joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing will cease from them, from those of the house of Israel. {S} |
| 12. I, yea I am He Who consoles you; who are you that you fear man who will die and the son of man, who shall be made [as] grass? | 12. "I, I am he that comforts you; of whom are you afraid, of man who dies, of the son of man who is reckoned as the grass? |
| 13. And you forgot the Lord your Maker, Who spread out the heavens and founded the earth, and you fear constantly the whole day because of the wrath of the oppressor when he prepared to destroy. Now where is the wrath of the oppressor? | 13. And you have forgotten the service of the LORD, your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth, and do you fear continually all the day because of the fury of the oppressor, when he sets himself to destroy. And now. where is the fury of the oppressor? |
| 14. What must be poured out hastened to be opened, and he shall not die of destruction, and his bread shall not be wanting. | 14. The avenger will speedily be revealed; the righteous/ generous will not die in destruction, neither will they lack their food. |
| 15. I am the Lord your God, Who wrinkles the sea and its waves stir; the Lord of Hosts is His name. | 15. For I am the LORD your God, who rebukes the sea so that its waves roar, - the LORD of hosts is His name. |
| 16. And I placed My words into your mouth, and with the shadow of My hand I covered you, to plant the heavens and to found the earth and to say to Zion [that] you are My people. {S} | 16. And I have put the words of My prophecy in your mouth, and protected you in the shadow of My might, to establish the people concerning whom it was said that they would increase as the stars of the heavens and to found the congregation concerning whom it was said they would increase as the dust of the earth, and to say to those who reside in Zion, 'You are My people.' {S} |
| 17. Awaken, awaken, arise, Jerusalem, for you have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of His wrath; the dregs of the cup of weakness you have drained. | 17. Exalt yourself, exalt yourself, stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have accepted before the LORD the cup of His wrath, who have drunk to the dregs a bowl of the cup of cursing. |
| 18. She has no guide out of all the sons she bore, and she has no one who takes her by the hand out of all the sons she raised. | 18. There is none to comfort her among all the sons she has borne; there is none to take her by the hand among all the sons she has brought up. |
| 19. These two things have befallen you; who will lament for you? Plunder and destruction, and famine | 19. Two distresses have come upon you. Jerusalem - you are not able to stand. When four will come upon |

| Rashi | Targum |
|---|--|
| and sword. [With] whom will I console you? | you - spoil and breaking and famine and sword; there is none that will comfort you but I. |
| 20. Your sons have fainted, they lie at the entrance of all streets like a wild ox in a net, full of the wrath of the Lord, the rebuke of your God. | 20. Your sons will be dashed to pieces, thrown at the head of all the streets like those cast in nets; they are full of wrath from the LORD, rebuke from your God. |
| 21. Therefore, hearken now to this, you poor one, and who is drunk but not from wine. {P} | 21. Therefore hear this, you who are cast out, who are drunk with distress, but not with wine. {P} |
| | |

Rashi's Commentary for: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 51:2-11

4 gave me a tongue for teaching Isaiah was saying, The Lord sent me and gave me a tongue fit to teach, in order to know to establish a time for the faint and thirsty to hear the words of the Holy One, blessed be He.

to establish times Heb. לְעֵיט . Menahem classified it in the group of (Ps. 119:126) "It is time (תָּעַ) to do for the Lord." To establish times for them.

He awakens my ear He awakens my ear with His Holy Spirit.

to hear according to the teachings According to the custom of the teachings, the truth and that which is proper.

5 opened my ear and let me hear (supra 6:8), "Whom shall I send?" I sent Amos, and they called him 'pesilus.' I sent Micah, etc., as is stated in Pesikta of 'Nachamu nachamu.'

and I did not rebel going on His mission, neither did I turn away backwards, but I said, "Here I am; send me" (ibid.).

6 I gave my back to smiters He said to me, Isaiah, My children are obstinate; My children are bothersome. [You may go] on the condition that you do not become angry with them. I said to Him, On that condition.

7 But the Lord God helps me if they rise up against me.

8 He Who vindicates me is near The Holy One, blessed be He, is near to me to vindicate me in judgment.

9 a moth Heb. שֵׁץ , the worm of the clothing.

10 to the voice of His servant To the voice of the prophets.

who went in darkness Even if trouble comes upon him, let him trust in the name of the Lord, for He shall save him.

11 Behold all of you who do not hearken to the voice of His prophets.

who kindle fire of His wrath upon yourselves.

and give power to flames Who strengthen the flames; they are sparks and burning coals that are cast up with a slingshot. It has a cognate in the Aramaic tongue, דְּנִיר זִיקִיקִין , flames of fire (Ber. 58b), so many slingers (זִיקִתָּא) are

assigned to us (Baba Mezia 94a) [frondeles in O. F., sling].

go in the flame of your fire According to your way, you will be punished.

from My hand shall this retribution come to you.

Chapter 51

1 look at the rock whence you were hewn from it.

and at the hole of the pit Heb. מִקְבֵּת . With which they penetrate (נוֹקְבִין) and hew the pits.

you were dug with which you were dug.

you were dug Heb. נִקְרַתָּם , an expression similar to (Ex. 33:22) “The cleft (נִקְרַת) of the rock”; (Prov. 30:17) “The ravens of the brook shall pick it (יִקְרִינָהּ).” And who is the rock? He is Abraham your forefather. And who is the hole? She is Sarah who bore you. [תְּהוּזְלִלְכֶם means] ‘who bore you,’ an expression similar to (infra 66:8) “For Zion experienced pangs (חָלָה) and also bore.”

2 who bore you Heb. תְּהוּזְלִלְכֶם [lit. shall bear you.]

for when he was but one I called him For he was one single person in the land of Canaan where I exiled him from his land and from his birthplace. I called him, meaning that I raised him and exalted him. An expression [similar to] (Num. 1:16) “Those called of (קְרִיאָה) the congregation.” And just as he was a single person and I exalted him, so will I exalt you, who are singled out to Me.

3 and its wasteland Heb. וְעֵרְבָתָהּ . This too is an expression of a desert. Comp. (Jer. 2:6) “In a wasteland (עֵרְבָה) and a land of pits,” but the wasteland once had a settlement and it was destroyed.

thanksgiving A voice of thanks.

4 When Torah shall emanate from Me The words of the prophets are Torah, and the judgments shall eventually mean tranquility and rest for the peoples for whom I will turn a pure language to serve Me.

I will give [them] rest Heb. אֶרְגִּיעַ , I will give them rest.

5 shall chasten Heb. יִשְׁפָּטוּ , chasten, jostize in O.F.

6 the heavens shall vanish like smoke The princes of the hosts of the heathens who are in heaven.

shall vanish Heb. נִמְלָחוּ , shall rot away. Comp. (Jer. 38:12) “Rags and decayed clothing (בְּלוּאֵי הַסֹּחָבוֹת),” a decayed garment. Another explanation of נִמְלָחוּ is: shall be stirred. This is an expression similar to “the sailors of (מְלָחֵי) the sea,” who stir the water with the oars that guide the ship. Comp. also (Ex. 30:35) “Stirred (מְמָלָחָה) , pure, and holy.”

and the earth the rulers of the earth.

and its inhabitants the rest of the people.

and My salvation for My people shall be forever. Another explanation is: [It refers] actually [to] the heavens and the earth, and this is its explanation: Raise your eyes and look at the heaven and at the earth, and see how strong and sturdy they are, yet they shall rot away, but My righteousness and My salvation shall be forever. Hence, My righteousness is sturdier and stronger than they.

8 the moth...the worm They are species of worms.

9 Awaken, awaken This is the prophet’s prayer.

Rahab [lit. pride.] Egypt, about whom it is written (supra 30:7): “They are haughty (רַהֲב) , idlers.”

slew Heb. מָחַוּלָה , an expression of slaying, related to הָלַל .

the sea monster Pharaoh.

11 And the redeemed of the Lord shall return This is an expression of prayer, and it is connected to “Awaken, awaken.”

12 who are you the daughter of the righteous like you and full of merits, why should you fear man, whose end is to die?

13 And you forgot the Lord your Maker and you did not rely on Him.

the oppressor The rulers of the heathens (the nations of the world [Parshandatha, K’li Paz]) who subjugate you. when he prepared Prepared himself.

Now where is the wrath of the oppressor Tomorrow comes and he is not here.

14 What must be poured out hastened to be opened Heb. מָהָר צָעָה לְהִפָּתֵחַ . Even if his stools are hard, and he must be opened by walking in order to move the bowels in order that he not die by destruction, and once he hastens to open up, he requires much food, for, if his bread is lacking, even he will die. צָעָה An expression of a thing prepared to be poured, as he says concerning Moab, whom the prophet compared to wine (Jer. 48:11): “Who rests on his dregs and was not poured from vessel to vessel.” And he says there (v. 12), “And I will send pourers (צָעִים) upon him and they shall pour him out (וַצִּעֵהוּ) , and they shall empty his vessels.” [This is an illustration of the weakness of man. Consequently, there is no need to fear him.] Another explanation is: צָעָה מָהָר That enemy who oppresses you, who is now with girded loins, girded with strength, shall hasten to be opened up and to become weak. צָעָה Girded. Comp. (infra 63:1) “Girded (צָעָה) with the greatness of His strength.”

and he shall not die i.e., the one delivered into his hand [shall not die] of destruction. But the first interpretation is a Midrash Aggadah in Pesikta Rabbathi (34:5).

15 Who wrinkles the sea Heb. רָגַע , an expression similar to (Job 7:5) “My skin was wrinkled (רָגַע) .” Froncir in O.F. [froncer in Modern French, to wrinkle, gather, pucker].

to plant the heavens to preserve the people about whom it was said that they shall be as many as the stars of the heavens [from Jonathan].

and to found the earth And to found the congregation about whom it is said that they shall be as many as the dust of the earth [from Jonathan].

17 dregs Heb. קבצת . Jonathan renders: פִּילִי , which is the name of a cup [phiala in Latin]. But it appears to me that קבצת , these are the dregs fixed (קבועים) to the bottom of the vessel, and the word מְצִית , “you have drained,” indicates it, as it is said (Ps. 75:9): “...shall drain (מְצִי) its dregs.”

weakness Heb. תְּרַעְלָה . That is a drink that clogs and weakens the strength of a person, like one bound, tied, and enwrapped. Comp. (Nahum 2:4) “And the cypress trees were enwrapped (הִרְעָלוּ) .” Also (supra 3:19), “And the bracelets and the veils (רְעִלוֹת) ,” which is an expression of enwrapping, and in Tractate Shabbath (6:6): “Median women (sic) may go out veiled (רְעִלוֹת) ,” a kind of beautiful veil in which to enwrap oneself. תְּרַעְלָה is entoumissant in O.F., (stiffening, weakening, paralyzing).

you have drained Heb. מְצִית , egoutter in French, [to drain, exhaust].

19 These two things have befallen you Twofold calamities, two by two.

[With] whom will I console you? Whom will I bring to you to console you and to say that also that certain nation suffered in the same manner as you?

20 fainted Heb. עָלַפוּ . An expression of faintness. Comp. (Amos 8:13) “The...virgins shall faint (תִּתְעַלְפֶּנָּה) from thirst.” Pasmer in O.F., (pamer in Modern French).

like a wild ox in a net Abandoned like this wild ox that falls into a net. Comp. (Deut. 14:5) “And the wild ox (וְהָאֵז) and the giraffe.”

21 and who is drunk but not from wine Drunk from something else other than wine.

22 Who shall judge His people Who shall judge the case of His people.

NAZAREAN TALMUD

SIDRA OF B’RESHEET (GENESIS) 24.1.41

V’ ABRAHAM ZAQEN” “AND ABRAHAM WAS OLD”

BY: H. EM. RABBI DR. ELIYAHU BEN ABRAHAM

HAKHAM SHAUL’S SCHOOL OF TOSEFTA
(Luke 5:33-35)

HAKHAM TSEFET’S SCHOOL OF PESHAT
(Mark 2:18-20)

And they said to him, "The talmidim of Yochanan often fast and offer prayers, the talmidim of the P’rushim (Pharisees) also do the same, but yours eat³² and drink." And Yeshua said to them, "You cannot make the sons (groomsmen) of the Chuppah (wedding canopy) fast while the groom is with them, can you? But the time (days) will come; and when the groom is taken away from them, then they will fast in that time (day)."

And the Shammaite P’rushim **came testing³³ him** (Yeshua) saying the talmidim of Yochanan and those talmidim of the P’rushim (Pharisees) are fasting.³⁴ And³⁵ they³⁶ also asked "Why do Yochanan’s talmidim and those talmidim of the P’rushim fast, but your talmidim do not fast?" And Yeshua said to them, "Can the sons (groomsmen) of the Chuppah (wedding canopy) fast while the groom is present with them? As long as they have the groom with them they are not able to fast. But the days will come³⁷ when the groom will be taken away from them, and they will fast in that day."

HAKHAM SHAUL’S SCHOOL OF REMES (2 Luqas - Acts 12.12 – 13.12)

And when he realized this, he went to the house of Miriam, the mother of Yochanan who was also called Mordechai, where many were gathered together and were praying for him.

When he (Hakham Tsefet) knocked at the door of the gate, a **servant-girl** named Shoshanna came to answer. When she recognized Hakham Tsefet's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Hakham Tsefet was standing in front of the gate. They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, "It is his angel."³⁸ But Hakham Tsefet continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed. But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the LORD had led him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to Ya’aqob and the brethren." Then he left and went to another place.

Now when day came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers as to what could have become of Hakham Tsefet. When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and

³² Verbal connection to B’resheet 22.6 However, this is a most unusual connection to the Hebrew word knife use in that location. Rashi explains that the Hebrew word means that the knife “consumes” flesh.

³³ The idea of being “tested” is evident in the text and its context.

³⁴ This “fasting” is not the fasting which was practiced by some as a semi-weekly fast. Cf. Lk. 18:12, Zech 7:3-48:19 Fasting is covered in many tractates of the Mishnah. However, we can briefly look at the following tractates. Hullin, Yoma, Ya’anit.

³⁵ While this reference seems most plausible we can believe that a number of fast days were possible, excluding Yom Kippur. We have excluded Yom Kippur because the text says that the talmidim of Yochanan and the P’rushim were fasting. Yom Kippur is a Festival fast day. Regardless of the specific fast date we believe that the Scripture Zech 8:19 is at the heart of the question. This scripture suggests four fast dates. From the possible four we have selected the 9th of Ab because it matches the materials and best fits the context of our pericope.

³⁶ The “they” is undefined and unspecified. We will posit our thesis as to who “they” are below. Indefinite, meaning “people.”

³⁷ The phrase “Days to come” and “in that day” are a reference to the Y’mot HaMashiach.

³⁸ A profundity here shows that in the first century the Jewish people generally believed that every person had an accompanying “angel.” This accompanying/guardian angel relates to our acceptance and observance of the Torah. The Hebrew word “Shomer” used as “guard” is synonymous with the concept of “shomer Shabbat” referring to one who is meticulous about keeping the mitzvot.

ordered that they be led away to execution. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there.

Now there were in the Congregation at Antioch prophets and teachers, **Bar-Nechamah**,³⁹ Shim’on who was called Niger (the dark skinned man), Lucius of Cyrene, Menachem a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Hakham Shaul. While they were worshipping the LORD and fasting,⁴⁰ the Spirit of Prophecy said, “Set apart for me Bar-Nechamah and Hakham Shaul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and **sent them off**.

So, **being sent** out by the Spirit of Prophecy, they went down to Seleucia,⁴¹ and from there they sailed to Cyprus.⁴² When they arrived at Salamis,⁴³ they proclaimed the Torah of God (Mesorah as elucidated by the Master) in the Synagogues of the Jews. And they had Yochanan (Mordechai) as their **Chazan** (Clerk Paqid). When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos,⁴⁴ they came upon a certain **magician**, a Jewish pseudo-prophet named Bar-Yeshua. He was with the proconsul, Sergius⁴⁵ Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Bar-Nechamah and Hakham Shaul and sought to hear the Torah of God (Mesorah as elucidated by the Master). But Elymas⁴⁶ the **magician** for that is the meaning of his name **opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from faithful obedience. But Hakham Shaul, who was also called Paul** (by the Romans and Greeks), filled with the Divine Presence (Shekinah), looked intently at him and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness/generosity, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the LORD? And now, behold, the hand of the LORD is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.”⁴⁷ Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the LORD.

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

³⁹ Bar-Nechamah the “son of comfort” or consolation, represents the office of Chesed – G’dolah and the ministry of the Masoret.

⁴⁰ The aspect of the Torah’s Bi-modality is seen in this statement. Furthermore, we see the continuity of Hakham Shaul’s thought concerning the fact that Yeshua was in Tzfat on Yom HaKippurim and the Yobel.

⁴¹ “white light”

⁴² “love: a blossom”

⁴³ “salt”

⁴⁴ “boiling or hot”

⁴⁵ “earth-born: born a wonder”

⁴⁶ “a wise man” In the present case we have a pseudo - “wise-man.”

⁴⁷ Here we see Hakham Shaul following the practice of His Master Hakham Tsefet. Hakham Tsefet following Yeshua who followed Hillel loved the sandwich technique of writing. Hakham Shaul is giving us anchor points to know that we are exactly where we should be in relation to our Torah readings. Last Torah Seder was associated with the lice as small as “dust.” This week we have a look towards the future of “darkness.” What is profound about this statement is that this pseudo-prophet is “Jewish.” The coming plague of “darkness” was G-d’s stealthy way of dealing with the Jews in Egypt who has assimilated and defected.

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------|-------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
| Gen 24:1-41 | Ps. 19 | Is. 51.2-11 | Mk 2:18-20 | Lk 5:33-35 | Acts 12.12 – 13.12 |
|-------------|--------|-------------|------------|------------|--------------------|

COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM TSEFET'S SCHOOL OF PESHAH

With the opening of chapter two, the Mesorah of Mordechai (Mark) has begun an investigation into halakhic issues that might seem difficult to some scholars. Many scholars have taken advantage of the difficulties of these pericopes in order to propagate their personal theories, doctrines and agendas. We have noted the halakhic issues as they have risen in each pericope. This is not to say that we have exhausted these issues. In continuity with the previous discussions, where Yeshua has questioning parties, the present pericope addresses new issues. We will see in this pericope the solution and elucidation of a question concerning "fasting" on the minor fasts. The explanation will cover this pericope and the next few pericopes as we will see Yeshua's answer unfolds in several aggadic examples.

The present pericope posits a problem in that it does not name the party who questions Yeshua concerning the "fasting" issue on the minor fasts. The text simply says "**And they came and asked to him**" with no explanation as to who "they" are. We surmise that it is not the talmidim of Yochanan as some suggest. We further note that "they" cannot be the P'rushim or their talmidim unless the question was asked in the third person. Most scholars agree this is not the case. Therefore, we are left with the question as to who "they" are. Rav Yitzchak Kanpanton in his "*Darchei ha Gemarah*" has taught us to ask several questions of the text. One of those questions is "who is speaking"? When we realize who is speaking in the present case we will be able to more readily understand the question and Yeshua's answer. The coming pericope of Hakham Tsefet (Mk. 2:21-22) is a part of the answer to the present question by way of contiguity. The answer is VERY detailed with regard to those being addressed. However, if we do not have the answer to who is asking the question we CANNOT fully answer or understand the question! Furthermore Hakham Tsefet has placed these pericopes in a specific sequential order for specific reasons. Each pericope harmonizes with the Torah Seder and the previous halakhic solution. Therefore, a review of the previous pericope might be helpful.

UNDERSTANDING THE KALLAH – BRIDE

Firstly, let us point out that the word "Kallah" here refers to the "Bride" and not "Challah" the Shabbat bread.

We do not have time or space here to elaborate at length on the Sanhedrin, Yeshivot of the first century and Kallah. Nevertheless, we will offer a brief overview so that we can more readily understand our present pericope and questions concerning halakhah. We must also note that the ancient Yeshivot of the first century were extensions of the Sanhedrin. This is because; contrary to popular opinion the Sanhedrin was NOT exclusively a judicial body. When we refer to the Sanhedrin we are referring to the two distinct courts which met in Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) and later in other parts of Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel). The two courts being, the Great Sanhedrin composed of 71 members, and the Smaller Sanhedrin composed of 23 members. The Sanhedrin was **firstly an educational body** and **secondly a judicial body**. However, the two greater Bate Din (Houses of Judgment), were more educational than judicial, because Judaism functions by "precedent," and the members the Bet Din relied on precedential cases to solve halakhic issues. When questions were dispatched from lesser courts and sent to the greater courts, the Sanhedrin "**sat**" and deliberated these halakhic issues.

m. San 4:3 The sanhedrin was [arranged] in the shape of a half of a round threshing floor [that is, as an amphitheater], so that [the judges] should see one another. And two judges' clerks stand before them, one at the right and one at the left. And they write down the arguments of those who vote to acquit and of those who vote to convict. R. Judah says, "Three: one writes the opinion of those who vote to acquit, one writes the opinion of

those who vote to convict, and the third writes the opinions both of those who vote to acquit and of those who vote to convict.”⁴⁸

The Hebrew word “Yeshiva” means, “to sit.” However, this is only an elementary definition of the word. Its uses developed into the idea of study, which in turn became the academy and court sessions. It is noteworthy to scrutinize the similarity between the “sitting” of the Judges in the Sanhedrin and the “sittings” of the Hakhamim in the Yeshivot or academies. However, we must note that the Sanhedrin is an assembly of Hakhamim primarily studying Torah. Their office is educational as well as judicial. This gives insight into the occupation of the Hakhamim of the Great Sanhedrin.

b. Bava Bathra 12a Further on,⁴⁹ Scripture enumerates them⁵⁰ according to their age⁵¹ and here⁵² according to their wisdom, this [is evidence] in support of R. Ammi. For R. Ammi said: At a session, (Yeshiva)⁵³ priority is to be given to⁵⁴ wisdom; at a festive gathering⁵⁵ age takes precedence.⁵⁶ R. Ashi said: This,⁵⁷ [only] when one is distinguished in wisdom; and that,⁵⁸ [only] when one is distinguished in old age.

*The word Yeshiva is frequently translated “session.” In some of those cases, the intention is a court, or session of the Sanhedrin. On other occasions, the word “session” implies an educational setting where the Hakhamim taught their Talmidim.*⁵⁹

Here Goodblatt sees the juxtaposition of the judicial “session,” “Yeshiva” with that of the festival gathering. In the judicial setting of the Sanhedrin, the Hakhamim sit in a semi-circle⁶⁰ so they can see one another. The juxtaposition of the festive gathering is one of sitting around a table at festival meals discussing the Festival.⁶¹ Both sessions have the title “yeshiva.”

In antiquity, as is the case today Yisrael is viewed as the “Bride of G-d.” However, the Hebrew term “Kallah” carried other relative connotations. The term “Kallah” is often used to refer to either “academic instruction” or an “academic

⁴⁸ Neusner, J. (1988). *The Mishnah: A new translation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. p. 590

⁴⁹ Where their marriages are reported.

⁵⁰ Zelophehad's daughters.

⁵¹ V. Num. XXXVI, II.

⁵² Ibid. XXVII, I, dealing with their right of inheritance.

⁵³ In connection with matters of Law or study.

⁵⁴ Lit., go after.

⁵⁵ Heb. mesibah a banqueting party reclining on couches round the room or round the tables.

⁵⁶ Num. XXXVI, II, speaking of marriages, enumerates Zelophehad's daughters according to age, the elder ones being given priority of place as is done at festive assemblies. In Num. XXVII, I, however, where a question of Law is discussed, the enumeration is according to their wisdom, those possessing more wisdom being given priority of place as is done at Law, or similar sessions.

⁵⁷ That wisdom is the determining factor at sittings of Law or study.

⁵⁸ That age takes precedence at festive gatherings.

⁵⁹ David M. Goodblatt, *Rabbinic instruction in Sasanian Babylonia*, Brill Academic Pub, 1975 p.71

⁶⁰ Cf. San 4:4

⁶¹ David M. Goodblatt, *Rabbinic instruction in Sasanian Babylonia*, Brill Academic Pub, 1975 p.71

institution.”⁶² These institutions were held in apparent sessions.⁶³

Superficially, it seems odd to call a Rabbinic Academy the “Bride,” “Kallah.” However, when we look at the allegorical imagery of the festivals the idea of a rabbinic session being the “Kallah” (Bride of G-d) is clear. Without delving deeply into the imagery of the Festival of Shavuot, we understand that Har Sinai was covered with smoke as if a “**wedding canopy**” and the voices of G-d were heard audibly. However, on a mystical note the “voices” were said to have been seen.

Shemot (Ex.) 19:16 So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder (the voices of the Hakhamim) and lightning flashes (the Hakhamim running back and forth to elucidate the Torah) and a thick cloud upon the mountain (governance [kingdom] of God [through the Hakhamim and Bate Din as opposed to human kings]) and a very loud voice of the shofar, so that all the people who were in the camp (world) trembled.

It was from Har Sinai that G-d gave the Torah and betrothed the B’ne Yisrael as His “Bride.” Consequently, the connection to the Torah and Torah Study is very relevant to the Rabbinic Academy as the “Bride” of G-d. This information is given on an elemental level for the sake of understanding our pericope. The development of Yeshivot – Kallah Academies during the third and fourth centuries can be seen from the present pericope, which pictures the embryonic stages of these Kallot (Academies).

In our previous pericope we saw that Yeshua and the School of Hillel would have embraced the Am HaAretz”) the people of the land "i.e .the uneducated Jews in the Torah(trying to bring them to teshuba (repentance). The Kallot Academies had very much the same agenda. Much like the 10 (11) Takanot of Ezra HaSopher⁶⁴ (Ezra the Scribe & Prophet) the Kallot Academies tried to develop a “**Nation of Hakhamim.**” In the words of Hayim Solomon, who designed the American one dollar bill, “One nation united **under one God** with freedom and liberty for every citizen.”⁶⁵ The statement “One nation united **under one God** with freedom and liberty for every citizen” was intended to mean, Shema – One G-d not three. And “freedom and liberty” was for the sake of Torah study and its observance.

B’NE PIRKEI

Besides the *benei kallah* (the “members of the *Kallah*”) **who participated in the studies during the whole day**, many of the **ordinary people**, (Am HaAretz, "the people of Land" i.e. the uneducated Jews in the Torah known as *B’ne Pirkei*) would come just for the public sermon (**of the day**) and were called *benei pirkei* (Ket. 62a).⁶⁶

While much is to be said concerning these matters, we suggest that there are a number of possibilities. We have seen the Soferim (scribes), The P’rushim” (Pharisees) and Doctors of the Torah (Hakhamim) ask Yeshua questions in the past few pericopes. At present none of these voices are questioning Yeshua. Each of those parties has their normative halakhic practices. Therefore, we would surmise that the questioning parties of this pericope are “B’ne Pirkei,” the

⁶² Ibid p.155

⁶³ B. Berakhot 6b I also run. R. Zera says: The merit of attending a lecture lies in the running. Abaye says: The merit of attending the Kallah sessions.

⁶⁴ B. B.K. 82a

⁶⁵ Jones, V. (1983). *Will the Real Jesus Please Stand.*, Institute of Judaic-Christian Research. p. 2-19ff

⁶⁶ Thomson Gale. (n.d.). *Encyclopedia Judaica*, (2 ed., Vol. 11). (F. Skolnik, Ed.) 2007: Keter Publishing House Ltd. p.741 My brackets for the sake of elucidation and emphasis.

Am HaAretz, "the people of Land" i.e. the uneducated Jews in the Torah known asand also known as *B'ne Pirkei*.

A possible hint to the B'ne Pirkei in our present pericope is the word "day." The word "day" is used first in the plural and then in the singular. "**But the time (days) will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and they will fast in that time (day).**" Some translations of the phrase "B'ne Pirkei" translate this phrase as "**Day Students**" as noted above. However, the point of interest is that Yeshua also mentions the "B'ne Chuppah" "Sons of the Groom" in the present pericope. The attendees of the Kallah Sessions/Academies were called "B'ne Kallah" – "children/sons of the Bride." Consequently, the whole dialogue makes perfect sense if we realize that this question is a legitimate question coming from those students who work to support themselves by regular labor. In many ways the entrepreneurial Am HaAretz was the financial and economic engine of Yisrael at that time as it ia also the case today.

The question at hand is what is the "B'ne Pirkei" to do about fasting during the minor fasts? We see their logic in the process of presenting the question. "The talmidim of Yochanan fast [during the minor fasts]," "the Talmidim of the P'rushim fast [during the minor fasts]." We have noticed that your Talmidim do not fast [during the minor fasts]. **What is the appropriate thing to do for the Am HAretz (B'ne Pirkei)?** Again, the question is a legitimate one, not some convoluted trap set by some beguiling P'rushim or Soferim as certain scholars would have it. We see that the Soferim, P'rushim and Hakhamim would all have been much closer in agreement with Yeshua than past and present scholars would admit.

PERORATION

Mark 2:1"Can the sons (groomsmen) of the Chuppah (wedding canopy) fast while the groom is present with them? As long as they have the groom with them they are not able to fast. But the time (days) will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and they will fast in that time (day).

During the days of Messiah, King Yeshua we experienced the "first-fruits" of the "Days of Messiah. Or we might say that we experienced a token of what it will be like in the "days of Messiah." The allegorical narrative that Hakham Tsefet uses here teaches us that the four fasts of Z'kharyah (Zechariah) 8:19 will end during the Days of Messiah. In the following passage Messiah is equated with the "groom."

Yesha'yahu 61:10 I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness/generosity, As a groom decks himself with beauty (Tiferet)⁶⁷, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

The word "Salvation" is an allegorical reference to Messiah King Yeshua. Pəsiqtā de-Raḅ Kahānā elucidates this passage as follows.

*The splendor of the garment He puts on the Messiah will stream forth from world's end to world's end, as implied by the words As a bridegroom putteth on a priestly diadem (Isa. 61:10)). Israel will live in his radiance and say: **Blessed is the hour in which the Messiah was created! Blessed is the womb whence he came! Blessed is the generation whose eyes behold him! Blessed is the eye which has been given the privilege of seeing him whose lips open with blessing and peace, whose diction is pure delight, whose garments are glory and majesty, who is***

⁶⁷ Note the verbal connection to 2 Luqas 5:1-6

*confident and serene in his speech, the utterance of whose tongue is pardon and forgiveness, whose prayer is a sweet savor, whose supplication during his study of Torah is purity and holiness.*⁶⁸

The Hakhamim have debated on just how long the Days of Messiah will last.

And how long is the “day” of the Messiah? R. Eliezer asserted: A thousand years, as it is said ***For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past*** (Ps. 90:4)... R. Joshua said: Two thousand years for the plural days in ***According to the days wherein You have afflicted us*** implies two days, one day of the Holy One, blessed be He, being a thousand years, as is said ***For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past***. R. Berechiah and R. Dosa the Elder said: Six hundred years, as is said ***For the days of my people will be as the days of a tree*** (Isa. 65:22), and the trunk of a sycamore-tree remains standing in the ground for six hundred years. R. Jose said: Sixty years, as is ***said They will fear You ... so long as the moon, throughout a generation and generations*** (Ps. 72:5); a generation implies twenty years, and generations implies forty years, making sixty. R. Akkiba said: Forty years, for ***According to the days wherein You have afflicted us*** refers to the forty years which the people of Israel spent in the wilderness, years of which is said ***And He afflicted you, and suffered you to hunger*** (Deut. 8:3). The Rabbis said: Four thousand years, as is said ***And the time of My acts of redemption is come*** (Isa. 63:4). R. Abba said: ***Seven thousand years, reckoning by the days of a bridegroom in the marriage chamber, as is said For as a young man espouses a virgin so will your sons espouse you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so will your God rejoice over you (Isaiah 62:5). And how many are the days of the bridegroom? Seven days, for Laban said to Jacob: Fulfill the week of this one (Genesis 29:27).***⁶⁹

It should be very obvious to our readers that there is a link between Yeshua HaMashiach and Yitzach as noted in His Honor’s commentary to the Psalms and elucidation by His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai. Yeshua is the “missing groom” and in the Torah Seder Yitzchaq disappears for “three days” allegorically speaking. The wise will understand.

COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM SHAUL’S SCHOOL OF REMES

SOMEONE IS KNOCKING AT MY DOOR

Hakham Shaul opens his remarks with Hakham Tsefet knocking on a door. This is reminiscent of the Apocalypse.

Rev. 3:20 “Behold, I (the Torah) stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice (Oral Torah) and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me.”

We see Hakham Tsefet knocking on this door and a young servant-girl named Shoshanna answers the door. The Greek text names the girl “Rhoda.” The lexical information we have on the name “Rhoda” is that it means, “Rose.”

⁶⁸ Huckel, T. (1998). *The Rabbinic Messiah*. Philadelphia: Hananeel House. Is 61:10

⁶⁹ Ibid Ge 29:27

Therefore, when restoring the text to its Mishnaic Hebrew we find that the name should be read as Shoshanna. This is most profound when we realize that this is a perfect verbal connection with the Psalm that is aligned with the Torah readings and Shabbat HaGadol.

As noted by His Eminence Rabbi Dr Hillel ben David, Rashi says, this psalm was composed in honor of the Torah scholars who are as tender as the rose, beautiful as the rose, and saturated with the good deeds as a fresh, moist rose. Just as the rose contains many exquisite petals, so is the Torah sage composed of a variety of scholarly attainments (*Ohel Yaakov*).⁷⁰

Furthermore, our text of 2 Luqas makes a subtle play on Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs).

(Cant. 5:2) “I was asleep, but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking: ‘Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.’”

These words relate to our Ashlamatah. “Awaken, awaken, put on your strength, O Zion; put on the garments of your beauty”

Restraining our remarks to Remes, we see Hakham Tsefet’s knocking on the outer door is the Wisdom of the Torah, which must be invited inside. Hakham Shaul and Hakham Tsefet are aware of all the possible nuances of our present readings. Shoshanna as noted above by His Eminence Rabbi Dr Hillel ben David is the Torah Scholar filled with compassion. She hears the voice of the **Mesorah** (Hakham Tsefet). Her joy is so great that she forgets to open the door. In her enthusiasm, she runs to tell others of her great “revelation.” Upon speaking to others, they believe she is “mad.” Why? Because she is not reciting the Written Torah to them.

We face a similar problem today. So many groups refer to themselves as “Sola Scriptura.” This madness consumes the ignorant. They are in the middle of a field of wheat and have no clue as to how to make bread.

Shoshanna runs back to the gate to invite the Mesorah into the Bet Midrash (House of Torah Education). When the door was opened, **“they saw him and were amazed.”** We see that the refrain is that they “saw.” This tells us that the Mesorah in the mouth of the Torah Scholar is capable of bridging all levels of Torah Truth.

The Rose is also an allegory for Gan Eden. Again, we see that the path to Gan Eden is through the Mesorah. Hakham Tsefet knows how to access the Garden of Torah. In the Peshat portion of our Nazarean Talmud we see that the woman with the discharge of blood looked beyond “Peshat” for her healing. She saw “rays of the sun” as the wings of the Shekinah. She attached the Shekinah to the Oral Torah and found Messiah. In Messiah she found healing and atonement. In Messiah, she found the path to Gan Eden. This is because she found the Or haGanuz “tabernacling” in a man.

Yochanan (John) 1:1 The chief principle (beginning) is the personification of the Torah, and the personification of Torah was with Elohim the Judge, and the personification of the Torah was an Elohim the Judge. The same

⁷⁰ *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.

was the chief principle of Elohim the Judge. And everything came to pass through him; and without him nothing came into being. What exists came to pass because of him. The Primordial Light of life in him; and that life is the Primordial Light of all Royal Anashim. And the primordial light shined into the darkness; and the darkness could not comprehend it.

(And it came to pass – וְהָיָה) **There was a man sent from Elohim the Judge, named Yochanan. The same man came to authenticate the arrival of the Primordial Light (Messiah), so that all (the Royal Anashim⁷¹) through him might become faithfully obedient (to his Mesorah). He (Yochanan) was not the Primordial Light, but *was sent to authenticate the arrival of the Primordial Light* (of Messiah). (He confirmed) *That the true Primordial Light, which lights the Way of every Royal Ish that comes into the world* with the coming of Mashiach ben Yosef. **He, Messiah the Primordial Light of the Oral Torah was (hidden) in the world, and he made the world** with the Oral Torah, **but the world of men apart from the Royal Anashim did not know it.****

The Primordial Light emanates from the Palace of King Messiah, which stands on the seven pillars of wisdom. The palace is upheld by the bent ones who are bent under the weight of Torah wisdom received from the light of that palace. That light is their helper and strength as they guard the Covenant with the light of revelation, the expressed will of the King Messiah.⁷² **The face of these seven pillars shines with the reflection** of the Primordial Light of Messiah as they move from vessel to vessel filling it with light, giving it inspiration and purpose for the sake of tikun olam.

But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them...

Motioning, pointing the direction or path with the **Yad Ha-Chazaqáh**.⁷³ Hakham Tsefet is allegorically giving instruction from the Mesorah/**Yad Ha-Chazaqáh**. He motions for silence. This is because the chattering mouth cannot receive/kibal the deeper levels of the Mesorah. The chattering mouth cannot receive any level of the Mesorah. Hakham Tsefet is teaching us how to return to the garden. Only the silent can re-enter the Garden.

But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the LORD had led him out of the prison (galut Gadol when he walked into the future with the messenger i.e. Eliyahu).

The allegorical nuances of Shabbat HaGadol permeate this sentence. Hakham Tsefet through the Oral Torah/**Yad Ha-Chazaqáh** teaches his audience how to escape the Galut Gadol. He points the way to Gan Eden, the escape from Galut. Gan Eden was not a garden of uncontrolled growth. Gan Eden is often represented by an orchard or grove. This means that everything is orderly and in place. The universe when it is reunited with the Oral Torah/ **Yad Ha-Chazaqáh** provides as structured environment for peace and wholeness. This was what our woman with the discharge of blood longed for, structure and order. Her world had been destroyed by anarchy. When blood is not contained in its proper container, death and mayhem ensue. However, when faithful obedience meets a human body shalom/wholeness is resultant.

“Report these things to Ya’aqob and the brethren.”

⁷¹ Here we use Royal Anashim to refer to the Jewish Hakhamim and their talmidim.

⁷² Cf. Gal 1:12

⁷³ We can play off of the same verbal connection we had in the previous pericope because we still have the Luqan text as a guide

Reporting these things to Ya'aqob means that we must teach the Oral Torah to the Master's talmidim. Only in the Oral Torah/ **Yad Ha- Chazaqáh** will they find deliverance from the "time of Ya'aqob's troubles."

"Then he left and went to another place."

2 Co. 12:2 I know a man in union Messiah who (personified) more than **fourteen years of wisdom, whether in or out of the body I do not know, God knows, this man was caught up to the third heaven.**

We leave the ambiguity of the text as it is for the present. This is because these words are unfolded during Shavuot. Nonetheless, they refer to Hakham Tsefet and his mastery of the Mesorah/**Yad Ha-Chazaqáh**. It is at this stage in 2 Luqas that we see Hakham Tsefet disappear so to speak. The words, **"Then he went down from Yehudah to Caesarea and was spending time there"** show us that the Jewish people went down from Yehudah to enter exile. It also teaches us that the Mesorah as personified by Hakham Tsefet was spread throughout the entire world.

Now when day came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers as to what could have become of Hakham Tsefet. When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away to execution.

The great disturbance among the "soldiers" is the disturbance of the Army of Pharaoh drowning in the Sea of Reeds. And Herod searched for Hakham Tsefet but could not find him. In other words, Herod searched for Torah Wisdom but could not find it. Why? Because he did not first search for chametz (Leaven–Pride) in his heart.

Shemot 7:3 But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and I will increase My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.

Hakham Shaul juxtaposes the "search for Hakham Tsefet with our search for Chametz (Leaven–Pride). Had Herod searched for the chametz in his heart he would have found the Torah wisdom personified by Hakham Tsefet.

PERORATION

As we prepare for Pesach, we must also prepare for receiving the Torah at Har Sinai. The clamour of soldiers can also be the regiments of spiritual beings, which we must contend with as we endeavour to build the Esnoga (Synagogue) of Messiah. Jewish scholars have noted that the plagues of Egypt are in an order opposite creation. As G-d unfolds the destruction anarchy, we should look to the Torah as a means of building up the body of Messiah.

אמן ואמן סלה

Blessing After Torah Study

**Barúch Atáh Adonai, Elohénu Meléch HaOlám,
Ashér Natán Lánu Torát Emét, V'Chayéi Olám Natá B'Tochénu.
Barúch Atáh Adonái, Notén HaToráh. Amen!
Blessed is Ha-Shem our God, King of the universe,**

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

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

“Now unto Him who is able to preserve you faultless, and spotless, and to establish you without a blemish, before His majesty, with joy, [namely,] the only one God, our Deliverer, by means of Yeshua the Messiah our Master, be praise, and dominion, and honor, and majesty, both now and in all ages. Amen!”

Shabbat Shalom!

Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham