

Esnoga Bet Emunah

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Esnoga Bet El

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

Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings	Third Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle
Kislev 16, 5779 – Nov. 23/24, 2018	Fourth Year of the Shmita Cycle

Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:

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

See: <http://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm>

Roll of Honor:

This Commentary comes out weekly and on the festivals thanks to the great generosity of:

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

For their regular and sacrificial giving, providing the best oil for the lamps, we pray that GOD's richest blessings be upon their lives and those of their loved ones, together with all Yisrael and her Torah Scholars, amen ve amen!

Please pray for your local Rabbi and this work that they may be successful touching many lives with the Torah, well financed; and that they may be for much blessing to all concerned. Amen ve Amen!

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

We pray for HE Giberet Sarah bat Noach (age 13- the daughter of HE Giberet Sarai bat Sarah) who is hospitalized far away from her family, she will probably transition from in-patient to a residential treatment program in another 1.5 to 2 weeks from now in a probable further away facility. **Mi Sheberach** – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless Her Excellency Giberet Sarah bat Noach and send her a complete recovery and strengthening of body, mind and soul. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Cure her, strengthen her, make her healthy and return her to her original strength, together with all the sick of Yisrael. And may it be so willed, and we will say, Amen ve Amen!

We pray for HE Adon Ruben Lopez Trevino ben Noach the father of HE Giberet Mirit bat Sarah, who is affected with prostate cancer. **Mi Sheberach** – He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal the father of HE Giberet Mirit bat Sarah. May the Holy One, Blessed is He, be filled with compassion for him to restore his health, to heal him, to strengthen him, and to revivify him. And may He send him speedily a complete recovery from heaven, among the other sick people of Yisrael, a recovery of the body and a recovery of the spirit and mind, swiftly and soon, and we say amen ve amen!

We also pray for the safety of HE Adon Ya'aqob ben David and his business from two of his employees who have left his firm, who may start frivolous suits against him or G-d forbid may do anything harmful to his safety and wellbeing and that of his family together with those among our people of Yisrael afraid for their safety, their family's safety and welfare, and the safety of their business, and we say amen ve amen!

We pray for my friend HE Adon Andrew ben Noach who is suffering from bi-polar problems, and currently sleeping in his car, and also has problems with drink and gambles on the stock market and loses money. **Mi Shebarach** - He Who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses and Aharon, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal HE Adon Andrew ben Noach. May the Holy One, Blessed be He, be filled with compassion to restore his mental and physical health, as well as improving his welfare, to heal him, to strengthen him, and to revivify him, and may He send him speedily a complete recovery from heaven, among the other sick people of Yisrael, a recovery of the body and a recovery of the spirit and mind, swiftly soon, and we pray amen ve amen!

We also pray for the son of H.E. Giberet Tikiribat bat Noach from Sri Lanka who has had an aortic dissection. He is sufficiently recovered to work on a slow level. He works night shifts. An operation has been discussed by the doctors which is serious, followed by another more difficult surgery in another year or so. **Mi Sheberach** – He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal the son of Her Excellency Giberet Tikiribat bat Noach. May the Holy One, Blessed is He, be filled with compassion for him to restore his health, to heal him, to strengthen him, and to revivify him. And may He send him speedily a complete recovery from heaven, among the other sick people of Yisrael, a recovery of the body and a recovery of the spirit and mind, swiftly and soon, and we say amen ve amen!

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

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

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

Blessings Before Torah Study

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

Please Ha-Shem, our GOD, sweeten the words of Your Torah in our mouths and in the mouths of all Your people Israel. May we and our offspring, and our offspring's offspring, and all the offspring of Your people, the House of Israel, may we all, together, know Your Name and study Your Torah for the sake of fulfilling Your **delight. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Who teaches Torah to His people Israel. Amen!**

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

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

**May Ha-Shem bless you and keep watch over you; - Amen!
May Ha-Shem make His Presence enlighten you, and may He be kind to you; - Amen!
May Ha-Shem bestow favour on you and grant you peace. – Amen!**

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

These are the Laws for which the Torah did not mandate specific amounts: How much growing produce must be left in the corner of the field for the poor; how much of the first fruits must be offered at the Holy Temple; how much one must bring as an offering when one visits the Holy Temple three times a year; how much one must do when doing acts of kindness; and there is no maximum amount of Torah that a person must study.

These are the Laws whose benefits a person can often enjoy even in this world, even though the primary reward is in the Next World: They are: Honoring one's father and mother; doing acts of kindness; early attendance at the place of Torah study -- morning and night; showing hospitality to guests; visiting the sick; providing for the financial needs of a bride; escorting the dead; being very engrossed in prayer; bringing peace between two people, and between husband and wife; but the study of Torah is as great as all of them together.

Amen!

Shabbat "Asimah Alai Melekh" - "I will set a king [over me]"

Shabbat	Torah Reading:	Weekday Torah Reading:
אָשִׁימָה עָלַי מֶלֶךְ		Saturday Afternoon
"Asimah Alai Melekh"	Reader 1 – D'barim 17:14-17	Reader 1 – D'barim 18:20-22
"I will set a king [over me]"	Reader 2 – D'barim 17:18-20	Reader 2- D'barim 19:1-3
"Pondré un rey [sobre mí]"	Reader 3 – D'barim 18:1-5	Reader 3- D'barim 19:4-6
D'barim (Deut.) 17:14–18:19	Reader 4 – D'barim 18:6-8	
	Reader 5 – D'barim 18:9-11	Monday & Thursday Mornings
Psalm 120:1 – 122:9	Reader 6 – D'barim 18:12-14	Reader 1 – D'barim 18:20-22
Ashlam.: Is 33:22 – 34:8	Reader 7 – D'barim 18:15-18	Reader 2- D'barim 19:1-3
	Maftir – D'barim 18:17-19	Reader 3- D'barim 19:4-6
N.C.: Mark 14:66-72 James 2:25-26	Is 33:22 – 34:8	

Summary of the Torah Seder – D'barim (Deut.) 17:14 – 18:19

- The King – Deuteronomy 17:14-20
- Priests and Levites – Deuteronomy 18:1-8
- Prophets – Deuteronomy 18:9-19

Reading Assignment:

The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me'Am Lo'Ez - Vol 17: Deuteronomy – III – Gratitude & Discipline

By: Rabbi Yitzchaq Behar Argueti & Rabbi Shmuel Yerushalmi

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1992)

Vol. 17 – "Deuteronomy – III – Gratitude & Discipline," pp. 223-253.

Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: D'barim (Deut.) 17:14 -18:19

RASHI	TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN
14. When you come to the land the Lord, your God, is giving you, and you possess it and live therein, and you say, "I will set a king over myself, like all the nations around me,"	14. When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and possess, and dwell in it, and you say, Let us appoint a king over us , like all the nations about me,
15. you shall set a king over you, one whom the Lord, your God, chooses; from among your brothers, you shall set a king over yourself; you shall not appoint a	15. you will inquire for instruction before the LORD and afterward appoint the king over you: but it will not be lawful to set over you a foreign man who is not of your

RASHI	TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN
foreigner over yourself, one who is not your brother.	brethren.
16. Only, he may not acquire many horses for himself, so that he will not bring the people back to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, for the Lord said to you, "You shall not return that way any more."	16. Only let him not increase to him more than two horses, lest his princes ride upon them, and become proud, neglect the words of the Law, and commit the sin of the captivity of Mizraim; for the LORD has told you, By that way you will return no more.
17. And he shall not take many wives for himself, and his heart must not turn away, and he shall not acquire much silver and gold for himself.	17. Neither will he multiply to him wives above eighteen, lest they pervert his heart; nor will he increase to him silver or gold, lest his heart be greatly lifted up, and he rebel against the God of heaven.
18. And it will be, when he sits upon his royal throne, that he shall write for himself two copies of this Torah on a scroll from [that Torah which is] before the Levitic kohanim.	18. And it will be that if he be steadfast in the commandments of the Law he will sit upon the throne of his kingdom in security. And let the elders write for him the section (parasha) of this Law in a book before the priests of the tribe of Levi;
19. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the Lord, his God, to keep all the words of this Torah and these statutes, to perform them,	19. and let it be at his side, and he will read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this Law, and all these statutes to perform them:
20. so that his heart will not be haughty over his brothers, and so that he will not turn away from the commandment, either to the right or to the left, in order that he may prolong [his] days in his kingdom, he and his sons, among Israel.	20. that his heart may not be arrogant toward his brethren, nor decline from the precepts to the right or the left, and that his days may be prolonged over his kingdom, his and his sons among Israel.
1. The Levitic kohanim, the entire tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel; the Lord's fire offerings and His inheritance they shall eat.	1. The priests of the tribe of Levi will have no part or inheritance with their brethren: they will eat the oblations of the LORD as their portion
2. But he shall have no inheritance among his brothers; the Lord is his inheritance, as He spoke to him.	2. but an inheritance in field or vineyard they will not have among their brethren. The twenty and four gifts of the priesthood which the LORD will give to him are his heritage; as He said to him,
3. And this shall be the kohanim's due from the people, from those who perform a slaughter, be it an ox or a sheep, he shall give the kohen the foreleg, the jaws, and the maw.	3. And this will be the portion belonging to the priest from the people, from them who offer sacrifices, whether bullock or lamb they will give to the priest the right shoulder, the lower jaw, the cheeks, and the maw;
4. The first of your grain, your wine, and your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him.	4. the firsts of your corn, wine, and oil, the first of the fleece of your sheep, as much as a girdle measures will you give to him:
5. For the Lord, your God, has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand and serve in the name of the Lord, he and his sons, all the days.	5. because the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand and minister in the Name of the LORD, him, and his sons, all the days.
6. And if a Levite comes from one of your cities out of all Israel where he sojourns, he may come whenever his soul desires, to the place the Lord will choose,	6. And when a Levite may come from one of your cities out of all Israel where he has dwelt, and come with all the obligation of his soul's desire to the place which the LORD will choose,
7. and he may serve in the name of the Lord, his God,	7. then he will minister in the Name of the LORD his

RASHI	TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN
just like all his Levite brothers, who stand there before the Lord.	God as all his brethren the Levites who minister there before the LORD.
8. They shall eat equal portions, except what was sold by the forefathers.	8. Portion for portion equally will they eat, besides the gifts of the oblations which the priests do eat, which Elazar and Ithamar your fathers have given them to inherit.
9. When you have come to the land the Lord, your God, is giving you, you shall not learn to do like the abominations of those nations.	9. When you have entered the land which the LORD your God gives you, you will not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.
10. There shall not be found among you anyone who passes his son or daughter through fire, a soothsayer, a diviner of [auspicious] times, one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,	10. None will be found among you to make his sons or daughters pass through the fire, nor who enchant with enchantments, or inspect serpents, nor observe divinations and auguries,
11. or a charmer, a pithom sorcerer, a yido'a sorcerer, or a necromancer.	11. or make (magical) knots and bindings of serpents and scorpions or any kind of reptile, or who consult the oba, the bones of the dead or the bone Jadua, or who inquire of the manes.
12. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations, the Lord, your God is driving them out from before you.	12. For every one who does these is an abomination before the LORD; and because of these abominations the LORD drives them out before you.
13. Be wholehearted with the Lord, your God.	13. You will be perfect in the fear of the LORD your God.
14. For these nations, which you are to possess, hearken to diviners of [auspicious] times and soothsayers, but as for you, the Lord, your God, has not given you [things] like these.	14. For these nations which you are about to dispossess have listened to inspectors of serpents and enchanter. But you are not to be like them the priests will inquire by Urim and Thummim and a Right Prophet will the LORD your God give you;
15. A prophet from among you, from your brothers, like me, the Lord, your God will set up for you, you shall hearken to him.	15. a Prophet from among you of your brethren like unto me, with the Holy Spirit will the LORD your God raise up unto you; to Him will you be obedient.
16. According to all that you asked of the Lord, your God, in Horeb, on the day of the assembly, saying, "Let me not continue to hear the voice of the Lord, my God, and let me no longer see this great fire, so that I will not die."	16. According to all that you begged before the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembling of the tribes to receive the Law, saying, Let us not again hear the Great Voice {of the Word - Dibbura} from before the LORD our God, nor behold again that great fire, lest we die:
17. And the Lord said to me, "They have done well in what they have spoken.	17. and the LORD said to me, That which they have spoken is right;
18. I will set up a prophet for them from among their brothers like you, and I will put My words into his mouth, and he will speak to them all that I command him.	18. I will raise up unto them a Prophet from, among their brethren in whom will be the Holy Spirit, as in you; and I will put My Word of prophecy in his mouth, and he will speak with them whatsoever I command him;
19. And it will be, that whoever does not hearken to My words that he speaks in My name, I will exact [it] of him.	19. and the man who will not hearken to the words of My prophecy which will be spoken in My Name, My Word will take vengeance upon him.

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

Rashi's Commentary on D'barim (Deut.) 17:14 -18:19

16 he may not acquire many horses for himself But, only what he needs for his chariots, "so that he will not cause the people to return to Egypt" [to purchase the horses], because horses come from there, as it is said of Solomon (I Kings 10:29), "And a chariot that went up and left Egypt sold for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty."-[San. 21b]

17 And he shall not take many wives for himself Only eighteen, for we find that David had six wives, and it was told to him [by Nathan the prophet] (II Sam. 12:8): "and if this is too little, I would add for you like them and like them" [totaling eighteen].-[San. 21a and Sifrei]

and he shall not acquire much silver and gold for himself However, he may have what is required to provide for his troops.-[San. 21b]

18 And it will be, when he sits [upon his royal throne] If he does this, he merits that his kingdom will remain established.-[Sifrei]

two copies of this Torah- Heb. מִשְׁנֵי הַתּוֹרָה i.e., two Torah scrolls, one that is placed in his treasury, and the other that comes and goes with him (San. 21b). [i.e., a small scroll, which the king carries with him. Thus the Talmud derives מִשְׁנֵי from שְׁנַיִם, two.] Onkelos, however, renders פְּתִיגָן, copy. He interprets [the word] מִשְׁנֵי in the sense of repeating and uttering. [i.e., one copy of the Torah, which the scribe would write while uttering the

words before he writes them, deriving מְשַׁבֵּחַ from שָׁבַח, studying.]

19 the words of [this] Torah [This is to be understood] according to its apparent meaning [namely a commandment written in the Torah].

20 and so that he will not turn away from the commandment Not even from a minor commandment of a prophet.

in order that he may prolong [his] days [in his kingdom] From this positive statement, one may understand the negative inference [i.e., if he does not fulfill the commandments, his kingdom will not endure]. And so we find in the case of Saul, that Samuel said to him, "Seven days shall you wait until I come to you to offer up burnt-offerings" (I Sam. 10:8), and it is stated, "And he waited seven days" (I Sam. 13:8), but Saul did not keep his promise and neglected to wait the entire [last] day. He had not quite finished sacrificing the burnt-offering, when Samuel arrived and said to him (I Sam 13:13-14), "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept [the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you...] so now your kingdom will not continue" (I Sam 13:13-14). Thus we learn, that for [transgressing] a minor commandment of a prophet, he was punished.

he and his sons [This] tells [us] that if his son is worthy of becoming king, he is given preference over any [other] person.-[Hor. 11b]

Chapter 18

1 the entire tribe of Levi whether whole-bodied or blemished.-[Sifrei]

no portion i.e., in the spoils.

or inheritance in the land.-[Sifrei]

the Lord's fire-offerings The holy sacrifices of the Temple. (Other editions: The holiest sacrifices.)

and His portion These are the holy things of the boundaries, [i.e. those eaten throughout the entire land, namely,] the terumoth and the tithes, but

2 [he shall have] no inheritance He shall have no absolute inheritance among his brothers. In Sifrei 18:41, our Rabbis expound [as follows]:

But he shall have no inheritance This refers to the "inheritance of the remainder."

among his brothers this refers to the "inheritance of the five." I do not know what this means. It appears to me, however, that across the Jordan and onwards is called "the land of the five nations," and that of Sihon and Og is called "the land of the two nations," namely, the Amorites and the Canaanites. Now the expression, "inheritance of the remainder," is meant to include the [remaining three nations of the ten whose land God promised to Abraham, namely] the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites (Gen. 15:19). The Sifrei in the section dealing with the [priestly] gifts specified for Aaron expounds this in a similar fashion, on the verse (Deut. 10:9), "Therefore, Levi has no portion or inheritance," to admonish [the Levite to take no portion in] the inheritance of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites. It has since been found in the words of Rabbi Kalonimus, that the proper version of this passage in Sifrei reads as follows:

And he will have no inheritance This refers to the "inheritance of the five."

among his brothers This refers to the inheritance of the seven, [Rashi now explains this version of the Sifrei:] [The first reference is to] the inheritance of five [of the twelve] tribes [of Israel]. [The second, is to] the inheritance of [the remaining] seven tribes [of Israel]. Now Moses and Joshua apportioned inheritance only to five tribes: Moses, to Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Mannasseh; Joshua, to Judah, Ephraim, and [the other] half of the tribe of Mannasseh. The remaining seven tribes took their inheritance by themselves after Joshua's demise. Thus, because of this [distinction between these five former tribes and the seven latter ones], the Sifrei mentions five and seven separately.

as He spoke to him i.e., to Aaron [saying], "You shall not inherit in their land... I am your portion [and your inheritance, among the children of Israel]."-[Num. 18:20]

3 from the people But not from the kohanim [i.e., a kohen is exempt from these dues].-[Sifrei, Chul. 132b]

be it an ox or a sheep But not [from the category of] beast (חַיָּה) .

the foreleg from the carpus to the shoulder blade, called espaldun, espalde, or espaleron in Old French.-[Chul. 134b]

the jaws together with the tongue. Those who interpret the symbolism of Biblical verses say, the יָד [which is, in effect, the "hand" of the animal, became the due of the kohanim, as a reward] for the "hand" [which Phinehas, the kohen, raised against the sinners], as it is said, "and he took a spear in his hand" (Num. 25:7); the jaws [as a reward] for the prayer [he offered], as it is said, "Then Phinehas stood and prayed" (Ps. 106:30); and the maw (הַקֶּבֶץ) , as a reward [for his action against the sinning woman], as it said, "[And he stabbed both of them, the man of Israel] and the woman in her stomach (הַקֶּבֶץ) " (Num. 25:8). -[Chul. 134b].

4 The first of your grain This refers to terumah ; and although the verse does not state a required amount, our Rabbis set an amount for it [ranging from a sixtieth to a fortieth of the total produce as follows]: A generous [person] gives one fortieth of the crop, a miserly [person] one sixtieth, and [a person of] average generosity one fiftieth. They base [this ruling] that one should not give less than one sixtieth on what is said, "[This is the offering that you shall set apart: a sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat,] and you shall separate a sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley" (Ezek. 45:13). [Since an ephah is equivalent to three se'ah,] a sixth of an ephah is equivalent to half a se'ah. [Now the "homer" mentioned in the verse is the same as a kor.] When you give [one sixth of an ephah from a homer, which we now know to be] one half of a se'ah for a kor, this amounts to one sixtieth because a kor is thirty se'ah.-[Yerushalmi, Terumoth 4:3]

and the first of the fleece of your sheep When you shear your sheep each year, give the first of it [the wool] to the kohen. And [although the verse] does not mention a required amount, our Rabbis set an amount, namely, one sixtieth. And how many sheep [are the minimum to] be liable to the law of "the first of the fleece?" At least five sheep, as it is said (I, "[Then Abigail... took] and five prepared (עֲשֻׂיֹת) sheep" (Sam. 25:18). [The עֲשֻׂיֹת here, is interpreted as meaning that five sheep compel their owner and say to you, as it were, "Get up and fulfill the commandment of 'the first of the fleece.'"] Rabbi Akiva says: [that the minimum number of sheep liable to this commandment is derived from our verse here]: The phrase שְׁנֵי אֵימָרִים denotes two sheep; אֶתְּרֵי [an additional two, making] four, and אֶתְּרֵי אֶתְּרֵי denotes one more, which is a total of five sheep. -[Chul. 135a, 137a; Sifrei] to stand and serve From here we learn that [the Temple] service is performed only when standing.-[Sifrei, Sotah 38a]

6 And if the Levite comes One might think that Scripture is referring to an actual Levite [i.e., not a kohen]. Therefore it says, "And he may serve" (verse 7). And since Levites are not fit to serve in the whole service, we see that this verse is not referring to them [but rather to kohanim].-[Sifrei]

he may come whenever his soul desires... 7 and he may serve [This] teaches [us] that a kohen may come and offer his own freewill and obligatory sacrifices even when it is not his shift.- B. K. 109b] Another explanation: It further teaches concerning kohanim who come to the Temple [as pilgrims] on the Festivals, that they may offer [together with those of the shift] and perform the services connected with the sacrifices that are brought because of the Festival—for instance, the “additional offerings” of the Festival even though it is not their shift.- [Sifrei, Sukk. 55b]

8 They shall eat equal portions This teaches that they [the kohanim present as pilgrims on the Festivals] receive a portion of the hides [of the Festival burnt-offerings] and the flesh of the he-goats of sin-offerings [of the Festival]. Now one might think that [these kohanim may participate] also in sacrifices which are brought unrelated to the Festival, such as the תָּמִיד, the daily burnt-offerings, מוֹסְפֵי שַׁבָּת, additional offerings of the Sabbath [on which a Festival may coincide] and sacrificial vows and donations. Therefore, it says:

except what was sold by the forefathers Except what his ancestors sold [to one another] in the days of David and Samuel when the system of shifts was established, trading with each other thus, “You take your week, and I will take my week.”-[Sifrei ; Sukk. 56a]

9 you shall not learn to do [like the abominations of those nations] But you may learn [their practices] to understand [them] and to teach [them], i.e. to understand how degenerate their actions are, and to teach your children, “Do not do such and such, because this is a heathen custom!”-[Sifrei ; San. 68a]

10 who passes his son or daughter through fire This was the Molech worship. They made two bonfires on either side and passed the child between them both.-[San. 64b]

a soothsayer What is a soothsayer? One who takes his rod in his hand and says [as though to consult it], “Shall I go, or shall I not go?” Similarly, it says (Hos. 4:12), “My people takes counsel of his piece of wood, and his rod declares to him.”-[Sifrei]

a diviner of [auspicious] times Heb. מְעוֹנֵן. Rabbi Akiva says: These are people who determine the times (עוֹנוֹת) , saying, “Such-and-such a time is good to begin [a venture].” The Sages say, however, that this refers to those who “catch the eyes (עֵינַיִם)” [i.e., they deceive by creating optical illusions].

one who interprets omens [e.g.,] bread falling from his mouth, a deer crossing his path, or his stick falling from his hand.-[Sifrei, San. 65b]

11 or a charmer One who collects snakes, scorpions or other creatures into one place.

a pithom sorcerer This is a type of sorcery called pithom. The sorcerer raises the [spirit of the] dead, and it speaks from his [the sorcerer’s] armpit.

a yido’a sorcerer Here the sorcerer inserts a bone of the animal called yido’a into his mouth, and the bone speaks by means of sorcery.-[Sifrei, San. 65a]

or a necromancer As, for example, one who raises [the dead spirit] upon his membrum, or one who consults a skull.-[Sifrei, see San. 65b]

12 [For] whoever does these [things] [is an abomination to the Lord] It does not say, “one who does all these things,” but, “whoever does these things,” even one of them.-[Sifrei, Mak. 24a]

13 Be wholehearted with the Lord, your God Conduct yourself with Him with simplicity and depend on Him, and do not inquire of the future; rather, accept whatever happens to you with [unadulterated] simplicity and then, you will be with Him and to His portion.-[Sifrei]

14 [But...] the Lord your God has not given you to hearken to diviners of auspicious times and soothsayers, for He caused His Divine Presence to rest upon the prophets and upon the Urim and Tummim.-[Targum Jonathan]

15 [A prophet] from among you, from your brothers, like me This means: Just as I am among you, from your brothers, so will He set up for you [another prophet] in my stead, and so on, from prophet to prophet.

Tehillim (Psalms) 120:1 – 122:9

RASHI	TARGUM
1. A song of ascents. In my distress I called to the Lord, and He answered me.	1. A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. In the presence of the LORD, when I was in distress, I prayed, and He received my prayer.
2. O Lord, save my soul from false lips, from a deceitful tongue.	2. O LORD, deliver my soul from lips of deceit, from a deceptive tongue.
3. What can He give you, and what can He add to you, you deceitful tongue?	3. What does He give to you, O slanderer? And what does He add to you, O defamer, deceptive tongue?
4. Sharpened arrows of a mighty man with coals of brooms.	4. The arrows of a warrior, sharp as lightning from above, with coals of broom that burn in Gehenna below.
5. Woe is to me for I have sojourned in Meshech; I dwelt among the tents of Kedar.	5. Woe is me, for I have settled down with the oasis-dwellers; I have dwelt with the tents of the Arabs.
6. For a long time, my soul dwelt with those who hate peace.	6. More than these, my soul abides with Edom, the hater of peace.
7. I am at peace, but when I speak, they [come] to [wage] war.	7. I am peaceful, for I will pray; but they are for war.
1. A song for ascents. I shall raise my eyes to the mountains, from where will my help come?	1. A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. I will lift up my eyes to the mountains. Whence shall come my help?
2. My help is from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.	2. My help is from the presence of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.
3. He will not allow your foot to falter; Your Guardian will not slumber.	3. He will not allow your foot to falter, your guardian does not slumber.
4. Behold the Guardian of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.	4. Behold, He does not slumber and He will not sleep, the guardian of Israel.
5. The Lord is your Guardian; the Lord is your shadow; [He is] by your right hand.	5. The LORD will guard you, the LORD will overshadow you, on account of the mezuzah affixed on your right side as you enter.
6. By day, the sun will not smite you, nor will the moon at night.	6. By day, when the sun rules, the morning-demons will not smite you, nor will the liliths, at night, when the moon rules.
7. The Lord will guard you from all evil; He will guard	7. The word of the LORD will guard you from all harm,

RASHI	TARGUM
your soul.	He will guard your soul.
8. The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in from now and to eternity.	8. The LORD will guard your going out for business and your coming in to study Torah, from now and forevermore.
1. A song of ascents of David. I rejoiced when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."	1. A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. I rejoiced with those who say to me, "Let us go to the sanctuary of the LORD."
2. Our feet were standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.	2. Our feet were standing in your gates, O Jerusalem.
3. The built-up Jerusalem is like a city that was joined together within itself.	3. Jerusalem that is built in the firmament is like a city that has been joined together on earth.
4. There ascended the tribes, the tribes of God, testimony to Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord.	4. Unto which the tribes have gone up, the tribes of the LORD, He who testifies to Israel that His presence abides among them when they go to give thanks to the name of the LORD.
5. For there were set thrones for judgment, thrones for the house of David.	5. For there thrones have been placed; in Jerusalem thrones are in the sanctuary for the kings of the house of David.
6. Request the welfare of Jerusalem; may those who love you enjoy tranquility.	6. Seek the welfare of Jerusalem; those who love you will dwell in tranquility.
7. May there be peace in your wall, tranquility in your palaces.	7. Let there be peace in your armies, tranquility in your citadels.
8. For the sake of my brethren and my companions, I shall now speak of peace in you.	8. On account of my brothers and companions, I will now speak in you of peace.
9. For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I shall beg for goodness for you.	9. Because of the sanctuary of the LORD our God, I will seek to do good to you.

Rashi's Commentary on Tehillim (Psalms) 120:1-7; 121:1-8; & 122:1-9

Chapter 120

1 A song of ascents which the Levites will recite on the fifteen steps that go down from the Israelites' court to the Women's court, and there are fifteen psalms entitled "A song of ascents" (Suc. 5:4, Mid 2:5). And our Rabbis said that David composed them to raise the deep, as is explained in Tractate Succah (53a). And according to the Aggadah (Yerushalmi Sanh. 10:2, 52b), it is to be interpreted: A song for a hundred steps (שיר למאה עולות) .

2 from false lips The arm of those who hunt people with their mouth with wicked accusations.

3 What can He give you [What can] the Holy One, blessed be He [give you]?

and what can He add to you [What] safeguard and walls? Behold you are placed within two walls.

4 Sharpened arrows of a mighty man Behold you kill in a distant place like an arrow.

with coals of brooms All coals, when extinguished on the outside, are extinguished on the inside, but these

extinguish themselves on the outside but not on the inside (ibid.). Another explanation: What will He give you? What is the Holy One, blessed be He, destined to decree upon you? Arrows of a mighty man with coals of brooms. His arrows from above and Gehinnom from below.

5 Woe is to me says the congregation of Israel, for I have already suffered in many exiles. Behold I sojourned in Meshech with the sons of Japheth in the kingdom of Persia, Greece, and Meshech.

7 I am at peace With them.

but when I speak peacefully with them, they come to wage war with me.

Chapter 121

1 A song for ascents The simple meaning is that when the Levites began to ascend the steps, they recited this song. Although this song is not written first, there is no chronological sequence. (In other books I found:)

A song for ascents [The Psalmist] alludes, in the second psalm, to the steps that ascend for the righteous/generous in the future from beneath the tree of life to the Throne of Glory, as we learned in Sifrei (Ekev 47): "It does not say here, 'A song of ascents' but, 'A song for ascents'; a song for the One Who is destined to make ascents for the righteous/generous in the future." This is what the Kalir established (in the concluding poem of the morning service for the second day of Succoth, which was composed by Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Simon the son of Yochai in Chagigah, chapter "We may not expound," see there): "And from beneath them thirty steps, one above the other until the Throne of Glory, flying and ascending with the pleasant speech of the song of ascents."

Chapter 122

1 I rejoiced when they said to me I heard people saying, "When will that old man die, and his son Solomon reign and build the Temple, and we shall go up on the festival pilgrimages?" And I am happy.

2 Our feet were standing in battle everywhere because of the gates of Jerusalem, where they were engaged in Torah.

3 The built-up Jerusalem When my son Solomon builds the Temple within it [Jerusalem], it will be built with the Shechinah, the Temple, the Ark, and the altar.

is like a city that was joined together within itself Like Shiloh, for Scripture compared them to one another, as it is said (Deut. 12:9): "to the rest and to the inheritance." The rest is Shiloh. The inheritance is Jerusalem (see Sifrei Re'eh 66). And our Rabbis said (Ta'an. 5a): There is a Jerusalem in heaven, and the Jerusalem on earth is destined to be like it.

4 There ascended the tribes For there in Shiloh the tribes ascended when they went up from Egypt, and the Tabernacle was established in its midst.

the tribes of God Heb. יָדָה, which is testimony to Israel, for the heathens were talking about them when they left Egypt, and they would say about them that they were the offspring of adulterous unions. If the Egyptians ruled over their own bodies, surely [they ruled] over their wives. Said the Holy One, blessed be He, "I attest that they are the sons of their fathers." He bestowed His name upon them: the Reubenites (הַרְאוּבֵנִי), the Simeonites (הַשְּׁמֹנִי) (Num. 26). He added the letters of the name, one on this side and one on that side. The result is that

this name יהוה's testimony to Israel.

5 For there were set thrones, etc. For also in Jerusalem the Shechinah will rest, and thrones will sit there upon which to judge the nations, and the royal thrones of the house of David.

6 Request the welfare of Jerusalem and say to her, "May those who love you enjoy tranquility, and let there be peace in your wall."

8 For the sake of Israel, my brethren and my companions

I shall now speak I, King David, [shall now speak] of peace in you.

Meditation from the Psalms Psalms 120:1-7; 121:1-8; & 122:1-9 By H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

In the preceding composition, Psalm 119, David describes in vivid detail how Torah wisdom and mitzvah observance constitute the very basis of the world order, the alphabet of the universal design. The individual who follows this comprehensive program will surely be elevated and will experience blessing and success, as Solomon said: *The path of life for the wise leads upward.*¹

Now the Psalmist begins a series of fifteen psalms which describe the rising fortunes of the wise. Psalms 120 through 134 are collectively known as the Psalms of ascent. Midrash Shocher Tov comments that the title of each psalm is not, *A Song of Ascent* (singular), but *A Song of Ascents* (plural), because when the Children of Israel are worthy to ascend, they do not climb one step at a time; rather, they mount many rungs at once. As Scripture states: *And you shall be in constant ascent.*² Conversely, if they fail to follow God's instructions, the Children of Israel descend many levels at once, as Scripture warns, *And you shall fall very low.*³

R' Saadiah Gaon comments that the music which accompanied these fifteen psalms reflected the theme of Ascents, for with each successive psalm the Levites played the music louder and in a higher key.⁴

These fifteen psalms were sung in the Temple, for it was in that sacred location that the Jew was catapulted toward successively higher summits. In the Temple, Israel declared that man must not be spiritually stagnant; the world is composed of infinite degrees of goodness, and man's mission is to scale the *spiritual heights*, which rise from earth heavenward.⁵

The Talmud tells us that these fifteen Psalms were composed by King David:

¹ Mishlei (Proverbs) 15:24

² Debarim (Deuteronomy) 28:13

³ Debarim (Deuteronomy) 28:43

⁴ see Ibn Ezra and Meiri

⁵ These introductory comments were 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.



Sukkah 53a FIFTEEN STEPS. R. Hisda said to a certain Rabbi who was arranging his Aggadas before him, 'Have you heard in correspondence to what David composed his fifteen Songs of Ascent?' — 'Thus', the other replied, 'said R. Johanan: When David dug the Pits the Deep rose up and threatened to submerge the world, and David thereupon uttered the fifteen Songs of Ascent and caused its waves to subside'.

Curiously, the format of Psalm 120 is the structure of a menorah.

Our chapter of Psalms seems focused on the tongue:

Tehillim (Psalms) 120:2-3 HaShem, deliver my soul from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue. 3 What shall be given unto thee, and what shall be done more unto thee, thou deceitful tongue?

I would like to take a deeper look at the tongue and what it represents in order to gain an understanding of the power of a 'deceitful tongue'. The tongue, and the words that the tongue forms, is no longer the organ, with its intended power, that God created in the beginning because of the sin of Babel.

The Torah tells us that from the time of creation until the incident at Bavel, that the whole earth had one language and one speech.

Bereshit (Genesis) 11:1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

Why are we told one language AND one speech? Aren't these the same thing? Clearly HaShem is trying to tell us that two facets of communication were the same. Chazal,⁶ based on these two words, teach us that not only did everyone speak Hebrew, but when they spoke they actually communicated! The ideas in the speaker's mind were exactly the same ideas that were understood by the listener. There was no miscommunication. There was no misunderstanding.

However, because of the sin at Bavel, HaShem confused the language and the speech.

Bereshit (Genesis) 11:6-9 And HaShem said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8 So HaShem scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because HaShem did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did HaShem scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Midrash Rabbah - Genesis XXXVIII:8 AND THEY SAID: COME, LET US BUILD US A CITY, AND A TOWER (XI, 4). R. Judan said: The tower they built, but they did not build the city. An objection is raised: But it is written, And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower (ib. 5)? Read what follows, he replied: And they left off to build the city (ib. 8), the tower, however, not being mentioned. R. Hiyya b. Abba said: A third of this tower which they built sank [into the earth],

⁶ Chazal is an acronym for the Hebrew "Chachameinu Zichronam Livracha", (חכמינו זכרונם לברכה), literally "our sages of blessed memory".

a third was burnt, while a third is still standing. And should you think that it [the remaining third] is small--R. Huna said in R. Idi's name: When one ascends to the top, he sees the palm trees below him like grasshoppers. AND LET US MAKE A NAME (SHEM). The School of R. Ishmael taught: SHEM (A NAME) means nought else but an idol. LEST WE BE SCATTERED ABROAD UPON THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH. R. Simeon b. Halputha [Halafta] quoted: A fool's mouth is his ruin (Prov. XVIII, 7).⁷

When HaShem confused the language, we no longer spoke Hebrew only. In addition, even when we speak the same language, there is a disconnect between what I want to communicate and what the listener actually understands. The Targum gives us some insight in this matter:

Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Bereshit (Genesis) 11:1-32 XI. *And all the earth was (of) one language, and one speech, and one counsel. In the holy language they spoke, that by which the world had been created at the beginning. And it was while they were journeying from the east that they found a plain in the land of Bavel, and dwelt there.*

[JERUSALEM. And all the inhabitants of the earth were (of) one language, and of one speech, and one counsel: for they spoke the holy language by which the world was created at the beginning: while their hearts erred afterwards from the Word of Him who spoke, and the world was, at the beginning; and they found a plain in the land of Pontos and dwelt there.]

Rashi tells us that the one language was Hebrew: **One language** - [That language was] the holy language [Hebrew].

In addition to Hebrew, we now had Spanish, Greek, Russian, Swahili, English, and a whole host of other languages.

Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Bereshit (Genesis) 11:1-32 *And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and the language of all of them one: and this they have thought to do: and now they will not be restrained from doing whatever they imagine. And the Lord said to the seventy angels which stand before Him, Come, we will descend and will there commingle their language, that a man shall not understand the speech of his neighbor. And the Word of the Lord was revealed against the city, and with Him seventy angels, having reference to seventy nations, each having its own language, and thence the writing of its own hand: and He dispersed them from thence upon the face of all the earth into seventy languages. And one knew not what his neighbor would say: but one slew the other; and they ceased from building the city. Therefore He called the name of it Babel, because there did the Lord commingle the speech of all the inhabitants of the earth, and from thence did the Lord disperse them upon the faces of all the earth.*

Targum Onkelos on Bereshit (Genesis) 11:1-4 *And all the earth was of one language and one speech. And it was in their migrations at the beginning, that they found a plain in the land of Babel, and dwelt there. And they said, a man to his companion, Come, let us cast bricks and bake them in the fire. And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. And they said, Come, let us build a city, and a tower, the head of it coming to the pinnacle of the heavens. And we will make to us a name, lest we be dispersed upon the face of all the earth. And the Lord was revealed to punish the work of the city and the tower which the sons of men had builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the*

⁷ By saying this they unconsciously prophesied their fate and were themselves responsible for it.

people is one and the language one with all of them: and this is what they begin to do. And now nothing will be restrained from them of what they imagine to do. Come, We will be manifest, and will confuse their language there, that a man shall not bear the language of his companion. And the Lord dispersed them from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they were restrained from building the city. Therefore the name of it is called Confusion, because the Lord there confused the tongue of all the earth, and from thence the Lord dispersed them upon the face of all the earth.

We still had Hebrew, however. Avraham and those of his family (Shem, Eber, Noach, etc.) continued to speak Hebrew, though the understanding of the words was now confused.⁸

Avodah Zarah 19a R. Simeon b. Pazi expounded [that verse as follows]: 'Happy is the man that hath not walked' — i.e., to theatres and circuses of idolaters 'nor stood in the way of sinners' — that is he who does not attend contests of wild beasts; 'nor sat in the seat of the scornful' — that is he who does not participate in [evil] plannings. And lest one say, 'Since I do not go to theatres or circuses nor attend contests of wild animals, I will go and indulge in sleep.' Scripture therefore continues, 'And in His Law doth He meditate day and night.' Said R. Samuel b. Nahmani in the name of R. Jonathan: Happy is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the wicked — that is our father Abraham who did not follow the counsel of the men of the Generation of the Division⁹ who were wicked, as it is said, Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, with its top in heaven,' nor stood in the way of sinners — for he did not take up the stand of the Sodomites, who were sinful, as it is said, Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinful against the Lord exceedingly; nor sat in the seat of the scornful — for he did not sit in the company of the Philistines, because they were scoffers; as it is said, And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said: Call for Samson that he may make us sport.¹⁰

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, in his commentary on the Torah, points out that the word ba-lahl - בלל, normally translated as "confused", really means "to mix two elements together as one through the introduction of a third element", such as in the mixing of dry particles of flour together through the introduction of water or oil, thereby making the flour particles into one dough. In other words, what is being implied in the word ba-lahl - בלל, in the verse, is that all HaShem did was to introduce something new into the formation of their speech, and this new element must by itself have brought about the condition whereby people no longer understood each other. What then was this new element that was the ultimate cause of the breakdown of the world's universal language with the resultant formation of all the other languages? Clearly, as Hakham Hirsch tells us, it was the subjective element whereby words no longer properly relate to each other, but are subject to the whims of the speaker.

It seems to be indicated in the words of our Prophets that the evolution of many different languages, after the dispersion, was detrimental to the ultimate perfection and unity that mankind strives for; and that only when the Messiah comes, and all peoples of the earth will once again speak in the Holy Tongue, will we achieve that perfection and unity. The prophet Zephania speaks of the future Messianic Era when he writes,

⁸ Avraham and his family lived in Shinar and observed the building of the tower at Bavel. Since they did not participate their language was not as confused as those who did take part in the building of the tower.

⁹ The builders of the Tower of Babel. Abraham was a younger contemporary of Peleg in whose days was the earth divided. (Gen. X, 25.)

¹⁰ Judges XVI, 25.

Zephania 3:9 For then I will change the nations [to speak] a pure language, so that they all will proclaim the Name of HaShem, to worship Him with a united resolve.

What is so special about language, and the Hebrew language in particular, that the dispersion and downfall of mankind, as well as his ultimate perfection, all depends on it? There is a major, qualitative difference between (Biblical) Hebrew and all the other languages. According to tradition, all the other languages are the product of human beings, while Hebrew was created by HaShem Himself. In fact, we are taught that Hebrew pre-existed the world itself! And the Sages tell us that when HaShem created the world, He created it by means of the holy tongue. Evidence is cited from the Hebrew words *ish* (man) and *isha* (woman). The Torah informs us that woman was so named:

Bereshit (Genesis 2:3) because she was taken from man.

A reasoning which would only make sense if man and woman were created by means of the holy language in which *ish* and *isha* are simply the masculine and feminine versions of the same word.

But the difference between Hebrew and all other languages is much, much deeper. As Rabbi Akiva Tatz explains in his book *World Mask*, in the Hebrew language with which the Torah was written, words express essence, and close study of the words is rewarded by an understanding of the nature of the ideas that those words describe. In other languages of the secular world, words are also revealing: the language of the culture reveals its heart. How a particular culture express an idea through language gives insight into the values of that culture. In Torah, words express essence because words are in fact the basis for the existence of those things which they describe. HaShem created objects in this world by saying the words for those objects. When He said, "Let there be *ohr* (light)" - light automatically came into being. The words are the medium of Creation, and a correct grasp of the words is a correct grasp of the essence of the objects those words represent.

Rabbi Hirsch explains that the sin of the builders of the Tower of Babel was that they wanted to unify themselves and achieve a so-called "perfect society" without HaShem's being in the picture. They wanted to "make a name for themselves", as the Torah says, and not to submit to HaShem's will and plan. Whereas HaShem had given human beings the ability to unite in their understanding of the world and its purpose - as reflected in their common, HaShem-given Hebrew language - which would in turn enable them to express HaShem's will in this world and to bring it to perfection, the inhabitants of the world instead united against HaShem. They felt that as a united entity, nothing could stop them from their desired goals, and that this could be accomplished without HaShem's help. And when human beings band together to "perfect" humanity without HaShem in the picture - nothing can be more dangerous than that.

So HaShem set out to destroy the unity of the world's inhabitants. And He did so by injecting (*ba'lal* - בלל) subjectivity into their minds and ideas, which, of course, was reflected in their language. This automatically caused them not to understand each other. No longer would they all speak Hebrew, thus understanding the objective essence of all things in creation. Now, each person would name things and speak a language that suited his or her human, subjective, and distorted understanding of all that exists.

Of course, as soon as all the nations stopped speaking Hebrew, they lost the chance to be HaShem's "chosen people" who would bring perfection to mankind by expressing HaShem's will in this world. And it was left to one man and his descendants - Avraham and the Jewish people - to inherit the sole ownership of the Holy Tongue, thereby understanding the true essence of all that HaShem created, and expressing that Divine Will in this world, leading all of mankind to its ultimate perfection.

Those who spoke Hebrew were not excluded from this confusion. Part of this confusion was the diversity of words that were not always known by everyone. Thus, even those who spoke the same language did not all have the same vocabulary. This problem persists into our day.

In addition to having the languages become confused, HaShem also confused their speech. This confusion resulted in the great communication difficulties that we all experience today. One has to work very hard to communicate one's thoughts. Somehow when we package our thoughts into words, the words no longer re-create our thoughts when they are heard by the listener. This confusion affected even Hebrew.

Now, let's look at the tongue that helps to form speech.

There are two covenantal parts of the body:

1. "Brit HaLashon", the covenant of the tongue.
2. "Brit Milah", the covenant of circumcision.

The Sepher Yetzirah 1:3. Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: The number of the ten fingers, five opposite five, with a single covenant precisely in the middle, like the circumcision of the tongue and the circumcision of the membrum.

The *Brit Milah*, the male organ, is used to bring a soul down from the upper world and clothe it in a physical body. The father's sperm, a mother's egg, and HaShem, all work together to draw a soul down from the upper world. This soul is then given a physical body with which to elevate itself by performing the will of HaShem.

The *Brit HaLashon*, the tongue, is used to bring the soul, in a physical body, into the Olam HaBa, the world to come. A teacher's words, a talmid's ears to hear, and HaShem work together to lead a soul from this world into the next world, the Olam HaBa.

This is the complete understanding of what Abraham and Sarah did in Haran. At the Peshat level it means they brought children into the world. At the sod level they brought their talmidim into the Olam HaBa. This is what the Torah is saying:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 12:5** And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had made in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.*

Bearing children and bearing talmidim are both the same thing. One is in this world and the other is in the next world. The lower form of connection brings a body into the world, the higher form of connection brings a mind into the next world.

Daat is the central line that connects the right- and left-hand sides of the body. It runs through the central organs in the body. It runs through the Brit HaLashon (the tongue), and the Brit Mila (the organ of circumcision), the two male organs. These are the two organs that make fruit in the world. The Brit HaLashon we use to make talmidim, spiritual children, who will enter the Olam HaBa and the Brit Mila we use to make physical children.

In the lower world, *physical* sperm is used to draw a soul from the upper world and give that soul physical life.

In the lower world, *non-physical* words are used to draw a soul from the lower world and give that soul spiritual life.

Horayoth 13a GEMARA. Our Rabbis taught: If a man and his father and his teacher were in captivity he takes precedence over his teacher and his teacher takes precedence over his father, while his mother takes precedence over all of them.

The Talmud, in Horayoth 13a, suggests that if one's father and one's teacher were both drowning, G-d forbid, a man is required to save his teacher first, unless his father also paid for the Torah teaching for his son. The logic for this is as follows: A man's father brought him into this world, but a teacher brings a man into the next world, the Olam HaBa.

The mouth is a place of connection, both physically between people, and spiritually. The mouth is used for three things: Speaking, eating, and kissing. If one organ is used for three things, then the three things must be the same. These three are used for connecting.

Speech is the vehicle that an infinite neshama¹¹ shares its heart with a finite world. The most explicit intimate connection that can exist between two people is speech. Speech, which comes from the mouth, is capable of allowing another person, at some level, to understand what is in our soul. So, it is also with the infinite G-d and His finite world. HaShem **spoke** to man through the *Keruvim*¹² in the Bet HaMikdash, which was where HaShem's connection to the world is most manifest.

The place of circumcision is the medium through which man pours his physical life force into the universe, while the tongue is the medium through which man pours his thoughts and ideas into the world.

The life force in man is focused in three places, his intelligence, his organs of reproduction, and his heart. Two of these he has the obligation to circumcise. On the eighth day his parents circumcise his organ of reproduction. It is up to the parents to turn their child into a channel for HaShem's goodness to enter the world through proper training and education. If they do their job well, parents can correct this defect. It is up to the individual himself to circumcise his tongue, to employ his adult intelligence to open his eyes and ears to the positive in other people and in the world.

Now that we have some understanding of speech and the organ that forms speech, let's take another view of the 'deceitful tongue'.

Zephaniah 3:13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make [them] afraid.

Midrash Tanchuma Vayikra (Lev.) 14:1-32 5.5 Leviticus 14: 1ff., Part V

Who can stand against them? And who will stand against them? Gehinnom? But Gehinnom also cries out: I am unable to stand against them. <Then> the Holy One said: I <will come at them> from above and you

¹¹ Neshama = soul

¹² Keruvim (cherubim) the guardians of the Tree of Life.

(Gehinnom), from below. I will hurl darts from above; and you will turn on them with burning coals from below. Thus, it is stated (in Ps. 120:3-4): <WHAT SHALL BE GIVEN TO YOU, AND WHAT SHALL BE YOUR GAIN, YOU DECEITFUL TONGUE?

Midrash Tehillim Psalms 120:2-4 In my distress I called unto the Lord ... Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue (Ps. 120:1-2). The children of Israel said to the Holy One, blessed be He: Even as You have delivered us from all kinds of distress, deliver us from this one, and we will have no other distress, for lying lips—in them is our distress. Hence it is said Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, etc.

Of all the organs of a man's body, some are fixed in place and some have freedom of movement; his feet make him free to come and go, his hands make it possible for him to give and take. Only the tongue is neither fixed nor free. Being set inside it is isolated and hemmed in. And yet the tongue can smite the great and the small, the near and the far. It could smite all the more fatally, if it were outside a man's body, or if like some other parts it could give and take, or if like the feet it were free to come and go.

III. What will it profit you, or what will be added unto you, you false tongue? (Ps. 120:3): What will your falseness profit you, or what good can it do you? The tongue sins, but not for its own advantage.

The Holy One, blessed be He, says to the tongue: When a thief steals, he steals to eat. Though it is written You will not steal (Ex. 20:13), a thief will steal for the need of the moment, as it is said Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry (Prov. 6:30). And though it is written You will not commit adultery (Ex. 20:13), a man will commit adultery and for the moment satisfy his appetite, as is said He that commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he that does it destroys his own soul (Prov. 6:32). Though the adulterer destroys his own soul, yet for the moment he satisfies his lust. But you, O tongue, what good have you done yourself by your slaying? I will tell you, O evil/lawless tongue, how I am going to act towards you! Even as you did act towards the world from the beginning—as a serpent you spoke evil to Adam—so will I act towards you. You were also the serpent tongue of the wilderness, when, as it is written, The people spoke against God and against Moses (Num. 21:5). And how did the Lord act towards them? The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people (ibid. 21:6). Why serpents? Because it was a serpent that spoke evil/lawlessness, as is said They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; vipers' venom is under their lips (Ps. 140:4). And so I made those evil-tongued children of Israel into the dust that I had decreed for the serpent: Dust will you eat (Gen. 3:14).

IV. What will it profit you, or what will be added unto you, you false tongue? (Ps. 120:3). The evil/lawless tongue is called "triple-slaying." Why? Because it slays three: the one who owns it, the one who listens to it, and the one of whom it speaks. And so you find in the story of Doeg that it slew three. It slew Doeg himself, for he has no portion in the world-to-come; it slew Ahimelech the priest, for it is said And Nob the city of the priests [Doeg] smote with the edge of the sword (1 Sam. 22:19); it also slew Saul, who listened to it and accepted its words, for it is said So Saul died, and his three sons (ibid.) And the wicked/lawless kingdom (Rome) slays with its tongue as does a serpent, for it is said The voice thereof will go like a serpent (Jer. 46:22).

The tongue is like an arrow. Why? Because if a man takes his sword in hand to slay his fellow, who thereupon pleads with him and begs for mercy, the would-be slayer can repent and return the sword to its sheath. But an arrow—once the would-be slayer aims and lets it go, he cannot bring it back

even if he wants to bring it back. Hence it is said Sharp are the arrows of the mighty, like coals of broom (Ps. 320:4), for a broom-shrub once set on fire makes coals that cannot be extinguished.

Once it happened that two men going through the wilderness sat down under a broom-shrub, gathered some fallen twigs of the broom, broiled for themselves what they wanted to eat, and ate their victuals. A year later when they came back into the wilderness to the place of the broom-shrub and found the ashes of the fire which they had kindled, they said: "It is now twelve months since we came through here and ate in this place." Thereupon they raked up the ashes, and as they walked over them, their feet were burnt by the coals under the ashes, for they were still unextinguished. Hence the evil tongue is said to be like coals of broom, as in the verse Sharp are the arrows of the mighty, like coals of broom (Ps. 120:4).

A wicked/lawless man can slay other men with his tongue. Like an arrow which a man is unaware of until it reaches him, so is the evil tongue. A man is unaware of it until its arrows from the kingdom of Esau come suddenly upon him. A man remains unaware of it until suddenly a sentence of death or imprisonment is released against him. For while the man is given over to his own affairs, the scribes libel him wherever he may be and so slay him. Hence it is said Sharp are the arrows of the mighty. Thus Moses said to Israel: You will not be afraid of the terror by night (Ps. 91:5)—that is, of the terror of the kingdom of Esau; and he went on to say, Nor of the arrow that flies by day (ibid.)—that is, the arrow of the scribes of Esau. Hence it is said Sharp are the arrows of the mighty.

Think about the tongue and how it is supposed to be used. Now imagine the penalty for its misuse. That should be a very sobering thought.

Ashlamatah Yeshayahu (Issaiah) 33:22 – 34:8

Rashi	Targum
22. For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our ruler; the Lord is our king ; He shall save us.	22. For the LORD is our judge, who brought us by his might out of Egypt, the LORD is our teacher, who gave us the teaching of his law from Sinai, the LORD is our king ; He will save us and take just retribution for us from the armies of Gog.
23. Your ropes are loosed, not to strengthen their mast properly; they did not spread out a sail; then plunder [and] booty were divided by many; the lame takes the prey.	23. In that time the Gentiles will be broken of their strength, and will resemble a ship whose ropes are cut, which has no strength in their mast, which has been cut, and it is not possible to spread a sail on it. Then the house of Israel will divide the possessions of the Gentiles, booty and spoil in abundance; although there are blind and lame among them, even they will divide booty and spoil in abundance.
24. And the neighbor shall not say, "I am sick." The people dwelling therein is forgiven of sin.	24. From now on they will not say to the people who dwell in safety all around the Shekhinah, "From you a stroke of sickness has come upon

	us"; the people, the house of Israel, will be gathered and return to their place, forgiven of their sins.
1. Nations, come near to hear, and kingdoms, hearken. The earth and the fullness thereof, the world and all its offspring.	1. Draw near, O peoples, to hear, and hearken, O kingdoms! Let the earth listen, and all that fills it; the world, and all that reside in it.
2. For the Lord has indignation against all the nations and wrath against all their host. He has destroyed them; He has given them to the slaughter.	2. For there is anger before the LORD against all the Gentiles, and slaughter against all their armies, he has declared them sinners, handed them over for slaughter.
3. And their slain ones shall be thrown, and their corpses-their stench shall rise, and mountains shall melt from their blood.	3. Their slain will be cast out, and the smoke of their corpses will rise; the mountains will flow with their blood,
4. And all the host of heaven shall melt, and the heavens shall be rolled like a scroll, and all their host shall wither as a leaf withers from a vine, and as a withered [fig] from a fig tree.	4. All the forces of heaven will melt completely and be wiped from under the skies just as was said concerning them in the scroll. All their armies will come to an end as leaves fall from a vine, like what is withered from a fig.
5. For My sword has become sated in the heaven. Behold, it shall descend upon Edom, and upon the nation with whom I contend, for judgment.	5. For My sword will be revealed in the heavens; behold it will be revealed for the judgment upon Edom, upon the people I have declared sinners.
6. The Lord's sword has become full of blood, made fat with fatness, from the blood of lambs and goats, from the fat of the kidneys of rams, for the Lord has a slaughter in Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.	6. The sword from the LORD is sated with blood, it is gorged with fat, with the blood of kings and rulers, with the fat of the kidneys of princes. For there is slaughter from the LORD in Bozrah, and great sacrifice in the land of Edom.
7. And wild oxen shall go down with them, and bulls with fat bulls, and their land shall be sated from blood, and their dust shall become saturated from fat.	7. Mighty ones will be killed with them, and rulers with tyrants. Their land will be soaked with their blood, and their soil made rich with their fat.
8. For it is a day of vengeance for the Lord, a year of retribution for the plea of Zion.	8. For there is a day of vengeance <i>before</i> the LORD, a year of recompense, to take just retribution for the mortification of Zion.

Rashi's Commentary on Isaiah 33:22 – 34:8

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

23 Your ropes that draw the ship, you sinful city. ([Mss. yield:] you, sinful Rome.)
properly prepared well.

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

then plunder [and] booty were divided (sg) related to, plunder, in Aramaic.

by many Many will divide the plunder of the heathens. ([Mss. yield:] the plunder of Edom.) ([Others:] the nations.)

([Still others:] Sennacherib.)

lame Israel, who were weak until now.

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

"I am sick" Because of this nation, this misfortune has befallen me, for

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

Chapter 34

4 And all the host of heaven will melt They will be frightened when I cast down the princes of the heathens.([Mss. yield:] the princes of the nations.) ([Warsaw edition:] of Assyria and Babylon.)

will be rolled an expression of rolling. And the heavens will be rolled like a scroll. Jonathan renders: And they will be erased from beneath the heavens, as it is stated about them in the Book. But I explain it according to the context, for now, the kingdoms of the Ishmaelites (the nations [ms.]) (the wicked [Warsaw ed.]) have fortune and light. When they are erased and destroyed, it will be as though the world has darkened for them, as though the sun and the light are rolled up like the rolling of a scroll.

and as a withered [fig] from a fig tree The withered fruit of a tree. This is what our Rabbis (Ber. 40b) explained: What are 'noveloth'? Fruit ripened in the heater, that become ripe in the heater. After they are picked, he gathers them and they become heated and ripen.

5 For My sword has become sated in the heaven To slay the heavenly princes, and afterward it will descend on the nation Ishmael ([mss. and Kli Paz:] Edom) ([Warsaw ed.:] Babylonians) below, for no nation suffers until its prince suffers in heaven.

the nation with whom I contend, the nation with whom I battle. This is a Mishnaic expression: (Keth. 17b) They taught this in connection with time of strife. Comp. (I Kings 20:42) "The man with whom I contend" referring to Ahab.

6 lambs and goats princes and governors.

in Bozrah It is from the land of Moab, but since it supplied a king for Edom, as it is stated (Gen. 36:33): "And Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead," it will, therefore, suffer with them. This is found in Pesikta.

7 wild oxen with them Kings with governors, wild oxen with the goats mentioned above. **fat bulls** (oh¹rh^c©t) fat and large bulls, as it is stated (Ps. 22:13): "Fat bulls of Bashan surrounded me."

8 retribution for the plea of Zion That He will mete out punishment (lit., pay a reward) for the plea of Zion, who cries before Him to judge her from those who harm her.

Verbal Connections

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

Debarim (Deuteronomy) 17:14–18:19

Tehillim (Psalms) 120

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 33:22 – 34:8

Mk 14:66-72, Jam. 2:25-26

The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Psalm are:

LORD - יהוה, Strong's number 03068.
Giveth / Delivered / Given - נתן, Strong's number 05414.

The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:

Land / Earth - ארץ, Strong's number 0776.
LORD - יהוה, Strong's number 03068.
Giveth / Delivered / Given - נתן, Strong's number 05414.
Dwell - ישב, Strong's number 03427.
Say - אמר, Strong's number 0559.
King - מלך, Strong's number 04428.
Nations - , Strong's number 01471.

Debarim (Deuteronomy) 17:14 When thou art come unto the **land <0776>** which the **LORD <03068>** thy God **giveth <05414> (8802)** thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt **dwell <03427> (8804)** therein, and shalt **say <0559> (8804)**, I will set a **king <04428>** over me, like as all the **nations <01471>** that are about me;

Tehillim (Psalms) 120:1 « A Song of degrees. » In my distress I cried unto the **LORD <03068>**, and he heard me.
Tehillim (Psalms) 120:3 What shall be **given <05414> (8799)** unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 33:22 For the **LORD <03068>** is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the **LORD <03068>** is our **king <04428>**; he will save us.
Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 33:24 And the inhabitant shall not **say <0559> (8799)**, I am sick: the people that **dwell <03427> (8802)** therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.
Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 34:1 Come near, ye **nations <01471>**, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the **earth <0776>** hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.
Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 34:2 For the indignation of the **LORD <03068>** is upon all **nations <01471>**, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath **delivered <05414> (8804)** them to the slaughter.

Hebrew:

Hebrew	English	Torah Reading Deut.17:14–18:19	Psalms 120:1 – 122:9	Ashlamatah Is 33:22 – 34:8
אָח	brethren, brother	Deut. 17:15 Deut. 17:20 Deut. 18:2 Deut. 18:7 Deut. 18:15 Deut. 18:18	Ps. 122:8	
אֱלֹהִים	God	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 Deut. 17:19 Deut. 18:5 Deut. 18:7 Deut. 18:9 Deut. 18:12 Deut. 18:13 Deut. 18:14 Deut. 18:15 Deut. 18:16	Ps. 122:9	
אָמַר	say, speak, spoke	Deut. 17:14	Ps. 122:1	Isa. 33:24

Hebrew	English	Torah Reading Deut.17:14–18:19	Psalms 120:1 – 122:9	Ashlamatah Is 33:22 – 34:8
		Deut. 17:16 Deut. 18:16 Deut. 18:17		
אָרֶץ	land, earth, ground, country	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 18:9	Ps. 121:2	Isa. 34:1 Isa. 34:6 Isa. 34:7
בּוֹא	come, go	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 18:6 Deut. 18:9	Ps. 121:1 Ps. 121:8	
גָּדוֹל	great, high	Deut. 18:16		Isa. 34:6
גּוֹי	nations	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 18:9 Deut. 18:14		Isa. 34:1 Isa. 34:2
גִּיר	dwells	Deut. 18:6	Ps. 120:5	
דִּבֵּר	said, says	Deut. 18:2 Deut. 18:17 Deut. 18:18 Deut. 18:19	Ps. 120:7 Ps. 122:8	
הַר	hills, mountain		Ps. 121:1	Isa. 34:3
זָבַח	sacrifice	Deut. 18:3		Isa. 34:6
תָּכַר	conjures, compact	Deut. 18:11	Ps. 122:3	
יְהוָה	LORD	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 Deut. 17:16 Deut. 17:19 Deut. 18:1 Deut. 18:2 Deut. 18:5 Deut. 18:6 Deut. 18:7 Deut. 18:9 Deut. 18:12 Deut. 18:13 Deut. 18:14 Deut. 18:15 Deut. 18:16 Deut. 18:17	Ps. 120:1 Ps. 120:2 Ps. 121:2 Ps. 121:5 Ps. 121:7 Ps. 121:8 Ps. 122:1 Ps. 122:4 Ps. 122:9	Isa. 33:22 Isa. 34:2 Isa. 34:6 Isa. 34:8
יוֹם	day, today	Deut. 17:19 Deut. 17:20 Deut. 18:5 Deut. 18:16		Isa. 34:8
יְמִין	right hand	Deut. 17:20	Ps. 121:5	
יִסָּף	again	Deut. 17:16 Deut. 18:16	Ps. 120:3	
יָשַׁב	dwell	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:18	Ps. 122:5	Isa. 33:24
יִשְׂרָאֵל	Israel	Deut. 17:20 Deut. 18:1 Deut. 18:6	Ps. 121:4 Ps. 122:4	
כִּסֵּא	throne	Deut. 17:18	Ps. 122:5	
מֶלֶךְ	king	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15		Isa. 33:22
מִשְׁפָּט	due, judgment	Deut. 18:3	Ps. 122:5	Isa. 34:5
נַפְשׁ	mind, soul	Deut. 18:6	Ps. 120:2	

Hebrew	English	Torah Reading Deut.17:14–18:19	Psalms 120:1 – 122:9	Ashlamatah Is 33:22 – 34:8
			Ps. 120:6 Ps. 121:7	
נָשָׂא	lift up, shall be forgiven		Ps. 121:1	Isa. 33:24
נָתַן	give, gave, given, giving	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:15 Deut. 18:3 Deut. 18:4 Deut. 18:9 Deut. 18:14 Deut. 18:18	Ps. 120:3 Ps. 121:3	Isa. 34:2
סֵפֶר	book	Deut. 17:18		Isa. 34:4
עָלָה	go up, rise		Ps. 122:4	Isa. 34:3
עַם	people	Deut. 17:16 Deut. 18:3		Isa. 33:24 Isa. 34:5
עָמַד	stand	Deut. 18:5 Deut. 18:7	Ps. 122:2	
עָשָׂה	observe, see, saw, seen	Deut. 17:19 Deut. 18:9 Deut. 18:12	Ps. 121:2	
קָרָא	read, cried, call	Deut. 17:19	Ps. 120:1	
שָׁאַל	medium, ask	Deut. 18:11 Deut. 18:16	Ps. 122:6	
שִׁבְט	tribe	Deut. 18:1 Deut. 18:5	Ps. 122:4	
שֵׁם	name	Deut. 18:5 Deut. 18:7 Deut. 18:19	Ps. 122:4	
שָׁמַיִם	heaven		Ps. 121:2	Isa. 34:4 Isa. 34:5
שָׁמַע	hear, listened	Deut. 18:14 Deut. 18:15 Deut. 18:16 Deut. 18:19		Isa. 34:1
שָׁמַר	careful, keep, guard	Deut. 17:19	Ps. 121:3 Ps. 121:4 Ps. 121:5 Ps. 121:7 Ps. 121:8	
שַׁעַר	gates	Deut. 18:6	Ps. 122:2	

Greek:

GREEK	ENGLISH	Torah Reading Deut.17:14–18:19	Psalms 120:1 – 122:9	Ashlamatah Is 33:22 – 34:8	Peshat Mishnah of Mark, 1-2 Peter, & Jude Mk 14:66-72	Tosefta of Luke	Remes/Gemara of Acts/Romans and James Jam. 2:25-26
άνθρωπος	man, men	Deu 17:15 Deu 18:19			Mk. 14:71		
αὐλή	courtyards		Psa 122:2		Mk. 14:66		
εἶπω	said	Deut. 17:14 Deut. 17:16 Deut. 18:2 Deut. 18:17		Isa. 33:24	Mk. 14:72		
λέγω	saying	Deu 18:16			Mk. 14:67		

GREEK	ENGLISH	Torah Reading Deut.17:14-18:19	Psalms 120:1 – 122:9	Ashlamatah Is 33:22 – 34:8	Peshat Mishnah of Mark, 1-2 Peter, & Jude Mk 14:66-72	Tosefta of Luke	Remes/Gemara of Acts/Romans and James Jam. 2:25-26
					Mk. 14:68 Mk. 14:69 Mk. 14:70 Mk. 14:71		
ὁδός	way	Deu 17:16					Jas. 2:25
παριστημι	beside, stand	Deu 18:5 Deu 18:7			Mk. 14:69 Mk. 14:70		
ῥήμα	word	Deu 18:18			Mk. 14:72		

NAZAREAN TALMUD
SIDRA OF "D'BARIM (DEUT.) 17:14 – 18:19
"ASIMAH ALAI MELEKH" - "I WILL SET A KING [OVER ME]"
BY: H. EM RABBI DR. ELIJAHU BEN ABRAHAM &

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM TSEFET'S PESHAT
MORDECHAI (MK)

עכשיו, כשצפת היה מתחת לחצר

Now when Tsefet was below in the courtyard, one of the Kohen Gadol's servant¹³ girls came (to the courtyard below the house). And when she saw Tsefet warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Yeshua the Nazarean." But he denied it, saying, "I do not know, nor do I understand what you are talking about." And he went out on the forecourt, and the Temple¹⁴ crier¹⁵ called out. And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood around, "This is (one) of them" (the talmidim of Yeshua). But he refused to acknowledge (Yeshua) again. And a little later those who stood by said to Tsefet again, "Surely you are (one) of them; for you are a Galilean,¹⁶ and your speech resembles (a Galilean)." Then he took an oath and swore,¹⁷ (that he was not one of Yeshua's associates, by saying) I do not know this man you are talking about!" A second time the Temple crier called out. Then Tsefet remembered the prophetic words that Yeshua had said to him, "Before the Temple crier calls out twice, you will disassociate yourself from me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept (in repentance).

לא היה רהב

Jas. 2:25-26 And in the same way was not Rahav the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead

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

Dt 12:20-13:19	Ps 119:73-104	Is 54:2-9+17	Mordechai 14:66-72	Rm 11:25-32
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COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM TSEFET'S SCHOOL OF PESHAT TO
"ASIMAH ALAI MELEKH"

May our Master teach us concerning "Cleaving to one's Master – Hakham"?

Job 42:6 Therefore I abhor *myself* And repent in dust and ashes."

¹³ The use of the "servant" makes a connection to the Psalm. Psalm 119:49

¹⁴ The use of the "Temple" connects with D'varim 12:10-11 where the Targum makes clear the Masoretic text the location of the Temple.

¹⁵ m. Mid.1:2 **Har HaBayit person (the Temple Crier) in charge of the Temple mount would go around at every watch**, and lighted torches were [flaring] before him. And to any watch which was not standing did the man in charge of the Temple mount say, "Peace be with you." [If] it was obvious that he was sleeping, he beats him with his staff. And he had the right to burn his garment. And they say, "What is the noise in the courtyard?" "It is the noise of a Levite being smitten, and his clothing being burned, for he went to sleep at his post." R. Eliezer b. Jacob says, "One time they found my mother's brother sleeping and burned his garment."

¹⁶ Here Hakham Tsefet makes a connection to our previous Ashlamatah. Naboth's is in the Jezreel Valley, which is considered a part of the Galilee. (1Ki 21:1-4) Galilee is also associated with the word Gilgal of D'varim 11:30.

¹⁷ Here Hakham Tsefet makes a verbal connection with the Torah Seder, recalling Mt Gerizim and Ebal (D'varim 11:29).

b. Ned 39b Seven things were created before the world, viz., The Torah, repentance, the Garden of Eden, Gehenna, the Throne of Glory, the Temple, and the name of the Messiah. The Torah, for it is written, The Lord possessed me [sc. the Torah] in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.¹⁸ Repentance, for it is written, Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you have formed the earth and the world... You turn man to destruction, and say, "Repent, you sons of men."¹⁹ The Garden of Eden, as it is written, And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden from aforetime.²⁰ Gehenna, as it is written, For Tophet²¹ is ordained of old.²² The Throne of Glory, as it is written, Thy Throne is established from of old.²³ The Temple, as it is written, A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.²⁴ The name of the Messiah, as it is written, His name [sc. of Messiah] shall endure forever, and [has existed] before the sun!²⁵ But Moses said thus: If a mouth has already been created for it [sc. Gehenna], tis well; if not, let the Lord create one. But is it not written, "there is no new thing under the sun?"²⁶ He said thus: If the mouth is not near to this spot, let it draw near.

Repentance and Gehenna, created before the world, cause us to understand that G-d had made the provision of free will from the very beginning.

The wrath of G-d is averted when we repent and return to the LORD as it is written:

Isa 54:8 In a surge of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, but I will have compassion on you with everlasting love," says the LORD your Redeemer.

And Hakham Tsefet remembered what Yeshua (His Master) said as it is written ...

Hakham Tsefet gained "hope" in remembering the Name of Messiah as it is said ...

Mar. 14:72 Then Tsefet remembered the words that Yeshua had said to him, "Before the Temple crier calls out twice, you will disassociate from me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept (in repentance).

From this, we learn that Hakham Tsefet knew that he was to repent, as it is written ...

D'barim 13:17 Nothing set apart for destruction is to remain in your hand, so that the LORD will turn from His burning anger and grant you mercy, show you compassion, and multiply you as He swore to your fathers.

How is it that we know that Hakham Tsefet's denial of Yeshua, as the Messiah was failure to "Cleave to G-d?" (Positive Mitzvah #6)

¹⁸ Prov. VIII, 22.

¹⁹ Ps. XC, 2f. Before, etc. applies to Repent.

²⁰ Gen. II, 8.

²¹ Another name for Gehenna.

²² Isa. XXX, 33.

²³ Ps. XCIII, 2.

²⁴ Jer. XVII, 12.

²⁵ Ps. LXXII, 17. Now, according to this, Gehenna was definitely created before the world; how then could Moses be doubtful? The general idea of this Baraitha is that these things are the indispensable prerequisites For the orderly progress of mankind upon earth. The Torah, the supreme source of instruction, the concept of repentance, in recognition that to err is human, and hence, if man falls, he needs the opportunity to rise again; the garden of Eden and the Gehenna, symbolizing reward and punishment, which, without conceding a purely utilitarian basis for ethical striving, are nevertheless powerful incentives thereto; the Throne of Glory and the Temple, indicating that the goal of creation is that the kingdom of God (represented by the Temple) should be established on earth as it is in Heaven; and finally, the name of Messiah, the assurance that God's purpose shall be eventually achieved.

²⁶ Ecc. I, 9.

We know that denial is failure to cleave to G-d. Hakham Tsefet was unfaithful (qafir) to King Yeshua the Messiah! The Syriac versions of Mark use the word *kephar* to indicate that Hakham Tsefet "denied" association with Yeshua.²⁷ Maimonides uses the word "qafir" or "kafir" (*kephar*) to describe the unfaithful in the "Guide to the Perplexed."²⁸ The term "qafir" refers to a person who rejects G-d or who hides, denies, or "covers" the truth. When we look at the etymology of the word *kaffir* (*kephar*), we find that it means to be an "unbeliever, infidel, and impious wretch." The literal sense of *kaffir* is "one who does not admit the blessings of G-d," also meaning *kafara* "to cover up, conceal, deny. We understand the word "infidelity" to mean "want of faithful obedience, unbelief in religion; false belief, paganism." It also means "unfaithfulness or disloyalty to a person" (originally to the Sovereign, and to a lover or spouse). From this word, we get the idea of an infidel, meaning, "unfaithful, not to be trusted," "unbelieving," "one who does not believe in religion" or "unfaithful to his religion. Also used to translate Arabic *qafir*, which is from a root meaning, "to disbelieve, to deny."

Hakham Tsefet's infidelity is a breach of the 6th Positive Mitzvah located in the previous Torah Seder D'barim 11:22 and as noted by the Rambam in his Sefer Ha-Mitzvot. we have recently read **D'barim 11:22**, there we see that what Hakham Tsefet and the Rambam are trying to say.

D'barim 11:22 For if you keep all these commandments which I command you to do them, to love the Lord, your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave to Him,

NOTE: The wise man, or as he is called in Hebrew, talmid Hakham, 'the disciple of wisdom', interpreting and exemplifying as he does the word of God, is regarded in Jewish thought as being nearest to Him. To cleave to the wise man (Hakham) is thus to cleave to the LCORD (Ber. 10b; Pes. 22b).

Scripture provides a perfect example of a disciple cleaving to his master in the constant and reverential attachment of Joshua to Moses: "But his minister Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the Tent" (Ex. XXXIII, ii). The Mishnah records the following saying of Jose ben Joezer of Zeredah, one of the early Fathers of the Tradition: 'Let your house be a meeting-house for the wise; and sit amid the dust of their feet; and drink in their words with thirst' (Ab. 1, 4). The Talmud abounds with illustrations of disciples going to extreme lengths in their earnest desire to learn the ways and customs, conduct and conversation of the wise men (Ber. 62a). To miss the society of an assembly of the wise men was considered an irretrievable loss: 'It is impossible that a gathering of the wise men should take place without their bringing to light some profound and fresh interpretation of the Law' (Hag. 3a).²⁹

How then does Hakham Tsefet nullify his denial of Yeshua?

If a person transgresses any of the mitzvot of the Torah, whether a positive command or a negative command - whether willingly or inadvertently - when he repents, and returns from his sin, he must confess before God, blessed be, He as [Numbers 5:6-7] states: "If a man or a woman commit any of the sins of man... they must confess the sin that they committed."³⁰

And what is the fruit of Hakham Tsefet's repentance?

Yesha'yahu (Isa) 54:2 "Enlarge the site of your tent and let your tent curtains be stretched out;¹ do not hold back; lengthen your ropes and drive your pegs deep.

²⁷ Marcus, J. (2009). *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Mark 8-16, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Yale University. p. 1019

²⁸ Maimonides, M. (1956). *The Guide for the Perplexed* (Second ed.). (M. Friedlander, Trans.) Dover Publications, Inc. p.51

²⁹ (Rambam), M. M. (1967). *The Commandments* (Vol. 1). (C. B. Chavel, Ed.) The Soncino Press. p. 9-10

³⁰ (Rambam), M. M. (n.d.). *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah* (Vol. 4). (R. E. Touger, Trans.) Moznaim Publishing Corp. p.1

Hakham Tsefet's demonstration of his infidelity to Yeshua, as a talmid, is his way of demonstrating the seriousness of the breach of the 6th positive mitzvah as noted above. In our pericope Hakham Tsefet is found by the fire warming himself.³¹ By inference, we see that Hakham Tsefet is more concerned with his physical comfort and safety than his master's well-being.³² Hakham Tsefet's repudiation of his master begins with a simple evasion and concludes with the swearing of an oath that he does not know, nor is he associated with the Master.³³ When we are unfaithful to G-d in serving self, we become idolatrous. Scholars have reduced idolatry to the serving of one's self and selfish desires instead of G-d and His messengers.

THE PILLARS

m. Sanhedrin 4.3 And two judges' clerks (Paqidim) stand before them (the Bench of three Hakhamim), 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.³⁴ 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."

This Mishnah tells us exactly what a deacon is. The "table waiter" is a judge's clerk (*paqid*) that records the arguments (halakhic) of the judge (Hakham).

We already know that Yeshua took the three "greatest" (Roshim) with him to Har Tz'fat. Therefore, we should make our selection from these three. Hakham Ya'aqob, as we learned in II Luqas (Acts) was made the Head (Rosh) of the Nazarean Bet Din. This then leaves us to make our selection from Hakham Tsefet and Hakham Yochanan. Hakham Yochanan penned the So'od materials of the Nazarean Codicil. Therefore, the idea of being the greatest may, in some opinions be attributed to Hakham Yochanan. However, there can never be a "So'od" without a Peshat. Making the least (last), i.e. Peshat – Mishnah the greatest (the first). Why is the Mishnaic Import of Hakham Tsefet so important? Because without the Mishnaic writings of Hakham Tsefet we could never understand the fundamentals of Messiah. Nor, could we understand any of the other levels of Messiah due to their non-literal meanings. The Mishnaic writings of Hakham Tsefet form the beginning of the Master's Mesorah the beginning and first (least). Yet Hakham Tsefet himself is the **chapter** of the Nazarean talmidim.

2Ch 3:15 Also he made before the house **two pillars** of thirty and five cubits high, and the **chapter** (*v'ha'tzepet*) that was on the top of each of them was five cubits.³⁵

We have included the Hebrew text of the cited passage for clarification.

וַיַּעַשׂ לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת עַמּוּדִים שְׁנַיִם אַמּוֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וְחָמֵשׁ אַרְדָּי וְהַצֵּפֶת אֲשֶׁר-עַל-רֵאשׁוֹ אַמּוֹת חֲמֵשׁ: ס

The highlighted Hebrew text reads *v'ha'tzepet*. The phrase *v'ha'tsefet* would read "and the chapter." The word **chapter** is translated "tsefet" which is not the pillar itself. The "tsefet" is the cap or head of the pillar. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet is not only seen as a "pillar," Hakham Tsefet is the cap or head of the pillar. The "tsefet" is the upper portion of the pillar, which supports the edifice. Consequently, Hakham Tsefet is not only the "pillar" of the Nazarean Community; he is the primary support for the whole community both the least and greatest.

³¹ Butler, J. G. (2008). *Analytical Bible Expositor, Matthew to Mark* (Vol. 10). Clinton, Iowa: LBC Publications. p. 747

³² Healy, M. (2008). *The Gospel of Mark* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. p. 302

³³ Ibid p. 303

³⁴ In other words they record the legal proceedings of the court i.e. Bench of three Hakhamim.

³⁵ KJV

COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM YA'AQOB'S SCHOOL OF REMES TO
"ASIMAH ALAI MELEKH"

Yehoshua 6.17 And the city shall be devoted, even it and all that is therein, to the LORD; only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she (they) hid the messengers (angels) that we sent. **6.23** And the young men the spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had, all her kindred also they brought out; and they set them without the camp of Israel.

The Question that always plagues the Nazarean Codicil is how it relates to the Torah Seder. The great question this week is how does Hakham Ya'aqob add Rahab into his sermonic materials. How does Rahab fist the whole scenario? What if anything does Rahab of a discussion on the King of Yisrael?

Hakham Ya'aqob's work is seminal regarding many issues. His stance does not fit normal theological norms. His stance does not fit the Christian view of many subjects. This leads to a butchery of his letter. One thing we have repeatedly fostered is that the Nazareans Hakhamim knew that the diaspora was fast approaching. It is evident that all Jewish parties of the first century could read the hand writing on the wall. The Nazareans laid down materials on the Messiah from their special perspective. As we recently pointed out Hakham Ya'aqob saw the Torah as a "Royal" document, Law. Again, this was because he was of Davidic ancestry. He was brought in a home and community that fostered thought from that perspective. Nevertheless, what is also of great import here is the fact that all the Nazarean Hakhamim lived and interacted with other Jewish P'rushim.³⁶ The School of Shammai shows little force in the Nazarean Codicil after the death burial and resurrection of Yeshua. This does not mean that they had ceased to exist. It seems more plausible that they chose to interact with Nazareans and other P'rushim from the House of Hillel and Shammai. An obvious place that the Shammaites appear is in the opening passages of Acts chapter 15.

And some men came down from Y'hudah and began teaching who the Jewish brothers are, saying to the gentiles "Unless you are circumcised and walk according to the customs³⁷ mandated by Moshe (and the Hakhamim), you cannot receive the Nefesh Yehudi (and enter the Olam HaBa)."

This is the teaching of P'rushim not just the School of Shammai. And, the "theology" is accurate. The only caveat is that Gentiles in the land of Yisrael must either obey at minimum the Noahide Laws or Convert and become Jewish. If they intend to become Jewish circumcision is mandatory. Those "turning towards G-d" are not just trying to do the bare minimum. Nevertheless, setting aside major opponents like the Tzdukim, Herodians, Zealots, Boethusians (Hebrew: בייתוסים) who were closely related to the Tzdukim and those pietists of Qumran.³⁸ There was a normative Jewish thought during this time. This means that at least for the greater part the P'rushim held

³⁶ Pharisees

³⁷ Williams, C. (1964). *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Black's New Testament Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles ed.). (H. Chadwick, Ed.) London: Adam & Charles Black. p. 179; According to the Ramban, "A custom is called *chok*, this being associated with the expressions: *Feed me with 'chuki' (my customary) bread*; (Proverbs 30:8.) '*chukoth' (the customary ways or laws) of heaven and earth.* (Jeremiah 33:25.) Custom is also called *mishpat (judgment or ordinance)* because it is something measured out accurately. A similar usage [of the word *mishpat*] is found in these verses: *So did David, and so has been 'mishpato' (his manner) all the while*; (I Samuel 27:11.) *After the former 'mishpat' (manner) when you were his butler*; (Genesis 40:13.) *And the palace shall be inhabited upon 'mishpato' (Jeremiah 30:18.) i.e., upon its ascertained dimension."* Ramban Commentary on the Torah, Vol. II, pp. 209-210, Shilo Publishing House, Inc., New York, 1973.

³⁸ Only to name a few

the greatest influence.³⁹ This said we should see thought patters of the P'rushim in the Nazareans. Or perhaps we should say that we should see thought patterns of the Nazareans in the P'rushim. The point being "Orthodox Judaism" held common ideology. The School of Shammai most certainly had followers of Yeshua.

Acts 21:17-20

¶ And having arrived in Yerushalayim, the brethren welcomed us gladly. And on the next day Hakham Shaul went in with us to Hakham Ya'aqob, and all the Nazarean Zeqenim⁴⁰ were present. And after greeting them, he began to systematically relate the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his abodah (service) to God. And when they heard this, they glorified God. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many ten thousands there are among the Jews who have faithfully obeyed, and they are all zealous supporters of the Torah."⁴¹

Hakham Ya'aqob is showing hakham Shaul just how many Orthodox Jewish people believed that Yeshua was the Messiah. Some have suggested, based on this verse and some teachings from Josephus that as many as one in five Jewish men believed that Yeshua was Messiah.⁴² Our point now stands as we have stated. Other Jewish sects believed and conducted themselves like the Nazareans and the Nazareans conducted life like other "Orthodox Jews."

The P'rushim of the first century were in the business of collecting sermons,⁴³ lessons and all data that was associated with the "Oral Torah." The "Nazarean Hakhamim" understood the PaRDeS hermeneutic system very well. It is generally believed that Yeshua's Talmidim⁴⁴ spent 42 months learning from the Master. If they mastered all four levels of hermeneutics, the level of hermeneutic changed every 10 ½ months. Of course, when we apply Remes hermeneutics to the thought process we can relate to 42 months to the 42 encampments of the B'ne Yisrael in their journey from Mitzrayim (Egypt) to Eretz Yisrael. The point here is that the Nazarean Hakhamim were extraordinary in their abilities to receive the Mesorah from the Master on such a profound level.

Last week we introduced some thoughts from the Sifre to D'barim.⁴⁵ Here we opine that these teachings were well known by all Orthodox Jewish Hakhamim, Rabbis and Sages during the first century.⁴⁶ This we would think that if we read any of these materials that Yeshua's talmidim would be well acquainted with them. This week we have a case in point. How would hakham Ya'aqob have inserted Rahab in his pericope relating to "Asimah Alai Melekh?"⁴⁷

Sifrei D'barim 159 (Devarim 17:17) "And he will not multiply for himself wives": R. Yehudah says: He may multiply (wives) for himself so long as they do not **"turn his heart,"** it being written **"that his heart not turn astray."** R. Shimon says: He should not marry even one that turns his heart astray. If so, why is it written **"he**

³⁹ Cf. Newman, Hillel, and Ruth M. Ludlam. Proximity to Power and Jewish Sectarian Groups of the Ancient Period: A Review of Lifestyle, Values, and Halakhah in the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Qumran. Brill Reference Library of Judaism, v. 25. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2006. p. 53 - 73

⁴⁰ Elders

⁴¹ Shomer Shabbat

⁴² Presently I'm at a loss for the source to this statement. I heard it in a lecture somewhere. Thus, it needs verification. Nevertheless, the verse stands on its own in saying how many **"ten thousands"** were faithful to the Master.

⁴³ Schiffman, Lawrence H. From Text to Tradition: A History of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism. Hoboken, N.J: Ktav Pub. House, 1991. p. 177-200

⁴⁴ Disciples

⁴⁵ Sifre Deuteronomy

⁴⁶ I realize that this may seem a bit anachronistic. But the Mesorah was the daily life of the Jewish Sage. The Nazareans are not defiantly Sages and Hakhamim of the highest caliber. Therefore, they would have understood all Massoritic texts in at least embryonic form.

⁴⁷ Deut.17:14-18:19

will not multiply himself wives" — even one (so virtuous as) Abigail. "and silver and gold he will not multiply for himself overmuch": I might think, (not) even to provision the army; it is, therefore, written **"he will not multiply for himself"** — but he may multiply it to provision the army.

Related to this Piska (Chapter) is a Talmudic passage that most certainly would have been understood as an accompanying thought.

Meg 15a To complete the discussion about the prophetesses, the Gemara cites a baraita in which the Sages taught: There were four women of extraordinary beauty in the world: Sarah, and Abigail, **Rahab**, and Esther.

And we have another Talmudic passage in close contiguity that is also helpful.

Meg 14b Rav Ena the Elder disagreed with Rav Nahman: Eight prophets who are priests come out from **Rahab** the harlot, and they are: Neriya, Baruch, and Serayah; Mahseyah, Jeremiah, Hilkiah, Hanamel, and Shallum. Rabbi Yehudah says: Even Huldah the prophetess was from the descendants of **Rahab** the harlot. Here it is written "son of Tikvah", and there it is written (Joshua 2:18) "the cord (tikvat) of scarlet thread."

We can see that it would have been logical for anyone with Orthodox norms to have associated the verse **"And he will not multiply for himself wives"** with Sarah Abigail, Rahab, and Esther.

Rahab was one of the four most beautiful women in history. The mere mention of her name sufficed to excite desire (Meg. 15a). At the age of ten Rahab became a prostitute. There was not a prince or ruler who did not have relations with her. Because of this, she was well informed about events outside of Jericho (Zeb. 116b). Rahab became a righteous proselyte and married Joshua. She was the ancestress of eight prophets, among them Jeremiah, who were also priests, and of the prophetess Huldah (Meg. 14b). Her conversion is regarded as more complete than that of Jethro and Naaman for, unlike them, she acknowledged with all of her heart and mind that the G-d of Israel is the only G-d both in heaven and on earth.⁴⁸

[THE DOG AND THE INVISIBLE MAN](#)

Rahab is a common denominator in the Torah Seder. She is listed with the 3 other most beautiful women in Biblical history. But she also is associated with the 18th chapter in that there we have a mention of the "portion" of the Priesthood.

Piska 165 *That they shall give unto the priest*—to the priest himself— **the shoulder**—the right shoulder—**and the two cheeks**—the lower cheeks—**and the maw** (18:3)—just as it says. R. Judah says: Those who interpret the law metaphorically say that the priest was given the shoulder as a reward for the hand, as it is said (of **Phinehas**), **He rose up from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand** (Num. 25:7); the cheeks as a reward for the prayer, as it is said, **Then stood up Phinehas, and prayed** (Ps. 106:30) ; and the maw as a reward for the belly, as it is said, **And the woman through her belly** (Num. 25:8).

The two spies were Caleb and Phinehas, the dog and the invisible man, Priest. The Gentiles in antiquity were called "dogs." David uses this term for Goliath, the "uncircumcised dog," gentile.

Mark 7:24-30

And from there he arose and went to the region of Tyre. And when he entered into a house, he wanted no one to know, and yet he was not able to escape notice. But **immediately a woman whose young daughter**

⁴⁸ Deut. R. 2:26–27

was possessed by a shade⁴⁹ (unclean she heard about him, she came and showed him the proper respect. Now the woman was a Greek Syrophoenician,⁵⁰ when by nationality, and she was asking him to expel the shade (demon) from her daughter. And he said to her, "Let the children (B'ne Yisrael) be satisfied first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs (Gentiles)!" But she answered and said to him, "master, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." And he said to her, "Because of this statement, go!"⁵¹ The shade (demon) has gone out of your daughter." And when she went to her home, she found the child lying on the bed and the shade (demon) had departed.

Thus, in Jericho the spies put up with Rahab. She had been leading an immoral life for forty years, but at the approach of Israel, she paid homage to the true G-d, lived the life of a pious convert, and, as the wife of Joshua, and again became the ancestress of eight prophets and of the prophetess Huldah. She had opportunity in her own house of beholding the wonders of G-d. When the king's bailiffs came to make their investigations, and Rahab wanted to conceal the Israelitish spies, Phinehas calmed her with the words: "I am a priest, and priests are like angels, visible when they wish to be seen, invisible when they do not wish to be seen."⁵²

Hakham Ya'aqob makes it very clear in his vocabulary. Regardless of Rahab's questionable past her act of hiding the spies was an act of Tzedakah (righteousness). This act with her repentance and conversion earned her a place in the Olam HaBa.

אמן ואמן סלה

Questions for Understanding and Reflection

1. From all the readings for this week, which verse or verses touched your heart and fired your imagination?
2. What is the "circumcision of the tongue" and how is it done?
3. In the Targum Yonatan for Debarim 17:14 it says: "Let us appoint a king over us, like all the nations about me" But was it not forbidden to imitate what the Gentiles roundabout did? Please explain your answer.
4. This week in Mordechai we read about an incident where the Majestic greatness of Hakham Tsefet shines for all to ponder about What example did Hakham Tsefet laid out for all who want to be followers and leaders in the Master's vineyard?
5. In your opinion what is the prophetic statement for this week?

⁴⁹ Note here that she has an "unclean spirit."

⁵⁰ The use of πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον (unclean spirit) in this case is amazing.

⁵¹ Yeshua acts graciously as G-d acts in our Torah Seder. This statement shows us that as agents of G-d we must conduct ourselves in G-d's stead. Cf. Sh'mot 22:26 (Hebrew published Bible)

⁵² Ginzberg, Legend of the Jews 4.1

Blessing After Torah Study

Barúch Atáh Adonai, Elohénu Meléch HaOlám,
Ashér Natán Lánu Torát Emét, V'Chayéi Olám Natá B'Tochénu.

Barúch Atáh Adonái, Notén HaToráh. Amen!
Blessed is Ha-Shem our God, King of the universe,
Who has given us a teaching of truth, implanting within us eternal life.
Blessed is Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!

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

Next Sabbath:

“ **Shabbat “Khi HaGoyim HaEleh” - “For those nations”**

Shabbat	Torah Reading:	Weekday Torah Reading:
כִּי הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה		Saturday Afternoon
“Khi HaGoyim HaEleh”	Reader 1 – D’barim 18:14-16	Reader 1 - D’barim 20:10-12
“For those nations”	Reader 2 – D’barim 18:17-19	Reader 2- D’barim 20:13-15
“Porque esas naciones”	Reader 3 – D’barim 18:20-22	Reader 3- D’barim 20:16-18
D’barim (Deut.) 18:14–20:9	Reader 4 – D’barim 19:1-10	
	Reader 5 – D’barim 19:11-14	Monday & Thursday Mornings
Psalms 123:1 -125:5	Reader 6 – D’barim 19:15-21	Reader 1 - D’barim 20:10-12
Ashlam.: Mic 5:11 - 6:8	Reader 7 – D’barim 20:1-9	Reader 2- D’barim 20:13-15
	Maftir – D’barim 20:5-9	Reader 3- D’barim 20:16-18
N.C.: Mark 15:1-5 Lk 23:1-16; James 3:1-2	Mic 5:11 - 6:8	

Coming Festival: Chanukah

[Evening December the 2nd – Evening December the 10th 2918]

For further information please see:

<http://www.betemunah.org/lapin.html> ; <http://www.betemunah.org/connection.html> ;
<http://www.betemunah.org/chanukah.html> ; <http://www.betemunah.org/lights.html>

Shalom Shabbat!

Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai
Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David
Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham