

Esnoga Bet Emunah

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

| Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings | First Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle |
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| Sivan 19, 5779 – June 21/22, 2019 | Fourth Year of the Shmita Cycle |

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 His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham in Singapore, who is possibly losing his job unless the company that has employed him is not sold. May the King of the universe have mercy on his Honor and preserve his job and his means to sustain himself alive and take care of his elderly father and family. We also pray for his frail health. **Mi Sheberach** He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham. May the Holy One, Blessed is He, be filled with compassion for him to restore his health, to heal him, to strengthen him, to revivify him and take care of his job situation. 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 for HE Giberet Pamala bat Noach (the sister of HE Adon Yeshoshua ben Abraham) who is very, very sick - **Mi Sheberach** – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless Her Excellency Giberet Pamala bat Noach and send her a complete recovery and strengthening of body, mind and soul. Please our 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 Vinus Felty bat Noach the daughter of HE Giberet Mirit bat Sarah who is quite sick. **Mi Sheberach** – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless Her Excellency Giberet Vinus Felty 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 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 Adon Ruben Lopez Trevino ben Noach the father of HE Giberet Mirit bat Sarah, who is undergone an successful operation to remove his prostate cancer, Barukh HaShem! He is now recovering from said operation. **Mi Sheberach** – He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and completely 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 pray for HE Adon Philippe ben Noach, the husband of HE Giberet Sarai bat Sarah, that the new monthly headache injections that the VA hospital will soon be providing for him will bring relief from the severe headaches that he has been experiencing for many years. **Mi Shebarach** - He Who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses and Aharon, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal HE Adon Philippe 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 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 gambling on the stock market and consequently losing 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 pray for the son of HE Adon Ya'aqob ben David = HE Adon Aharon ben Ya'aqob who has received his commission as a second lieutenant and has been transferred to South Korea. We pray that G-d. most blessed be He have mercy upon Adon Aharon and protect him from any evil and/or harm and make his assignment very successful and return at the time of G-d's choosing to his beloved family safe and healthy and with great honor. We also pray for great peace in the hearts and minds of his parents who are sore afraid of the great dangers this assignment represents. May HaShem. Most blessed be He grant peace of mind to HE Adon Aharon's parents together with faith in a good outcome, amen ve amen!

We pray for Mrs. Priscilla Duncan bat Noach, age 77. The mother of HE Giberet Sarai bat Sarah. Who suffered a stroke, **Mi Sheberach** – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless Her Excellency Giberet Priscilla Duncan 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!

Also a great thank you and great blessings be upon all who send comments to the list about the contents and commentary of the weekly Torah Seder and allied topics.

If you want to subscribe to our list and ensure that you never lose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to gkilli@aol.com with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!

Shabbat: “Vay’hi Bimei Amraphel” - “And in the days of Amraphel”

| Shabbat | Torah Reading: | Weekday Torah Reading: |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם אֲמֶרָפֶל | | |
| “Vay’hi Bimei Amrafel” | Reader 1 – B’resheet 14:1-3 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 15:1-3 |
| “And in the days of Amraphel” | Reader 2 – B’resheet 14:4-7 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 15:4-6 |
| “Y en los días de Amrafel” | Reader 3 – B’resheet 14:8-10 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 15:1-6 |
| B’resheet (Gen.) Gen. 14:1-24 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 14:11-13 | |
| Ashlamatah: Isaiah 41:2-5 + 8-13 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 14:14-16 | |
| | Reader 6 – B’resheet 14:17-20 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 15:1-3 |
| Psalms 11:1-7 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 14:21-24 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 15:4-6 |
| | Maftir – B’Midbar 14:22-24 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 15:1-6 |
| N.C.: Mark 1:29-31 Luke 4:38-39 & Acts 7:23-43 | Isaiah 41:2-5 + 8-13 | |

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!

Contents of the Torah Seder

- Abram Rescues Lot – Genesis 14:1-17
- Abram and Melchizedek – Genesis 14:18-20
- Abram and the King of Sodom – Genesis 14:21-24

Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: B'reshet 14:1-24

| Rashi's Translation & Keter Crown Bible (Chorev) | Targum Pseudo Jonathan & Jerusalem Targum |
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| <p>1. Now it came to pass in the days of Amraphel the king of Shinar, Arioch the king of Ellasar, Chedorloemer the king of Elam, and Tidal the king of Goyim.</p> <p>1. It was in the days of Amraphel, king of Shin'ar; Aryoch, king of Ellasar; Kedorla'omer, king of Eilam, and Tid'al, king of the nations.</p> | <p>1. And it was in the days of Amraphel,--he is Nimrod, who commanded Abram to be cast into the furnace; he was then king of Pontos; Ariok, (so called) because he was (arik) tall among the giants, king of Thalaras, Kedarlaomer, (so called) because he had bound himself (or gone over) among the bondmen of the king of Elam, and Thidal, crafty as a fox, king of the peoples subjected to him,</p> |
| <p>2. That they waged war with Bera the king of Sodom and with Birsha the king of Gomorrah, Shineab the king of Admah, and Shemeber the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.</p> <p>2. They waged war against Bera, king of Sodom; Birsha, king of Amorah; Shin'av, king of Admah; Shem'ever, king of Tzevoyim, and the king of Bela that is Tzo'ar.</p> | <p>2. – made war with Bera, whose deeds were evil, king of Sedom, and with Birsha, whose deeds were with the wicked, king of Amora: Shinab, who had hated his father, king of Admah, and Shemebar, who had corrupted himself with fornication, king of Zeboim; and the king of the city which consumed (Bela) the dwellers thereof, which is Zoar.</p> |
| <p>3. All these joined in the valley of Siddim, which is the Dead Sea.</p> <p>3. All these met in the Valley of Siddim, that is the Salt Sea.</p> | <p>3. All these were joined in the valley of the gardens (paredesaia), the place that produced the streamlets of waters that empty themselves into the sea of salt. JERUSALEM: All these were joined in the valley of the gardens.</p> |
| <p>4. For twelve years they served Chedorloemer, and for thirteen years they rebelled.</p> <p>4. For twelve years they served Kedorla'omer and for thirteen years they rebelled.</p> | <p>4. Twelve years they had served Kedarlaomer; and in the thirteenth year they had rebelled.</p> |
| <p>5. And in the fourteenth year, Chedorloemer came, and the kings who were with him, and they smote the Rephaim in Ashteroth karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh kiriathaim.</p> <p>5. In the fourteenth year Kedorla'omer and the kings that were with him came and they attacked the</p> | <p>5. And in the fourteenth year came Kedarlaomer and the kings who were with him, and smote the Giants (gibboraiia) which were in Ashtaroth-Karniam, and the Strong who were in Hametha, and the Terrible who were in the plain of Kiriathaim, JERUSALEM: And they slew the giants who were in</p> |

| Rashi's Translation & Keter Crown Bible (Chorev) | Targum Pseudo Jonathan & Jerusalem Targum |
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| <i>Repha'ites in Ashterot-karnayim, the Zuzites in Cham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiryatayim.</i> | Ashtaroth-Karnaim, the famed who were among them, and the formidable who inhabited the city which they had built, and the cavern people who dwelt in the mountain of Gebala, unto the valley of vision which is near upon the desert. |
| 6. And the Horites in their mountain Seir, until the plain of Paran, which is alongside the desert. <i>6. And the Chorites on their mountain, Se'ir, until the plain of Paran that is in the desert.</i> | 6. and the Choraee (dwellers in caverns) who were in the high mountains of Begala, unto the valley of Pharan, which was near upon the edge of the desert. |
| 7. And they returned and came to Ein Mishpat, which is Kadesh, and they smote the entire field of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazon Tamar. <i>7. They returned and came to Ein Mishpat, that is Kadesh and attacked the entire Amalekite territory and also the Emorites who live in Chatzetzon-tamar.</i> | 7. And they returned, and came to the place where was rendered the judgment of Mosheh the prophet, to the fountain of the waters of Strife, which is Requam. And they smote all the fields of the Amalkaee, and also the Emoraee, who dwelt in En-gedi. |
| 8. And the king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah and the king of Admah and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar, came forth, and they engaged them in battle in the valley of Siddim. <i>8. The king of Sodom, the king of Amorah, the king of Admah, the king of Tzevoyim and the king of Bela that is Tzo'ar went out and waged war against them in the Valley of Siddim.</i> | 8. And the king of Sedom, and the king of Amorah, and the kind of Admah, and the king of Zeboim, and the king of the city which consumed its inhabitants, which is Zoar, went forth, and set the array of battle against them in the valley of the gardens; |
| 9. With Chedorloemer the king of Elam and Tidal the king of Goyim and Amraphel the king of Shinar and Arioch the king of Ellasar, four kings against the five. <i>9. Against Kedorla'omer, king of Eilam; Tid'al, king of nations; Amraphel, king of Shin'ar and Aryoch, king of Ellasar; four kings against the five.</i> | 9. with Kedarlaomer king of Elam, and Thidal king of the nations obedient to him, and Amraphel king of Pontos, and Ariok king of Thelasar; four kings arrayed in battle against five. JERUSALEM: And Amraphel king of Pontos, and Ariok king of Elasar: four kings against five spread out the array of war. |
| 10. Now the valley of Siddim was [composed of] many clay pits, and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and they fell there, and the survivors fled to a mountain. <i>10. The Valley of Siddim was full of clay pits, and the kings of Sodom and Amorah fled and fell in there; those remaining fled to the hills.</i> | 10. And the valley of the gardens had many pits filled with bitumen: and the kings of Sedom and Amora fled away, and fell there; and they who were left fled to the mountains. JERUSALEM: The valley of the gardens was full of pits of bitumen: |
| 11. And they took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food, and they departed. <i>11. They took all the possessions of Sodom and Amorah, all their food and they left.</i> | 11. And they took all the property of Sedom and Amora, and all their food, and went. |
| 12. And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Abram's brother, and they departed, and he was living in Sodom. <i>12. They took Lot, Avram's nephew, and his</i> | 12. And they made captive Lot the son of Abram's brother, and his property, and went. And he had dwelt in Sedom. |

| Rashi's Translation & Keter Crown Bible (Chorev) | Targum Pseudo Jonathan & Jerusalem Targum |
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| <p><i>possessions, and they left; he was [then] living in Sodom.</i></p> | |
| <p>13. And the fugitive came and he told Abram the Hebrew, and he was living in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eshkol and the brother of Aner, who were Abram's confederates. 13. The survivor came and told Avram the Hebrew. He was dwelling in the plains of Mamre the Emorite, brother of Eshkol and Aner; they were Avram's allies.</p> | <p>13. And Og came, who had been spared from the giants that died in the deluge, and had ridden protected upon the top of the ark, and sustained with food by Noah; not being spared through high righteousness/generosity, but that the inhabitants of the world might see the power of the LORD, and say, Were there not giants who in the first times rebelled against the LORD of the world, and perished from the earth? But when these kings made war, behold, Og, who was with them, said in his heart, I will go and show Abram concerning Lot, who is led captive, that he may come and deliver him from the hands of the kings into whose hands he has been delivered. And he arose and came, upon the eve of the day of the Pascha, and found him making the unleavened cakes. Then showed he to Abram the Hebrew, who dwelt in the valleys of Mamre Amoraah, brother of Eshkol and brother of Aner, who were men of covenant with Abram.</p> |
| <p>14. And Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, and he armed his trained men, those born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and he pursued [them] until Dan. 14. Avram heard that his brother was captured, so he roused his disciples, [those] born in his house, [who numbered] three hundred and eighteen, and he gave chase till Dan.</p> | <p>14. And when Abram heard that his brother was made captive, he armed his young men who were trained for war, grown up in his house; but they willed not to go with him. And he chose from them Eliezer the son of Nimrod, who was equal in strength to all the three hundred and eighteen; and he pursued unto Dan. JERUSALEM: Domestic of his house, eighteen and three hundred, and pursued after them unto Dan of Kisarion.</p> |
| <p>15. And he divided himself against them at night, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them until Hobah, which is to the left of Damascus. 15. He and his servants deployed against them at night, then he attacked them; he chased them till Chovah, to the left of Damesek [Damascus].</p> | <p>15. And he divided them at night in the way; a part were to engage with the kings, and a part were hidden to smite the firstborn of Egypt. And he arose, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them which remained of them unto (the place) of the memorial of sin which was to be in Dan, from the north of Darmesek. JERUSALEM: And he pursued them unto Havetha, which is from the north of Darmesek.</p> |
| <p>16. And he restored all the possessions, and also Lot his brother and his possessions he restored, and also the women and the people. 16. He returned all the possessions; and he also returned his brother Lot and his possessions, also the women and the people.</p> | <p>16. And he brought back all the substance, and also Lot his brother and his substance he brought back, and also the women and the people.</p> |
| <p>17. And the king of Sodom came out toward him, after his return from smiting Chedorlaomer and the kings</p> | <p>17. And the king of Sedom came forth, after that he returned from destroying Kedarlaomer and the kings</p> |

| Rashi's Translation & Keter Crown Bible (Chorev) | Targum Pseudo Jonathan & Jerusalem Targum |
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| <p>who were with him, to the valley of Shaveh, which is the valley of the king. 17. The king of Sodom went out to greet him, after his return from defeating Kedorla'omer and the kings who were with him, till the Valley of Shaveh, that is the Valley of the King.</p> | <p>who were with him, to meet him at the plain of Mephana, which was the king's race-course. JERUSALEM: And the kings who were with him, at the plain of vision which was the house of the king's plain.</p> |
| <p>18. And Malchizedek the king of Salem brought out bread and wine, and he was a priest to the Most High God. 18. Malki- tzedek, king of Shalem, brought out food and wine; he was a priest to GOD Most High.</p> | <p>18. And Malka Zadika, who was Shem bar Noah, the king of Yerushalem, came forth to meet Abram, and brought forth to him bread and wine; and in that time he ministered before Eloha Ilaha. JERUSALEM: And Malki Zedek, king of Yerushalem, who was Shem, who was the great priest of the Most High.</p> |
| <p>19. And he blessed him, and he said, "Blessed be Abram to the Most High God, Who possesses heaven and earth." 19. He blessed him and said, "Blessed is Avram to GOD Most High, Who possesses the heavens and earth.</p> | <p>19. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the LORD God Most High, who for the righteous/generous possesses the heavens and the earth.</p> |
| <p>20. And blessed be the Most High God, Who has delivered your adversaries into your hand," and he gave him a tithe from all. 20. And blessed is GOD Most High, Who delivered your enemies into your hands"; he (Avram) gave him a tenth of everything.</p> | <p>20. And blessed be Eloha Ilaha, who has made your enemies as a shield which receives a blow. And he gave to him one of ten, of all which he brought back.</p> |
| <p>21. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the souls, and the possessions take for yourself." 21. The king of Sodom said to Avram, "Give me the souls and take the possessions for yourself."</p> | <p>21. And the king of Sedom said to Aram, Give me the souls of the men of my people whom you have brought back, and the substance take to yourself. JERUSALEM: And the treasure take it to yourself.</p> |
| <p>22. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I raise my hand to the Lord, the Most High God, Who possesses heaven and earth." 22. Avram said to the king of Sodom, "I raise my hand to the LORD, GOD Most High, possessor of the heavens and the earth:</p> | <p>22. And Abram said to the king of Sedom, I have uplifted my hands in an oath before the LORD God the Most High, who for the just possesses His possession of the heavens and the earth,</p> |
| <p>23. Neither from a thread to a shoe strap, nor will I take from whatever is yours, that you should not say, 'I have made Abram wealthy.' 23. I will take nothing that is yours, from a thread to a shoelace, so you shouldn't say, 'I made Avram wealthy.'</p> | <p>23. if from a thread to the latchet of a sandal I receive any thing of all that is your; lest you magnify yourself in saying, I have enriched Abram from mine own. JERUSALEM: If from a thread to the latchet of a sandal I receive of all that is yours: that you magnify not yourself and say, I have enriched Abram.</p> |
| <p>24. Exclusive of what the lads ate, and the share of the men who went with me; Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre they shall take their share." 24. Besides me, only that which the youths ate and the share of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshkol and Mamre; they will take their share."</p> | <p>24. Have I not power over all the spoil?--Apart from what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre, they also receiving their portion.</p> |

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Welcome to the World of P'shat Exegesis

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

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

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

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

Reading Assignment:

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

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

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

Vol. 2 – "The Patriarchs," pp. 49-80.

Rashi's Commentary for: B'reshet (Genesis) 14:1-24

1 Amraphel This is Nimrod, who said (אַמְרָ) to Abram, Fall (פֹּל) into the fiery furnace. (Gen. Rabbah) [from Mid. Tan., Lech Lecha 6; Er. 53a, Targum Jonathan]

the king of Goyim There is a place named Goyim because [people] from many nations (גוֹיִם) and places assembled there, and they crowned over them a man named Tidal (Gen. Rabbah 42:4).

2 Bera He was evil (עָרָ) to Heaven and evil to people. [from Tan. Lech Lecha 8]

Birsha He was elevated in wickedness (עָרָ) . [cf. Tan. Lech Lecha 8]

Shineab He hated (שִׂנְאָ) his Father (אָב) in Heaven. [from Tan. ad loc.]

Shemeber He made (שָׁמַר) wings (אֲבִיר) to fly and to spring and to rebel against the Holy One, blessed be He. [from Tan. ad loc.]

Bela the name of the city.

3 the valley of Siddim This was its name because there were many fields (שִׁדְדִים) in it, and there are many Aggadic midrashim. [from Targum Onkelos]

which is the Dead Sea Afterwards, the sea flowed into it, and it became the Dead Sea. The Midrash Aggadah (Gen. Rabbah 42:6), however, states that the rocks around it split, and rivers flowed into it.

4 For twelve years they served These five kings [served] Chedorloemer.

5 And in the fourteenth year of their rebellion, Chedorloemer came. Since the matter concerned him, he bore "the heavier side of the beam" [i.e., he bore a major part of the responsibility]. [from Gen. Rabbah 42:6]

and the kings These are the three kings.

and the Zuzim These are the Zamzumim. See Deut. 2:20.

6 in their mountain Heb. בְּהַרְרָם, in their mountain. [from Targum Onkelos]

the plain of Paran Heb. אֵיל. According to its Aramaic translation, it means a plain. I say, however, that אֵיל does not mean a plain, but rather, that the plain of Paran was named Eil, and that [the plain] of Mamre was named Elonei, and that [the plain] of the Jordan was named Kikkar, and that [the plain] of Shittim was named Abel, אָבֶל הַשְּׁטִים (Num. 33:49). And similarly, Baal-gad [was a plain] named Baal. [Though] they are all translated מִישׁוֹר, a plain, each one has its name accompanying it.

alongside the desert Heb. עַל alongside the desert, like (Num. 2:20): "and alongside them (וְעִלָּיו) was the tribe of Manasseh."-[from Targum Onkelos]

7 Ein Mishpat, which is Kadesh lit. the fountain of judgment. [It was thus called] because of the future, for Moses and Aaron were destined to be judged there concerning matters [that would occur at] that fountain, viz. the waters of Meribah (Tan. Lech Lecha 8). Onkelos, however, rendered it according to its simple meaning, the place where the people of the province would assemble for all litigation.

field of the Amalekites Amalek had not yet been born, but it was given this appellation because of the [name it would bear] in the future. [from Tan. ad loc.]

in Hazon Tamar This is Ein-Gedi. This is an explicit verse in (II) Chronicles (20:2) concerning Jehoshaphat.

9 four kings Nevertheless, the few were victorious. This is to inform you that they were mighty men. Despite this, Abram did not hesitate to pursue them. [from Gen. Rabbah 42:7]

10 many clay pits There were many pits there from which they took earth for the clay for building (Targum Onkelos). The Midrashic explanation (Gen. Rabbah ad loc.), is that the clay was kneaded in them [i.e., in the pits], and a miracle was wrought for the king of Sodom that he escaped from there, because some of the nations did

not believe that Abraham had been saved from Ur of the Chaldees, from the fiery furnace, but since this one escaped from the clay, they believed in Abraham retroactively.

fled to a mountain [Meaning]: They fled to a mountain. The word הָרָה is the same as לָהָר . Any word that requires a lamed at the beginning, may have a hey added to it at the end [instead]. But there is a difference between הָרָה and הֶרָה for the hey at the end of the word takes the place of the lamed at the beginning [of the word], but it does not take the place of a lamed vowelized with a pattach under it. Now הֶרָה is like לָהָר or like אֶל הָרָה , [to a mountain] but it does not specify to which mountain, for each one fled to whichever mountain he found first. But when the letter hey is placed at the beginning, by writing הֶרָה , הַמְדַבְּרָה , it is to be interpreted as הָרָה , אֶל , or like לָהָר , [to the mountain], and it refers to that mountain that is known and specified in the chapter.

12 and he was living in Sodom What brought this about to him [that he was taken captive]? His living in Sodom. [from Gen. Rabbah ad loc.]

13 And the fugitive came According to its simple meaning, this was Og, who escaped from the battle, and that is what is referred to in (Deut. 3:11): "Only Og survived from the rest of the Rephaim." And that is the meaning of "survived," that Amraphel and his allies did not kill him when they smote the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim [Midrash Tanchuma (Chukkath 25)]. The Midrash Gen. Rabbah [explains]: This is Og, who escaped from the Generation of the Flood, and this is the meaning of "from the rest of the Rephaim," as it is said: (above 6:4): "The Nephilim were on the earth, etc." And he [Og] intended that Abram should be killed and he would marry Sarah (Gen. Rabbah 42:8).

the Hebrew Heb. הַעֲבָרִי [So called] because he came from the other side (מַעֲבָר) of the [Euphrates] river (Gen. Rabbah 42:8).

Abram's confederates lit. the masters of Abram's covenant. Because they made a covenant with him. (Other editions add: Another explanation of [בְּעֵלֵי בְרִית] : They gave him advice concerning circumcision (Aggadath Bereishith 19:3), as is explained elsewhere) (below 18:1). [According to Aggadath Bereishith, the covenant mentioned is that of circumcision.]

14 and he armed Heb. וַיִּרְכֵּז , like its Aramaic translation: וַיִּרְכִּיז , [and he armed], and similarly (Lev. 26:33): הָרַב וְהִרְקִיתִי אֶתְרִיבְךָ חֶרֶב [which Onkelos renders]: "and I will arm Myself with My sword against you," and similarly (Exod. 15:9): "I will arm myself (אָרִיק) with my sword, and similarly (Ps. 35:3): "And arm Yourself (וְהִרְקֵ) with a spear and ax."-[from Gen. Rabbah 43:2]

his trained men Heb. תְּחִיבֵי . It is written תְּחִיבֵי [in the singular], his trained man, (other editions: It is read). This is Eliezer, whom he had trained to [perform the] commandments, and it [תְּחִיבֵי] is an expression of the initiation (lit. the beginning of the entrance) of a person or a utensil to the craft with which he [or it] is destined to remain, and similarly (Prov. 22: 6): "Train (תְּחַבֵּ) a child ;" (Num. 7:10): "the dedication of (תְּחַבַּת) the altar ;" (Ps. 30:1): "the dedication of of (תְּחַבַּת) the Temple," and in Old French it is called enseigner [to instruct, train].

three hundred and eighteen Our Sages said (Gen. Rabbah 43:2, Ned. 32a): It was Eliezer alone, and it [the number 318] is the numerical value of his name.

until Dan There he became weak, for he saw that his children were destined to erect a calf there (Sanh. 96a). The reference is to I Kings 12:29: "And he (Jeroboam) placed one in Beth-el, and the other he placed in Dan."

15 And he divided himself against them According to its simple meaning, transpose the verse: "And he divided himself, he and his servants, upon them at night," as is customary for pursuers, who divide themselves after the pursued when they flee, one here and one there.

at night i.e., after nightfall he did not refrain from pursuing them. The Midrash Aggadah (Gen. Rabbah 43:3) states, however, that the night was divided, and in its first half, a miracle was wrought for him, and its second half was preserved for the [miracle of] midnight in Egypt.

until Hobah There is no place named Hobah, but Dan is called Hobah [culpable] because of the idolatry which would be practiced there [in the future]. [from Tan. Lech Lecha 13]

17 to the valley of Shaveh That is its name, and the Targum renders: to the clear plain. It was clear of trees and of every obstacle.

the valley of the king [Onkelos renders:] the king's race course; one race course was thirty rods long, which was designated for the king to play there. The Midrash Aggadah (Gen. Rabbah 42: 5, 43:5), however, [explains that it was] a valley where all the nations concurred (וְהַשְׁוּוּ) and crowned Abram over them as a prince of God and as an officer.

18 And Malchizedek The Midrash Aggadah (Targum Jonathan, Ned. 32b, Mid. Ps. 76:3) states that he was Shem, the son of Noah.

bread and wine This is done for those weary from battle, and he [Malchizedek] demonstrated that he bore no grudge against him [Abram] for slaying his sons (Tan. Lech Lecha 15). And according to the Midrash Aggadah (Gen. Rabbah 43:6), he hinted to him about the meal offerings and the libations, which his [Abraham's] children would offer up there.

19 Who possesses heaven and earth - Heb. קִנָּה , like (Ps. 115:15): the Maker of heaven and earth. By making them, He acquired them to be His.

20 Who has delivered Heb. מִגָּן , Who has delivered, and likewise, (Hosea 11:8): I shall deliver you (אֶמְצִיֶנְךָ) , O Israel.

and he gave him [i.e.,] Abram [gave Malchizedek] a tithe from all that was his because he was a priest. [from Gen. Rabbah 44:7]

21 Give me the souls Of that which was captured that belonged to me, which you rescued, give me back the people only.

22 I raise my hand Heb. הִרְמַתִּי , lit. I raised. This is an expression of an oath. "I raise my hand to the Most High God." And similarly (Gen. 22:16): בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי , [means] "I swear by Myself," and similarly (Gen. 23:13): נָתַתִּי כֶסֶף הַשְּׂדֵה קַח מִמֶּנִּי [means] "I am giving you the price of the field, take it from me."-[from Gen. Rabbah 43: 9]

23 Neither from a thread to a shoe strap will I keep for myself of the captured possessions.

nor will I take from whatever is yours And if you offer [lit. say] to give me reward from your treasuries, I will not take [it].

that you should not say, etc The Holy One, blessed be He, promised to make me rich, as it is said (above 12:2): "and I will bless you, etc."

24 the lads My servants who went with me, and additionally, Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre, etc. Although my servants entered the battle, as it is stated (above verse 14): "he and his servants, and smote them," while Aner and his companions stayed with the luggage to guard [it], nevertheless, "they shall take their share." And from him, David learned, as he said (I Sam. 30:24): "for as the share of him who goes down into battle, so is the share of him who stays with the luggage; they shall share alike." Therefore, it says (ibid. verse 25): "And it was so from that day (and had been so) from before, that he made it a statute and an ordinance." It does not say וְלִמָּחָר [and onwards], because that statute had already been enacted in the days of Abram. [from Gen. Rabbah 43:9]

Ketubim: Psalms 11:1-7

| Rashi's Translation | Targum |
|---|--|
| 1. To the conductor, of David; I took refuge in the Lord. How do you say to my soul, "Wander from your mountain, [you] bird "? | 1. A hymn of David. In the word of the LORD I have hoped; how do you say to my soul, wander to the mountain like a bird ? |
| 2. For behold the wicked tread the bow, they set their arrow on the bowstring to shoot in the dark at the upright of heart. | 2. For behold, the wicked bend the bow, fixing their arrows on the string to shoot in darkness at the firm of heart. |
| 3. For the foundations were destroyed; what did the righteous man do? | 3. For if the foundations are shattered, why did the virtuous do good? |
| 4. The Lord is in His Holy Temple. The Lord-His throne is in Heaven; His eyes see, His pupils try the sons of men. | 4. The LORD is in His holy temple; God's throne is in the highest heavens; His eyes see, His eyelids examine, the sons of men. |
| 5. The Lord tries the righteous, but His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence. | 5. God examines the righteous/generous, but His soul hates the wicked and those who love rapacity. |
| 6. He shall rain upon the wicked charcoal, fire, and brimstone, and a burning wind is the portion of their cup. | 6. He will bring down rains of retribution on the wicked, coals of fire and brimstone; a violent storm-wind is the portion of their cup. |
| 7. For the Lord is righteous; He loves [workers of] righteousness, whose faces approve of the straight [way]. | 7. For the LORD is righteous/generous, He loves righteousness/generosity, the honest man will look upon His countenance. |
| | |

Rashi's Commentary on Psalm 11:1-7

1 How do you say to my soul, "Wander from your mountain, etc. This is on the order of (I Sam. 26:19): "for they have driven me today from cleaving to the Lord's heritage," for they drove him out of the [Holy] Land to outside the [Holy] Land, and here he says, "I took refuge in the LORD [hoping] that He would restore me to cleave to His heritage. How do You, who drive away my soul, say to me,

... **"Wander from your mountain"**? Pass over your mountain, you wandering bird. For every wandering person is compared to a bird that wanders from its nest, as it is written (in Prov. 27:8): "As a bird wandering from its nest, so is a man wandering from his place." For your nest has wandered, because we have driven you from the entire mountain like a wandering bird. The Masoretic spelling is נודו [plural] because it is also expounded on in reference to Israel, that the nations say that to them.

2 For behold the wicked/Lawless Doeg and the informers of the generation who cause hatred between me and Saul. **tread** The expression of treading is appropriate for the bow, because if it is stout, he must place his foot on it when he wishes to bend it. **the bow** They have directed their tongue treacherously [as] their bows (Jer. 9:2). **they set their arrow on the bowstring** lit. the cord [the string], of the bow, corde d'arche in French, a bowstring. **in the dark** In secret. **at the upright of heart** David and the priests of Nob. **to shoot** ajeter in French.

3 For the foundations were destroyed Because of you the righteous/generous priests of the Lord, who are the foundation of the world, were slain. **what did the righteous/generous man do** David, who did not sin, what did he do in this entire matter? [He said to Doeg,] You will bear the iniquity, not I.

4 The LORD is in His Holy Temple Who sees and tests their deeds, and although His throne is in Heaven and is lofty, His eyes see you on the earth.

5 The LORD tries the righteous/generous And if, because I suffer and am pursued by you, you boast, saying (below 71:11), "G-d has forsaken him," it is not so, but so is the custom of the Holy One, blessed be He, to chasten and to test the righteous/generous but not the wicked/Lawless. The flax worker as long as he knows that his flax is of high quality, he beats it, but when it is not of high quality, he crushes it only a little because it breaks. **His soul hates** He lays away the recompense for his iniquities/Lawlessness for the "long world," and then He showers [punishment] upon them [sic] in Gehinnom.

6 charcoal Heb. פְּחִים, an expression of charcoal (פָּחַם). **burning** Heb. זִלְעָפוֹת, an expression of burning. Menachem (p. 79) interprets it as an expression of (Isa. 28:2) "a storm of destruction (שָׁעַר קָטָב)." Likewise, (in Lam. 5:10), "because of the heat of (זִלְעָפוֹת) hunger"; (below 119:53), "burning (זִלְעָפָה) seized me." That is to say, (as in Ezek. 27:35), "became greatly alarmed (שָׁעַרוּ שָׁעַר)." (The quotation from Menachem appears only in several early printed editions, and not in any manuscript.)

7 For the LORD is righteous/generous; He loves [workers of] righteousness/generosity and has mercy on the righteous/generous and loves those whose faces see the straight [way], in whose sight the straight way is proper. **whose faces approve of the straight** This refers to "The LORD is righteous/generous; He loves [workers of] righteousness/generosity and those whose faces approve of the straight [way]." Our Sages [Mid. Ps. 11:2, Sanh. 26a, Lev. Rabbah 5:5] interpreted "the wicked/Lawless tread the bow" as referring to Shebna and his company, and they interpreted "the upright of heart" as referring to Hezekiah and his company. **For the foundations are destroyed** If the foundations are destroyed by them, what did the Righteous/Generous One of the world accomplish? The sequence of verses, though, does not concur with the Midrash.

Meditation from the Psalms

Psalm 11:1-7

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

The commentaries do not agree on the specific event in David's life to which this psalm refers. *Meiri*,¹ for example, holds that this psalm corresponds to the events related in *I Shmuel 23*, when David defended the city of Keilah² against a Philistine attack.

¹ Rabbi Menachem Ben Shlomo Meiri. His Torah commentary always took a non-literal approach.

Rashi sees this as related to Doeg and the informers of the generation who cause hatred between David and Saul.

However, all agree that this chapter represents a chronicle of treachery, recounting the slander of those who wished to undermine David. These wicked men flatly denied the cornerstone of our faith, 'personal divine guidance' and refused to accept the fact that HaShem is ever-present and intimately involved in human affairs. David's many misfortunes served them as evidence that G-d abandons everyone, even the righteous.³ David forcefully responds to this heresy with his own resounding declaration of unshakeable faith. David teaches us to trust and connect with HaShem in the most intimate way possible. David proclaims his full reliance and trust in HaShem.

In the war of the five kings versus the four kings, Avraham was the victor and became, in essence, the king of the world. This week's portion, in v15:1, records the fear that Avraham had regarding that victory. He feared that he had used up all of his merit and had no reward in the Olam HaBa. The Midrash Tanchuma Yelammedenu puts it this way:

You find that Abraham once pondered over the matter of divine justice. What did he say to himself? R. Levi was of the opinion that he said to himself: It appears to me as though I have already received my full reward in this world, inasmuch as the Holy One, blessed be He, has assisted me against the kings and has saved me from the furnace. Surely, I have received my full reward; there can be no additional reward awaiting me in the world to come. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: Since you dare to reflect on My actions, you must bring a burnt offering to Me. Therefore, He said: *Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, even Yitzchak, and get into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of.*⁴ R. Yitzchak declared: Abraham excoriated himself unmercifully, saying: Perhaps of those whom I have killed, there were some righteous men. The Holy One, blessed be He, replied: Those whom you have destroyed were like thorns that you eradicated from before Me. You have committed no sin because of it; rather you shall be greatly rewarded because of it, both now and in the future.⁵

Our chapter of Psalms has a pasuk that speaks to our Torah portion. I would like to examine that pasuk in greater depth:

Tehillim (Psalms) 11:4 *HaShem is in His holy temple, HaShem, His throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men. 5 HaShem trieth the righteous; but the wicked and him that loveth violence His soul hateth.*

² Keilah (Hebrew: קַיִלָּה), meaning Citadel, was a city in the lowlands of Judah (Joshua 15:44). It is now a ruin, known as Kh. Qeila, near the modern village of Qila. According to the biblical narrative in the first Book of Samuel, the Philistines had made an inroad eastward as far as Keilah, and had begun to appropriate the country for themselves, until David prevented them (1 Samuel 23:1). Later, he discerned in prayer that the inhabitants would prove unfaithful to him, in that they had offered to deliver him up to King Saul (1 Samuel 23:10-12). He and his 600 men "departed from Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go". They fled to the woods in the wilderness of Ziph. "And David was in the wilderness of Ziph, in a wood" (1 Samuel 23:15). Here his friend Jonathan sought him out, "and strengthened his hand in God": this was the last meeting between David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 23:16-18).

³ *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.

⁴ Bereshit (Genesis) 22:2

⁵ Tanchuma Buber, Lech Lecha 15.

Our pasuk speaks of the trials that HaShem brings to His beloved. Since our Torah portion speaks directly to one of these trials given to Abraham; I thought that I would explore HaShem's 'tests' in greater detail. The ArtScroll Tehillim gives us the following explanation of a 'test':

v.5 HASHEM examines the righteous one.

Said David to his enemies: Because I am afflicted and pursued by you, you exult and say, 'G-d has abandoned him'.⁶ But this is not the case. For the way of G-d is to afflict and test the righteous, but not the wicked. This may be likened to the flax-maker, who, when he knows that the flax is strong and durable, beats it vigorously. But when it is not strong he refrains from beating, lest it shred and fall apart.⁷

Hashem tests the righteous man in order to display his genuine goodness to the entire world and in order to cleanse him of his few sins.⁸

[Actually, the purpose of the 'test' is not only to bring the righteousness of the good man to the attention of the world, but also to bring it to the attention of the good man himself. Ramban in, 'The Gate of Reward', explains that G-d tests the righteous in order to extract the latent, potential powers of faith from their inner selves and to bring it forth to fruition. G-d Himself knows what strength the righteous possess, but He wishes to let them know for themselves.

This major trial which Avraham experienced was part of a series of ten trials. Here is a list of the trials according to Maimonides:

- 1) The "Calling" of Lech Lecha, leaving behind a situation that is no longer working in order to surrender to the unknown.*
- 2) The famine in Canaan, especially after G-d has promised blessing and prosperity – economic security of the entire region is threatened. Feelings of abandonment and perhaps betrayal from Life itself.*
- 3) The injustice he faced in Egypt concerning Sarah – government sponsored injustice.*
- 4) The war between the four kings and the five kings – being at the mercy of the turbulent political climate of the times.*
- 5) The marriage to Hagar that came as a result of having no children with Sarah – family drama and relationship challenges.*
- 6) The command to circumcise himself at his advanced age – carrying out G-d's Will can be painful.*
- 7) The injustice and deception suffered at the hands of Avimelech of Gerar when he also took Sarah – people could be cunning, manipulative and self-seeking at the expense of others*
- 8) The sending away of Hagar after having impregnated her - family drama, heartbreak, and pain.*
- 9) The sending away of his son Ishmael – family drama, heartbreak and pain.*

⁶ Tehillim (Psalms) 71:11

⁷ Rashi

⁸ Radak

10) And finally, the binding and attempted sacrifice of Yitzchak, his beloved son, Yitzchak – testing the limits of sanity itself

The Ramban states that the reason that HaShem tests us is not to see whether or not we will pass. The reason for tests is to help us bring out our dormant greatness.⁹ When we are challenged to live and to practice what we know in our hearts, it brings out our reliance and connection with HaShem in a most intimate, clear, and powerful way. Why does HaShem do this? "HaShem love the righteous".¹⁰ This is the greatest gift and opportunity. HaShem places us in the arena of challenge in order to make us great.

Tests draw us closer to HaShem and force us to practice what we believe. Under the stress of a test our true colors shine forth, for better or worse. We actualize our potential. How many people do we know who went through a turbulent time in life and came out a different person? We must work hard to ensure that our hearts are committed to HaShem so that we can echo David's words with deep recognition that HaShem loves us and wants us to be great.

Tests are the banners HaShem uses to display the high levels of "those who fear [Him]." (The Hebrew word for test is *nisayon*,¹¹ a word phonetically related to *nes* – banner.) By testing such people, He is proclaiming: These are the finest examples of mankind.

The Midrash speaks of the testing of a vessel while quoting our psalm:

Midrash Rabbah - Genesis 55:2 *The Lord trieth the righteous, etc.*¹² *R. Jonathan said: A potter does not examine defective vessels, because he cannot give them a single blow without breaking them. What then does he examine? Only the sound vessels, for he will not break them even with many blows. Similarly, the Holy One, blessed be He, tests not the wicked but the righteous, as it says, 'The Lord trieth the righteous'.*

Clearly the vessels are men in the above Midrash. It is also apparent that Avraham was a sound vessel as he had now reached the mid-point of his ten trials. In speaking about the trials of the righteous, David was surely thinking of Avraham (a sound vessel), and his ten tests, as he was composing this psalm. Avraham was teaching us to trust and connect with HaShem in the most intimate way possible – in the midst of a trial! Avraham was proclaiming his full reliance and trust in HaShem.

"*Ma'aseh Avot Simin L'banim*," the deeds of our fathers are signs for their children. Everything that occurred to our ancestors did in previous generations are lessons for us in our generation. Just as our ancestors suffered greatly while they were in galut,¹³ we too suffer while we are in galut. Just as our ancestors in their galut were tested on a physical level, we too are being tested in our galut.

Finally, all tests given to us by HaShem are really *opportunities* for us. Be it for our personal growth, or for the glory of HaShem's name, or, at times, for the benefit of the generation, we should realize that they are given *only*

⁹ Ramban Commentary on The Torah, translated and annotated with index, by Rabbi Dr. Charles B. Chavel. See Bereshit 22:1

¹⁰ Tehillim (Psalms) 11:7

¹¹ Nisayon ("Test"): (lit. "test"); a challenge in one's Divine service. It's a situation G-d puts a person in, to bring out parts of their personality that they might not be fully aware of. If the person passes the "test," then that good aspect of his personality gets strengthened. If he "fails," this can also lead to good, because it can be a *sign* for the person that he needs to work and improve this part of his personality. (The word "*nisayon*" also means "sign".)

¹² Tehillim (Psalms) 11:5

¹³ Exile

to those who can withstand them.¹⁴ The wicked are never tested as they are unable to complete the test. If you are repeatedly experiencing trials, then you can be certain that you have the strength to complete the trial.

Let's examine one of the times when HaShem *tried the righteous*¹⁵...

Judaism is a religion that maintains that salvation depends upon the sacrifice of a beloved son centuries ago. The Midrash teaches us that when Avraham put the knife to Yitzchak's throat, his soul departed. Judaism is a religion whose adherents believe that their sins are expiated because someone long ago offered himself up to be sacrificed. Though this may be hard to believe, it is absolutely true.

The sacrifice of which I speak is not the crucifixion of Yeshua, but rather it is the binding of Yitzchak¹⁶ from the book of Bereshit (Genesis). Because Avraham willingly offered his beloved son to HaShem as a sacrifice, HaShem blessed Avraham, and, just as important, HaShem blessed Avraham's descendants. This is straight from the Torah. According to our Sages, because Yitzchak offered himself freely to HaShem as a sacrifice, HaShem blessed Yitzchak, and, just as important, HaShem blessed Yitzchak's descendants. Therefore, our generation, a generation of descendants, benefits from the righteousness of Avraham and Yitzchak. We are blessed because of their willingness to sacrifice.

One aspect of this blessing is that HaShem is merciful toward us. Because our ancestors so dutifully obeyed HaShem's command, HaShem is more willing to look past our sins. Indeed, our Sages teach that HaShem is more willing to forgive our sins because of our righteous heritage. If our sins are thereby forgiven, then we will secure our place in the world to come. Simply stated: Because Avraham and Yitzchak obeyed HaShem, HaShem blessed their descendants. This blessing includes HaShem's mercy, and HaShem's forgiveness of our sins. Our sins having been forgiven; we will enjoy eternal life in the world to come. Through this progression, we can draw a causal connection between the attempted sacrifice of a beloved son and the forgiveness and salvation of a later generation. Believe it or not, this is Jewish.

Zechut avot¹⁷ is the doctrine by which we benefit from the good deeds of those who came before us. In addition to our patriarchs, we also benefit from the righteous deeds of the matriarchs. For instance, our Sages teach in the Midrash that HaShem will return the exiles to Israel because of the merits of the matriarch Rachel.

The merits of the forefathers is not a stagnant thing. It is not only our patriarchs and matriarchs, but, also our own grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers, and mothers. Each generation should earn merits as a legacy for future generations.

Though we may be unfamiliar with Zechut avot, it is actually a central tenet of Judaism. Though it may seem foreign to us, we can actually find it in three familiar sources. Zechut avot plays a prominent role in the Torah, in our daily worship, and in our High Holiday liturgy. Let us begin with our Torah portion. We read in:

¹⁴ It is important to note that we should NEVER request a test. As King David found out, one who requests a test will always fail that test. We must wait for the test that HaShem know we will pass – and let that be enough for us.

¹⁵ Tehillim (Psalms) 11:5

¹⁶ The tenth of Avraham's ten trials.

¹⁷ Lit. *the merit of the fathers*. Zechut means something between an advantage, a privilege, a merit, or a reward. Often it is an advantage or honor that is felt to be a reward. You might say, its a Zechut for me to look after you.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12:1 *"These are the statutes and the ordinances which you shall observe to do in the land which HaShem, the G-d of your fathers, has given you to possess."*

There are many names for HaShem, so when a text specifies a particular name for HaShem there is often a special significance. In this passage, the Torah introduces a series of commandments which the Israelites must fulfill in order to possess the land that HaShem has promised. What is significant here is the nature of that promise. The Israelites' sole claim to the land is that HaShem had promised it to their forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaaqob. The Israelites will receive the land because of Zechut avot, the merit of their ancestors. That is why we find in this verse the particular name for HaShem as "Lord, G-d of your fathers."

One of the most intriguing commentaries on the Akeida, the binding of Yitzchak, sees the sacrifice as actually having been consummated and as effecting atonement for Israel in the same manner as animal sacrifices:

"There was a remarkable tradition that insisted that Avraham completed the sacrifice and that afterward Yitzchak was miraculously revived. According to this Aggadah, Avraham slew his son, burnt his victim, and the ashes remain as a stored-up merit and atonement for Israel in all generation."¹⁸

The Baal HaTurim quotes a *Pirke d'Rebbi Eliezer*¹⁹ that at the time of the Akeida; Yitzchak actually died and was immediately brought back to life.

Leviticus Rabbah. 29:9 R. Judah says: When the sword touched Yitzchak's throat his soul flew clean out of him. And when He let his voice be heard from between the two cherubim, 'Lay not thy hand upon the lad, 'the lad's soul returned to his body. Then his father unbound him, and Yitzchak rose, knowing that in this way the dead would come back to life in the future; whereupon he began to recite, Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who quickens the dead. Pirke de-Rav Eliezer 31

The Torah also alludes to the death of Yitzchak in Bereshit chapter 22. In this chapter of the Torah, there is no reference to Yitzchak returning home with his father.

Through the Akeida, Yitzchak had attained the status of a korban²⁰ and was forbidden to leave Eretz Canaan²¹. Yitzchak was 37 years old at the time of the Akeida.²²

In Bereshit 22:9, the word "binding". VaYa'akod, is found nowhere else in Tanakh in conjugative form. This "binding" was something truly unique!

Yitzchak's death was NOT caused by Avraham; the Torah is clear on this point. Yitzchak gave up his own soul. This matches well with Mashiach Who was not killed by the Romans, but instead laid down His own life.²³

There appears to be some support for the Binding of Yitzchak taking place on Pesach. Rashi tells us that the Akeida was on Pesach.²⁴ The Zohar also makes this point.²⁵ Finally, the Talmud gives us a hint that the Akeida took place on Pesach:

¹⁸ The Torah: A Modern Commentary (UAHC, 1981), p. 151, n.5

¹⁹ Chapters of Rabbi Eliezar is an aggadic-midrash. Traditionally, PRE has been understood to be a tannaitic composition which originated with the Tanna Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, - a disciple of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zaikai and teacher of Rabbi Akiva - and his disciples.

²⁰ Sacrificial offering.

²¹ Bereshit (Genesis) 26:1-2

²² Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 56:8

²³ I Yochanan (John) 3:16

Rosh HaShana 11a ...on New Year the bondage of our ancestors in Egypt ceased; in Nisan they were redeemed and in Nisan they will be redeemed in the time to come. R. Joshua says: In Nisan the world was created; in Nisan the Patriarchs were born; in Nisan the Patriarchs died.

There is also some relationship between Rosh HaShana and the Binding of Yitzchak:

The Maharil²⁶ compiled a detailed and authoritative compendium of the customs of his native Ashkenaz. In Chapter 9 of the section on Rosh HaShana, he explains:

“On Rosh HaShana, after the meal, we have the custom of going to the lakes and rivers to cast into the depths of the sea all of our sins. This commemorates the Akeida, in accordance with the Midrash²⁷ which says that [on the way to the intended sacrifice of Yitzchak] Avraham Avinu passed through a river until the water reached up to his neck, and said, ‘Rescue me, HaShem, for the waters have reached until the soul’.²⁸ And it was actually Satan, who made himself into a river in order to prevent Avraham from performing the Akeida.”

The Maharil²⁹ emphasizes that Tashlich³⁰ is a commemoration of the Akeida.³¹ By going to the river, we demonstrate to HaShem that we recall Avraham’s determination to fulfill His command. Not only was Avraham willing to sacrifice his only son, but he was willing to endure great hardship in order to do so. We imply that we too are willing to overcome obstacles to carry out HaShem’s will.

By emphasizing our continuing connection to Avraham Avinu, showing that we are his spiritual as well as his genetic heirs, we show that we are fully worthy of sharing in the blessing which HaShem swore to Avraham’s descendants as a result of the Akeida.³²

According to our tradition, when we sound the shofar on the morning of Rosh HaShana, HaShem hears the sound and remembers the ram that Avraham Avinu, Father Avraham, offered as a sacrifice atop Mount Moriah so many generations ago. Our act of association resurrects the merit of Avraham, and his merit of faith is attributed to us, simply because we made the connection. You don’t get the Zechut unless you make the connection. Unless you sound the shofar, invoke the symbolic link, whatever it may be, that affirms your bond, their merit is of no value.

²⁴ Rashi on Bereshit 18

²⁵ see the Zohar on Bereshit (Genesis) 28:11

²⁶ Rav Yaakov HaLevi Segal Moelin (c. 1365 – September 14, 1427) was a Talmudist and posek (authority on Jewish law) best known for his codification of the customs (Minhagim) of the German Jews.

²⁷ Yalkut Shimoni, Vayera 99

²⁸ Tehillim (Psalms) 69:2

²⁹ Yaakov ben Moshe Levi Moelin (c. 1365 – September 14, 1427) was a Talmudist and posek (authority on Jewish law) best known for his codification of the customs (Minhagim) of the German Jews. He is also known as Maharil מהרי"ל - the Hebrew acronym for "Our Teacher, the Rabbi, Yaakov Levi".

³⁰ On the first day of Rosh HaShana, Jews traditionally proceed to a body of running water, preferably one containing fish, and symbolically cast off their sins. The Tashlich ceremony includes reading the source passage for the practice, the last verses from the prophet Micah 7:19, “He will take us back in love; He will cover up our iniquities. You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”

³¹ The Binding of Isaac (Akeida) is a story from the Torah found in Bereshit (Genesis) 22. In the biblical narrative, HaShem asks Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac, on Moriah. Abraham begins to comply, when a messenger from HaShem interrupts him. Abraham then sees a ram and sacrifices it instead. This was the tenth of Avraham’s ten trials.

³² Bereshit (Genesis) 22:16-18

Why should a dissolute Jew who identifies as a Jew be redeemable? Here it gets mystical. According to our sages, the Patriarchs and Matriarchs passed their spiritual DNA down to their descendants. Their spiritual achievements were not personal. In virtually every Divine revelation to the Patriarchs, HaShem makes promises dealing with their descendants, they will be "like the stars of the heaven" and "like the sands of the seashore", they will inherit the Land of Israel, etc. Among the promises was that HaShem would not let a Jewish soul hit rock bottom without Divine intervention to stop his free-fall. This spiritual safety net is called, "*Zechut avot*", the merit of the forefathers.³³

According to the Midrash, at the splitting of the sea, the angel of Egypt protested to G-d that both the Hebrews and the Egyptians were idol worshippers. Why should the Hebrews be saved, and the Egyptians drowned? G-d answered that because the Hebrews are the descendants of Abraham, Yitzchak, and Yaaqob; *Zechut avot*, the merit of the forefathers, they should be saved.

But *Zechut avot*, like any inheritance, only becomes yours if you claim it. Your grandfather can bequeath you a bank account worth a million dollars, but if don't show up at the lawyer's office and identify yourself as Jake Levy's grandson, you won't have access to his fortune. If you don't actively identify as a Jew, you can't inherit the precious fortune of *Zechut avot*.

Zechut avot is like a skydiver's reserve chute. If the main parachute fails to open, and the skydiver is falling at 120 mph, he can be saved by the reserve chute. But only if he pulls the cord! The cord that activates the merit of the forefathers is Jewish identity.

Jewish identity is what prompted Kirk Douglas to fast every Yom Kippur. As he proudly stated, "I might be making a film, but I fasted".

Jewish identity is what prompted Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to post a large silver mezuzah on the doorpost of her Supreme Court chambers.

Jewish identity is what prompted movie star Scarlet Johansson to stand up for Israel at the cost of her prestige as an Oxfam ambassador.

The Passover Seder speaks about four sons. Only one of them is cast as "wicked". As the Haggada states: "The wicked son, what does he say? 'What is this service **to you?**' 'To you,' but not to him. Because he excludes himself from the community, he is a heretic. ... Say to him, 'Because of what G-d did for me when I went out of Egypt.' **For me**, but not **for him**, because if he would have been there, he would not have been redeemed."

The first Passover marked the birth of the Jewish nation. Every Passover since poses the challenge to every Jew: **Are you in or are you out?** Can you sustain a test and come out with flying colors?

But what of those among us who have no ancestors from whom to derive such Zechut? What of the orphans who do not know upon whom to connect? Or the Jews by choice, the convert, who have no Jewish ancestry at all? This is the good part. It's not hereditary! It's not in our chromosomes or our cell structure. It's in our history, the collective memory of our people. It's open to anyone who chooses to remember:

***Galatians 3:6-9** Even as Avraham believed HaShem, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Avraham. And the scripture, foreseeing*

³³ The end of the section written by Sara Yocheved Rigler.

that HaShem would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Avraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Avraham.

Do we really believe that we're genetically related to Avraham and Sarah? Do we actually think that if we could trace back our ancestry as far as we wanted we would find Yaaqob, Moshe, and Ruth? Does it matter? We're related to them when we choose to relate to them. You see, the act of connecting to them, to the deeds they performed, to the choices they made is, for us, a choice as well. What makes the Zechut happen is just as dependent upon our conscious decisions as it was upon theirs. It's a two-way street. Their merit is credited to us by our merit. And in both instances, the merit is the simple product of making a choice.

Finally, just as HaShem tested the faithful of His house, so also we can expect to be tested. Therefore, when you are going through a trial...

Yaaqob (James) 1:2-4 *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and complete, wanting nothing.*

Testing proves the righteous. The wicked are never tested.

Tehillim (Psalms) 11:4 *HaShem is in His holy temple, HaShem, His throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men. 5 HaShem trieth the righteous; but the wicked and him that loveth violence His soul hateth.*

Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 41:2-5 + 8-13

| Rashi's Translation | Targum |
|---|--|
| 17. ¶ All the nations are as nought before Him; as things of nought and vanity are they regarded by Him. | 17. ¶ All the peoples, their deeds are as nothing; they are accounted extirpation and destruction before him. |
| 18. And to whom do you compare God, and what likeness do you arrange for Him? | 18. Why are you planning to contend before God, or what likeness do you prepare before Him? |
| 19. The graven image, the craftsman has melted, and the smith plates it with gold, and chains of silver he attaches. | 19. Behold, the image! The workman makes it, and the smith overlays it with gold, and the smith attaches silver chains to it. |
| 20. He who is accustomed to select, chooses a tree that does not rot; he seeks for himself a skilled craftsman, to prepare a graven image, which will not move. {S} | 20. He cuts down a laurel, he chooses the wood that rot does not attack; he seeks out a skilful craftsman to set up an image that will not move. {S} |
| 21. Do you not know, have you not heard has it not been told to you from the beginning? Do you not understand the foundations of the earth? | 21. Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has not the fact of creation's orders been told you from the beginning? Will you not understand so as to fear before Him who created the foundations of the earth? |
| 22. It is He Who sits above the circle of the earth, and whose inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heaven like a curtain, and He spread them out like a tent to dwell. | 22. It is He who makes the Shekhinah of His glory dwell in the strong height, and all the inhabitants of the earth are reckoned before him like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a trifle and spreads them like a tent of glory for His Shekhinah's house; |
| 23. Who brings princes to nought, judges of the land He made like a thing of nought. | 23. who hands over rulers to weakness, and makes the judges of the earth as nothing. |

| Rashi's Translation | Targum |
|---|---|
| 24. Even [as though] they were not planted, even [as though] they were not sown, even [as though] their trunk was not rooted in the earth; and also He blew on them, and they dried up, and a tempest shall carry them away like straw. {S} | 24. Although they grow, although they increase, although their sons are exalted in the earth, He sends His anger among them, and they are ashamed and His Memra, as the whirlwind the chaff. will scatter them. {S} |
| 25. "Now, to whom will you compare Me that I should be equal?" says the Holy One. | 25. Whom then will you liken before Me, and compare (Me): says the Holy One. |
| 26. Lift up your eyes on high and see, who created these, who takes out their host by number; all of them He calls by name; because of His great might and because He is strong in power, no one is missing. {S} | 26. Lift up your eyes to the height and see so as to fear before Him who created these, who brings out the forces of heaven by number, calling to all of them by their names; by an abundance of prodigies and because He is strong in force not one from its order is missing. {S} |
| 27. Why should you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way has been hidden from the Lord, and from my God, my judgment passes"? | 27. Why will you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hid before the LORD, and my judgment will pass over before my God"? |
| 28. Do you not know-if you have not heard-an everlasting God is the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth; He neither tires nor wearies; there is no fathoming His understanding. | 28. Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God who created the foundations of the earth, not by toil and not by labour, His understanding is endless. |
| 29. Who gives the tired strength, and to him who has no strength, He increases strength. | 29. He gives wisdom to the righteous/generous who faint for the words of His Law and to those without strength He increases possessions. |
| 30. Now youths shall become tired and weary, and young men shall stumble. | 30. Even sinful youths will faint and be weary, and the wicked young men will utterly stumble; |
| 31. But those who put their hope in the Lord shall renew [their] vigor, they shall raise wings as eagles; they shall run and not weary, they shall walk and not tire. {S} | 31. but they who wait for the salvation of the LORD will be gathered from among their exiles. and they will increase force and be renewed in their youth like a feather that mounts up on eagles' wings, they will run and not be weary, they will walk and not be faint. {S} |
| | |
| 1. Be silent to Me, you islands, and kingdoms shall renew [their] strength; they shall approach, then they shall speak, together to judgment let us draw near. | 1. Give ear to My Memra, O islands; let kingdoms increase (their) force; let them approach, then let them speak; let us together draw near for judgment. |
| 2. Who aroused from the East, [the one] whom righteousness accompanied? He placed nations before him and over kings He gave him dominion; He made his sword like dust, his bow like wind- blown stubble. | 2. Who brought Abraham openly from the east, a select one of righteousness/generosity in truth? He brought him to his place, handed over peoples before him and shattered kings; he cast the slain like dust before his sword, he pursued them like chaff before his bow. |
| 3. He pursued them and passed on safely, on a path upon which he had not come with his feet. | 3. He pursued them and passed on safely; a forced march did not tire his feet. |
| 4. Who worked and did, Who calls the generations from the beginning; I, the Lord, am first, and with the last ones I am He. | 4. Who says these things? One who lives speaks and acts, the One ordering the generations from the beginning. I, the LORD, created the world from creation, even the ages of the ages are Mine. and besides Me none is God. |

| Rashi's Translation | Targum |
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| 5. The islands shall see and fear; the ends of the earth shall quake; they have approached and come. | 5. The islands have seen and will be afraid, those at the ends of the earth will tremble; they will draw near and come. |
| 6. Each one shall aid his fellow, and to his brother he shall say, "Strengthen yourself." | 6. Everyone will help his neighbour, and will say to his brother, "Take courage!" |
| 7. And the craftsman strengthened the smith, the one who smooths with the hammer [strengthened] the one who wields the sledge hammer; he says of the cement, "It is good," and he strengthened it with nails that it should not move. {S} | 7. Will they not be ashamed of their work, which the craftsman strengthens with the smith, and he who strikes with the hammer with him who beats with the mallet, then says of the soldering, "It is straight", and he fastens it with nails so that it cannot be moved? {S} |
| 8. But you, Israel My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, who loved Me, | 8. But you, Israel, my servant Jacob in whom I am pleased, the seed of Abraham, my friend; |
| 9. Whom I grasped from the ends of the earth, and from its nobles I called you, and I said to you, "You are My servant"; I chose you and I did not despise you. | 9. you whom I brought near from the families of the earth, and chose from the kingdoms, and said to you, "You are my servant, I am pleased with you and I will not cast you off"; |
| 10. Do not fear for I am with you; be not discouraged for I am your God: I encouraged you, I also helped you, I also supported you with My righteous hand. | 10. fear not, for my Memra is your help, be not shattered, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will grasp you with the right hand of my truth. |
| 11. Behold all those incensed against you shall be ashamed and confounded; those who quarreled with you shall be as nought and be lost. | 11. Behold, all the Gentiles who were stirred up against you will be put to shame and confounded; the men of your judgment will be as nothing and will perish. |
| 12. You may seek them but not find them, those who quarrel with you; those who war with you shall be as nought and as nothing. | 12. You will seek for the men of your contention, but you will not find them; men who were stirred up to make war with you will be as nothing at all. |
| 13. For I, the Lord your God, grasp your right hand; Who says to you, "Fear not, I help you." {S} | 13. For I, the LORD your God, strengthen your right hand; it is I who says to you, "Fear not, My Memra is your help." {S} |
| 14. Fear not, O worm of Jacob, the number of Israel; "I have helped you," says the Lord, and your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. | 14. Fear not, tribe of the house of Jacob, families of the house of Israel! My Memra is your help, says the LORD; your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. |
| 15. Behold I have made you a new grooved threshing-sledge, with sharp points; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them fine, and you shall make hills like chaff. | 15. Behold, I make you a strong threshing sledge, new, full of points; you will kill the Gentiles and destroy [them], and you will make the kingdoms like the chaff. |
| 16. You shall winnow them, and a wind shall carry them off, and a tempest shall scatter them, and you shall rejoice with the Lord, with the Holy One of Israel shall you praise yourself. {S} | 16. You will winnow them, and a wind will carry them away, and His Memra, as the whirlwind the chaff, will scatter them. And you will rejoice in the Memra of the LORD; in the Holy One of Israel you will glory. {S} |
| 17. The poor and the needy seek water, but there is none; their tongue is parched with thirst; I, the Lord, will answer them, I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. | 17. When the poor and the needy desire teaching as a thirsty person [desires] water and do not find it, and their spirit faints with affliction, I the LORD will accept their prayer, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. |
| 18. I will open rivers on the high places, and springs in | 18. I will bring their exiles near from among the |

| Rashi's Translation | Targum |
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| the midst of valleys; I will make a desert into a pool of water and a wasteland into sources of water. | Gentiles and lead them in a correct way and open to them rivers on bare heights and springs in the midst of deserts; I will make the wilderness pools of water and the land of the thirsty place springs of water. |
| 19. I will give in the desert cedars, acacia trees, myrtles, and pines; I will place in the wilderness boxtrees, firs, and cypresses together. | 19. I will put in the wilderness cedars, acacias, myrtles, olive trees; I will make great in the desert cypresses, planes, and pines together; |
| 20. In order that they see and know, and pay attention and understand together that the hand of the Lord did this and the Holy One of Israel created it. {P} | 20. that they may see and know, may set my fear in their heart and understand together that the might of the LORD has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it. {P} |
| | |

Rashi's Commentary for: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 41:2-5 + 8-13

Chapter 40

17 All the nations are as naught before Him In His eyes they are as nothing, and are not regarded by Him.

19 melted Heb. נִמְצָה , an expression of melting (מִצָּה) .

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

and chains Heb. וַיִּתְקַוּוּ , and chains.

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

He who is accustomed Heb. הַמְסִבֵּן . Comp. (Num. 22:30) "Have I been accustomed (הֲהִסְבֵּנִי) ?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 Why should you say My people ([K'li Paz, mss.:] the people of) Jacob, and speak in exile.

My way has been hidden from the Lord He hid from before His eyes all that we served Him, and gave those who did not know Him, dominion over us.

and from my God, my judgment passes? He ignores the judgment of the good reward He should have paid our forefathers and us.

28 the Creator of the ends of the earth...there is no fathoming His understanding And One who has such strength and such wisdom He knows the thoughts. Why does He delay your benefit, only to terminate the transgression and to expiate the sin through afflictions.

29 Who gives the tired strength And who will eventually renew strength for your tiredness.

30 Now youths shall become tired Heb. נִעְרִים. The might of your enemies who are devoid (מִנְעָרִים) of commandments, shall become faint.

and young men shall stumble Those who are now mighty and strong, shall stumble, but you, who put your hope in the Lord shall gain new strength and power.

31 wings [The Hebrew אַבְרָם means] a wing.

Chapter 41

1 Be silent to Me in order to hear My words. islands Heathens ([mss. Kli Paz:] nations).

shall renew [their] strength They shall adorn themselves and strengthen themselves with all their might perhaps they will succeed in their judgment by force.

they shall approach here, and then, when they approach, they shall speak.

to judgment let us draw near to reprove them to their faces.

2 Who aroused from the East one whom righteousness accompanied? Who aroused Abraham to bring him from Aram which is in the East and the righteousness that he would perform that was opposite his feet wherever he went.

He placed nations before him He, Who aroused him to leave his place to cause him to move, He placed before him four kings and their hosts.

He gave him dominion Heb. דָּן, like הָדָן .

He made his sword like dust [Jonathan paraphrases:] He cast slain ones before his sword like dust. He suffered his sword to take its toll of casualties as [numerous as] grains of dust, and his bow He suffered to take its toll of casualties who would fall like wind blown stubble.

3 He pursued them and passed on safely He traversed all his fords safely; he did not stumble when he pursued them.

a path upon which he had not come with his feet A road upon which he had not come previously with his feet. [The future tense of] יבֹּא means that he was not accustomed to come.

4 Who worked and did for him all this? He Who called the generations from the beginning, to Adam, He did this also for Abraham.

I, the Lord, am first to perform wonders and to aid.

and with the last ones I am He Also with you, the last sons, I will be, and I will aid you.

5 The islands shall see [lit. saw.] The heathens shall see the mighty deeds that I will perform, and they shall fear.

they have approached and come One to another they will gather to war when they see the redemption.

6 Each one...his fellow etc. He shall say, "Strengthen yourself" for war, perhaps their gods will protect them [lit. stand up for them].

7 And the craftsman strengthened [i.e.,] the one who molds the idol.

the smith who plates it with gold.

the one who smoothes with the hammer The final stage, when he taps lightly to flatten out the work.

the one who wields the sledge hammer He is the one who commences on it when it is a block, and beats it with all his might.

he says of the cement, "It is good," Heb. דָּבַק . He alludes to those who seek suitable ground upon which to adhere iron plates. דָּבַק is soudure in French, weld.

and he strengthened it The idol.

with nails that it should not move All of them will strengthen each other.

8 But you, Israel My servant and I am obliged to help you. The end of this sentence is (infra 10): "Do not fear." This appears to me to be the sequence of the section according to its simple meaning. But the Midrash Aggadah in Gen. Rabbah 44:7 expounds the entire section as alluding to Malchizedek and Abraham.

[5] Islands saw the war and feared. Shem [Malchizedek] feared Abraham, lest he say to him, You begot these wicked men in the world. And Abraham feared Shem, since he slew his sons, the people of Elam, who was descended from Shem.

islands Just as the islands of the sea are distinguished and recognized in the sea, so were Abraham and Shem distinguished in the world.

[6] Each one aided his fellow This one [Shem] aided this one [Abraham] with blessings, "Blessed be Abram" (Gen. 14:19), and this one [Abraham] aided this one [Shem] with gifts, "And he gave him tithe from everything" (ibid. verse 20).

[7] And the craftsman strengthened This is Shem, who was a blacksmith, to make nails and bars for the ark.

the smith This is Abraham, who purified (צוֹרֵף) the people, to bring them near to God [lit. to Heaven].

the sledge hammer This is Abraham, who smote (הָלַם) all these kings at one time.

He says of the cement Heb. דָּבַק . The nations said, It is good to cleave to this one's God [rather than to Nimrod's idols].

And he strengthened him Shem strengthened Abraham to cleave to the Holy One, blessed be He, and not to move.

[8] And you, Israel My servant Abraham, who was not descended from righteous/generous men I did all this for him, and you, Israel My servant, who belong to Me by dint of two forefathers.

the seed of Abraham, who loved Me who did not recognize Me because of the admonition and the teaching of his fathers, but out of love.

9 whom I grasped Heb. הִחֲזַקְתִּיךָ . I took you for My share. Comp. (Ex. 4: 4) "And he stretched out his hand and grasped (וַיִּחְזַק) it."

from the ends of the earth from the other nations.

and from its nobles from the greatest of them.

I called you by name for My share, "My firstborn son, Israel" (ibid. v. 22).

and I did not despise you like Esau, as it is said (Malachi 1:3), "And Esau I hated."

10 be not discouraged Heb. תִּשְׁתַּעֲ אֶל . Let your heart not melt like wax (שֶׁעָה) . This is the rule: Every word whose first radical is 'shin,' when it is used in the reflexive present, past, or future, the 'tav' separates it and enters between the first two radicals. Comp. (infra 49:16) "And He was astounded (וַיִּשְׁתַּוְּמָם) "; (Micah 6:16) "For the statutes of Omri shall be observed (וַיִּשְׁתַּמְרָה) "; (I Sam. 1:14) "will you be drunk (תִּשְׁתַּכְּרוּן) ?"; (Job 30:16) "My soul is poured out (תִּשְׁתַּפֵּךְ) ."

14 O worm of Jacob Heb. תוֹלַעַת . The family of Jacob, which is weak like a worm, which has no strength except in its mouth. תוֹלַעַת is vermener in O.F., [vermisseau in Modern French, a worm].

the number of Israel Heb. מְתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל , the number of Israel.

15 a...grooved threshing sledge It is a heavy wooden implement made with many grooves, similar to the ironsmiths' tool known as 'lime' in French, a file, and they drag it over the straw of the ears of grain and it cuts them until they become fine straw.

new When it is new, before the points of its grooves are smoothed off, it cuts very much, but when it becomes old, the points of the grooves are smoothed off.

with sharp points Heb. פִּיפּוּיּוֹת . Those are the points of the grooves.

you shall thresh the mountains kings and princes.

16 You shall winnow them You shall scatter them, as with a pitchfork, to the wind.

and a wind shall carry them off by themselves to Gehinnom.

17 seek water The prophet prophesied concerning the end of days (Amos 8:11), "Not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water, but to hear the words of the Lord...They shall wander to seek the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it." And when His wrath subsides, He shall prepare for them bread and water and cause His Shechinah and His spirit to rest in the mouth of their prophets.

is parched Heb. נִשְׁתָּה . An expression similar to (supra 19: 5) "And water from the sea shall dry up (וְנִשְׁתָּהוּ)." An expression similar to (Lam. 3:45) "The destruction (הַשָּׂאת) and the breach." And all of them are an expression of destruction and dryness. Therefore, a 'dagesh' appears in the 'tav,' since it comes instead of two, for there is no שָׂאת without a 'tav,' and he should have said for the feminine נִשְׁתָּהוּ , since for the masculine singular he says נִשְׁתָּה and for the plural וְנִשְׁתָּהוּ .

18 rivers an understanding heart for Torah and prophecy.

a desert A place where there was no Torah wisdom.

19 I will give in the desert cedars, acacia trees all kinds of civilization. Even in them will I give all kinds of wisdom, goodness, and peace.

firs and cypresses Names of trees that do not produce fruit, used for building.

Verbal Tallies

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

Beresheet (Genesis) 14:1-24
Tehillim (Psalms) 11
Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 41:2-5, 8-13
Mk 1:29-31, Lk 4:38-39, Acts 4:1-4

The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Psalm are:

Mountain - , Strong's number 02022.

The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:

King - מלך, Strong's number 04428.

Nations (Gentiles) - גוי, Strong's number 01471.

Beresheet (Genesis) 14:1 And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel **king <04428>** of Shinar, Arioch **king <04428>** of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer **king <04428>** of Elam, and Tidal **king <04428>** of **nations <01471>**;
10 And the vale of Siddim *was full of* slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the **mountain <02022>**.

Tehillim (Psalms) 11:1 « To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. » In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee *as* a bird to your **mountain <02022>**?

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 41:2 Who raised up the righteous *man* from the east, called him to his foot, gave the **nations <01471>** before him, and made *him* rule over **kings <04428>**? he gave *them* as the dust to his sword, *and* as driven stubble to his bow.

Hebrew:

| Hebrew | English | Torah Reading Gen. 14:1-24 | Psalms 11:1-7 | Ashlamatah Is. 41:2-5, 8-13 |
|-----------|-------------|--|--|--------------------------------|
| אָהַב | loves | | Ps. 11:5 Ps. 11:7 | Isa. 41:8 |
| אָמַר | said | Gen. 14:19 Gen. 14:21 Gen. 14:22 Gen. 14:23 | Ps. 11:1 | Isa. 41:9 Isa. 41:13 |
| אָנוּשׁ | men | Gen. 14:24 | | Isa. 41:11 Isa. 41:12 |
| אֶרֶץ | earth, land | Gen. 14:19 Gen. 14:22 | | Isa. 41:5 Isa. 41:9 |
| בֹּא | came, go | Gen. 14:5 Gen. 14:7 Gen. 14:13 | | Isa. 41:3 |
| בֶּן | son | Gen. 14:12 | Ps. 11:4 | |
| גּוֹי | nations | Gen. 14:1 Gen. 14:9 | | Isa. 41:2 |
| הַר | mountains | Gen. 14:10 | Ps. 11:1 | |
| יְהוָה | LORD | Gen. 14:22 | Ps. 11:1 Ps. 11:4 Ps. 11:5 Ps. 11:7 | Isa. 41:4 Isa. 41:13 |
| מִלְחָמָה | war | Gen. 14:2 Gen. 14:8 | | Isa. 41:12 |

| | | | | |
|----------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| מֶלֶךְ | king | Gen. 14:1 Gen. 14:2 Gen. 14:5 Gen. 14:8 Gen. 14:9 Gen. 14:10 Gen. 14:17 Gen. 14:18 Gen. 14:21 Gen. 14:22 | | Isa. 41:2 |
| נַפְשׁ | soul, persons | Gen. 14:21 | Ps. 11:1 Ps. 11:5 | |
| נָתַן | give, gave, given | Gen. 14:20 Gen. 14:21 | | Isa. 41:2 |
| עֲבָד | servants, slave | Gen. 14:15 | | Isa. 41:8 Isa. 41:9 |
| עָשָׂה | made, make, do, did, done | Gen. 14:2 | | Isa. 41:4 |
| פָּנִים | countenance, face | | Ps. 11:7 | Isa. 41:2 |
| פָּעַל | do | | Ps. 11:3 | Isa. 41:4 |
| קָשָׂת | bow | | Ps. 11:2 | Isa. 41:2 |
| רָדַף | went, pursued | Gen. 14:14 Gen. 14:15 | | Isa. 41:3 |
| שָׁמַיִם | heavens | Gen. 14:19 Gen. 14:22 | Ps. 11:4 | |

Greek:

| Greek | English | Torah Gen. 14:1-24 | Psalms 11:1-7 | Ashlamatah Is. 41:2-5, 8-13 | Peshat Mark, 1-2 Peter & Jude Mk 1:29-31 | Tosefta Luke Lk 4:38-39 | Remes Acts/Romans James Acts 4:1-4 |
|-----------|------------------------|--|------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|
| ἀκούω | heard, hear | Gen 14:14 | | | | | Acts 4:4 |
| άνηρ | man, men | Gen 14:21 Gen 14:24 | | | | | Acts 4:4 |
| εἶδω | see, beheld | | Psa 14:2 | Isa 41:5 | | | |
| ἐξέρχομαι | went forth, came forth | Gen 14:8 Gen 14:17 | | | Mk. 1:29 | | |
| έρχομαι | came, go, coming | Gen. 14:5 Gen. 14:7 Gen. 14:13 | | Isa. 41:3 | Mk. 1:29 | | |
| θεός | God | Gen 14:18 Gen 14:19 Gen 14:20 Gen 14:22 | | Isa 41:4 Isa 41:10 Isa 41:13 | | | |
| ἱερεὺς | priest | Gen 14:18 | | | | | Acts 4:1 |
| καλέω | called | | | Isa 41:2 Isa 41:4 Isa 41:9 | | | |
| κρατέω | holding | | | Isa 41:13 | Mk. 1:31 | | |
| λαός | people | Gen 14:16 | | | | | Acts 4:1 Acts 4:2 |
| λέγω | saying | | | Isa 41:13 | Mk. 1:30 | | |
| πεντε | five | Gen 14:9 | | | | | Acts 4:4 |
| χεῖρ | hands | Gen 14:22 | | | Mk. 1:31 | | Acts 4:3 |

NAZAREAN TALMUD

“VAY’HI BIMEI AMRAFEL” “AND IN THE DAYS OF AMRAPHEL”
BY: H. E.M. RABBI DR. ELIYAHU BEN ABRAHAM

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM SHAUL

Tosefta
(Luke 4:38-39)
Mishnah 8

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM TSEFET

Peshat
(Mark 1:29-31)
Mishnah 8

Then leaving the Synagogue he (Yeshua) entered Shim'on's house. But Shim'on's mother-in-law was constrained with a [high] great [burning] fever³⁴ and they asked him (entreated him to pray) for her. And standing over her he rebuked³⁵ the [burning – fiery] fever and it let go of her. Then she rose up **immediately**³⁶ and **served**³⁷ them.

And **immediately** they left the Synagogue and entered came into the house of Shim'on Hakham Tsefet and his brother Adam with Ya'akov and Yochanan. But Shim'on's mother-in-law was bedfast³⁸ with a (burning – fiery) fever³⁹ and they (Yeshua's Talmidim) **told him about her immediately**. And **he came and raised**⁴⁰ her by the hand⁴¹. And the (burning – fiery) fever left her **immediately** and she **served**⁴² them.

HAKHAM SHAUL'S SCHOOL OF REMES (Acts 7.23 – 43)

"But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Yisrael. "And when he saw one of them being treated cruelly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. "And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him; but they did not understand. "And on the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?' Then he said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" So Moshe feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!"(Shemot 2:14) "And at this remark Moshe fled, and became an alien in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

And after forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Har Sinai (Mt Sinai), in the

³⁴ Like the Gk. word, the OT terms for fever are derived of roots meaning “to burn,” “to catch fire,” cf. תִּקַּח in Lv. 26:16; Dt. 28:22 and תִּקַּח in Dt. 28:22 - *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (6:957)

³⁵ Hermeneia – suggest that the “fever” is a demon because it is rebuked and “departs” or “leaves” immediately. Collins, A. Y. (2007). *Mark, A Commentary* (Hermeneia, A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible ed., Vol. Mark). (H. W. Attridge, Ed.) Fortress Press. p. 174

³⁶ παραχρήμα (*parachrema*) seems to be related primarily to temporal reference where εὐθύς (*euthus*) contains the idea of moral urgency as pointed out in last week's commentary.

³⁷ Verbal connection to Ge. 14:15 & Isa. 41:8

³⁸ κατέκειτο πυρέσσουσα—was lying prostrate with a fever. The language is descriptive, the preposition in κατέκειτο denoting the prostration of disease, and the participle **the fire of fever**. Gould, E. P. (1922). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark*. New York: C. Scribner's sons. p. 25

³⁹ Like the Gk. word, the OT terms for fever are derived of roots meaning “to burn,” “to catch fire,” cf. תִּקַּח in Lv. 26:16; Dt. 28:22 and תִּקַּח in Dt. 28:22 - *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (6:957)

⁴⁰ Verbal connection to Ps. 10:12

⁴¹ Verbal connection to Is. 41:10

⁴² Verbal connection to Ge. 14:15 & Is. 41:8

flame of a burning thorn bush. "And when Moshe saw it, he was awed by the sight; and as he approached to examine more closely, there came the voice of the LORD: Moreover, He said, "I *am* the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Yitzchak, and the God of Ya'aqob." And Moshe hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who *are* in Mitzrayim, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. "So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. "Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. "Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Paro that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Mitzrayim."

"This Moshe whom they disowned, saying, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" So Moshe feared and said, "Surely this thing is known!"(Shemot 2:14) **is the one whom God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush. "This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of Mitzrayim and in the Yam Suf (Red Sea) and in the wilderness for forty years. "This is the Moses who said to the B'ne Yisrael,** "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. him you will hear, "according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' "**This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Har Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you. "And our fathers were unwilling to be obedient to him, but repudiated him and in their hearts turned back to Mitzrayim,** now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." (Exodus 32:1) **"And at that time they made a calf and brought a sacrifice to the idol and were rejoicing in the works of their hands. "But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets,** "Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O Bet Yisrael? You took along the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of the god Rompha, the images which you made to worship them and the star of your god Rompha, which you made for yourselves. Therefore, I will send you into captivity beyond Babylon," Says the LORD, whose name *is* the God of hosts.

COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM TSEFET'S SCHOOL OF PESHAT

And the (burning – fiery) fever left her immediately and she served⁴³ them.

Again, we note the link to moral urgency and immediacy as illustrated in last week's commentary.

What does the present pericope of Mordechai (Mark) have in common with the Torah Seder? The question is frequently challenging as we have stated in the past. And, again as we have stated the answer is staring us right in the face. We have noted in our footnotes the verbal connections between all the related passages of the Nazarean Codicil and Torah Seder. However, the connection between the Torah Seder and the Nazarean Codicil is thematic. This thematic connection maintains continuity with the thought of moral expediency and urgency.

In the previous Torah Seder, we saw Lot taking the plush fields of pasture for his flocks in the regions of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abram choose the place, which contained spiritual greenery rather than temporal luxury. While there seemed to be some strife between their herdsmen as noted in the last Sidra, Abram and Lot do not appear as

⁴³ Verbal connection to Ge. 14:15 & Isa. 41:8

though they had any ill feelings against one another. The moral immediacy of Mordechai teaches us that there can be no place for such feelings in the Torah Family. While we may see and experience things differently, we remain a part of a single whole.

COMMUNITY IN JEOPARDY

Ge. 14:12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who lived in Sodom, and all his goods, and went away.

The conjoining theme is that of Torah Family in jeopardy. Lot is carried away captive with all his property. The message of this calamity reaches Abram and he “**immediately**” comes to Lot’s rescue. Likewise, Yeshua and his talmidim exit the Esnoga (Synagogue) entering Hakham Tsefet’s house where his sick mother-in-law lays in bed with a high fever. In some cases, the Nazarean Codicil relates “fever” with a near fatal condition.⁴⁴ When Yeshua is informed of the situation, he acts “immediately” coming to her aid as was modelled in the Abramic story.

The message is simple enough. Brothers in need have brothers who are required to assist them in their dilemma. We have noted the verbal connections to the word “servant.” The idea of the “servant” is far-reaching. We can see that Yeshua is the prototypical “Servant of G-d.” The “trained servants” of Abram fight against the warring kings and prevail. Hakham Tsefet’s mother-in-law immediately “serves” when she is healed. The concept of servanthood and serving in the present materials suggests interdependence upon one another.

RECLAIMING HUMAN LIVES

Understanding the truth of “fishers of men”, we realize the importance of a single soul to G-d. Likewise, in the previous pericope of the Nazarean Codicil we learned that *shade* – demons wish to inhabit humans as if they were a vessel or container. This has deep spiritual implications “and the wise will understand.”

And Yeshua rebuked⁴⁵ him saying “be muzzled⁴⁶ and go out⁴⁷ of him!” And the unclean spirit shook [him] violently,⁴⁸ making loud shrieking noises⁴⁹ and went out⁵⁰

And standing over her he rebuked⁵¹ the (burning) fever and it **let go** of her.

By use of the 6th hermeneutic rule of Hillel’s Peshat, **Ka-yoze bo mi-maḳom aḥer**: Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage we can determine that there must have been some sort of “*shade*” – demon that brought about

⁴⁴ Cf. Jn. 4:47-52 While **πυρέσσω** (*puresso*) finds limited use in the Nazarean Codicil, we can see that in antiquity it was a very serious illness.

⁴⁵ The spirit is “rebuked” – **ἐπιτιμάω** (*epitimao*) adjudged, charged with silence and expulsion

⁴⁶ The word “muzzled” here fits well since the *shad* – demon appeals to the Yetser HaRa or the lower (animal) self. Use of “muzzle” is synonymous with the Hebrew שדש “shedim” pl. שדש *shad*.

⁴⁷ ἐξέρχομαι – (*exerchomai*) “To go out,” TDNT 2:678 This makes a verbal tally with B’resheet 12:1 הָלַךְ-הָלַךְ To go (get) out.

⁴⁸ **σπαράσσω** (*sparasso*) to throw a fit, distort by convulsion. The demon – possible *mazzikim* (hamers), *shedim* or *ruhot* are considered “harmful spirits” therefore we see that the spirit “throws a fits” causing harm convulsing his victim.

⁴⁹ φωνέω denotes the production of a **sound** or **noise** by musical instruments, **animals**, or men TDNT 9:301. Consequently, the noise that the *shad* makes is not necessarily intelligible speech. Here the spirit shrieks and makes loud animalistic sounds.

⁵⁰ ἐξέρχομαι – (*exerchomai*) “To go out,” TDNT 2:678 This makes a verbal tally with B’resheet 12:1 הָלַךְ-הָלַךְ To go (get) out. Genesis 12:1 καὶ εἶπεν κύριος τῷ Ἀβραμ **ἐξελεθε** (Rooted in – ἐξέρχομαι) ἐκ τῆς γῆς σου καὶ ἐκ τῆς συγγενείας σου καὶ ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ πατρὸς σου εἰς τὴν γῆν ἣν ἄν σοι δεῖξω

⁵¹ Hermeneia – suggest that the “fever” is a demon because it is rebuked and “departs” or “leaves” immediately. Collins, A. Y. (2007). *Mark, A Commentary* (Hermeneia, A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible ed., Vol. Mark). (H. W. Attridge, Ed.) Fortress Press. p. 174

the “fever.” Likewise, several scholars argue this same point.⁵²

These exorcisms rid the possessed person of the *shade* – demon, which “oppress, stunt and seek to control human lives.”⁵³ In this venue, Yeshua is reclaiming those lives, which need redemption like the souls lost in the Babylonian exile. Consequently, redeeming those souls, which would otherwise be determined unredeemable, is of essential priority to Yeshua and his talmidim. Abram saw the value of a single soul in his making talmidim. Likewise, he saw the value of Lot’s soul and redeemed him through his able means.

PERORATION

m. Aboth 3:9 – 10 (12) R. Haninah b. Dosa says, “For anyone whose fear of sin takes precedence over his wisdom, his wisdom will endure. “And for anyone whose wisdom takes precedence over his fear of sin, his wisdom will not endure.” He would say, “Anyone whose deeds are more than his wisdom— his wisdom will endure. “And anyone whose wisdom is more than his deeds—his wisdom will not endure.” **10** (13) He would also say: “One, who is pleasing to his fellow men, is pleasing to God. But one, who is not pleasing to his fellow men, is not pleasing to God.”

This Mishnah is not telling us to be people – pleasers. Reuven Bulka tells us that the wisdom we gain in life should be practical.⁵⁴ Proper motivation brings proper application. The properly motivated person applies what he has learned. In this, others find motivation and stimulation. Proper integration of Torah will excite others to emulate what they have seen. This is pleasing to men of Torah learning and education. This is also pleasing to G-d. Herein is the true meaning of the cited Mishnah. Only through true community can we find fulfilment in Torah integration. When we function as a community of Torah Scholars, we are concerned with the issues of each member as if they were our very own.

REMES COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM SHAUL

Following the sermonic lecture of Steven, Hakham Shaul gives a discussion of Moshe Rabbenu as a way of seeing the principles of Messiah that Yeshua must emulate. He must be like Moshe Rabbenu! Allegorically these two men mirror one another. The Messianic figure of Melchizedek stands as a prototype for being an “Agent of G-d” as both Moshe Rabbenu and Yeshua clearly demonstrate.

Moshe Rabbenu said the **LORD your G-d will raise up to you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brothers, one like me. To Him you will listen,** (De. 18:15) **“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brothers, one like you, and will put My words in His mouth.” “And He will speak to them all that I will command Him.”** (De. 18:18) **And it will happen, whatever man will not listen to My Words which He will speak in My name, I will require⁵⁵ it of him.** (De. 18:19)

Hakham Shaul (Paul) uses Remes of Melchizedek to tell us that Yeshua is the Messiah. From the text of D’varim (Deuteronomy) 18:15-19 we see that Yeshua the Messiah must be a second Moshe. We derive three halakhic principles from this Remes.

1. Messiah **MUST** be like Moshe Rabbenu

⁵² Byrne, B. (1989). *The Hospitality of God, A reading of Luke's Gospel*. MIN: The Liturgical Press. p.55ff, . Collins, A. Y. (2007). *Mark, A Commentary* (Hermeneia, A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible ed., Vol. Mark). (H. W. Attridge, Ed.) Fortress Press. p. 174

⁵³ Byrne, B. (1989). *The Hospitality of God, A reading of Luke's Gospel*. MIN : The Liturgical Press. p 55ff

⁵⁴ Bulka, R. P. (1993). *The Chapters of the Fathers, A Psychological Commentary on Pirkey Avoth*. Jason Aronson Inc. p. 116

⁵⁵ Verbal connection to Ps. 10:13

2. Messiah MUST have G-d's Word (Torah and Oral Torah) in his mouth
3. We MUST listen to and obey the Words of Torah that emanate from his mouth.

You are the sons of the prophets and part of the covenant that God made with your forefathers saying to Abraham **"And in your Seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed [grafted in], because you have obeyed My voice."** (Ge. 22:18) God raised His **servant**⁵⁶ (Messiah) and sent him first to bless you by turning each of you away from your **wickedness**⁵⁷ [by his Mesorah].

THE DIVINE PRESENCE – OCULAR DESIRE

Both Moshe Rabbenu and Yeshua must be a vehicle for the Divine Presence. The Divine presence of G-d is manifest in the world through many forms. We will discuss only two in these comments. This is not in any way an attempt at limiting G-d's ability to manifest in the world nor is this a systematic "theology," which tries to relegate G-d to limited perceptions.

- The first "manifestation of G-d is that of the Shekinah. The Shekinah is the Divine "neighboring presence." This manifestation simply means that G-d has come near. We see this demonstrated in the giving of the Torah at Har Sinai. G-d descended on the mountain and it smoked as if with **fire**.⁵⁸ The Shekinah is also thought of as the Ruach HaQodesh.
- The second and most common manifestation of G-d is in His Word – i.e. Torah.

The Word of G-d (Oral Torah) was spoken into the world and became the life-giving principle of sustenance for every living creature. It was this Spoken Torah, which brought forth teeming creatures in the sea. It also produced plant and vegetation in abundance. The "Word" of G-d is known by many appellations. Through the "Word," we see aspects of G-d that would otherwise be imperceptible. However, we must remember that we are now speaking in **Remes** (Hinting) at things, which also have higher meanings "and the wise will understand."

The Greek "**Logos**"⁵⁹ (The Word)

- The word and concept of Logos is very common in theological circles. This word needs clarification as to when it is "spoken" and when it refers to the "Written Word." We ascribe to this aspect the "Giving of the Torah" – "Noten HaTorah." His Divine Mercy gave us the Torah.

Aramaic "**Memra**" corresponds best to the Greek **ῥῆμα** (*rhema*)

- *Memra* is not only distinguished from G-d, but evidently refers to G-d as revealing Himself.⁶⁰ We distinguish this aspect as the beauty of Torah, the Oral Torah.

⁵⁶ Verbal connection to Ge. 14:15 & Isa. 41:8

⁵⁷ Verbal connection to Ge. 14:1-2

⁵⁸ See Rashi's comments to B'resheet 14:1

⁵⁹ The "word," as spoken, is distinguished from the "Word" as speaking, or revealing Himself. The former is generally designated by the Aramaic term "*pithgama*" which corresponds to the Greek **ῥῆμα** (*rhema*) Thus in Gen. 15:1, "After these words (things) came the "*pithgama*" of Adonai to Abram in prophecy, saying, Fear not, Abram, My "Memra" will be your strength, and your very great reward." Still, the term Memra, as applied not only to man, but also in reference to God, is not always the equivalent of "the LOGOS."

⁶⁰ The various passages in the Targum of Onkelos, the Jerusalem, and the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum on the Pentateuch will be found enumerated and classified, as those in which it is a doubtful, a fair, or an unquestionable inference, that the word *Memra* is intended for God revealing Himself, in Appendix II.: 'Philo and Rabbinic Theology.' Edersheim, A. (1993). *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Peabody : Henderson Publishers.

The **Dabar Elohim** – The Word of G-d

- As the Word of G-d (Elohim), the materials (Torah) should be read as G-d (Elohim) executing justice.

We must come to understand the “The Mind of the Universe,” that is to say, G-d, has for His abode His own Word (Torah – Oral Torah).⁶¹ Therefore, these “manifestations of G-d” refer to G-d inhabiting His Word (Torah). **Any individual, who reads, speaks or teaches the Torah brings a “manifestation of G-d” into the world per se.** As such, Moshe Rabbenu brings a Divine Manifestation (revelation) of G-d into the world when he speaks and teaches us the Torah MiSinai and the Torah Sheba'al peh. In similar manner, Yeshua HaMashiach brings about a Divine Manifestation of G-d's presence when he teaches and “walks” out the Torah, as we will see in the coming weeks. Those who desire to HEAR (Shema) G-d and listen with intent to do what they HEAR are the only ones able to apprehend these manifestations of G-d.

Our Ocular desire borders' idolatry,⁶² therefore, we must maintain the statement that “G-d is in his Word” is apprehended in a metaphoric non-literal sense. Furthermore, any reference to “seeing G-d” is a non-literal expression interpreted in those hermeneutic principles and laws above Peshat. The Remes comments of Hakham Shaul demonstrate Moshe as an embodiment of the Torah. In similar manner, we see that this Remes hint applies the same imagery to Messiah. Therefore, the G-d in Moshe and Messiah are the “Word of G-d” vested with Divine presence metaphorically speaking. Our ocular desire to see G-d is accomplished by watching any Hakham, Talmid or Torah Observant individual “walk out” or teach the Torah.

Therefore, Hakham Shaul's association of Yeshua with Moshe the giver of the “Word of G-d” does not deify Messiah. The “manifestation” of G-d is the Torah with Divine investiture. Again, we repeat, **any individual, who reads, speaks or teaches the Torah brings a “manifestation of G-d” into the world per se** and, is a manifestation of Moshe Rabbenu and Messiah.

PERORATION

The question of how all of this can be tied together with the Peshat of Hakham Tsefet through his sofer (scribe) – amanuensis, Mordechai remains unanswered as of yet.

But Shi'mon's mother-in-law was bedfast with a burning – fiery fever and they Yeshua's Talmidim told him about her immediately. And he came and raised her by the hand. And the burning – fiery fever left her immediately and she served them.

This Peshat statement is riddled with Remes/Allegorical interpretation. The “bedfast” mother-in-law represents a Torah (fire/Hakham) not “walking” out the Oral Torah. She, like the Shammaites is “bound” by legalism. Yeshua, the personification of the Mesorah comes and elevates the “bedfast” deaconess, with the investiture of the Mesorah and his Rabbinic authority. Then **immediately**, with moral immediacy and urgency the fever (burning – fiery Torah – Mesorah) goes out of her mouth as she “serves,” ministers to them. The **fire** of the Torah cannot be “shut up” inside. The Torah shut up inside cannot be endured.⁶³ The Torah must find expression through personification in **chesed**. The woman (mother-in-law) as a Shammaite is a contradiction. The woman is the personification of **chesed**. Therefore, when the attribute of **chesed** is bound by legalism it will bring damage to the soul of its occupant. The feminine element of **chesed** when elevated (raised) to its appropriate place brings **beauty** in its service and a revelation of the presence of Ha-Shem in our midst.

Peshat does not waste words. Looking **deeply** into these Peshat materials, we can see that the mention of Hakham Yochanan, the mystic is a hint to the *So'od* materials invested in the present Peshat. The images of three ministerial

⁶¹ Migration of Abraham 1:4, Philo, o. A., & Yonge, C. D. (1996, c1993). *The works of Philo: Complete and unabridged*. Peabody: Hendrickson. p. 253

⁶² Boyarin, D. (2003). *Memra sparks of the Logos, Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics* (Vol. II). Boston, MA: Brill. p.15

⁶³ Cf. Yermi'yahu 20:9

qualities of the Divine Presence are in view. Do you see what I see? "The wise will understand."

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. In your opinion what is the prophetic statement for this week?
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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!"

Shalom Shabbat!

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

Next Shabbat:
Shabbat: “BaMahazeh, Lemor” - “In a vision saying”
& Shabbat Mevar’chim HaChodesh Tammuz
(Sabbath of the Proclamation of the New Moon for the Month of Tammuz)

| Shabbat | Torah Reading: | Weekday Torah Reading: |
|---|--|-----------------------------|
| בַּמַּחֲזֵה, לֵאמֹר | | |
| “BaMaHazeH, Lemor” | Reader 1 – B’resheet 15:1-6 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 17:1-3 |
| “In a vision saying” | Reader 2 – B’resheet 15:7-17 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 17:4-6 |
| “en visión, diciendo:” | Reader 3 – B’resheet 15;18-21 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 17:7-9 |
| B’resheet (Gen.) Gen. 15:1 - 16:16 B’Midbar (Num.) 28:9-15 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 16;1-3 | |
| Ashlamatah: Isaiah 1:1-8 + 2:2-3 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 16:4-6 | |
| Special: 1 Sam. 20:18 & 42 | Reader 6 – B’resheet 16:7-12 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 17:1-3 |
| Psalms 12:1-9 & 13:1-6 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 16:13-16 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 17:4-6 |
| | Maftir – B’Midbar 28:9-15 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 17:7-9 |
| N.C.: Mark 1:32-37 Luke 4:40-43 & Acts 7:44-60; 8:1-25 | Is. 1:1-8 + 2:2-3 1 Sam. 20:18 & 42 | |