

The [Four](four.html) Exiles - Arba Galuyot

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)



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# Introduction

The [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people have been subjected to [four](four.html) exiles, according to Our Sages. These are in addition to the Egyptian exile which was the prototype for all [future](future.html) exiles. Why did [HaShem](hashem.html) send us into exile, [*four*](four.html) times?

Our Sages have given us the answer in the [Gemara](orallaw.html):

***Menachoth 53b*** *R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said, At the* [*time*](time.html) *of the destruction of the* [*Temple*](temple.html) *the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, found* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)[*standing*](mashal.html) *in the* [*Temple*](temple.html)*. Said He, ‘What hath My beloved to do in My house?’[[1]](#footnote-1)* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *replied, ‘I have come concerning the fate of my children’ . . . Said He, ‘Thy children sinned and have gone into exile’. ‘Perhaps’, said* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, ‘they only sinned in error?’ And He answered, ‘She hath wrought lewdness’.[[2]](#footnote-2) ‘Perhaps only a few sinned?’ ‘With many’, came the reply. ‘Still’, he pleaded, ‘Thou shouldst have remembered unto them the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *of* [*circumcision*](circumcz.html)*’. And He replied, ‘The hallowed flesh is passed from thee.’[[3]](#footnote-3) ‘Perhaps hadst Thou waited for them they would have repented’, he pleaded. And He replied, ‘When thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest!’ Thereupon he put his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *on his* [*head*](body.html) *and wept bitterly, and cried, ‘Perhaps,* [*Heaven*](heaven.html) *forfend, there is no hope for them’. Then came forth a Heavenly Voice and said, The Lord called thy* [*name*](name.html) *a leafy olive-tree, fair with goodly fruit:[[4]](#footnote-4) as the olive-tree produces its best only at the very end,[[5]](#footnote-5) so Israel will flourish at the end of* [*time*](time.html)*.*

Thus Our Sages [teach](teacher.html) that The Bne Israel[[6]](#footnote-6) were sent, [four](four.html) times, into exile *because of their* [*sins*](sin.html). These were not petty issues, but premeditated [wickedness](wicked.html). Thus we can understand that exile was/is the [tikkun](tikkun.html), the correction, for premeditated [wickedness](wicked.html). However, [HaShem](hashem.html) has big plans for His [world](worlds.html). He is going to have the [Jews](gen-jew.html) do double duty. In addition to being fixed up for their [sin](sin.html), they will also be role models for the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html). To understand this, we need to understand that [Gentiles](gen-jew.html), not proselytes, are given to Israel as an [inheritance](inherit.html):

***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 2:7-9*** *I will declare the decree:* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. 8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen[[7]](#footnote-7) for thine* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a* [*rod*](staff.html) *of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.*

It seems that when we are sent into exile, we provide an example that causes the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) to either become proselytes, or to be condemned. Further, when we went into exile, we did not go alone.

When we went [into Egypt](thebirth.html), the prototype for all exiles, we did not go alone. Notice Who went with us.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 46:3-4*** *And he said, I am G-d, the G-d of thy father:* [*fear*](fear.html) *not to go down* [*into Egypt*](thebirth.html)*; for I will there make of thee a great* [*nation*](nations.html)*: 4 I will go down with thee* [*into Egypt*](thebirth.html)*; and I will also surely bring thee up: and* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *shall put his* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *upon thine* [*eyes*](body.html)*.*

Thus we see that G-d[[8]](#footnote-8) accompanied us into exile. We did *not* go alone! However, this is *not* the only unusual thing about our exiles.

In all of human history, exiles of a [nation](nations.html) out of their country have been very rare. It’s a highly unusual phenomenon to take a whole [nation](nations.html) and exile them from their country. Multiple exiles are unheard of, since, after the [first](one.html) [one](one.html), the distinctive people disappear as they become assimilated among the other peoples. As a matter of fact, in human history, multiple exiles and dispersions are unique only to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people.

Nor only is the concept of multiple exiles and dispersion, of the [Jews](gen-jew.html), unique in history, the very survival of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) is a singular [event](feasts.html). No other [nation](nations.html) has ever survived without a homeland. Yet, from the destruction of the second [Temple](temple.html) in [seventy](seventy.html) CE until the rebirth of the modern State of Israel in the twentieth century, the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people survived, in the diaspora, without a state.

Why? What is the purpose of the multiple exiles of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people?

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) offers the following explanation for the phenomenon of galut:[[9]](#footnote-9)

***Pesachim 87b*** *R. Eleazar said: Even when the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, is angry, He remembers* [*compassion*](jonah.html)*, for it is said, for I will no more have* [*compassion*](jonah.html) *upon the house of Israel.[[10]](#footnote-10) R. Jose son of R. Hanina said [i.e., deduced] it from this: that I would in any wise pardon them. R. Eleazar also said: The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, did not exile Israel among the* [*nations*](nations.html)[*save*](salvation.html) *in order that proselytes might join them, for it is said: And I will sow her unto Me in the land;[[11]](#footnote-11) surely a man sows a se’ah in order to harvest many kor!*

**The Children of Israel were exiled amongst the** [**nations**](nations.html) **only so that converts might be added to them![[12]](#footnote-12)**

The Maharsha, Rabbi Shmuel HaLevi Eidels,[[13]](#footnote-13) explained[[14]](#footnote-14) that had [HaShem](hashem.html) merely wished to punish the [Jews](gen-jew.html), He did not have to exile them from their homeland; the fact that He did exile His [nation](nations.html) shows that He intended for another outcome, namely, the addition of proselytes into the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [body](body.html).

To build on this idea, we need to look at the word [*Adam*](adam.html). [*Adam*](adam.html) is a legal term, according to Our Sages, that applies to Israel.

***Baba Metzia 114b*** *R. Simeon b. Yohai said: The graves of* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *do not defile, for it is written, And ye my flock, the flock of my pastures, are men (*[*Adam*](adam.html)*);[[15]](#footnote-15) only ye are designated ‘men (*[*Adam*](adam.html)*)’.[[16]](#footnote-16)*

Thus we see that **only** *Israel* is called [*Adam*](adam.html).

[**Adam**](adam.html) **= Israel**

So the question is: Who is Israel?

Our Sages answer this question in the [Talmud](orallaw.html) Yerushalmi: “[*Adam*](adam.html) *includes Proselytes*”*.*[[17]](#footnote-17) Israel is not clearly defined because Israel is in constant movement and change because proselytes are constantly being added.

From this we understand that Israel is sent into exile in order to make proselytes. These proselytes (converts) become a part of Israel! In exile we become complete by making proselytes. Yet, we must still ask: How did proselytes correct the premeditated [wickedness](wicked.html) that caused us to be sent into exile? To answer this question we still need a bit more background.

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) us that exile makes an [atonement](atonemen.html):

***Berachoth 56a*** *For a Master has said: Exile makes* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for iniquity.*

***Ta’anith 16a*** *We have exiled ourselves [from the* [*House of God*](housegod.html)*] may our exile atone for us.*

***Sanhedrin 37b*** *R. Johanan said: Exile atones for everything, for it is written, Thus saith the Lord, write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days, for no man of his* [*seed*](flower.html) *shall prosper* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *upon the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah.[[18]](#footnote-18) Whereas after he [the king] was exiled, it is written, And the sons of Jeconiah, — the same is Assir — Shealtiel his son etc.[[19]](#footnote-19)*

[Ruth](ruth.html) was a proselyte. [Ruth](ruth.html), as we saw in a previous [study](study.html), was a picture of the Children Israel as they stood at Mt. [Sinai](stages.html) to receive the Torah. At [Sinai](stages.html) we [Jews](gen-jew.html) were *all proselytes* accepting Torah for the very [first](one.html) [time](time.html). Further, [Ruth](ruth.html)’s chessed, her kindness, had such a profound effect on the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people that she became the grandmother of King David! Now lest we forget, [Ruth](ruth.html) became a [convert](aliens.html) *only* because Elimelech took his family into exile in [Moab](stages.html), during a [famine](famine.html). Thus because of this minor exile, we made [one](one.html) very, very significant proselyte who became a significant part of the Messianic line. This proselyte’s life was so important that Shmuel the Prophet wrote a book about her.

Yitro, Moshe’s father-in-[law](law.html) who, as a proselyte, had a tremendous positive impact on the Torah’s Judicial system[[20]](#footnote-20) and Judaism as a whole, while the Children of Israel were in exile. His advice to Moshe became the standard for the rest of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history! Yitro became a proselyte because Moshe went into exile [from Egypt](thebirth.html) to Midian.

Rahab was a prostitute and innkeeper, who was visited by the most important dignitaries and leaders of her [generation](toldot.html)[[21]](#footnote-21) yet after being exposed to the greatness of [two](two.html) Torah giants, Caleb and Phinehas, who were on a reconnaissance mission to Canaan[[22]](#footnote-22) she converted and married Joshua.[[23]](#footnote-23) Counted among her descendants are [priests](priests.html) and prophets including Chuldah the Prophetess, Yirmeyahu, Baruch, Neryah, Sharya, Chilkiyah, and Chanamel.[[24]](#footnote-24)

Onkelos, a proselyte, wrote a Targum on the Torah that sheds significant light on the meaning of the Torah. [Jews](gen-jew.html) throughout the ages have learned from his Targum.

Rabbi Akiva was a famous [Jewish](gen-jew.html) rabbi of the second century, during the beginning of the Edomite exile. He was a great [authority](authority.html) in the matter of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) tradition, and [one](one.html) of the most central and essential contributors to the [Oral Torah](orallaw.html), mainly the [Mishna](orallaw.html) and the [Midrash](orallaw.html) Halakha. He laid the foundations of the mishnaic dispute, by which pairs or larger groups of Sages dispute points of Halakha or Biblical interpretation.

When [Edom](edom.html) sent Israel into exile, [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) commanded His Talmidim to [teach](teacher.html) them and to make them into Talmidim:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 28:18*** *And* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and talmudize all the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html) *…*

[Hebrew](hebrew.html) is very precise because it is the language of [creation](bara.html). In [Hebrew](hebrew.html), “Exile” is called “Golah”. But this word contains the solution to exile with a hint to the [redemption](redemption.html). By inserting the [letter](letters.html) alef (א), the word “Golah” (גולה), “Exile” becomes “Geulah” (גאולה), “[redemption](redemption.html)”. This implies that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people’s service involves bringing [HaShem](hashem.html), *The Alef*, into the exile, and thus, transforming the exile into [redemption](redemption.html). Not only are the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people [redeemed](redemption.html), but as the [Talmud](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html),[[25]](#footnote-25) so also are the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) who become proselytes, or converts. Thus dispersion is for the purpose of gathering.

And so it has been throughout [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history; everytime we were sent into exile, [HaShem](hashem.html) sent great proselytes to help effect the needed [tikkun](tikkun.html) for our [sins](sin.html).

# In the beginning

In the beginning G-d created the [heavens](heaven.html) and the earth. When He created the [world](worlds.html), He created it with a master plan. As history has unfolded, we have begun to get a clear picture of parts of His plan. Part of His plan included the exile of His people, [four](four.html) times (not including Egypt). These [four](four.html) exiles are going to form an outline that will frame the history of the Children of Israel.

In the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) view of history, there are [four](four.html) kingdoms which oppressed, or are oppressing, the the Children of Israel. These are [Bavel](bavel.html) - בבל[[26]](#footnote-26) ([Babylon](bavel.html)), Madai[[27]](#footnote-27) - מדי[[28]](#footnote-28) (Media), Yavan - יון[[29]](#footnote-29) (Greece), and [Edom](edom.html) - אדם[[30]](#footnote-30) (Rome). The sequence of these [four](four.html) [nations](nations.html) is alluded to all over the Tanach,[[31]](#footnote-31) as we shall see.

Why does this list *not* include the descendant of Yishmael?[[32]](#footnote-32) Even though the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were subject to Muslim control at various points in history. In his work *Ner* [*Mitzva*](cmds613.html), the Maharal deals with this issue. He writes that the [four](four.html) exiles all fit [one](one.html) of [two](two.html) criteria: either they wrested power from the [Jews](gen-jew.html) directly, or they took over from another [nation](nations.html) that had already done the task of overpowering and subjugating the [Jews](gen-jew.html). Since the descendants of Yishmael never took power in either of these [two](two.html) ways, they are not included by the Sages among the list of exiles.

To recap, the [four](four.html) exiles are:

[Bavel](bavel.html) ([Babylon](bavel.html)),

Madai / Paras (Media / Persia),

Yavan (Greece), and

[Edom](edom.html) (Rome),

Ever since the [six](six.html) days of [creation](bara.html), there is nothing [new](new.html) before [HaShem](hashem.html). Before [creation](bara.html) He looked ahead to the end of history in His [world](worlds.html) and arranged every incident that will happen on earth according to a timetable, as the Sages interpreted Bereshit (Genesis) 1:2 as alluding to the [four](four.html) exiles and the ruach[[33]](#footnote-33) of the [Mashiach](mashiach.html).[[34]](#footnote-34)

\* \* \*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:2*** *And the earth was without form (tohu), and void (bohu); and darkness was upon the* [*face*](body.html) *of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the* [*face*](body.html) *of the waters.*

With respect to this seemingly uninformative verse, Our Hakhamim have explained the words this way:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Genesis II:4*** *R. Simeon b. Lakish applied the passage to the [foreign] Powers. NOW THE EARTH WAS TOHU (E.V. ‘UNFORMED’) symbolizes Babylonia: I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was tohu-E.V. ‘waste’ (Jer. IV, 23)[[35]](#footnote-35); AND BOHU (E.V. ‘VOID’) symbolizes Media: They hastened (wa-yabhillu) to bring* [*Haman*](esther.html) *(Est. VI, 14).[[36]](#footnote-36) AND DARKNESS symbolizes Greece, which darkened the* [*eyes*](body.html) *of Israel with its decrees, ordering Israel, ‘Write on the* [*horn*](shofar.html) *of an ox that ye have no portion in the God of Israel.’[[37]](#footnote-37) UPON THE* [*FACE*](body.html) *OF THE DEEP - this* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *State[[38]](#footnote-38):just as the great deep cannot be plumbed, so* [*one*](one.html) *cannot plumb [the depths of iniquity of] this* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *State. AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD HOVERED: this alludes to the spirit of* [*Messiah*](mashiach.html)*, as you read, And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him (Isa. XI, 2). In the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of what will [this spirit] eventually come? [For the sake of that which] HOVERED OVER THE* [*FACE*](body.html) *OF THE WATERS, i.e. in the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of repentance which is likened to water, as it is written, Pour out thy* [*heart*](body.html) *like water (Lam. II, 19). R. Haggai said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Pedath: A* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *was made with water[[39]](#footnote-39) that even in the hot season a breeze stirs over it.[[40]](#footnote-40)*

Within this single and ominous verse, there is an allusion to all [four](four.html) exiles that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people were destined to [experience](experience.html) throughout their long history until the Messianic [time](time.html), which has still yet to occur. And without exception, all of them have come to pass as predicted, with the final exile, the “Roman Exile” ([Edom](edom.html)) still in progress.

[HaShem](hashem.html) hinted to these [four](four.html) exiles in the story of [creation](bara.html), as we saw earlier. At the beginning of [creation](bara.html) it is written that, “The [world](worlds.html) was tohu and bohu, and darkness covering the deep.” The [four](four.html) phrases:

1) “tohu”,

2) “bohu”,

3) “darkness”, and

4) “covering the deep”

The [four](four.html) phrases hint to the [four](four.html) exiles:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| tohu | bohu | darkness | covering the deep |
| [**Bavel**](bavel.html) - [Babylon](bavel.html) | **Madai** - Media / Persia | **Yavan** - Greece | [**Edom**](edom.html) - Rome |

The final exile, [Edom](edom.html), corresponds to the phrase, “covering the deep” because just as we cannot grasp the depth of the ocean, so too we cannot grasp how terrible this exile is.

The Maggid of Kozhnitz seeks to understand the concept of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [tears](mashal.html)[[41]](#footnote-41) on the basis of the [Midrash](orallaw.html) that interprets the verse, “And the earth was void and chaos…”[[42]](#footnote-42) as referring to the [four](four.html) exiles.[[43]](#footnote-43) Here, too, the [Midrash](orallaw.html) attributes historical significance to a natural phenomenon, in this case, the primal “void and chaos.” The “void,” “chaos,” “darkness,” and “deep” hint at the suffering of the [four](four.html) exiles that Israel will endure. In other words, *the suffering has its roots in* [*creation*](bara.html); it is part of a necessary periodicity which is fundamental to the existence of the [world](worlds.html). What appears to us as a stage preceding [creation](bara.html) (the “void and chaos…”) is interpreted here as applying to all of history. We may have thought that the chaos and void belonged to the reality that preceded the [creation](bara.html) of the [world](worlds.html). The [Midrash](orallaw.html) comes to tell us that history itself is “void and chaos and darkness,” and the light that is described as [coming](coming.html) afterwards, and, in a more general sense, the orderly [world](worlds.html) that the Torah presents in chapter 1 of *Bereshit*, belongs to the [future](future.html), not the past. History is [one](one.html) long process of movement from “void” to “chaos,” from “chaos” to “darkness,” etc., up until the light and [redemption](redemption.html) that are promised at the end.

Since the Torah is the blueprint of the [world](worlds.html), something written at the very beginning of the blueprint indicates that these exiles are a fundamental process in the history of the [world](worlds.html).

# The [Number](nchart.html) [Four](four.html)

According to Chazal, our Sages, the [number](nchart.html) [four](four.html) signifies completion, wholeness, or fullness. [One](one.html) can see this by looking at the [fingers](body.html) on your [hand](fourteen.html). We have [four](four.html) that move in the same direction and are regularly used together. These [four](four.html) [fingers](body.html) are a complete set of [fingers](body.html). Note, however, that the thumb is similar to the other [fingers](body.html), yet it is different. Thus, whenever we see [four](four.html), we will always find a [fifth](five.html) which is similar yet materially different.

The [four](four.html) exiles, represented by the [four](four.html) [fingers](body.html), are:

[Bavel](bavel.html) ([Babylon](bavel.html)),

Madai / Paras (Media / Persia),

Yavan (Greece), and

[Edom](edom.html) (Rome).

]

The [fifth](five.html) exile, represented by the thumb, is the Egyptian exile. Like the other [four](four.html), the Egyptian exile provided [atonement](atonemen.html). Unlike the other [four](four.html), the Egyptian exile was not forced by a foreign [nation](nations.html), but rather by a [famine](famine.html). Unlike the other [four](four.html) exiles, the Egyptian exile was also relatively peaceful and trouble free as long as [Joseph](joseph.html) was alive.

The [number](nchart.html) [four](four.html) is a [number](nchart.html) of separation, and represents dispersal in all [four](four.html) directions. We see scripture describing division and separation as:

***Zechariah 2:10*** *...for I have scattered you like the* [*four*](four.html) *directions of the* [*heavens*](heaven.html)*.*

[Four](four.html) is the [number](nchart.html) representing exile, as we have already begun seeing.

# The [Four](four.html) Rivers

We find a hint to the [four](four.html) exiles in the description of the [Garden of Eden](eden.html), from which came out a river that split into [four](four.html) smaller rivers: Pishon, Gichon, Chidekel, and P’ros (Euphrates). These [four](four.html) rivers also correspond to the [four](four.html) exiles of [Bavel](bavel.html), Madai, Yavan and [Edom](edom.html).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 2:10*** *And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into* [*four*](four.html) *heads. 11 The* [*name*](name.html) *of the* [*first*](one.html) *is Pishon: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; 12 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.13 And the* [*name*](name.html) *of the second river is Gichon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. 14 And the* [*name*](name.html) *of the* [*third*](three.html) *river is Chidekel: that is it which goeth toward the* [*east*](east.html) *of Assyria. And the* [*fourth*](four.html) *river is P’ros (Euphrates).*

The [first](one.html) use of the [number](nchart.html) [four](four.html), in the Torah, is found in [connection](connection.html) with the water that flowed out of [Gan Eden](eden.html).

# The [Covenant](covenant.html) Between The Parts

In this next passage we see [Avraham](avraham.html) being told that his descendents would be going into exile in Egypt. Chazal see a hint, also, the [four](four.html) exiles that would enslave the Children of Israel throughout [time](time.html).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 15:12-21*** *And when the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *was going down, a deep* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *fell upon* [*Abram*](avraham.html)*; and, behold, a* [*fear*](fear.html)*, a great darkness fell upon him. 13 And he said unto* [*Abram*](avraham.html)*,* [*Know*](daat.html) *of a surety that thy* [*seed*](flower.html) *shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them* [*four*](four.html) *hundred years; 14 And also that* [*nation*](nations.html)*, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. 15 And thou shalt go to thy* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. 16 But in the* [*fourth*](four.html)[*generation*](toldot.html) *they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. 17 And it came to pass, that, when the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking* [*furnace*](furnace.html)*, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. 18 In the same day* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *made a* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *with* [*Abram*](avraham.html)*, saying, Unto thy* [*seed*](flower.html) *have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, 21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.*

The [nations](nations.html) which kept us in exile were hinted to in verse [twelve](twelve.html), which says that after [Avraham](avraham.html) fell [asleep](mashal.html), “*And behold, a* [*fear*](fear.html)*, a great darkness fell upon him*.” The words form a [remez](remez.html), according to the [Midrash](orallaw.html):

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Genesis XLIV:17*** *AND, LO, A DREAD, EVEN A GREAT DARKNESS, FELL UPON HIM (ib.). DREAD refers to* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, as it is written, Then was Nebuchadnezzar filled with fury (Dan. III, 19).[[44]](#footnote-44) DARKNESS refers to Media, which darkened the* [*eyes*](body.html) *of Israel with fasting and tribulation; GREAT refers to Greece. R. Simon said: The Kingdom of Greece set up* [*one*](one.html) *hundred and* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *commanders,* [*one*](one.html) *hundred and* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *governors, and* [*one*](one.html) *hundred and* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *generals. The Rabbis said: Sixty of each, for it is written, Serpents, fiery serpents, and scorpions (Deut. VIII, 15)[[45]](#footnote-45): just as the scorpion lays sixty eggs at a* [*time*](time.html)*, so did the Greek state set up sixty of each. FELL UPON HIM alludes to* [*Edom*](edom.html) *[Rome], as it is written, The earth quaketh at the noise of their fall (Jer. XLIX, 21).[[46]](#footnote-46) Some reverse it: FELL UPON HIM (ib.) alludes to* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, as it is written, Fallen, fallen is* [*Babylon*](bavel.html) *(Isa. XXI, 9). GREAT alludes to Media, as it is written, King Ashuerus did make great, etc. (Est. III, 1). DARKNESS alludes to Greece that darkened the* [*eyes*](body.html) *of Israel with its decrees.’ DREAD alludes to* [*Edom*](edom.html)*, as it is written, After this I saw... a* [*fourth*](four.html) *beast[[47]](#footnote-47), dreadful and terrible (Dan. VII, 7).[[48]](#footnote-48)*

[**Fear**](fear.html): This refers to [Bavel](bavel.html), the [Babylonian](bavel.html) exile.

**Darkness**: This refers to Madai, the Median exile.

**Great**: This refers to Yavan, the Greek exile.

**Fell upon him**: This refers to the Edomite exile, the last of the [four](four.html) exiles, in which we still suffer.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [fear](fear.html) | Darkness | Great | Fell upon him |
| [**Bavel**](bavel.html) - [Babylon](bavel.html) | **Madai** - Media / Persia | **Yavan** - Greece | [**Edom**](edom.html) - Rome |

The Tzadik of Ruzhin concluded, “Even before we sinned the exile was decreed upon us. The ‘[four](four.html) exiles’ and ‘[two](two.html) destructions’ were already decreed in the [time](time.html) of our Patriarch [Avraham](avraham.html) at the [*Covenant*](covenant.html) *Between The Pieces*.

# [Four](four.html) Kings vs. [Five](five.html) Kings

***Bereshit (Genesis) 14:1-9*** *And it happened in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar; Arioch, king of Ellasar; Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and Tidal, king of Goiim, that these made war on Bera, king of Sodom; Birsha, king of Gomorrah; Shinab, king of Admah; Shemeber, king of Zeboiim; and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. All these had joined at the Valley of Siddim, now the Salt Sea.* [*Twelve*](twelve.html) *years they served Chedorlaomer, and they rebelled* [*thirteen*](thirteen.html) *years. In the* [*fourteenth*](fourteen.html) *year, Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and struck the Rephaim at Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim at Shaveh-kiriathaim; and the Horites in the mountains of Seir, as far as the Plain of Paran which is by the desert. Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat, which is* [*Kadesh*](stages.html)*; they struck all the territory of the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html)*; and also the Amorites who* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in Hazazon-tamar.*

*And the king of Sodom went forth with the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar, and engaged them in battle in the Valley of Siddim: With Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, Tidal, king of Goiim; Amraphel, king of Shinar; and Arioch, king of Ellasar –* [*four*](four.html) *kings against* [*five*](five.html)*.*

Both Rashi and the Ramban ask why the Torah emphasizes that there were [four](four.html) kings against [five](five.html). Rashi gives a simple answer that it’s meant to show that although the [four](four.html) were less in [number](nchart.html), they were tremendous in strength, and yet [Avraham](avraham.html) was able to beat them with just [three](three.html)-hundred [eighteen](eighteen.html) men. The Ramban sees something much more complex. He says that this [event](feasts.html) happened to [Avraham](avraham.html) to [teach](teacher.html) us that before the [end of days](lastdays.html), there will be [four](four.html) superpowers who will rise up to [attack](attacks.html) the [Jews](gen-jew.html), and that we will survive and take back all the captive [Jews](gen-jew.html) in the [world](worlds.html). Just as war started with [four](four.html) kingdoms, it will end with [four](four.html). There are also the [four](four.html) exiles: [Bavel](bavel.html), Madai, Yavan (Greeks), and [Edom](edom.html) (Romans). We are currently in the exile of [Edom](edom.html), and [one](one.html) [sign](signs.html) of the age of [Mashiach](mashiach.html) is the end of that exile.

# [Yaaqov](israelja.html)’s Ladder

***Bereshit (Genesis) 28:10-16*** *And* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*. 12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*: and behold the* [*angels*](angels.html) *of God ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *stood above it, and said, I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God of* [*Avraham*](avraham.html) *thy father, and the God of* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy* [*seed*](flower.html)*; 14 And thy* [*seed*](flower.html) *shall be as the* [*dust*](rock.html) *of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the* [*east*](east.html)*, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy* [*seed*](flower.html) *shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. 16 And* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *awaked out of his* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*, and he said, Surely* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *is in this place; and I* [*knew*](daat.html) *it not.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Leviticus XXIX:2*** *R. Nahman opened his discourse with the text, Therefore* [*fear*](fear.html) *thou not, O* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *My servant (Jer. XXX, 10). This speaks of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *himself, of whom it is written, And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth... and behold the* [*angels*](angels.html) *of God ascending and descending on it (Gen. XXVIII, 12). These* [*angels*](angels.html)*, explained R. Samuel b. Nahman, were the guardian Princes of the* [*nations*](nations.html) *of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. For R. Samuel b. Nahman said: This verse* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *us that the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, showed our father* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *the Prince of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html) *ascending* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *rungs of the ladder, the Prince of Media fifty-*[*two*](two.html) *rungs, the Prince of Greece* [*one*](one.html) *hundred and eighty, while the Prince of* [*Edom*](edom.html) *ascended till* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *did not* [*know*](daat.html) *how many rungs. Thereupon our father* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *was afraid. He thought: Is it possible that this* [*one*](one.html) *will never be brought down? Said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to him: “‘*[*Fear*](fear.html) *thou not, O* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *My servant.” Even if he ascend and sit down by Me, I will bring him down from there!’ Hence it is written, Though thou make thy nest as high as the eagle, and though thou set it among the* [*stars*](mazaroth.html)*, I will bring thee down from thence (Obad. I, 4). R. Berekiah and R. Helbo, and R. Simeon b. Yohai in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Meir said: It* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *that the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, showed* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *the Prince of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html) *ascending and descending, of Media ascending and descending, of Greece ascending and descending, and of* [*Edom*](edom.html) *ascending and descending. Then the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, said to* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*: ‘You also ascend.’ Thereupon our father* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *was afraid, and thought: Perhaps,* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *for- fend, in the same way as these are to come down, so also am I? Said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to him: ‘ “*[*Fear*](fear.html) *thou not, O* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *My servant.” Once you ascend there will be no descent for you! ‘ He would not believe, and did not ascend. R. Berekiah and R. Helbo in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Simeon b. Yohai stated: R. Meir used to expound the verse, For all this they sinned still, and believed not in His wondrous works (Ps. LXXVIII, 32) as applying to our father* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*, who would not believe and did not ascend. So the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, said to him: ‘ If you had believed and ascended you would never more come down. Now, however, that you would not believe and did not ascend, your children are destined to be enslaved to* [*four*](four.html) *empires in this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, paying them duties, annonae, fines, and capitation taxes. Thereupon* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *was afraid. He said to the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He: ‘Sovereign of the Universe! Am I to infer that this will endure for ever? ‘ Said He to him: ‘Neither be dismayed, O Israel; for, lo, I will* [*save*](salvation.html) *thee from afar’ (Jer. loc. cit.)-- as you read, They are come from a far country unto me, even from* [*Babylon*](bavel.html) *(Isa. XXXIX, 3)--And thy* [*seed*](flower.html) *from the land of their captivity (Jer. loc. cit.), namely, from Gaul, and from Spain, and from her neighbours; And* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *shall return (ib.) from* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*; And be quiet (ib.) as regards Media; And at ease (ib.) as regards Greece; And none shall make him afraid (ib.) alludes to* [*Edom*](edom.html)*; For I will make a full end (kalah) of all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *whither I have scattered thee (ib. 11); that is to say, ‘I will make an end (kalah) of the* [*nations*](nations.html) *of the* [*world*](worlds.html) *who wholly reap (mekallim) their fields; But I will not make a full end of thee (ib.); that is to say, ‘But I will not make a full end’ of Israel, who do not wholly reap their fields; as you read, Thou shalt not wholly reap the corner of thy field (Lev. XXIII, 22); For I will correct thee in measure (Jer. loc. cit.); that is to say, ‘I will correct thee’ with sufferings in this* [*world*](worlds.html) *in order to cleanse you from your iniquities in the* [*Time*](time.html) *to Come. When? IN THE* [*SEVENTH*](seven.html) *MONTH.*

In his prophetic [dream](dreams.html), [Yaakov](israelja.html) Avinu saw a ladder with its base on the ground and its top in [heaven](heaven.html) and [angels](angels.html) going up and down its rungs. These [angels](angels.html) are identified by the [Midrash](orallaw.html) as the *sarei ha’umos*, the patron [angels](angels.html) of the [four](four.html) kingdoms, that would oppress [Yaakov](israelja.html)’s descendants in their exile. [Yaakov](israelja.html) Avinu saw the *sar[[49]](#footnote-49)* of [Bavel](bavel.html) ascend [seventy](seventy.html) rungs-representing the [number](nchart.html) of years that [nation](nations.html) held power over Jewry-and then descend. Next came the *sar* of Media, whose ascent of fifty-[two](two.html) rungs symbolized the length of the Persian-Median exile. Then came the *sar* of Greece, who got as high as 180 rungs-the [number](nchart.html) of years [Jews](gen-jew.html) suffered under the Hellenist yoke until their [liberation](freedom.html) on [Chanukah](chanukah.html). It was only the ever-ascending *sar* of [Edom](edom.html) that led [Yaakov](israelja.html) to ask [HaShem](hashem.html) if this meant that the [fourth](four.html) exile would never end. He was reassured that even if [Edom](edom.html)-Rome and its heirs-reached the [stars](mazaroth.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) would bring it down.

This theme of the [four](four.html) kingdoms and the exiles they were to impose upon Jewry is not encountered for the [first](one.html) or last [time](time.html) in [Yaakov](israelja.html)’s vision. There are at least half a dozen other references in Tanach.

[Yaakov](israelja.html)’s [dream](dreams.html) is unique in pinpointing the length of each exile. But all the other symbols and visions are alike in [offering](korbanot) an opportunity to analyze the nature of each kingdom. It is these concise yet profound [insights](insights.html) into the personality of each [nation](nations.html) that Our Sages and Torah commentators throughout the [generations](toldot.html) have developed into a fascinating picture of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history.

***Tehillim (Pslams) 78:32*** *Nevertheless, they sinned again and they did not have faith in* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s wonders...*

This verse refers to our forefather [Yaakov](israelja.html), who did not have faith in [HaShem](hashem.html) and did not ascend the ladder. [HaShem](hashem.html) told [Yaakov](israelja.html)... now that you did not have faith in Me, your children will have to undergo [four](four.html) exiles in this [world](worlds.html), during which they will be subject to many forms of taxation.[[50]](#footnote-50)

It is worth studying the [events](feasts.html) of the Patriarchs because the [Midrash](orallaw.html) says: *“Maase Avot Siman L’Banim”*, the [events](feasts.html) of the forefathers foretell [future](future.html) [events](feasts.html) of their children.

# [Yitzchak](isaac.html)’s Wells

The [four](four.html) wells dug by [Yitzchak](isaac.html) and his men allude to the [four](four.html)exiles ([Bavel](bavel.html), Madai, Yavan, and [Edom](edom.html)) that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people have been forced to endure because of our abandonment of the Torah.

# In The [Mishkan](mikdash.html)

The Torah at the beginning of the Portion of Teruma enumerates the materials that were needed for the building of the [Mishkan](mikdash.html), “Gold, silver, copper…and ram skins that are dyed red”. The Yalkut[[51]](#footnote-51) explains that gold is a representation of the [Babylonian](bavel.html) Empire. Silver represents the Persian Empire. Copper represents the Greek Empire and the ram skins, that were dyed red, is an allusion to the Roman Empire ([*Edom*](edom.html)), as the Torah refers to [Esav](edom.html) as “red skinned”**.** Why do the [four](four.html) exiles need to be represented in the holiest location in existence, the [Mishkan](mikdash.html), which is the “[dwelling](dwelling.html) place” of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s presence in our midst?

Rambam writes in *Hilchot Teshuva* that the state of “tzadik”[[52]](#footnote-52) and “rasha”[[53]](#footnote-53) is not predestined but rather [one](one.html) has the ability to choose between good and evil. [One](one.html) is put at the equidistant point between the [two](two.html) extremes to be able to make the choice. Thus, man is pulled equally in both directions. In order to maintain the proper balance between good and evil, at whatever level “good” is represented, “evil” must have a similar level of representation. The Holy of Holies of the [Mishkan](mikdash.html), although it was the location of the Divine Presence, just as all “good” emanates from the holiness of that location, identically “evil” must be represented there. Thus, when the Men of the Great Assembly [prayed](prayer.html) that the evil inclination should present itself to be destroyed it exited from the Holy of Holies.

***Yoma 69b*** *He answered:* [*One*](one.html) *does not pronounce the Ineffable* [*Name*](name.html) *outside [the limits of the* [*Temple*](temple.html)*]. But may* [*one*](one.html) *not? Is it not written: And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose. [. . . and Ezra praised the great God]. And R. Giddal [commenting thereupon] said: He magnified Him by [pronouncing] the Ineffable* [*Name*](name.html)*?-That was a decision in an emergency. And [they] cried with a great [loud] voice unto the Lord, their God. What did they* [*cry*](mashal.html)*? — Woe, woe, it is he who has destroyed the* [*Sanctuary*](mikdash.html)*, burnt the* [*Temple*](temple.html)*, killed all the righteous, driven all Israel into exile, and is still dancing around among us! Thou hast surely given him to us so that we may receive reward through him. We want neither him, nor reward through him! Thereupon a tablet fell down from* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *for them, whereupon the word ‘truth’ was inscribed. (R. Hanina said:* [*One*](one.html) *may learn therefrom that the seal of the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, is truth). They ordered a fast of* [*three*](three.html) *days and* [*three*](three.html) *nights, whereupon he was surrendered to them. He came forth from the Holy of Holies like a young fiery lion.*

# The Mabul (Flood)

In the story of the Flood we find the mentioning of “the water increased” [four](four.html) times and Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that this is a hint to the [four](four.html) exiles.

# Egypt – The Prototype

There is a Midrashic[[54]](#footnote-54) view that maintains that the [impurity](purity.html) of Egypt is the source of all further exiles and is too profound to be listed as [one](one.html) of the [four](four.html). The Egyptian exile lasted [two](two.html) hundred and [ten](ten.html) years,[[55]](#footnote-55) from the [time](time.html) [Yaaqov](israelja.html) Avinu and his sixty-[nine](nine.html) family members crossed the borders of Egypt.

This prototypical exile has at least [one](one.html) very important lesson for us.

Our [salvation](salvation.html), the [salvation](salvation.html) of all [Jews](gen-jew.html), depends on us saving the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) [first](one.html)

We learn this fron the Egyptian exile where a [Jew](gen-jew.html), [Joseph](joseph.html) ben [Yaaqov](israelja.html), [first](one.html) saved the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) before he saved his family – the rest of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). Thus we need to absorb a very powerful lesson:

Our [salvation](salvation.html) depends

on the [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html)!

We [save](salvation.html) the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) by scattering the [seeds](flower.html) of the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) amongst the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html). The scattering of the [seeds](flower.html) of the oral [law](law.html), amongst the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html), is illustrated by a simile in Mark[[56]](#footnote-56)**:**

***Mark 4:13-20*** *And he said to them: “Do you not comprehend[[57]](#footnote-57) this simile?[[58]](#footnote-58) And how will you comprehend all similes? The sower sows the* [*seed*](flower.html) *of the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html)*.[[59]](#footnote-59) And these are those along the way (path) where the* [*seed*](flower.html) *of the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html) *is sown. And when they hear, the adversary (Yester HaRa) comes immediately[[60]](#footnote-60) and takes away the* [*seed*](flower.html) *of the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html) *having been sown in their hearts. And likewise, these are the ones having been sown on the rocky (soil),[[61]](#footnote-61) who, when they hear the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html)*, they immediately receive it with joy, Yet they have no root (faithfulness) in themselves, but are temporal opportunists.[[62]](#footnote-62) Then when trouble or persecution[[63]](#footnote-63) has occurred because of the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html)*, they immediately stumble[[64]](#footnote-64) (and fall away). These are those being sown into the thorn bushes, those* [*hearing*](mashal.html) *the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html)*, And the cares of this age, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts about other things entering in, they choke the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html)*, and it becomes unfruitful.[[65]](#footnote-65) And these are those being sown on the good ground, who hear and welcome the* [*Oral Torah*](orallaw.html) *and bring forth fruit,* [*one*](one.html)[*thirty*](thirty.html)*, and* [*one*](one.html) *sixty, and* [*one*](one.html) *a hundredfold.*

The Egyptian exile which is, for us, the paradigm of all exiles. When [HaShem](hashem.html) freed us [from Egypt](thebirth.html)ian bondage, He used [four](four.html) terms of [redemption](redemption.html). He said,

* “I will take you out (v’hotzeiti) of the land of Egypt,
* And I will [save](salvation.html) you (v’hitzalti) from serving them.
* And I will [redeem](redemption.html) you (v’gaalti) from slavery to [freedom](freedom.html),
* And I will take you (v’lakachti) to Me as a [nation](nations.html)”.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I will take you out of the land of Egypt | And I will [save](salvation.html) you from serving them | And I will [redeem](redemption.html) you from slavery to [freedom](freedom.html) | And I will take you to Me as a [nation](nations.html) |
| [**Bavel**](bavel.html) - [Babylon](bavel.html) | **Madai** - Media / Persia | **Yavan** - Greece | [**Edom**](edom.html) - Rome |

“v’hotzeiti” hints at Galut [Bavel](bavel.html), for so the Prophet writes in Yeshayahu “Go out from [Bavel](bavel.html) ... , flee from the Kasdim”;[[66]](#footnote-66)

“v’hitzalti” hints at Galut Paras and Madai, since that is where they were saved from [physical](physical.html) annihilation;

“v’gaalti” hints at Galut Yavan, because that is where their [spiritual](physical.html) existence was threatened; whilst –

“v’lakachti eschem li le’Am” hints at Galut [Edom](edom.html), where [HaShem](hashem.html) will take us as His [nation](nations.html) once and for all, when the [time](time.html) comes.

## The [Four](four.html) Cups

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) Yerushalmi[[67]](#footnote-67) says that the [four](four.html) cups of wine at the [seder](haggada.html) parallel [four](four.html) phrases of [redemption](redemption.html). The Yerushalmi goes on to say that the [four](four.html) cups represent our [freedom](freedom.html) from the [four](four.html) [nations](nations.html) who oppressed us: [Bavel](bavel.html), Madai, Yavan, and [Edom](edom.html).

The early experiences of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people are considered to foreshadow our later experiences in history. For us, history truly repeats itself. And so our Egyptian [experience](experience.html) is a forerunner of all the later times we would be oppressed by the [nations](nations.html) of the [world](worlds.html).

During the [seder](haggada.html) we take [four](four.html) cups of wine, which correspond with these [four](four.html) expressions of [redemption](redemption.html).

This prototypical exile confirms the words of Our Sages when they [taught](teacher.html) that the purpose of exile is to make converts:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 12:37*** *And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to* [*Succoth*](succoth.html)*, about* [*six*](six.html) *hundred thousand on* [*foot*](heel.html) *that were men, beside children. 38 And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.*

Thus we see that the Erev Rav, the mixed multitude, also came out with the Children of Israel. These [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) had attached themselves to Israel and would receive a portion of the Promised Land.

Egypt is viewed as the prototype of all the [future](future.html) exiles and therefore remains in a class of its own.

It was the Egyptian paradigm that enabled the sages to view Israel’s exile in such broad perspective. Just as they compared the [first](one.html) redeemer (Moses) to the final redeemer ([Messiah](mashiach.html) of the house of David), and the [first](one.html) [redemption](redemption.html) to the final [redemption](redemption.html), so they considered the [first](one.html) *Galut* to be the model for all [future](future.html) exiles. [HaShem](hashem.html)’s promise to [Yaakov](israelja.html) Avinu was thus interpreted by the Rabbis as applying to every *Galut* [experience](experience.html):

***Bereshit (Genesis) 46:3-4***[*Fear*](fear.html) *not to go down* [*into Egypt*](thebirth.html)*, for I will ... go down with you* [*into Egypt*](thebirth.html) *and surely bring you up again.*

The Rabbis understand this literally to mean that [HaShem](hashem.html) Himself, as it were, accompanies His people into exile. A [new](new.html) concept was thus born, [known](daat.html) as *Shekhinta* *be-Galuta*, “the Divine Presence [is] in exile”,[[68]](#footnote-68) which would later become potent in the Kabbalah.

This exile is puzzling. [Seventy](seventy.html) righteous, holy, and undefiled [Jewish](gen-jew.html) souls went down to Egypt and 600,000 souls emerged mired in [forty](forty.html)-[nine](nine.html) levels of defilement! What purpose did this exile serve? The goal of the exile was to scour the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people and prepare them for their mission as the chosen people. This is what [HaShem](hashem.html) meant when He told [Avraham](avraham.html): “[Know](daat.html) for sure” that if you want your descendants to be the chosen people they must endure [four](four.html) hundred years of purification in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed, not because they sinned, but in order to be cleansed and prepared for the mission that awaits them.

# The [Journeys](stages.html)

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 33:1*** *These are* (eileh) *the* [*journeys*](stages.html) *of the Children of Israel, who went forth from the land of Egypt according to their legions, under the leadership of Moshe and Aharon.*

The word *eileh,* “these are”, seems superfluous. The pasuk could have just said, *masei b’nei Yisrael,* “the [journeys](stages.html) of the Children of Israel” Why is it stated this way?

In addition to the Egyptian exile, the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people suffered additional exiles under [four](four.html) kingdoms: [Edom](edom.html)/Rome *(*[***Edom***](edom.html)*)*; Media/Persia *(****Madai****)*; [Babylon](bavel.html) *(*[***Bavel***](bavel.html)*)*; and Greece *(****Yavan****)*. The [first](one.html) [letters](letters.html) of the words *“Eilah masei b’nai Yisrael”,* “These are the [journeys](stages.html) of the Children of Israel” are a hint to the [four](four.html) exiles which will come after the [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html). The [first](one.html) [four](four.html) words of the verse begin with the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) [letters](letters.html) *alef, mem, bet,* and *yud*, representing the [first](one.html) [letters](letters.html) of the [four](four.html) exiles: [*Edom*](edom.html) (Rome beginning with *alef*), *Madai* (Media/Persia *mem*), [*Bavel*](bavel.html) ([Babylon](bavel.html) *bet*), and *Yavan* (Greece *yud*).

The words *eileh Maasei b’nei Yisrael,* “These are the [journeys](stages.html) of the Children of Israel”, are an acronym for the [four](four.html) *galuyot,* exiles, in which the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were persecuted and subjugated under [four](four.html) kingdoms: [Edom](edom.html)/Rome *(*[***Edom***](edom.html)*)*; Media/Persia *(****Madai****)*; [Babylon](bavel.html) *(*[***Bavel***](bavel.html)*)*; and Greece *(****Yavan****)*. The [forty](forty.html)-[two](two.html) lettered [name](name.html) accompanies the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people throughout all their travels during the exile and assists them in reaching the ultimate [redemption](redemption.html).

In the historical [journey](stages.html), we are told that we have already endured the [forty](forty.html)-[two](two.html) [journeys](stages.html) and we are [standing](mashal.html) poised at the “dark plains” on the banks of the River [Jordan](stages.html) [Jericho](stages.html) boundary, about ready to enter the Promised Land, this [time](time.html), permanently. Commentaries explain that the opening of this week’s Torah portion, “eleh Massei b’nei Yisrael” (these are the [journeys](stages.html) of the children of Israel) is the acronym: [Edom](edom.html), Madai, [Bavel](bavel.html), Yavan, the [four](four.html) major exiles and empires that have dominated history.[[69]](#footnote-69)

# Wanderings

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 4:2*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will disperse you among the people, and you will remain small in* [*number*](nchart.html) *among the* [*nations*](nations.html) *that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will lead you there.*

**Among the people *[Ba’Amim]*** – The word *“Ba’Amim”* has a numerical equivalent of 162, which is the same as *“Bein HaBavliim”* [among the Babylonians]

**The** [**Nations**](nations.html) ***[BaGoyim]*** – The word *“BaGoyim”* totals 61, which is equivalent to *“U’V’Madai”* [and the Persians]

**Will Lead *[Yinaheg]*** – The word *“Yinaheg”* totals 68, which is equivalent to *“B’yavan”* [in Greece]

**There *[Shamah]*** – The word *“Shamah”* totals 345, which is equivalent to *“M’Romiim”* [The Romans]

The [**four**](four.html) **exiles** that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people will undergo are all alluded to in this verse.[[70]](#footnote-70)

\* \* \*

The words “cup of wine” are mentioned [four](four.html) times in Pharaoh’s butler’s [dream](dreams.html).[[71]](#footnote-71) According to the [Midrash](orallaw.html), these cups of wine alluded to the Israelites’ [liberation](freedom.html).

**\* \* \***

***Daniel 7:2-6*** *Daniel* [*spoke*](mashal.html)*, and said: I saw in my vision by night...* [*four*](four.html) *great beasts... The* [*first*](one.html) *was like a lion...and behold, another beast, a second* [*one*](one.html)*, similar to a bear... Afterwards I beheld, and there was another, similar to a leopard....*

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) interprets this verse to be referring to the [four](four.html) exiles endured by the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, and the righteous individuals who would help the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html) persevere during those trying times. It lists the exiles in the following order: In the days of the Chaldeans, in the days of the Greeks ([Chanukah](chanukah.html)), in the days of [Haman](esther.html) ([Purim](Purim.html)), and in the days of the Persians. Concerning [Chanukah](chanukah.html), the [Talmud](orallaw.html) states: “In the days of the Greeks, for I gave them Shimon HaTzaddik, Chashmonai and his sons, and Matityahu the [high priest](priests.html)”.[[72]](#footnote-72)

# Un-kosher Animals

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Leviticus XIII:5*** *Moses foresaw the empires engaged in their [subsequent] activities. [Among the unclean animals]*

*THE CAMEL (GAMAL) (XI, 4) alludes to* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, of whom is said, O daughter of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, that art to be destroyed; happy be he that repayeth thee thy retributions (gemul) as thou hast dealt (gamal) with us (Ps. CXXXVII, 8).*

*THE* [*ROCK*](rock.html) *BADGER alludes to Media. The Rabbis and R. Judah b. Simon gave different explanations. The Rabbis said: Just as the* [*rock*](rock.html)*-badger possesses marks of uncleanness and marks of cleanness, so too did Media produce a righteous man as well as a* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man. R. Judah b. R. Simon said: The last Darius was the son of* [*Esther*](esther.html)*,* [*clean*](purity.html) *from his mother [‘s side] and unclean from his father [‘s side].*

*THE HARE alludes to Greece; the* [*name*](name.html) *of the mother of Ptolemy was [Lagos, the Greek equivalent of] hare.*

*THE SWINE alludes to Seir [*[*Edom*](edom.html)*, i.e. Rome]. Moses mentioned [the* [*first*](one.html)*]* [*three*](three.html) *of them in* [*one*](one.html) *verse, but the last [by itself] in another verse. R. Johanan and R. Simeon b. Lakish gave explanations. R. Johanan said: Because it [i.e. the swine] is on a par with the* [*three*](three.html) *others put together.*

\* \* \*

Our Sages enumerate [four](four.html) separate “exiles” that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people have endured since [first](one.html) settling the [Land of Israel](city.html) 3,300 years ago. Each of these exiles is qualitatively different, in the sense that the oppressors focused on uprooting different aspects of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) life and practice. Let us look at these differences.

# [Bavel](bavel.html) ([Babylon](bavel.html)) - בָּבֶל

[**Bavel**](bavel.html) *attempted* to disconected us from our land. The [Babylonian](bavel.html) exile was characterized by [physical](physical.html) suffering and oppression. The Babylonians were barbarians who viewed sheer [physical](physical.html) strength as bestowing the right to dominate and conquer. This characteristic of the Babylonians was built at the [time](time.html) of the Tower of [Bavel](bavel.html). At the [time](time.html) the people were interested in waging war with [HaShem](hashem.html). Because of this rebellion, [HaShem](hashem.html) confused their language (not only did He create multiple languages, but He caused, even those who [spoke](mashal.html) the same language, to misunderstand each other). As they were separated from their land, by their languages, so they exiled us from our land. We began the [tikkun](tikkun.html) for the confusion of language. This is where the [Babylonian](bavel.html) [Talmud](orallaw.html), the [heart](body.html) of the [Oral Torah](orallaw.html), was written.

# Madai (Media) - מָדַי

**Madai** *attempted* to disconnect us from [physical](physical.html) life. The Median exile was [one](one.html) of emotional temptation. The [events](feasts.html) written in the Megilla of [Esther](esther.html) took place after [Babylon](bavel.html) had been conquered by the Medians and the Persians. These [events](feasts.html) were custom tailored to kill us.

As we learned in the introduction, our Sages [teach](teacher.html) that the purpose of exile is to [redeem](redemption.html) the sparks among the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) and to make proselytes. Thus when the Bne Israel were exiled in [Babylon](bavel.html), by the Medians, they also made proselytes:[[73]](#footnote-73)

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***9:26*** *Wherefore they called these days* [*Purim*](Purim.html) *after the* [*name*](name.html) *of Pur. Therefore for all the words of this* [*letter*](letters.html)*, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them, 27 The* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *ordained, and took upon them, and upon their* [*seed*](flower.html)*, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them,[[74]](#footnote-74) so as it should not fail, that they would keep these* [*two*](two.html) *days according to their writing, and according to their* [*appointed*](settimes.html)[*time*](time.html) *every year; 28 And that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every* [*generation*](toldot.html)*, every family, every province, and every* [*city*](city.html)*; and that these days of* [*Purim*](Purim.html) *should not fail from among the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*, nor the memorial of them perish from their* [*seed*](flower.html)*.*

When we review the Megilla, we find that “the seal-ring of [Haman](esther.html)” legalizing the genocidal edict against Persian Jewry did more to bring [Jews](gen-jew.html) back to Judaism than all the preaching of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) prophets.[[75]](#footnote-75) Perhaps it is this renewal which [HaShem](hashem.html) used to help the [Jews](gen-jew.html) make the many [Babylonian](bavel.html) proselytes.

# Yavan (Greece) - יָוָן

**Yavan** *attempted* to disconnect us from the Torah and [mitzvot](cmds613.html) even as we remained in our land. The Greeks abolished [Shabbat](sabbath.html), [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html), and [Brit Mila](circumcz.html), because all of these [mitzvot](cmds613.html) emphasized the particular [Jewish](gen-jew.html) relation to the [world](worlds.html), the santification of the [creation](bara.html), of [time](time.html), and of the [body](body.html) respectively.

Galut Yavan, the [third](three.html) exile, lasted 180 years, and was [known](daat.html) as the exile of *darkness* because the Greeks went to great lengths to make [Jews](gen-jew.html) see and understand the [world](worlds.html) in a way which was [alien](aliens.html) to the Torah. Further, the Greeks forced the translation of the Torah into Greek in order to appropriate our Torah to themselves. We were no longer to be the exclusive interpreters of the Torah. The Galut Yavan is always referred to as *darkness* because it took away the light of Torah.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 1:2*** *And the earth was without form (tohu), and void (bohu); and darkness was upon the* [*face*](body.html) *of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the* [*face*](body.html) *of the waters.*

By looking at the above pasuk and understanding the Greek [desire](needs.html) to remove Torah from the [world](worlds.html), we can understand why Our Sages said that the ‘darkness’ of Bereshit 1:2 [spoke](mashal.html) of Yavan, the Greek exile.

The Greek exile was not a [physical](physical.html) exile, as the [Jews](gen-jew.html) remained living in Israel. Nor were the Greek interested in destroying the [Jews](gen-jew.html). The Greek wanted the [Jews](gen-jew.html) not to be [Jews](gen-jew.html). They wanted the [Jews](gen-jew.html) to stop circumcising their sons, to stop celebrating [Shabbat](sabbath.html) and the [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html). The wanted the [Jews](gen-jew.html) to be like them.

# [Edom](edom.html) (Rome) - אֱדוֹם

[**Edom**](edom.html) *attempted* to sever our [connection](connection.html) from [Heaven](heaven.html) by destroying the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), [Jerusalem](city.html), and dispersing us to the [four](four.html) winds.

[Edom](edom.html) is the [fourth](four.html) exile that has lasted for almost 2000 years. The final exile, [Edom](edom.html), corresponds to the phrase, “covering the deep”, In Bereshit (Genesis) 1:2, because just as we cannot grasp the depth of the ocean, so too we cannot grasp how terrible this exile is.

"[*Edom*](edom.html)" in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) means "red", and is thus associated with bloodshed and bloodlust, just as [Esau](edom.html) chose to be a hunter rather than a farmer.

With the destruction of the second [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html)began the exile bearing the yoke of [Edom](edom.html), that which we suffer from till this day. It is the worst of the exiles because it contains poisons of all previous exiles.

The exile of [Edom](edom.html) began with Rome, whose culture lacked any clearly-defined philosophy. Rather, it adopted the philosophies of all the preceding cultures, causing Roman culture to be in a constant flux. Although the Roman Empire has fallen, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) are still in the exile of [Edom](edom.html), and indeed, [one](one.html) can find this phenomenon of ever-changing trends dominating modern western society.

Our Sages call [Edom](edom.html), Rome, the ‘evil kingdom:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Genesis XLII:2*** *R. Samuel commenced his discourse: And this also is a grievous evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go (Eccl. V. 15). Said R. Samuel: As he comes with slops, so he goes with slops.[[76]](#footnote-76) R. Abin said: Just as he commenced with* [*four*](four.html) *kings, so will he conclude with* [*four*](four.html) *kings.[[77]](#footnote-77) [He commences with* [*four*](four.html) *kings, viz.]: With Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar (Gen. XIV, 9); so he ends with* [*four*](four.html) *kingdoms: the kingdom of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, the kingdom of Media, the kingdom of Greece, and the empire of* [*Edom*](edom.html) *[i.e. Rome]. R. Phinehas quoted in R. Abin's* [*name*](name.html)*: But they* [*know*](daat.html) *not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel, for He hath* [*gathered*](gather.html) *them as the sheaves to the threshing- floor (Micah IV, 12). Thus, why Came all these as allies (Gen. XIV, 3)? In order that they might come and fall by the* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *of* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*; hence it is written, AND IT CAME TO PASS lN THE DAYS OF AMRAPHEL, etc.*

The [three](three.html) kingdoms which preceded [Edom](edom.html) were each based in [one](one.html) location, while the Roman Empire, like Tidal’s kingdom, extended over many [nations](nations.html).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **Bereshit 1** - Tohu - null | Bohu - void | darkness | covering the deep | “And the spirit of God” |
| Pishon | Gichon | Chidekel | P’ros (Euphrates) | [Gan Eden](eden.html) |
| **Bereshit 12** - [fear](fear.html) | Darkness | Great | Fell upon him |  |
| [**Babylon**](bavel.html) **-** [**Bavel**](bavel.html) | **Media/Persia - Madai** | **Greece - Yavan** | **Rome -** [**Edom**](edom.html) | **Messianic days** |
| [Jacob](israelja.html)’s ladder – 70 rungs | 52 rungs | 180 rungs | Many rungs |  |
| *Amraphel king of Shinar* | *Chedorlaomer the king of Elam (eternity)* | *Arioch king of Ellasar (God is chastener)* | *Tidal king of* [*nations*](nations.html) |  |
| [Avraham](avraham.html) | [Yitzchak](isaac.html) | [Yaaqov](israelja.html) | Moshe | [Mashiach](mashiach.html) |
| Geburah | Chesed | Tiferet | Malchut |  |
| **Daniel 7** - lion | bear | leopard | [Fourth](four.html) beast | A wild [donkey](chamor.html) of a man |
| Camel | Rabbit | Hare | Pig |  |
| Pshat | [Remez](remez.html) | Drash | [Sod](sod.html) |  |
| **Cup 1** | **Cup 2** | **Cup 3** | **Cup 4** | **Cup of Eliyahu** |
| **Shemot 6:6** - “I will take you out (v’hotzeiti) of the land of Egypt | And I will [save](salvation.html) you (v’hitzalti) from serving them.  | And I will [redeem](redemption.html) you (v’gaalti) from slavery to [freedom](freedom.html) | And I will take you (v’lakachti) to Me as a [nation](nations.html) |  |
| wise | [wicked](wicked.html) | simple | [one](one.html) who does not [know](daat.html) how to ask a question |  |
| “Ve-hotzaiti”= Egypt - [Pesach](passover.html)  | “Ve-He-tzalti” [Babylon](bavel.html) - [Purim](Purim.html) | “Ve-Ga-alti”= Greek - [Chanukah](chanukah.html) | “Ve-Lakachti” Roman exile |  |
| “**N**afshi” (Emotional) - [Babylonian](bavel.html) tyrant Nebuchadnezzar wanted the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people to emotionally submit themselves to him and his [idolatry](idolatry.html). They refused, so Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the [First](one.html) [Temple](temple.html) and sent the [Jews](gen-jew.html) packing to [Babylon](bavel.html). | **G**ufani (Bodily) - While living under Persian domination, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) experienced an exile which threatened to annihilate them through the genocidal machinations of [Haman](esther.html), the villain of the [Purim](Purim.html) story. | **S**ichli (Intellectual) - Under the rulership of the Greeks, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were subject to harsh decrees prohibiting their [connection](connection.html) to God and Torah. The tide of Greek philosophy and culture ― chronicled in the [Chanukah](chanukah.html) story ― threatened to extinguish [Jewish](gen-jew.html) intellectual thought. | **H**aKol (Combination) - The current exile began 2,000 years ago with the Roman destruction of the Second [Temple](temple.html) and the disbursement of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) to [four](four.html) corners of the globe. During this [time](time.html), [Jews](gen-jew.html) have been subjected to a horrific combination of all other exiles ― perpetual persecution, expulsion, humiliation, mass murder, and more. |  |
| **Bereshit 15** – 3 year old [Heifer](heifer.html) | 3 year old She goat | 3 year old ram | Turtle dove and pigeon |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# Conclusion

There is a universal [redemption](redemption.html) [coming](coming.html) when “The great [shofar](shofar.html) shall be sounded, and the lost shall come from the lands of plenty, and the forsaken from the lands of stricture, and they shall bow to G-d on the Holy Mountain in [Jerusalem](city.html).”[[78]](#footnote-78)

The Prophet [teaches](teacher.html) us that, in the end, our arba Galuyot, our [four](four.html) exiles will be successful!

***Zechariah 2:14*** *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in the midst of thee, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. 15 And many* [*nations*](nations.html) *shall be joined to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *in that day, and shall be my people: and I will* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in the midst of thee, and thou shalt* [*know*](daat.html) *that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts hath sent me unto thee.*

[HaShem](hashem.html) also comforted us by reminding us that despite being in Exile, He will still be there with us.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:44*** *But despite all this, while they will be in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them nor will I abhor them, to obliterate them, to annul My* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *with them - for I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *their G-d.*

Rabbi Yoshe Ber HaLevi Soloveitchik (1820-1892) added[[79]](#footnote-79) that without the punishment of exile, all those [Gentile](gen-jew.html) souls who were destined to [convert](aliens.html) would have come to Israel on their own seeking [spiritual](physical.html) enlightenment. Because of the exile and its scattering of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html), Israel will be there when converts from all over the [world](worlds.html) will seek the truth. May [HaShem](hashem.html) completely [redeem](redemption.html) His [nation](nations.html) and end the exile from the [four](four.html) corners of the Earth with the [coming](coming.html) of the [Mashiach](mashiach.html), speedily and in our days: Amen V’Amen!

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\* \* \*

This [study](study.html) was written by

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

(Greg Killian).

Comments may be submitted to:

Rabbi Dr. Greg Killian

12210 Luckey Summit

San Antonio, TX 78252

Internet address: gkilli@aol.com

Web page: http://www.betemunah.org/

(360) 918-2905

Return to The WATCHMAN home page

Send comments to Greg Killian at his email address: gkilli@aol.com

1. Yiremeyahu (Jeremiah) 11:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid. The word המזמתה implies premeditated wickedness; cf. Tehillim (Psalm) 89:20. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Yiremeyahu (Jeremiah) ibid. They attempted to disguise their [circumcision](circumcz.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. It is only after many years that the olive-tree bears fruit. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The Children of Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Goyim (גוים) – Gentiles. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. G-d = [Elohim](conundrum.html) = HaShem when He is exercising the attribute of justice. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Galut - גלות‎, refers to the exile of the Jewish people. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Hoshea 1:6 ‘Compassion’ is thus mentioned even in connection with retribution. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Hoshea 2:25. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ohr Hachayim, beginning of Ki Satze. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. (1555–1631) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Chiddushei Aggadah to Pesachim 87 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ezek. 34:31 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Cf. Num. 19:14: This is the [law](law.html), when a man dieth in a tent; all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean [seven](seven.html) days. (This command applies ONLY to Israel!) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Yerushalmi, Shekalim 1:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Yiremeyahu (Jeremiah) 22:30. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. I Divrei Hayamim (Chronicles) 3:17. Notwithstanding the curse that he should be childless and not prosper, after being exiled he was forgiven. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Shemot 18:14-27 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Zevachim 115a [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See Joshua Chapter 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Megillah 14b-15a [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Pesachim 87b [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. 423-371 BCE [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Also spelled ‘Modai’. Madai is also linked to Paras (Persia). These two often appear together. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. 371-356 BCE. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. 318-138 BCE [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Approximately 63 BCE until today. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Tanach is an acronym for: Torah ([Law](law.html)), Neviim (Prophets), and Ketubim (Writings) – the so called ‘Old Testament’. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. i.e. the Arab nations [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Spirit [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *Yalkut Shim’oni, Bereshit,* No.4 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Jeremiah refers to the desolation wrought by the conquering might of [Babylonia](bavel.html). Tohu and bohu are applied to Babylonia and Media (Persia) respectively in the sense that they caused chaos and destruction. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. This happened in Media, and wa-yabhillu is linked up with ‘bohu’. Or possibly wa-yabhillu is read: wayabo bohu lo, and they brought desolation to him.-Mah. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The reference is to Antiochus who endeavored to annihilate Judaism and implant Hellenism in its stead; ‘ write on the horn of an ox ‘ probably implies a public disavowal of Judaism. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Pesik. R.: to the wicked State of [Edom](edom.html)-i.e. [Rome](edom.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. I.e. it is the [eternal](eternal.html) nature of water. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. He translates ‘ruah’ literally, wind, and also stresses the present tense of merahefeth, lit. ‘hovers’; thus the verse means that at all times a breeze, caused by God, stirs over the waters. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Berachot 59a [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Bereshit 1:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Bereshit Rabba 2:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. The word for ‘fury’ ( הימה ) is somewhat similar to that used for dread ( חימה ). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. This is symbolically applied to Babylon, Media, and Greece respectively. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. This refers to Edom, as is stated in the preceding verse q.v. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. The fourth beast was applied to Edom. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The exile is regarded as putting Israel in pledge to atone their sins. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Sar = prince angel [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. [Midrash Rabbah](orallaw.html) Vayikra 29:2; Tanchuma Vayetze #2 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. *Yalkut Shimoni* (usually referred to as “the Yalkut” of Simeon of Frankfurt). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Righteous / generous [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Evil / stingy [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. [Midrash Rabbah](orallaw.html) - Numbers VII:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Nedarim 32a, Midrash Rabbah - Genesis LVII:4, Midrash Rabbah - Exodus XVIII:11, Midrash Rabbah - Numbers XIII:20. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. With thanks for this translation to His Eminence Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai and His Eminence Hakham Dr. Eliyahu ben Avraham. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. οἴδατε know by insight or intuition as opposed to **γινώσκω** meaning to come to know by observation and experience. Therefore, we can see here the reference to spiritual “insight” referring to apprehension of an abstract idea. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. The question is not a reproach as some scholars suggest. Taylor, V. (1955). *The Gospel According to Mark.* New York St Martin's Press: MacMillian & Co LTD. pp. 258-9 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Taylor promotes the idea that the phrase τὸν λόγον implies the “Gospel” or the “Christian Message.” Therefore, we note that the phrase τὸν λόγον used here refers to the “Mesorah” or Oral Torah. Taylor, V. (1955). *The Gospel According to Mark.* New York St Martin's Press: MacMillian & Co LTD. p. 259 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. **Εὐθύς** (*euthus*) is a multifaceted word. As we have shown (Sivan 12, 5772), it carries the connotation of being straight. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that it also carries a sense of immediacy and urgency. In brief, **εὐθύς** (*euthus*) bears the weight of moral urgency. This moral urgency is demonstrative of those who obey and hear. Acceptance of the Torah and Oral Torah is not conditional. When we hear we MUST obey with immediate moral acceptance and urgency. Here we note that **εὐθέως** (*euthus*) denotes those who “immediately” “fall away.” In other words, they “immediately” turn from moral immediacy taking the approach opposite to ***Na’aséh V’Nishmá*** “We will do and [then] we will hear.” cf. Exodus 19:8. See “Immediately” Sivan 12, 5772 [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. This “ground” is a rocky soil or rock with a thin layer of soil, which allows the seed to initially geminate. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. These people receive the Mesorah – Oral Torah with gladness. However, because they are not filled with faithfulness, they soon wander from the path and they lose sight of the ideas purported by the Oral Torah. They revel in the glory of the moment. However, they cannot endure anything for more than a short period before they begin their expedition looking for the “latest thing.” Swete opines that their spiritual association with the Word (Oral Torah) is “short lived.” Swete, H. B. (1898). *The Gospel According to Mark, The Grek Text with Introduction notes and Indices.* New York: MacMillian and Co., Limited. p. 79 [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. **διωγμός** (*diogmos*) referring to heat or resistance, which fits the simile well. Therefore, **διωγμός** (*diogmos*) is ***Na’aséh V’Nishmá*** put to the test. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. **σκανδαλίζω** (*skandalizo)* used only in the LXX and the Nazarean Codicil. This indicated that it is a Hebraism. And, shows the positive connection between the LXX and the Nazarean Codicil. Here our association is not to believe that the Nazarean Codicil originated in Greek but to suggest that the Nazarean Codicil originated in Hebrew and was then translated to Greek like the LXX. Therefore, we would expect that Nazarean Codicil to use similar words and expressions. Interestingly, the word is also found in a literal sense in Yehudit (Judith) 5:1 calling to mind Hanukah recently past. Here the notion is also associated with ethics and moral immediacy as in εὐθέως noted above. Here it is also associated with the idea of apostasy. The vocabulary here is very ethical connoting the association with the Oral Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Note here that the plant has come to a level of maturity whereby it should have produced fruit. Yet it remains fruitless. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 48:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Pesachim 10:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Megilla 29a [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Yalkut Reuveni Massei from Rameh m’Pano, Maamar Chokur Din sec. 3 ch. 22. Chida – Nachal Kedumim [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Baal HaTurim, Rabbi Yaakov Ben Asher (1270-1340). [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Bereshit 40:11-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Megillah 11a [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Proselytes [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Both Rashi and Ibn Ezra indicate that this passage speaks of proselytes. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Megilla 14a [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. At birth he can only eat slops, and in old age before death he is the same. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. R. Abin relates the verse to the Jewish nation: just as his history commences with an engagement between Abraham and the four kings, so at an advanced stage of his history shall he be subject to four powers. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 27:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Beit HaLevi to Parshat BeShalach [↑](#footnote-ref-79)