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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **First Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Elul 23, 5783 - September 8/9, 2023** | **First Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:** [**https://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm**](https://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

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His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham

His Excellency Adon Ya’aqob ben David

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

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

**If you want to subscribe to our list and ensure that you never lose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to** [gkilli@aol.com](mailto:gkilli@aol.com%20) **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

**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 favor on you and grant you peace. – Amen!**

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

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

**A Prayer for Israel**

Our Father in Heaven, Rock, and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel, the first manifestation of the approach of our redemption. Shield it with Your lovingkindness, envelop it in Your peace, and bestow Your light and truth upon its leaders, ministers, and advisors, and grace them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our holy land, grant them deliverance, and adorn them in a mantle of victory. Ordain peace in the land and grant its inhabitants eternal happiness.

Lead them, swiftly and upright, to Your city Zion and to Jerusalem, the abode of Your Name, as is written in the Torah of Your servant Moses: “Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you. And the Lord your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it, and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers.” Draw our hearts together to revere and venerate Your name and to observe all the precepts of Your Torah, and send us quickly the Messiah son of David, agent of Your vindication, to redeem those who await Your deliverance.

**A Prayer for our Beloved Hakhamim**

We would like to ask for prayers on behalf of our three Hakhamim, Hakham Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai, Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David, and Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham for their health, as well as for this work, that it may prosper, be of great benefit to all, and that it may be well supported, and we all say, Amen ve Amen!

**We pray especially, for our beloved Hakham His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai. Mi Sheberach…He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless and heal the sick person HE Rabbi Dr. Yosef ben Haggai, 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, swiftly and soon, and we will say amen ve amen!**

**Shabbat: “Binyamin”**

**7th Sabbath of Consolation/Strengthening**

**(Shabbat Nachamu VII)**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **בִּנְיָמִין** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Binyamin”** | **Reader 1 - B’resheet 49:27-30** | **Reader 1 - Sh’mot 1:1-4** |
| **“Benjamin”** | **Reader 2 - B’resheet 49:31-33** | **Reader 2 - Sh’mot 1:5-7** |
| **“Benjamín”** | **Reader 3 - B’resheet 50:1-5** | **Reader 3 - Sh’mot 1:8-10** |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 49:27 – 50:26 | **Reader 4 - B’resheet 50:6-9** |  |
| **Ashlamatah:** I Samuel 9:1-10 | **Reader 5 - B’resheet 50:10-14** | **Monday / Thursday Mornings** |
| **Special:** Isaiah 61:10 – 63:9 | **Reader 6 - B’resheet 50:15-23** | **Reader 1 - Sh’mot 1:1-4** |
| Tehillim (Psalms)41:5-14 | **Reader 7 - B’resheet 50:24-26** | **Reader 2 - Sh’mot 1:5-7** |
|  | **Maftir- B’resheet 50:24-26**  **I Samuel 9:1-10** | **Reader 3 - Sh’mot 1:8-10** |
| N.C.: Mk 4:35-41; Lk 8:22-25 |  |  |

**Contents of the Torah Seder- B’resheet (Genesis)** **49:27 – 50:26**

* Blessing upon Benjamin - Gen 49:27
* Summary of blessings and Jacob’s last instructions – Gen. 49:28-31
* Jacob’s Death and Burial – Gen. 50:1-21
* Joseph’s Death – Gen. 50:22-26

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: B’Resheet (Genesis) 49:27 – 50:26**

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo-Jonathan** |
| --- | --- |
| 27. Benjamin is a wolf, he will prey; **in the morning he will devour plunder,** and in the evening he will divide the spoil." | 27. Benjamin is a strong tribe, (like) the wolf (with) his prey. In his land will dwell the Shekina of the LORD of the world, and the house of the sanctuary be built in his inheritance. **In the morning will the priests offer the lamb continually until the fourth hour**, and between the evenings the second lamb, and at eventide will they divide the residue remaining of the offering, and eat, every man, his portion.  JERUSALEM: BENJAMIN I will liken him to a ravening wolf. In his limits will the sanctuary be built, and in his inheritance the glory of the Shekina of the LORD will dwell. **In the morning will the priests offer the continual lamb and its oblations**, and at the going down of the sun will the priests offer the continual lamb and its oblations, and at evening divide the offerings of the sons of Israel. |
| 28. All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them and blessed them; each man, according to his blessing, he blessed them. | 28. All these Tribes of Israel are twelve: **they are all righteous/generous together,** and this it is which their father spoke to them, and blessed them; according to his blessing blessed be each man. |
| 29. And he commanded them and said to them, "I will be brought in to my people; bury me with my fathers, in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, | 29. And he commanded them and said to them, I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cavern which is in the field of Ephron the Hitite, |
| 30. in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which field Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for burial property. | 30. in the cave that is in the Double Field over against Mamre in the land of Kenaan; for Abraham bought the field of Ephron the Hitite for an inheritance of burial. |
| 31. There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah, there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebecca, and there I buried Leah. | 31. There they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife; there they buried Yitshaq, and Rivkah his wife; and there I buried Leah: |
| 32. The purchase of the field and the cave therein was from the sons of Heth." | 32. the purchase of the field, and the cave that is in, of the sons of the Hitite. |
| 33. And Jacob concluded commanding his sons, and he drew his legs [up] into the bed, and expired and was brought in to his people. | 33. And Ya’aqob ceased to command his sons. And he gathered up his feet into the midst of the bed, and expired, and was gathered unto his people |
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| 1. Joseph fell on his father's face, and he wept over him and kissed him. | 1. And Joseph laid his father upon a couch of ivory which was framed with pure gold, and inlaid with precious stones, and secured with cords of byssus. There they poured out fervid wines, and there burned they most costly perfumes: there stood the chiefs of the house of Esau and the chiefs of the house of Ishmael; there stood the Lion of Yehuda, the strength of his brethren. He answered and said to his brethren, Come, and let as raise up to our father a tall cedar whose head will reach to the top of heaven, and its branches overshadow all the inhabitants of the earth, and its roots extend to the depths of the abyss: from it have arisen the twelve tribes, and from it will arise kings, princes, and priests in their divisions, to offer oblations, and from it the Levites in their appointments for singing. Then, behold, Joseph bowed himself upon his father's face, and wept over him, and kissed him.  JERUSALEM: And Joseph laid him on a couch of ivory which was covered with pure gold, and inset with pearls, and spread with clothes of byssos and purple. There they poured out wine with choice perfumes, there they burned aromatic gums; there stood the chiefs of the house of Esau; there stood the princes of the house of Ishmael there stood the Lion Yehuda, the strength of his brethren. And Yehuda answered and said to his brethren, Come, let us raise up to our father a tall cedar, whose head will reach to heaven, but whose branches unto the inhabitants of the world. From it have arisen the twelve tribes, from it the priests with their trumpets and the Levites with their harps. And they wept, and Joseph bowed himself on the face of his father, and wept over him and kissed him. |
| 2. And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father, and the physicians embalmed Israel. | 2. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father; and the physicians embalmed Israel. |
| 3. And forty days were completed for him for so are the days of embalming completed and the Egyptians wept over him for seventy days. | 3. And the forty days of embalming were completed to him; for so fulfil they the days of embalming; and the Mizraee lamented him seventy days; saying one to another, Come, let us lament over Ya’aqob the Holy, whose righteousness/generosity turned away the famine from the land of Mizraim. For it had been decreed that there should be forty and two years of famine, but through the righteousness/generosity of Ya’aqob forty years are withheld from Mizraim, and there came famine but for two years only. |
| 4. When the days of his weeping had passed, Joseph spoke to Pharaoh's household, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, speak now in Pharaoh's ears, saying, | 4. And the days of his mourning passed. And Joseph spoke with the lords of the house of Pharaoh, saying If I may find favour in your eyes, speak now in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, |
| 5. 'My father adjured me, saying, "Behold, I am going to die. In my grave, which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." So now, please let me go up and bury my father and return.' " | 5. My father made me swear, saying, Behold, I die, in the sepulchre which I have prepared for me in the land of Kenaan there will you bury me. And now let me go up and bury my father, and I will return. |
| 6. And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father as he adjured you." | 6. And Pharoh said, Go up, and bury your father, according as he made you swear. |
| 7. So Joseph went up to bury his father, and all Pharaoh's servants, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt went up with him, | 7. And Joseph went up to bury his father; and all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Mizraim, went up with him. |
| 8. and Joseph's entire household and his brothers and his father's household; only their young children and their flocks and cattle did they leave in the land of Goshen. | 8. And all the men of Joseph's house, and his brethren, and his father's household: only their children, and their sheep and oxen, left they in the land of Goshen. |
| 9. And chariots and horsemen also went up with him, and the camp was very numerous. | 9. And there went up with him chariots and horsemen and a very great host. |
| 10. And they came to the threshing floor of the thornbushes, which is on the other side of the Jordan, and there they conducted a very great and impressive eulogy, and he made for his father a mourning of seven days. | 10. And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jarden, and there they lamented with a great and mighty lamentation. And he made there a mourning for his father seven days. |
| 11. The Canaanite[s], the inhabitant[s] of the land, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of the thornbushes, and they said, "This is an intense mourning for the Egyptians." Therefore, they named it Abel Mizraim (Egypt mourns), which is on the other side of the Jordan. | 11. And the inhabitants of the land of Kenaan beheld the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, and they loosed the girdles of their loins in honour of Ya’aqob, and spread forth their hands, and said, This is a mighty mourning of the Mizraee. Therefore he called the name of the, place Abel Mizraim, which is on the other side of the Jarden. |
| 12. And his sons did to him just as he had commanded them. | 12. And his sons did for him as he had commanded them. |
| 13. And his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and they buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which field Abraham had bought for burial property from Ephron the Hittite before Mamre. | 13. But when his sons had brought him into the land of Kenaan, and the thing was heard by Esau the Wicked, he journeyed from the mountain of Gebala with many legions, and came to Hebron, and would not suffer Joseph to bury his father in the Double Cave. **Then forthwith went Naphtali and ran, and went down to Mizraim, and came in that day, and brought the Instrument that Esau had written for Ya’aqob his brother in the controversy of the Double Cave.** And immediately he beckoned to Hushim the son of Dan, who unsheathed the sword and struck off the head of the Wicked Esau, and the head of Esau rolled into the midst of the cave, and rested upon the bosom of Yitshaq his father; and the sons of Esau buried his body in the double field, and afterward the sons of Ya’aqob buried him in the cave of the double field; in the field which Abraham bought for an inheritance--sepulchre, of Ephron the Hitite, over against Mamre. |
| 14. And Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father. | 14. And Joseph returned to Mizraim, he and his brethren, and all who went up with him to bury his father, after they had buried his father. |
| 15. Now Joseph's brothers saw that their father had died, and they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us and return to us all the evil that we did to him." | 15. And Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, and that he (Joseph) did not return to eat together with them, and they said, Perhaps Joseph retains enmity against us, and will bring upon us all the evil that we did to him. |
| 16. So they commanded [messengers to go] to Joseph, to say, "Your father commanded [us] before his death, saying, | 16. And they instructed Bilhah to say to Joseph, Your father commanded before his death to speak to you, |
| 17. 'So shall you say to Joseph, "Please, forgive now your brothers' transgression and their sin, for they did evil to you. Now please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. | 17. Thus will you say to Joseph, Forgive now the guilt of your brethren and their sin, for they committed evil against you; but forgive, I beseech you, the guilt of the servants of the God of your father. And Joseph wept when they spoke with him.  JERUSALEM: And they instructed the tribe of Bilhah the handmaid of Rachel to say, Your father before he was gathered commanded, saying: |
| 18. His brothers also went and fell before him, and they said, "Behold, we are your slaves." | 18. And his brethren came also, and bowed themselves before him, and said, Behold, we are your servants. |
| 19. But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid, for am I instead of God? | 19. And Joseph said to them, Fear not, for I will not do you evil, but good; for I fear and humble myself before the LORD.. |
| 20. Indeed, you intended evil against me, [but] God designed it for good, in order to bring about what is at present to keep a great populace alive. | 20. You indeed imagined against me evil thoughts, that when I did not recline with you to eat it was because I retained enmity against you. But the Word of the LORD thought on me for good; for my father has caused me to sit at the head, and on account of his honour I received; but now not for the sake of my (own) righteousness/generosity or merit was it given me to work out for you deliverance this day for the preservation of much people of the house of Ya’aqob.  JERUSALEM: And Joseph said to them, Fear not, for the evil that you did me has ended. Are not the thoughts of the sons of men before the LORD? |
| 21. So now do not fear. I will sustain you and your small children." And he comforted them and spoke to their hearts. | 21. And now fear not; I will sustain you and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spoke consolation to their hearts. |
| 22. So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household, and Joseph lived a hundred and ten years. | 22. And Joseph dwelt in Mizraim, he and his father's house. And Joseph lived a hundred and ten years. |
| 23. Joseph saw children of a third generation [born] to Ephraim; also the sons of Machir the son of Manasseh were born on Joseph's knees. | 23. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; also the sons of Makhir the son of Menasheh, when they were born, were circumcised by Joseph. |
| 24. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am going to die; God will surely remember you and take you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." | 24. And Joseph said to his Brethren Behold, I die; but the Lord remembering will remember you and will bring you up from this land, into the land which He sware to Abraham, to Yitshaq, and to Ya’aqob. |
| 25. And Joseph adjured the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely remember you, and you shall take up my bones out of here." | 25. And Joseph adjured the sons of Israel to say to their sons Behold, you will be brought into servitude in Mizraim; but you will not presume to go up out of Mizraim until the time that two Deliverers will come, and say to you, Remembering, remember the LORD. And at the time when you go up you will carry up my bones from hence. |
| 26. And Joseph died at the age of one hundred ten years, and they embalmed him and he was placed into the coffin in Egypt. | 26. And Joseph died, the son of a hundred and ten years. And they embalmed him with perfumes, and laid him in an ark, and submerged him in the midst of the Nile of Mizraim.  JERUSALEM: And they embalmed him, and laid him in an ark in the land of Mizraim. |
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**"Chazak! Chazak! Venitchazek!"**

**("Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!")**

**Welcome to the World of P’shat Exegesis**

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

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

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

**1. Ḳal va-ḥomer:** “Argumentum a minori ad majus” or “a majori ad minus”; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.

**2. Gezerah shavah:** Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.

**3. Binyan ab mi-katub eḥad:** Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.

**4. Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim:** The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.

**5. Kelal u-Peraṭ and Peraṭ u-kelal:** Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.

**6. Ka-yoẓe bo mi-maḳom aḥer:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.

**7. Dabar ha-lamed me-’inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.

**Welcome to the World of Remes Exegesis**

Thirteen rules compiled by Rabbi Ishmael b. Elisha for the elucidation of the Torah and for making halakic deductions from it. They are, strictly speaking, mere amplifications of the seven Rules of Hillel, and are collected in the Baraita of R. Ishmael, forming the introduction to the Sifra and reading as follows:

**1. Ḳal wa-ḥomer**: Identical with the first rule of Hillel.

**2. Gezerah shawah**: Identical with the second rule of Hillel.

**3. Binyan ab**: Rules deduced from a single passage of Scripture and rules deduced from two passages. This rule is a combination of the third and fourth rules of Hillel.

**4. Kelal u-Peraṭ**: The general and the particular.

**5. u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The particular and the general.

**6. Kelal u-Peraṭ u-kelal**: The general, the particular, and the general.

7. The general which requires elucidation by the particular, and the particular which requires elucidation by the general.

8. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it for pedagogic purposes elucidates the general as well as the particular.

9. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of the special regulation which corresponds in concept to the general, is thus isolated to decrease rather than to increase the rigidity of its application.

10. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of some other special regulation which does not correspond in concept to the general, is thus isolated either to decrease or to increase the rigidity of its application.

11. The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of a new and reversed decision can be referred to the general only in case the passage under consideration makes an explicit reference to it.

12. Deduction from the context.

13. When two Biblical passages contradict each other the contradiction in question must be solved by reference to a third passage.

Rules seven to eleven are formed by a subdivision of the fifth rule of Hillel; rule twelve corresponds to the seventh rule of Hillel, but is amplified in certain particulars; rule thirteen does not occur in Hillel, while, on the other hand, the sixth rule of Hillel is omitted by Ishmael. With regard to the rules and their application in general. These rules are found also on the morning prayers of any Jewish Orthodox Siddur.

**Reading Assignment:**

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| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by:  Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp.  (New York, 1990)  **Vol. 3b – “The Twelve Tribes” pp. 536 - 593** | **Ramban: Genesis Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1971)  **pp. 601 - 606** |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: B’Resheet (Genesis) 49:27 – 50:26**

**27** **Benjamin is a wolf, he will prey** He is a wolf for he will prey. He (Jacob) prophesied that they were destined to be “grabbers”: “and you shall grab for yourselves each man his wife” (Jud. 21:21), in [the episode of] the concubine [who happened to be] in Gibeah (ibid., chs. 19-21); and he prophesied about Saul, that he would be victorious over his enemies all around, as it is said: “And Saul took the kingdom… and he waged war…against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, etc., and wherever he turned, he caused them to tremble” (I Sam. 14:47). -[From *Shitah Chadashah* and *Gen. Rabbah*98:3]

**in the morning he will devour plunder** Heb. עַד, an expression of plunder and spoil, translated into Aramaic as עֲדָאָה. There is another example of its use in Hebrew: “Then plunder and booty (עַד שָׁלָל)were divided” (Isa. 33:23). He (Jacob) is referring to Saul, who arose at the beginning of the “morning (other editions: עַד is the blossoming) and sunrise” of Israel.-[From *Esther Rabbah* 10:13]

**and in the evening he will divide the spoil** Even when the sun will set for Israel through Nebuchadnezzar, who will exile them to Babylon, he (Benjamin) will divide the spoil. Mordecai and Esther, who were of [the tribe of] Benjamin, will divide the spoils of Haman, as it is said: “Behold, the house of Haman I have given to Esther” (Esther 8:7) (*Esther Rabbah* 10:13). Onkelos, however, rendered it as regarding the “spoils” of the priests, i.e., the holy things of the Temple, [namely the priests’ share of the sacrifices].

**28** **and this is what their father spoke to them and blessed them** Now is it not so that some of them he did not bless, but [in fact] chided? Rather, this is what is intended: And this is what their father spoke to them-what is related in this section. One might think that he did not bless Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. Therefore, Scripture states: and he blessed them, meaning all of them.-[From *Pesikta Rabbathi* 7]

**according to his blessing** With the blessing destined to befall each of them.

**he blessed them** Scripture should have said, “each man, according to his blessing, he blessed him.” Why does Scripture say, “he blessed them”? Since he (Jacob) bestowed upon Judah the might of a lion, and upon Benjamin the power to seize like a wolf, and upon Naphtali the fleetness of a gazelle, I might think that he did not include all of them in all the blessings. Therefore, Scripture states: “he blessed them.”-[From *Tanchuam Vayechi* 16]

**29** **I will be brought in to my people**-Heb. נֶאֱסָף [The term נֶאֱסָף is utilized] because they brought souls into the place where they are concealed. There are instances of אֲסִיפָה in Hebrew that mean bringing in, e.g. “but no one brought them (מְאַסֵּף) home” (Jud. 19:15); “you shall take it (וַאֲסַפְתּוֹ) into your house” (Deut. 22:2); [and] “when you bring in (בְּאָסְפְּכֶם) the produce of the land” (Lev. 23:39). It is [the produce] brought into the house because of the rains. [Another instance is:] “When you bring in (בְּאָסְפְּךָ) your labors” (Exod. 23:16). Likewise, every instance of אֲסִיפָה mentioned in connection with death is also an expression of “bringing in.”

**with my fathers** Heb. אֶל, lit., to my fathers. [Here it means] with my fathers.

**33** **and he drew his legs**-Heb. וַיֶאֱסֽף רַגְלָיו, he drew in his legs.

**and expired and was brought in** But no mention is made of death in his regard, and our Rabbis of blessed memory said: Our father Jacob did not die.-[From *Ta’anith* 5b]

**Chapter 50**

**2** **to embalm his father** This involves compounding aromatic spices.-[From *Targum Jonathan* and *Targum Yerushalmi*]

**3** **And forty days were completed for him** They completed for him the days of his embalming, when forty days were completed for him.

**and the Egyptians wept over him for seventy days** Forty [days] for embalming and thirty for weeping, because a blessing had come to them when he arrived-the famine ended and the waters of the Nile increased.-[From *Bereshith Rabbathi*, *Targum Jonathan*]

**5** **which I dug for myself** Heb. כָּרִיתִי. According to its simple meaning, it (כָּרִיתִי) is similar to “If a man digs (יִכְרֶה)” (Exod. 21:33) (*Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel*). Its midrashic interpretation also fits the language [of the text here] [viz., that it is] like קָנִיתִי, I bought. Rabbi Akiva said, “When I went to [some] cities by the sea, they called selling (מְכִירָה) כִּירָה ” (*Rosh Hashanah* 26a). [Similarly, it may have been used for “buying.”] Another midrashic interpretation is that it is a term derived from כְּרִי, a stack, [meaning] that Jacob took all the silver and gold that he had brought from Laban’s house and made it into a stack. He said to Esau, “Take this for your share in the cave” (*Tanchuma Buber, Vayishlach* 11; *Gen. Rabbah* 100:5). See *Rashi* on 46:6.

**6** **as he adjured you** But were it not for the oath, I would not permit you [to go]. He (Pharaoh) was afraid to tell him (Joseph) to transgress the oath, however, lest he say, “If so, I will transgress the oath that I swore to you that I would not reveal that I understand the holy tongue (Hebrew) in addition to seventy languages of the nations of the world, but you do not understand it (Hebrew),” as is found in Tractate *Sotah* 36b.

**10** **the threshing floor of the thorn-bushes** It was surrounded by thornbushes. Our Rabbis, however, interpreted it [that it was called the threshing floor of the thornbushes] to commemorate the event, when all the people of Canaan and the princes of Ishmael came to [fight a] war. When they saw Joseph’s crown hanging on Jacob’s coffin, they all stood up and hung their own crowns on it and surrounded it with crowns, like a threshing floor surrounded by a fence of thorns.-[From *Sotah* 13a]

**12** **as he had commanded them** What was it that he had commanded them?-[What the Torah elaborates in the following verse.]

**13** **And his sons carried him** But not his grandsons, for so he had commanded them: “Neither shall any Egyptian carry my coffin nor any of your sons, for they are born of the daughters of Canaan, but you [alone].” He designated a position for them [by his coffin], [so that] three [of them would carry] on the east, and so on for [all] four directions. [This was] similar to their arrangement in the traveling of the camp [in the desert] of the groupings [of the tribes as] they were designated here. [He also ordered,] “Levi shall not carry it because he (i. e., his tribe) is destined to carry the Ark. Joseph shall not carry it because he is a king. Manasseh and Ephraim shall carry it instead of them.” That is the meaning of “Each one according to his group with signs” (Num. 2:2), according to the sign that their father gave them to carry his coffin.-[From *Tanchuma Bamidbar* 12]

**14** **he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him** Here, when they returned, [Scripture] places his brothers before the Egyptians who had gone up with him, whereas when they left, [Scripture] places the Egyptians before his brothers, as it is said: “and all Pharaoh’s servants…went up with him” (verse 7), and afterwards, “And Joseph’s entire household and his brothers” (verse 8). But because they (the Egyptians) saw the honor that the kings of Canaan had bestowed, (i.e.,) that they hung their crowns on Jacob’s coffin, they treated them (Joseph’s brothers) with respect.-[From *Sotah* 13b]

**15** **Now Joseph’s brothers saw that their father had died** What does it mean that they saw? They recognized his (Jacob’s) death in Joseph, for they were accustomed to dine at Joseph’s table, and he was friendly toward them out of respect for his father, but as soon as Jacob died, he was no longer friendly toward them.-[From *Targum Jonathan ben Uzziel* ; *Tanchuma Buber, Shemoth* 2]

**Perhaps Joseph will hate us** Heb.לוּ [The word] לוּ has many different meanings. לוּ is used as an expression of request or to denote “if only,” [as in these examples:] “If only (לוּ) it would be as you say” (Gen. 30:34); “If only (לוּ) you would listen to me” (ibid. 23:13); “If only (לוּ) we had been content” (Josh. 7:7); “If only (לוּ) we had died” (Num. 14:2). לוּ sometimes means “if” (אִם) or “perhaps” (אוּלַי), e. g., “If (לוּ) they had been wise” (Deut. 32:29); “Had (לוּא) you hearkened to My commandments” (Isa. 48:18); “And even if (וְלוּ) I should weigh on my palms” (II Sam. 18:12). לוּ sometimes serves as an expression of “perhaps,” [as in] “Perhaps (לוּ) will hate us” (Gen. 50:15). And there is no similar use [of this word] in Scriptures. It is [used as] an expression of “perhaps” (אוּלַי), like “Perhaps (אוּלַי) the woman will not follow me” (Gen. 24:39), which denotes “perhaps.” There is also an example of אוּלַי [used as] an expression of a request, e.g., “If only (אוּלַי) the Lord will see [the tears of] my eye” (II Sam. 16:12); “If only (אוּלַי) the Lord will be with me” (Josh. 14:12). This is similar to “If only (לוּ) it would be as you say” (Gen. 30:34). Sometimes אוּלַי is an expression of “if”: “If (אוּלַי) there are fifty righteous men” (Gen. 18:24). -[From *Targum Onkelos*]

**16** **they commanded [messengers to go] to Joseph** Like “and He commanded them to the children of Israel” (Exod. 6:13). [That is,] he commanded Moses and Aaron to be messengers to the children of Israel. In this case, too, they (the brothers) commanded their messenger to be a messenger to Joseph to say this to him. Whom did they command? Bilhah’s sons who were frequently with him, as it is said: “and he was a lad [and was] with the sons of Bilhah” (Gen. 37:2). -[From *Targum Yerushalmi* as quoted by *Chizkuni*]

**Your father commanded** They altered the facts for the sake of peace.-[From *Yeb.* 65b, *Tanchuma Toledoth* 1].

**17** **please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father** Although your father is dead, his God is alive, and they are His servants.-[From *Tanchuma Buber, Shemoth* 2]

**18** **His brothers also went** in addition to sending messengers.

**19** **for am I instead of God?**-Heb. הֲתַחַת. Am I perhaps in His place? [The prefixed “hey” denotes] wonder. If I wanted to harm you, would I be able? Did not all of you plan evil against me? The Holy One, blessed be He, however, designed it for good. So how can I alone harm you?

**21** **and spoke to their hearts** Convincing words. Before you came down here, they (the Egyptians) were spreading rumors about me that I was a slave. Through you, it became known that I am a free man. Now if I kill you, what will people say? “He (Joseph) saw a group of young men and glorified himself through them by saying, ‘They are my brothers’ and at the end he killed them. Is there such a thing as a brother who kills his brothers” (*Gen. Rabbah* 100:9)? Another explanation: If ten candles could not extinguish one candle, [how can one candle extinguish ten candles?] (*Meg.* 16b).

**23** **on Joseph’s knees** As the *Targum* renders: [were born and Joseph raised them, i.e.,] he raised them between his knees.

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 41:5 - 14**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. For the conductor, a song of David. | 1. For praise; a psalm of David. |
| 2. Praiseworthy is he who looks after the poor; on a day of calamity the Lord will rescue him. | 2. **Happy the man who is wise to show mercy to the humble and poor on the day of evil; the LORD will deliver him.** |
| 3. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he will be praised in the land, and You will not deliver him into the desire of his enemies. | 3. The LORD will keep him and preserve him and do well to him in the land; and he will not hand him over to the will of his enemies. |
| 4. The Lord will support him on his sickbed; when You have transformed his entire restfulness in his illness. | 4. The word of the LORD will aid him in his life, and be revealed to him on the bed of his sickness to preserve him; You have reversed wholly his bed in the time of his sickness and rebuke. |
| 5. I said, "O Lord, be gracious to me; heal my soul because I have sinned against You." | 5. I said: O LORD, have mercy on me; heal my soul, for I have sinned in Your presence. |
| 6. My enemies speak evil of me; "When will he die and his name be lost?" | 6. My enemies will speak evil about me: "When will he die and his name perish?" |
| 7. And if he comes to see [me], he speaks falsely; his heart gathers iniquity for him; when he goes outside, he talks. | 7. And if he comes to welcome me, he will speak falsehood; in his mind he will gather iniquity to himself, he will go outside and speak. |
| 8. All my enemies whisper together about me; concerning me, they think evil. | 8. All my enemies speak together about me in secret, plotting ruin for me. |
| 9. "An evil thing shall be poured into him, and once he lies down, he will no longer rise." | 9. He will pour out on him the speech of an oppressor, and will say, "This one who is sick will not get up again." |
| 10. Even my ally, in whom I trusted, who eats my bread, developed an ambush for me. | 10. Even a man who seeks my welfare, in whom I trusted, feeding him my meal he has cunningly prevailed over me. |
| 11. But You, O Lord, be gracious to me and raise me up, so that I may repay them. | 11. But You, O LORD, have mercy on me, and raise me up from illness; and I will pay them back. |
| 12. With this I shall know that You desired me, when my enemy does not shout joyfully over me. | 12. By this I know that You have favored me, that my enemy has not prevailed over me to cause harm. |
| 13. As for me, because of my innocence You shall support me, and stand me up before You forever. | 13. But I, for my blamelessness You have sustained me; and You made me stand in Your presence forever. |
| 14. Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel from all times past and to all times to come. Amen and amen. | 14. Blessed be the name of the LORD God of Israel, from this world to the world to come; the righteous/ generous will say, "Amen and amen." |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Tehillim (Psalms) 41:5-14**

**5** **I said, “O Lord, be gracious to me”** As for me, I have none who visit for good, and when I cry out from my illness and say, “O Lord, be gracious to me, etc,” my enemies rejoice over me and say evil things about me: “When will he die, etc.”

**7** **he speaks falsely** He pretends to be troubled, and when he sits before me, his heart gathers thoughts of violence to himself, [of] what evil he will speak when he leaves, and when he goes outside, he speaks of it.

**8** **whisper about me** something that is harmful to me, and what is that thought?...

**9** **An evil thing shall be poured into him** All the wicked things that he did shall be poured and spilled into his body, and if he lay down, he shall not rise. This is how they curse me.

**10** **developed an ambush for me** Heb. עקב, an ambush, as (in Josh. 8:13): “and their ambush party (עקבו) on the west of the city.”

**12** **With this I shall know, etc.** When You are gracious to me and raise me up, I shall know that You have desired me; when my enemy will not shout with shouts of joy over me, and I will see that because of my innocence, You have supported me.

**14** **Blessed is the Lord** When I stand up from my illness, I will bless You in this manner.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalms ‎‎41:5-14**

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

With this chapter David closes the series of psalms[[1]](#footnote-1) in which he expresses gratitude[[2]](#footnote-2) to God for having healed him. He dedicates this work to the Lord 'Who cares wisely for the sick'.

A human physician confines his diagnosis to physical symptoms. God alone has the understanding to detect the deeper spiritual deficiency which saps the sinner's vitality. Sickness is inflicted upon a person to make him aware of God's displeasure with his moral shortcomings.

Rabbenu Yonah[[3]](#footnote-3) sets forth this principle: 'Just as the body is susceptible to sickness, so is the soul'. The illness afflicting the soul stems from its evil traits and its sins. God heals the soul through the ailments of the body as David said, HaShem, show me favor, heal my soul for I have sinned against You.[[4]](#footnote-4)

David was particularly upset because his illness prevented him from realizing the great ambition of his life — the construction of the Temple.

God cured the ailing king, allowing him the privilege of preparing the plans and materials for Solomon's construction of the Temple. This was the pinnacle of David's career; therefore, this psalm comes as the climax and conclusion of the First Book of Psalms, his first compilation of God's praises.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Lets continue our study of sickness that we began with the first part of this chapter of Psalms.

The Ramchal[[6]](#footnote-6) teaches that the world was not created perfect. It had an imperfection, but only in potential. It is a mistake to think that the world was created perfect. We think that HaShem[[7]](#footnote-7) is perfect, therefore His creation is perfect. This is not true. The world we see is imperfect according to our standard, how much more according to HaShem’s standard! The world was created with an imperfection, i.e. it was created with a distance from HaShem. We can see natural disasters, human and animal suffering, and even plants are far from perfect. They all have imperfections. This world is full of limitations; it is not infinite. The plants, animals, and men all have limitations. One would expect that since HaShem is infinite, His world would be infinite.[[8]](#footnote-8)

If Adam,[[9]](#footnote-9) upon awakening, had realized how far he was from HaShem; if he had been aware of this distance, he would have fulfilled his obligation of exile forever! When he was placed in that garden[[10]](#footnote-10) he should have had a sense of the tragedy that he had been created and *was no longer part of the Creator.* If he had felt that distance he would have immediately returned to HaShem. Instead, he manifested the human tendency to say, “Hmmm, this is not bad”. This world is not so bad, according to his perception. This tendency required ‘exile’ in order to be excised from the human psyche.[[11]](#footnote-11) That is why the current exile is so bad. Consider how often we wake up and consider that our own world is ‘not so bad’. If this is our perception of a sinful world, then how much more did Adam perceive that his world was ‘not so bad’!

If you ask whether this world was created with a degree of suffering; the answer is ‘No’! With our attitude, we have forced the world to have a greater degree of suffering. Because we take the changes to the world wrought by our sins; and we say ‘it is not so bad’. We force HaShem to step up His game, so to speak. To deepen the exile and bring greater suffering to bring us to the realization of just how far we are from HaShem.

The world was created with an imperfection, i.e. it was a created entity and was created with a distance from The Creator. For example, if Adam chose to use his free will incorrectly he could bring death and destruction to the world, which he did! He brought the world with potential for death, he brought that potential into the actual. If Adam had realized the potential of the world, in this regard, and had used his free will to negate all the possibilities of suffering, then we could have avoided going through all of this.

Consider that a child can learn to trust his mother, who commands him not to touch the hot stove. Or he can touch the hot stove, get burnt, and learn the hard way that he should have trusted his mother’s word. She created the danger by cooking on the stove, but the child had two ways to deal with this potential problem: He could do what his mother commanded, or he could touch the hot stove, suffer the burning pain, and then learn not to touch hot stoves. Thus the child, like Adam, brought the potential for suffering into the world in actuality.

HaShem made the world like a glass sculpture. He did not create the broken pieces that resulted from your carelessness in dropping that sculpture. He did create it as fragile, as a world capable of being broken. HaShem gave us a fragile world and He gave us the task of handling it properly. We need to use our free will to choose the correct path. Unfortunately, we don’t always choose wisely. Thus we can accuse HaShem of creating a fragile world, but we cannot accuse Him of breaking it with all of the accompanying problems. *We broke His world.*

If you go back to the beginning, you will find that HaShem created an idyllic world without death and illness, but man chose to break that idyllic world and bring death and suffering into the world. Man created death and suffering, so to speak. Our merit, however, is that HaShem gives us the ability to fix our crashed world. The Talmud[[12]](#footnote-12) has a passage where Chazal express gratefulness that HaShem created a fragile world because otherwise we would not be here, and we would not have the ability to fix it, and thus acquire merit.

The world was created with the potential for imperfection, and ever since that first sin it has continued to break down. This includes suffering, even suffering we cannot understand.

Why can’t we understand *why* suffering and illness come into the world? We need to understand that we live in a phase of history where HaShem hides His face.[[13]](#footnote-13) The reason for this is that we have moved very far from the beginnings at Sinai, and very far from the source of His “voltage”. The voltage has dropped considerably. Each generation adds to the sins of the world and each generation contributes to the darkening of the world. We are in the post-prophecy phase. This is the age where there is no prophecy or prophets. In the phase where we had prophecy, one could go to the prophet and he would tell you the spiritual reason for your sickness. Once you corrected the underlying spiritual problem, the phyical manifestation of that problem was also corrected. While a doctor could see symptoms that could be adjusted, he could never see the underlying spiritual cause.

In those days we had the book of cures. The Talmud[[14]](#footnote-14) teaches about King Chizkiyahu[[15]](#footnote-15) hiding away “The Book of Cures – Sefer HaRefuot”. The remedies written down in that book could heal anything and the chance of getting healed was extremely high or almost 100%. It is unknown who wrote it. Some people claim that it was Shlomo HaMelech.[[16]](#footnote-16) The Talmud,[[17]](#footnote-17) however, teaches us that King Chizkiyahu decided to hide the book. Why? Wouldn’t such a book be great because it would enable everyone to get healed? There are actually different opinions on why King Chizkiyahu hid the book away. For instance, Rashi says that Chizkiyahu wanted the Jews to rely on G-d and pray to Him when they are sick. People got so used to relying on the book and getting healed that they forgot thanking G-d afterwards. One of the intended consequences of an illness is to give us a sense of our own vulnerability.

**Sickness for our benefit**

Originally, death came without warning. One sneezed[[18]](#footnote-18) and we died.[[19]](#footnote-19) The infirmities of old age were given to highlight our vulnerability for a very special reason. This vulnerability causes us to start preparing for our own demise. It gives us a warning to get our spiritual house in order, knowing that our end is near. This is a legacy of our Patriarchs who prayed that we should have old age and infirmities so that we would be warned that our end is approaching.[[20]](#footnote-20) This warning gave us time to correct our faults and perform teshuva.[[21]](#footnote-21) This is a precious gift!

Note that even when we had old age, infirmities, and sickness, in those days, of the first phase, we still had the book of cures. But, to go back to answer our question: Why can’t we understand *why* suffering and illness come into the world? The answer is we can never know, now, because we no longer have access to prophets. Living in this phase where HaShem hides his face is specifically designed so that we will not know why things happen the way they do. It is a tragic error to go to modern mystics who claim to know such things. Even if they know, they are not to be trusted because we are not to know. Our Hakhamim[[22]](#footnote-22) are not given this specific knowledge, they are only given generalities.

There are some rare individuals who are given direct knowledge about why things happen to them. But, this is a special occurrence that is very rare.

Today, when we are sick we go to the doctor. A doctor does not have the book of cures and he certainly does not know the underlying spiritual condition that needs to be corrected. Never the less, HaShem uses doctors to bring about His desire and His treatment. The doctor merely disguises HaShem’s hand so that HaShem’s face will remain hidden. We function in the darkness. The great blessing of functioning in the darkness is that we are less responsible for correcting the errors. As we move away from HaShem the darkness intensifies and we become less responsible. This is analogous to working with the low voltage of a battery where mistakes have minimal consequence. Now the first phase would be analogous to using high tension voltage where the slightest mistake will get you fried. That is why, in Jewish history, every time man made a mistake with HaShem’s Torah, HaShem took a step back and became more hidden in order to protect us from the consequences of our mistakes. The tragedy is that we live in the darkness and we don’t know how to correct specific spiritual illnesses to correct the resulting physical illness, and we are very far from HaShem.

So, if a person gets ill, what should he be doing? The normative Torah requirement is that we do whatever is considered ‘normal’. So, if the question is: How many locks should I have on my door? The answer is: Whatever is considered normal in that area. In a big city, normal might include a deadbolt, a locking knob, and a chain. In the country they may not even use a lock. Clearly locks offer no protection if HaShem is bringing us trouble, and no locks are needed if HaShem is guarding our door. The locks, whatever they may be, simply disguise HaShem’s hand. If we use more than the normal amount of locks it is considered a lack of faith. Somehow you perceive that one more lock will protect you. If we use fewer that the normal number of locks it is considered irresponsible. In the same way, we should do whatever is considered *normal*, in our location, for any illness.

When we are sick we should undertake to get the normal healing; what ever is wide spread in your time and place. It does not matter if it is considered an alternative form of medicine; once it becomes accepted on a wide spread basis, that is the route we should pursue. And the reason, as we stated before, is that HaShem heals us and the medical treatment merely hides His hand. Our headache is not cured by the aspirin tablet, it is cured by the hand of HaShem and the aspirin is just a cover-up. One of the basic facts of life is that Hashem runs this world. While it may appear that man is in charge, HaShem orchestrates every activity on the planet. The question is: What is man’s part? If HaShem determines all outcomes, how is man supposed to act?

*Chovot HaLevavot*[[23]](#footnote-23) teaches us that we are obligated to act *b’derech hatevah* – in the ways of the world. In other words, we are obligated to go through the motions as if the results are dependent upon us, knowing all the while that the outcome is completely out of our hands, and is in the hands of HaShem.

We work for a living, knowing the amount of money we are to make has been set on Rosh HaShanah.[[24]](#footnote-24) We go to doctors when we are sick, even though we know our health is determined solely by HaShem. We put in our effort, knowing all the while it is HaShem’s world and He alone determines the outcome.

One does not need to scour the world looking for a cure. If the illness is rare and it can only be found in a distant place, then we must do what is considered normal and travel to that place. On the other hand, if there is an accepted treatment at hand, then we should use that treatment. Can we spend a fortune and travel the world looking for an exotic cure if we wish to? The answer is: It depends. In general, making excess effort is a lack of faith, just like putting too many locks on your door. Conversely, you must at least do what is ‘normal’, if we do otherwise we have not done what HaShem requires of us.

Now, everyone knows that medical treatment is constantly changing. What is accepted today will certainly change tomorrow. Never the less, we are to seek the treatment that is considered *normal for our time and place*. This begs an interesting question: What if the normal treatment causes a person harm? For example, what if the medicine has severe side effects? The answer is that we seek the normal treatment and if it causes us harm, then HaShem intended for us to have that side effect. And, He does it for our benefit! In effect, we *needed* that harm.

This does not mean we ignore extenuating circumstances! For example: If a vaccine is suspected of cause one of your children to be autistic, then one must consider that the treatment, while normal, is abnormal for your family. That is why a child would *not* be circumcised on the eight day IF his brother died, or had serious consequences from a prior circumcision. Remember that the mitzvot were meant to bring life, not death:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:5*** *Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am HaShem.*

This plays out in another circumstance: Suppose that the normal treatment is very ineffective. Are you obligated to try it anyway? The answer is no; we are obligated to the normal cure If it is reasonably effective. For those cures which are not effective, there is no obligation to use an ineffective cure, and there is no penalty if you do decide to use it. After all, if HaShem brings the cure He can bring it no matter how ineffective the treatment might be. This ineffective treatment is allowed if there is no other hope and all alternatives have already been explored.

The same applies to experimental treatments. If all the research has been done, due care has been exercised, and the situation is dire, then we can engage experimental treatment, but there is no obligation to engage that treatment.

I read in a computer journal about a woman who had twin daughters who were two years old when they were diagnosed with Niemann Pick Type C[[25]](#footnote-25) disease. This disease kills before you are old enough to go to school and produces severe brain problems like Alzheimer’s disease.[[26]](#footnote-26) The disease is caused by a build-up of cholesterol[[27]](#footnote-27) in the brain. She heard about a treatment, for rats, that uses a type of sugar[[28]](#footnote-28) that removes cholesterol from the bodies of rats. Because the twins were in a bad way, our Hakhamim would have given permission to use this experimentally to treat Niemann Pick disease.

If the treatment has no evidence that it will cure, yet it has evidence that it will *not* harm, then one may engage the treatment, but there is no obligation.

If you are on an exceptional level in your emunah, your faithfulness, then there are some who say you can make less than the normal effort. However, these would be the exceptional people.

There are many limitations to the knowledge of medical doctors. For example, doctors have no idea why your fingernails keep growing, but your fingers do not. No one knows why the body reaches a certain level of development and then it just stops. This should be sufficient for one to trust HaShem and not a doctor, even though we should seek his treatment.

Before the flood, people lived hundreds of years. After the flood, man’s lifetime was greatly decreased. In the Messianic age men will again live hundreds of years. A person who dies at 700 years of age will be called a ‘lad’, a young boy. There is no medical reason why we should not be able to live hundreds of years today. No one knows why we have this limitation. Some turtles, for example, live hundreds of years today.

Given our life time limitation, our Hakhamim have decreed that we are not allowed to harm ourselves, therefore smoking is forbidden. For example, the thought of a physician assisting a patient to commit suicide is anathema to a Jewish view of medicine. Physicians (and for that matter, anyone else with medical knowledge such as nurses, emergency medical technicians, or lifeguards) are granted a mandate to *heal*. However, it is unequivocally clear from *halacha*[[29]](#footnote-29) that permission is granted to a physician to treat a patient only when he can offer that patient therapy that can be reasonably expected to be efficacious. This, at times, may include even experimental treatments that could be helpful.

When a physician cannot offer effective therapy, cannot alleviate pain, and cannot cure the patient, he or she ceases to function as a physician. In such a case, he or she has no more of a license than anyone else to cause harm to another person. Physician-assisted suicide is wrong because it undermines the mandate that the Torah grants to physicians to be G-d’s partners in the treatment of the sick.

On the other hand, one might also ask: If HaShem made you sick, what right do you have to go get a cure?

There actually is a great deal of controversy in Jewish halachic literature as to where we derive the mandate to heal. While most authorities derive a very broad mandate, there are a few very famous minority opinions that severely limit the scope of the authorization to provide medical care.

The most obvious source to look for the authority to heal would be from the case of two men fighting in:

***Shemot (Exodus) 21:18-19*** *If one man strikes another and the victim does not die,[[30]](#footnote-30) “[the aggressor] shall pay for his [lost] time [from work] and he shall cause [the victim] to be thoroughly healed.”*

Rashi, the great Biblical commentator, learns that this passage instructs us that “he shall pay the fee of the physician.” Clearly, if the aggressor is commanded to pay the doctor’s bills, then seeking medical treatment and providing medical treatment must be not only permissible, but also *obligatory*.

Not so, writes the Ibn Ezra,[[31]](#footnote-31) another great Biblical commentator. The command to heal “is a sign that permission has been granted to physicians to heal blows and wounds that are externally visible. But, all internal illnesses are in G-d’s hand to heal”.

Why does the Ibn Ezra take a limited view of the mandate to heal? Are we indeed in agreement with the Christian scientists who teach that all healing comes from G-d, to the exclusion of human medical intervention? The Ibn Ezra’s case is not a hard one to make. The Torah itself instructs that if we listen carefully to the mitzvot of the Torah:

***Shemot (Exodus) 15:26******26*** *and He said: ‘If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of HaShem thy G-d, and wilt do that which is right in His eyes, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon thee, which I have put upon the Egyptians;* ***for I am HaShem that healeth thee****.’*

This verse implies that G-d does not need man to cure the afflictions that He creates. The Ibn Ezra argues that the meaning of this Torah passage is that because G-d acts as the (sole) healer of all illness, we will not need physicians. If this is the case, is it not a lack of faith that would lead us to seek medical care?

If Ibn Ezra is correct, by what virtue does man attempt to “short circuit” G-d’s will and attempt his own meager cures? Does man have any right to heal at all, and if he does, are there any limitations on how it may be accomplished? Is every action done in the name of therapy justified, solely because a physician performs it?

Because Judaism recognizes the enormity of these questions, it requires direct permission from G-d to permit the practice of medicine and carefully circumscribes the limits of medical practice. The duty to save one’s fellow man is well grounded in the Torah and the restrictions are discussed at length in our codes of Jewish law.

The complexity of the previously mentioned philosophical tension between G-d’s control of health and the role of the human healer is encapsulated by the enigmatic opening words of the Code of Jewish Law’s discussion of the laws applying to physicians: “The Torah gives permission to the physician to heal; moreover, this is a mitzva[[32]](#footnote-32) and it is included in the mitzva of saving a life; and, if he withholds his services, he is considered a shedder of blood”.

This sentence is rather puzzling. We do not find the Code of Jewish Law informing us that the Torah gives permission to keep kosher, the Sabbath, or any of the other mitzvot enumerated in the Torah. Why is permission specifically granted here? Because only here we may have thought that the action should be forbidden. Left to our own logic, we would have no choice but to assume that G-d makes people sick and G-d alone heals.

So, are the Christian scientists[[33]](#footnote-33) correct? No, they are not. Once the Torah clearly stated that healing is permitted, it immediately becomes a mitzva, like all other mitzvot. Therefore, the Code of Jewish Law quite appropriately states that “The Torah gives permission to the physician to heal; moreover, this is a mitzva”.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Chazal teach that we are forbidden to rely *ONLY* on prayer for our healing. Once the Torah permits using a doctor, at that point we *MUST* use a doctor!

So what part does prayer play in dealing with an illness? Chazal teach that we must be a bit schizophrenic in the handling of illness. On the one hand, we must realize that there is no cure except by HaShem’s hand, and therefore we pray like nothing else will bring a cure, or perhaps it is better to say that we should pray that the doctor will cure us; while at the same time we must put our full effort into seeking a physician and completely following their recommendation. In essence, we must pray that the medicine we are about to take should provide a cure, knowing full well that it is HaShem who will use that medicine to hide the fact that He provided the cure and the medicine was worthless except by His command it becomes efficacious.

To a certain extent, this schizophrenic attitude should accompany every action and every thought in all areas of life. For example, we must understand that HaShem provides our living and everything is determined on Rosh HaShana, while at the same time putting our heart and soul into earning a living.

What is the Jewish approach to the physician? There is a fascinating insight about King Asa[[35]](#footnote-35) when he became ill. The Bible records that:

***Divrei HaYamim (II Chronicles) 16:12*** *And in the thirty and ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet; his disease was exceeding great; yet in his disease he sought not to HaShem, but to the physicians.*

If healing and guarding health are mitzvot, what did King Asa do wrong? His error was that he only sought out the doctors. Healing is a partnership between G-d and a man. While G-d is the ultimate healer, He delegates part of His role to mankind and asks the physician to practice medicine for the good of man. This relationship can be conceived of as follows: G-d makes a person ill until he finds the right doctor to heal him.

That is, part of the “punishment” of illness is the fear that one will not find the right physician capable of healing him. This is why the Code of Jewish Law states: “if he withholds his services, he is considered a shedder of blood. And even if there is someone else (available) capable of healing, not every physician is able to heal every patient”.[[36]](#footnote-36)

Medicine is an art and therefore one must pray that he finds the right doctor who can cure him. Similarly, no physician may excuse himself from a case merely because there is another physician present, for he may be the one destined to cure this patient (i.e. he may be the one who will make the right diagnosis and prescribe appropriate treatment when all others are baffled or incorrect). This approach must obviously exist within the reality of the physical limitations of each physician.

The Jewish approach to illness and medicine requires us to recognize the preeminent role of G-d in healing, while seeking appropriate medical care. Asa’s sin was seeking out the doctors only, without the recognition of G-d as the ultimate healer.

The Talmud[[37]](#footnote-37) states: “the best of the doctors are bound for hell”. Such a statement appears antithetical to the positive view Judaism promulgates regarding physicians. One traditional explanation is that the physician must recognize the awesome responsibility that he holds in treating illness, with even a small error possibly leading to death. Constant vigilance is required to avoid making a preventable error that would be considered bordering on criminal negligence.

A second understanding of this mysterious passage sheds light on one of the great risks of medical practice, arrogance. The statement can be understood to mean that it the specifically those doctors who consider themselves to be the best that are bound for *Gehenom.* The humble physician will realize his limitations and consult with colleagues, bringing the best care to his patients. The “best” doctor will see no need to consult with those less qualified than himself, eventually causing unnecessary harm to a patient for which he will be culpable.

Like the patient, the physician must have the same recognition of his role as an intermediary in healing, not its source. When the physician begins seeing himself as the source of healing, he is destined for *Gehenom.[[38]](#footnote-38)*

By now we should be able to understand how Yaaqob knew that his end was approaching in our parash. We can also appreciate how David would be inspired to write this chapter of Psalms.

**Ashlamatah:** **Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 9:1-10**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| 1. ¶ Now there was a man of **Benjamin**, and his name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, the son of a Benjamite man, a mighty man of power. | 1. And there was a man from the tribe of the house of Benjamin, and his name was Kish, son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, the son of a man from the tribe of the house of Benjamin, a man of might. |
| 2. And he had a son whose name was Saul. He was young and handsome, there being no one of the children of Israel handsomer than he; from his shoulders and upwards he was taller than any of the people. | 2. And he had a son, and his name was Saul, young and handsome. And there was no man from the sons of Israel who was more handsome than he. From his shoulders and above he was taller than all the people. |
| 3. Now, the she-asses of Kish, Saul's father, became lost, and Kish said to Saul his son, "Now, take one of the servants and arise and go, seek the she- asses." | 3. And the she-asses belonging to Kish, the father of Saul, were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son: “Take now with you one of the young men; and rise, go, search for the she-asses.” |
| 4. And he passed through Mt. Ephraim, and he passed through the land of Shalishah, and they did not find them, and they passed through the land of Shaalim and they were not there, and he passed through the land of Benjamin and they did not find them. | 4. And he passed through the hill country of house of Ephraim and passed through the land of the south, and they did not find them. And they passed through the land of the breakers, and they were not there. And he passed through the land of the tribe of Benjamin and they did not find them. |
| 5. When they had come into the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us return, lest my father cease to worry about the she-asses, and worry about us." | 5. They came in the land in which there was a prophet. And Saul said to his young man, who was with him: “Come, and let us return, lest my father cease from the matter of the she-asses and be afraid for us.” |
| 6. And he said to him, "Behold now, a man of God is in this city, and the man is held in high esteem; everything which he speaks, surely comes to pass. Now, let us go there; perhaps he will tell us our way upon which we have gone." | 6. And he said to him: “Behold now there is a prophet of the Lord in this city, and the man prophesies the truth. Everything that he speaks indeed comes to pass. Now let us go there; perhaps he will tell us our way on which we have come.” |
| 7. And Saul said to his servant, "And behold, if we go what shall we bring to the man, for the bread is used up from our vessels, and there is no present to bring to the man of God: what have we?" | 7. And Saul said to his young man: “And behold we will go. If he accepts money, what will we bring to the prophet of the Lord? Also regarding us — provisions have ceased entirely from our food, and there is nothing that is fitting to bring to the prophet of the Lord. And what is there with us to do?” |
| 8. The lad answered Saul again, and said, "Behold, I have in my possession a fourth of a shekel of silver, and I shall give it to the man of God, that he may tell us our way." | 8. And the young man answered Saul again and said: “Behold there is found in my hand one shekel of silver. And I will give it to the prophet of the Lord, and he will tell us our way.” |
| 9. Formerly, in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he would say thus, "Come and let us go to the seer," for he who is called a prophet today, was formerly called a seer. | 9. In olden times in Israel thus a man said when he went to seek instruction from before the Lord: “Come, and let us go unto the seer.” For the prophet today was called in olden times the seer. |
| 10. And Saul said to his servant, "Well said, come, let us go." And they went to the city where the man of God was. | 10. And Saul said to his young man: “Your word is good. Come, let us go.” And they went to the city where the prophet of the LORD was. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 9:1-10**

**5** **into the land of Zuph:** (Jonathan renders:) into the land wherein there was a prophet.

**Zuph:** like ‘Zopheh,’ a prophet (or seer).

**lest my father cease to worry about the she-asses:** because his worry for us will increase until he forgets the she-asses.

**and worry:** doutera in French.

**6** **our way:** The story of the she-asses, i.e., what has become of them, for whom we have gone all this way.

**7** **and what shall we bring to the man:** Jonathan paraphrases: If he accepts money, what shall we bring to the man? Saul was not familiar with Samuel’s practice and thought that he would ask for a reward.

**and there is no present:** (Heb ‘t’shurah’) Jonathan renders: and there is nothing proper. This is an expression of ‘yosher,’ propriety. (The root is ‘yashor.’ The yud is missing, and the ‘tav’ is a prefix.) Menahem, however, explains ‘t’shurah’ as an expression of an offering for the privilege of seeing a king or an important person. An expression related to ‘ashurenu,’ “I behold them” (Num. 24: 17). And his opinion is acceptable to me.

**8** a **fourth of a shekel:** one zuz of silver (from Jonathan).

**9** **Formerly in Israel:** The author wrote this. This is not part of the statement of Saul’s servant.

**for he who is called prophet today:** (lit., to the prophet today.) The one who is called a prophet today, was formerly called a seer.

**Special Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) ‎‎** **61:10 – 63:9**

**Shabbat Nachamu VII**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 10. ¶ I will rejoice with the Lord; my soul shall exult with my God, for He has attired me with garments of salvation, with a robe of righteousness He has enwrapped me; like a bridegroom, who, priestlike, dons garments of glory, and like a bride, who adorns herself with her jewelry. | 10. Jerusalem said, I will greatly rejoice in the Memra of the LORD, my soul will exult in the salvation (Yeshua) of my God; for He has clothed me in garments of salvation (Yeshua), He has wrapped me with a robe of virtue, as the bridegroom who prospers in his canopy, and as the high priest who is prepared in his garments, and as the bride who is adorned with her ornaments. |
| 11. For, like the earth, which gives forth its plants, and like a garden that causes its seeds to grow, so shall the Lord God cause righteousness and praise to grow opposite all the nations. | 11. For as the earth which brings forth its growth, and as a channelled garden which increases what is sown in it, so the LORD God will disclose the virtue and the praise of Jerusalem before all the Gentiles. |
|  |  |
| 1. **For the sake of Zion, I will not be silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not rest, until her righteousness comes out like brilliance, and her salvation burns like a torch**. | 1. **Until I accomplish salvation for Zion, I will not give rest to the Gentiles, and until I bring consolation for Jerusalem, I will not give quiet to the kingdoms; until her light is revealed as the dawn, and her salvation (Yeshua) burns as a torch**. |
| 2. And nations shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory, and you shall be called a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall pronounce. | 2. The Gentiles will see your innocence, and all the kings your glory; and they will call you by the new name which by His Memra the LORD will make clear. |
| 3. And you shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord and a kingly diadem in the hand of your God. | 3. You will be a diadem of joy before the LORD, and a crown of praise before your God. |
| 4. No longer shall "forsaken" be said of you, and "desolate" shall no longer be said of your land, for you shall be called "My desire is in her," and your land, "inhabited," for the Lord desires you, and your land shall be inhabited. | 4. You will no more be termed Forsaken, and your land will no more be termed Desolate; but you will be called, Those who do My pleasure in her, and your land Inhabitant, for there will be pleasure before the LORD in you, and your land will be inhabited. |
| 5. As a young man lives with a virgin, so shall your children live in you, and the rejoicing of a bridegroom over a bride shall your God rejoice over you. | 5. For just as a young man cohabits with a virgin, so will your sons co-inhabit in your midst, and just as the bridegroom rejoices with the bride, so will your God rejoice over you. |
| 6. On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night, they shall never be silent; those who remind the Lord, be not silent. | 6. Behold, the deeds of your fathers, the righteous/generous, O city of Jerusalem, are prepared and watched before Me; all the day and all the night continually they do not cease. The remembrance of your benefits is spoken of before the LORD, it does not cease. |
| 7. And give Him no rest, until He establishes and until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the land. | 7. And their remembrance will not cease before Him until He establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth. |
| 8. The Lord swore by His right hand and by the arm of His strength; I will no longer give your grain to your enemies, and foreigners shall no longer drink your wine for which you have toiled. | 8. The LORD has sworn by His right hands and by His arm of strengthening: “I will not again give you grain to be food for your enemies, and the sons of Gentiles will not drink your wine for which you have labored. |
| 9. But its gatherers shall eat it and they shall praise the Lord, and its gatherers shall drink it in My holy courts. **{S}** | 9. But those who garner the grain will eat it and give praise before the LORD; and those who press the wine will drink it in My holy courts. |
| 10. Pass, pass through the portals, clear the way of the people, pave, pave the highway, clear it of stones, lift up a banner over the peoples. | 10. Prophets, go through and return by the gates, turn the heart of the people to a correct way; announce good reports and consolations to the righteous/generous who have removed the impulsive fantasy which is like a stone of stumbling, lift up an ensign over the peoples. |
| 11. Behold, the Lord announced to the end of the earth, "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your salvation has come.' " Behold His reward is with Him, and His wage is before Him. | 11. Behold, the lord HAS PROCLAIMED TO THE END OF THE EARTH: Say to the congregation of Zion, Behold your saviour is revealed; “Behold, the reward of those accomplishing His Memra is with him, and all their deeds are disclosed before him.” |
| 12. And they shall call them the holy people, those redeemed by the Lord, and you shall be called, "sought, a city not forsaken." **{S}** | 12. And they will be called the Holy people, the redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called Sought Out, a city which is not forsaken. |
|  |  |
| 1. **Who is this coming from Edom, with soiled garments, from Bozrah, this one [Who was] stately in His apparel, girded with the greatness of His strength? "I speak with righteousness, great to save.**" | 1. **He is about to bring a stroke upon Edom, a strong avenger upon Bozrah, to take the just retribution of His people, just as He swore to them by His Memra. He said, Behold I am revealed – just as I spoke – in virtue, there is great force before Me to save**. |
| 2. Why is Your clothing red, and your attire like [that of] one who trod in a wine press? | 2. Why will mountains be red from the blood of those killed, and plains gush forth like wine in the press? |
| 3. "A wine press I trod alone, and from the peoples, none was with Me; and I trod them with My wrath, and I trampled them with My fury, and their life blood sprinkled on My garments, and all My clothing I soiled. | 3. “Behold, as grapes trodden in the press, so will slaughter increase among the armies of the peoples, and there will be no strength for them before Me; I will kill them in My anger and trample them in My wrath; I will break the strength of their young ones before Me, and I will annihilate all their wise ones. |
| 4. For a day of vengeance was in My heart, and the year of My redemption has arrived. | 4. For the day of vengeance is before Me, and the year of My people’s salavation (Yeshua) has come. |
| 5. And I looked and there was no one helping, and I was astounded and there was no one supporting, and My arm saved for Me, and My fury- that supported Me. | 5. It was disclosed before Me, but there was no man whose deeds were good; it was known before Me, but there was no person who would arise and beseech concerning them; so I saved them by My arm of strengthening, and by the Memra of My pleasure I helped them. |
| 6. And I trod peoples with My wrath, and I intoxicated them with My fury, and I brought their power down to the earth." **{S}** | 6. I will kill the peoples in My anger, I will trample them in My wrath, and I will cast to the lower earth those of their mighty men who are killed.” |
| 7. The kind acts of the Lord I will mention, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord bestowed upon us, and much good to the house of Israel, which He bestowed upon them according to His mercies and according to His many kind acts. | 7. The prophet said, I am recounting the benefits of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and His great goodness to the house of Israel which He has granted them according to His mercy, according to the abundance of His benefits. |
| 8. And He said, "They are but My people, children who will not deal falsely." And He became their Savior. | 8. For He said, Surely they are My people, sons who will not deal falsely; and His Memra became their Saviour. |
| 9. In all their trouble, He did not trouble [them], and the angel of His presence saved them; with His love and with His pity He redeemed them, and He bore them, and He carried them all the days of old. | 9. In every time that they sinned before Him so as to bring affliction upon themselves, He did not afflict them, an angel sent from Him saved them, in His love and in His pity upon them He delivered them; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:10 – 63:9**

**Shabbat Nachamu VII**

**10 like a bridegroom** who dons garments of glory like a high priest.

**and like a bride**, who adorns herself with her jewelry Heb. כֵלֶיהָ , [lit. her utensils, in this case,] her jewelry.

**Chapter 62**

**1 For the sake of Zion I will do,** and I will not be silent concerning what they did to her.

**I will not rest** There will be no peace before Me until her righteousness comes out like brilliance.

**2 shall pronounce** Heb. יִקֳּבֶנּוּ , shall pronounce.

**4 “inhabited”** Heb. בְּעוּלָה , [lit. possessed,] inhabited.

**5 As a young man lives with a virgin, etc**. As a young man lives with a virgin, so shall your children live in you [after Jonathan].

**6 On your walls, O Jerusalem** Our Rabbis expounded it according to its apparent meaning as referring to the angels who remind the Lord concerning its destruction, to build it. What do they say? (Ps. 102:14) “You shall rise, You shall have mercy on Zion”; (ibid. 132: 13) “For the Lord has chosen Zion.” As is found in the Tractate Menahoth (87a, Rashi ad loc.). Jonathan, [however,] renders “your walls,” the early forefathers, who protect us like a wall.

**I have appointed watchmen** **to inscribe a book of remembrances, that their merit be not forgotten from before Me.**

**they shall never be silent** not to mention their merit before Me.

**those who remind the Lord** of the merit of the forefathers.

**be not silent** Heb. אַל־דֳּמִי לָכֶם , [lit. let there be no silence to you,] be not silent.

**9 shall eat it** This refers back to “your grain.”

**shall drink it** This refers back to “your wine.”

**10 Pass, pass through the portals** Said the prophet, “Pass and return in the portals; turn the heart of the people to the proper path” [after Jonathan].

**pave, pave the highway** Heb. סֽלּוּ . Pave the road, batec lokemin in O.F., beat down the road. סֽלּוּ is the same root as מְסִלָּה .

**clear it of stones** Clear the highway of stones **and cast the stumbling blocks to the sides.**

**of stones** of there being there a stone, and he is **alluding to the evil inclination**. It may also be interpreted as referring to the repairs of the road for the ingathering of the exiles.

**clear it of stones** Heb. סַקְּלוּ , espedrec in O.F., to rid of stones.

**lift up a banner** A staff, perche in French. That is a sign, that they gather to Me and bring Me those exiled beside them [i.e., those exiled in their land].

**11 Behold his reward** [that is prepared] to give to His servants is prepared with Him.

**and His wage** [Lit. His deed.] The reward for the deed they did with Him, is before Him, prepared to give.

**Chapter 63**

**1 Who is this coming from Edom** The prophet prophesies concerning what the Holy One, blessed be He, said **that He is destined to wreak vengeance upon Edom**, and He, personally, will slay their heavenly prince, like the matter that is said (supra 34:5), “For My sword has become sated in the heaven.” And afterward, (ibid.) “it shall descend upon Edom,” and it is recognizable by the wrath of His face that He has slain [them with] a great massacre, and the prophet is speaking in the expression of the wars of human beings, dressed in clothes, and when they slay a slaying, the blood spatters on their garments, for so is the custom of Scripture; it speaks of the Shechinah anthropomorphically, to convey to the ear what it can hear. Comp. (Ezek. 43:2) “His voice is like the voice of many waters.” The prophet compares His mighty voice to the voice of many waters to convey to the ear according to what it is possible to hear, for one cannot understand and hearken to the magnitude of the mighty of our God to let us hear it as it is.

**Who is this coming from Edom** Israel says, “Who is this, etc.?” And He is coming with soiled garments, colored with blood, and anything repugnant because of its smell and its appearance fits to the expression of חִמּוּץ , soiling.

**from Bozrah** Our Rabbis said (see Makkoth 12a): “The heavenly prince of Edom is destined to commit two errors. He thinks that Bozrah is identical with Bezer in the desert, which was a refuge city. He will also err insofar as it affords refuge only for inadvertent murder, but he killed Israel intentionally.” There is also an Aggadic midrash (see above 34:6) that because Bozrah supplied a king for Edom when its first king died, as in Gen. (36:33), “And Jobab the son of Zerah from Bozrah reigned in his stead,” and Bozrah is of Moab, according to the matter that is stated (Jer. 48:24): “Upon Kerioth and upon Bozrah.”

**this one who was stately in His attire**, צֽעֶה , and girded with the greatness of His strength. And the Holy One, blessed be He, replies to him, ‘It is I, upon Whom the time has come to speak of the righteousness of the Patriarchs, and of the righteousness of the generation of religious persecution, and My righteousness, too, is with them, and I have revealed Myself as being great to save.’ And they say, ‘Why is your clothing red? Why are your garments red?’

**3 and from the peoples, none was with Me** standing before Me to wage war.

**and their lifeblood sprinkled** Heb. נִצְחָם , Their blood, which is the strength and victory (נִצָּחוֹן) of a man.

**I soiled** Heb. אֶגְאָלְתִּי . Comp. (Lam. 4:14) “They were defiled (נִגּֽאֲלוּ) with blood.”

**5 And I looked, and there was no one helping Israel.** and I was astounded An expression of keeping silent, and I have already explained it above (57:16): “And He was astounded for there was no intercessor.”

**and My fury that supported Me** My fury that I have against the heathens (the nations [mss. and K’li Paz]), for I was a little wrath with My people, and they helped to harm them. That strengthened My hand and aroused My heart to mete recompense upon them although Israel is not fit and worthy of redemption.

**6 And I trod** Heb. וְאָבוּס . An expression of wallowing in blood and treading with the feet. Comp. (Ezekiel 16:6) “wallowing (מִתְבּוֹסֶסֶת) in your blood.” Comp. also (Jer. 12:10): “They trod (בּֽסְסוּ) My field.” their power Heb. נִצְחָם, the might of their victory.

**7 The kind acts of the Lord I will mention** The prophet says, I will remind Israel of the kind acts of the Lord.

**and much good** I will remind Israel of what He bestowed upon the house of Israel with His mercies.

**8 They are but My people** Although it is revealed before Me that they would betray Me, they are, nevertheless, My people, and they are to Me like children who will not deal falsely.

9 In all their trouble that He would bring upon them.

**He did not trouble [them]** He did not trouble them according to their deeds, that they deserved to suffer, for the angel of His presencei.e., Michael the prince of the Presence, of those who minister before Him saved them always as an agent of the Omnipresent.

**Verbal Tallies**

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

& H.H. Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

Beresheet (Genesis) 49:27 – 50:26

Tehillim (Psalms) 41: 5-14

Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 9:1-10

Mk 4:35-41, Lk 8:22-25

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the psalm are:**

Devour / Eat - אכל, Strong’s number 0398.

Israel - ישׂראל, Strong’s number 03478.

Blessed - ברך, Strong’s number 01288.

One / Man / Friend - אישׁ, Strong’s number 0376.

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:**

Benjamin - בנימין, Strong’s number 01144.

Israel - ישׂראל, Strong’s number 03478.

Father - אב, Strong’s number 01.

One / Man / Friend - אישׁ, Strong’s number 0376.

**Beresheet (Genesis) 49:27 Benjamin <01144>** shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall **devour <0398> (8799)** the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.

28 ¶ All these are the twelve tribes of **Israel <03478>**: and this is it that their **father <01>** spake unto them, and **blessed <01288> (8762)** them; every **one <0376>** according to his blessing he **blessed <01288> (8765)** them.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 41:9** Yea, mine own familiar **friend <0376>**, in whom I trusted, which did **eat <0398> (8802)** of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 41:13** **Blessed <01288> (8803)** be the LORD God of **Israel <03478>** from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

**Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 9:1** Now there was a **man <0376>** of **Benjamin <01144>**, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power.

**Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 9:2** And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of **Israel <03478>** a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.

**Shmuel alef (I Samuel) 9:3** And the asses of Kish Saul’s **father <01>** were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Reading**  **Gen. 49:27 – 50:26** | **Psalms**  **41:5-14** | **Ashlamatah**  **I Sam 9:1-10** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **db;a'** | lost |  | Ps. 41:5 | 1 Sam. 9:3 |
| **vyai** | every one, man, men | Gen. 49:28 | Ps. 41:9 | 1 Sam. 9:1 1 Sam. 9:2 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:8 1 Sam. 9:9 1 Sam. 9:10 |
| **lk;a'** | devours, ate | Gen. 49:27 | Ps. 41:9 |  |
| **~yhil{a/** | God | Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:19 Gen. 50:20 Gen. 50:24 Gen. 50:25 | Ps. 41:13 | 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:8 1 Sam. 9:9 1 Sam. 9:10 |
| **~ai** | if | Gen. 50:4 | Ps. 41:6 |  |
| **rm;a'** | say, said | Gen. 49:29 Gen. 50:4 Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:6 Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:15 Gen. 50:16 Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:18 Gen. 50:19 Gen. 50:24 Gen. 50:25 | Ps. 41:5 | 1 Sam. 9:3 1 Sam. 9:5 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:8 1 Sam. 9:9 1 Sam. 9:10 |
| **~yIr'p.a,** | Ephraim | Gen. 50:23 |  | 1 Sam. 9:4 |
| **#r,a,** | land, earth | Gen. 49:30 Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:7 Gen. 50:8 Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:24 |  | 1 Sam. 9:4 1 Sam. 9:5 |
| **rv,a]** | what, who, which | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 49:30 Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:10 Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:15 Gen. 50:24 | Ps. 41:8 Ps. 41:9 | 1 Sam. 9:5 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:10 |
| **aAB** | came, come, go, bring | Gen. 50:10 | Ps. 41:6 | 1 Sam. 9:5 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 |
| **!Be** | son | Gen. 49:32 Gen. 49:33 Gen. 50:12 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:23 Gen. 50:25 Gen. 50:26 |  | 1 Sam. 9:1 1 Sam. 9:2 1 Sam. 9:3 |
| **!ymiy"n>Bi** | Benjamin | Gen. 49:27 |  | 1 Sam. 9:1 |
| **%r'B'** | blessed | Gen. 49:28 | Ps. 41:13 |  |
| **~G"** | both, also | Gen. 50:9 Gen. 50:18 Gen. 50:23 | Ps. 41:9 |  |
| **rb;D'** | said, spoke | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 50:4 Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:21 | Ps. 41:6 | 1 Sam. 9:6 |
| **rb'D'** | said |  | Ps. 41:8 | 1 Sam. 9:10 |
| **%l;h'** | come, go | Gen. 50:18 |  | 1 Sam. 9:3 1 Sam. 9:5 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:9 1 Sam. 9:10 |
| **hNEhi** | behold | Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:18 |  | 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:8 |
| **hz<** | this, here | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:20 Gen. 50:24 Gen. 50:25 |  | 1 Sam. 9:6 |
| **bv;x'** | meant, devise | Gen. 50:20 | Ps. 41:7 |  |
| **~Ay** | day | Gen. 50:3 Gen. 50:4 Gen. 50:10 Gen. 50:20 |  | 1 Sam. 9:9 |
| **@s;y"** | again |  | Ps. 41:8 | 1 Sam. 9:8 |
| **laer'f.yI** | Israel | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 50:2 Gen. 50:25 | Ps. 41:13 | 1 Sam. 9:2 1 Sam. 9:9 |
| **lKo** | all, whole, entire, every | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 50:7 Gen. 50:8 Gen. 50:14 Gen. 50:15 | Ps. 41:7 | 1 Sam. 9:2 1 Sam. 9:6 |
| **ble** | kindly, heart | Gen. 50:21 | Ps. 41:6 |  |
| **~x,l,** | bread, food |  | Ps. 41:9 | 1 Sam. 9:7 |
| **tWm** | die | Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:15 Gen. 50:24 Gen. 50:26 | Ps. 41:5 |  |
| **ac'm'** | find, found | Gen. 50:4 |  | 1 Sam. 9:4 1 Sam. 9:8 |
| **an"** | now, please | Gen. 50:4 Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:17 |  | 1 Sam. 9:3 1 Sam. 9:6 |
| **l[;** | before, upon, above | Gen. 49:30 Gen. 50:1 Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:20 | Ps. 41:7 Ps. 41:9 Ps. 41:11 |  |
| **hT'[;** | now, so | Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:21 |  | 1 Sam. 9:6 |
| **~ynIP'** | face, before | Gen. 49:30 Gen. 50:1 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:16 Gen. 50:18 | Ps. 41:12 | 1 Sam. 9:9 |
| **~Wq** | arise |  | Ps. 41:8 Ps. 41:10 | 1 Sam. 9:3 |
| **ar'q'** | named, called | Gen. 50:11 |  | 1 Sam. 9:9 |
| **ha'r'** | saw, see | Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:15 Gen. 50:23 | Ps. 41:6 |  |
| **bWv** | return, pays back in full | Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:14 Gen. 50:15 |  | 1 Sam. 9:5 |
| **~v'** | there, where | Gen. 49:31 Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:10 |  | 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:10 |
| **~ve** | named | Gen. 50:11 | Ps. 41:5 | 1 Sam. 9:1 1 Sam. 9:2 |
| **rb;['** | pasted | Gen. 50:4 |  | 1 Sam. 9:4 |
| **~[;** | people | Gen. 50:20 |  | 1 Sam. 9:2 |
| **h['r'** | wrong, evil, wicked | Gen. 50:15 Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:20 | Ps. 41:7 |  |

**Greek:**

| **GREEK** | **ENGLISH** | **Torah Reading**  **Gen. 49:27 – 50:26** | **Psalms**  **41:5-14** | **Ashlamatah**  **I Sam 9:1-10** | **Peshat**  **Mishnah of Mark,**  **1-2 Peter, & Jude**  **Mk 4:35-41** | **Tosefta of**  **Luke**  **Lk 8:22-25** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ἀγαθός | good | Gen 50:20 |  | 1Sa 9:2  1Sa 9:10 |  |  |
| ἀλλήλων | one another |  |  |  | Mk. 4:41 | Lk. 8:25 |
| **ἀνάγω** | lead | Gen 50:24 |  |  |  | Lk. 8:22 |
| **ἄνεμος** | wind |  |  |  | Mk. 4:37 Mk. 4:39 Mk. 4:41 | Lk. 8:23 Lk. 8:24 Lk. 8:25 |
| **ἀνήρ** | man |  |  | 1Sa 9:1 1Sa 9:2 1Sa 9:9 |  |  |
| **ἄνθρωπος** | man, men | Gen. 49:28 | Ps. 41:9 | 1 Sam. 9:1 1 Sam. 9:2 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:8 1 Sam. 9:9 1 Sam. 9:10 |  |  |
| **ἀνίστημι** | rise up |  | Psa 41:8  Ps 41:10 | 1Sa 9:3 |  |  |
| **ἀπόλλυμι** | perish, were lost |  | Psa 41:5 | 1Sa 9:3 | Mk. 4:38 | Lk. 8:24 |
| **ἄρα** | then |  |  |  | Mk. 4:41 | Lk. 8:25 |
| **ἀφίημι** | forgive them, leaving | Gen 50:17 |  |  | Mk. 4:36 |  |
| **γαλήνη** | calm |  |  |  | Mk. 4:39 | Lk. 8:24 |
| **γενεά** | generation | Gen 50:23 |  |  |  |  |
| **γῆ** | land, earth | Gen. 49:30 Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:7 Gen. 50:8 Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:24 |  | 1 Sam. 9:4 1 Sam. 9:5 |  |  |
| **δίδωμι** | give |  |  | 1Sa 9:8 |  |  |
| **διεγείρω** | awaken |  |  |  | Mar 4:38 Mar 4:39 | Lk. 8:24 |
| **διέρχομαι** | went, go |  |  | 1Sa 9:4 | Mk. 4:35 | Lk. 8:22 |
| **εἴδω** | to see, saw, knowing, beholding | Gen 50:11  Gen 50:15 Gen 50:23 | Psa 41:6 |  |  |  |
| **εἷς** | one |  |  | 1Sa 9:3 |  | Lk. 8:22 |
| **ἐπιτάσσω** | gave orders | Gen 49:33 |  |  |  | Lk. 8:25 |
| **ἐπιτιμάω** | rebuked |  |  |  | Mk. 4:39 | Lk. 8:24 |
| **ἔπω** | spoke, said, speak | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 50:4 Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:21 | Ps. 41:6 | 1 Sam. 9:6 | Mar 4:39 Mar 4:40 | Luk 8:22 Luk 8:25 |
| **ἔρχομαι** | to come | Gen. 50:18 |  | 1 Sam. 9:3 1 Sam. 9:5 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:9 1 Sam. 9:10 |  |  |
| **ἔχω** | have, had |  |  |  | Mk. 4:40 |  |
| **ζάω** | living, lived | Gen 50:22 |  |  |  |  |
| **ἡμέρα** | days | Gen 50:3 Gen 50:4 Gen 50:10 |  |  | Mk. 4:35 | Lk. 8:22 |
| **θάλασσα** | sea |  |  |  | Mk. 4:39 Mk. 4:41 |  |
| **θέλω / ἐθέλω** | wanted |  | Psa 41:11 |  |  |  |
| **θεός** | God | Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:19 Gen. 50:20 Gen. 50:24 Gen. 50:25 | Ps. 41:13 | 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:7 1 Sam. 9:8 1 Sam. 9:9 1 Sam. 9:10 |  |  |
| **καλέω** | called | Gen 50:11 |  | 1Sa 9:9 |  |  |
| **καρδία** | kindly, heart | Gen. 50:21 | Ps. 41:6 |  |  |  |
| **καταβαίνω** | went down |  |  |  |  | Lk. 8:23 |
| **καταπαύω** | rested, restrained | Gen 49:33 |  |  |  |  |
| **λαῖλαψ** | gale |  |  |  | Mk. 4:37 | Lk. 8:23 |
| **λαλέω** | speaking, spoke | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 50:4 Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:21 | Ps. 41:6 | 1 Sam. 9:6 |  |  |
| **λέγω** | saying | Gen 50:4 Gen 50:16 Gen 50:24 Gen 50:25 |  | 1Sa 9:9 | Matt. 6:16 Mk. 4:35 Mk. 4:38 Mk. 4:39 Mk. 4:40 Mk. 4:41 | Lk. 8:22 Lk. 8:24 Lk. 8:25 |
| **λόγος** | words, matter |  | Psa 41:8 |  |  |  |
| **μέγας** | great | Gen 50:9 Gen 50:10 Gen 50:11 |  |  | Mk. 4:37 Mk. 4:39 Mk. 4:41 |  |
| **μνημεῖον** | memorial, tombs | Gen 49:30 Gen 50:5 Gen 50:13 |  |  |  |  |
| **νῦν** | now | Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:17 Gen. 50:21 |  | 1 Sam. 9:6 |  |  |
| **ὁδός** | way |  |  | 1Sa 9:6 1Sa 9:8 |  |  |
| **ὅπως** | that, how | Gen 50:20 |  | 1Sa 9:6 |  |  |
| **ὅς / ἥ / ὅ** | who, which, that | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 49:30 Gen. 50:5 Gen. 50:10 Gen. 50:11 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:15 Gen. 50:24 | Ps. 41:8 Ps. 41:9 | 1 Sam. 9:5 1 Sam. 9:6 1 Sam. 9:10 |  |  |
| **ὄχλος** | crowd, multitude |  |  |  | Mk. 4:36 |  |
| **πᾶς** | all, whole, entire, every | Gen. 49:28 Gen. 50:7 Gen. 50:8 Gen. 50:14 Gen. 50:15 Gen.50:22 | Ps. 41:7 | 1 Sam. 9:2 1 Sam. 9:6 |  |  |
| **πατήρ** | faher | Gen 49:28 Gen 49:29 Gen 50:1  Gen 50:2  Gen 50:5 Gen 50:6 Gen 50:7  Gen 50:10  Gen 50:14  Gen 50:15  Gen 50:16  Gen 50:17  Gen 50:22 Gen 50:24 |  | 1Sa 9:3 1Sa 9:5 |  |  |
| **πέραν** | on the other side | Gen 50:10 Gen 50:11 |  |  | Mk. 4:35 | Lk. 8:22 |
| **πίστις** | belief, faith |  |  |  | Mk. 4:40 | Lk. 8:25 |
| **πλοῖον** | boat |  |  |  | Mk. 4:36 Mk. 4:37 | Lk. 8:22 |
| **ποιέω** | make, do | Gen 50:10 Gen 50:1 |  |  |  |  |
| **πόλις** | city |  |  | 1Sa 9:6  1Sa 9:10 |  |  |
| **πορεύομαι** | went, go |  |  | 1Sa 9:3 1Sa 9:6 1Sa 9:7 1Sa 9:9 1Sa 9:10 |  |  |
| **πούς** | foot, feet | Gen 49:33 |  |  |  |  |
| **πρό** | before | Gen 50:5 Gen 50:16 |  |  |  |  |
| **πρόσωπον** | face, appearance | Gen 50:1 |  |  |  |  |
| **τροφή** | provisions, food | Gen 49:27 |  |  |  |  |
| **υἱός** | son | Gen. 49:32 Gen. 49:33 Gen. 50:12 Gen. 50:13 Gen. 50:23 Gen. 50:25 Gen. 50:26 |  | 1 Sam. 9:1 1 Sam. 9:2 1 Sam. 9:3 |  |  |
| **ὑπακούω** | obey |  |  |  | Mk. 4:41 | Lk. 8:25 |
| **ὑπάρχοντα** | exists, being |  |  | 1Sa 9:7 |  |  |
| **φοβέω** | fear,afraid | Gen 50:19 Gen 50:21 |  |  | Mk. 4:41 | Lk. 8:25 |
| **φωνή** | voice |  |  |  |  |  |

**Abarbanel On**

**Pirqe Abot**

**Pereq 1, Mishnah 6**

**Yehoshua hen Perahyah and Nitai of Arhel received [the tradi­tion) from them. Yehoshua hen Perahyah said: Provide [literally: make) yourself with a teacher and** **acquire [literally: buy) for yourself an associate. And judge all men meritoriously .**

It is amazing that Abarbanel starts his comments on this *Mishnah* with the cursory remark that Yehoshua hen Perahyah was a teacher of Jesus, the founder of Christianity. What moved him to digress and to make this observation is open to speculation. After Abarbanel apprises us of this fact, he launches into a short history of the Karaites, which sect, he claims, began in the time of Yehoshua hen Perahyah. According to Abarbanel, Karaism started during the reign of King Hyrcanus, who was also the high priest. At a banquet which he gave for his ministers and the scholars of his day, Hyrcanus said to the sages, "I am your disciple, if you ever see me leave the true path, rebuke me and return me to it, because you are the proper people to rebuke and I will accept it." The sages replied that in their estimation he was a saintly person, a faithful king and a righteous high priest. This, of course, pleased the king immensely. But then, one of the sages - his name was Elazar and he was a wicked and contentious man - spoke up and contradicted the sages and said, "Hyrcanus, if you like being rebuked you should relin­quish your station as a high priest because your mother was captured by the army of Antiochus and may have been sexually violated, thus disqualifying you as a priest." Noting that the other sages remained silent during this diatribe, the king became infuriated and had many of them put to death. He was advised by his counsellors to forsake the Oral Law, so as not to need the services of the sages and drive them all out of the country. Although they eventually returned and reestab­lished their authority, the concept of defying the Oral Law became an established fact.

As we noted above, it is difficult to understand what prompted Abrabanel to speak about Jesus and the Karaites before delving into the substance of this Mishnah. Perhaps he intended to set the histori­cal background to Yehoshua ben Perahyah's dictum.

True to fashion, Abrabanel connects this Mishnah with an earlier one in which Yosi ben Yoezer teaches us the importance of moving in the circles of the scholarly, to the extent that one's home should be open to them at all time on the basis that you can always gain intellec­tually in their presence. Along comes Yehoshua ben Perahyah and gives us an exercise in the process and methodology of learning. It is not wise to gather scholars into one's home for the sake of amassing cultural tidbits, **because unorganized and undisciplined study will only lead to confusion and obfuscation. The only advisable way to relate to scholars is to choose one primary master and learn from him as much as you can; then to turn to a master of another discipline and begin studying under him.** The use of the verb “A’asah L’kha” - make for yourself - is explained by Abrabanel to mean that even if the person you choose to be your teacher is not the greatest scholar there is, you should *make* him your teacher.

Abrabanel refers to **Seneca, the Roman philosopher, who compared an unorganized educational program to an upset stomach which re­sults from devouring all kinds of foodstuffs at one sitting.**

A question presents itself: In Chapter IV of *Pirkei Avot,* Ben Zoma says: **"Who is a wise man? He who learns from *all* men."** This seems **to** contradict the concept of sitting at the feet of one master at one time. However, Abrabanel does not see this as a contradiction. One does notstudy the dicta of Shammai and Hillel simultaneously with the natural sciences of Aristotle and the geometry of Ptolemy. To study the discip­lines individually and at different periods is productive, to attack them all at one time is unproductive.

Abrabanel is alerted to the difference of language that Yehoshua ben Perahyah employs: Provide yourself - “A’asah L’kha” - make for yourself - with a teacher and acquire for yourself – Uq’nah L’kha Chaber– and acquire [literally: buy) for yourself an associate." An associate in a study program is necessary because he challenges and sharpens the mind of the student. There are times when a student is reticent and too inhi­bited to ask of his master a difficult problem. When one has an associ­ate, however, and they debate, analyze and challenge each other, the student becomes more confident in the presence of the master. Thus, Yehoshua ben Perahyah is emphatic that even if one has to pay another student to be his associate he should do so. As for the importance of accepting the authority of a master, Abrabanel cites the Talmud (Ta'anit 4a; Tosefot) where the sages bemoan the incident involving Yiftah and his vow which ended in tragedy. Yiftah vowed that if he returned victorious from war he would sacrifice the first thing that emerged from his house. He had been thinking of an animal; his daugh­ter was the first creature to come out of his house and he sacrificed her. However, it need not have been so. He could have approached Pinhas the prophet and requested that his vow be nullified. Yiftah knew this, but demanded that Pinhas come to him, the political leader of the nation. Pinhas was equally adamant. He was the prophet of God, and Yiftah would have to come to him. **The catastrophe came about because Yiftah refused to relate to Pinhas as his master.**

Finally, Abrabanel is quick to caution the searching student that although he should attach himself to one master at a time and have one associate, he should not consider other scholars as unworthy. This is the thrust of Yehoshua ben Perahyah's words, "Judge all men meritori­ously." There may be many other scholars of equal standing. It is just that you have chosen this scholar to be your master.

To embellish this line of reasoning, Abrabanel looks to the Torah where we find that God gave the Children of Israel only one master, Moshe, and an associate, Aaron. Moshe, too, chose only one successor**,** Joshua and so it went on throughout the ages. Even in the days of Joshua there may have been scholars who were his equal, but Moshe felt that the most functional method was to appoint one. In later centuries there was one president and one head of the Sanhedrin.

In concluding his comments on this *Mishnah,* Abrabanel refers to Rambam's interpretation of "Judge all men meritoriously." Rambam is realistic in bis assessment of human beings. When an individual is renowned for his piety and noble behavior and suddenly wanders off the straight and narrow path, the sage of the *Mishnah* urges us not to condemn him. We must look for extenuating circumstances to explain his sudden lapse. Then, again, even if a person does not enjoy any singular distinction - he is not reputed to be either a saint or a sinner -he, too, should be judged meritoriously and be given the benefit of the doubt. However, when a man is known for his habitual transgressions, he does not deserve any favorable consideration by the community.

**Miscellaneous Interpretations**

**Rabbenu Yonah** comments on the first of the three dicta of Yehoshua ben **Perahyah** that a man should provide himself with a teacher. **He argues that when a student studies under the disciplined tutorship of a master he is apt to remem­ber what was taught more than if he studied by himself.** Moreover, there is always the possibility that the disciple will better understand the subject matter than his teacher, express himself and thus the student, for the moment, will become the tutor.

On the subject of acquiring an associate, the second of the three dicta, Rabbenu Yonah enumerates three reasons for so doing. First, basing his thesis on a Talmudic statement (Ta'anit 7a), where one rabbi confides that, "I have learned much from my masters but even more from my associates," he opines that this refers to the study of Torah. The give and take in the intricacies of Talmudic study will be beneficial both to him and his associate. The second reason deals with the personal and religious behavior of the two associates. It does not take very much for a man to digress from righteous living. A devoted friend will immediately alert the other to the folly of his ways and influence him to repent. Under these circumstances they will both stay on the straight and narrow path. Lastly, a friend is a valuable asset when one needs to unburden oneself of one's problems. To feel all alone can be stifling and oppressive; to have a confidante brings relief and comfort.

On the matter of the third dictum, "And judge all men meritoriously," Rabbe­nu Yonah fully agrees with Rambam who contends that this attitude is not to be applied in every case. If a person has a reputation of being an extremely righteous person, but is discovered to have deviated temporarily, he is to be judged not harshly but meritoriously. The rabbis (Berakhot 19a) took up this matter and concluded that if a scholar is seen committing a wrong during the nighttime, we must not condemn him the following day because immediately after the transgression he surely repented. Thus, the next morning he will have returned to his state of righteousness and any condemnation is unwarranted and unjustified.

On the other hand, an extremely wicked person cannot be allowed to enjoy our charitable attitude. Even when he does something meritorious on occasion, it is only a fluke and he does not intend it to be a sign that he has mended his ways. The main thrust of this Mishnah concerns the one who is deemed by society to be "so, so." In this case the rabbi asks us to be sympathetic and understanding and judge him meritoriously.

**Me'iri** pauses to analyze the language of the Mishnah, Why, in reference to a teacher, did the sage use the word A’asah (make), but when speaking of an associate employs the word Q’nah (buy)? The answer he proposes: The importance of having a teacher dictates that **one is required to work and toil to attract a master to him.** **In the matter of an associate, no such conscientious effort must be made. It is possible that he can be bought with material means.**

**Rabbi Moshe Alshakar:** How does one recognize an associate? What identifies a man as a desirable associate? The word **Chaber** implies a close relationship. If a man has only good things to say about his peers and showers praises upon them, it demonstrates that he is the type of a person who wants to be closely involved with others. This is a sure sign that he is the one you should seek out as an associate.

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Beresheet (Genesis) 49:27 – 50:26**

**“Benjamin” “Binyamin”**

By: H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul**  **Tosefta**  **(Luqas Lk 8:22-25)**  **Mishnah א:א** | | **School of Hakham Tsefet**  **Peshat**  **(Mk 4:35-41)**  **Mishnah א:א** |
| **One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, "Where is your faithfulness** (faithful obedience)**?" And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?** | **On that day, when evening[[39]](#footnote-39) had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” And leaving the congregation and other boats were with him, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And** (suddenly) **a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking** (over) **into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.[[40]](#footnote-40) And they woke him and said to him, “Rabbi** (your Eminence)**,[[41]](#footnote-41) don’t you care that we are about to die?” And he woke up and commanded[[42]](#footnote-42) the storm to desist** (be silent/still) **saying to the sea, “Peace! Be still!** (Shut up)**” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, “Why are you so timid** (afraid)**?[[43]](#footnote-43) How is it that you have no faithfulness** (faithful obedience)**?” And great sense of awe[[44]](#footnote-44)** (of HaShem) **came upon them,** **and they said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea** (faithfully) **obey him and hear** (listen to him)**?”** | |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gen 49:27 - 50:26** | **Ps. 41:5 - 14** | **I Sam 9:1 - 10** | **Mk 4:35-41** | **Lk 8:22-25** |

**Commentary To Hakham Tsefet’s School Of Peshat**

**Yeshua and Yonah**

Hakham Tsefet in the presents the present pericope couched in hyperbolic terms. This hyperbolic Peshat/Midrash is a Peshat *aggadah* (story) with deep So’od substructures. Some aspects of the story we cannot reveal from Peshat hermeneutic. However, we will concentrate on those items, which Hakham Tsefet wanted us to learn.

Hakham Tsefet has formulated his language so that we must look at each phrase carefully. Sabin notes the following…

As in the similes that Jesus tells, in the present simile he enacts is composed of echoes of Scripture. In this case, the direct echo is of some of the Psalms that reflect on God’s power over creation:

*LORD, God of hosts, who is like You? ...*

*You rule the raging sea;*

*You still its swelling waves (Ps. 89:9a, 10)*

*You still the roaring of the seas,*

*The roaring of their waves (Ps. 65:8)*

*[The LORD] hushed the storm to a murmur;*

*The waves of the sea were stilled (Ps. 107:29)*

Mark, steeped in the Hebrew Bible himself, surely assumed that when he quotes the disciples saying: “Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?” (4:41), his audience would have heard the answer in the memory of these psalms.”[[45]](#footnote-45)

Here we agree to a point with Noonan Sabin, in that what we find in this section is the Master turning himself into a simile providing an analogy as to what the Kingdom/Governance of G-d is like!

While there is merit to the Psalms quoted above as the background to this section, we find greater merit in the book of the Prophet Yonah (Jonah) as the immediate background to this section, and the story of Moshe being found in the present Torah Seder from the hidden background. These things have been discussed at length in the Torah Seder of [Ab 25, 5769](http://www.betemunah.org/sederim/ab2569.html). Therefore, we highly encourage the reader to look at that data as a further explanation to these events.

**Against the Tide**

The pressing question for the present pericope conjoined with the Torah Seder “Sh’mot” is what does Moshe, Yonah and Yeshua all have in common? Or, why does Hakham Tsefet juxtapose these three characters? We can understand that the connecting element is “water” on the most simplistic level. Each of these men is in a “boat” of sorts. Therefore, it is not difficult to conjoin them by means of boats and water. However, this still leaves the daunting question of why Hakham Tsefet connects these characters.

In subtle amazement, the Nazarean Codicil has made the transition from B’resheet to Sh’mot by a change in scenery. This is amazing because we will finish the fourth chapter of Mordechai (Mark) with our initiation of Sh’mot. The astute can see that there is an abrupt change in scenery and nomenclature of the Nazarean Codicil. We have traversed the sown grounds of fields and come into the “herb garden.” Now we are exiled to a boat in the dark with raging winds and waves. The change of scenery is very relevant.

Hakham Tsefet has as a core to his teachings that Yeshua is the “Prophet like Moshe.”[[46]](#footnote-46) Therefore, we opine that Hakham Tsefet’s juxtaposes Moshe and Yeshua keeping in mind the theme of Yonah. However, this compounds the matter of why we have a direct tie to Yonah.

**Our Father Abraham**

We can connect Moshe with Yonah and Yeshua as noted above. However, we can also associate Abraham with the present pericope in a multifarious number of ways.

Sh’mot will demonstrate G-d’s faithfulness to His prophecy given to Abraham at the “Covenant of the pieces.” Therefore, we find a natural connection between Moshe and Abraham. It now behoves us to determine the Abrahamic connection to Yeshua and Yonah.

Firstly, both Yonah and Moshe were prophets. Secondly, both Abraham and Yonah had a mission to the Gentiles. Abraham rescued many souls in his day by his great hospitality and monotheistic belief in the One G-d of all humanity. His efforts turned many Gentiles to HaShem. Similarly, Yonah was specifically sent to the Gentiles of Nineveh. However, his attitude needed some slight adjustment. Interestingly, we read his story at Yom Kippur, situated at the end of our days of repentance. Consequently, we can connect Yonah with Abraham.

Now the task at hand, is to connect Abraham with Yeshua. Abraham was the first to be called a “Hebrew,”[[47]](#footnote-47) one from “the other side.” The present Marqan text begins with this same phrase.

**When evening[[48]](#footnote-48) had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.”**

Hakham Tsefet gives a subtle clue as to where we need to look for the hermeneutic key for our pericope and Torah Seder. How does this information teach us what Hakham Tsefet was trying to say? And, how does all of this relate to the Torah Seder?

The calamity of destructive winds and a life-threatening storm bespeak a very particular adversary.

While there are ten classes of angels,[[49]](#footnote-49) generally they fall they divide into three groups.

1. The First group is the mechanism of the Universe – Pro-Torah angels. These angels promote and enforce Torah observance since the Universe was created by the Torah/Nomos.[[50]](#footnote-50) This group of angels will be very “pro-Jewish” per se.
2. The Second group of angels is the group that desires the destruction of humanity by and at large. Among those angels is the fallen light-bearer Lucifer.
3. The final group of angels is the group, which rebelled when G-d desired to give the Torah to humanity, specifically the Jewish people.

**Severah**

Because the first group of angels has influence over “nature” per se we must logically deduce that angelic powers have varied abilities to manipulate nature. The Midrash tells us that not even a single blade of grass grows without an angel (constellation) striking it to make it grow.[[51]](#footnote-51) These “**constellations**” are Divine messengers.

As noted there are Cosmic Messengers (angels) who assure Torah observance in the world. There are also Divine Messengers on earth, the Hakhamim, who have the same occupation. In other words, the Hakhamim are the Cosmic Messengers who ensure Torah observance in the world. The Hakhamim are the Cosmic Police Officers who manage the security and stability of the world every day.

**b. Chag 13b – 14a** R. Nahman b. Isaac said: The words, Asher Kummetu, indicate blessing: these are the scholars who wrinkle[[52]](#footnote-52) themselves over the words of the Torah in this world, [wherefore] the Holy One, blessed be He, will reveal a secret (So’od) to them in the ever coming world, for it is said: To whom a secret is poured out as a stream. ﻿Every day ministering angels are created from the fiery stream (of words that emanate from G-d’s mouth), and utter song, and cease to be, for it is said: They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness.

Each word of G-d is an “angel.” Each word of G-d is a message, messenger. Therefore, when the bent ones (wrinkled ones explained in the footnote above) study the Torah they become its message and messenger. They capture the essence of the cosmic message and become the messenger. If it were not for these Cosmic Police Officers, the world would be destroyed immediately.

The Chazan as the “angel” of the **congregation** and the Hakham as the initiation of that message borne by the Chazan are the apothecary of the congregation. The Hakham as *R. Simon said: There is not a single herb but has a constellation (mazal – angel) in the heavens, which strikes it and says, Grow!* The Hakham is the father of the congregation.

**Abraham and Yeshua**

**B’resheet 15:5** And He took him outside, and He said, "Please look heavenward and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So will be your seed."

Rashi’s comments on B’resheet 15:5 below …

**5 And He took him outside** According to its simple meaning: He took him out of his tent, outdoors, to see the stars. But according to its midrashic interpretation, He said to him, “Go out of your astrology,” for you have seen in the signs of the zodiac that you are not destined to have a son. Indeed, Abram will have no son, but Abraham will have a son. Similarly, Sarai will not give birth, but Sarah will give birth. I will give you another name, and your destiny will change (Ned. 32a, Gen. Rabbah 44:10). Another explanation: He took him out of the terrestrial sphere and lifted him above the stars. This explains the expression of **הבטה**, looking down from above (Gen. Rabbah 44:12).

In a matter of speaking G-d was telling Abraham that he was the master of his own destiny. Abraham and his progeny would not need to look UP to the constellations; they would look down from above. Therefore, in Peshat language, the agency of the Jewish people is greater than the agency of the Constellations.

In a similar manner, Moshe Rabbenu did not accept the direct agency of the angels.

**Eph 4:8** Therefore He (G-d) says, "You have ascended on high, you have led captivity captive; you have received gifts among men, yes, among the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell (tabernacle) there"(Psa. 68:18).

This verse relates to Moshe when he ascended the mountain and was given by G-d, not only the Torah, but also the ability to share his given gifts to men in the form of the 70 Elders of Israel and Y’hoshua (a figure of Yeshua). Conversely Yeshua as the second Moshe (Deut. 18:15) relives this experience again, and reinvigorates these gifts which were temporarily weakened because of the multitude of sins amongst our people.

Moshe Rabbenu ascended and took the Torah from those cosmic forces,[[53]](#footnote-53) which wanted to keep the Torah for themselves. This instigated that rivalry of angels mentioned above. Therefore, we see Yeshua as G-d’s appointed agent acting as Abraham, Moshe, Y’hoshua and the prophets. We will elaborate on these things from a Remes perspective below.

**Peroration**

We must expect Messiah to conduct himself after the manner of protocols established by our forefathers. However, these protocols being established in our ancestors, we should expect the Master to function as Messiah within the norms of Judaism. His argument with the wind and the waves is an argument with the cosmic opponents that every Jewish person must battle. Yonah was defunct in his duties as a prophet. Therefore, the winds and waves, the cosmic forces, which ensure Torah observance, possessed legitimate authority to operate against him. In the Peshat of our Marqan pericope, the cosmic energies (angels) were not the same angels as those faced by Yonah. The cosmic energies of the Marqan pericope were those angels who rebelled when G-d determined to give the Jewish people the Torah. We can deduce this from simple logic. Groups 2-3 in the numbered list above contested Yeshua as the personification of the Torah to humanity.

**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this week, which particular verse or passage caught your attention and fired your heart and imagination?
2. In your opinion, and taking into consideration all of the above readings for this Sabbath, what is the prophetic message (the idea that encapsulates all the Scripture passages read) for this week.

**Blessing After Torah Study**

**Barúch Atáh Adonai, Elohénu Meléch HaOlám,**

**Ashér Natán Lánu Torát Emét, V'Chayéi Olám Natá B'Tochénu.**

**Barúch Atáh Adonái, Notén HaToráh. Amen!**

**Blessed is Ha-Shem our GOD, King of the universe,**

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

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

**“Now unto Him who is able to preserve you faultless, and spotless, and to establish you without a blemish,**

**before His majesty, with joy, [namely,] the only one GOD, our Deliverer, by means of Yeshua the Messiah our Master, be praise, and dominion, and honor, and majesty, both now and in all ages. Amen!”**

**Next Shabbat: Tishri 1, 5784 – September 15/17, 2023**

**Shabbat: “Rosh Hashanah” – “New Year”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **Rosh HaShannah** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **New Year - Año Nuevo** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 21:1-4 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 1:1-4 |
| **1st Day – Primer Día** | Reader 2 – B‘resheet 21:5-12 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 1:5-7 |
|  | Reader 3 – B’resheet 21:13-17 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 1:8-10 |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 21:1-34  B’midbar (Numbers) 29:1-6 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 21:15-17 |  |
| Ashlamatah: 1 Samuel 1 – 2:10 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 21:18-21 | **Monday / Thursday Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – B’resheet 21:22-27 | Reader 1 – Sh’mot 1:1-4 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 81 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 21:28-34 | Reader 2 – Sh’mot 1:5-7 |
| Mishlei (Proverbs) 7 | Maftir – B’midbar 29:1-6 | Reader 3 – Sh’mot 1:8-10 |
| N.C.: Yochanan 1:1-18 | 1 Samuel 1 – 2:10 |  |

**Coming Festival**

**Rosh HaShannah – New Year 5784**

**Friday Evening 15th – Sunday Evening 17th of September 2023**

**For further information see:**

[**http://www.betemunah.org/teruah.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/teruah.html) **;** [**http://www.betemunah.org/shofar.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/shofar.html) **;**

[**http://www.betemunah.org/knowday.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/knowday.html)

**Coming Fast:**

**Monday 18th of September 2023 Fast of Gedaliah**

[**http://www.betemunah.org/gedaliah.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/gedaliah.html)

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**Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai**

**Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David**

**Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham**

Edited by Paqid Ezra ben Abraham.

A special thank you to Giberet Giborah bat Sarah for her diligence in proof-reading every week.

1. Book 1: Psalms 1—41, Book 2: Psalms 42—72, Book 3: Psalms 73—89, Book 4: Psalm 90—106, Book 5: Psalm 107—150 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Hebrew term for gratitude is **hakarat hatov - הכרת הטוב** , which means, literally, "recognizing the good". [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Shaarei Teshuvah 2:3, 4:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 41:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. This introduction was excerpted and edited from: The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Moshe Chaim Luzatto 1707 in Padua, also known by the Hebrew acronym RaMCHaL (or RaMHaL, רמח”ל), was a prominent Italian Jewish rabbi, kabbalist, and philosopher. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. In Judaism, HaShem (lit. " the name") is used to refer to God, when avoiding God's more formal title, Adonai (lit. " My Master"). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This study is based on a shiur given by Rabbi Akiva Tatz. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Adam is a figure from the Book of Genesis who is also mentioned in the Nazarean Codicil. According to the creation account in the Torah, he was the first human. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The Garden of Eden [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Psyche is the Greek term for "soul" or "spirit". [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Menachoth 53a [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Hester panim (הֶסְתֵר פָּנִים) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Berachot 10b [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Chizkiyahu - Hezekiah [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. King Solomon [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Berachoth 10b [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Just as the neshama, the soul, was blown into Adam by his nose, so also did it depart by his nose. Although not technically part of Jewish Law (*halachah*), saying *gezuntheit* or G‑d bless you is considered a mannerly custom. It is written in the Midrash that the Patriarch Jacob was the first person to become ill before passing on. Before that, people would sneeze and die. When G‑d infused the soul into Man, He "blew it" into Adam's nostrils. Thus, when it came time for the soul to be returned to its Maker, it would leave through the same portal it arrived. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Yaaqob Abinu was the first person to get sick before he died. From that point on, no one died after sneezing and people got sick before they died. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Genesis Rabbah 65:9.1 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Repentance [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Hakhamim mean “wise One” is the name given to Sephardic Rabbis. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Duties of the Heart is the primary work of the Jewish philosopher and Rabbi Bachya ibn Paquda, full name Bachya ben Joseph ibn Pakuda. Ibn Paquda is believed to have lived in Zaragoza, Spain in the first half of the eleventh century. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The Biblical new year. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Niemann-Pick Disease is one of a group of lysosomal storage diseases that affect metabolism and that are caused by genetic mutations. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Cholesterol is a waxy substance that comes from two sources: your body and food. Your body, and especially your liver, makes all the cholesterol you need and circulates it through the blood. But cholesterol is also found in foods from animal sources, such as meat, poultry and full-fat dairy products. Your liver produces more cholesterol when you eat a diet high in saturated and *trans* fats. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. (2-Hydroxypropyl)-β-cyclodextrin [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. The word "halachah" is usually translated as "Jewish Law," although a more literal (and more appropriate) translation might be "the path that one walks." The word is derived from the Hebrew root Hei-Lamed-Kaf, meaning to go, to walk or to travel. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Which might make it a capital crime. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Rabbi Abraham Ben Meir Ibn Ezra (1089–1167) was born in Tudela, Navarre in 1089, and died c. 1167, apparently in Calahorra. He was one of the most distinguished Jewish poets and philosophers of the Middle Ages. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. A religious obligation. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Christian Science is a set of beliefs and practices belonging to the metaphysical family of new religious movements. It was developed in 19th-century New England by Mary Baker Eddy, who argued in her book Science and Health (1875) that sickness is an illusion that can be corrected by prayer alone. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Yoreh Deah 336: 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Asa was, according to the Hebrew Bible, the third king of the Kingdom of Judah and the fifth king of the House of David. He was the son of Abijam, grandson of Rehoboam, and great-grandson of Solomon. The Hebrew Bible gives the period of his reign as 41 years. His reign is dated between 913-910 BC to 873-869 BC. He was succeeded by Jehoshaphat, his son (by Azubah). According to Thiele's chronology, when Asa became very ill, he made Jehoshaphat coregent. Asa died two years into the coregency. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Yoreh Deah 336: 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Kiddushin 82b. Babylonian Talmud. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Gehenna (/ɡɪˈhɛnə/; Ancient Greek: γέεννα), from the Hebrew Gehinnom (Rabbinical: גהנום/גהנם), is the Jewish analogue of hell or purgatory in Christianity. The terms are derived from a place outside ancient Jerusalem known in the Hebrew Bible as the Valley of the Son of Hinnom (Hebrew: גֵיא בֶן־הִנֹּם or גיא בן-הינום, Gai Ben-Hinnom). The Valley of Hinnom is the modern name for the valley surrounding Jerusalem's Old City, including Mount Zion, from the west and south. It meets and merges with the Kidron Valley, the other principal valley around the Old City, near the southeastern corner of the city. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The crossing of the sea at night was not an impossible task since mariners have been accustomed to these practices from antiquity. However, the present crossing at night gives the story more peril. The setting at evening is set by Hakham Tsefet/Yeshua to teach his talmidim a specific lesson. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Yeshua being asleep in the stern of the boat is reminiscent of Yonah in his travels to Nineveh. However, in the present pericope Yeshua is not fleeing the Shekinah (presence) of G-d. Actually, Yeshua is using this setting as a vehicle for teaching his talmidim a very specific truth. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. **διδάσκαλος** – *didaskalos* shows clear reverence as one who is preeminent. We must not think of a “teacher” in the “classroom” setting. The Hebraic idea of teaching is that of impartation. The Hakham inseminates Hokhmah. How Hokhmah is received is a matter of discussion. The appropriate address here should be “Your Eminence.” [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Yeshua’s command of the storm is presented in the form of expelling demons, or resisting demonic force. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. **δειλός** – *deilos* here denote timidity rather than genuine fear. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Lit. “fear a fear.” Pro. 9:10 The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Noonan Sabin, M. (2006), *New Collegeville Bible Commentary: The Gospel According to Mark*, Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, pp. 47-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. cf. D’varim (Deut) 18:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. cf. B’resheet (Gen.) 14:13 עִבְרִי `Ibriy – one who has crossed over or one from beyond. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The crossing of the sea at night was not an impossible task since mariners have been accustomed to these practices from antiquity. However, the present crossing at night gives the story more peril. The setting at evening is set by Hakham Tsefet/Yeshua to teach his talmidim a specific lesson. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. cf. Rambam, M. M. (1998). *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah* (Vol. 1:4). (R. E. Touger, Trans.) Moznaim Publishing Corp. p 166 ff . - 1. Chayot (Hayyot), 2. Ofanim, 3. Erelim, 4. Chashmalim, 5. Seraphim, 6. Malachim, 7. Elohim, 8. B’nai Eleohim (Sons of God), 9. Cherubim, and 10. Ishim. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Specifically through and by the Oral Torah. For example G-d said “Let there be light.” These words, though written were first Oral! [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. **Midrash Rabbah - Genesis X:6** The son of Sira said: God caused drugs to spring forth from the earth; with them the physician heals the wound and the apothecary compounds his preparations. R. Simon said: **There is not a single herb but has a constellation in the heavens, which strikes it and says, Grow**, as it is written, Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish the **dominion** thereof (*mishtaro*) in the earth (Job XXXVIII, 33)? Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, or loose the bands on Orion (ib. 31)? R. Hanina b. Papa and R. Simon said: Pleiades binds the fruit and Orion draws it out between knot and knot, as it is written, Can you lead forth the constellations (*mazaroth*) in their season (ib. 32)? R.Tanhum b. R. Hiyya and R. Simon said: [*Mazaroth* connotes] the constellation, which ripens (*me-mazzer*) the fruits. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. This “**wrinkling**” is reminiscent of the fetus who studies Torah in his mother’s womb in the form of a curled Torah scroll. The Gemara elaborates on the embryo in the mother’s womb as it is stated… **b. Nid 30b** ﻿﻿R. Simlai delivered the following discourse: What does an embryo resemble when it is in the bowels of its mother? Folded writing tablets. Its hands rest on its two temples respectively, its two elbows on its two legs and its two heels against its buttocks. Its head lies between its knees, its mouth is closed and its navel is open, and it eats what its mother eats and drinks what its mother drinks, but produces no excrements because otherwise it might kill its mother. As soon, however, as it sees the light the closed organ opens and the open one closes, for if that had not happened the embryo could not live even one single hour. A light burns above its head and it looks and sees from one end of the world to the other, as it is said, t*hen his lamp shined above my head, and by His light I walked through darkness*. And do not be astonished at this, for a person sleeping here might see a dream in Spain. And there is no time in which a man enjoys greater happiness than in those days, for it is said, *O that I were as the months of old, as in the days when God watched over me*; now which are the days that make up months and do not make up years? The months of pregnancy of course. It is also taught all the Torah from beginning to end, for it is said, *And he taught me, and said unto me: Let your heart hold fast to my words, keep my commandments and live*, and it is also said, *When the converse of God was upon my tent*. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. cf. b. Shabb 88b [↑](#footnote-ref-53)