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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah**  **12210 Luckey Summit**  **San Antonio, TX 78252**  **United States of America**  **© 2022**  [**https://www.betemunah.org/**](https://www.betemunah.org/)  **E-Mail:** [**gkilli@aol.com**](mailto:gkilli@aol.com) | **Menorah 5** | **Esnoga Bet El**  **102 Broken Arrow Dr.**  **Paris TN 38242**  **United States of America**  **© 2022**  [**https://torahfocus.com/**](https://torahfocus.com/)  **E-Mail:** [**waltoakley@charter.net**](mailto:waltoakley@charter.net) |

**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** |
| **Kislev 23, 5783 – December 16-17, 2022** | **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

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba 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 us about the contents and commentary of the weekly Torah Seder and allied topics**.

Be sure to check both websites for the latest updates and newest posts about Torah and the current state of affairs of our world before the Great and coming day of the return of the Messiah and the Tikun and restoration following.

**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** [**chozenppl@gmail.com**](mailto:chozenppl@gmail.com) **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!**

We pray 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!

We pray for Her Honor Giberet Zahavah bat Sarah, the beloved wife of His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Haggai, who is struggling with health issues. Mi Sheberach – He Who blessed our holy and pure Matriarchs, Sarah, Ribkah, Rachel and Leah, bless Her Honor Giberet Zahavah bat Sarah and send her a complete recovery and strengthening of body and soul. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Please G-d heal her, please. Cure her, strengthen her, make her healthy and return her to her original strength, together with all the sick of Yisrael. And may it be so willed, and we will say, Amen ve Amen!

**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.

**Shabbat: “BaMahazeh, Lemor” - “In a vision saying”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **בַּמַּחֲזֶה, לֵאמֹר** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“BaMahazeh, Lemor”** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 15:1-3 | Reader 1 – B’midbar 27:15-17 |
| **“In a vision saying”** | Reader 2 – B’resheet 15:4-6 | Reader 2 – B’midbar 27:18-20 |
| **“en visión, diciendo:”** | Reader 3 – B’resheet 15:7-9 | Reader 3 – B’midbar 27:21-23 |
| B’resheet (Genesis) 15:1-21 | Reader 4 – B’resheet 15:10-12 |  |
| Ashlamatah: Isaiah 1:1-8 + 2:2-3 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 15:13-15 | **Monday & Thursday Mornings** |
| 1 Samuel: 20:18, 42 | Reader 6 – B’resheet 15:16-18 | Reader 1 – B’midbar 27:15-17 |
| Tehillim (Psalms) 12:1-9 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 15:19-21 | Reader 2 – B’midbar 27:18-20 |
|  | Maftir – B’resheet 15:17-21 | Reader 3 – B’midbar 27:21-23 |
| N.C.: Mark 1:32-34  Luke 4:40-41 | Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:1-8 + 2:2-3 |  |

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* G-d’s Revelation of Himself as Shield and Reward – Genesis 15:1-5
* Abraham’s Faithful Obedience and Trust in Ha-Shem – Genesis 15:6
* The Covenant Between the Pieces- Genesis 15:7-21

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: B’resheet 15:1-21**

| **Rashi’s Translation** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
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| 1. After these incidents, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Fear not, Abram; I am your Shield; your reward is exceedingly great." | 1. After these words, when the kings had gathered together, and had fallen before Abram; and four kings had been slain, and nine hosts brought back, Abram reasoned in his heart, and said, Woe to me, because I have received the reward of my appointments in this world, and have no portion in the world to come. Or peradventure the brethren and friends of those who have been slain will combine in legions and come against me; or that at that time there was found with me the reward of a little righteousness/generosity, so that they fell before me; but the second time reward may not be found with me, and by me the name of the Heavens may be profaned. Thereupon was the word (pithgama) of the LORD with Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not; for if these men should gather together in legions and come against you, My Word (Memra) will be your shield: and also if these fall before you in this world, the reward of your good works will be kept, and be prepared before Me in the world to come, great and exceedingly.  JERUSALEM: After these words, when all the kings of the lands, and the sultans of the provinces, had gathered together, and had made war against Abram the Just, and had fallen before him, and he had slain of them four kings, and had brought back nine hosts, did Abram the Just reason in his heart, and say, Woe, now, to me, because I have received the reward ordained in the present world, and have no portion in the world to come. Or peradventure the brethren and kindred of the slain who have fallen before me, who are in their cities and provinces, will combine in great legions, and come against me; or peradventure there were in my hand a few commandments in the former times, so that they fell before me when they had risen up against me; or it may be that righteousness/generosity was found in me at the former times, that they fell before me, but at the second time it may not be found, and the Heavenly Name will be profaned in me. Then was the word of prophecy from the Lord unto Abram the Righteous/Generous, saying, Fear not, Abram, though they should gather together and come against you with many legions, My Word will be your reward and your shield in this world, and a protector over you all the days of the world to come. And though I deliver up your adversaries before you in this world, the reward of your good works is prepared for you also before Me in the world to come. |
| 2. And Abram said, "0 Lord God, what will You give me, since I am going childless, and the steward of my household is Eliezer of Damascus?" | 2. And Abram said, LORD God, great blessings have You given me, and great (are they which it is) before You to give me: nevertheless, what profit is to me, when I pass from the world without children, and Eliezer the manager**(bar parnasath, the son of sustenance)** of my house, by whose hands signs were wrought for (or to) me in Darmasek, expects to be my heir?  JERUSALEM: And Abram said, Before You I supplicate mercy, O LORD God. Manifold blessings You have given me, and many have You before Yourself still to give: nevertheless, what profit have I who go from the world childless, and Eliezer, the son of my house, by whose hands signs were wrought for me in Damasek, expects himself to be my heir? |
| 3. And Abram said, "Behold, You have given me no seed, and behold, one of my household will inherit me." | 3. And Abram said, Behold, to me You have not given a son; and, behold, the manager **(bar parnasath, the son of sustenance)** of my house will be my heir. |
| 4. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one will not inherit you, but the one who will spring from your innards-he will inherit you." | 4. And, behold, a word from before the LORD was to him, saying, He will not be your heir; but a son whom you will beget will be your heir. |
| 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." | 5. And He brought him forth without, and said, Look up now to the heavens, and number the stars, if you are able to number them: and he said, So will be your sons. |
| 6. And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him as righteousness. | 6. **And he believed in the LORD, and had faithful obedience in the (Memra) Word of the LORD, and He reckoned it to him for righteousness/generosity (lizeku), because he spoke not before Him with words.** |
| 7. And He said to him, "I am the Lord, Who brought you forth from Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it." | 7. And He said to him, I am the LORD who brought you out of the fiery furnace of the Kasdai, to give you this land to inherit.  JERUSALEM: And He said to him, I am the LORD who brought you out of the fiery furnace from Ur of the Kasdai. |
| 8. And he said, "O Lord God, how will I know that I will inherit it?" | 8. And he said, LORD God, by what may I know that I will be the heir of it? |
| 9. And He said to him, "Take for Me three heifers and three goats and three rams, and a turtle dove and a young bird." | 9. And He said, Bring Me oblations, and offer before Me an heifer of three years, and a goat of three years, a ram of three years, and a dove, and the young of a pigeon. |
| 10. And he took for Him all these, and he divided them in the middle, and he placed each part opposite its mate, but he did not divide the birds. | 10. And he brought all these before Him, and divided them in the midst, and set in order every division over against its fellow; but the fowl he divided not.  JERUSALEM: And He brought before him all these, and divided them into divisions, and set one part over against its fellow; but the fowl He divided not. |
| 11. And the birds of prey descended upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. | 11. **And there came down idolatrous peoples which are like to unclean birds, to steal away the sacrifices of Israel; but the righteousness/generosity of Abram was a shield over them.**  **JERUSALEM: And when the birds descended, they came not near the divisions: those birds are unclean fowl, and those unclean fowl are the kingdoms of the earth which are worshippers of idols, and which counsel evil counsels against the sons of Israel; but the integrity of the righteous/generous Abram hindered them.** |
| 12. Now the sun was ready to set, and a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and behold, a fright, a great darkness was falling upon him. | 12. And when the sun was nearing to set, a deep sleep was thrown upon Abram: and, behold, four kingdoms arose to enslave his children: Terror, which is Babel; Darkness, which is Madai; Greatness, which is Javan; Decline, which is Pheras, which is to fall, and to have no uplifting, and from whence it is to be that the children of Israel will come up.  JERUSALEM: And when the sun was going to set, a sleep profound and sweet fell upon Abram. And, behold, Abram saw four kingdoms which should arise to bring his sons into subjection (and) Terror; the Greatness of Darkness Fell upon him: Terror, that is Babel; Darkness, that is Media; Greatness, that is Greece; Fell, that is Edom, (Rome) that fourth kingdom which is to Fall, and never to rise again forever and ever. |
| 13. And He said to Abram, "You shall surely know that your seed will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and they will enslave them and oppress them, for four hundred years. | 13. And he said to Abram, Knowing, you must know, that your sons will dwell in a land not their own, because you have not believed, and they will subjugate and afflict them four hundred years; |
| 14. And also the nation that they will serve will I judge, and afterwards they will go forth with great possessions. | 14. and also that the people whom they will serve I will judge with two hundred and fifty plagues, and afterwards they will go forth into liberty with great riches. |
| 15. But you will come to your forefathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age. | 15. And you will be gathered to your fathers, your soul will rest in peace, and you will be buried in a good old age. |
| 16. And the fourth generation will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites will not be complete until then." | 16. And in the fourth generation of your sons they will return here to inherit; because the guilt of the Amoraah is not yet complete. |
| 17. Now it came to pass that the sun had set, and it was dark, and behold, a smoking furnace and a fire brand, which passed between these parts. | 17. And when the sun had set there was darkness. And, behold, Abram saw Gehinnam ascending, smoke with flaming coals and burning flakes of fire, wherewith the wicked are to be judged. And, behold, He passed between those pieces.  JERUSALEM: And, behold, the sun went to set, and there was darkness, and Abram beheld till the seats were arrayed and the thrones set forth. **And lo, Gehinam, which was prepared for the wicked in the world to come, enveloped in burning flakes and flames of fire, into which the wicked had fallen when in their lives they rebelled against the Law, while the just who had kept it had been delivered from affliction.** And all were seen by Abram while He passed between those divisions. |
| 18. On that day, the Lord formed a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your seed I have given this land, from the river of Egypt until the great river, the Euphrates river. | 18. In that day the LORD ordained a covenant with Abram, that He would not judge therein his sons, but would deliver them from the kingdom, saying, To your sons will I give this land, from Nilos of Mizraim unto the great river, the river Pherath, |
| 19. The Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, | 19. the Shalmia, and the Kenizah, and Kadmonaah, and the |
| 20. And the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Rephaim, | 20. Hittaee, and the Pherizaee, and Gibaraee, and the |
| 21. And the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Girgashites and the Jebusites."‎ | 21. Emoraee, and the Kinaanaee, and the Girgeshaee, and the Jebusaee. |

**Reading Assignment:**

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| **The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez - Vol II: The Patriarchs**  By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi, Translated by: Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan  Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1988)  Vol. 2 – “The Patriarchs,” pp. **81 - 107**. | **Ramban: Commentary on the Torah**  Translated and Annotated  by Rabbi Dr. Charles Chavel  Published by Shilo Publishing House, Inc.  (New York, 1971)  PP. **193 - 211** |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎** **B’resheet (Genesis) 15:1-21**

**Chapter 15**

**1 After these incidents Wherever the term אַחַר is used, it signifies immediately afterwards**; אַחֲרֵי signifies a long time afterwards (Gen. Rabbah 44:5). After this miracle had been wrought for him, that he slew the kings, he was worried and said, “Perhaps I have received reward for all my righteous deeds.” Therefore, the Omnipresent said to him, “Fear not Abram, I am your Shield” from punishment, that you will not be punished for all those souls that you have slain, and as far as your being worried about receiving reward, your reward is exceedingly great. [from Aggadath Beresheet 16:2; Tan. Buber, Lech Lecha 15; Pirke d’Rabbi Eliezer ch. 27]

**2 since I am going childless** Heb. עֲרִירִי . Menachem ben Saruk (Machbereth p. 137) explained it as meaning an heir, and a similar instance is (Mal. 2:12): “a son (עֵר) and a grandson (וְעֽנֶה) .” Hence, עֲרִירִי would mean without an heir, as you would say (Job 31:12): “and it will uproot (תְשָׁרֵשׁ) , all my crops” [meaning] it will tear out its roots. Similarly עֲרִירִי means childless; in Old French, desenfantez. It appears to me, however, that עֵר וְעֽנֶה is derived from the same root as (Song of Songs 5:2): “but my heart is awake (עֵר) ” whereas עֲרִירִי is an expression of destruction, as in (Ps. 137:7): “Raze it, raze it (עָרוּ עָרוּ) ” and as in (Hab. 3:13): “destroying (עָרוֹת) the foundation,” and as in (Jer. 51:58): “shall be completely destroyed תִּתְעַרְעַר) (עַרְעֵר ,” and as in (Zeph. 2:14): “for the cedarwork will be destroyed (עֵרָה).”

**and the steward of my household** - וּבֶן מֶשֶׁק בֵּיתִי , to be interpreted like the Aramaic translation, (וּבַר פַּרְנָסָה הָדֵין דִי בְּבֵתִי) : and this sustainer who is in my house). My entire household is sustained by his orders, as (below 41:40): “and by your orders they will be sustained (יִשַׁק) .” [ בֶּן מֶשֶׁק ‚ means] “my administrator,” but if I had a son, my son would be appointed over my possessions.

**Damascus** Heb. דַמֶשֶׂק . According to the Targum, he was from Damascus, but according to the Midrash Aggadah (Gen. Rabbah 44:9) [the meaning is] that he pursued the kings until Damascus. And in our Talmud (Yoma 28b), it (the word דַמֶשֶׂק ) is interpreted as a notarikon [acrostic דוֹלֶה וּמַשְׁקֶה ]: he drew and gave to drink from his master’s teachings to others.

**3 Behold, You have given me no seed** So of what avail is all that You will give me?

**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 ofהַבָּטָה , looking down from above (Gen. Rabbah 44:12).

**6 And he believed in the Lord** He did not request of Him a sign regarding this, but regarding the inheritance of the land, he did request of Him a sign, and he said to Him, “How will I know? [from Ned. 32a]

**and He accounted it to him as righteousness** The Holy One, blessed be He, accounted it to Abram as a merit and as righteousness for the faith that he believed in Him (Targum Jonathan). Another explanation for: “How will I know?” He did not ask Him for a sign but he said before Him, “Let me know with what merit will they [my descendants] remain therein [in the Land]?” The Holy One, blessed be He, replied, “With the merit of the sacrifices.”

**9 three heifers** -(Gen. Rabbah 44:14) Three calves, symbolic of the three bulls: the bull of Yom Kippur, the bull brought when the interpretation of a law is hidden from the people [because of an error of the Sanhedrin], and the heifer whose neck was broken.

**and three goats** Symbolic of the he-goat that is sacrificed inside, the he-goats of the additional offering of the festivals, and the he-goat that is sacrificed as a sin offering for an individual.

**and three rams** A guilt offering for a definite sin, a guilt offering for a doubtful sin, and a ewe lamb for a sin offering for an individual.

**and a turtle dove and a young bird** A turtle dove and a young pigeon. [These are the various species offered up for all kinds of atonement sacrifices.]

**10 and he divided them** He divided each one into two parts. The verse does not lose its simple meaning, because He was forming a covenant with him to keep His promise, to cause his sons to inherit the land, as it is written (verse 18): “On that day, the Lord formed a covenant with Abram, saying, etc.,” and it is the custom of those who form a covenant to divide an animal and to pass between its parts, as it is written (Jer. 34:19): “who passed between the parts of the calf.” Here too, “a smoking furnace and a fire brand, which passed between the parts,” was the agent of the Shechinah, which is [referred to as] fire. [from Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer , ch. 28]

**but he did not divide the birds** Since the idol-worshipping nations are likened to bulls, rams, and goats, as it is said (Ps. 22:13): “Many bulls surrounded me, etc.,” and Scripture states (Dan. 8:20): “The ram that you saw, the one with horns, represents the kings of Media and Persia,” and Scripture states (ibid. verse 21): “And the he-goat is the king of Greece.” And the Israelites are likened to young doves, as it is said (Song of Songs 2:14): “My dove, in the clefts of the rock.” Therefore, he divided the animals, as an allusion that the nations will gradually perish. “But he did not divide the bird,” as an allusion that Israel will exist forever. [from Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 28; Targum. Ps. 22:13]

**11 And the birds of prey** Heb. הָעַיט This is a bird, and [it is called עַיט ] because it swoops down [ עָט ] and seeks the carcasses. (Job 9:26): “to swoop upon food,” and like (I Sam. 15:19): “and you flew (וַתַּעַט) upon the spoil.”

**upon the carcasses upon the parts.** (Other editions: הַפְּגָרִים is translated into Aramaic as פַּגְלַיָא , [meaning “carcass,” and not “parts,” as Rashi interprets]. But because they [the Targumim] were accustomed to translating אִישׁ בִּתְרוֹ [verse 10] as וִיהַב פַּלְגַיָא [meaning: “He placed each part”], the word פַּגְלַיָא was mistakenly changed to פַּלְגַיָא , and they therefore translated הַפְּגָרִים as פַּלְגַיָא . But whoever translates that way is in error, because we cannot equate בְּתָרִים , parts, to פְּגָרִים , carcasses, for בְּתָרִים should be translated פַּלְגַיָא , and פְּגָרִים should be translated פַּגְלַיָא , an expression of פִּגוּל , an abominable thing, as (Lev. 19:7): “it is an abominable thing (פִּגוּל) ,” an expression of a carcass. (So I heard from Rabbi Judah the son of Rabbi Samuel.) And so it was emended in a Rashi ms., and in another ms. was written: So did Rabbi Meir the son of Rabbi Samuel explain.)

**and Abram drove them away** Heb. וַיַשֵׁב , an expression of blowing and causing to fly away, like (Ps. 147:18): “He causes His wind to blow (יַשֵׁב) .” This is an allusion that David the son of Jesse will come to destroy them, but they will not permit him from heaven [to do so] until the King Messiah arrives. [from Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 28]

**12 and behold, a fright**, etc. An allusion to the troubles and darkness of the exiles. [from above mentioned source, Targum Jonathan, Targum Yerushalmi, Gen. Rabbah 42:17, and many other midrashic sources]

**13 that your seed will be strangers** From the time that Isaac was born until the Israelites left Egypt was four hundred years. How so? Isaac was sixty years old when Jacob was born, and Jacob, when he went down to Egypt, said, “The days of the years of my sojournings are one hundred and thirty years,” which total 190. They were in Egypt 210 years, like the numerical value of רְדוּ (See Rashi, below 42:2.) ר = 200 ד= 4 ו = 6 = 210 Thus, the total is 400 years. Now, if you should say that they were 400 years in Egypt, [this is not so] because Kehath was one of those who descended to Egypt. If you compute the years of Kehath (133) and those of Amram (his son, 137), and the 80 years of Moses, his age when they left Egypt, you will find only 350 [years]. And you must still subtract from them all the years that Kehath lived after the birth of Amram and that Amram lived after the birth of Moses. [from Seder Olam ch. 3]

**in a land that is not theirs** It does not say, “in the land of Egypt,” but, “[in a land] that is not theirs,” and from the time Isaac was born (below 21:34): “and Abraham sojourned, etc.” (Below 20:1): “And [Isaac] sojourned in Gerar.” (Ps. 105:23): “And Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.” (Below 47:4): “To sojourn in the land we have come.”-[from Mid. Abchir]

**14 And also the nation** [The word] וְגַם , [and also], is to include the four kingdoms (Babylon, Persia and Media, Greece, and Edom), for they too will perish because they enslaved Israel. [from Gen. Rabbah 44:19]

**will I judge** with ten plagues. [from Gen. Rabbah 44:20]

**with great possessions** with much money, as it is said (Exod. 12:36): “and they emptied out Egypt.”

**15 But you will come to your forefathers in peace** And you will not witness any of this. [From Gen. Rabbah 44:20]

**to your forefathers** His father was an idolater, and He announces to him that he will come to him? This teaches you that Terah repented. [from Tan. Shemoth 18]

**you will be buried in a good old age** He announced to him that Ishmael would repent during his lifetime (Gen. Rabbah 30:4, 38:12), and that Esau would not embark on evil ways during his lifetime. Therefore, he died five years before his time, and on that very day, Esau rebelled (ibid. 63:12). See below 25:29f.

**16 And the fourth generation** After they will have been exiled to Egypt, they will be there for three generations, and the fourth will return to this land (Mishnath Rabbi Eliezer ch. 5), for in the land of Canaan He spoke with him, and formed this covenant, as it is written (above verse 7): “to give you this land to inherit it.” And so it was: Jacob descended to Egypt. Go forth and figure his generations: Judah, Perez, and Hezron, and Caleb the son of Hezron was one of those who entered the land (Sotah 11b).

**for the iniquity of the Amorites will not be complete** that they should be sent out of their land until that time, for the Holy One, blessed be He, does not punish a nation until its measure is full, as it is said: (Isa. 27:8): “When her measure is full, when You send her away, then You will strive with her.”-[from Zohar, vol. 1, p. 113b]

**17 Now it came to pass that the sun had set** Heb. הַשֶׁמֶשׁ בָּאָה וַיְהִי [The subject apparently does not agree with the predicate, because שֶׁמֶשׁ is a feminine noun, whereas וַיְהִי is a masculine verb. Therefore, Rashi explains as follows:] This is similar to (below 42:35): “And it came to pass that they were emptying their sacks;” (II Kings 13:21): “And it came to pass that they were burying a man;” meaning: this event took place. [The subject of וַיְהִי is not הַשֶׁמֶשׁ but דָבָר זֶה (i.e., it is as if the masculine noun דָבָר זֶה (this event) were inserted after וַיְהִי .] The same is true in the two instances quoted by Rashi, in which the subject is plural, whereas the predicate is singular. There too, the subject of וַיְהִי is דָבָר זֶה .]

**the sun had set** Heb. בָּאָה . It had set.

**and it was dark** The day darkened.

**and behold, a smoldering furnace, etc.** He hinted to him that the kingdoms of the pagans would fall into hell.-[from Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 28]

**had set** Heb. בָּאָה Its accent is on the first syllable. Therefore, it is explained that it had already set; but if its accent were at the end, on the “alef,” it would be explained to mean: as it was setting. but it is impossible to say this, for it is already written (above verse 12): “Now the sun was setting” and the passing of the smoking furnace happened after this. It is found that it had already set. And this difference exists in every word in the feminine gender, whose radical consists of two letters, such as tc (to come), oe, (to arise), ca, (to return). When the accent is on the first syllable, it is in the past tense, e.g., this case and e.g., (below 29:9): “and Rachel came (בָּאָה) ,” (below 37:7) “my sheaf arose (קָמָה) ;” (Ruth 1:15) “Lo! Your sister-in-law has returned (שָׁבָה) .” However, when the accent is on the final syllable, it is in the present tense, denoting a thing that is happening now and is continuing to happen, like (below 29:6): “She is coming בָּאָה with the flocks;” (Esther 2: 14): “In the evening she would come (בָּאָה) , and in the morning she would return (שָׁבָה) .”

**18 To your seed I have given** The word of the Holy One, blessed be He, is like an accomplished fact.

**the great river, the Euphrates river** Since it is associated with the Land of Israel, He calls it great, even though it is the last of the four rivers going forth from Eden, as it is said (above 2:14): “and the fourth river that is the Euphrates.” A common proverb states: “A king’s servant is a king; associate with a ruler, and people will bow down to you.” -[from Sifre Devarim 6]

**19 The Kenites** There are ten nations [enumerated] here, but He gave them only seven nations. The [other] three are Edom, Moab, and Ammon, and they are [here referred to as] the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, which are destined to be [our] heritage in the future, as it is said (Isa. 11:14): “upon Edom and Moab shall they stretch forth their hand, and the children of Ammon shall obey them.”-[from Gen. Rabbah 44:23]

**20 and the Rephaim** the land of Og, concerning which it is said (Deut. 3:13): “That is called the land of the Rephaim.”

**Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms)** ‎**12:1-9**‎

| **Rashi’s Translation** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. For the conductor on the sheminith, a song of David. | 1. For praise, on the lyre of eight strings. A hymn of David. |
| 2. Save, O Lord, for the pious are gone, for the faithful have vanished from the sons of men. | 2. Redeem, O LORD, for the good are annihilated; for the faithful have ceased from the sons of men. |
| 3. One speaks to another with falseness, smooth talk; they speak with a double heart. | 3. They speak lies, each to his fellow, lips are flattering; in their heart they deceive, and with a lying heart they speak. |
| 4. May the Lord cut off all smooth lips, the tongue that speaks great things. | 4. The LORD will destroy from the world all flattering lips, the tongue that speaks arrogance. |
| 5. Who said, "With our tongue we will overpower; our lips are with us. Who is lord over us?" | 5. Those who deny the essence, who say, "By our tongue we will prevail, our lips are with us, who is our master?" |
| 6. Because of the plunder of the poor, because of the cry of the needy, Now I will rise, the Lord shall say; I will grant them salvation, He shall speak concerning them. | 6. Because of the oppression of the poor, because of the cry of the needy, now I will arise, says the LORD; I will give redemption to My people, but against the wicked I will give testimony of evil. |
| 7. **The sayings of the Lord are pure sayings, like silver refined, exposed to the earth, clarified sevenfold.** | 7. **The words of the LORD are pure words, silver purified in the furnace on the ground, refined seven times.** |
| 8. You, O Lord, shall guard them; You shall guard him from this generation forever. | 8. You, O LORD, will keep the righteous/generous; You will protect them from this evil generation forever. |
| 9. Wicked men walk on all sides when the [one who appears] basest to the sons of men is elevated. | 9. All around the wicked walk, like a leech that sucks the blood of the sons of men. |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Psalm** ‎**12:1-9**

**1 on the sheminith** The eight stringed harp.

**2 are gone** Heb. גמר , lit. finished, destroyed.

**have vanished** Heb. פסו , faylirt in Old French, to lack, fail.

**for the faithful have vanished from the sons of men** Everyone betrays me and spies out the places where I hide, and tells Saul (54:2): “Is not David hiding with us?”

**3 with a double heart** Lit. with a heart and a heart; with two hearts. They feign friendliness, but there is hatred hidden in their heart.

**5 With our tongue we will overpower** With our tongue we will gain strength.

**6 Because of the plunder of the poor** Because of the plunder of the poor who are robbed by youfor example, I myself and my men and the priests of Noband because of the cry of the needy, the Lord shall say, “Now I will rise to their help.”

**I will grant them salvation**, He shall speak I will grant them salvation, He will speak concerning them. יפיח is an expression of speech. There are many [examples] in the Book of Proverbs, and in Habakkuk (2:3): “and He shall speak (יפח) of the end, and it shall not fail.” However, Menachem (p. 141), interpreted it as an expression of a snare, as (below 124:7) “the snare (הפח) broke.”

**7 The sayings of the Lord are pure sayings** for He has the ability to fulfill them, but the sayings of the sons of men are not sayings when they die and are unable to fulfill [them].

**pure** Clear and permanent. Whatever He promises He does, for He promised me salvation and the throne.

**silver refined** They are like refined silver that is exposed to the entire land.

**exposed** Heb. בעליל , an expression of revealing; in the language of the Mishna (Rosh Hashanah 21b, see Gemara): “whether it was plainly (בעליל) visible or whether it was not plainly (בעליל) visible, etc.” Others explain בעליל as an expression of elevation, and this is its explanation: silver refined with the best earth. That is to say, like silver that is refined with the best earth and its upper layer, because a person makes a crucible to refine the silver from the best earth. Another explanation: בעליל is like בעלי , with a mortar (as in Prov. 27: 22): “among grain with a pestle,” which is the name of a utensil in which [grain] is crushed. Similarly, בעליל is the crucible in which gold and silver are smelted. However, this does not seem correct because he does not call עלי the mortar in which [the grain] is crushed, but the handle of the pestle with which they crush. This is called pilon in French, pestle. Another explanation: בעליל is an expression of the master of a hand, i.e., the master of the earth, and the praise of the word applies to God. Targum Jonathan, too, renders it as an expression of lordship. He says that His sayings are like silver, refined by the Lord of the earth, Who is God, for He refined and clarified them.

**8 shall guard them** Those poor and needy people being pursued by this generation, who are informers.

**9 Wicked men walk on all sides** to hide traps to cause me to stumble.

**when the basest to the sons of men is elevated** Heb. כרם זלות לבני אדם [They walk on all sides] because of their envy, for they are jealous of my greatness, that I was taken from behind the sheep to be a king. This is the interpretation of כרם זלות לבני אדם : **when a man considered by the sons of men to be base is elevated. This is on the order of the passage elsewhere (below 118:22): “The stone that the builders rejected became a cornerstone.”** The Midrash Aggadah interprets it concerning Israel in the future, when they will be elevated. [Unknown Midrashic source] Menachem interprets כרם זלות לבני אדם (pp. 78, 164): like a gluttonous wild ox to devour the sons of men. Accordingly, כרם is rendered: like a רים or ראם , and זלות is like (Deut. 21:20) זולל וסבא , “a glutton and a drunkard.” The following is its interpretation: The wicked walk on all sides around the poor man; the wicked walk to swallow him for naught, as a wild ox to swallow the sons of men.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalm 12:1-9**

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

Psalm 12 was inspired by a prophetic message foretelling an era when the wicked would succeed in overcoming the poor and the helpless. The threat manifested itself when Saul seemed to be on the verge of subduing David and occurred again on a national scale when the entire House of David was threatened with extinction at the hands of the evil Israelite Queen Athaliah who annihilated the entire ‘royal seed’ [with the exception of the infant Yoash who was hidden[[1]](#footnote-1)].

Rashi[[2]](#footnote-2) writes: David dedicated this Psalm to Athaliah’s atrocity, which would occur in the eighth generation of His dynasty (beginning with Solomon), praying that a remnant of his family be spared, saying, ‘Save me, HaShem, for the devout are no more’.

However, the psalm ends on the confident note that HaShem will surely protect the helpless. The full realization of this wish will come to pass in Messianic times when evil will vanish in the face of the enlightenment gained through Torah study.[[3]](#footnote-3) Therefore, this psalm was accompanied by the שמינית, the eight-stringed instrument symbolizing that the forces set loose during the seven days of creation will finally be bridled and disciplined.[[4]](#footnote-4)

In this light, we understand why the Vilna Gaon prescribes this psalm as the שיר של יום, ‘The Song of the Day’, for Shemini Atzeret.[[5]](#footnote-5) This is the special psalm for Shemini Atzeret found in the Orot Sephardic Succoth Machzor.

On the seven days of the Succoth Festival, offerings were brought symbolizing the seventy nations who surround Israel. But on the eighth day, Shemini Atzeret, the offering symbolizes only Israel who will remain alone and exalted in Messianic times as HaShem’s chosen people. [[6]](#footnote-6)

The verbal connection between our Torah portion, Ashlamata, and psalm, all revolve around the word: halak - הלך. In the Torah portion it is Avraham Abinu who is to walk before HaShem and be perfect.[[7]](#footnote-7) In our psalm it is the wicked that walk. Since our psalm deals with the walk of the wicked, I would like to take an in-depth look at *Halacha*,[[8]](#footnote-8) *walking*, which is the opposite of the walk of the wicked.

***Tehillim (Psalm) 12:9*** *The wicked* ***walk*** *on every side, when vileness is exalted among the sons of men.*

The following section is an excerpted, and edited, portion from “The Handbook of Jewish Thought, Vol. 2”, by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan.

*It is HaShem’s will that there exists a certain degree of uniformity in Jewish practices, as well as in the interpretation of the Law. It is thus written, “There shall be one Torah and one law for you”.[[9]](#footnote-9)*

*Therefore, even when no formal central authority, such as the Sanhedrin, exists, HaShem has provided guidelines to insure the continuance of Judaism as a unified way of life. These guidelines provide the basis for the system of Torah law known as Halacha.[[10]](#footnote-10)*

*Moreover, it was impossible to include every possible case in the Oral Torah. It would also be impossible for the Sanhedrin to decide in every possible case. Therefore, HaShem gave each qualified Torah scholar the right to decide questions of Torah law. Then, even if laws were forgotten, they could be restored through the halachic process.*

*It is a positive commandment for a duly qualified Torah scholar to render decisions in questions of Torah law when asked. It is thus written, “You shall teach the children of Israel all the decrees which HaShem told them through Moses”…[[11]](#footnote-11)*

*The unique relationship between HaShem and Israel guarantees that we will always be able to ascertain His will. It is thus written, “You will seek HaShem your Lord, and you will find Him, as long as you search after Him with all your heart and with all your soul”…[[12]](#footnote-12)*

*HaShem therefore granted the Jewish people as a whole a sort of collective Divine Inspiration so that they would be able to recognize the correct opinion in questions of Torah law. Therefore, when there is any question, it is ultimately decided on the basis of what becomes common practice. Hence, when a decision is accepted as a general custom, it becomes universally binding.*

*Therefore, any practice, decision or code that is universally accepted by the Jewish people is assumed to represent HaShem’s will and is binding as such. Even when a decision is initially disputed, the commonly accepted opinion becomes binding as law.*

*Since the Talmud was accepted by all Israel, it is the final authority in all questions of Torah law. Since such universal acceptance is a manifestation of HaShem’s will, one who opposes the teachings of the Talmud is like one who opposes HaShem and His Torah. All later codes and decisions are binding only insofar as they are derived from the Talmud.*

*Other works, written prior or contemporary to the Babylonian Talmud are likewise very important for the understanding of laws, beliefs and history. However, since they were all known to the compilers of the Talmud, it is assumed that when the Talmud disputes these works, it does so for a reason. Therefore, whenever they disagree with the Talmud, decisions found in the Jerusalem Talmud, Midrash and Tosefta are ignored. There are, however, certain special cases, where, because of long established custom, the opinions of other early works are accepted, even when they disagree with the Talmud.*

*All the opinions found in the Talmud are equally sacred. Still, there is always one binding opinion whenever questions of actual practice are concerned. This is known either from the Talmudic discussions itself, or from later tradition.*

*However, when a dispute involves questions of opinion or history, and has no special consequences any opinion found in the Talmud is equally acceptable. Similarly, no final decision is normally rendered between conflicting Talmudical opinions in the case of laws that are no longer applicable.*

Halacha teaches us how to behave with our families, relatives, and strangers as well as how to fulfill our religious requirements between ourselves and HaShem. To fulfill our role as a holy people, we imitate HaShem’s actions. Examples are visiting the sick, welcoming guests, giving charity, refraining from creative activity on Shabbat, and promoting peace between husband and wife.[[13]](#footnote-13) The true reason for following Halacha is because HaShem commanded us to do so. We observe Halacha to please our Creator and to become spiritually close to Him by doing His will and imitating His actions. Like the word for the whole body of Jewish “laws,” each rule of how to act is called a Halacha.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The Shema is an affirmation of our covenantal relationship and a declaration of faith in one G-d. The obligation to recite the Shema is the beginning of the obligation to pray, yet separate from it. This means that we must also pray in addition to saying the Shema. Saying the Shema is the beginning of Torah study since the two commands are so closely related. A Jew is obligated to say Shema in the morning and at night, as we can see from the above passage.

The directives of the Shema, Debarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4ff, intimate two ways for Israel to express its love for HaShem: **to do** and **to hear**. Later Hakhamim will refer to these “ways” as “**duties of the limbs**” and “**duties of the heart**”, the “duties of the limbs” implying what the Hakhamim came to call *halacha.* Derived from the causative verb *halak* (to walk, i.e., to make someone else walk, to lead, to guide), *halacha* is that component of Torah which provides guidance through definitive rulings or commandments (mitzvot[[15]](#footnote-15)). It answers the questions ‘what,’ ‘when,’ and ‘how’ in Israel’s call to holiness.

The Torah was HaShem’s plan holiness given to Adam[[16]](#footnote-16) and later to Israel through Moshe, at Mount Sinai, in the presence of all the people of Israel. This plan was written out in the Torah. We worship HaShem by studying this plan and putting it into *practice*, i.e. one must *walk* (halak) out the Torah. Righteousness is, by definition, the state created by living according to the Torah, HaShem’s plan. Jewish life was defined by Torah regardless of where one lived.

The first place where “walk” is used, with people, is in:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 13:14-18*** *And HaShem said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then] shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise,* ***walk*** *through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. Then Abram removed [his] tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which [is] in Hebron, and built there an altar unto HaShem.*

In this first use of the word “walk”, with people, we find that it has the basic idea of performing the will of HaShem. HaShem is having Abram check out his inheritance, his land. Many of HaShem’s commands, such as the Sabbatical year and the Jubilee year, can ONLY be performed in the land. This walk establishes Abram’s continued obedience to the commands of HaShem.

One of the things we will notice in this study, is that most of the time that we see this word ‘walk’, it will be juxtaposed with the commands of HaShem.

Now, let’s see how this same word is used in other scriptures:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 17:1-14*** *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, HaShem appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I [am] the Almighty HaShem;* ***walk*** *before me and become perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and HaShem talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant [is] with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a HaShem unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their HaShem. And HaShem said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This [is] my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which [is] not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*

In this use, we see that walking is intimately connected with obedience to HaShem. The implied usage seems to indicate a lifestyle of obedience. There are some Mitzvot where the symbol and the meaning are explicit: Some are called ‘ot’, a sign: - Circumcision - mila - is described as a “Sign of the Covenant”, the meaning of which is contained in the phrase “Walk in front of Me and become perfect”.[[17]](#footnote-17) To “walk in HaShem’s ways”, which Chazal understand as mandating not just concrete actions but also the cultivation of virtuous character traits.[[18]](#footnote-18) Judaism requires halakhic observance, but it also asks for more than that, namely, a life of compassion for those who are vulnerable.

Torah asks us not just to perform our duties but also to cultivate ourselves. This pervades the whole history of Jewish religious writing. The Musar movement’s focus on character-building; the Rambam’s persistent concern with virtue;[[19]](#footnote-19) and R. Bachya’s preoccupation with the duties of the heart rather than (merely) those of the limbs.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Working to become a refined and holy person is the entire goal of the Torah. HaShem introduces His covenant with Abram by telling him to “walk yourself before Me and be whole”.[[21]](#footnote-21) Thus, perfecting one’s ability to relate to HaShem and to other people is the goal of the entire observance, not merely a means to fulfill other mitzvot and doing mitzvot themselves. This goal is to make manifest the Image of the Divine within each of us.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:1-5*** *And HaShem spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am HaShem your HaShem. After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye* ***walk*** *in their ordinances. Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to* ***walk*** *therein: I [am] HaShem your HaShem. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do,* ***he shall live in them****: I [am] HaShem.*

In this powerful passage, HaShem again indicates that the way to live, is in obedience to His Torah. Our walk, our obedience to the Torah and Chazal determines whether we are choosing death or life.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 26:2-12*** *Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I [am] HaShem. If ye* ***walk*** *in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make [you] afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new. And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.*

In this passage, HaShem indicates that if we are to be His people, and He is to be our HaShem, then we MUST walk in His statutes. There is no other way.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 5:31 - 6:2*** *But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do [them] in the land which I give them to possess it. Ye shall observe to do therefore as HaShem your HaShem hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. Ye shall* ***walk*** *in all the ways which HaShem your HaShem hath commanded you, that ye may live, and [that it may be] well with you, and [that] ye may prolong [your] days in the land which ye shall possess. Now these [are] the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which HaShem your HaShem commanded to teach you, that ye might do [them] in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou mightest fear HaShem thy HaShem, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.*

In this passage, walking in His ways, means living a Torah observant life. The result of this walk is prolonged life on Earth.

***Deuteronomy 30:10-20*** *if you obey the Lord your HaShem to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the Lord your HaShem with all your heart and soul. “For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. “It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may* ***observe*** *it?’ “Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may* ***observe*** *it?’ “But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it. “See, I have set before you today* ***life*** *and prosperity, and death and adversity; in that I command you today to love the Lord your HaShem, to* ***walk*** *in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may* ***live*** *and multiply, and that the Lord your HaShem may* ***bless*** *you in the land where you are entering to possess it. “But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other G-ds and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You shall not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it. “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you* ***life*** *and death, the blessing and the curse.* ***So choose life*** *in order that you may* ***live****, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your HaShem, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him;* ***for this is your life*** *and the length of your days, that you may* ***live*** *in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them. “*

In this passage, the use of “walk” is used to graphically describe a life of absolute Torah obedience. This lifestyle is called “our life”!

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 22:1-6*** *Then Yehoshua (Joshua) called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of HaShem commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you: Ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of HaShem your HaShem. And now HaShem your HaShem hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, [and] unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of HaShem gave you on the other side Jordan. But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of HaShem charged you, to love HaShem your HaShem, and to* ***walk*** *in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul. So Yehoshua (Joshua) blessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto their tents.*

Here again, we have HaShem associating our walk with our obedience to His Torah. Yehoshua (Joshua) seems to be emphasizing how important it is to walk in His ways.

***Zechariah 8:20-23*** *“Thus says HaShem of hosts, ‘{It will} yet {be} that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities. ‘And the inhabitants of one will go to another saying, “Let us go at once to entreat the favor of HaShem, and to seek HaShem of hosts; I will also go.” ‘So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek HaShem of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of HaShem.’ “Thus says HaShem of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew saying,” Let us* ***go*** *with you, for we have heard that HaShem is with you.*

In this passage, “go” literally means to “walk”. When we walk with the Jews, it means to live a lifestyle that they live. It means that we have embraced a Torah observant lifestyle, as they have. When we are Torah observant, we will find that HaShem is with us too!

In the Nazarean Codicil, we find this same theme regarding our walk:

***II Luqas (Acts) 21:18-24*** *And now the following day Paul went in with us to Yaaqob (James), and all the elders were present. And after he had greeted them, he {began} to relate one by one the things which HaShem had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it they {began} glorifying HaShem; and they said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law; and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to* ***walk*** *according to the customs. “What, then, is {to be done}? They will certainly hear that you have come. “Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow; take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses in order that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also* ***walk*** *orderly, keeping the Law.*

Here, Paul demonstrates that he walks orderly by keeping the Torah. The Greek word for “walk”, in the above passage, is:

4748 stoicheo, stoy-kheh’-o; from a der. of steicho (to range in regular line); to march in (military) rank (keep step), i.e. (fig.) to conform to virtue and piety:-walk (orderly).

***Romans 6:4-6*** *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Mashiach was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should* ***walk*** *in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also [in the likeness] of [his] resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

We have already seen the close association between walking and life. The above passage reinforces this idea. Mashiach’s death was for the purpose of eliminating sin. Sin is the word that describes a lifestyle devoid of Torah:

***1 Yochanan (John) 3:4*** *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

***Romans 8:1-4*** *[There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Mashiach Yeshua, who* ***walk*** *not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Mashiach Yeshua hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, HaShem sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who* ***walk*** *not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

In this difficult passage, Paul is putting our walk together with life, and this is in opposition to the flesh and sin. Since Paul lived a Torah observant lifestyle, and was well versed in the Torah, it is clear that he is reiterating that we must walk in obedience to the Torah, which is the Spirit of life.

***2 Yochanan (John) 1:4-6*** *I was very glad to find {some} of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment {to do} from the Father. And now I ask you, lady, not as writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we* ***walk*** *according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.*

Here, at the end of the Nazarean Codicil, we still see that we are commanded to walk according to the Torah, which are His commandments.

His Eminence, Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai, has also taught me about another Greek word used in the Nazarean Codicil that refers to our *walk*, to reveal some amazing things. Strong’s defines this word as:

**3598** hodos, hod-os’; appar. a prim. word; a road; by impl. a progress (the route, act or distance); fig. a mode or means:-journey, (high-) way.

As we follow the Hebrew word HALAK, we need to follow it into the Nazarean Codicil. The Greek word used to translate the Hebrew word HALAK is HODOS. HUDOS means HALAKHA, the way of walking. We have some very interesting passages that uses this word:

***Matityahu 3:3*** *For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

***Matityahu 5:25*** *{Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.}*

***Matityahu 7:13*** *{Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide [is] the gate, and broad [is] the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:}*

***Yochanan (John) 14:5-6*** *Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Yeshua saith unto him, {I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.}*

The Torah was HaShem’s plan for creation given to Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai in the presence of all the people of Israel. This plan was written out in the Five Books of Moses known collectively as the Torah. One worships HaShem by studying this plan and putting it into *practice*, i.e. one must walk (*halak*) in the Torah. Righteousness is, by definition, the state created by living according to the Torah, which is HaShem’s plan. Jewish life is / was defined by Torah regardless of where one lived.

By now we should understand why the wicked prosper, *in this world*. Their ***walk*** will determine their ultimate end in a place where they will encounter the torment that they have earned. Consider the following pasuk:

***Hoshea (Hosea) 14:10****Whoso is wise, let him understand these things, whoso is prudent, let him know them. For the ways of HaShem are right, and the just do walk in them; but transgressors do stumble therein.*

The Vilna Gaon,[[22]](#footnote-22) quoted in *Even Sheleimah*,[[23]](#footnote-23) teaches us the true meaning of the above pasuk.

*The relationship of Torah to the soul: A comparison to rain for the ground, it causes what was planted there to grow, whether a sam hachaim or a sam hamaves, a poison. Similarly, Torah causes what is in his heart to grow. If what is in his heart is good, his yir’ah will grow; if what is in his heart is a “root sprouting poison weed and wormwood” then the bitterness that is in his head will grow. As it is written, “the righteous will walk in it, and sinners will stumble in it” (Hoshea 14:10, as explained by Chazal), and as it is written, “To those who go to the right side of it, it is a medicine of life; to those who go to its left, it is a deadly poison”).[[24]](#footnote-24)*

The day when the wicked reap the consequence of their walk is *The Eighth Day*, which is alluded to in the opening of our psalm:

***Tehillim (Psalm) 12:1*** *For the Leader; on the* ***Sheminith****.*[[25]](#footnote-25) *A Psalm of David.*

The eight stringed harp speaks to The Eighth Day, the eighth millennium, when this eight-string harp will be used.

**Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) ‎1:1-8 + 2:2-3‎**

| **Rashi’s Translation** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. ¶ The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, [and] Hezekiah, kings of Judah. | 1. The prophecy of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he prophesied concerning the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the days ‎of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of the house of Judah. |
| 2. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken; Children I have raised and exalted, yet they have rebelled against Me. | 2. Hear, O heavens which shook when I gave My Law to My people, ‎and give ear, O earth which reeled before My word; for the LORD speaks: "The house of Israel is My people. I called them sons. I ‎cherished and ‎glorified them, but they have rebelled against My Memra. |
| 3. An ox knows his owner and a donkey his master's crib; Israel does not know, my people does not consider. | 3. The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's crib; but Israel does not teach ‎to know the fear of Me, My people does not understand, to return to My Law." |
| 4. Woe to a sinful nation, a people heavy with iniquity, evildoing seed, corrupt children. They forsook the Lord; they provoked the Holy One of Israel; they drew backwards. | 4. Woe, because they were called a holy people, and‎sinned; a chosen congregation have multiplied sins; they were named as a beloved seed and they acted wickedly, and it was said of ‎them, "Cherished sons'; and they corrupted their ways! They have forsaken the service of the LORD, they have despised the fear of the Holy ‎One of Israel, because of their wicked deeds they are turned about and backwards. |
| 5. Why are you beaten when you still continue to rebel? Every head is [afflicted] with illness and every heart with malaise. | 5. They do not understand so as to say, "Why are we ‎still smitten?" They continue to sin. They do not say, "For what reason is every head sick and every heart mournful?" |
| 6. From the sole of the foot until the head there is no soundness-wounds and contusions and lacerated sores; they have not sprinkled, neither have they been bandaged, nor was it softened with oil. | **6.** From the remnant ‎of the people even to the heads there is not among them one that is perfect in My fear. All of them are disobedient and rebellious; they ‎defile themselves with sins as a dripping wound. They do not forsake their arrogance and they do not desire repentance, and they have no ‎merits to protect them. ‎ |
| 7. Your land is desolate; your cities burnt with fire. Your land-in your presence, strangers devour it; and it is desolate as that turned over to strangers. | 7. Your country lies desolate, your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence the Gentiles take possession of your land; and because of ‎your sins it is removed from you, and given to aliens. |
| 8. And the daughter of Zion shall be left like a hut in a vineyard, like a lodge in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. | 8. And the congregation of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard after they have picked ‎it clean, like a tent for staying overnight in a cucumber field after they have stripped it, like a city which is besieged. |
| 9. "Had not the Lord of Hosts left us a remnant, we would soon be like Sodom; we would resemble Gomorrah." **{P}** | 9. Had the abounding ‎goodness of the LORD of hosts not left us a remnant in His mercies, then our sins would have been with us, so that as the men of Sodom ‎we should have perished, and as the inhabitants of Gomorrah we should have been destroyed. ‎ |
|  |  |
| 1. ¶ The word that Isaiah, son of Amoz, prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem. | 1. The word of prophecy which Isaiah the son of Amoz prophesied concerning the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. |
| 2. And it shall be at the end of the days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be firmly established at the top of the mountains, and it shall be raised above the hills, and all the nations shall stream to it. | 2. And ‎it will come to pass in the end of days that the mountain of the sanctuary of the LORD will be established at the head of the mountains, and ‎raised above the hills; and all kingdoms will turn to worship upon it, |
| 3. **And many peoples shall go, and they shall say, "Come, let us go up to the Lord's mount, to the house of the God of Jacob, and let Him teach us of His ways, and we will go in His paths," for out of Zion shall the Torah come forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.** | 3. **and many peoples will come, and say: "Come, and let us go up ‎to the mountain of the sanctuary of the LORD, to the house of the Shekhinah of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us ways that are correct‎before Him and that we might walk in the teaching of His Law." For out of Zion will go forth the Law, and the teaching of the word of the ‎LORD from Jerusalem.** |
| 4. And he shall judge between the nations and reprove many peoples, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. **{P}** | 4. And He will judge between kingdoms, and will reprove many peoples, and they will beat their swords into‎ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; people will not take up a weapon against people, neither will they learn war any more. ‎ |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) ‎1:1-8 + 2:2-3‎‎**

**Chapter 1**

**1 the vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz** Said Rabbi Levi: We have a tradition from our ancestors that Amoz and Amaziah, king of Judah, were brothers.

**which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem** Now, did he not prophesy concerning many nations, viz. the prophecy of Babylonia (ch. 13), the prophecy of Moab (ch. 15)? Thus you learn that this is not the beginning of the Book, and that the Book is not given its name for this prophecy. So we learned in the Baraitha of the Mechilta (Exod. 15:9,10): “In the year of King Uzziah’s death” (6:1) is the beginning of the Book, **but there is no early and late in the order [i.e., the order of the chapters is no indication of the chronological order. (Others read: There is no early and late in the Book Parshandatha.]** The context proves this point, for, on the day of the earthquake (see Zech. 14:5), the day Uzziah became a metzora (see 2 Chron. 26:19), it was said: “Whom shall I send and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here I am; send me” (6:8). We learn that this was the beginning of his mission, and this prophecy was said afterwards. And concerning this alone, it is stated: which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, just as Scripture says concerning each nation, “the prophecy of such and such a nation.” Here too, Scripture writes: “which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.” **Since they are harsh reproofs, he calls them “chazon,” which is the harshest of the ten expressions by which prophecy is called, as is stated in Gen. Rabbah (44:7), and proof of this is the verse (infra 21:2), “A harsh prophecy (חָזוּת) was told to me.”**

**in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, [and] Hezekiah, kings of Judah.** These four kings he buried, [i.e. he outlived,] in his lifetime. On the day Uzziah became a metzora, the Shechinah rested upon him, and he prophesied all the days of these kings, until Manasseh arose and killed him. (And this prophecy was said in the days of Hezekiah after the ten tribes were exiled.)

**2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth** And Moses said, “Give ear, O heavens, … and may the earth hear” (Deut. 32:1). Why did Isaiah change the wording? Our masters taught concerning this matter, [and] many midrashim [are] in the section entitled “Ha’azinu” in Sifrei, but the Sages disagreed with them and said: A matter is not so unless witnesses come and testify. If their words coincide, their testimony is fulfilled; if not, their testimony is not fulfilled. Had Isaiah not addressed the heavens with giving ear and the earth with hearing, the heavens would testify and say, ‘When we were called to this testimony in Moses’ time, when he said, (Deut. 30:19) “I call heaven and earth to witness against you,” we heard with an expression of giving ear,’ and the earth would testify, ‘I was called with an expression of hearing,’ hence their testimony would not coincide. [Therefore,] Isaiah came and reversed the matter. Consequently, both are found to testify with an expression of giving ear and with an expression of hearing.

**for the Lord has spoken** That you should be witnesses in this matter, when I warned them in Moses’ time. Therefore, come and hear what I reason with them, for they transgressed the warning, I did not sin against them, but I raised them and exalted them, yet they rebelled against me. [Another version reads:] That you should be witnesses in this matter. Now, where did He speak? “Give ear, O heavens and I will speak” (ibid. 32:1). [So this was taught] in Mechilta (Bo 12).

**3 his owner** Heb. קֽנֵהוּ [is] like מְתַקְּנוֹ , the one who affixes him to the plowshare for plowing by day, and since he has accustomed him to this, he knows him. The dull donkey, however, does not recognize his master until he feeds him. Israel was not intelligent like the ox, to know, when I called him and said, “Israel will be your name” (Gen. 35:10), and I informed them of several of My statutes, yet they deserted Me, as is related in Ezekiel (20:39): “Let each one go and worship his idols.” Even after I took them out of Egypt and fed them the manna and called them, “My people, the children of Israel,” they did not consider even as a donkey. Another explanation is:

**An ox knows its owner** An ox recognizes his owner so that his fear is upon him. He did not deviate from what I decreed upon him, by saying, I will not plow today. Neither did a donkey say to his owner, I will not bear burdens today. Now, these [creatures,] who were created to serve you, and are not destined to receive reward if they merit, or to be punished if they sin, did not change their manner, which I decreed upon them. Israel, however, who, if they merit receive reward, and if they sin are punished.

**does not know** **i.e., did not want to know; they knew but trod with their heels, and my people did not take heart to consider.**

**4 Woe** Every instance of הוֹי in Scripture is an expression of complaining and lamenting, like a person who sighs from his heart and cries, “Alas!” There are, however, several, which are an expression of a cry, the vocative voice, e.g., “Ho, ho, flee from the land of the north” (Zech. 2:10), which the Targum renders, אַכְלוּ , an expression of announcing.

**Woe** There is a reason to cry about a holy nation that turned into a sinful nation, and a people referred to by the expression, “for you are a holy people” (Deut. 7:6), turned into a people with iniquity.

**a people heavy with iniquity** The heaviness of iniquity. The word denotes a person who is heavy, pesant in French, ponderous. The word כֶבֶד is a substantive of heaviness, pesantoma in French, and is in the construct state, and is connected with the word עָוֹן , iniquity.

**evildoing seed** And they were seed whom the Lord blessed (Isa. 61:9). Similarly, they were children of the Holy One, blessed be He, and they became corrupt.

**they provoked** Heb. נִאֲצוּ , they angered.

**they drew backwards** [The root נְזִירָה ,] wherever it appears, **is only an expression of separation.** Similarly, Scripture states: “And they shall separate (וְיִנָּזְרוּ) from the holy things of the children of Israel” (Lev. 22: 2), “the one separated (נְזִיר) from his brothers” (Gen. 49:26). Here too, they drew away from being near the Omnipresent.

**5 Why are you beaten...** A person who was punished (lit. beaten) and repeats his sin his friend admonishes him and says to him, For this you have been punished, yet you do not take heart to say, ‘For this I have been punished. I will not repeat it again.’ Here too, why are you beaten since you continue disobedience, to turn away from following the Omnipresent? Is not every head afflicted with illness and every heart with malaise? Why then do you not understand?

**6 soundness** An expression of perfection, sound without pain.

**wounds** Heb. פֶּצַע , i.e., a wound of a sword.

**contusions** Heb. חַבּוּרָה , an expression of a bruise. [Some editions read:] Other bruises.

**and lacerated sores** Jonathan renders: מְרַסְסָא , lacerated and crushed.

**and lacerated sores** demarcejjre, in O.F., and in the language of the Talmud, we find, “he bumped (טַרְיֵה) his head” (Chullin 45b). Menahem explained it as an expression of moisture, i.e., moist and wet, always oozing [muyte in O.F.].

**they have not been sprinkled** These lesions were not sprinkled with medicinal powders by physicians. This is an expression of: (Job 18:15) “Sulphur shall be sprinkled (יְזֽרֶה) on his dwelling.” Menahem explained it as an expression of healing, as in (Jeremiah 30:13): “No one pronounced your judgment for healing (לְמָזוֹר) .”

**neither was it softened with oil** Their wound was not softened with oil, as is customary with other wounds. It would be inappropriate to say here, “They were not softened with oil,” for they soften only the place of the sore, not the wound and the contusion but the sprinkling and the bandaging applies to all three, [i.e., the wound, the contusion, and the lacerated sore.] Therefore, the plural number applies to them; the lesions were not sprinkled and not bandaged. Jonathan interprets the entire verse figuratively, referring to the fact that they were soiled and afflicted with iniquity. Accordingly, he rendered, “From the sole of the foot until the head,” from the smallest to the greatest, there is no soundness. There is none good among them, wounds and contusions, rebellious deeds, iniquities, and inadvertent sins.

**they have not been sprinkled...** i.e., they have not been healed by repenting wholeheartedly, nor has it been softened with oil, not even a trace of repentant thought has entered their heart.

**7 in your presence, strangers devour it** Before your eyes, your enemies will devour it.

**and desolate of you as a heritage turned over to strangers, which is desolate of its owners.** Jonathan renders in this manner.

**8 And the daughter of Zion** shall be left devoid of its inhabitants, for they will be exiled from its midst, as a hut in a vineyard, made by a watchman, and when the produce of the vineyard is gathered, he leaves his hut and goes away, after they gather it.

**like a lodge in a cucumber field** As the lodge, which the watchman made at the end of a cucumber field, to watch its cucumber, is left, for after it is gathered, he leaves it and goes away; the one in the vineyard is called a hut since he lives in it day and night; by day, he guards it from the birds and by night from the thieves, b ut cucumbers are hard, and there is no fear of the birds, and one need not watch them by day. It is, therefore, called a lodge since it is a place of lodging at night. Jonathan renders: Like a bed in a lodge (again repeated in Hebrew), [in] a cucumber field, in a cucumber field after it has been picked (בָּתַר דְאַבְעָיוּהִי) , after it has been picked. [This is the expression of the Mishnah] (Peah 4:5): “There are three gatherings (אַבְעָיוֹת) a day.”

**like a besieged city** Like a city which was besieged, and they make huts around it to hide the troops, and when they give up the siege [lit., when they go away from it], they leave them and go away. All this is Jonathan’s translation.

**Chapter 2**

**2 At the end of the days** after the rebels perish.

**firmly established** fixed.

**at the top of the mountains** On a mountain that is the head of all the mountains in the importance of the mountains.

**and it shall be raised above the hills** The miracle performed on it, will be greater than the miracles of Sinai, Carmel, and Tabor.

**will stream** will gather and stream to it like rivers.

**3 to the house of the God of Jacob** Since he [Jacob] called it [the Temple site] Beth El [the house of God], therefore, it will be called on his name, but Abraham called it a mount, “On God’s mount shall He appear” (Gen. 22:14); Isaac called it a field, “to meditate in the field” (ibid. 24:63).

**Special Ashlamatah: Shmuel Alef (1 Samuel) 20:18,42**

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
| --- | --- |
| 18. And Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be remembered, for your seat will be vacant. | 18. And Jonathan said to him: “Tomorrow is the (new) moon, and you will be sought out, for your dining place will be empty.” |
| 42. And Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace! (And bear in mind) that we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, 'May the Lord be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'" And he arose and went away; and Jonathan came to the city. {P} | 42. And Jonathan said to David: “Go in peace, for the two of us have sworn by the name of the LORD saying, ‘May the Memra of the LORD be a witness between me and you, and between my sons and your sons forever.’” And he arose and went, and Jonathan entered the city.  {P} |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Shmuel alef (1 Samuel) 20:18,42**

**18 Tomorrow is the new moon:** and it is the custom of all those who eat at the king’s table to come on the festive day to the table.

**and you will be remembered:** My father will remember you, and ask where you are.

**for your seat will be vacant:** for your seat in which you sit, will be vacant, and so did Jonathan render: and you will be sought, for your seat will be vacant.

**and you will be remembered:** [ונפקדת is] an expression of remembering.

**will be vacant:** [יפקד is] an expression of lacking.

**42** **Go in peace!:**And the oath which we have sworn, may the Lord be witness thereon forever.

**Verbal Tallies**

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

**Beresheet (Genesis) 15:1-21**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 12:1-9**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:1-8 + 2:2-3**

**Mk 1:32-34, Lk 4:40-41**

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

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Saying / Say / Said - אמר, Strong’s number 0559.

Go / Walk - הלך, Strong’s number 01980.

Son / Children - בן, Strong’s number 01121.

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

Word / Thing - דבר, Strong’s number 01697.

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Saying / Say / Said - אמר, Strong’s number 0559.

Go / Walk - הלך, Strong’s number 01980.

Son / Children - בן, Strong’s number 01121.

House - בית, Strong’s number 01004.

**Beresheet (Genesis) 15:1** After these **things <01697> the word <01697>** of the **LORD <03068>** came unto Abram in a vision, **saying <0559> (8800)**, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward.

2 ¶ And Abram **said <0559> (8799)**, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing **I go <01980> (8802)** childless, and the steward **<01121>** of my **house <01004>** *is* this Eliezer of Damascus?

**Tehillim (Psalms) 12:1** « To the chief Musician upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David. » Help, **LORD <03068>**; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the **children <01121>** of men.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 12:4** Who have **said <0559> (8804)**, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips [are] our own: who [is] lord over us?

**Tehillim (Psalms) 12:8** The wicked **walk <01980> (8691)** on every side, when the vilest **men <01121>** are exalted.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:1** The vision of Isaiah the **son <01121>** of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 2:3** And many people shall **go <01980> (8804)** and **say <0559> (8804)**, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the **LORD <03068>**, to the **house <01004>** of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will **walk <03212> (8799) - יָלַךְ** in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the **word <01697>** of the **LORD <03068>** from Jerusalem.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Reading**  **Gen. 15:1-21** | **Psalms**  **12:1-9** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is. 1:1-8 + 2:2-3** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| vyai | man | Gen. 15:10 | Ps. 12:2 |  |
| !m;a' | believed, amen | Gen. 15:6 | Ps. 12:1 |  |
| rm;a' | saying | Gen. 15:1 Gen. 15:2 Gen. 15:3 Gen. 15:4 Gen. 15:5 Gen. 15:7 Gen. 15:8 Gen. 15:9 Gen. 15:13 Gen. 15:18 | Ps. 12:4 Ps. 12:5 | Isa. 2:3 |
| #r,a, | land, earth, ground | Gen. 15:7 Gen. 15:13 Gen. 15:18 | Ps. 12:6 | Isa. 1:2 Isa. 1:7 |
| vae | burning, fire | Gen. 15:17 |  | Isa. 1:7 |
| tyIB; | house | Gen. 15:2 Gen. 15:3 |  | Isa. 2:2 Isa. 2:3 |
| !Be | son, heir, children | Gen. 15:2 Gen. 15:3 | Ps. 12:1 Ps. 12:8 | Isa. 1:1 Isa. 1:2 Isa. 1:4 |
| lAdG" | great | Gen. 15:12 Gen. 15:14 Gen. 15:18 | Ps. 12:3 |  |
| yAG | nation | Gen. 15:14 |  | Isa. 1:4 Isa. 2:2 |
| rBeDI | spoke, speak, say |  | Ps. 12:2 Ps. 12:3 | Isa. 1:2 |
| rb'D' | word | Gen. 15:1 Gen. 15:4 |  | Isa. 2:3 |
| rAD | generation | Gen. 15:16 | Ps. 12:7 |  |
| %l;h' | go, walk | Gen. 15:2 | Ps. 12:8 | Isa. 2:3 |
| [r;z< | offspring, seed | Gen. 15:3 Gen. 15:5 Gen. 15:13 Gen. 15:18 |  | Isa. 1:4 |
| [dy | know, knew, known | Gen. 15:8 Gen. 15:13 |  | Isa. 1:3 |
| hw"hoy> | LORD | Gen. 15:1 Gen. 15:4 Gen. 15:6 Gen. 15:7 Gen. 15:18 | Ps. 12:1 Ps. 12:3 Ps. 12:5 Ps. 12:6 Ps. 12:7 | Isa. 1:2 Isa. 1:4 Isa. 2:2 Isa. 2:3 |
| ~Ay | day | Gen. 15:18 |  | Isa. 1:1 Isa. 2:2 |
| ac'y" | come, go forth | Gen. 15:4 Gen. 15:5 Gen. 15:7 Gen. 15:14 |  | Isa. 2:3 |
| tr;K' | made, cut | Gen. 15:18 | Ps. 12:3 |  |
| rc;n" | preserve, guard |  | Ps. 12:7 | Isa. 1:8 |
| !wO[' | iniquity | Gen. 15:16 |  | Isa. 1:4 |
| ~Wr | exalted |  | Ps. 12:8 | Isa. 1:2 |
| [;re | other, another | Gen. 15:10 | Ps. 12:2 |  |
| ~yIm;v' | heavens | Gen. 15:5 |  | Isa. 1:2 |
| [m;v' | heeded, heard |  |  | Isa. 1:2 |

**Greek:**

| **Greek** | **English** | **Torah**  **Gen. 15:1-21** | **Psalms**  **12:1-9** | **Ashlamatah**  **Is. 1:1-8 + 2:2-3** | **Peshat**  **Mark, 1-2 Peter**  **& Jude**  **Mk 1:32-34** | **Tosefta**  **Luke**  **Lk 4:40-41** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| εἴδω | beheld, saw |  |  | Isa 1:1 | Mk. 1:34 | Lk. 4:41 |
| ἐξέρχομαι | come forth, went forth | Gen 15:4 Gen 15:14 |  | Isa 2:3 |  | Lk. 4:41 |
| ἐπιτίθημι | place |  |  | Isa 1:6 |  | Lk. 4:40 |
| ἥλιος | sun | Gen 15:12 Gen 15:17 |  |  | Mk. 1:32 | Lk. 4:40 |
| θεός | God | Gen 15:6 Gen 15:7 |  | Isa. 2:3 |  | Lk. 4:41 |
| λαλέω | spoke, speak, say |  | Ps. 12:2 Ps. 12:3 | Isa. 1:2 | Mk. 1:34 | Lk. 4:41 |
| λέγω | saying, says | Gen. 15:1 Gen. 15:2 Gen. 15:3 Gen. 15:4 Gen. 15:5 Gen. 15:7 Gen. 15:8 Gen. 15:9 Gen. 15:13 Gen. 15:18 | Ps. 12:4 Ps. 12:5 | Isa. 2:3 |  | Lk. 4:41 |
| πόλις | city, town |  |  | Isa 1:7 Isa 1:8 | Mk. 1:33 |  |
| υἱός | son, heir, children | Gen. 15:2 | Ps. 12:1 Ps. 12:8 | Isa. 1:1 Isa. 1:2 Isa. 1:4 |  | Lk. 4:41 |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra Of B’resheet Gen. 15:1-21**

**“In a vision saying”**

By H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SCHOOL OF HAKHAM SHAUL**  **Tosefta**  **(Luke 4:40-41)** | **School of Hakham Tsefet**  **Peshat**  **(Mark 1:32-34)** |
| And **at the setting of the sun** just after Habdalah, **all who were sick with various manners of disease** and calamity] **brought** (led) **them to him** (Yeshua) **and he pressed his hands on each of them** willingly out of his graciousness righteous/generosity **cured them. But the shedim – demons came out of many, saying and shouting “You are the son of G-d”** (Messiah)! **And he rebuked** them and would **not permit them to speak, because they knew** (da’at) **that he is the Messiah.** | **And evening being come, at sunset[[26]](#footnote-26)** just after Habdalah **they** (the people of the community) **brought to him** (Yeshua) **all manner[[27]](#footnote-27) of sick or those controlled** (possessed) **by shedim – demons. And the entire community** (city) **gathered around the door** of the home where he was staying**. And he** (Yeshua)willingly out of his graciousness,[[28]](#footnote-28) righteous / generosity **cured[[29]](#footnote-29) various diseases** and calamities **and cast out many shedim – demons; and he would not permit the shedim – demons speak, because they knew who he was.** |

**Commentary to Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat**

We must her first point out that our Torah Portions begins with the phrase “In a Vision Saying.” While the Nazarean Codicil does not make that exact statement it relates to the Torah Portion in verse 12 of chapter 15 where the statement relates to the exile of Abrahams children through the promised seed of Yitzchaq saying “now when the sun was going down.” Herein we should learn a lesson which the Nazarean Codicil is making in relation to the present Torah Seder.

The message we should learn from this passage, among other things is that the “setting of the sun” brings about the great exile (which we currently experience). Yet Yeshua establishes a powerful lesson here. Those who will be sustained in this Galut (exile) must be Shomer Shabbat.

**Habdalah**

We note here that the sun has set and that Habdalah has come and gone. This ceremony, practiced at the end of every Shabbat **separates** the Holy from the mundane (profane). The timing of Habdalah in the Nazarean Codicil is often referred to as “the first of the week.” **τη μια των σαββατων συνηγμενων** (*tē mia tōn sabbatōn sunēgmenōn*)[[30]](#footnote-30) in this case the Talmidim met at the “first of the week” referring to the time just after Habdalah and not Sunday morning. It is most likely that they lived in a communal setting with an Erub so they could “come together” for Habdalah and have a meal.

The key thought in our present pericope being separation between the Holy and **profane**. We would not usually translate the concept of division as division between the Holy and profane, preferring the separation between the Holy and the **mundane**. We have used this term because of the setting where Yeshua must separate between the holy and profane in those persons possessed with demons, making a play on words.

**HA – MAVDIL**

**Ha – Mavdil (**Heb. הַמַּבְדִּיל; “who distinguishes”), name of a hymn sung in the Havdalah ceremony at the close of the Sabbath. The acrostic yields the name of the author Isaac the Younger (probably Isaac b. Judah Ibn Ghayyat of Spain (1030–1089). There are two versions of the hymn; in both the refrain starts: “**May He who maketh a distinction between holy and profane pardon our sins (in most versions: “and our wealth”); may he multiply our offspring as the sand and as the stars in the night.**” The hymn was probably composed for the concluding service (*Ne’ilah*) of the Day of Atonement. One version is still recited as a *selih*̣*ah piyyut* in the *Ne’ilah* service of some of the Sephardi rites (e.g., Algeria); the other, and better known version, has become the standard hymn for the *Havdalah* service in all Jewish rites.[[31]](#footnote-31)

The citation above demonstrates the antiquity of the relationship between Habdalah and the Torah Seder where Abram is promised the blessing of innumerable seed. Based on the citation from the Encyclopedia Judaica we would opine that the *piyyut* was actually much older than the cited dates. The antiquity of Habdalah predates the Men of the Great Assembly. Therefore, we must believe that the basics of Habdalah originated long before this period. A regular distinction between the Sabbath and Habdalah was possibly initiated before the giving of the Torah at Sinai. Given the fact that Hakham Tsefet is called the “leader of the poets” by Rashi's grandson, Rabbenu Tam in his Otzar HaMidrashim.[[32]](#footnote-32) And having penned Nishmat ("Soul of"), which opens with the words, "The soul of every living being will bless your name"[[33]](#footnote-33) causes us to wonder how far-reaching his influence was on the Yom Kippur service and the early Siddur.

NISHMAT KOL ḤAI (Heb. **נשְמַת כָל חַי;** “The soul of every living being”), the initial words and name of a prayer recited at Sabbath and festival morning services at the conclusion of the Pesukei de-Zimra introductory biblical hymns. This prayer expresses the gratitude men owe to God for His mercies in sustaining them. In talmudic literature it is called *Birkat ha-Shir* (“Benediction of the Song,”Pes. 10:7, and 117b–118a). Based upon the opinion of R. Johanan, *Nishmat* also became part of the Passover *Haggadah*. *Nishmat* consists of three main sections. The first contains an avowal of God’s unity: Besides Thee we have no King. Deliverer, Savior, Redeemer… We have no King but Thee.” Some scholars believed that this passage was composed by the apostle Peter as a protest against concepts foreign to pure monotheism.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Hakham Tsefet is actually referred to as the “Hakham of the poets by Rashi's grandson, Rabbenu Tam in his Otzar HaMidrashim.[[35]](#footnote-35) These thoughts show us just how closely associated Hakham Tsefet was with the House of Hillel. We also note that the Houses of Hillel and Shammai differed in their order of blessings for Habdalah.

**m. Ber. 8:5** The House of Shammai say, “[The order of the blessings at the conclusion of the Sabbath is] lamp, meal, spices, and *[[36]](#footnote-36)habdalah*.” But the House of Hillel says, “Lamp, spices, meal, and *habdalah*.” [The blessing over the lamp—] the House of Shammai say, “Who created the light of the fire.” But the House of Hillel say, “Who creates the lights of the fire.” [[37]](#footnote-37)

Consequently, we can see the order that Yeshua would have followed. The Peshat materials of Mordechai allude to the separation between the Holy Torah Scholar filled with **חן** grace – gracious, and the demon possessed who gathered at the door. His Eminence Rabbi Dr Yosef ben Haggai has correctly stated that these events did not take place “inside” the house but at the door og the house where the mezuzah was located. Again, the mezuzah makes further distinction between the holy (inside) and the profane (outside). As we commented in a recent pericope, **the gate (door) to the soul is the mind**. If the mind is properly guarded, with the Mezuzah (Shema Yisrael, the recital of pure monotheism) we will not have any possibility of demonic possession.

**Demon Possession**

We do not intend to elaborate at great lengths on the “demonic” ranks and numbers. This study would be time consuming and unfruitful for present purposes. We have no need to focus on the *shedim* – demons, their origins and numbers save for the sake of illustrating varied points of interest. The phrase “demon – possessed” speaks volumes. Namely, that the person who is inhabited by the *shade* – demon is the “possession” of the *shade.*

Now of these souls some descend upon the earth with a view to being bound up in mortal bodies, those namely which are most nearly connected with the earth, and which are lovers of the body. But some soar upwards, being again distinguished according to the definitions and times which have been appointed by nature. Of these, those which are influenced by a desire for mortal life, and which have been familiarised to it, again return to it. But others, condemning the body of great folly and trifling, have pronounced it a prison and a grave, and, flying from it as from a house of correction or a tomb, have raised themselves aloft on light wings towards the aether, and have devoted their whole lives to sublime speculations. [[38]](#footnote-38)

For those who love the body and feral pleasure, the intermediaries bind them to their incontrollable pleasures with the control of a *shade* – demon. We should also note that by use of “*shade* – demon,” Hakham Tsefet is NOT referring to the Yetser HaRa. The Yetser HaRa is the natural G-d given balance needed for human survival. The reference to “*shedim* – demons” teaches us that the person who believes that the body is the purpose for living, will be bound by a *shade* – demon to live in that manner. Again, we state that the Torah Scholar is never controlled or possessed by the *shedim* – demons.

***B’resheet (Genesis) 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."*

**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 הַבָּטָה, looking down from above (*Gen. Rabbah* 44:12).

Rashi’s comments illustrate the point that Hakham Tsefet is trying to make. That point is that these intermediaries do not control the Torah Scholar and Torah observant Jews.[[39]](#footnote-39) Lloyd Gaston makes the illustration of this point in his book “Paul and the Torah.”

***The Gentile Predicament.*** Even to set down conclusions briefly will distort Paul. He did not begin with an objective analysis of the Gentile situation, and he thought mythologically rather than systematically about it. Nevertheless, it might be helpful to oversimplify here in order to make clear what is at issue. Chapter 1 raises the question of how the law relates to Gentiles in early Jewish thought. Chapter 2 carries the argument further by discussing in particular the apocalyptic conception of the angels of the nations. Since these two essays were written, there has appeared a significant study of Paul’s theology advocating apocalyptic as the matrix for all of Paul’s thought. An even more recent book revives the “principalities and powers” as part of Paul’s background. It is to be hoped that these two works will provide the stimulus for renewed attention to these important aspects of first-century thought.

The basic myth can be baldly stated. If early Judaism thought that **God ruled over Israel directly**, **his rule over the Gentile nations was indirect and impersonal, through an agent something like a Persian satrap, if one will**. The most common way of imagining these agents is in terms of the “**angels of the nations**.” A more Hellenistic way of putting the matter is to say that God’s rule, especially over nature, is administered by the “elements of the world,” that is, earth, water, air, and fire, or by the gods, especially the national gods. All of these are to be found in Paul along with much more general language concerning “the powers.” If in principle the rule of the angels or elements or gods was intended to be benevolent, for most people of this period it was experienced as oppressive. None of this is stated explicitly by Paul, but the basic pattern must be presupposed as part of the first century world-view.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Gaston is demonstrating that there are elemental agents whose principal duty is rule over the world, specifically the gentiles. However, should the Jewish people fail to allow themselves to be controlled by the Torah, these agents will seek to control them as well.

**δαίμων** (demon) is not a word of bad omen in Greek. In the earlier language, it is used interchangeably with θεός, though more commonly it denotes the abstract notion of deity. In the later language, it denotes inferior deities, beings between God and man.[[41]](#footnote-41)

**and he would not permit the *shedim* – demons speak, because then knew who he was.**

According to popular belief demons are “shades” which appear in all kinds of places, especially the lonely, at all possible times, especially at night, and in the most varied forms, especially those of uncanny beasts.[[42]](#footnote-42)

**Peroration**

The mention of Habdalah and the allusion to the mezuzah makes Hakham Tsefet’s point and lesson very clear. Freewill allows us to be “controlled” by our choice. We can be controlled by the Torah and the Oral Torah or, we can be controlled by the *shade* – demon of our choice. The present pericope demonstrates a number of people who were controlled by the *shedim –* demons, which they had previously chosen. However, seeing the light of the Master’s Mesorah these people came to a place that they desired restoration. This is an echo of last week’s statements in 2 Luqas (Acts) (3:17-26)…

“Therefore, do Teshubah and return to God so that your sins may be wiped out, and so that the times of strengthening (comforting) may come from the presence of the LORD, so He will send the Messiah **Yeshua chosen for you**.”

The final statement demonstrates G-d’s choice for us.

אמן ואמן סלה

**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: Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Tebet**

**Sabbath of the New Moon for the Month of Tebet**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **יִפְקֹד יְהוָה** |  |  |
| **“Yifqod Adonai”** | Reader 1 – B’Midbar 27:15-17 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 16:1-4 |
| **“Let Appoint the LORD”** | Reader 2 – B’Midbar 27:18-20 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 16:5-7 |
| **“Ponga el SEÑOR”** | Reader 3 – B’Midbar 27:21-23 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 16:8-10 |
| B’Midbar (Numbers) 27:15 - 28:26 | Reader 4 – B’Midbar 28:1-9 |  |
| Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-24 | Reader 5 – B’Midbar 28:10-14 |  |
|  | Reader 6 – B’Midbar 28:15-18 | Reader 1 – B’resheet 16:1-4 |
| Mishlei (Proverbs) 7:1-27 | Reader 7 – B’Midbar 28:19-25 | Reader 2 – B’resheet 16:5-7 |
|  | Maftir – B’Midbar 28:23-25 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 16:8-10 |
| N.C.: Col. 2:16-23 | Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:1-24 |  |

**Coming Festival: Chanukah**

**25 Kislev through 2 Tevet**

**[starts Sunday Evening December the 18th  – ends Monday Evening December the 26th, 2022]**

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Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

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1. 2 Melachim (Kings) 11:11-2 - Radak [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2 Divrei HaYamim (Chronicles) 22:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. v. 7-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. cf. comm. Tehillim (Psalms) 6:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Tishri 22, the day after the seventh day of Succoth, is the holiday Shemini Atzeret. In Israel, Shemini Atzeret is also the holiday of Simchat Torah. Outside of Israel, where extra days of holidays are held, only the second day of Shemini Atzeret is Simchat Torah: Shemini Atzeret is Tishri 22 and 23, while Simchat Torah is Tishri 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. This introduction was excerpted and edited from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. Radak [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Avraham began this walk on Tammuz 1 by circumcising himself and his household. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Halakha (Hebrew: הֲלָכָה) is the collective body of Jewish religious laws derived from the Written and Oral Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Bamidbar (Numbers) 15:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. literally, “the way”, or “the walk” [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Vayikra (Leviticus) 10:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:29 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. shalom bayit [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. plural, Halachot [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *“Mitzva”* has a nuance beyond “commandment” – its root also means connection or bond (*tzavta* means bond). According to our Sages, the true reward for the mitzva is simply that we have had the unique opportunity and privilege to become closer to G-d, to strengthen our bond with our Infinite Creator. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The body of Halacha has been around since before creation. “G-d looked into the Torah and created the world,” says the Zohar, and so we find the Patriarchs followed halacha even before the Torah was given on Mount Sinai four centuries later. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Bereshit, Ch. 17, Commentary of R. Shimshon Raphael Hirsch & Coll. Writings IV 65 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Mesillat Yesharim, by Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzatto – Rabbi Luzatto builds his work on a Baraita (quoted in many places, including (Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah 20b)) in the name of the sage Pinchas ben Yair, whose list goes in order of accomplishment: “Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair said: Torah leads to watchfulness; Watchfulness leads to alacrity; Alacrity leads to cleanliness; Cleanliness leads to abstention; Abstention leads to purity; Purity leads to piety; Piety leads to humility; Humility leads to fear of sin; Fear of sin leads to holiness; Holiness leads to prophecy; Prophecy leads to the resurrection of the dead”. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Strikingly, the Rambam requires us to do teshuva not just for sinful acts but also for evil character traits. See *MT*, Hilchot Teshuva 7:4. For Rambam, it seems, the cultivation of virtue simply is the meaning of walking in HaShem’s ways. For a useful discussion along these lines, see R. Walter Wurzburger, “The Centrality of Virtue Ethics in Maimonides,” in *Of Scholars, Savants, and their Texts*. The discerning reader will note two strands here: one, a mandate to cultivate virtue, and two, an obligation to go beyond the letter of the law. Strikingly, Rambam makes the connection between them explicit, in that the virtuous person will be motivated to do more than the law technically requires. See, most illustratively, *Mishna Torah*, Avadim 9:8. And Cf. Deot 1:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Great Torah teachers do not teach that our obligations to HaShem are exhaustively defined by obedience. Torah always demands more. What Rabbi Luzzato calls a Chassid. A Tzadik keeps the commandments of the Torah, and that is considered a ‘starting point’. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Bereshit 17:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, known as the Vilna Gaon or Elijah of Vilna, or by his Hebrew acronym HaGra ("HaGaon Rabbenu Eliyahu"), was a Talmudist, halakhist, kabbalist, and the foremost leader of misnagdic (non-hasidic) Jewry of the past few centuries. He is commonly referred to in Hebrew as ha-Gaon he-Chasid mi-Vilna, "the pious genius from Vilnius". [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. All HaShem’s service is dependent upon the improvement of one’s character. So begins *Even Shelemah*, the classic work of Mussar by the unparalleled genius, the Gaon of Vilna. How do we improve our character? How do we eradicate evil traits, fight the yetzer hara, and learn to serve HaShem? In a work of astonishing simplicity and depth, the Vilna Gaon instructs, guides, and teaches us with compassion and insight. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Shabbat 88b [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Rashi tells us that this is an eight stringed harp. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Verbal connection to B’resheet 15:12 (“and it came to pass as the sun was going down”) and Psa. 11:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. TDNT 5:886 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. **חן** grace – gracious, an allusion to a Kabbalist. See Ramban. (2008). *The Torah; with Ramban’s Commentary Translated, Annotated, and Elucidated,* (Vol. Sefer Beresheet). Artscroll Series, Mesorah Publications ltd. p 340 n2 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. **θεραπεύω (***therapeuo*) contains the dual concept of “willing service” – slavery and healing of a disease or offering medical attention. Note the concept as stated in *Proverbs. 19:﻿6 Many will entreat the favor of the prince; and every man is a friend to him who gives gifts.* Also a thematic connection to Psa 11:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Cf. 2 Luqas (Acts) 20:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Thomson Gale. (n.d.). *Encyclopedia Judaica,* (2 ed., Vol. 8). (F. Skolnik, Ed.) 2007: Keter Publishing House Ltd. p. 295 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Bekkum, 299. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Shimon Halevi Horovitz, Machzor Vitri, (Berlin: bi-defus shel Ts. H. Ittskavski, 1889), 282. This is also discussed in Wout Van Bekkum, "*The Rock on Which the Church is Founded*," *Saints and Role Models in Judaism and Christianity* (Brill, 2004), 300 and "Nishmat Kol Hai," Encyclopedia Judaica CD ROM Edition, Judaica Multimedia (1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Thomson Gale. (n.d.). *Encyclopedia Judaica,* (2 ed., Vol. 15). (F. Skolnik, Ed.) 2007: Keter Publishing House Ltd. p. 275 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Bekkum, 299. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *habdalah* The ceremony which marks the conclusion of a Sabbath or festival and the beginning of an ordinary day. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Neusner, J. (1988). *The Mishnah: A new translation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. p.12 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Philo. (1993). *The Works of Philo, Complete and Unabridged in one volume.* (N. U. Edition, Ed., & C. Yonge, Trans.) Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. p. 377 (1:138 – 139) [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Culi, R. Y. (1989). *The Torah Anthology (B’ereheet 12:1-28:9)* (Vol. 2). Brooklyn, New York: Moznaim Publishing Corporation. p 89. See also *Zohar Chadash*, p. 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Gaston, L. (1987). *Paul and the Torah.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. p. 9 (Bolding and underlining are my emphisis) [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Gould, E. P. (1922). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark*. New York: C. Scribner's sons. p. 26 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 2.6 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)