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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **Third Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **II Adar 02, 5782 / March 4-5 2022** | **Seventh 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:

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

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

**If you want to subscribe to our list and ensure that you never lose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to** [**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!

**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: “Az Yavdil” – Sabbath “Then set apart”**

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| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **אָז יַבְדִּיל** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“****Az Yavdil”** | Reader 1 – D’barim 4:41-43 | Reader 1 – D’barim 24:19 - 25:2 |
| **“****Then set apart”** | Reader 2 – D’barim 4:44-46 | Reader 2 – D’barim 25:3 – 25: 5 |
| **“Entonces apartó¨** | Reader 3 – D’barim 4:47-49 | Reader 3 – D’barim 25:6 - 8 |
| D’barim (Deut.) 4:41 – 6:3 | Reader 4 – D’barim 5:1-18 |  |
| Ashlamatah: Josh 20:7- 21:8 | Reader 5 – D’barim 5:19-21 | **Monday and Thursday Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – D’barim 5:22-24 | Reader 1 – D’barim 24:19 - 25:2 |
| Psalms: 112:1- 113:9 | Reader 7 – D’barim 5:25 – 6:3 | Reader 2 – D’barim 25:3 – 25: 5 |
| Mk 14:1-2: Luke 22:1-2 | Maftir: D’barim 6:1-3 | Reader 3 – D’barim 25:6 - 8 |

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* Moses Assigns 3 Cities of Refuge East of Jordan – Deut. 4:41-43
* Title, Time, and Place of Moses’ Second Discourse – Deut. 4:44-49
* On the Revelation of Horeb – Deut. 5:1-5
* The First Word – Deut. 5:6
* The Second Word – Deut. 5:7-10
* The Third Word – Deut. 5:11
* The Fourth Word – Deut. 5:12-15
* The Fifth Word – Deut. 5:16
* The Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Word – Deut. 5:17
* The Tenth Word – Deut. 5:18
* The Manner in which the Decalogue was Delivered – Deut. 5:19-30
* Conclusion of the Second Discourse – Deut. 6:1-3

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: D’barim (Deuteronomy)** ‎‎**4:41 – 6:3**‎

| **Rashi** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
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| 41. **Then Moses decided to separate** three cities on the side of the Jordan towards the sunrise, | 41. And now, behold, **Mosheh set apart** three cities beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise, |
| 42. so that a murderer might flee there, he who murders his fellow man unintentionally, but did not hate him in time past, that he may flee to one of these cities, so that he might live: | 42. that the manslayer who had killed his neighbor without intention, not having hated him yesterday or before, may flee, and escape into one of those cities, and be spared alive. |
| 43. Bezer in the desert, in the plain country of the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead of the Gadites, and Golan in the Bashan of the Menassites. | 43. Kevatirin the wilderness, in the plain country, for the tribe of Reuben, and Ramatha in Gilead for the tribe of Gad, and Dabera in Mathnan for the tribe of Menasheh. |
| 44. And this is the teaching which Moses set before the children of Israel: | 44. This is the declaration of the Law which Mosheh set in order before the sons of Israel |
| 45. These are the testimonies, statutes and ordinances, which Moses spoke to the children of Israel when they went out of Egypt, | 45. and the statutes and judgments which Mosheh spoke with the sons of Israel at the time when they had come out of Mizraim. |
| 46. on the side of the Jordan in the valley, opposite Beth Peor, in the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they went out of Egypt. | 46. And Mosheh delivered them beyond Jordan over against Beth Peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amoraee, who dwelt in Heshbon, whom Mosheh and the sons of Israel smote when they had come out of Mizraim. |
| 47. And they possessed his land and the land of Og, king of the Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who were on the side of the Jordan, towards the sunrise, | 47. And they took possession of his land and the land of Og, king of Mathnan, the two kings of the Amoraee, who were beyond the Jordan, eastward, |
| 48. from Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, to Mount Sion, which is Hermon, | 48. from Aroer on the bank of the river Arnon to the mountain of Saion, which is the Snowy Mount; |
| 49. and all the plain across the Jordan eastward as far as the sea of the plain, under the waterfalls of the hill. | 49. and all the plain beyond Jordan, eastward, unto the sea that is in the plain under the spring of the heights. |
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| 1. And Moses called all Israel and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, and learn them, and observe [them] to do them. | 1. And Mosheh called all Israel, and said to them: Hear, Israel, the statutes, and judgments that I speak before you this day, to learn them, and observe to perform them. |
| 2. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. | 2. The LORD our God confirmed a covenant with us in Horeb: |
| 3. Not with our forefathers did the Lord make this covenant, but with us, we, all of whom are here alive today. | 3. not with our fathers did the LORD confirm this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here this day alive and abiding. |
| 4. Face to face, the Lord spoke with you at the mountain out of the midst of the fire: | 4. Word to word did the LORD speak with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire. |
| 5. (and I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to tell you the word of the Lord, for you were afraid of the fire, and you did not go up on the mountain) saying, | 5. I stood between the Word of the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD, because you were afraid before the voice of the Word of the LORD, which you heard from the midst of the fire; neither did you go up to the mountain while He said: |
| 6. "I am the Lord your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. | 6. Sons of Israel, My people, I am the LORD your God, who made and led you out free from the land of Mizraim, from the house of the bondage of slaves. |
| 7. You shall not have the gods of others in My presence. | 7. Sons of Israel, My people, no other god will you have beside Me. |
| 8. You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness which is in the heavens above, which is on the earth below, or which is in the water beneath the earth. | 8. You will not make to you an image or the likeness of anything which is in the heavens above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth: |
| 9. You shall not prostrate yourself before them, nor worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a zealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me. | 9. you will not worship them or do service before them; for I am the LORD your God, a jealous and avenging God, taking vengeance in jealousy; remembering the sins of wicked/lawless fathers upon rebellious children to the third generation and to the fourth of them that hate Me, when the children complete to sin after their fathers; |
| 10. And [I] perform loving kindness to thousands [of generations] of those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments. | 10. but keeping mercy and bounty for a thousand generations of the righteous/generous who love Me and keep My mandates and My laws. |
| 11. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain, for the Lord will not hold blameless anyone who takes His name in vain. | 11. Sons of Israel, My people, no one of you will swear by the Name of the Word of the LORD your God in vain: for the LORD, in the day of the great judgment, will not acquit anyone who will swear by His Name in vain. |
| 12. Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord your God commanded you. | 12. Sons of Israel, My people, observe the day of Sabbath, to sanctify it according to all that the LORD your God has commanded. |
| 13. Six days may you work, and perform all your labor, | 13. Six days you will labor and do all your work, |
| 14. but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall perform no labor, neither you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your ox, your donkey, any of your livestock, nor the stranger who is within your cities, in order that your manservant and your maidservant may rest like you. | 14. but the seventh day (will be for) rest and quiet before the LORD your God; you will do no work, neither you, nor your sons, nor your daughters, nor your servants, nor your handmaids, nor your oxen, your asses, nor any of your cattle, nor your sojourners who are among you; that your servants and handmaids may have repose as well as you. |
| 15. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God took you out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm; therefore, the Lord, your God, commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. | 15. And remember that you were servants in the land of Mizraim, and that the LORD your God delivered and led you out with a strong hand and uplifted arm; therefore, the LORD your God has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. |
| 16. Honor your father and your mother as the Lord your God commanded you, in order that your days be lengthened, and that it may go well with you on the land that the Lord, your God, is giving you. | 16. Sons of Israel, My people, be everyone mindful of the honor of his father and his mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and it may be well with you in the land which the LORD your God gives you. |
| 17. You shall not murder. And you shall not commit adultery. And you shall not steal. And you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. | 17. Sons of Israel, My people, you will not murder, nor be companions or participators with those who do murder, nor will there be seen in the congregations of Israel (those who have part) with murderers; that your children may not arise after you and teach their own to have part with murderers; for because of the guilt of murder the sword comes forth upon the world.  Sons of Israel, My people, you will not be adulterers, nor companions of, or have part with, adulterers; neither will there be seen in the congregations of Israel (those who have part) with adulterers, and that your children may not arise after you, and teach theirs also to be with adulterers; for through the guilt of adulteries the plague comes forth upon the world.  Sons of Israel, My people, you will not be thieves, nor be companions nor have fellowship with thieves, nor will there be seen in the congregations of Israel (those who have part) with thieves; for because of the guilt of robberies famine comes forth on the world.  Sons of Israel, My people, you will not bear false witness, nor be companions or have fellowship with the bearers of false testimony; neither will there be seen in the congregations of Israel those who (have part) with false witnesses; for because of the guilt of false witnesses the clouds arise, but the rain does not come down, and dearth comes on the world. |
| 18. And you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor shall you desire your neighbor's house, his field, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. | 18. Sons of Israel, My people, you will not be covetous, nor be companions or have fellowship with the covetous; neither will there be seen in the congregations of Israel any who (have part) with the covetous; that your children may not arise after you and teach their own to be with the covetous. Nor let any one of you desire his neighbour's wife, nor his field, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that belongs to his neighbour; for because of the guilt of covetousness the government (malkutha) seizes upon men's property to take it away, and bondage comes on the world. |
| 19. The Lord spoke these words to your entire assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the opaque darkness, with a great voice, which did not cease. And He inscribed them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. | 19. These words spoke the LORD with all your congregation at the mount, from the midst of the fiery cloud and tempest, with a great voice which was not limited; and the voice of the Word {Dibbera} was written upon two tables of marble, and He gave them unto me. |
| 20. And it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, and the mountain was burning with fire, that you approached me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. | 20. But when you had heard the voice of the Word {Dibbera} from the midst of the darkness, the mountain burning with fire, the chiefs of your tribes and your Sages drew near to me, |
| 21. And you said, "Behold, the Lord, our God, has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we saw this day that God speaks with man, yet [man] remains alive. | 21. and said, Behold, the Word of the LORD our God has showed us His glorious Shekinah, and the greatness of His excellence, (His magnificence) and the voice of His Word have we heard out of the midst of the fire. This day have we seen that the LORD speaks with a man in whom is the Holy Spirit, and he remains alive. |
| 22. So now, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we continue to hear the voice of the Lord, our God, anymore, we will die. | 22. But now why should we die? For this great fire will devour us; if we again hear the voice of the Word of the LORD our God, we will die. |
| 23. For who is there of all flesh, who heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? | 23. For who, of all the offspring of flesh, has heard the voice of the Word of the Living God speaking from amid the fire as we, and has lived? |
| 24. You approach, and hear all that the Lord, our God, will say, and you speak to us all that the Lord, our God, will speak to you, **and we will hear and do.** | 24. Go you near, and hear all that the LORD our God will say, and speak you with us all that the LORD our God will say to you, **and we will hearken and will do.** |
| 25. And the Lord heard the sound of your words when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me, "I have heard the sound of the words of this people that they have spoken to you; they have done well in all that they have spoken. | 25. And the voice of your words was heard before the LORD when you spoke with me, and the LORD said to me, All the words of this people which they have spoken with you are heard before Me; all that they have said is good. |
| 26. Would that their hearts be like this, to fear Me and to keep all My commandments all the days, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! | 26. O that the disposition of their heart were perfect as this willingness is to fear Me and to keep all My commandments all days, that it may be well with them and with their children forever! |
| 27. Go say to them, 'Return to your tents.' | 27. {Go, say to them: he has permitted you to join with your wives since you have been separated three days.} |
| 28. But as for you, stand here with Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances which you will teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess. | 28. Now therefore be separate from your wife, that with the orders above you may stand before Me, and I will speak with you the commandments, statutes, and judgments, which you will teach them to perform in the land that I give you to inherit. |
| 29. Keep them to perform [them] as the Lord your God has commanded you; do not turn aside either to the right or to the left. | 29. And now observe to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; decline not to the right hand or to the left. |
| 30. In all the way which the Lord, your God, has commanded you, you shall go, in order that you may live and that it may be well with you, and so that you may prolong your days in the land you will possess. | 30. Walk in all the way which the LORD your God commands you, that you may live and do well, and lengthen out days in the land you will inherit. |
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| 1. This is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances that the Lord, your God, commanded to teach you, to perform in the land into which you are about to pass, to possess it. | 1. And this is the declaration of the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded (me) to teach you to perform in the land to which you pass over to inherit; |
| 2. In order that you fear the Lord, your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments that I command you, you, your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life, and in order that your days may be lengthened. | 2. that you may fear the LORD your God, and keep all His statutes and precepts which I command you; you, your son, and the son of your son, all the days of your life; and that you may prolong your days. |
| 3. And you shall, [therefore,] hearken, O Israel, and be sure to perform, so that it will be good for you, and so that you may increase exceedingly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, spoke to you, a land flowing with milk and honey. | 3. Hearken then, Israel, to keep and to do, that it may be well with you, and you may increase greatly, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you, (that) He will give you a land whose fruits are rich as milk, and sweet as honey. |

**Reading Assignment:**

**The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez - Vol 16: Deuteronomy – II – Faith & Optimism**

By: Rabbi Yitzchaq Behar Argueti

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

Vol. 16 – “Deuteronomy – II – Faith & Optimism,” pp. 214-260.

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

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

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎** **D’barim (Deuteronomy) ‎‎4:41 – 6:3‎.** ‎‎‎

**41 Then [Moses] decided to separate** Heb. אָז יַבְדִּיל [The future form יַבְדִּיל instead of the past form הִבְדִּיל is to be explained]: Moses set his heart to hasten to [implement] the matter to separate them. And even though they were not to serve as cities of refuge until those of the land of Canaan would be separated, Moses said, “Any commandment that is possible to fulfill, I will fulfill” (Makkoth 10a).

**on the side of the Jordan towards the sunrise** On that side which is on the east of the Jordan.

**towards the sunrise** Heb. מִזְרְחָה שָׁמֶשׁ Because the word מִזְרְחָה is in the construct state, the “reish” is punctuated with a “chataf” (vocal “sh’va”), the meaning being, “the rising of the sun,” i.e., the place of the sunrise.

**44 And this is the teaching** This one which he is about to set down after this chapter.

**45 These are the testimonies... which [Moses] spoke** They are the very same ones that he spoke when they went out of Egypt, and he taught it to them again in the plains of Moab.

**47 who were on the side of the Jordan** which is in the east, because the other side was in the west. [That means on the side opposite the western side.]

**Chapter 5**

**3 Not with our forefathers** Alone did the Lord make [this covenant], but with us.

**4 Face to face** Rabbi Berechiah said, "So said Moses: 'Do not say that I am misleading you about something that does not exist, as an agent does, acting between the seller and the buyer, [because] behold, the seller Himself is speaking with you.’" (Pesikta Rabbathi).

**5 saying** This refers back to (verse 4), "the Lord spoke with you at the mountain out of the midst of the fire... saying, ‘I am the Lord...,’ and I stood between the Lord and you".

**7 in My presence** Heb. עַל־פָּנָי , lit. before Me, i.e., wherever I am, and that is the entire world. Another explanation: As long as I exist [i.e., forever] (Mechilta). I have already explained the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20:1-14).

**12 Keep [the Sabbath day]** But in the first set [of Ten Commandments] (in Exod. 20) it says: “Remember [the Sabbath day]!” The explanation is: Both of them ("Remember" and “Keep”) were spoken simultaneously as one word and were heard simultaneously. (Mechilta 20:8)

**just as [the Lord your God] commanded you** Before the giving of the Torah, at Marah (Shab. 87b).

**15 And you shall remember that you were a slave...** God redeemed you on the condition that you will be His slave and keep His commandments.

**16 as the Lord your God commanded you** Also regarding the honoring of father and mother they were commanded at Marah, as it is said: (Exod. 15:25), “There He gave them a statute and an ordinance.” (San. 56b)

**17 And you shall not commit adultery** Adultery applies only [to relations] with a married woman.

**18 nor shall you desire** Heb. וְלֹא תִתְאַוֶּה . [As the Targum [Onkelos] renders:] וְלֹא תֵרוֹג , “you shall not desire.” This too is an expression of coveting (חֶמְדָּה) , just as “pleasant (נֶחְמָד) to see” (Gen. 2:9), which the Targum [Onkelos] interprets as “desirable (דִּמִרַגֵּג) to see.”

**19 which did not cease** Heb. וְלֹֽא יָסָף , interpreted by the Targum [Onkelos]: וְלָא פְּסָק “and it did not cease.” [Because it is human nature that one is unable to utter all his words in one breath, but he must pause, whereas the characteristic of the Holy One, blessed is He, is not so. God did not pause, and since He did not pause, He did not have to resume,] for His voice is strong and exists continuously (San. 17a). Another explanation of וְלֹא יָסָף : He never again revealed Himself so publicly [as He did on Mount Sinai. Accordingly, we render: and He did not continue].

**24 And you speak to us** Heb. וְאַתּ , a feminine form]-You weakened my strength as that of a female, for I was distressed regarding you, and you weakened me, since I saw that you were not anxious to approach God out of love. Would it not have been preferable for you to learn [directly] from the mouth of the Almighty God, rather than to learn from me?

**Ketubim: Psalm 112:1-10 & 113:1-9**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Hallelujah. Praiseworthy is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly desires His commandments.** | 1. **Hallelujah! Happy is the man who fears the LORD; he takes great pleasure in His commandments.** |
| 2. His seed will be mighty in the land, a generation of upright ones, which shall be blessed. | 2. His children/disciples will be mighty in the Torah, he will be blessed in the generation of the upright. |
| 3. Wealth and riches will be in his house, and his righteousness endures forever. | 3. Luck and riches are in his house, and his merit endures forever. |
| 4. **He shone a light in the darkness for the upright, [for He is] gracious and merciful and righteous.** | 4. **Light dawns in darkness for the upright, gracious, and merciful, and righteous/generous.** |
| 5. Good is the man who is gracious and lends, who conducts his affairs with moderation. | 5. A good man pities the poor and lends money; he will support his words according to rule. |
| 6. For he will never falter; for an everlasting memorial will the righteous man be. | 6. For he will never be moved; the righteous/generous man is destined for eternal memory. |
| 7. He will not fear bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. | 7. He will not fear news of disaster; his heart is firm, trusting in the word of the LORD. |
| 8. His heart is steadfast, he will not fear until he sees in his adversaries. | 8. His heart is steady, he will not be afraid, until he sees redemption in distress. |
| 9. **He distributed, he gave to the needy; his charity endures forever, his horn will be raised with glory.** | 9. **He scattered his wealth, gave it to the needy; his merit endures forever, his might will rise up in glory.** |
| 10. A wicked man will see and become angry; he will gnash his teeth and melt; the desire of the wicked will be lost. | 10. The wicked (lawless) man will see and be angry, he will grind his teeth at him and rot; the desire of the wicked (lawless) will perish. |
|  |  |
| 1. Hallelujah! Praise, you servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord. | 1. Hallelujah! Give praise, O servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. |
| 2. May the name of the Lord be blessed from now and to eternity. | 2. May the name of the LORD be blessed, from now and forever. |
| 3. From the rising of the sun until its setting, the name of the Lord is praised. | 3. From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the LORD is praised. |
| 4. The Lord is high over all nations; upon the heavens is His glory. | 4. The LORD is high above all Gentiles, His glory is over the heavens. |
| 5. Who is like the Lord, our God, Who dwells on high, | 5. Who is like the LORD, our God, whose dwelling is lofty in situation? |
| 6. Who lowers [His eyes] to look in the heavens and the earth? | 6. Who lowers His eyes to look on the heavens and the earth. |
| 7. He lifts the pauper up from the dust, from the dung heap He raises up the needy, | 7. Who raises up the poor man from the dust; He will lift up the needy from the ash-heap. |
| 8. To seat [him] with princes, with the princes of His people. | 8. To make him dwell with the leaders, with the leaders of His people. |
| 9. He seats the barren woman of the house as a happy mother of children. Hallelujah! | 9. Who makes dwell the congregation of Israel, who is likened to a barren woman who sits beholding the men of her house, full of people, like a mother who rejoices over her sons. |

**Rashi’s Commentary for: Psalm 112:1-10 & 113:1-9**

**Chapter 112**

**2 a generation of upright ones** which will be blessed, will be his seed.

**4 He shone a light in the darkness** Heb. זרח [the “kal” conjugation], like הזריח , [the “hiph’il” or causative conjugation]. Its midrashic interpretation is that He Himself, so to speak, becomes a light for them, as (above 27:1): “The Lord is my light and my salvation.”

**5 Good is the man who is gracious, etc.** **who is gracious to the poor and lends [to] them, and is not strict, saying, “I cannot afford it,” but [instead] his things, which he needs for himself, in food, drink, and clothing, he conducts with moderation and with a measure, and he spares his property.**

**7 his heart is steadfast** His heart is faithful to His Maker.

**8 His heart is steadfast** He leans on and trusts in the Holy One, blessed be He.

**10 A wicked man will see and become angry** Heb. וכעס , an expression of a verb in the past tense, equivalent to ויכעס [i.e., the “vav” converts the past tense to the future]. Therefore, it is vowelized half with a “kamatz” and half with a “pattah,” and the accent is at the end of the word.

**Chapter 113**

**5 Who is like the Lord, our God** in heaven and earth, who dwells on high and lowers His eyes to see? מושיבי , להושיבי , מקימי , משפילי , מגביהי , all have a superfluous “yud.”

**9 the barren woman of the house** Zion, which is like a barren woman He will seat her.

**as a happy mother of children** (Isa. 66:8): “that Zion both experienced birth pangs and bore her children.”

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalms ‎‎112:1 – 113:9**

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

The preceding psalm, psalms chapter 111, concluded with the words, “The beginning of wisdom is the fear of HaShem” (verse 10). Psalms chapter 112 takes up that theme with the declaration, “Praiseworthy is the man who fears HaShem, and proceeds to describe that good fortune”.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Midrash[[2]](#footnote-2) observes that fear of G-d is so important that King Solomon, the wisest of all men, concluded two of his books with this very theme: Grace is false, and beauty is vain, a G-d-fearing woman — she should be praised,[[3]](#footnote-3) and the sum of matter, when all has been considered: fear G-d and keep His commandments, for that is man's whole duty.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The initial letters of the stiches of this psalm follow the sequence of the Aleph-Beit, the Hebrew alphabet. This indicates that the hero of this psalm, the G-d-fearing man, painstakingly fulfills every dictate of the Torah from א, the first letter, to ת, the last letter of the Law.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Psalms chapter 112 contains an amazing perspective that is not often seen in our days.

***Tehillim (Psalms) 112:7*** *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in HaShem.*

I would like to share how HaShem runs his world so that we can all share the perspective of the psalmist.

**Turnaround**

In today’s world, the hand of HaShem is rarely ‘seen’. HaShem is wearing the mask of ‘nature’ and ‘science’ so that His face is completely hidden by His mask. If we want to see the hand of HaShem, we must be prepared to study His Torah diligently. It is only in His written and oral Torah that we learn how to unmask him. Purim[[6]](#footnote-6) is the festival where those who study Torah are sensitized into the unique art of seeing behind HaShem’s mask. This study will help us to begin understanding How HaShem hides behind His mask, yet His wonders, His *nes nistarim* (hidden miracles) can still be discerned. In this process, we can ‘unmask’ HaShem and begin to understand why we have so much evil in the world. Megillat Esther details how, and why, HaShem hides. It also shows us the amazing secret of how to unmask HaShem and see how all the evil will be rectified and be revealed as beneficial.

Megillat Esther is a book which details the redemption of the Jewish people in a miraculous and yet hidden way.[[7]](#footnote-7) The most amazing part of this redemption is the way HaShem manipulated events such that every disaster ***was turned around*** (*V’nahapoch hu*) and became a marvelous redemption. *V’nahapoch hu[[8]](#footnote-8)* - הוּא וְנַהֲפוֹךְ is not a victory over evil. It means that the enemy’s’ efforts ultimately lead them towards becoming the source of the salvation for the Jews. The “evil”, the “bad” is **revealed** to be “good” and beneficial, in fact, absolutely essential. Every event will be revealed as an “elegant solution”. This is how HaShem conducts His world. There are no exceptions.

***Zephaniah 3:9*** *In the end I will turn things around for the people. I'll give them a language undistorted, unpolluted, Words to address HaShem in worship and, united, to serve me with their shoulders to the wheel.*

An elegant solution is one in which the maximum desired effect is achieved with the smallest, or simplest effort. In Torah terms, this means that HaShem will reveal that everything that has ever happened, or will happen, will be turned around and revealed to be for our good and absolutely essential to HaShem’s plan. Everything will contribute to the Oneness[[9]](#footnote-9) of HaShem.

To illustrate this idea, consider the following idea. In a battle, one can overcome one’s opponent with superior strength, but this is brute force, it is *not* elegant. A more sophisticated approach to battle, is to use your opponent’s own strength against him. Many martial arts, and especially judo,[[10]](#footnote-10) teach you how to use your opponent’s strength, or weight, against him. In this illustration of *V’nahapoch hu*, we see an elegant solution that reveals that the defeat of my opponent was due entirely to my opponent’s strength as used against me. My opponent’s strength was my solution to his defeat. His strength against me was revealed to be my solution to defeating my opponent. This is the solution that HaShem uses in His world. He uses *V’nahapoch hu*, to reveal that all things work together for our benefit.[[11]](#footnote-11) All things advance His plan and contribute to His oneness.

Our Sages are masters in the art of seeing *through* what appear to be disastrous events, to see how they contribute to His plan and reveal His goodness in the world. They are able to see behind the mask, so to speak. The following example from the Gemara illustrates this:

***Pesachim 50a*** *…While R. Joshua b. Levi said: This refers to the people who are honoured in this world, but will be lightly esteemed in the next world. As was the case of R. Joseph the son of R. Joshua b. Levi, [who] became ill and fell into a trance. When he recovered, his father asked him, ‘What did you see?’ ‘I saw a topsy-turvy world’, he replied, ‘the upper [class] underneath and the lower on top’ he replied: ‘My son’, he observed, ‘you saw a clear world.[[12]](#footnote-12) And how are we [situated] there?’ ‘Just as we are here, so are we there. And I heard them saying, "Happy is he who comes hither with his learning in his hand".*

The message of *V’nahapoch hu*, is, then, a bit different than the one we usually think of. The clear world is the one in which we speak out, even when we’re the lowly ones. It is *this* world, the one we live in, which is the true upside-down world.

The events recorded in the book of Esther, and celebrated at Purim, are revealed, through the Megilla, to be examples of *V’nahapoch hu.* Compared to the holocaust, Haman’s plan was much more complete and thorough than the holocaust. Haman wanted to destroy every last Jew, in all parts of the world, ON ONE DAY!!![[13]](#footnote-13) The reversal of this, the *V’nahapoch hu*, is that Haman’s sons were hanged on one day, on the same tree, at the same time. We demonstrate the timelessness of this event by rapidly saying their names in ONE breath.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The concept of *V’nahapoch hu* is derived from the following pasuk:[[15]](#footnote-15)

***Esther 9:1*** *Now in the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have rule over them; whereas it was turned to the contrary* (וְנַהֲפוֹךְהוּא), *that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;*

The commentaries point out that the unexpected reversal of fates is the apparent underlying theme in the Purim story. Close analysis of the Megillah reveals how quickly and smoothly the plans of Haman were not merely foiled but more notably transformed into bringing about the salvation of the Jewish People. The very night that Haman planned to convince Achashverosh[[16]](#footnote-16) to have Mordechai hanged ended up being the night on which he advised Achashverosh to extravagantly honor Mordechai. The very gallows that Haman prepared for Mordechai ended up being used for his own hanging. The very day that Haman had decided to be the time to destroy the Jews was the day on which the Jews destroyed their enemies. Ultimately, Haman’s own proposal to kill Vashti ended up paving the way for the ultimate salvation of the Jewish People. The turn of events in the story of Purim truly embody the verse that says, “Many are the thoughts that are in the heart of man but the counsel of HaShem will prevail”.[[17]](#footnote-17)

*V'nahapoch*[[18]](#footnote-18) *hu* וְנַהֲפוֹךְ הוּא, the theme of Purim, connotes not only the fact that the danger was miraculously resolved, but also the way the resolution occurred. Danger's resolution cannot always be clearly attributed to heavenly intervention. The Purim story's significance lies in the fact that the salvation recycled and utilized all the elements of the danger in its service.

The picture that expresses this idea in the most powerful way is Mordecai's picture above riding the horse, and Haman down, leading him, while Haman's ambition was to see the same picture, but exactly the opposite way.

The message of Purim, the Feast of Lots, is that current world events are HaShem’s jigsaw puzzle, part of His Master Plan. It is He who charts the course of human events, even as we speak. As He plots His course, He sets up every event to be revealed, in the end, as beneficial to His Plan.

The redemption of Purim is not a redemption where we are restored to our land and HaShem’s service. The redemption of Purim is a redemption whereby we return to our normal lives after nearly being wiped out. There was no real gain. This is analogous to a man with a terminal illness who receives a cure in the final hours of his life. He has not received anything more than a restoration to his normal life, yet he is exuberant and flies high in his exhilaration at the life that has been restored.

The people were still in exile. They were still subjects of king Achashverosh. Esther was still married to Achashverosh. The redemption was real, but it was not our concept of redemption. Hidden from our view is that Esther’s son with Achashverosh will permit the rebuilding of the Temple.

Unlike any other redemption in our history, this one was obviously accomplished by a complete reversal of fortunes. Everything we needed for victory was already there, but it had all been deployed against us. We only had to turn our hearts to HaShem to merit that He set this same power loose upon our enemies.

This is the message of Purim; V’nahapoch Hu, “it is the opposite”. To us mortals many things seem bad, look around, everyone has their own package of trials and difficulties to contend with. On Purim we acknowledge that we really don’t understand. And even something that may seem like a disaster is really a blessing in disguise.

This explains Rav Hutner,[[19]](#footnote-19) is the underlying true miracle of Purim. If it were simply the case that a horrible decree had befallen our people and in the nick of time a salvation occurred, then the possibility would remain, that HaShem’s people could be exterminated, could be vanquished *chas v’shalom*.[[20]](#footnote-20) To even conceive of the potential for Haman’s plan ‘to destroy, murder and obliterate all the Jews’ to succeed goes directly against the will of HaShem. We are His eternal people and the covenant between us is unbreakable, certainly by any means of man. Therefore, the miracle of Purim had to be specifically that ‘it was turned around’ and in the end the whole nation could see that every single step that seemed to plant seeds of despair was in fact a key stage that would lead to great joy and deliverance. This then, is the proper understanding of the pasuk:[[21]](#footnote-21) because we as a people are always protected by HaShem, there is no inherent possibility of vanquishing us and any attempt to do so is just, in essence, ‘turned around’ and, as a result, the foregone conclusion will always be ‘the Jews prevailed over their enemies’. It is for this reason that when all other Yamim tovim[[22]](#footnote-22) will be annulled in the days of Mashiach,[[23]](#footnote-23) Purim will still be celebrated. Purim represents our limitless existence and relationship with HaShem and that has no boundaries of celebration. This is our eternal joke which we laugh about and enjoy each year on Purim. No matter what the outside world may plot against us, we know that it is all futile. For in the end, the Hand of HaShem will be there to protect and help us as He has done in those days and will continue to do in our times.

**Cure created before the disease**

The eighth blessing of the Shemoneh Esrei prayer in which we ask HaShem, "Heal us, HaShem, and we will be healed”, contains unnecessary language. Isn't it a given that if HaShem heals us, we will be healed? Why the double language?

In his elucidation on the siddur, the 18th-century master, Rabbi Elijah ben Shlomo Zalman, commonly known as the Vilna Gaon, explains that this blessing means that the cure, or healing, is always created before the illness or pain. "heal us HaShem" means we know that the healing already exists; "and we will be healed" means that we are asking HaShem to allow us to access the healing for ourselves and for all Israel.

Dinim, the harsh elements of history, have to be sweetened. The source of ecstasy in the next world is the Yetzer HaRa.

We turn the problem into the solution.

The Maharal explains that turnaround had to be that way. Haman was attempting the destroy Klal Israel, the eternal nation, the nation whose existence is guaranteed and ensured by the Creator of the Universe Himself. Throw a projectile at an impenetrable and invincible barrier, that projectile will reverse direction and come directly back at you with the same force with which it was launched. (That's known as Newton's Third Law to nerds of the west.) HaShem wanted Klal Israel to have absolute clarity on their mission and destiny, so he created a very powerful enemy and let him loose... specifically so the whole world could see his plans, all of his plans, reverse back on himself.

Not only did Haman's plans come back against him -- *he was the one who turned them around!* Haman (who was also known as M'muchan) suggested the plan to depose Vashti and which led to Esther becoming queen. Haman himself told the king how to honor one whom the king wishes to honor. Haman himself prepared the gallows on which he would be hung. When Haman sent his servants to find a plank 50 amot long, they opined that there was only one such plank in the whole land... it was the main support beam of Haman's palace![[24]](#footnote-24) Haman ordered that his palace be dismantled and, just to be 100% sure, *he measured it length with his own body to confirm it was the correct length to hang its intended victim.* At that point the archangel Gavriel exclaimed, "Golly gee willikers! So *that's* why we needed a 50-amah plank to be ready since the six days of creation!"

What caused Haman’s terrible ire to be roused to the point that he wanted to do away with all of the Jews? Of course, it was the fact that Mordechai refused to bow to him. Take note, though, of the following words of the pasuk: “And all the servants of the king that were stationed at the gate of the king would kneel and bow to Haman…and Mordechai would not kneel, and he would not bow (3:2).” It is clear from the pasuk that this requirement for everyone to bow to Haman was only for those stationed at the King's gate, and not in all 127 countries under the dominion of Achashverosh. As such, had Mordechai not been at the King's gate, the events of Purim would never have taken place! And what brought Mordechai to find himself daily at the gate of the king’s palace? Esther! Because Esther was in the palace, Mordechai frequented there to keep as much of an eye on her as possible. It emerges, then, that v’nahafoch hu: the health of Esther being in the palace was itself what caused Mordechai to stand up to Haman!

The salvation of the Jewish people only came about through Esther’s position, so it was a blessing in disguise that she became queen. (Also, the Midrash tells us that she bore a son to Achashverosh called Daryovesh (AKA Darius) who eventually became king and allowed the rebuilding of the second Beit HaMikdash).

In his sefer Pachad Yitzchak, Rav Hutner develops a teaching of the Maharal into the true celebration of Purim. The Maharal notes that the Pasuk in Mishlei, He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone-it will return to him (Mishlei 26:27) is an illustration of the scientific principle of cause and effect. Or as Sir Isaac Newton stated in his third law of physics: for every action in the natural world there is an equal and opposite reaction. Explains the Maharal; if one digs a pit to cause harm to another, then in some way the perpetrator himself will fall into a pit. Furthermore, one who throws a stone at the innocent will find the stone in some other circumstance ricocheting and hitting him in turn. Expounding further, the Maharal writes that with this principle we can understand the laws of *conspiring witnesses*, which is brought down in sefer Devarim:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:19*** *and you shall do to him as he conspired to do to his fellow.*

The law that false testifiers are subjected to the exact punishment which they had plotted against their friend, is simply a case of cause and effect. The negative energy which one expends towards a friend will be directed in turn back upon the wrongdoer. This principle of reciprocity highlights an important idea. In life one can fall into the false belief that control of destiny is in the hands of the individual. This is a mistake. Rather, the moment that one performs an action, the consequences are no longer in his or her own hands but have hit the ‘wall’ of HaShem’s intervention in the world. And that whether we want it or not, our actions both positively and negatively will always produce a reaction back upon ourselves.

Everything has a purpose, even evil. We may not want it, but it’s only against resistance and challenge that we grow. Haman’s Ring, say Chazal, did more than all the Nevi’im, we may not like to admit it, but we reached, through Haman’s decrees, the level of Torah acceptance! So, in retrospect, from HaShem’s perspective, the Haman of this world was paradoxically the cause for an even greater good.

**Hiddenness**

Hiddenness and revelation are at the very foundation of the Book of Esther and the celebration of *Purim*. Indeed, Esther’s name itself is from the Hebrew root *s-t-r* meaning hidden. Furthermore, Esther is not called a “Book” but is more precisely referred to as “The Scroll of Esther” or *Megillat Esther*. Hidden in the word *megillah* is the root *g-l-h* that means “to reveal” and also “to exile.” *Megillat Esther* could then be translated as “The Revealing of the Hidden” or, alternatively, “The Exiling of the Hidden.” Thus, the title of the story presages one of its central themes.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Remarkably and surprisingly hidden throughout the entire *Megillah*, is HaShem. Not once is HaShem’s name mentioned in the unrolling of this scroll.

While HaShem’s name is absent from the unrolling of this scroll, I do not believe that HaShem is absent but rather that HaShem remains in hiding. The Talmud[[26]](#footnote-26)asks, “Where is Esther indicated in the *Torah*?

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:17*** *Then My anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day: Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?**18 And I will surely hide My face in that day for all the evil which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.*

The Gemara thus makes the connection between Esther and the hiding of HaShem’s face, an important motif that appears in the Torah and continues throughout biblical and post-biblical Jewish theology. The hiding of HaShem’s face is the withholding of HaShem’s presence and blessing, it is a metaphor for the terrifying silence of HaShem:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 30:8*** *Thou hadst established, HaShem, in Thy favour my mountain as a stronghold-- Thou didst hide Thy face; I was affrighted.*

In Megillat Esther, HaShem wears a mask to hide Himself. According to Chazal, the term *“*HaMelech*”*, “the King”, in the Megillah is also a reference to HaShem, the King of the world.[[27]](#footnote-27) Thus, we find HaShem wearing a mask disguising Himself as The King.

The message of Megillat Esther is that even when HaShem is not visible to all and does not change nature, it does not mean his supervision over reality is not present. HaShem is present in daily life and in the history of the world. Sometimes it is difficult to notice Divine Providence, but when we look back and see the coincidences that occurred as though by chance, we understand that someone has been directing the processes from above.

This is true of the history of the Jewish nation, and it is true also regarding the individual who sometimes thinks his life is going along on its own, without Divine intervention. Success, failure, experience, opportunity, none of these are coincidences. Our lives are conducted and supervised by HaShem, and we can recognize this mainly when we look back, and believe that also looking forward, it will be so.

**Drinking**

The body, after the sin, is to be elevated to the spiritual. The body ate the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil and crashed. Now we need to elevate the body, using wine, to the spiritual. We need to use the source of the problem to become the solution. The concept of *V’nahapoch hu* allows us to turn the problem into the solution!

In Judaism wine[[28]](#footnote-28) is a central feature in all movement from physical to spiritual. We use wine at occasions of connecting the two: at a wedding, where two physical bodies will elevate their relationship to the spiritual; at a circumcision, where we begin the process of sanctifying the body; at kiddush, the blessing sanctifying the first moments of Shabbat where the mundane domain of the week meets the transcendence of Shabbat; four cups of wine at the Passover seder, where we celebrate exile's transition to redemption, slavery to freedom.

Wine powerfully represents the danger of the physical; if taken in excess it converts consciousness to unconsciousness, dehumanizes to the extent that the drinker becomes entirely part of the physical, nothing more than a mindless body. And yet, used correctly, it has the capacity to open consciousness, to facilitate a state of elevation. The deeper sources note that although wine is a physical substance it obeys the rules of the spiritual: all physical things degrade and disintegrate with time; this is the rule for all things in the material and biological world no matter how carefully those things are handled and nursed.

Conversely, things of the spirit improve with time; wisdom deepens with age, even as the body of the sage sags, his wisdom gains. But unlike other physical things, wine improves with age. Uniquely in the world of the material, wine reflects the quality of the deeper, the secret hidden within the material (the Hebrew word for wine has the same numerical value as the word for secret - sod).

Our Sages say that it is an obligation to become so drunk on Purim that one does not know the difference between “Cursed be Haman” and “Blessed be Mordechai.” Since the miracle permeated through to the most material levels, its commemoration also involves the body as well as the soul.

This is the rationale behind our drinking. In our sober state we are not able to fully comprehend the irony of events. So, we drink! When a person is intoxicated, he is able to be merry about his sorrows. For one day a year we bring ourselves to a place where it is possible to see the reality of our sorrows; that they are our salvation! For this same reason we dress up, we are showing that things are not the way they seem on the outside

The expression, v'nahafoch hu, it was turned about, reminds us that HaShem can bring about a stunning reversal of a nation's destiny in the blink of an eye.

On Purim, we are commanded to drink wine, so much wine that we can no longer differentiate between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordechai".[[29]](#footnote-29) Some say that it means that you should drink enough that you should get tired and fall asleep, and when you’re asleep you don’t know the difference between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordechai", because when you are asleep HaShem continues to carry out His plan.

The requirement is not to drink to the point where one can no longer distinguish between Haman and Mordechai, between evil and good; rather, it is that one must drink until one cannot distinguish between “Cursed be Haman,” the destruction of evil, and “Blessed be Mordechai,” the reward of the righteous. Both the destruction of evil and the enhancement of the good shift the moral balance of the world towards the side of the good. Thus, it is not at all a trivial distinction that the Talmud is pointing to. **Literally, we are being commanded to KNOW that there is no difference between ‘Cursed be Haman’ and ‘Blessed be Mordechai’. Because HaShem uses the concept of v’nahafoch hu, we KNOW that both Haman and Mordechai are advancing HaShem’s plan and contributing to the Oneness of HaShem. They are both working for our benefit. Wine allows us to literally see the v'nahafoch hu. Purim is the only day when we can see that both ‘Cursed be Haman’ and ‘Blessed be Mordechai’[[30]](#footnote-30) are truly the same and are both beneficial.** On Purim, we rise above the limited reach of our understanding, and for a brief moment we perceive that "blessed be Mordechai" and its *hippuch/its reversal*, "cursed be Haman," are really one and the same. Two paths to one destination!

On Purim, physical and spiritual reality unite, free will and Divine Providence merge and human history is revealed as identical to HaShem's plan for humanity. The fact that this reality is at times hard to comprehend only means we have to work harder to find the ultimate unity that exists in the world. The drinking on Purim helps us pull back the normative curtain of illusionary reality and reveals HaShem's Providence in all places and at all times, even those occurrences we initially perceive as "evil." But this takes getting to a consciousness where all becomes known within the unknowable, **“Until one Cannot Distinguish” -** **ad d'lo yada**.[[31]](#footnote-31)

**Costumes and Masks[[32]](#footnote-32)**

Whydo we wear costumes and masks on Purim?

**On Purim we celebrate by wearing masks, because we remind ourselves that things are seldom the way they seem on the outside.** The concept of *V’nahapoch hu* means that no matter what we see on the outside, on the inside we find only HaShem’s plan and His Oneness.

When we meet someone on the street, we do not get to see who they really are. Rather we get to see an image that they project. The image is a projection of what they want us to know about them. In most cases, what we can discern has very little to do with who, and what, they really are. This is the reality of our world. Most people are not transparent, they are not beautiful in the Torah sense.[[33]](#footnote-33) Most people are intensely private and do not want people to know about their true desires. They do not want us to know *who* they really are. They want us to know what they *think* we want to know. To put it another way, we wear a costume and a mask most of the time. Only on very rare occasions does the mask come off. Only rarely do we reveal who we *really* are.

Esther hides her identity as a Jew from the King when she is crowned Queen of his world-wide kingdom. Esther, so to speak, is wearing a mask. When her people are in peril, she finds the courage to go before the king and invite him and Haman to her banquet. Here is the part of the story where Esther sets up the *nahafoch hu* for Haman, revealing that she is a Jew and Haman’s evil intentions to annihilate her people.

When Adam HaRishon was created, he wore a ‘garment’ of light. His spiritual nature was incandescent and was seen as light emanating from a wisp of a body.

Moshe’s face had to be covered after spending time with HaShem on the mountain because it glowed.

***Shemot (Exodus) 34:29*** *And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of the testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses knew not that the skin of his face sent forth beams while He talked with him.* ***30*** *And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face sent forth beams; and they were afraid to come nigh him.*

The miracle of Purim was a series of hidden miracles and hidden identities. Esther concealed her Jewish identity. Mordechai’s identity as the one who saved the king’s life remained hidden from the king until the right time. HaShem, too, is hidden, as His name is not mentioned in the megillah. Therefore, we hide our identity by getting dressed up on Purim.

When Haman’s decree of genocide was issued, many Jews dressed up as gentiles to conceal their identity. When the decree was reversed and the Jews were permitted to attack their enemies, the non-Jews dressed as Jews to save themselves. In remembrance of this miracle, we change our clothes on Purim. Mordechai wore different kinds of clothing (bigdei malchut) when he paraded through the streets of Shushan. We change our clothing to commemorate this miracle.

The Talmud asks, “Where do we see a hint to Esther in the Torah?” it answers with a verse from Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:18 “*v’Anochi haster Astir Panai*” (“and I will surely hide My Face”). The word “Esther” means “hidden”.

Jews know that HaShem may often seem to hide. But even in the worst of times, if we look carefully, we discover that He can be found. Another reason we wear masks on Purim is to indicate that we, too, often hide our real selves. Even when we are cringing, ashamed of our misdeeds, ashamed of our cowardice, hiding behind our masks, we yearn to find HaShem and be close to Him. We want to reveal our true selves to Him. The mask creates the illu­sion that it is possible to hide. Even the first man, Adam, told HaShem, “I heard Your Voice while 1 was in the garden, but I convinced myself that it is possible to hide”.

Even when HaShem appears to wear a mask, does that mean that He is distant? No. If you see someone wearing a mask, he is obviously near. If you hear his voice, if you discover his pres­ence, you know he is near. HaShem wants us to seek Him, to know His name, to know Him through His love, His deeds, His Torah, His Creation. The Purim mask is an illusion. In truth, HaShem is very near.

Within the Megillah there are a number of “dressings up”. Vashti remains attached to her attire despite the demands of Achashverosh. Esther doesn’t reveal her people, no one knew where she was from, nor realized she was Jewish. People who saw her thought she was from their nation. Mordechai wore sackcloth in mourning for his people and was later dressed in the clothes of the king.

The Talmud writes that just as the Jews at the time pretended to be serving other G-ds, HaShem pretended that He was going to destroy the Jewish nation, and in the end He did not.[[34]](#footnote-34) Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Shapiro, known as the Bnai Yissachar, writes that this is the reason we pretend to be someone else on Purim, since both the Jews’ and HaShem’s actions were masked by other intentions.[[35]](#footnote-35)

Purim is the time of masks; HaShem has gone into hiding in Jewish history, He has donned a mask. But He is not distant; if one is distant, he does not need a mask to avoid being identified, the distance achieves that. No, a mask is necessary when one is very close and yet wishes to remain hidden.

The world is His mask; nature hides His Presence. But this same world, this same nature, needs only to be peeled back to reveal its Source. The ordeal is doubt; all may appear coincidental, and the Amalek ideology may be found in the culture of today – nothing has absolute meaning or value, all is accident. The mask is heavy and convincing. But that should not deter us from our function, the function of revealing the Reality behind the mask.

One of the most renowned aspects of the Purim celebration is masquerading. Children, and even adults, don masks and wear costumes. What is the source of this custom? On a very basic level, it is an expression of happiness and Purim is a day when our joy is given full expression. Its significance, however, is historically related to the Purim miracle. Why was Esther successful? Because she concealed her identity and Achashverosh, the Persian king, did not know that she was Jewish until it became crucially important for him to know this.

On a deeper level, the concept of concealment is intrinsically related to the mystical core of Purim. Our Sages tell us: Where is there an allusion to the story of Esther in the Torah?[[36]](#footnote-36) The phrase *hastier astir*, “I will conceal”. And indeed, Godliness is concealed throughout the story of Purim.

Achashverosh wore the High Priest’s garments at his party, although he did not deserve to wear such garments. In addition, when Achashverosh asked Haman how to honor someone, he replied that the person should be dressed in royal clothing. Haman thought he would be that man, and that he would wear garments which he did not deserve. We wear costumes on Purim to poke fun at both Achashverosh and Haman who aspired to clothing which was above their station. We wear costumes that do not befit us, but throughout the year we only wear clothing that befits us.

The whole point of wearing costumes on Purim is to reveal our Yetzer HaRa, to mock how the rest of the year we pretend to be what we are not. Purim is the great exposure of the hidden Yetzer HaRa, and more importantly, of the hidden hand of HaShem that shapes destiny and directs the affairs of man, from *behind* the scenes.

Those who disguise themselves eventually want to be discovered. So is our Father in heaven, with all the concealment and darkness, he turns things around, conducts the orchestra, watches over all of us under close and loving supervision, and he just waits for us to discover him and notice that he is there ...

**Teshuva – Repentance**

In keeping with this theme of *v’nahafoch hu,* we would be remiss if we failed to mention the most important application of this term.

The power of teshuva at the time of Purim was activated when Esther realized she must be ready to sacrifice her life, if necessary, in order to plead the case of the Jews before the king. That act of supreme self-sacrifice and teshuva, coupled with her call for all Jews in the capital city of Shushan to fast with her for three days and nights, aroused Divine compassion from Above, turning the plans of Haman upside down, till he was hung on the very same tree he hoped to hang Mordecai.

The incredible power of teshuva*,* to not only change the present and affect the future, but even "change" the past, is one of the many secrets of Purim. This is one of the reasons why the Talmud says that YomHaKippurim, the culmination of the ten days of *teshuva*, should be read Yom (a day) ki (like) Purim. This astounding statement comparing Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year, to a seemingly ‘fun’ day like Purim, captures the essence of what Purim really is, the ability to completely turn around our lives even when all seems lost.

We are told in the Talmud that **teshuva**, the life changing act of sincere repentance, when motivated by fear of punishment, has the retroactive power of turning purposeful sins into inadvertent mistakes. Even more than this is **teshuva** motivated by love, which can even turn past purposeful sins into merits.

***Yoma 86b*** *Resh Lakish said: Great is repentance, for because of it premeditated sins are accounted as errors, as it is said: Return, O Israel, unto the Lord, thy God,’ for thou hast stumbled in thy iniquity.[[37]](#footnote-37) ‘Iniquity’ is premeditated, and yet he calls it ‘stumbling’ But that is not so! For Resh Lakish said that repentance is so great that premeditated sins are accounted as though they were merits, as it is said: And when the wicked turneth from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby![[38]](#footnote-38)*

This is the depth of the miracle of Purim where everything was flipped upside down. Everything that seemed to be negative turned out to be the positive that existed from the outset. Purim is a day when we learn to see through the superficiality of things; we learn not to be fooled by the mirage of impurity that we sometimes see in each other and in ourselves. On Purim, we learn to flip everything around, and where we think we see lowliness and impurity, we look deeper to find the highest levels of purity.

**Our task on Purim is to do teshuvain such a manner that we make our will His will, so he can make His will our will, thereby revealing His presence in every point of time and space.**

The consummate expression of the conflation of opposites is the dictum (trans­mitted in the name of Reish Lakish[[39]](#footnote-39)) that repentance has the power to transpose blameworthy acts into meritorious acts, a transposition that is associated with Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, when transgressions of the contrite are wiped away, as repentance (when it is done from the standpoint of the love of HaShem) has the capacity to “transform evil entirely to the good in actuality”. This point is enhanced, additionally, by the idea suggested in a passage from Tikunei Zohar[[40]](#footnote-40) that the expression yom Kippurim should be decoded as yom ki-purim, “a day like Purim.” That Yom Kippur will be rendered analogous to Purim implies that the latter is superior to the former. Both days demand self-sacrifice, a form of worship that is above reason and knowledge, but, in the case of Yom Kippur, this is carried out through ascetic renunciation, whereas, in the case of Purim, it is realized through sensual indulgence.

**Conclusion**

Because HaShem is one,[[41]](#footnote-41) we know that there are no temporary events or processes. Every event, every process, everything must be part of His oneness. It must be eternal and be a vital part of HaShem.

HaShem does not create any unnecessary event or process. This means that every event and every process must pertain to His end product. It is not good enough that evil be overcome and replaced with the good, rather every negative and every positive event must produce a part of His final plan. Every negative event must be reversed in order to justify its existence. Every negative event must be shown to be a positive event that produces HaShem’s benefit in the world. The end result of every event and every process must be revealed as part of the good. This recognition that everything that happens in the world is for our benefit and for the good, is testified in the book of Romans:

***Romans 8:28*** *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love HaShem, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

The whole purpose of *V’nahapoch hu* is to reveal that no matter how disastrous an event or process, seems to be, nevertheless in the end it will be revealed as positive and absolutely vital to HaShem’s plan. There will be no exceptions.

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 55:8*** *For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares HaShem.*

**Ashlamatah: Yehoshua (Joshua) 20:7- 21:8**

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. And the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying, | 1. And the LORD spoke with Joshua, saying: |
| 2. "Speak to the children of Israel, saying, 'Prepare for you cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses. | 2. "Speak with the sons of Israel, saying: 'Pick out for yourselves the cities of refuge about which I spoke with you by the hand of Moses, |
| 3. To which a slayer that kills any person unawares, unwittingly, shall flee and they shall be for you as a refuge from the avenger of blood. | 3. where a killer who will kill someone by negligence without his knowl­edge may flee. And they will be for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. |
| 4. And he shall flee to one of those cities, and he shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city to them, and give him a place, and he shall dwell among them. | 4. And he will flee to one of these cities, and he will stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and he will speak before the elders of that city his words, and they will gather him to the city unto them, and they will give to him a place, and he will dwell with them. |
| 5. And if the avenger of blood pursue him, then they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, because he smote his neighbor unwittingly, and did not hate him from before. | 5. And if the avenger of blood will pursue after him, they will not hand over the killer in his hand, for without his knowing he struck down his neighbor and he was not hating him yesterday and before that. |
| 6. And he shall dwell in that city until he stand before the tribunal for judgment, until the death of the High Priest that shall be in those days. Then shall the slayer return, and come to his own city, and to his own house, to the city from which he fled." | 6. And he will dwell in that city until he will stand before the congregation for judgment, until the high priest in those days will die. Then the killer will return and enter his city and his house, the city from which he fled." |
| 7. And they set apart Kedesh in Galilee Mount Naphtali, and Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Kirjatharba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah. | 7. And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of the house of Naphtali and Shechem in the hill country of the house of Ephraim and Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron, in the hill country of the house of Judah. |
| 8. And on the **other side** of the **Jordan** at Jericho **eastward,** they had assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh. | 8. And **across** the **Jordan** which is **east** of Jericho, they picked Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain, from the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Matnan from the tribe of Manasseh. |
| 9. These were the cities set apart for all the children of Israel and for the stranger that sojourns among them, that whosoever kills any person unawares might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the tribunal.  **{P}** | 9. And these were the cities that were appointed for all the sons of Israel and for the sojourners who will sojourn among them, where anyone who will kill someone by negligence may flee, and he will not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he will stand before the congregation.  **{P}** |
|  |  |
| 1. And the heads of the fathers' [houses] of the Levites approached Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' [houses] of the tribes of the children of Israel; | 1. And the heads of the clans of the Levites drew near unto Eleazar the priest and unto Joshua the son of Nun and unto the heads of the clans of the tribes for the sons of Israel. |
| 2. And they spoke to them in Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, "The Lord commanded through **Moses** to give us **cities** to dwell in, and the open land around them for our cattle." **{P}** | 2. And they spoke with them in Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying: "The Lord commanded by the hand of **Moses** to give to us **cities** to dwell in and their open spaces for our cattle."   **{P}** |
| 3. And the children of Israel gave to the Levites from their inheritance, according to the commandment of the Lord, these **cities** and the open land around them. | 3. And the sons of Israel gave to the Levites from their inheritance according to the Memra of the LORD these **cities** and their open spaces. |
| 4. And the lot went out for the families of the Kohathites; and the children of Aaron the priest, who were of the Levites, had by lot, from the tribe of Judah, and from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.  **{S}** | 4. And the lot went forth for the families of Kohath, and the sons of Aaron the priest from the Levites had in the lot from the tribe of Judah and from the tribe of Simeon and from the tribe of Benjamin thirteen cities.   **{S}** |
| 5. And the rest of the children of Kohath had by lot ten **cities** from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh.  **{S}** | 5. And the sons of Kohath who were left had in the lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim and from the tribe of Dan and from the half tribe of Manasseh ten **cities.**   **{S}** |
| 6. And the children of Gershon had by lot from the families of the tribe of Issachar, and from the tribe of Asher, and from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.  **{S}** | 6. And the sons of Gershon had in the lot thirteen cities from the families of the tribe of Issachar and from the tribe of Asher and from the tribe of Naphtali and from the half tribe of Manasseh in Matnan.  **{S}** |
| 7. For the children of Merari according to their families, there were twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben and from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun.  **{S}** | 7. And the sons of Merari according to their families had twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben and from the tribe of Gad and from the tribe of Zebulun.  **{S}** |
| 8. And the children of Israel gave to the Levites by lot these cities with the open land around them, as the Lord had commanded through Moses.   **{P}** | 8. And the sons of Israel gave to the Levites these cities and their open spaces, just as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, in the lot.   **{P}** |

**Rashi’s Commentary on Joshua 20:8 – 21:8‎**

**8** **And of the other side of the Jordan at Jericho eastward, they had assigned** during Moses’ time as it is stated: Bezer in the wilderness, etc.

**9** **set apart** lit., the cities of setting apart, those set apart for this.

**Chapter 21**

**5** **And the rest of the children of Kohath** They are the children of Moses, and the children of Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.

**from the families of the tribe of Ephraim** These cities fell to them from the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim, for they received cities in the inheritance of each tribe, as it is stated: "From the many you shall take many, and from the few you shall take few; each tribe according to its inheritance which they inherit, shall give of its cities to the Levites."

**Verbal Tallies**

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

**& HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah**

**Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:41 – 6:3**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 112 & 113**

**Yehoshua (Joshua) 20:7- 21:8**

**Mk 14:1-2, Lk 22:1-2**

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

Sun - שמש, Strong’s number 08121.

Rising / Eastward - מצרח, Strong’s number 04217.

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

Moses - משה, Strong’s number 04872.

Three - שלוש, Strong’s number 07969.

Cities - עיר, Strong’s number 05892.

Side - עבר, Strong’s number 05676.

Jordan - ירדן, Strong’s number 03383.

Rising / Eastward - מצרח, Strong’s number 04217.

**Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:41** Then **Moses <04872>** severed **three <07969>** **cities <05892>** on this **side <05676>** **Jordan <03383>** toward the **sunrising** **<08121>** **<04217>**;

**Tehillim (Psalms) 113:3** From the **rising <04217>** of the **sun <08121>** unto the going down of the same the LORD’S name is to be praised.

**Yehoshua (Joshua) 20:8** And on the other **side <05676>** **Jordan <03383>** by Jericho **eastward <04217>**, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

**Yehoshua (Joshua) 21:2** And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, The LORD commanded by the hand of **Moses <04872>** to give us **cities <05892>** to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle.

**Yehoshua (Joshua) 21:4** And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and the children of Aaron the priest, which were of the Levites, had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen **<07969>** <06240> **cities <05892>**.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Reading**  **Deut. 4:41 – 6:3** | **Psalms**  **112:1- 113:9** | **Ashlamatah**  **Josh 20:7- 21:8** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ba'** | father | Deut. 5:3 Deut. 5:9 Deut. 5:16 Deut. 6:3 |  | Jos. 21:1 |
| **~yhil{a/** | God | Deut. 5:2 Deut. 5:6 Deut. 5:7 Deut. 5:9 Deut. 5:11 Deut. 5:12 Deut. 5:14 Deut. 5:15 Deut. 5:16 Deut. 5:24 Deut. 5:25 Deut. 5:26 Deut. 5:27 Deut. 5:32 Deut. 5:33 Deut. 6:1 Deut. 6:2 Deut. 6:3 | Ps. 113:5 |  |
| **~ae** | mother | Deut. 5:16 | Ps. 113:9 |  |
| **rm;a'** | said | Deut. 5:1 Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:24 Deut. 5:27 Deut. 5:28 Deut. 5:30 |  | Jos. 21:2 |
| **#r,a,** | plateau, land, earth, ground, country | Deut. 4:43 Deut. 4:46 Deut. 4:47 Deut. 5:6 Deut. 5:8 Deut. 5:15 Deut. 5:31 Deut. 5:33 Deut. 6:1 Deut. 6:3 | Ps. 112:2 Ps. 113:6 | Jos. 21:2 |
| **hm'heB.** | cattle | Deut. 5:14 |  | Jos. 21:2 |
| **tyIB;** | house | Deut. 5:6 Deut. 5:21 | Ps. 112:3 Ps. 113:9 |  |
| **!Be** | children, son | Deut. 4:44 Deut. 4:45 Deut. 4:46 Deut. 5:9 Deut. 5:14 Deut. 5:29 Deut. 6:2 | Ps. 113:9 | Jos. 20:9 Jos. 21:1 Jos. 21:3 Jos. 21:4 Jos. 21:5 Jos. 21:6 Jos. 21:7 Jos. 21:8 |
| **rc,B,** | Bezer | Deut. 4:43 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **!v'B'** | Bashan | Deut. 4:43 Deut. 4:47 |  | Jos. 20:8 Jos. 21:6 |
| **!l'AG** | Golan | Deut. 4:43 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **d['l.GI** | Gilead | Deut. 4:43 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **rGE** | stranger | Deut. 5:14 |  | Jos. 20:9 |
| **rBeDI** | speak, spoke, say | Deut. 4:45 Deut. 5:1 Deut. 5:4 Deut. 5:22 Deut. 5:24 Deut. 5:26 Deut. 5:27 Deut. 5:28 Deut. 5:31 Deut. 6:3 |  | Jos. 21:2 |
| **rb'D'** | word | Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:22 Deut. 5:28 | Ps. 112:5 |  |
| **rh;** | mount, mountain | Deut. 4:48 Deut. 5:4 Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:22 Deut. 5:23 |  | Jos. 20:7 |
| **%v,xo** | darkness | Deut. 5:23 | Ps. 112:4 |  |
| **dy"** | hand | Deut. 5:15 |  | Jos. 20:9 Jos. 21:2 Jos. 21:8 |
| **hw"hoy>** | LORD | Deut. 5:2 Deut. 5:3 Deut. 5:4 Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:6 Deut. 5:9 Deut. 5:11 Deut. 5:12 Deut. 5:14 Deut. 5:15 Deut. 5:16 Deut. 5:22 Deut. 5:24 Deut. 5:25 Deut. 5:27 Deut. 5:28 Deut. 5:32 Deut. 5:33 Deut. 6:1 Deut. 6:2 Deut. 6:3 | Ps. 112:1 Ps. 112:7 Ps. 113:1 Ps. 113:2 Ps. 113:3 Ps. 113:4 Ps. 113:5 | Jos. 21:2 Jos. 21:3 Jos. 21:8 |
| **ac'y"** | came out, go out | Deut. 4:45 Deut. 4:46 Deut. 5:6 Deut. 5:15 |  | Jos. 21:4 |
| **arey"** | afraid, fear | Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:29 Deut. 6:2 | Ps. 112:1 Ps. 112:7 Ps. 112:8 |  |
| **!Der>y:** | Jordan | Deut. 4:41 Deut. 4:46 Deut. 4:47 Deut. 4:49 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **bv;y"** | dwell, dwelt | Deut. 4:46 | Ps. 113:5 Ps. 113:8 Ps. 113:9 | Jos. 21:2 |
| **laer'f.yI** | Israel | Deut. 4:44 Deut. 4:45 Deut. 4:46 Deut. 5:1 Deut. 6:3 |  | Jos. 20:9 Jos. 21:1 Jos. 21:3 Jos. 21:8 |
| **dAbK'** | glory | Deut. 5:24 | Ps. 112:9 Ps. 113:4 |  |
| **daom.** | greatly | Deut. 6:3 | Ps. 112:1 |  |
| **rB'd>mi** | wilderness | Deut. 4:43 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **tAm'** | die | Deut. 5:25 |  | Jos. 20:9 |
| **xr'z>mi** | sun | Deut. 4:41 Deut. 4:47 Deut. 4:49 | Ps. 113:3 | Jos. 20:8 |
| **rAvymi** | plateau | Deut. 4:43 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **hw"c.mi** | commandments | Deut. 5:10 Deut. 5:29 Deut. 5:31 Deut. 6:1 Deut. 6:2 | Ps. 112:1 |  |
| **hv,mo** | Moses | Deut. 4:41 Deut. 4:44 Deut. 4:45 Deut. 4:46 Deut. 5:1 |  | Jos. 21:2 Jos. 21:8 |
| **jP'v.mi** | judgments | Deut. 4:45 Deut. 5:1 Deut. 5:31 Deut. 6:1 | Ps. 112:5 |  |
| **sWn** | flee | Deut. 4:42 |  | Jos. 20:9 |
| **hk'n"** | defeated, killed | Deut. 4:46 |  | Jos. 20:9 |
| **!t;n"** | giving, gave, given | Deut. 5:16 Deut. 5:22 Deut. 5:29 Deut. 5:31 | Ps. 112:9 | Jos. 20:8 Jos. 21:2 Jos. 21:3 Jos. 21:8 |
| **db,[,** | bondage, servant | Deut. 5:6 Deut. 5:14 Deut. 5:15 Deut. 5:21 | Ps. 113:1 |  |
| **rb,[e** | side | Deut. 4:41 Deut. 4:46 Deut. 4:47 Deut. 4:49 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **~l'A[** | forever | Deut. 5:29 | Ps. 112:6 Ps. 113:2 |  |
| **ry[i** | cities | Deut. 4:41 Deut. 4:42 |  | Jos. 20:9 Jos. 21:2 Jos. 21:3 Jos. 21:4 Jos. 21:5 Jos. 21:6 Jos. 21:7 Jos. 21:8 |
| **~[;** | people | Deut. 5:28 | Ps. 113:8 |  |
| **dm;['** | stood, stand | Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:31 | Ps. 112:3 Ps. 112:9 | Jos. 20:9 |
| **~ynIP'** | before, face | Deut. 4:44 Deut. 5:4 Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:7 |  | Jos. 20:9 |
| **hWc** | commanded | Deut. 5:12 Deut. 5:15 Deut. 5:16 Deut. 5:32 Deut. 5:33 Deut. 6:1 Deut. 6:2 |  | Jos. 21:2 Jos. 21:8 |
| **vd;q'** | holy | Deut. 5:12 |  | Jos. 20:7 |
| **ha'r'** | shown, show, see, perceive | Deut. 5:24 | Ps. 112:8 Ps. 112:10 Ps. 113:6 |  |
| **tAmar'** | Ramoth | Deut. 4:43 |  | Jos. 20:8 |
| **varo** | heads | Deut. 5:23 |  | Jos. 21:1 |
| **vAlv'** | three | Deut. 4:41 |  | Jos. 21:4 Jos. 21:6 |
| **~ve** | name | Deut. 5:11 | Ps. 113:1 Ps. 113:2 Ps. 113:3 |  |
| **~yIm;v'** | heaven | Deut. 5:8 | Ps. 113:4 Ps. 113:6 |  |
| **vm,v,** | toward the rising, sun | Deut. 4:41 Deut. 4:47 | Ps. 113:3 |  |
| **~yIT;v.** | two | Deut. 4:47 Deut. 5:22 |  | Jos. 21:7 |
| **%w<T'** | midst | Deut. 5:4 Deut. 5:22 Deut. 5:23 Deut. 5:24 Deut. 5:26 |  | Jos. 20:9 |

**Greek:**

| **GREEK** | **ENGLISH** | **Torah Reading**  **Deut. 4:41 – 6:3** | **Psalms**  **112:1- 113:9** | **Ashlamatah**  **Josh 20:7- 21:8** | **Peshat**  **Mishnah of Mark,**  **1-2 Peter, & Jude**  **Mk 14:1-2** | **Tosefta of**  **Luke**  **Lk 22:1-2** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| δύο | two | Deu 4:47  Deu 5:22 |  |  | Mk. 14:1 |  |
| ἡμέρα | day | Deu 5:1  Deu 5:12  Deu 5:13  Deu 5:14  Deu 5:15  Deu 5:24  Deu 5:29  Deu 6:2 |  |  | Mk. 14:1 |  |
| λαός | people | Deut. 5:28 | Ps. 113:8 |  | Mk. 14:2 | Lk. 22:2 |
| λέγω | saying | Deu 5:5  Deu 5:24 |  | Jos 20:2  Jos 21:2 | Mk. 14:2 | Lk. 22:1 |
| μήποτε | time | Deu 5:25 |  |  | Mk. 14:2 |  |
| πάσχα | passover |  |  |  | Mk. 14:1 | Lk. 22:1 |
| φοβέω | afraid, fear | Deut. 5:5 Deut. 5:29 Deut. 6:2 | Ps. 112:1 Ps. 112:7 Ps. 112:8 |  |  | Lk. 22:2 |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of “D’barim” (Deut.) “4:41- 6:3”**

**“Az Yavdil” – “Then set apart”**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Tosefta Luqas (LK)** | **School of Hakham Tsefet’s Peshat**  **Mordechai (Mk)** |
| **Now the feast of Unleavened Bread** (which is called Passover) **was drawing near. And the Chief Priests and the Scribes** (Heb. Soferim, of the Sadducees Heb. Tz’dukim) **were seeking how they could destroy him, because they were afraid of the people.** | **¶And now Pesach** (Passover) **the** feast of **Matzot** (unleavened bread) **was near. And the Chief Priests and** their scribes (Heb. soferim, of the Sadducees Heb. Tz’dukim) **sought, by cunning how they might take hold** and kill him (Yeshua); **For they said, “not during the Festival” for fear that** there may **be a disturbance** (of mob violence) **by the people.** |

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Deut. 4:41-6:3** | **Ps 112-113:9** | **Josh 20:7-21:8** | **Mordechai 14:1-2** | **1 Luqas 22:1-2** |

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

**The Bi-modal theme of Pesach**

We now see a paradigm shift in our readings of the book of D’varim. Just as the Torah Seder makes its paradigm shift to the Book of D’varim, Mordechai as Hakham Tsefet’s Sofer makes the shift of scenery. We have been involved in reading of the calamities, which will befall the Bet Mikdash on the end times. Now we will further our understanding of the final days of Yeshua and the message that he wished to convey to his talmidim and all his followers. The theme very well fits with the Book of D’varim where Moshe gives a rehearsal of the Torah and a rebuke for past failures. The genius of Hakham Tsefet and his Sofer further reveals itself in the present materials as once again Hakham Tsefet weaves all the materials into a neat sermon. And, as usual the theme should be self-evident once we have read the Torah Seder and other weekly readings.

The mention of the Festival is cryptic. Hakham Tsefet does not elaborate on why he includes Pesach and Hag HaMatzah in his opening of this pericope. Nor does the opening phrase make a great deal of sense. Here we would interject that we must remember that Hakham Tsefet and Mordechai are NOT concerned with chronology and specific order of events. We must say that Hakham Tsefet inserts the materials, as they would best fit the Torah Seder theme. Therefore, we are not concerned with trying to present a day-by-day chronological order to the life of Yeshua. Hakham Tsefet places the opening sentence in that past tense. This is not to say that Hakham Tsefet was looking back on these events. It is rather to say that he was reflecting on Pesach (perhaps the Egyptian Passover) for some unexplained reason.

The Pesach theme seems to fit the final part of our reading in the Psalms where the abundant chesed of G-d is bestowed on his “children,” i.e., the B’ne Yisrael. The activities of the defunct Levitical Priesthood parallel portions of the Davidic song.

Another way of interpreting why the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened bread is mentioned here has to do with the bimodality of the Torah when it is read in a double 3 and ½ year cycle, that is seven years cycle. The First 3 and ½ year cycle starts in Tishri and ends 3 and ½ years later with the last Sabbath of Adar. The next 3 and ½ year cycle starts on the first Sabbath in Nisan and ends with the Sabbath in Ellul. In a cycle that starts in Tishri this reading of Mordechai (Mark) would fall close to or on the last Shabbat of Adar, and then the dating would be close to Passover and the days of Unleavened bread.

Christian scholars see the High Priests and their Soferim as representing the whole Sanhedrin.[[42]](#footnote-42) This is NOT, G-d forbid in any way remotely true. Ezra Gould completely misses the point. The amazing point is that Gould’s subliminal undertones set the stage for how we read future events. Furthermore, we see that abuse of the idea that the **legitimate** Sanhedrin was a body of Lawmakers initiated by G-d and Moshe, was a **good thing**. Here the plot of the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) and his Soferim is an abuse of their joint office and power. The Kohen Gadol and his Soferim were most certainly a part of the Sanhedrin. However, these events do NOT represent a legitimate Sanhedrin. Nor do they represent the attitude of the whole of the Sanhedrin. The relationship of Hakham Tsefet to the present Torah Seder allows us to see their abuse of the office by adjudicating the illegitimate priesthood who had sold themselves to the interests and whims of the Roman occupying forces.

Gould believes that the language of Mordechai alluded to the Sanhedrin by use of the phrase **ἐν δόλῷ.** Gould states:

A designation of the Sanhedrim by the two principal classes composing it. **ἐν δόλῷ**—by cunning; not openly[[43]](#footnote-43)

Here Gould suggests that every action of the Sanhedrin was subversive and thereby corrupt. Gundry adds “the Elders” to further implicate the Sanhedrin.[[44]](#footnote-44)

Yeshua is not indifferent to the Sanhedrin as a governing body for the B’ne Yisrael. Yeshua was looking to the day when the Mesorah (Oral Torah) would find its place as the “King of Yisrael” rather than the illegitimate Roman overlords.

In the words of Rabbi Yitzchak Behar Arguiti …

“**our masters and Rabbis, high above the kings of the earth, the Rabbi is a sage great among his people. He is a speaker for our people, the glowing lamp, and the elder of judgment. He should be called holy”**[[45]](#footnote-45)

Consequently, the theme of Pesach is a way of looking to the future by looking at the past. The Romans i.e., Edom, like the Egyptians, will be overthrown and replaced by the “Mesorah” and “Bate Din.” Hakham Tsefet realizes that validity and importance of the Mesorah and illustrates this through his critical assessment of the illegitimate Kohanim and their Soferim. The theme presented by the Torah Seder and mimicked by Hakham Tsefet is that of poor or bad judgment and rebuke for rebellion! What is his resolve? The Kohen Gadol and his Soferim illegitimately judge Yeshua, as do the guests and talmidim, judging the woman of our next pericope who anoints Yeshua for his burial.

The actions of the Kohen Gadol and the Zekanim (Elders) must be viewed as separate actions from the true functioning of the Sanhedrin. We will deal with this in greater depth in the coming pericope.]

**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: “Zakhor” - Sabbath: “Remember”**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **זָכוֹר** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Zakhor”** | Reader 1 – Debarim 24:19-22 | Reader 1 – D’barim 7:12-14 |
| **“Remember”** | Reader 2 – Debarim 25:1-4 | Reader 2 – D’barim 7:15-17 |
| **“Acuérdate”** | Reader 3 – Debarim 25:5-7 | Reader 3 – D’barim 7:18-20 |
| Debarim (Deut.) 24:19 – 25:19 | Reader 4 – Debarim 25:8-10 |  |
| Ashlamatah: I Samuel 15:1-34 | Reader 5 – Debarim 25:11-13 | **Monday & Thursday**  **Mornings** |
|  | Reader 6 – Debarim 25:14-16 | Reader 1 – D’barim 7:12-14 |
| Psalm 109: | Reader 7 – Debarim 25:17-19 | Reader 2 – D’barim 7:15-17 |
| N.C.: Rev. 13:11 – 14:12; 15:2-4 | Maftir – Debarim 25:17-19 | Reader 3 – D’barim 7:18-20 |
|  | I Samuel 15:1-34 |  |

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Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

Edited by Adon Ovadyah ben Abraham and Adon Aviner ben Abraham

Please e-mail any comments to [chozenppl@gmail.com](mailto:chozenppl@gmail.com)

1. Malbim [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Kohelet Rabbah [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mishlei (Proverbs) 31:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 12:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Midrash Shocher Tov - These opening remarks are excerpted, and edited, from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Purim is the plural of pur which means a goral or lottery. If the Megillah says that a ‘Pur’ is simply a Goral, a lottery, why is the term ‘Pur’ used at all? ANSWER: ’Pur’ indicates a lottery for the bad, whereas Goral indicates a lottery for the good (HaRav Yaakov MiLisa). Hakhel Note: Thus, we see the V’nahafoch Hu in the name Purim itself! Alternatively, the ‘Pur’ is a special name for the dice that Haman cast (Ya’arot Devash). [Ya'arot Devash a frequently quoted collection of the sermons of Rabbi Eybeschutz. Jonathan Eybeschütz (also Eibeschutz or Eibeschitz; 1690 in Kraków – 1764 in Altona), was a Talmudist, Halachist, Kabbalist, holding positions as Dayan of Prague, and later as Rabbi of the "Three Communities": Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbek.] [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Purim is a holiday of *nes nistar* (hidden miracles). A *nes nistar* is when HaShem intervenes and helps us, within the laws of nature. Megillat Esther does not tell of any supernatural miracles. Both the Gra and the Malbim point out the seemingly coincidental occurrences in the *megillah* that were really veiled miracles. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Meaning, “and it was overturned” or, “and the opposite happened”, or “but it was reversed”, or “it was turned around”. *hippuch* the Purim particular redemption which literally means reversal. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Judo by the meaning of the word means “gentle way”, which means use opponent’s force to combat against himself. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. In which people occupy the positions they merit. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The concept of “one day” is the concept that the event takes place without any elapsed time. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The Gemara (Megillah 16b) states that the names of all of Haman’s sons should be read in a single breath because they all died at the same moment. By reading about their deaths in a single breath we indicate that the deaths were not ten separate events, but a single moment when they all died. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Pasuk = verse [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. AKA Ahasuerus [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Mishlei (Proverbs) 19:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *V'nahapoch* is spelled with a Hebrew letter (פ) that can have either a ‘P’ or an ‘F’ sound. So, you will see it spelled both ways. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Yitzchak Hutner was born in Warsaw, Poland, to a family with both Ger Hasidic and non-Hasidic Lithuanian Jewish roots. As a child he received private instruction in Torah and Talmud. As a teenager he was enrolled in the Slabodka yeshiva in Lithuania, headed by Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel, where he was known as the "Warsaw Illui" ("prodigy"). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. "chas v'shalom" is a Hebrew phrase that means "G-d forbid". The Aruch HaShulchan says that it should be literally translated as "completely disgraced". [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Esther 9:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Yamim tovim = Festival days [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Mashiach = Messiah [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Yalkut Esther 1059 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. By Rabbi J. Rolando Matalon [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Hulin 139b [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Zohar, Vayikra 109a, Midrash Rabbah 3:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. If you analyze the gematria of wine (יין) = 70, it matches the gematria of secret (סוד) = 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Megillah 7b [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. You shouldn’t know which is more important, that Haman was destroyed, or that Mordechai was raised up? Which helped the Jews more, that we got rid of Haman, or that we made Mordechai into the important leader? You should KNOW that both have the same result even as the words “Baruch Mordechai” and “Arur Haman” ("cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordechai") have the same Gematria. They both are the same in terms of advancing HaShem’s plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Megillah 7b. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Much of this information I learned from Rabbi Akiva Tatz. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. HaShem’s idea of beauty is when our inner self, our spiritual self, is reflected in our body and in our actions. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Megillah 12a [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Bnei Yissachar, vol. 2, in the chapters on Adar. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Hoshea (Hosea) 14:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Yehezechel (Ezekiel) 33:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Shim‘on ben Lakish (Hebrew: שמעון בן לקיש‎; Aramaic: שמעון בר לקיש‎ Shim‘on bar Lakish or bar Lakisha), better known by his nickname Reish Lakish, was an amora who lived in the Roman province of Syria Palaestina in the third century. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Tikunei HaZohar (תקוני הזהר, lit. "Rectifications of the Zohar"), also known as the Tikkunim (תקונים), is a main text of the Kabbalah. It is a separate appendix to the Zohar consisting of seventy commentaries on the opening word of the Torah, Bereshit (בראשית), in a style of Kabbalistic Midrash. Containing deep secret teachings of Torah, stirring dialogues and fervent prayers, the explicit and apparent theme and intention of Tikunei HaZohar is to repair and support the Shechinah or Malkhut — hence its name, "Repairs of the Zohar" — and to bring on the Redemption and conclude the Exile. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. When we say that ‘HaShem is one’, we do not mean that He is one rather than many, rather we mean that His all that there is – there is nothing besides Him. This is true oneness. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Gould, E. P. (1922). *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark* New York: C. Scribner's sons. p. 255 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Gundry, R. H. (2004). *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (p. 800) Grand Rapids, Michigan: (Vol. 2). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Arguiti, R. Y. (1988). *The Torah Anthology (D'varim 1:1-3:22)* (p. xiii) (Vol. 15). Brooklyn, New York: Moznaim Publishing Corporation. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)