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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah**  **4544 Highline Dr. SE**  **Olympia, WA 98501**  **United States of America**  **© 2016**  [**http://www.betemunah.org/**](http://www.betemunah.org/)  **E-Mail:** [**gkilli@aol.com**](mailto:gkilli@aol.com) | **Menorah 5** | **Esnoga Bet El**  **102 Broken Arrow Dr.**  **Paris TN 38242**  **United States of America**  **© 2016**  [**http://torahfocus.com/**](http://torahfocus.com/)  **E-Mail:** [**waltoakley@charter.net**](mailto:waltoakley@charter.net) |

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

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **First Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Ellul 21, 5779 – September 20-21, 2019** | **Fourth Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:**

**For other places see:** [**http://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm**](http://www.chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.htm)

**Roll of Honor:**

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David and beloved wife HH Giberet Batsheva bat Sarah

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham

His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Karmela bat Sarah,

His Honor Paqid Adon Tsuriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Gibora bat Sarah

Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family

His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife

Her Excellency Giberet Leah bat Sarah & beloved mother

His Excellency Adon Yehoshua ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Rut bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Michael ben Yosef and beloved wife HE Giberet Sheba bat Sarah

Her Excellency Giberet Prof. Dr. Emunah bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Robert Dick & beloved wife HE Giberet Cobena Dick

His Excellency Adon Aviner ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Chagit bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Ovadya ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Mirit bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Brad Gaskill and beloved wife Cynthia Gaskill

His Excellency Adon Shlomoh ben Abraham

His Excellency Adon Ya’aqob ben David

**For their regular and sacrificial giving, providing the best oil for the lamps, we pray that G-d’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 loose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to** [**benhaggai@GMail.com**](mailto:benhaggai@GMail.com) **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

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

**Shabbat: “Y’zera** **Yitschaq”** – **“And Yitschaq Sowed”**

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| --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** |
| **ַיִּזְרַע יִצְחָק** |  |
| **“Y’zera Yitschaq”** | Reader 1 – B’resheet 26:12 – 13 |
| **“And Yitschaq sowed”** | Reader 2 – B’resheet 26:14 – 15 |
| B’resheet (Gen.) 26:12 – 35 | Reader 3 – B’resheet 26:16 – 18 |
|  | Reader 4 – B’resheet 26:19 – 20 |
| Ashlamatah: Is 62:8 – 63:4, 7 | Reader 5 – B’resheet 26:21 – 22 |
|  | Reader 6 – B’resheet 26:22 – 23 |
| Psalms 22:1-22 | Reader 7 – B’resheet 26:23 – 24 |
|  | Maftir – B’resheet 26:22 – 24 |
| N.C.: Mark 3:5-6  Luke 6:10-11 & Acts 15:1-11 | Is 62:8 – 63:4, 7 |

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

**Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our G-d, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us through Your commandments, and commanded us to actively study Torah. Amen!**

**Please Ha-Shem, our G-d, 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 G-d, 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!**

**Contents of the Torah Seder**

* Yitschaq sowed
* Yitschaq becomes great
* Wells and trouble from the Philistines

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: B’resheet**‎‎‎‎‎**26:12-35**‎

| **Rashi’s Translation** | **Targum Pseudo Jonathan** |
| --- | --- |
| 12. And Isaac sowed in that land, and he found in that year a hundred fold, and the Lord blessed him. | 12. And Izhak sowed unto righteousness/generosity in that land, and found in that year a hundred for one, according to his measure. And the LORD blessed him, |
| 13. And the man became great, and he grew constantly greater until he had grown very great. | 13. and the man increased, and went forward increasing until he was very great. |
| 14. And he had possessions of sheep and possessions of cattle and much production, and the Philistines envied him. | 14. And he had flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, and great cultivation; and the Philistaee envied him. |
| 15. And all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father the Philistines stopped them up and filled them with earth. | 15. And all the wells which the servants of his father had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistaee stopped up and filled with earth. |
| 16. And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you have become much stronger than we." | 16. And Abimelek said to Izhak, Go from us; for you are stronger than we in riches very much. |
| 17. And Isaac went away from there, and he encamped in the valley of Gerar and dwelt there. | 17. And Izhak went thence, and sojourned in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. |
| 18. And Isaac again dug the wells of water which they had dug in the days of his father, Abraham, and the Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham's death; and he gave them names like the names that his father had given them. | 18. And Izhak dug again the wells of water which the servants of his father had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and which the Philistaee had stopped after Abraham was dead; and he called them by the names his father had called them. |
| 19. And Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and they found there a well of living waters. | 19. And the servants of Izhak dug in the border of the valley, and found there a well of flowing water. |
| 20. And the shepherds of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's shepherds, saying, "The water is ours"; so he named the well Esek, because they had contended with him. | 20. And the shepherds of Gerar contended with Izhak's shepherds, saying, The water is ours. And it was the will of Heaven, and it dried. But when they returned to Izhak, it flowed. And he called the name of the well (Esek) Contention, because (etheseku) they had quarrelled with him on account of it. |
| 21. And they dug another well, and they quarreled about it also; so he named it Sitnah. | 21. And they dug another well; and they contended for it also; and it dried, and did not flow again. And he called the name of it (Sitnah) Accusation. |
| 22. And he moved away from there, and he dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth, and he said, "For now the Lord has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land." | 22. And he removed from thence and dug another well, and for that they did not contend as formerly, and he called the name of it (Ravchatha) Spaciousness; for he said, Now has the LORD given us space to spread us abroad in the land. |
| 23. And he went up from there to Beer sheba. | 23. And he went up from thence unto Beersheba. |
| 24. And the Lord appeared to him on that night and said, "I am the God of Abraham, your father. Fear not, for I am with you, and I will bless you and multiply your seed for the sake of Abraham, My servant." | 24. And the LORD appeared to him that night, and said, I am the God of Abraham your father: fear not; for My Word is for your help, and I will bless you, and multiply your sons for the righteousness'/generosity’s sake of Abraham My servant. |
| 25. And he built an altar there, and he called in the name of the Lord, and he pitched his tent there, and Isaac's servants dug a well there. | 25. And he built there an altar, and prayed in the name of the LORD. And he spread his tabernacle there, and the servants of Izhak dug there a well. |
| 26. And Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and a group of his companions and Pichol, his general. | 26. And when Izhak went forth from Gerar the wells dried up, and the trees made no fruit; and they felt that it was because they had driven him away, all these things had befallen them. And Abimelek went to him from Gerar, and took his friends to go with him, and Phikol the chief of his host. |
| 27. And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me, and you sent me away from you?" | 27. And Izhak said to them, Why come you to me that I should pray for you, when you have hated me, and driven me from you? |
| 28. And they said, "We have seen that the Lord was with you; so we said: Let there now be an oath between us, between ourselves and you, and let us form a covenant with you. | 28. And they answered, Seeing, we have seen, that the Word of the LORD is for your help, and for your righteousness’/generosity’s sake all good has been to us; but when you went forth from our land the wells dried up, and our trees made no fruit; then we said, We will cause him to return to us. And now let there be an oath established between us, and kindness between us and you, and we will enter into a covenant with you, |
| 29. If you do [not] harm us, as we have not touched you, and as we have done with you only good, and we sent you away in peace, [so do] you now, blessed of the Lord." | 29. lest you do us evil. Forasmuch as we have not come near you for evil, and as we have acted with you only for good, and have indeed sent you away in peace; you are now blessed of the LORD. |
| 30. So he made a feast for them, and they ate and drank. | 30. - - |
| 31. And they arose early in the morning, and they swore one to the other, and Isaac escorted them, and they went away from him in peace. | 31. And they arose in the morning, each man with his brother; and he broke off from the bridle of his ass, and gave one part to them for a testimony. And Izhak prayed for them, and they were enlarged. And Izhak accompanied them, and they went from him in peace. |
| 32. And it came to pass on that day, that Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug, and they said to him, "We have found water." | 32. And on that day the servants of Izhak came and told him concerning the well they had dug, and said to him, We have found water; |
| 33. And he named it Shibah; therefore, the city is named Beer sheba until this very day. | 33. and he called it Sheba (the Swearing); therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day. |
| 34. And Esau was forty years old, and he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. | 34. And Esau was the son of forty years; and he took to wife Yehudith daughter of Beari the Hittah, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittah. |
| 35. And they were a vexation of the spirit to Isaac and to Rebecca. | 35. And they bowed in strange worship, and set themselves to rebel in their evil conduct against Izhak and against Rivekah.  JERUSALEM: **And they were refractory, swelling in spirit with strange worship, and would not receive instruction either from Izhak or Rivekah.** |
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**Welcome to the World of P’shat Exegesis**

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

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

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

**1. 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.

**Reading Assignment:**

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

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

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

Vol. 2 – “The Patriarchs,” pp. 447-485

**Rashi’s Commentary for: ‎** **B’resheet (Genesis) ‎‎‎‎26:12-35‎**

**Chapter 26**

**12 in that land** [The land yielded an abundant harvest] even though it was not considered as esteemed as the Land of Israel itself, i.e., as the land of the seven nations (Gen. Rabbah 64:6).

**in that year** Even though it was not as it should have been, for it was a year of famine (Gen. Rabbah ad loc.).

**in that land... in that year** Why both of them? To tell us that the land was hard and that the year was a hard one.

**a hundred fold** For they had estimated how much it [the land] was fit to produce, and it produced for each measure that they had estimated, one hundred [measures], and our Rabbis said that the purpose of this estimate was for tithing. [Gen. Rabbah 64:6]

**13 he had grown very great** For they would say, “Rather the manure of Isaac’s mules than Abimelech’s silver and gold” (Gen. Rabbah 64:7).

**14 and much production** Heb. וַעֲבֻדָּה רַבָּה , much activity, in Old French ouvrene (enterprises). עֲבוֹדָה means one job, whereas עֲבֻדָּה means much production.

**15 the Philistines stopped them up** Because they said, “They are a danger to us due to the armies that will come upon us.” [Onkelos renders:] טְמוּנוּן פְּלִשְׁתָּאֵי an expression of stopping up, and in the language of the Talmud, “stops up (מְטַמְטֵם) the heart.”

**17 in the valley of Gerar**far from the city.

**18 And Isaac again dug** [Meaning] the wells that they had dug in the days of his father Abraham and that the Philistines had stopped up—before Isaac traveled from Gerar, he went back and dug them.

**20 Esek** Contention.

**because they had contended with him** They engaged with him about it with strife and contention.

**21 Sitnah**- nuysemant in Old French (harm, wrong, injury).

**22 and we will be fruitful in the land** Heb. וּפָרִינוּ בָאָרֶץ , as the Targum translates it: וְנִיפוּשׁ בְּאַרְעָא , “and we will be fruitful in the land.”

**26 and a group of his companions** Heb. וַאֲחֻזַת מֵרֵעֵהוּ , as the Targum renders: וְסִיעַת מֵרַחֲמוֹהִי , a group of his friends [the “mem” meaning “of”](Gen. Rabbah 64:9). Some interpret that in the word מֵרֵעֵהוּ , the “mem” is [part of] the root of the word, like (Jud. 14:11): “the thirty companions” (מֵרֵעִים) of Samson, in order that the word וַאֲחֻזַת should be in the construct state [i.e., the group of his friends]. However, it is not polite to speak of royalty in this manner, i. e., “his group of companions,” because this would imply that he brought his entire group of companions, and that he had only one group of companions. Therefore, it should be interpreted in the previous manner, [i.e., that אֲחֻזַת is not construct]. And do not be puzzled about the letter “thav” of אֲחֻזַת . Although the word is not in the construct state, there are similar cases in Scripture (Ps. 60:13): “help against the adversary” עֶזְרָת מִצָּר (Isa. 51:21): “drunk, but not from wine” (וּשְׁכֻרַת וְלֽא מִיָּיִן) .

**a group** Heb. אֲחֻזַת , an expression of a gathering or a band [of people] who are held (שֶׁנֶאֱחָזִין) together.

**28 And they said, “We have seen** Heb. רָאוֹ רָאִינוּ , [a double expression meaning:] We saw it regarding your father; we saw it regarding you. [From Gen. Rabbah 64:10]

**Let there now be an oath between us, etc.** Let the oath that has existed between us from the days of your father be now also between us and you. [From Targum Onkelos]

**29 we have not touched you** when we said to you, “Go away from us.” you You too, (other editions: now too) do to us likewise.

**33 Shibah** Because of the covenant [shevuah in Hebrew means oath].

**34 forty years old**Esau was compared to a swine, as it is said (Ps. 80:14): “The boar from the forest gnaws at it.” This swine, when it lies down, stretches out its hooves, as if to say, “See, I am a clean (kosher) animal.” So do these [the chiefs of Esau] rob and plunder and then pretend to be honorable. During the entire forty years, Esau kidnapped wives from their husbands and violated them. When he was forty years old, he said: “My father married at forty; I, too, will do the same.” [From Gen. Rabbah 65:1]

**35 a vexation of the spirit** Heb. מֽרַת רוּחַ , an expression of defiance of spirit הַמְרָאַתרוּחַ like (Deut. 9:24): “You have been rebellious מַמְרִים .” All their deeds were to provoke and to grieve. [From Targum Onkelos]

**to Isaac and to Rebecca** for they worshipped idols. [From Midrash Tanchuma, Toledoth 8]

**Ketubim: Psalms ‎‎22:1-22**

**Rashi’s Translation and Commentary on Psalms ‎‎22:1-22**

**1 For the conductor, on the ayeleth hashachar, a song of David.**

ayeleth hashachar: The name of a musical instrument. Another explanation: Concerning the nation of Israel, which is a beloved hind (אילת אהבים), who looks forth like the dawn (שחר) (Song 6: 10). Our Sages, however, interpreted it as referring to Esther (Mid. Ps. 22:1, Meg. 15b). Menachem (p. 22) interprets אילת as an expression of strength, as (verse 20): “My strength (אילותי), hasten to my assistance.” השחר is an expression of dawn, but Menachem (p. 172) interprets it as an expression of seeking, as (in Prov. 11: 27): “He who desires (שֹׁחֵר) good etc.” and as (ibid. 7:15) “to look (לשחר) for you.”

**2 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? [You are] far from my salvation [and] from the words of my moaning.**

why have You forsaken me?: They are destined to go into exile, and David recited this prayer for the future.

far from my salvation: and from the words of my moaning.

**3 My God, I call out by day and You do not reply, and at night I do not keep silent.**

I call out by day: I call out to You every day, and You do not answer.

**4 But You are holy; You await the praises of Israel.**

But You are holy: and You wait to hear the praises of Israel from time immemorial.

5 Our ancestors trusted in You; they trusted and You rescued them.

**6 They cried out to You and they escaped; they trusted in You and they were not shamed.**

**7 But I am a worm and not a man; a reproach of man, despised by peoples.**

But I am a worm: He refers to all Israel as one man.

8All who see me will mock me; they will open their lips, they will shake their head.

they will open: Heb. יפטירו, they open, as (in Exod. 13:12, 13): “all that open (פטר) the womb,… and firstling (ופטר) of a donkey.” [Also] (in Prov. 17: 14): “like letting out (פוטר) water.”

**9 One should cast his trust upon the Lord, and He will rescue him; He will save him because He delights in him.**

One should cast his trust upon the Lord: Heb. גֹּל like לגל, lit. to roll. A person should roll his burden and his load upon His Creator so that He rescue him.

**10 For You drew me from the womb; You made me secure on my mother's breasts.**

drew me: Heb. גחי, who took me out and drew me out, as (in Job 40:23): “he will draw (יגיח) the Jordan into his mouth.”

You made me secure on my mother’s breast: You prepared breasts for a person, upon which to rely for sustenance.

**11 Upon You, I was cast from birth; from my mother's womb You are my God.**

Upon You, I was cast from birth: I was cast from birth since You took me out of the womb, as Scripture states (in Isa. 46:3): “who are carried from birth.” From the time the tribes were born, He carried them and led them.

**12 Do not distance Yourself from me, for distress is near; for there is none to help.**

**13 Great bulls have surrounded me; the mighty ones of Bashan encompassed me.**

Great bulls: Mighty kingdoms.

the mighty ones of Bashan: That too is an expression of the bulls of Bashan, which are fat.

encompassed me: Heb. כתרוני. They encompassed me like a crown (כתר), which encompasses the head.

**14 They opened their mouth against me [like] a tearing, roaring lion.**

a tearing lion: Nebuchadnezzar.

**15 I was spilled like water, and all my bones were separated; my heart was like wax, melting within my innards.**

like wax: Wax, which melts from the heat of the fire.

**16 My strength became dried out like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my palate; and You set me down in the dust of death.**

my palate: Heb. מלקוחי. This is the palate which is called palayc (palais) in Old French, gaumen in German. When a person is distressed, he has no saliva in his mouth. Menachem, however, interprets מלקוחי as etenayles in Old French (tongs), like (Isa. 6:6): “with tongs (במלקחים) he had taken it.” And the מלקוח is the teeth, which resemble a smith’s tongs. (The quotation from Menachem appears only in the Salonika edition of Rashi printed in 1515.)

and in the dust of death: To the crushing of death.

You set me down: Heb. תשפתני You set me down, an expression of setting a pot, as (in Ezek. 24:3, II Kings 4:38): “set on (שפת) the pot.” Menachem (p. 179) interprets every expression of שפיתה as an expression of placing.

**17 For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me, like a lion, my hands and feet.**

like a lion, my hands and feet: As though they are crushed in a lion’s mouth, and so did Hezekiah say (in Isa. 38: 13): “like a lion, so it would break all my bones.”

18 I tell about all my bones. They look and gloat over me.

I tell about all my bones: The pain of my bones.

They look: They rejoice at my misfortune.

**19 They share my garments among themselves and cast lots for my raiment.**

and cast lots for my raiment: They plunder our property.

**20 But You, O Lord, do not distance Yourself; my strength, hasten to my assistance.**

my strength: Heb. אילותי, my strength, as (below 88: 5): “I was as a man without strength (איל) ,” and as (Gen. 31: 29): “It is within the power (לאל) of my hand.”

**21 Save my soul from the sword, my only one from the grip of the dog.**

**22 Save me from the lion's mouth, as from the horns of the wild oxen You answered me.**

Save me from the lion’s mouth: as You answered me from the horns of the wild oxen. This is the Amorite, “whose height is as the height of the cedar trees” (Amos 2:9); the thirty-one kings.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalms ‎19:1-15**

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

September 21, 5779 - Ellul 21, 5779

**Bereshit (Genesis) 26:12-35**

**Tehillim (Psalms) 22:1-22**

**Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 62:8 – 63:4, 7**

Mk 3:5-6, Lk 6:10-11, Acts 8:1-4

**Psalms chapter 22** although entitled, 'A song of David' primarily deals with events which were destined to occur hundreds of years after David's time. David, with his 'holy spirit' foresaw the bleak Babylonian and Persian exiles in general, and in particular, the terrible threat of Haman and Achashverosh against the entire Jewish nation, personified by Queen Esther. Although there are countless events in Jewish history which David does not discuss in the Book of Psalms, Alshich explains that David dedicated a Psalm to Esther because he personally had a hand in the salvation of Israel in her days. When David fled from Absalom, Shimi ben Gera of the tribe of Benjamin went out to viciously curse David. Yet, David would not allow his men to kill Shimi although he deserved death for blaspheming the king.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Talmud[[2]](#footnote-2) says that David foresaw that Mordecai [and Esther] was destined to descend from Shimi ['Mordecai, son of Yair, son of Shimi'[[3]](#footnote-3)] and being that the salvation of Israel was at stake, David forfeited his own dignity for the sake of saving his people.

Therefore, David was inspired to compose a psalm in honor of the Purim miracle, for without him it could not have come to pass. It was the custom of the Vilna Gaon to recite this psalm as the שיר של יום, 'the song for the day' on the day of Purim.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The superscription of Psalms 22 declares that it was written by David. Since Psalms chapter 22 was designated by the Vilna Gaon as the song for Purim, let’s look a bit more closely at Purim.

The first half of the first chapter, of the book of Esther, seems to be superfluous. It starts off by telling us, briefly, that king Achashverosh gave a six-month feast for the nobles. It does not tell us what happened at this feast. Then it describes a feast that lasted seven days and was given for everyone in Susa.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Achashverosh holds an elaborate six-month feast for all his officers and subjects in the capital city of Shushan. What was the king celebrating?

Jeremiah the prophet had reported, in HaShem’s name, that following the destruction of the first Temple, the Jews would be in exile for seventy (70) years.[[6]](#footnote-6) According to Achashverosh’s calculations, the seventy years had been completed, meaning that HaShem Himself had been permanently defeated. It turns out that Achashverosh, and Belshazzar before him, had miscalculated the seventy years. He thought that it began with the exile of the first Jews. In reality, Jeremiah’s prophecy was figured from the time of the destruction of the Temple, some two years later. In fact, the exile did end, as prophesied, after seventy years!

At the feast, Achashverosh denigrated HaShem, and the Jews, by wearing the special clothes of the High Priest and by displaying the Temple vessels.[[7]](#footnote-7) The entire purpose of this feast was to denigrate the holy objects and, in effect, celebrating the end of the Jewish people.

So, who went to this party where Vashti ends up dead? Were there any Jews there? Somehow this first half of chapter one does not seem necessary, yet it plays a crucial role in understanding the rest of the scroll of Esther. Since HaShem is in control even while He is concealed in this story, we can assume that the decree to destroy the Jews, which was advanced by Haman, was something that HaShem allowed. The question is: What did the Jews do to deserve this awful decree? The Talmud sheds some light on this:

***Megillah 12a*** *R. Simon b. Yohai was asked by his disciples, Why were the enemies of Israel[[8]](#footnote-8) in that generation deserving of extermination? He said to them: Do you answer. They said: Because they partook of the feast of that wicked one.[[9]](#footnote-9) [He said to them]: If so, those in Susa should have been killed, not those in other parts?[[10]](#footnote-10) They then said, Give your answer. He said to them: It was because they bowed down to the image.[[11]](#footnote-11) They said to him, Did HaShem then show them favoritism?[[12]](#footnote-12) He replied: They only pretended to worship,[[13]](#footnote-13) and He also only pretended to exterminate them; and so it is written, For he afflicted not from his heart.[[14]](#footnote-14) In the court of the garden of the king’s palace.[[15]](#footnote-15) Rab and Samuel gave different interpretations of this — One said that those who had the entree[[16]](#footnote-16) of the court were [entertained] in the court, and those who had the entree of the garden in the garden, and those who had the entree of the palace in the palace. The other said: He first put them in the court, and it did not hold them — Then he took them into the garden and it did not hold them; and finally he had to take them into the palace, and he found room for them. In a Baraita it was taught: He took them into the court and opened two doors for them, one into the garden and one into the palace.*

So, the Jews, of Shushan, derived pleasure from the wicked king’s party, which they probably had to go to, and the other Jews, in captivity, derived pleasure from the fact that the Shushan Jews had pleasure. So why is this worthy of Haman’s decree? Why did they have pleasure? Because even as exiles, they were elevated to the point of getting an invitation to the kings party! This king was king over the whole world and he had invited the Jews to his party. No wonder the Jews derived pleasure from the king’s party! **The Jews, then, were defining their existence according to the laws of nature, according to logic**. (It is instructive to note that these same Jews have already been told that they could return to Israel and have a feast in The King’s [HaShem’s] palace – The Temple. They chose to stay in exile and go to this pagan feast.) It is important to recognize this in order to understand the rest of the story. HaShem is going to deal with the Jews measure for measure according to their sins. Since they followed natural law, HaShem is going to let them be buffeted by natural law. Natural law indicates that Jews do not deserve to exist, therefore Haman’s decree merely repaid the Jews measure for measure.

Haman, the Agagite, is a descendant of Amalek.[[17]](#footnote-17) Amalek’s theology is that there is no G-d Who works both naturally and supernaturally. Amalek has a philosophy that everything “just happens”. Amalekites see only the natural law. They do not acknowledge the hand of HaShem. This explains why an Amalekite appears on the scene to bring punishment to the Jews who were acting like Amalekites.

At this time in history, HaShem’s people were never more secure, according to the laws of nature. Mordechai was a high government minister, Esther was about to become queen, and the children of Israel had been elevated in status to the point that they were now being invited to the king’s palace for a party. HaShem had prepared the cure before He allowed the disease to afflict His people.

When HaShem gives measure for measure, then people always get their ‘just desserts’. Consider Vashti,

At first glance it appears as though the lecherous king has made a wicked request of an innocent woman. If we consider ‘who’ and ‘what’ Vashti was, we might think a little differently.

Vashti was the granddaughter of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. Just as Nebuchadnezzar was very wicked, so was his daughter. Vashti was just like her father. Vashti was called to appear before the king, *naked* on Shabbat, as punishment for her tradition of forcing enslaved Jewish girls to work for her on Shabbat stripped of their clothing. HaShem always deals midda kneged midda, measure for measure. Because she refused the king’s request, he had her killed.

The next part of our story concerns a beauty contest to replace the queen who has just been killed. We can assume that most of the empire’s eligible women wanted to be queen. If you are an observant Jew, the last thing that you wanted was to be made the queen of a pagan idol worshipper. Being Achashverosh’s queen was the last thing that Esther wanted. Yet, that is exactly what HaShem caused because it is the nature of lecherous kings to want the most beautiful of women.

Natural law had taken its course. What Esther least wanted, that is what she got. Mordechai, Esther’s cousin and husband, was a descendant of King Saul (a son of Kish)[[18]](#footnote-18) and that makes Esther also of royal blood. Natural law dictates that those of royal blood should be king and queen. The Talmud explains:

***Megillah 12b*** *There was a certain Jew in Shushan the castle, etc. a Benjamite.[[19]](#footnote-19) What is the point of this verse? If it is to give the pedigree of Mordecai, it should trace it right back to Benjamin![[20]](#footnote-20) [Why then were only these specified?] — A Tanna taught: All of them are designations [of Mordecai]. ‘The son of Jair’ means, the son who enlightened [he’ir] the eyes of Israel by his prayer. ‘The son of Shimei means, the son to whose prayer HaShem hearkened [shama’]. ‘The son of Kish’ indicates that he knocked [hikkish] at the gates of mercy and they were opened to him. He is called ‘a Jew’ [yehudi] which implies that he came from [the tribe of] Judah, and he is called ‘a Benjamite’, which implies that he came from Benjamin. [How is this]? — R. Nahman said: He was a man of distinguished character.[[21]](#footnote-21) Rabbah b. Bar Hanah said in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi: His father was from Benjamin and his mother from Judah. The Rabbis, however, said: The tribes competed with one another [for him]. The tribe of Judah said: I am responsible for the birth of Mordecai, because David did not kill Shimei the son of Gera, and the tribe of Benjamin said: He is actually descended from me. Raba said: The community of Israel explained [the two designations] in the opposite[[22]](#footnote-22) sense: ‘See what a Judean did to me and how a Benjamite repaid me!’ What a Judean did to me viz., that David did not kill Shimei from whom was descended Mordecai who provoked Haman. ‘And how a Benjamite repaid me’, viz., that Saul did not slay Agag from whom was descended Haman who oppressed Israel. R. Johanan said: He did indeed come from Benjamin. Why then was he called ‘a Jew’? Because he repudiated idolatry. For anyone who repudiates idolatry is called ‘a Jew’, as it is written, There are certain Jews[[23]](#footnote-23) etc.*

Mordechai had raised Esther. What sort of education could Mordechai provide for Esther? Lets look at the Talmud:

***Megillah 13b*** *In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king’s gate, Bigthan and Teresh were wroth.[[24]](#footnote-24) R. Hiyya b. Abba said in the name of R. Johanan: The Holy One, blessed be He, [once] caused a master to be wroth with his servants in order to fulfill the desire of a righteous man, namely Joseph, as it says, And there was with us there a young man, a Hebrew, etc.;[[25]](#footnote-25) and servants with their master in order to perform a miracle for a righteous man, namely, Mordecai, as it is written, ‘And the thing was known to Mordecai etc. ‘ R. Johanan said: Bigthan and Teresh were two Tarseans[[26]](#footnote-26) and conversed in the Tarsean language. They said: From the day this woman came we have been able to get no sleep.[[27]](#footnote-27) Come, let us put poison in the dish so that he will die. They did not know that Mordecai was one of those who had seats in the Chamber of Hewn Stone,[[28]](#footnote-28) and that he understood seventy languages.[[29]](#footnote-29) Said the other to him, But are not my post and your post different?[[30]](#footnote-30) He replied: I will keep guard at my post and at yours. So it is written, And when inquisition was made, he was found,[[31]](#footnote-31) that is to say, they were not [both] found at their posts.*

Since Mordechai was a member of Sanhedrin, and since we know that one of the requirements of this group was the ability to speak seventy languages, we can, therefore, know that Mordechai spoke seventy languages. If you are going to be queen over the entire world, it makes sense that a knowledge of languages would be very useful. Esther, therefore, was obviously one of the most qualified ladies, in Achashverosh’s kingdom, to be queen, according to natural law. To Mordechai, it did not make any sense. How could a lady be chosen who was specifically trying not to be chosen? How could a married woman be chosen in a beauty contest that was open only to virgins? Achashverosh didn’t know, or care, about Esther’s unique qualifications. He just wanted a beauty queen. HaShem’s hand is concealed as he starts to turn things up side down. Mordechai senses that HaShem is at work, so he tells Esther to keep quiet about her nationality.

Esther is now in the place HaShem wanted her to be. Mordechai is almost set up. He is a minister in the palace, but we need one more piece to ensure that Mordechai is set up:

***Esther 2:21-23*** *During the time Mordecai was sitting at the king’s gate, Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king’s officers who guarded the doorway, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Achashverosh. But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were hanged on a gallows. All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.*

This event is rather odd. Would you plot against the king in the earshot of one of his ministers? Obviously no! So, what’s going on here? The answer relates to Mordechai’s ability to speak seventy languages. The guards did not expect Mordechai to understand since he was not one of their country men. Mordechai is wearing his kipah[[32]](#footnote-32) and his tzitzith[[33]](#footnote-33) were hanging out. His white beard and obvious Jewish attire were not what the guards were wearing. Mordechai was different.

Mordechai is now set up. He has his position and he has the king’s good graces. But, something odd happened. He has given the king information which saved his life, yet Mordechai did not get rewarded. If you are king and depend on ‘tips’ from your subjects, you are in a very bad way if you don’t give a reward for information. Obviously no one will risk giving the king information if there is no reward. Therefore, no reward, no information.

Our story seems very illogical so far. Esther is chosen for queen, when she tries not to be chosen. She is married and the contest was only for virgins. Mordechai saves the kings life, but he receives no reward. This is all very illogical.

It is now time to turn our attention to Haman. Who is Haman? Haman is a descendant of Agag the Amalekite![[34]](#footnote-34) The Talmud, which we read earlier, has described Haman as a descendent of Agag who was conceived because of king Saul’s misplaced mercy. The Amalekites were dedicated to the destruction of the Children of Israel:

***Shemot (Exodus) 17:8*** *The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim.*

Because of this attack, HaShem dictated that the Amalekites should all be destroyed.

***Shemot (Exodus) 17:14-16*** *Then HaShem said to Moses, “Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” Moses built an altar and called it HaShem is my Banner. He said, “For hands were lifted up to the throne of HaShem. HaShem will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.”*

King Saul failed to obey HaShem’s command to kill EVERY Amalekite. He spared the king of the Amalekites:

***I Shmuel (Samuel) 15:8-9*** *He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs-- everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.*

Haman has a most despicable heritage. The task that king Saul was charged with: the destruction of Agag, will be accomplished by Saul’s descendent, Mordechai; upon Agag’s descendent, Haman.

Haman had a problem. Haman wanted worship from Mordechai, but Mordechai would not worship Haman. Haman is enraged. He goes to Achashverosh and he ‘logically’ explains the problem. The Jews are all spread out and they have customs that are different. These are the characteristics of HaShem’s people. They wear different clothes. They wear different hair styles. They pray differently. They are dispersed throughout the entire world, yet they still look and act alike. This is still true of HaShem’s people today.

Achashverosh agrees with logic and does not listen to the money. Logic says that the Jews do not deserve to be alive. Because the Jews had relied on logic at Achashverosh party, HaShem will allow logic to have its way with the Children of Israel. Achashverosh show his true character and allows the destruction of HaShem’s people. Notice that Achashverosh acts illogically towards HaShem’s people. He should have had Haman draft the law and give it to the king for review before he uses his signet ring. But, that is not what happens. Achashverosh is so hateful towards HaShem’s people that he just gives Haman the signet ring. This enables Haman to draft whatever he wants, and the king does not care. Achashverosh is not a nice guy.

So, what is the significance of the day that the order goes out? It is two days before Passover! Passover is supposed to be the feast of our physical freedom. Instead it has been turned into a time of mourning while in exile, an exile that they could already have ended.

At this point the lights should be going on in Mordechai’s head. He should immediately realize why Esther became queen. He should have immediately requested that she appeal to the king to spare their lives. Mordechai does not do the logical thing. He realizes that HaShem is allowing this for a reason. He analyzes and understands that it is a result of their logical attitude towards Achashverosh’s party. So he does not do the logical thing. Mordecai does a very strange thing.

***Esther 4:1-4*** *When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly. But he went only as far as the king’s gate, because no one clothed in sackcloth was allowed to enter it. In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes. When Esther’s maids and eunuchs came and told her about Mordecai, she was in great distress. She sent clothes for him to put on instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.*

Mordechai begins to act as though he trusts in HaShem, not in logic or natural law. Notice that Mordechai is not the *only* one to adopt this attitude. All of the Children of Israel adopt this attitude. HaShem’s people have begun the process of returning to HaShem. No one has gone to appeal to the queen. No one has acted logically. Esther does not even know what is going on. After he mourned, one would expect Mordechai to go in to the queen. Instead he rips his royal garment and wears sackcloth to ensure that he can *not* go in to the queen!

The Midrash records that Mordecai went and taught 22,000 children the laws of the mincha (meal) offering. This is odd. He didn’t go out and give to charity or do other mitzvot. Instead he taught those who were least able to help HaShem’s people, and he taught them a part of Torah that would not help them out of their predicament. In fact, he taught them something that they could not do, because the Temple was destroyed, though some were engaged in rebuilding it (the 70,000 who returned to Israel when they were permitted to do so). This was very illogical, but it demonstrated that He was going to depend on HaShem to handle the situation. He recognized the problem.

***Midrash Rabbah - Esther IX:4*** *4. Having made the gallows, he went to Mordecai, whom he found in the house of study with the schoolchildren sitting before him with sackcloth on their loins, studying the Torah and crying and weeping. He counted them and found twenty-two thousand children. He put chains of iron on them and set guards over them, saying, ‘ Tomorrow I will kill these children first, and then I will hang Mordecai.’ Their mothers brought them bread and water and said to them: ‘Children, eat and drink before you die to-morrow, and do not die of starvation.’ Straightway they put their hands on their books and swore by the life of Mordecai their teacher saying, ‘We will neither eat nor drink, but will die while still fasting.’ They all wept piteously until the sound of their crying ascended to heaven and the Holy One, blessed be He, heard the sound of their weeping at about the second hour of the night. At that moment the compassion of the Holy One, blessed be He, was stirred, and He arose from the Throne of Judgment and sat on the Throne of Mercy and said: ‘What is this loud noise that I hear as the bleating of kids and lambs?’ Moses our teacher thereupon stood before the Holy One, blessed be He, and said: ‘ Sovereign of the Universe, they are neither kids nor lambs, but the little ones of Thy people who have been keeping a fast now for three days and for three nights, and tomorrow the enemy means to slaughter them like kids and lambs.’ At that moment the Holy One, blessed be He, took the letters containing their doom which were signed with a seal of clay and tore them and brought fright upon Ahasuerus in that night, as it says, ON THAT NIGHT. etc. (VI, 1).*

Mordechai had taught the children that they needed to attach themselves to HaShem. In teaching the children, he had taught their parents. They had all learned the lesson of the meal offering. They had all learned that they needed to draw closer to HaShem. Mordechai taught the meal offering in order to teach Torah. He taught a part of Torah that the children could not possibly fulfill in order to demonstrate that *Torah study alone* will draw us closer to HaShem. This is the importance of Torah study.

About this time, Esther is beside herself trying to figure out what is wrong with Mordechai. He does not want to cooperate with her. So, she sends out a very special person as her messenger. Our Sages teach that Hathach is Daniel. The prophet Daniel who has prophesied regarding the end of days, one of HaShem’s mightiest servants. He was still serving in the palace, in exile. Mordechai tells Hathach the problem and he gives instructions to Esther.

Now Esther responds with logic to tell Mordechai why she can’t obey his instructions:

***Esther 4:10-11*** *Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, “All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”*

Esther does not yet understand the problem, but she is no dummy. She realizes, quickly, when Mordechai explains it to her:

***Esther 4:12-17*** *When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai, He sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?” Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.” So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther’s instructions.*

Now Esther gets it! She starts to act illogically. Instead of making herself beautiful before going in to the king, she makes herself ugly by fasting for three days. This is very illogical, but Esther now understands what Mordechai understood. She must quit trusting logic and natural law. She must begin to trust wholeheartedly in HaShem. Mordechai was now confident that Esther understood because he went out to carry out her wishes, where he had ignored them before.

It is important to understand how illogical it is for Mordechai, Esther, and the other Jews to fast for three days. one of the three days will be Passover! Passover is a feast! You are not allowed to fast on Passover. You are commanded by HaShem to eat!

The decree then went out on Nisan 13. So Esther and the Jews of Shushan fasted on Nisan 13, 14, and 15. The evening of the 14th was HaShem’s Passover feast:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:5*** *HaShem’s Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month.*

The Midrash states that Mordechai protested the fast on Passover. Esther replied that if there are no Israelites, there will be no Passover! Mordechai, obviously, agreed. **The deliverance of the Israelites has begun! No wonder it takes place on Passover!** Once the Children of Israel begin returning to HaShem, He promises that He will deliver them. Isn’t HaShem’s timing perfect?

***Midrash Rabbah - Esther VIII:7*** *7.THEN ESTHER BADE THEM RETURN ANSWER UNTO MORDECAI (ib. 15). She said to him: GO, GATHER TOGETHER ALL THE JEWS THAT ARE PRESENT IN SHUSHAN, AND FAST YE FOR ME, AND NEITHER EAT NOR DRINK THREE DAYS (ib, 16): these were the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of Nisan. He sent back word to her: But these include the first day of Passover? She replied: Elder of Israel, why is there a Passover?[[35]](#footnote-35) Mordecai thereupon acceded to her request, as it says, SO MORDECAI WENT HIS WAY, AND DID ACCORDING TO ALL AT ESTHER HAD COMMANDED HIM (ib. 17). In Babylon they say that this[[36]](#footnote-36) means that he spent the festival of Passover in fasting on account of that calamity. Mordecai prayed to the Lord and said: ‘ It is fully known before the throne of Thy glory, O Lord of all worlds, that it was not from pride of heart or vain gloriousness that I acted in not bowing down to Haman, but through fear of Thee I did thus, not to bow down to him, for I was in fear of Thee lest I should assign Thy honour to flesh and blood, and I was not willing to bow down to any beside Thee. For who am I that I should not bow down to Haman for the salvation of Thy people Israel? For that I would even kiss his shoe-latchet. Now therefore, our G-d, deliver us, we pray Thee, from his hand and let him fall into the pit which he has dug and let him be caught in the snare which he has hidden for the feet of Thy saints, and let this sinner know that Thou hast not forgotten the promise*

Three days later, Esther does another illogical thing. Esther puts her life on the line to go ask the king to deliver her people. When her life is spared, her wildest hopes are also answered: the king is disposed to give her ANYTHING she wants, up to half of his kingdom. Does she make her appeal for her people? NO! Instead she invites the king, and Haman to a wine party. This is very illogical. What is going on here?

Queen Esther enters Achashverosh’s palace just as the High Priest gingerly and reverently steps into the Holy of Holies to atone for the Jewish people. Whereas the High Priest wears simple, modest clothing upon his reverent penetration into the Holy of Holies, the queen wears lavish, seductive attire in her attempt to appease the gluttonous king. The High Priest enters twice, first to produce the thick cloud of the incense to cover the Ark, and thereafter to actually perform the service of sprinkling the blood to obtain atonement. Correspondingly, Esther first enters the royal chamber to invite the king to her feast, the purpose of which is to confuse and blur the king’s perception. Thereafter, after Haman is hung, she enters once again to plead with the king to annul the threatening decree.

When they have all feasted on the wine, the king is again favorably disposed towards Esther:

***Esther 5:6-8*** *As they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, “Now what is your petition? It will be given you. And what is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted.” Esther replied, “My petition and my request is this: If the king regards me with favor and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them. Then I will answer the king’s question.”*

So, does Esther make an appeal for her people? NO! She again does an illogical thing: she invites the king and Haman to another wine party – remember those four cups of wine at the seder. What is going on here? The text tells us that Haman was invited to make him so confident that he decides to show his heart and attempt to destroy Mordechai. We also see his wife’s heart and his sons’ hearts. They are all alike in their hatred of the Jews. They have the heart of hatred, of the Amalekites.

Now we need to figure out why Esther is waiting to ask her question. In perhaps the most famous scene of the entire Megillah, Mordechai is paraded on horseback through the streets of Shushan, wearing the royal robes, with Haman leading the way.

After this incident, Haman returns home “with his head covered”.[[37]](#footnote-37) The Midrash explains the meaning of this phrase: When the parade route passed by Haman’s house, his daughter saw them coming and had a great idea: She would take a chamber pot up to the second floor window, and pour its contents on Mordechai’s head! The only problem is that the girl assumed it was her wonderful father being honored on horseback, with that lowly Jew Mordechai pulling him along. So when the parade passed by, she timed it perfectly and, splash! The one pulling the horse got it right on the head.

The Midrash says that when the girl saw that she’d dumped toilet waste all over her father, she was so despondent that she jumped out of the window to her death. And Haman returned home “with his head covered.”

To make matters worse, Haman found little encouragement at home: His wife Zeresh tells him: “If this is how things are going, you’re going to lose your fight against the Jewish People!”[[38]](#footnote-38)

**The King can’t sleep**

What causes a king to lose sleep? Surely not money worries or hunger. Yet, here is a sleepless king. Something is bothering him, but what? We can tell by what he does: he has his servant read the book of chronicles to him. This would seem to indicate that he is looking for a reason to explain why certain types of things are not happening. From his answer it appears that he is no longer getting tips from his subjects. The subjects are not likely to risk going to the king with a tip if he does not reward them. When the king discovers that he has never rewarded Mordechai, he finally understands why he hasn’t been receiving any tips lately. The word has gotten out that he in ungrateful and that he never rewarded Mordechai for saving his life. The king immediately sets about to correct this problem. This is the set up that will lead us to Esther’s strange behavior. After Esther observes Haman’s debasement and Mordechai’s elevation, she immediately pops the question. It appears that she was looking to see if HaShem was predisposed towards helping her and her people. After this little parade she has her answer.

HaShem has seen that his people have recognized their sin in failing to look to Him for the reason for their existence. The People of Israel have recognized their sin at the beginning of Esther, the party sin. They have repented and begun to look to HaShem for their the reason for their existence.

Next we find that Haman constructed his gallows using the beam from Noah’s ark that was fifty amot long. This transcendent ark was used to preserve the Jewish people twice.

At the second wine feast, she recounts the story of Passover from the first person, including herself as part of the Exodus from Egypt, as we are commanded to do. Esther’s words are allusions to the story of Passover: “The Jews were sold to be destroyed, slain, and exterminated”.[[39]](#footnote-39) Esther now reveals that she is Jewish and that genocide is planned against her people.

Outraged, the king demands to know who would dare threaten the Queen and her relatives[[40]](#footnote-40). Esther points to none other than Haman! Haman is aghast and while pleading with Esther, accidentally falls on “the couch upon which Esther was”[[41]](#footnote-41). This is an allusion to the custom to lean during the seder rather than sit.

Measure for measure, HaShem has given to Haman as Haman had given to Mordechai. Haman had sought to debase Mordechai, and had been debased himself. He had sought to hang Mordechai, and had been hung on his own gallows.

Haman had sought to destroy his enemies, the Jews; and HaShem turned that about and used the Jews to destroy their enemies.

Esther was not content to see the vile Haman dead. She immediately put her life at risk again, to make another plea. HaShem has decided to hear Esther’s plea. The king, again, extends his scepter, and again invites her to make a request. This time he can not do what she wants, but he does what he can. He invites Esther and Mordechai to come up with a solution. The solution is illogical. Mordechai had written a new decree that enabled the Jews to defend themselves and to slay their enemies. This is illogical. How could a small group of people from the southern kingdom of Judah, possibly fight the whole world? What chance did they have?

As if this is not illogical enough, Mordechai and the Children of Israel go out with JOY and begin celebrating! They haven’t even started to fight, and they are already celebrating! What is going on here? The Children of Israel had already figured out that if they rely on HaShem, He will not disappoint them. They knew they had the victory because they knew that the battle belonged to HaShem. The Children of Israel had learned their lesson well.

Tehillim 22 opens with the famous phrase:

***Tehillim (Psalm) 22:1*** *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [why art thou so] far from helping me, [and from] the words of my roaring?*

The Gemara puts this pasuk in Queen Esther’s mouth:

***Megillah 15b*** *And stood in the inner court of the king’s house. R. Levi said: When she reached the chamber of the idols, the Divine Presence left her. She said, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me. Dost thou perchance punish the inadvertent offence like the presumptuous one, or one done under compulsion like one done willingly? Or is it because I called him ‘dog’, as it says. Deliver my soul from the sword, mine only one from the power of the dog? She straightway retracted and called him lion, as it says. Save me from the lion’s mouth.*

The Nazarean Codicil puts this pasuk in Mashiach ben Yosef’s mouth:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 27:46*** *And about the ninth hour Yeshua cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Esther is thus seen in allegory as Mashiach ben Yosef.

Esther was the daughter of AviChayil.[[42]](#footnote-42) AviChayil is a Hebrew word that has a meaning of: “My Father is strong”. This is most appropriate as a remez, or a hint, to HaShem, the Mashiach ben Yosef’s Heavenly Father:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 18:35*** *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.*

Another pasuk from Megillat Esther that has strong Messianic overtones is:

***Esther 5:1*** *Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther donned royalty, and stood in the inner court of the king’s house, over against the king’s house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.*

As His Majesty King Yeshua rose on the third day, so also did Queen Esther rise on the third day. As His Majesty presented Himself to HaShem The King in the Holy of Holies in the heavens, so queen Esther presented herself to the king in the inner court. As HaShem sits on His throne, so the king sat on his.

Thus, we see that Psalms chapter 22 is full of hints and lots of intrigue.

**Ashlamatah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) ‎62.8 – 63.4,7**

**8 The Lord swore by His right hand and by the arm of His strength; I will no longer give your grain to your enemies,**

and foreigners shall no longer drink your wine for which you have toiled.

**9 But its gatherers shall eat it and they shall praise the Lord, and its gatherers shall drink it in My holy courts.**

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

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

**10 Pass, pass through the portals, clear the way of the people, pave, pave the highway, clear it of stones, lift up a banner over the peoples.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**11 Behold, the Lord announced to the end of the earth, "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your salvation has come.'**

" Behold His reward is with Him, and His wage is before Him.

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

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

**12 And they shall call them the holy people, those redeemed by the Lord, and you shall be called, "sought, a city not forsaken."**

**Chapter 63**

**1 Who is this coming from Edom, with soiled garments, from Bozrah, this one [Who was] stately in His apparel, girded with the greatness of His strength? "I speak with righteousness, great to save."**

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

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

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

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

**2 Why is Your clothing red, and your attire like [that of] one who trod in a wine press?**

**3 "A wine press I trod alone, and from the peoples, none was with Me; and I trod them with My wrath, and I trampled them with My fury, and their life blood sprinkled on My garments, and all My clothing I soiled.**

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

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

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

**4 For a day of vengeance was in My heart, and the year of My redemption has arrived.**

**7 The kind acts of the Lord I will mention, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord bestowed upon us, and much good to the house of Israel, which He bestowed upon them according to His mercies and according to His many kind acts.**

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

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

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| **NAZAREAN TALMUD**  **Sidra Of B’resheet (Genesis) 26.12-35**  **Y’zera Yitschaq” – “And Yitschaq Sowed”**  **By: H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham** | |
| **Hakham Shaul’s School of Tosefta**  **(Luke 6:10-11)**  **And looking around at them all, he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand!” And he did so. And his hand was restored and made whole like the other. And they** (the Boethusians) **were filled with madness, and talked with one another as to what they might do to Yeshua.** | **Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat**  **(Mark 3:5-6)**  **And having looked upon them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their heart, he said to the man, “Stretch forth your hand;” and he stretched forth, and his hand was restored; And** the Boethusians **having gone forth, immediately, with the Herodians, were taking counsel against him how they might destroy him.** |
|  |  |
| **Hakham Shaul’s School of Remes**  **2 Luqas (Acts) 15:1 -12**  **And some** men **came down from Y’hudah and began teaching who the** Jewish **brothers are,** saying to the gentiles **“Unless you are circumcised and walk according to the customs[[43]](#footnote-43) mandated by Moshe** (and the Hakhamim)**, you cannot receive the Nefesh Yehudi** (and enter the Olam HaBa)**.” And after considerable discussion they were unable to resolve the issue halakhically[[44]](#footnote-44) therefore, they arranged for Hakham Shaul and** Paqid **BarNechamah and some others from among them to go up to the Sh’l'achim and Zechanim of Yerushalayim concerning this issue. So they were sent on their way by the Esnoga/Synagogue, and passed through both Phoenicia and Shomron, telling in detail the conversion of the Gentiles and bringing great joy to all the** Jewish **brothers. And when they arrived in Yerushalayim, they were received by the Esnoga/Synagogue and the Sh’l'achim and Zechanim, and reported all that God had done with them. But some of those who had believed from the party of the P’rushim** (Pharisees)[[45]](#footnote-45) **stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to observe the Torah[[46]](#footnote-46) of Moshe!”** | |
|  | |

**15:6 – 9 ¶** **Both the Sheliachim and the Zechanim** (**the talmidim of the Master**) **assembled[[47]](#footnote-47) to deliberate concerning this matter.[[48]](#footnote-48) And** after **there was much debate, Hakham Tsefet stood up** and **said to them, “Anashim** (Men of nobility) and**brothers, you know that a good while ago[[49]](#footnote-49) how God chose among you through my mouth** that **the Gentiles should hear the message of the Mesorah and become faithfully obedient[[50]](#footnote-50)** (to the Torah/Mesorah of the Master).[[51]](#footnote-51) **And God, who knows the heart, testified to them** by **giving** them**the Nefesh Yehudi** (Jewish Soul of Holiness)**, just as he also** did **to us.** **And He made no distinction between us and them,[[52]](#footnote-52) cleansing their hearts[[53]](#footnote-53) through faithful obedience**.”

**15:10 – 12 Hakham Tsefet continued saying “So now why are you putting God to the test[[54]](#footnote-54)** by **placing on the neck of the talmidim** (**not on the Gentiles**) **a yoke[[55]](#footnote-55) that neither our fathers nor we have strength to bear? But we who have become faithfully obedient** **will have admittance into the Olam HaBa[[56]](#footnote-56) through the chesed** (mercy) of the **Master Yeshua, and they will find admittance into the Olam HaBa in the same way as we did,**” **And the whole congregation became silent and listened to BarNechamah and Hakham Shaul describing the marvel of the Gentiles taking up** (putting to practice) **the signs of God.**

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

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gen. 26:12-35 | Psa. 22:1-22 | Is 62:8 – 63:4, 7 | Mk 3:5-6 | Lk 6:10-11 | Acts 15:1-11 |

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

**In the Esnoga (Synagogue)**

Hakham Tsefet depicts Yeshua as a faithfully obedient Jewish Hakham. The uses of “again” in the pericope, denotes faithful attendance. His attendance at the Esnoga is regular and faithful. Even though it appears that there are contradictions we understand that Judaism was struggling with its identity under the Roman regime. “Pax Romana” was not “peace” in the Jewish sense of the word. Roman “Pax” (peace) was peace through subjugation. The old cliché “the squeaky wheel gets the grease” did not serve to describe Pax Romana. The cliché might have read more like “the squeaky wheel gets replaced.” In other words, everything was peaceful so long as conformity was routine. When subjugation brought some form of rebellion the Roman administration quickly dealt with it by force. Our text makes somewhat of a play on these notions. The Boethusians sympathized with the Roman regime. Therefore, the contest between the Boethusians and the Master is more telluric than religious. Their use of the Torah was only for the sake of accomplishing their Epicurean agendas.

**The Rise of Rabbinic Hakhamim**

Having halakhic eyes to see the troubles which Hakham Tsefet presents as legal issues of the first century is most intriguing. What is of equal interest is the understanding of all the socio/religious views of the first century. Judaism of the first century was fragmented and fractured. Jacob Neusner tells us that there was no such thing as “normative Judaism” in the first century.[[57]](#footnote-57) Josephus observes noticeable differences between the three most popular groups.[[58]](#footnote-58) If Judaism was to survive there must be some normative unity. The rise of the Rabbinic Hakhamim was the result of Jews who were genuinely trying to draw closer to G-d and establish a normative Judaism. This legacy was initiated by Ezra and refuelled by Hillel and his talmidim. This is not to minimize the efforts of other great Jewish redeemers before or after. First century Judaism was “full of vitality, but in the end without a clear and widely accepted view of what was required of each man, apart from acceptance of the Mosaic revelation. And this could mean whatever you wanted. People would ask one teacher after another, what must I do to enter the kingdom of heaven?”[[59]](#footnote-59)

The rabbinic mission was that of bringing salvation[[60]](#footnote-60) – preservation by a normative Judaism.

**The God of our fathers raised up Yeshua, whom you had killed and hanged on a tree. This one, God has exalted to be a leader and the preservation[[61]](#footnote-61) of the** Oral Torah – Mesorah.

This verse is typically rendered as…

This One G-d has exalted to be a Ruler and Saviour to His right hand in order to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel.

The context is butchered and the “new” religion is established in just a few simple words. This translation totally misappropriates Yeshua’s mission. The fact that Yeshua is a “**leader”** (ruler) is easily demonstrated in the present pericopes of the Marcan and Lucan texts. Our translation makes it clear that Yeshua was one of the “Leaders” who sought to “preserve” (save) faithful obedience to God through an awareness of the Oral Torah – Mesorah i.e. normative Judaism.

If we define “salvation” as some ecstatic connection to the spirit world and thereby G-d we have totally missed the point. Yeshua’s mission as one of the Leaders of the Jewish people was **the preservation of a normative Jewish lifestyle which was faithful to the Torah.**

**Hillel as a Prophet**

In our previous pericope and commentary, we demonstrated that Yeshua was a Prophet “Like” Moshe Rabbenu. We must assert that the same is true of Hillel. As a Hakham, Hillel “Prophesied” the Oral Torah in the same manner as Yeshua. Yeshua and Hillel prophesied on a level above the Prophets because they prophesied from the Oral Torah. Just as the Torah is the standard for Prophecy the Oral Torah is the standard for elucidating the written Torah. We have used the word “prophecy” in relation to speaking the truth of the Torah and Oral Torah. This is NOT to rob the concept of Prophecy of the ability to see the future per se. This would evoke a question. If the Torah and Oral Torah are prophecy, can the Hakhamim such as Hillel and Yeshua foresee the future by studying the Oral Torah? Or, to state the question differently are the Torah and Oral Torah prophecy in the sense of foretelling the future? We answer with a decisive **Yes**! Therefore, the Hakhamim who devote themselves to incessant study of the Torah and Oral Torah will see the future. Therefore, by means of the Oral Torah, Hillel and Yeshua were able to picture the future of Judaism. Furthermore, they laboured to bring about a normative Judaism based on the foundation of the Torah and Oral Torah. Hillel and Yeshua desired to build Judaism on an establishment of Jewish Mesorah. In one sense, this type of Judaism had never existed before. However, since that time the dominant Judaism is the Judaism that they established. This is not to say that there are not branches, factions and diversity in present day Judaism. What has been deemed as “Orthodox” is that of Rabbinic Mesorah taught by Yeshua. These pericopes of Hakham Tsefet reflect this connection. However, it is impossible to see this connection if one takes an anti-Rabbinic posture. It is interesting to note that in the coming pericope of Hakham Tsefet’s Mishnah demonstrates that Jews from every “corner” of Eretz Yisrael came to the North (the Galil) to hear the Mesorah of Hillel and Yeshua.[[62]](#footnote-62) Why do we see these groups arrive in the Galil (North) from every part of Eretz Yisrael to question Yeshua? It would suggest that the Galil was the religious academic centre of Eretz Yisrael, while Yerushalayim was the cultic centre of the Nation. We would further opine that it was here with Yeshua and his teacher Shimon ben Hillel that the “Kallah Secessions” actually were initiated.

**Ben Elohim**

 Many scholars jump at the chance to cite some passage or phrase to deify Yeshua HaMashiach. The phrase “Son of G-d” should be understood as “Son of the (a) Judge. This implies that Yeshua’s father, Yosef was a Judge on a Bet Din. However, the phrase can also mean that Yeshua was the student (talmid) of a Judge such as Shimon ben Hillel. This notion fits well with the comments we have made above. As a talmid of Hillel, Yeshua fits into this category. In a measure all Hakhamim must now function as a Judge. This is for the benefit and growth of the spiritual community. Yeshua is depicted in these pericopes as a Judge, defining matters of halakhah. As Messiah, Yeshua would accept the role of Judge very much like Hillel his Hakham.

Yeshua presents the halakhic question to the Boethusians.

**“Is it lawful** (Halakhically acceptable) **on the Sabbath, to do what is beneficial, or to do evil** (empty – Heb Ra)**? To save** (preserve) **life, or to destroy it?”**

**Peroration**

 The failure of the Boethusians to answer the question means they acquiesce. Likewise, Yeshua’s healing of the man with the withered hand demonstrates his decisive Halakhah. Therefore, we gather that Yeshua decided with true Rabbinic Hokhmah and determined that **the Torah is a means to live by**.

**Determinate Halakhah**

**As Nazarean Jews we must state that the Torah is a means to Live by! However, to fully understand these matters we emphatically assert that the Nazarean Jew must seek the council of a Hakham in such matters before taking any course of action!**

**Remes Commentary to Hakham Shaul**

**Introduction**

The Gemarah of II Luqas is seemingly fraught with halakhic problems. However, we will apply Remes hermeneutics to determine the solution to our problems. Superficially, it would appear that Hakham Shaul has reached an impasse. However, as we will see, Hakham Shaul is teaching us the importance of defused power and the eminence of the Bate Din. In the present Gemarah we have a Nazarean Bet Din Gadol as a decisive body for determining halakhic mores. However, we must assert that this Nazarean Bet Din follows the protocols requisite for all Bate Din. The apparent “conflict” is written on every page of the Gemarah. The formula of Rabbi “A” saying X and Rabbi “B” saying Y bringing a decision of Z is absolutely Jewish. Furthermore, this system in no way negates the halakhic mores established by the Hakhamim. We also opine that this is the mindset of the Nazarean Communities and every Orthodox Jew in the First Century.

Firstly, the halakhic answer must be based on the Written Torah, halakhic exegesis applied to the Written Torah, precedential[[63]](#footnote-63) resolution based on the decisions of the Hakhamim and or the traditions of our ancestors.

Secondly, the concept of a mitzvah is connection to G-d. Therefore, mitzvoth (pl.) are a means of connection with the Divine. For the Gentiles or we the Jewish people to reject the Divinely mandated mitzvoth, connection to G-d would be impossible. The Jewish soul (Nefesh Yehudi) rejoices in *matan haTorah* (giving of the Torah) because it is a confirmation to the orally transmitted Torah of our forefathers. The Oral Torah is a testimony to the magnitude of the Jewish soul. This is because the grandeur of the Jewish soul has the ability to make connection to G-d on the highest levels of reception. To refuse to accept the mitzvoth is to rescind connection to G-d and forfeit our place in the Olam HaBa (the ever-coming world).

Rabbi Dr. Charles B. Chavel in his translation and commentary on “**The Commandments: Sefer Ha-Mitzvoth of Maimonides**”[[64]](#footnote-64) has enumerated seven principles regarding the “Performance of the Mitzvoth.”

1. Hiddur Mitzvah (Glorifying the mitzvah)
2. Chibbuv Mitzvah (Love of the mitzvah)
3. Mitzvoth Tzrichoth Kavvanah (Mitzvoth need conscious purpose for their due performance)
4. Zerizuth (Alertness)
5. Bizui Mitzvah (A mitzvah may not be treated with disrespect)
6. Mitzvah Habaah Be' Averah (A mitzvah may not be performed with the fruits of sin).
7. Ponder the path

These seven principles demonstrate the Jewish approach to the Mitzvoth. Any other approach is contrary to possession of the Nefesh Yehudi.

**Circumcision**

Circumcision is not only Torah mandated it is Divinely mandated. Furthermore, we see that when Abraham sealed his covenant with G-d in his flesh the promised son came immediately. While the Torah is not given to promising a reward for obedience to the mitzvoth we have a plethora of examples where the eight principles noted above bring forth bountiful fruit. This is no less true of circumcision.

**B’resheet (Gen). 17:10-14 “This is My covenant, which you will keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. And you will be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it will be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. A *servant* who is born in your house or who is bought with your money will surely be circumcised; thus will My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person will be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”**

**B’midbar 15:15 “The convert will be the same as you…”[[65]](#footnote-65)**

**This statute** (Chok) **is eternal!** Therefore, for a connection to G-d to be valid in the Jewish or Converted male there **must** be ritual circumcision. Abraham is analogous of the Gentile who turns to G-d. If Abraham Abinu is circumcised at a late stage in life, we cannot imagine this “mitzvah” being rescinded through any means. Had G-d planned to detract this mitzvah, how could He have stated that it was to be practiced “**throughout all generations**”? And how would He explain Himself to those generations after demanding their circumcision?

**Legalities**

We often wrestle with the Oral Torah and why we should adhere to it principles. We have discussed the structured universe ad nauseam, yet we have yet to reach a complete understanding of its preeminent importance. In the present case, we might question if the Oral Torah is really applicable to our halakhic issue. We must assert that it is! However, as we have shown, the Torah is replete with enough data to understand that Gentile circumcision is not even a consideration. Gentiles most certainly **must** be circumcised.[[66]](#footnote-66) The Oral Torah will apply to procedure, but not to determining whether Gentiles should receive the mark/sign of the Covenant in their flesh. The translation of His Eminence Rabbi Eliyahu Touger to B’midbar 15:15 make it abundantly clear that Jews and Gentiles are circumcised as a sign that they are a part of the Covenant. If the Gentile wants to have the same ability to “connect” with the Divine, he is obligated to follow the same mitzvot that the Jewish people have followed for millennia. Gentiles are most certainly recipients of G-d’s chesed (mercy). However, their experience can never match the connection G-d has made with his Covenant people until they have submitted to the laws of conversion (which includes circumcision according to the Jewish Law).

**Allegorical meaning of Circumcision**

The critics among the Christian “Scholars” will never understand the depth of Allegory until they throw out the notion that everything, including allegory is literal/Peshat. To fail to understand the allegory of II Luqas (Acts) 15:1-5 is indistinguishable to the blind leading the blind. Christian Scholarship relegates itself to two types of hermeneutic. The first is Peshat, which they honestly do not understand. If they truly understood Peshat hermeneutics, they would never apply Peshat to all the books of the Nazarean Codicil.

Secondly, Christian Scholarship spiritualizes all that they do not deem “literal.” Again, this is a fatal error. Many things that are “spiritualized” are a means of dismissing halakhah. This is the case with the present pericope of II Luqas.

**Excision of soulish pleasure**

Philo elaborates in the most eloquent terms the allegorical meaning of circumcision.[[67]](#footnote-67) Allegorically speaking circumcision is being **Shomer Shabbat**. (Observer/Keeper of Shabbat) This means that the Jewish Soul/Nefesh Yehudi understands that everything must be temperate. Sexual pleasure is not a forbidden act. Had it been forbidden or shameful G-d could never have created it. This is Torah too! (The wise will understand) The absurdity of those who propagate such lies (that legitimate sexual pleasure is forbidden is amoral or dirty) should be hung with a new rope. (Our hyperbole). Excision of the soul equated to Shomer Shabbat, means that the Jewish Soul follows the mandates of the Hakhamim and Mesorah with meticulous care. This is because they understand the Hakhamim as guardians of the Jewish Soul. Another way of stating the same things is that Excision of Soulish pleasure means that the Jewish soul has mastered or is working diligently on mastering the Yetser HaRa (inclination to do evil). This does not mean that the Yetser HaRa is annihilated. It means that the Yetser HaRa is relegated to its proper place.

**Man’s knowing (Da’at) himself**

How can circumcision be equated with man’s Knowing himself? Each of us is given a gift at Pesach. The gift is the mastery of pride and ego. Chametz, allegorically represents the swelling of the ego. Therefore, the ability to “Know” oneself is equated with circumcision because the Jewish soul understands that the inflation of virility has its place and purpose. Man’s world is a balance of the natural and supernatural. Investigation of natural things can teach us volumes about the invisible spiritual world. Therefore, we must find the balance of investigation between both of these worlds. However, these mundane things are not the real world. They are only a *mashal* (parable analogy) of true reality.

The ability to “Know” one’s own “self”[[68]](#footnote-68) means that he has mastery of one’s self or self-mastery. This state belongs to those who are Masters of the Torah’s four levels of Prds. One cannot be the “master of his soul” if he does not know the difference between the literal and the allegorical. Nor can he master his soul if he is only involved in the study of a single Hermeneutic level. Those that study believing that everything is Peshat will never experience the heights of So’od. However, those who are only involved in the study of So’od will never connect with G-d in the way that G-d designed the human soul. These people actually destroy what they want to create or repair because they have neglected the other levels of experience and mandated practical application. These practices drove the B’ne Yisrael into the first Exile. Likewise, we can understand that if these imbalanced practices continue in the soul that is not balanced, he or she will find himself or herself in spiritual exile, ***karet*** (cut off) from the things that they desire.

**Problems and Conclusion**

The Problem is that there is **NO** Problem. The II Luqan Gemarah is no more about “circumcision” than the Torah Seder is about Man (manna).

Therefore, the true argument presented in our Remes portion of the Nazarean Codicil cannot be whether Gentiles should be circumcised. As we have stated above this is not a legitimate halakhic question. The true meaning of the Gemarah is Gentile submission to the Jewish Bate Din as part and process of Gentiles converting. Allegorically we see that Hakham Shaul and others are “sent” by the Esnoga/Synagogue at Antioch. This is a statement showing that the Jewish people follow the system of the Oral Torah without hesitancy. This is the model and precedent to be followed by the Gentile as he/she turns toward G-d. His connection to G-d through circumcision is equated with being Shomer Shabbat (Observers/keeper of the Sabbath). He accepts the covenantal sign in his flesh as a sign that he is connected to G-d in a very intimate way.

“The sacred scripture teaches not to neglect a good reputation, and not to break through any established **customs**,[[69]](#footnote-69) which divine men of greater wisdom than any in our time have enacted or established. For although the seventh day is a lesson to teach us the power which exists in the uncreated God, and also that the creature is entitled to rest from his labors, it does not follow that on that account we may abrogate the laws which are established respecting it, so as to light a fire, or till land, or carry burdens, or bring accusations, or conduct suits at law, or demand a restoration of a deposit, or exact the repayment of a debt, or do any other of the things which are usually permitted at times which are not days of festival. **Nor does it follow, because the feast is the symbol of the joy of the soul and of its gratitude towards God, that we are to repudiate the assemblies ordained at the periodical seasons of the year; nor because the rite of circumcision is an emblem of the excision of pleasures and of all the passions, and of the destruction of that impious opinion, according to which the mind has imagined itself to be by itself competent to produce offspring, does it follow that we are to annul the law which has been enacted about circumcision**.”[[70]](#footnote-70)

As a brief commentary to Philo’s words, we note that the allegorical meaning of a verse or verses in the Torah do not negate the truth of halakhic application.

It is also possible that like the case of the Manna, where Scripture states: ***“Then said the LORD unto Moses: 'Behold, I will cause to rain bread from heaven for you; and the people will go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or not”*** (Exodus 16:4), that some easy commandments are necessary to be given to the Gentiles to show to all concerned “***whether they will walk in His Law or not***,” before we demand circumcision.

**Implicit Mitzvot**

* The Gentile converting to Nazarean (Orthodox) Judaism must be ritually circumcised.
* It is incumbent on the Nazarean Jew to be Shomer Shabbat.

# II Luqas (Acts) 15:6-11

**Introduction**

We have now before us some of the most difficult passages in all the Nazarean Codicil. Therefore, we must read with great caution every word so that we are able to determine exactly what is being conveyed. Through context, contiguity and hermeneutic laws we will be able to determine that the great discussion being deliberated is the “Gentile predicament.”[[71]](#footnote-71) It should be obvious that the great deliberation is over how the Jewish people are to relate to the Gentiles in Diaspora, without presenting an unnecessary threat to the practices of the commandments and traditions received. This is a very complex issue. However, through verbal archaeology we are able to determine how to interpret this deliberation. Therefore, we will try to interpret the materials systematically and then try to draw a Remes and halakhic summation.

**A Nazarean Bet Din**

**Both the Sh’l'achim and the Zechanim** (the talmidim of the Master)…

Before we can determine what is being deliberated we need to know that the Bet Din is a Nazarean one. This means that the congregation of Judges/Hakhamim are all believers in Yeshua as Messiah i.e. Yeshua’s Talmidim. Therefore, all the congregants are Yeshua’s **talmidim!** Upon this point, we must be clear, because it is a vital point in our understanding of this Bet Din’s ruling. If there is any Gentile present, we are not apprised of their attendance. We will opine that there are not any Gentiles present. We are able to make this assessment because this is a Nazarean **Jewish** Bet Din. Therefore, the issue being discussed is “Adjudicated” by a Jewish Bet Din of Hakhamim. The determination of this Bet Din will establish precedent or follow the **customs[[72]](#footnote-72)** of earlier Bate Din.

**Colossians 2:16-17 Therefore let no one who is a Gentile but the body of Messiah (the Jewish people) pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a New Moon or a Sabbath. 17 For these are a shadow (prophecies) of things yet to come.**

Hakham Shaul makes this statement in the wake of II Luqas (Acts) chapter 15 making it clear that the Gentiles are subjected to the Jewish Bate Din. Therefore, we see from this passage that the only viable Court with regard to Jewish halakhah is an authentic Bet Din of Jewish Hakhamim.

**Romans 13:1- 2** **Let every gentile soul be subject to the governing authorities** (of the Jewish Synagogue)**. For there is no legitimate authority except** (that of the Jewish Bet Din) **from God, and the authorities** (of the Bet Din) **that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority** (of the Bet Din) **resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment** (of the heavens) **upon themselves.**

Therefore, all Gentiles who wish to have any part in the Jewish Commonwealth must uphold the rulings of the Jewish Bet Din. We state this as a matter of Halakhah.

**Hakham Tsefet stood up** and **said to them, “Anashim** (Men of nobility) and**brothers, you know that a good while ago[[73]](#footnote-73) how God chose among you through my mouth** that **the Gentiles should hear the message of the Mesorah and become faithfully obedient[[74]](#footnote-74)** (to the Torah/Mesorah of the Master)…

Hakham Tsefet is referring to the events that transpired as he stayed in Caesarea. The precedential case of Cornelius will guide us through the next few weeks as we look at the “Gentile Predicament.”

**Shema Yisrael (and Gentiles) HaShem Our G-d is One!**

**And He made no distinction between us and them,[[75]](#footnote-75) cleansing their hearts[[76]](#footnote-76) through faithful obedience**.”

There is One Torah for the Jew and the Gentile alike as it says…

**Shmot (Exo.) 12:49) One Torah will be to him that is native born, and unto the Gentile** (Ger) **that dwells among you. B’Midbar (Num.) 15:15 “The convert will be the same as you…”[[77]](#footnote-77)**

Hakham Tsefet’s words echo Shmot 12:49, B’Midbar 15:15. There is only one Torah, meaning that the Torah Oral and written constitute the “Torah.” Furthermore, there is not a Torah for the Jewish people and another for the Gentiles. There is One G-d! This is the principal statement of Judaism according to Yeshua and the Hakhamim. The same Torah that applies to the Jewish people applies to the Gentile who wishes to join the commonwealth of Yisrael.

**Summary of II Luqas (Acts) 15:6-9**

To summarize the first pericope of the Remes portion of our Nazarean Talmud we note…

* The Congregation/Bet Din is a Nazarean Assembly of Yeshua’s **Talmidim**
* The Bet Din is a Halakhically acceptable Bet Din
* The Jewish Bate Din are the only acceptable Courts for determining acceptable Halakhot
* Hakham Tsefet was that principal Sh’liach (apostle – emissary, plenipotentiary agent) to the Gentiles
* The Gentiles have already accepted the Mesorah (Torah Orally and Written) as elucidated by the Master by the mouth of Hakham Tsefet
* Acceptance of the Mesorah and faithful obedience to the Halakhic mores of the Jewish Bate Din resulted in the Nefesh Yehudi being given to the Gentiles as it was given to the Jewish people
* There is no distinction between the Jew and Gentile who has fully converted to Jewish Orthodoxy

It is imperative that we understand the above noted items before moving on to the next pericope. Therefore, we ask that our readers please rehearse the bulleted items above.

**2nd Pericope II Luqas (Acts) 15:10-12**

**Allegory**

The word "allegory," is derived from the Greek "*alla,*" meaning "other," and "*agoreuo*," meaning, “proclaim.” It originally referred to a figure of speech that Cicero defined as a “continuous stream of metaphors.” According to St. Augustine, allegory is a mode of speech in which “one thing is understood by another.” Allegory differs from ***the parable*** in its more systematic presentation of the different features of the idea, which it illustrates, as well as in its contents, which are concerned with the exposition of theoretical truths rather than practical exhortation.

**Hakham Tsefet continued saying “So now why are you putting God to the test** by **placing on the neck of the talmidim** (**not on the Gentiles**) **a yoke that neither our fathers nor we have strength to bear?**

This passage is the most confused pericope in all of the Nazarean Codicil! Therefore, let us begin with a few introductory remarks.

We must note principally that the mentioned “yoke” is NOT a “Yoke” being placed upon the Gentiles. Hakham Tsefet is saying that the “Yoke” is placed on Yeshua’s Talmidim. At this juncture, we must note that the “talmidim are primarily Jewish or Orthodox Jewish Converts. In other words, without exception, all of Yeshua’s talmidim are “Jewish” by birth or Conversion to Orthodox Judaism.

**The Unbearable Yoke**

Hakham Shaul through his amanuensis Hillel (Dr Luke) has recorded his words very carefully. Therefore, we must look at them with great care. For our hermeneutic rules, we look to the Thirteen Remes rules compiled by Rabbi Ishmael b. Elisha.

**1 Ḳal wa-ḥomer:** Identical with the first rule of Hillel - "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.

1. **Gezerah shawah:** Identical with the second rule of Hillel - Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.

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

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

**12 Deduction from the context.**

The coded language of Hakham Shaul has eluded the best Scholars. This is because they fail to accept that the present materials are Allegory. Secondly, they fail to understand that II Luqas (Acts) is a Remes commentary to the Mishnaic Marqan Peshat. Therefore, we will note that we follow the above cited hermeneutics for the sake of determining the nature of the “unbearable Yoke.” The Torah itself gives us the answer in Sefer D’barim (Deuteronomy).

**D’varim (Deut). 22:10 “You will not plow with an ox and a donkey together.”**

Hakham Tesfet’s Remes speech perfectly explains the apparent problem dealt with by Yeshua’s Talmidim. The Mishneh Torah (Yad Hazakah) elaborates on the halakhah of ploughing with two animals as presented in D’barim (Deut) 22:10.

**Kilyaim Chapter 9 Halacha 7** Anyone who performs labor with two species of animals or wild beasts together **when one of them is kosher and the other is not kosher is liable for lashes in all places**, as [Deuteronomy 22:10] states: "Do not plow with an ox (a Kosher Animal) and a donkey (a non-Kosher animal) together. "Whether one plows, seeds, has them pull a wagon, or a stone, or led them together even with his voice [alone], he is liable for lashes. This is derived from the term "together." If, however, one [merely] yokes them [to a wagon], he is exempt unless he pulls them or leads them.

Hakham Shaul’s allegorical words in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians has been mistranslated.

**2 Co. 6:14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers** (i.e. Gentiles who oppose Torah observance)**; for what partnership has righteous/generosity and lawlessness** (direct opposition to the Torah)**, or what fellowship has light with darkness?**

The Rambam makes the allegory even clearer. The unbearable yoke is a Jew being yoked with a Gentile and forced to “till in the same Torah.” This is an impossible situation. However, Christian scholars have been trying to plow the Torah like a Donkey for nearly two millennia. We have established in earlier materials that the Torah is elucidated “**by the Jew first!**”

**Rom. 1:16** **For I am not ashamed of the Mesorah** (of the Master), **for it is the virtuous power of God bringing redemption to everyone who is faithfully obedient,** (to the Mesorah) **Chiefly by the Jewish** Hakhamim[[78]](#footnote-78) **and also by the Jewish** Hakhamim of the **Hellenists** (in Diaspora).[[79]](#footnote-79)

Therefore, it is impossible/unbearable for the Jewish Hakhamim and Talmidim of the Master to till in the Torah with a Donkey, i.e. Christian Scholar!

**Romans 3:1** **Then what advantage does the Jew have? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, they were entrusted with the oracles of God** (Mesorah).

Hakham Shaul shows that those who are “yoked” with the “unbelieving” Gentiles are “yoked” to those who will not faithfully obey the Torah therefore, lacking righteous/generosity, i.e. the Nefesh Yehudi. We will elaborate on this yoke later in this commentary.

**In the Wake of Rebellion**

**m. Shab 1:4** These are some of the laws which they stated in the upper room of Hananiah b. Hezekiah b. Gurion when they went up to visit him. They took a vote, and the House of Shammai outnumbered the House of Hillel. And eighteen rules did they decree on that very day.

The Gemarah to The Mishnaic Shabbat 1:4 reads as follows…

**b. Shab 17a** ﻿A sword was planted in the Beth HaMidrash and it was proclaimed, He who would enter, let him enter, but he who would depart, let him not depart![[80]](#footnote-80) And on that day Hillel sat submissive before Shammai, like one of the disciples,[[81]](#footnote-81) **and it was as grievous to Israel[[82]](#footnote-82) as the day when the [golden] calf was made**.

This situation is amazing when we realize some very interesting facts. Jewish sources are plentiful that tell us Shammai (Vice-president) was the Av Bet Din to Hillel, who served as the Nasi (President) of the Bet Din. The point here is that Shammai has no respect for the chain of command. In other words, Shammai demonstrated despotic power over the B’ne Yisrael rather than following the appropriate system of Hakham/talmid. Shammai usurped authority over Hillel in and illegal manner on this day. The Sin of the Golden calf is not about the eighteen measures mostly. The “Sin of the Golden Calf” here is the sin of the abrogating the principle of hierarchy. Hillel as the Nasi (president) should have been honored rather than being relegated to the position of one of Shammai’s talmidim. It is imperative that we understand this principle before continuing. The structure of the Esnoga/Synagogue is built on a very specific hierarchy. This hierarchy has preserved the Esnoga for millennia. Furthermore, the system of Hakham/Talmid has existed also for millennia. The systematic diffusion of power is expressed in the present Torah Seder with the words of Yitro to his son-in-law Moshe Rabbenu.[[83]](#footnote-83)

According to Josephus, Hezekiah b. Gurion (Garon)[[84]](#footnote-84) was a murderous robber.[[85]](#footnote-85) This would account for the Jerusalem Talmud’s statement in **Shabbat 1:4** that the followers of Shammai *did* murder the disciples of Hillel: “Rabbi Yehoshua taught: The students of Beit Shammai stood below, killing the students of Beit Hillel. We learn: Six of them went up, and the rest stood upon them with swords and spears.”

The meeting place in the House of Hezekiah b. Gurion (Garon) could not have been pro-Gentile. Consequently, we must surmise that the eighteen edicts of Shammai were in direct opposition to Gentile interaction with the Jewish people and their possible Conversion.[[86]](#footnote-86) Hillel was kind, guiding Gentiles towards the acceptance of the Kingdom/Governance of G-d through the Bate din as opposed to human kings. Shammai, on the other hand, was vehemently opposed to any interaction between Jew and Gentile.[[87]](#footnote-87) Hakham Shaul refers to this separation as a “wall of partition” …

**Eph. 2:14-16 But you** (Gentiles) **who were far away are now brought close by your union with Yeshua HaMashiach, his life of peace bringing us into unity by breaking down the middle wall of partition[[88]](#footnote-88) which stood between us. This was accomplished by abolishing the enactments contained** **in** (Shammaite) **ordinances** (dogma)**[[89]](#footnote-89), that he might establish one new body[[90]](#footnote-90) in himself, by the cross, having broken down conflict** between the Jewish people and the Gentiles**.**

It would appear that Yeshua’s Talmidim followed his belief that the Gentiles were destined to enter the Olam HaBa with the Jewish people through conversion.

**Matityahu (Matt). 28:19 “Therefore go and make talmidim** (disciples) **of all the nations** (talmudize the Gentiles), **immersing** (as a pars pro toto to the full rite of conversion) **them on the authority of the Father and the Son and the Oral Torah,**

The eighteen edicts of Shammai must have dominated the Jewish mindset from 20 B.C.E until about 44-45 C.E. This is the timeframe when Hakham Tsefet enters Cornelius’s house in II Luqas (Acts) 10:28.

**And he said to them, You know that it is a forbidden[[91]](#footnote-91) thing for a man, a Jew to keep company with or to come near to one of another nation. But G-d has shown me not to call any man common or unclean** (but his kitchen is unclean)**.**

Obviously, this is not a Torah Mandate. It is in fact most likely one of the enactments of Shammai who also determined even the air of Gentile lands “unclean.” Yeshua’s talmidim, beginning with Hakham Tsefet accepted Gentiles as Talmidim though Orthodox Conversion. All Scholars, including our unequally yoked asses accept that Orthodox conversion in the First Century included (for males) circumcision and then immersion. Interestingly the Zohar states that the B’ne Yisrael were circumcised until just before Pesach. Hakham Shaul shows the precedential process of conversion by saying…

**1 Co. 10:2 and all were immersed into Moshe in the cloud and in the sea**

Rabbi Yaakov Culi answers our question for us. Hakham Culi tells us that there were 50 miracles, which occurred at the Yam Suf. The first he cites is the “Seven Ananei HaKabod” as being enveloped in the Shekinah (Divine Presence) by seven clouds that coalesced into one solid cloud.[[92]](#footnote-92)

In other words, they were immersed in the “Seven Ananei HaKabod.” We learn that they were first circumcised, then they were immersed as a “sign” and they received the Torah at Har Sinai. Therefore, the procedure for reviving the Nefesh Yehudi is established in the B’ne Yisrael. Interestingly, last week we dealt with the “sign” of circumcision. In the readings of the Zohar for last week’s Torah Seder, the material discusses the “sign” of circumcision at length. It associates the phrase “(Exod. 15:26) If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God” with Malkut, the symbol of circumcision.[[93]](#footnote-93) How did the B’ne Yisrael merit the Shekinah (the Divine Presence) which resulted in their reception of the Nefesh Yehudi? “Through guarding (shomer) against the impurity of the menstruation.”[[94]](#footnote-94)

The Rabbis show that the process of Gentile conversion must match the Jewish acceptance of the yoke of the Kingdom/Governance of G-d. They accepted circumcision, immersion, the acceptance of a sacrifice and the reception of the Oral Torah.[[95]](#footnote-95)

**Salvation, Entrance into the Olam HaBa through Yeshua**

**But we who have become faithfully obedient** **will have admittance into the Olam HaBa through the chesed** (mercy) of the **Master Yeshua, and they will find admittance into the Olam HaBa in the same way as we did**”

Because the donkey cannot till the Torah we have seen the Christian Scholars (Donkeys) try to abrogate the Torah and establish deistic means for “Salvation” or the right to enter the Olam HaBa.

**m. San 10:1** All Israelites have a share in the world to come (be Saved),

How is it that All Yisrael merits entrance into the Olam HaBa?

**b. Baba Mestia 2:11** [If he has to choose between seeking] what he has lost and what his father has lost, his own takes precedence. . . . what he has lost and what his master has lost, his own takes precedence. . . . what his father has lost and what his master has lost, that of his master takes precedence. For his father brought him into this world. **But his master, who taught him wisdom, will bring him into the life of the world to come**. But if his father is a sage, that of his father takes precedence. [If] his father and his master were carrying heavy burdens, he removes that of his master, and afterward removes that of his father. [If] his father and his master were taken captive, he ransoms his master, and afterward he ransoms his father. But if his father is a sage, he ransoms his father, and afterward he ransoms his master.

Hakham Tsefet is saying that we merit entrance into the Olam HaBa because we listen to the words of the Hakhamim. By being attentive to their words, we are “birthed” into the Olam HaBa. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet’s words make perfect sense. The Gentile will merit entrance into the Olam HaBa by converting to Judaism through the ritual practiced established by the Hakhamim. Upon acceptance of the Halakhot of the Hakhamim, they have embraced and accepted the “Yoke” of the Kingdom/Governance of G-d through the Bate Din as opposed to human kings and presidents.

**m. Berakhot 2:2** “Why does [the passage of] Shema precede [that of] And it shall come to pass [if you keep my commandments]? “So that one may first **accept upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of heaven and afterwards may accept the yoke of the commandments**. “[Why does] And it shall come to pass [precede] And G-d said? “For And it shall come to pass is recited by both day and night. “[But] And G-d said is recited only by day.”

**m. Abot 3:5** R. Nehunya b. Haqqaneh says, “From whoever accepts upon himself the yoke of Torah do they remove the yoke of the state and the yoke of hard labor. “And upon whoever removes from himself the yoke of the Torah (yoke of the Kingdom i.e. recital of the Shema D’barim 6:4f.) do they lay the yoke of the state and the yoke of hard labor.”

This “Yoke” is halakhically acceptable, Baruch HaShem!

**Here Is Your Sign**

Here is a sign for you, “For my head is filled with dew.” (Petach Eliyahu).

**And the whole congregation became silent and listened to BarNechamah and Hakham Shaul describing the marvel of the Gentiles taking up** (putting to practice) **the signs of God.**

If we were to list some of the “*otiot*” of the Jewish people, we would now see what the Gentiles were accepting.

* Circumcision B’resheet (Gen.) 17:3-14
* Shabbat Shmot (Exo) 31:12-17
* Revelation at Har Sinai Shmot (Exo) 19
* Tefillin Shmot (Exo) 13:16, D’barim (Deut) 6:8 and 11:18
* Tsitsit B’Midbar (Num) 15:37-41

We can now understand that the gentiles who were coming to G-d through faithful obedience to the Mesorah of the Master accepted the “signs” as a part of their lives in the same way that the B’ne Yisrael did. Hakham Shaul does not tell of the “signs” and “wonders” that G-d was doing but rather the marvel (**τέρας** – *teras* wonder) of the Gentiles “taking up” (**ποιέω** – *poieo*) the “signs” (**σημεῖον** – *semeion*) of G-d.

**Categorical Defining of the Unbearable Yoke in detail**

We have seen that Hakham Tsefet mentioned by the unbearable Yoke in the opening of the second pericope of our Nazarean Talmud, but what implications does this have in a more detailed way?

**Firstly**, the Jew cannot plow in the field of the Torah with a Gentile “Scholar” who has not converted to Judaism and been taught the Torah “First” by a Hakham.

**Secondly**, another unbearable yoke that we, as Jewish people cannot bear, is being taught the Torah by a Gentile from a Gentile/Christian perspective. These situations were arising in places at the end of the First Century. Gentiles who should have been subordinated to Jewish Hakhamim turned the tables and began subjecting Jewish authorities to their doctrines laced with pagan practices.

**Thirdly**, if Gentiles are not permitted to convert to Judaism an unbearable yoke separates the Jew and Gentile from having “ANY” interaction. This is an impossible situation. We must be able to interact, albeit with appropriate boundaries. We must here note that the global mission of the B’ne Yisrael is to be Kings and Priests.[[96]](#footnote-96) If it is the occupation of the B’ne Yisrael to be a Nation “set apart” as a “royal priesthood,” we must be able to interact with the Gentiles, albeit on our terms. This is a cosmic mission of tikun. Should we reject this mission it would also be tantamount to the sin of the Golden calf. The Rabbis teach us that one reason the B’ne Yisrael have been sent into Diaspora is due to their lack of talmudizing the Gentiles. This is the Purim memorandum. The Jewish people in Diaspora must not cease from being Jewish.

**b. Pes. 87b** R. Eleazar said: Even when the Holy One, blessed be He, is angry, He remembers compassion, for it is said, for I will no more have compassion upon the house of Israel. R. Jose son of R. Hanina said [i.e., deduced] it from this: that I would in any wise pardon them. R. Eleazar also said: The Holy One, blessed be **He, did not exile Israel among the nations save in order that proselytes might join them,** for it is said: And I will sow her unto Me in the land; (Hos. 2:25) surely a man sows a se'ah in order to harvest many kor! While R. Johanan deduced it from this: And I will have compassion upon her that hath not obtained compassion. (﻿**R. Johanan makes this refer to the Gentiles, who in God's compassion will be given the opportunity. through Israel's exile, of coming under the wings of the Shechinah.** According to Rashi, R. Johanan deduces it from the concluding part of the verse, And I will say to them that are not My people; thou art My people. This passage shows these two Rabbis in favor of proselytes. For the general attitude of the Rabbis towards proselytization v. f. E. art. Proselyte.)

**Fourthly**, the thesis of “Scholar X” is invalid because in Esther’s day, with the victory of the Jewish people over Haman, Gentiles converted in mass, “allowing themselves to be circumcised.”[[97]](#footnote-97) And, as noted above the B’ne Yisrael throughout history have never felt it burdensome to circumcise themselves according to the Torah mandate. Likewise, millions of Muslims circumcise and have for centuries. Therefore, circumcision cannot be an “unbearable yoke” and it is foolishness to believe so.

**Fifthly**, as noted in the second point above, an unbearable yoke placed on the Jewish people i.e. Hakhamim is the subjection of the Hakham to the Talmid. This is tantamount to the sin of the “golden calf” mentioned in the Talmudic passage Shabbat 17a (13b-17b). Because Shammai usurped the authority of his Hakham/Nasi, he generated a “golden calf” equal to the sin of the first calf that wrenched the authority from their hands. Furthermore, the reversals of hierarchical order, seen in the story of the “Golden Calf,” shows contempt for Mosaic authority. The phrase “as for this Moses” shows that anarchy had ensued the B’ne Yisrael with its poison.

Furthermore, the mindset of anarchy against the “Oracles of G-d” caused Jeroboam to decide to build two golden calves. One resided in Dan and the other in Beth El. Without lengthy elaboration, we note that the idea of the Golden calf seems to be related to anarchy and usurping the authority of one’s superior. This is most certainly an “unbearable yoke.”

**Sixthly**, we have seen Hakham Tsefet’s “unbearable yoke” allegorically bespeaks of five crimes against the Jewish people and the Hakhamim. We will also note that it is impossible to interact with the Gentiles who wish to join the Commonwealth of Yisrael without having their submission to Jewish Bate Din. Furthermore, those who misread these passages determine that they are not subject to the Theocratic rule of G-d. As such, they forfeit their right of entrance to the Kingdom/Governance of G-d, and His Messiah through the Bate Din as opposed to human Kings. And, they forfeit their place in the Olam HaBa.

The Midrashic statement of Hakham Matityahu fits well here.

Matityahu (Mat.) 7:23 “**And then I** (Yeshua) **will declare to them, “I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS** (opposition to or those without the Torah)**.**”

**Peroration**

The excess of Shammaisim was an unbearable yoke in the first century. It remains an unbearable yoke to this very day. While we most certainly uphold the Torah, Oral and Written we can in no way agree with despotic authoritarian legalism to enforce it. And, while we often express our desires for halakhic observance ad nauseam, our goal is to bring about a balanced Orthodox Jewish life without legalism. We realize that there is a fine line. We also realize that G-d gave His people a head for something other than a place to put a kippah. The wall of boundary between Jew and Gentile is rebuilt and we are still in Diaspora. We must hear the words of Rabbi Johanan and our Master Yeshua and begin to talmudize those of the Nations containing the Nefesh Yehudi, hidden within Gentile vessels, waiting to be discovered and rekindled.

אמן ואמן סלה

**Questions for Understanding and Reflection**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat which verse or verses impressed your heart and fired your imagination?
2. What question/s (no more than two questions) about the Torah Seder for this Shabbat arose for which Hakham Tsefet’s Mishnah and Hakham Shaul’s Gemarah provide adequate answers?
3. Taking into consideration all the readings for this Shabbat what is the prophetic statement 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!”**

**Coming Festival**

**Rosh HaShannah – New Year 5780**

**Saturday Evening 29th – 30thth of September 2019**

**For further information see:**

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

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



Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham

1. II Shmuel (Samuel) 16:5-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Megillah 13a [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Esther 2:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Maaseh Rav no. 250 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Esther 1:1-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Yeremyahu (Jeremiah) 29:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. see v. 1:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Euphemism for ‘Israel’. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Achashverosh. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. As only those in Susa were invited. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Set up by Nebuchadnezzar. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. By delivering them, since they really deserved to be exterminated. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Lit., ‘they did only for appearance’. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Lamentations 3:33. [ מלבו is rendered ‘without heart’, מ being taken as partitive: G-d does not afflict him who sins without intent (Maharsha).] [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Esther 1:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Lit., ‘he who was worthy’. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Amalekites are any people who try to destroy Jews even if they are killed themselves – like suicide bombers in Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. King Saul was a Benjamite. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Esther 2:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. And not mention three names only. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Lit., ‘crowned with his nimus’. The word nimus means in the Talmud ‘manner’, or ‘way’ (\*\*), hence bearing, character. Rashi translates ‘with his names’ (as just explained) as if ‘nimus’ here = Greek \*\*. [Var. lec. add ‘as an ornament’, כעדי. V. Aruch who explains: He was adorned with the precepts of the Law as with an ornament. Yehudi as applied to Mordecai then does not denote a tribal name but is an epithet of distinction.] [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. I.e., derogatory. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Daniel 3:12. Though Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah to whom he refers were not of the tribe of Judah. V. Sanh. 93 b (Tosaf.). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ibid. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Genesis 41:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. There was a Tarsus in Cilicia and in Cappodocia and it is not certain which is referred to. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Having always to dance attendance on Achashverosh. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The meeting place of the Sanhedrin in the Temple at Jerusalem. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. V. Sanh. 17a. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. So that neither of us can do duty for both. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. E.V., ‘it was found’. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Hat worn by orthodox Jews. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Bamidbar (Numbers) 15:37ff [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Esther 3:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Radal emends: If there is no Israel, why should there be a Passover? [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. The word wa-ya’abor (went his way), which literally means ‘passed’, and can also be rendered ‘transgressed’. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Esther 6:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Esther 6:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Esther 7:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Esther 7:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Esther 7:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Esther 2:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Williams, C. (1964). *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Black's New Testament Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles ed.). (H. Chadwick, Ed.) London: Adam & Charles Black. p. 179; According to the Ramban, “**A custom is called *chok*, this being associated with the expressions: *Feed me with 'chuki' (my customary) bread*;** (Proverbs 30:8.) ***'chukoth' (the customary ways or laws) of heaven and earth*.** (Jeremiah 33:25.) **Custom is also called *mishpat (judgment or ordinance)* because it is something measured out accurately. A similar usage [of the word *mishpat*] is found in these verses: *So did David, and so has been 'mishpato' (his manner) all the while*;** (I Samuel 27:11.) ***After the former 'mishpat' (manner) when you were his butler*;** (Genesis 40:13.) ***And the palace shall be inhabited upon 'mishpato'*** (Jeremiah 30:18.) **i.e., upon its ascertained dimension.” Ramban Commentary on the Torah,** Vol. II, pp. 209-210, Shilo Publishing House, Inc., New York, 1973. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. We have translated the sentence freely because a word for word translation cannot capture the concept of what is being conveyed. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. In most Luqan materials (Luke and Acts) the P’rushim are most likely from the School of Shammai. Therefore, Hakham Shaul through his amanuensis shows contention and negativity for the Shammaite School of P’rushim. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Oral and Written [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. The “gathering” is the assembly of the Nazarean Bet Din Gadol (The Greater Nazarean House of Judgment). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. We would be a loss to explain these matters were it not for the teachings of the Jewish Sages. The matters at hand a concerning the Gentiles must be deliberated because of the political climate in the First Century. It would appear that earlier generations had no trouble converting the Gentile to Judaism. Albeit we are not given all the details of their conversion without a great deal of research. Likewise, we realize that the requisite deliberation is also related to the “Eighteen Edicts of Shammai” as we have discussed before. We have postulated that Shammai forbade Gentile conversion among the Jewish populations in the First Century. These Edicts were in direct violation of the Torah. Likewise their presence among the Jewish people is evident in the early cases where Yeshua intends that “salvation” (having a place in the Olam HaBa) was for the Jew and Gentile alike. F.F. Bruce accepts that for Gentile conversion to Orthodox Judaism a Gentile must follow the preordained Jewish practice of circumcision ritual or a drop of blood if the Gentile is already circumcised) and ritual immersion as well as acceptance and faithful obedience to the Torah/Oral and Written. Bruce, F. (1990). *The Acts of the Apostles, A Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary.* (Third Revised and Enlarged Edition ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. p. 329 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Hakham Tsefet is referring to the days when he was sent to the House of Cornelius. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. **Rom 1:5** Through him (Yeshua) we have received chesed and a commission to bring into obedience among all gentiles, [living in] faithfulness [to the Torah] under his (Messiah’s) authority. (It is G-d’s grace, if we may use the term, to bring Gentiles into faithful obedience of the Torah and Oral Torah through the agent of Yeshua our Messiah.) [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Cf. our translation of II Luqas 10:1 – 11:18, connected with Torah readings Kislev 24 – Tebeth 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. **B’midbar 15:15 “The convert will be the same as you…”** (Translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Touger in Hilchot Melachim 8:10) [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Cf. Psa 10:8 (7) [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. A verbal tally with our Torah Seder. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. **m. Berakhot 2:2** “Why does [the passage of] Shema precede [that of] And it shall come to pass [if you keep my commandments]? “So that one may first **accept upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of heaven and afterwards may accept the yoke of the commandments**. “[Why does] And it shall come to pass [precede] And G-d said? “For And it shall come to pass is recited by both day and night. “[But] And G-d said is recited only by day.”

    **m. Abot 3:5** R. Nehunya b. Haqqaneh says, “From whoever accepts upon himself the yoke of Torah do they remove the yoke of the state and the yoke of hard labor. “And upon whoever removes from himself the yoke of the Torah (yoke of the Kingdom i.e. recital of the Shema D’barim 6:4f.) do they lay the yoke of the state and the yoke of hard labor.”

    **m. Shabbat 1:4** These are some of the laws which they stated in the upper room of Hananiah b. Hezekiah b. Gurion when they went up to visit him. They took a vote, and the House of Shammai outnumbered the House of Hillel. And eighteen rules (of Shammai concerning Gentile conversion) did they decree on that very day. **﻿**

    **b. Shabbath 17a** And on that day Hillel sat submissive before Shammai, like one of the disciples, and it was as grievous to Israel as the day when the [golden] calf was made. Now, Shammai and Hillel enacted [this measure], but they would not accept it from them; but their disciples came and enacted it, and it was accepted from them.

    We can also associate the “Yoke of the Kingdom” with the Yoke of the (Master) Mesorah. (Mt 11:29-30)

    **Kilyaim Chapter 9 Halacha 7** Anyone who performs labor with two species of animals or wild beasts together when one of them is kosher and the other is not kosher is liable for lashes in all places, as [Deuteronomy 22:10] states: "Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together. "Whether one plows, seeds, has them pull a wagon, or a stone, or led them together even with his voice [alone], he is liable for lashes. This is derived from the term "together." If, however, one [merely] yokes them [to a wagon], he is exempt unless he pulls them or leads them. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. **b. Baba Mestia 2:11** [If he has to choose between seeking] what he has lost and what his father has lost, his own takes precedence. . . . what he has lost and what his master has lost, his own takes precedence. . . . what his father has lost and what his master has lost, that of his master takes precedence. For his father brought him into this world. **But his master, who taught him wisdom, will bring him into the life of the world to come**. But if his father is a sage, that of his father takes precedence. [If] his father and his master were carrying heavy burdens, he removes that of his master, and afterward removes that of his father. [If] his father and his master were taken captive, he ransoms his master, and afterward he ransoms his father. But if his father is a sage, he ransoms his father, and afterward he ransoms his master. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Jacob Neusner, First-century Judaism in crisis: Yohanan ben Zakkai and the renaissance of Torah, Ktav Pub Inc., 1982 p. 39 [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Cf. **Wars 2:164 -166** [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Jacob Neusner, First-century Judaism in crisis: Yohanan ben Zakkai and the renaissance of Torah, Ktav Pub Inc., 1982 p. 39 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Our use of “salvation” here in no way reflects the traditional use of the word. We use “salvation” as a description of the mission of preserving the Jewish way of life. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. 1964-c1976. Vols. 5-9 edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Vol. 10 compiled by Ronald Pitkin. (G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich, Ed.) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 7:1004 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. The order of the places mentioned in the text is points of the compass. Jerusalem was situated to the most north of Judea; Idumea lied to the south of Judea, “beyond the Jordan” lies to the east of Judea, and Tyre and Sidon lie to the west of Judea. Verse eight therefore could be summarized as saying that congregations of people from the four corners of the Land of Israel (Palestine) together with congregations of men from Judea and the Galil had come to see the Master based on the information that “great things he was doing.” [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Law. a legal decision or form of proceeding serving as an authoritative rule or pattern in future similar or analogous cases. 2. any act, decision, or case that serves as a guide or justification for subsequent situations. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Rabbi Dr. Charles B. Chavel in his translation and commentary on “The Commandments: Sefer Ha-Mitzvoth of Maimonides” (London: Soncino Press, 1967, Vol. I pp. 280-288 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Touger in Hilchot Melachim 8:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. However, at what point in the Gentile’s walk with G-d will circumcision take place is another issue. For Abraham’s life shows that he had a relationship with G-d whilst yet uncircumcised. Nevertheless, when G-d found him able to be circumcised in order to partake in the covenant he **immediately** went forth and circumcised himself and his entire household (females excluded.) [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Philo. (1993). *The Works of Philo, Complete and Unabridged in one volume.* (N. U. Edition, Ed., & C. Yonge, Trans.) Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. pp. 261-262 [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Referring to the inner dimensions of the Neshamah. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. According to the Ramban, “**A custom is called *chok*, this being associated with the expressions: *Feed me with 'chuki' (my customary) bread*;** (Proverbs 30:8.) ***'chukoth' (the customary ways or laws) of heaven and earth*.** (Jeremiah 33:25.) **Custom is also called *mishpat (judgment or ordinance)* because it is something measured out accurately. A similar usage [of the word *mishpat*] is found in these verses: *So did David, and so has been 'mishpato' (his manner) all the while*;** (I Samuel 27:11.) ***After the former 'mishpat' (manner) when you were his butler*;** (Genesis 40:13.) ***And the palace shall be inhabited upon 'mishpato'*** (Jeremiah 30:18.) **i.e., upon its ascertained dimension.” Ramban Commentary on the Torah,** Vol. II, pp. 209-210, Shilo Publishing House, Inc., New York, 1973. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Philo. (1993). *The Works of Philo, Complete and Unabridged in one volume.* (N. U. Edition, Ed., & C. Yonge, Trans.) Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. pp. 261-262 [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Gaston, L. (1987). *Paul and the Torah.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. p. 9 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. According to the Ramban, “**A custom is called *chok*, this being associated with the expressions: *Feed me with 'chuki' (my customary) bread*;** (Proverbs 30:8.) ***'chukoth' (the customary ways or laws) of heaven and earth*.** (Jeremiah 33:25.) **Custom is also called *mishpat (judgment or ordinance)* because it is something measured out accurately. A similar usage [of the word *mishpat*] is found in these verses: *So did David, and so has been 'mishpato' (his manner) all the while*;** (I Samuel 27:11.) ***After the former 'mishpat' (manner) when you were his butler*;** (Genesis 40:13.) ***And the palace shall be inhabited upon 'mishpato'*** (Jeremiah 30:18.) **i.e., upon its ascertained dimension.” Ramban Commentary on the Torah,** Vol. II, pp. 209-210, Shilo Publishing House, Inc., New York, 1973. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Hakham Tsefet is referring to the days when he was sent to the House of Cornelius. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. **Rom 1:5** Through him (Yeshua) we have received chesed and a commission to bring into obedience among all gentiles, [living in] faithfulness [to the Torah] under his (Messiah’s) authority. (It is G-d’s grace, if we may use the term, to bring Gentiles into faithful obedience of the Torah and Oral Torah through the agent of Yeshua our Messiah.) [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. **B’midbar 15:15 “The convert will be the same as you…”** (Translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Touger in Hilchot Melachim 8:10) [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Cf. Psa 10:8 (7) [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Touger in Hilchot Melachim 8:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. The inference is simply stated. The Mesorah MUST be passed down – transmitted from Jewish Hakhamim to talmidim. This includes the “Gentiles” who would teach Torah/Mesorah. They MUST be first taught by a Jewish Hakham! [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. The sense of the verse means, in modern terms that the MESORAH will be carried chiefly by the Orthodox Nazarean Jews, and also by the Reform and Conservative Jews. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. This was the practice when a vote was taken upon any question; Halevi, Doroth, I, 3, p. 585 n. 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. I.e., the assembly voted against him-of course the actual expression is not to be understood literally. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. In view of the humility to which Hillel, who was the Nasi, had been subjected. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Cf. b. Erubin 54b [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. b. Shab. 12a, 13b, 98b, 99a [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Josephus Ant 14:156-159 [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Cf. b. Shab. 31a [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Ibid, Acts 10:28, where Hakham Tsefet states that it is unlawful for a Jewish person to enter the house of a Gentile. This mandate is not found in the Torah, therefore, we surmise it is a dogma established by the house of Shammai. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. The middle wall is not the Soreg of the Temple. This “wall of partition” is the dogma of Shammai separating the Jewish people from the Gentile as noted above. The “Soreg” is a wall in the Temple courtyard, which marked the boundaries of the Court of the Gentiles. This is NOT Hakham Shaul’s reference. This breaking down of the “middle wall” is a reference to the Messianic title “Peretz.” The word ***paretz***, wherever used, signifies the breaching of a fence and passing through, just as: *I will break down* ***('p'rotz')*** *the fence ‎thereof*; (Isaiah 5:5) *Why have You broken down* ***('paratzta')*** *her fences*? (Psalms 80:13) And in the language of the Rabbis: ***“Pirtzah*** (a breach in a wall) calls ‎forth to the thief.” (Sotah 26a) Indeed, the Sacred Language (Hebrew is called “the sacred” language.) uses the term ***p'rotz*** when referring to anything that oversteps its boundary: *And you ‎will break forth* ***('upharatzta')*** *to the west, and to the east;* *And the man broke forth* **(‘vayiphrotz ')** *exceedingly*. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. These δόγμασιν are a reference to the eighteen edicts (middot) of Shammai which separated the Jewish people from the Gentiles by deeming the Gentile “unclean.” cf. Acts 10:28. See Falk, H. (2003). *Jesus the Pharisee, A new Look at the Jewishness of Jesus.* Wipf and Stock Publishers. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. The “New Body” is a conjoining of Jews and Gentiles who have converted to Judaism under the authority of Yeshua HaMashiach. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. We must take caution when trying to understand this phrase. Hakham Tsefet is NOT saying that the Torah forbade interaction between Jew and Gentile. Actually, there are a number of instances in the Torah where we are clearly taught how to interact with the Gentiles. In the present case, we have a dogma, which Shammai established concerning the interaction between Jews and Gentiles. ἀθέμιτος also means not permitted or not allowed. It is not a halakhah in any sense. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Culi, R. Y. (1979). *The Torah Anthology.* (M. Lo'ez, Ed., & R. A. Kaplan, Trans.) Brooklyn , New York: Moznaim Publishing Corp. Book 5 p. 213 [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Yochai, R. S. (20003). *The Zohar, From the Book of Avraham with Commentary by Rav Yehuda Ashlag.* New York: The Kabbalah Center International Inc. Vol 9 p. 292 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Ibid p. 296 [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. b. Keritot 9a [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Exod. 19:6 And you will be to me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words, which you will speak/command to the children of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Cf. Esther 8:17, Mid. Rab. Esther 6:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-97)