

MORDECHAI 108

MORDECHAI 14:10-11

BESB	GREEK TEXT
Mar 14:10 And Yehudah Ish Keriyoth, one of the twelve [talmidm] went out to the Kohen Gadol in order to give (betray) him (Yeshua) to them.	¹⁰ Καὶ ὁ Ἰουδᾶς ὁ Ἰσκαριώτης, εἷς τῶν δώδεκα ἀπῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς ἵνα παραδῶ αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς
Mar 14:11 And when they (the Kohen Gadol and his soferim) were pleased (greatly) and promised to give him money. Then he (Yehudah Ish Keriyoth) sought how he might find opportunity to conveniently deliver him (Yeshua) [to them].	¹¹ οἱ δὲ ἀκούσαντες ἐχάρησαν καὶ ἐπηγγείλαντο αὐτῷ ἀργύριον δοῦναι καὶ ἐζήτηι πῶς εὐκαίρως αὐτὸν παραδῶ.

DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

וַיְהוּדָה אִישׁ־קִרְיֹוֹת אֶתְדַּ מְשָׁנִים הָעֶשֶׂר הַלֵּךְ אֶל־רְאִשֵׁי הַכֹּהֲנִים לְמַסֵּר אוֹתוֹ אֵלֵיהֶם: ¹¹ וְהֵם כְּשָׂמְעָם שָׂמְחוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְתַת־לוֹ כֶּסֶף וַיִּבְקֶשׁ תְּאַנָּה לְמַסֵּרוֹ:

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INTRODUCTION

MAR 14:10 AND YEHUDAH ISH KERIYOTH, ONE OF THE TWELVE [TALMIDM] WENT OUT TO THE KOHEN GADOL IN ORDER TO GIVE (BETRAY) HIM (YESHUA) TO THEM.

The theme of these two short verses is packed with information that must be decoded. However, before I venture to “decode” I must lay down some facts.

FOUNDATIONS ARE FOUNDATIONS

My trade is that of an excavator. If its dirt I move it or dig it. I have worked in this area of construction since my youth. I used to sit next to my father on big D8 caterpillars and occasionally get to take the machine to park it for the night when I was about 9 years old. Since that time, my primary source of income has been in heavy equipment. Likewise, I have had the opportunity to dig many a foundation and footer for every sort of building imaginable. When I arrive to dig a footer there are usually a number of lines drawn on the ground running in every direction. In my mind, I see the footing before digging it. When we finish with the concrete, others come and build on the foundation we have laid. However, we do not see the house because we ONLY build its foundation. In similar manner when reading Mordechai's expression of Hakham Tsefet, we see the foundation ONLY! Scholars and armature theologians come along and try to look at the house after it has covered the foundation, trying to explain the footing. My point here is that the scholars retreat to the other "gospels," trying to decode Mordechai. This is placing the "cart before the horse." The logistics of the horse trying to push a cart are impossible. Likewise, when reading from P'shat, we CANNOT resort to the other "Gospels" for pertinent information to solve problems and dilemmas.

This is the main problem with the two verses of our present pericope. ALL of the scholars have retreated to Matthew and John for their information. I realize that the pickings are often slim when using a P'shat hermeneutic. However, it is better to have the truth of P'shat than to deviate to some other level for information that is NOT applicable.

Each level of hermeneutic applies to a text for the sake of drawing information from that specific level. If we miss this point, we have missed the whole point of the P'shat exercise.

ONE OF THE TWELVE [TALMIDM]

That **YEHUDAH ISH KERIYOTH** is "one of the twelve" is troubling for scholars. Even in the selection of the "twelve,"^a we have the troubling statement that **YEHUDAH ISH KERIYOTH** will be a "betrayor."^b I believe that this incorporation of **YEHUDAH ISH KERIYOTH** demonstrates Yeshua's prophetic skills from the time of the twelve's selection. This is not to limit his prophetic insights to the years of his ministry only. This is another matter to be discussed elsewhere. Here my reasoning (within the confines of P'shat) will be based on the information presented by His Eminence Rabbi Dr Yoseph ben Haggai in his commentary as well as other information I will present below.

MOTIVE

When we search Mordechai for a motive to explain **YEHUDAH ISH KERIYOTH** actions, superficially, we draw a blank. Scholars suggest avarice, mutiny and disappointment. For whatever reason, Hakham Tsefet does not feel like we need this information at present. We may be able to draw some inferences, however, these would be more in line with speculation, rather than honest hermeneutic. The text merely reads **AND YEHUDAH ISH KERIYOTH, ONE OF THE TWELVE [TALMIDM] WENT OUT TO THE KOHEN GADOL IN ORDER TO GIVE (BETRAY) HIM (YESHUA) TO THEM. AND WHEN THEY (THE KOHEN GADOL AND HIS SOFERIM) WERE PLEASED (GREATLY) AND PROMISED TO GIVE HIM MONEY.**

^a Cf. Mar 3:19

^b Literally the one who handed (Yeshua) over

Note that the text does not tell us that he “asked for money.” It **ONLY** tells us that they **AND PROMISED TO GIVE HIM MONEY**. This is not to say that Yehudah may have asked for money. The text simply does not tell us that. If this is the motive, we must draw on other P’shat materials to derive this conclusion.

Here I would suggest that it is plausible to believe that there was some other motive. However, this does not rule out avarice as a potential motive.

Others suggest that Yehudah may have been disenchanted about Yeshua as Messiah. They suggest the possibility that Yehudah lost his faith in Yeshua. Again, I reiterate all of this is conjecture drawing from other “Gospels” circumventing P’shat.

BETRAYAL / HAND OVER

The real meaning of the Greek phrase, παραδίδομι *paradidomi* {par-ad-id'-o-mee} means “to hand over.” Here, betrayal is by inference rather than direct definition. I must admit that I wanted to call Yehudah the “barking dog.” However, in the present pericope there does not seem to be any real “barking.” Mordechai will illustrate in the future just how Yehudah accomplishes his “handing over,” but he does not yet disclose this information.

It appears that Hakham Tsefet plays down the role of Yehudah in his Mesorah. Exactly why is a mystery. To conjecture would be conjecture. There is nothing wrong with conjecture so long as there is some sufficient hint to draw a possible thesis from.

CONSPIRACY?

Was Yehudah involved in some sort of conspiracy to kill Yeshua? While the information is slim, we may be able to detect signs of a possible conspiracy.

Joel Marcus^a draws the following parallel from the Greek text of Mordechai.

14:1	14:11b
And the Chief Priests and [their] scribes (Heb. soferim, of the Sadducees Heb. Tz'dukim) sought, (ζητέω zeteo {dzay-teh'-o})	Then he (Yehudah Ish Keriyoth) sought (ζητέω zeteo {dzay-teh'-o})
how they might take hold (and) kill [him Yeshua] πῶς αὐτὸν	how he might find opportunity to conveniently deliver him πῶς αὐτὸν
by cunning δόλος dolos {dol'-os}	opportunity to conveniently εὐκαιρῶς eukairos {yoo-kah'-ee-roce}
take hold (and) kill [him Yeshua]; κρατήσαντες ἀποκτείνωσιν	deliver him (Yeshua) [to them] εὐκαιρῶς αὐτὸν παραδῶ

This parallelism emphasizes the terrifying extent of Judas' corruption, which is so complete that his will has blended with that of Jesus enemies;^b

^a Marcus, J. (2009). *The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Mark 8-16, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. (p. 943) Yale University.

^b Ibid.

Here, there is a plausible connection between Yehudah and the Kohen Gadol. We cannot say that there is a conspiracy connection with absolute certainty. Nevertheless, there appears to be at minimum a superficial connection.

THE MAN FROM KERIYOTH

Yehudah's identity is been clouded in mystery for most readers. In the list of commentaries, only two make note the possible identity of Yehudah.

R. France^a notes that Yehudah is not a "Galilean." Here France wants us to know that Yehudah was not a "hometown" boy from Galilee, and therefore suspicious.^b France correctly translates Ἰσκαριώτης *Iskariotes* {is-kar-ee-o'-tace} as "Man from Keriyoth."^c However, France misses that fact the Yehudah was from Moab rather than Eretz Yisrael.^d

Joan Taylor^e in her article, "The Name "Iskarioth" (Iscairiot)" notes the complexity of trying to translate this name.

Overall, this appears to indicate that Judas was designated by a Hebrew or Aramaic name transliterated as Ἰσκαριώθ and rendered in Greek form as Ἰσκαριώτης. The manuscripts show more of a tendency to standardize the epithet in Greek form rather than to retrieve or preserve the Hebrew or Aramaic form.

The leading theory is...

The epithet translates Hebrew, אִישׁ קְרִיּוֹת 'iš qārîyôt, meaning "a man from Qarioth", this place being attested in Eusebius, Onom. 120.1; cf. Jer 48:24, 41; Amos 2:2. The interpretation has been supported by Paul Billerbeck, Julius Wellhausen, Donatus Haugg, and Gustaf Dalman.^f As a variant of this proposal, the epithet is taken to mean "a man of towns," a town-dweller—the town in question being Jerusalem (so Günther Schwartz).^g

Taylor also cites another possible translation based on the work of Jewish scholar Yoel Abreitman...

The epithet is derived from an Aramaic word for "red color," on the basis of the root סקר, so that it means a "redhead" or "ruddy-colored," as in Arabic, where šuqra can mean "a ruddy complexion" (so Harald Ingholt),^h or "red dyer," supposedly saqqara, as Albert Ehrman suggests.ⁱ The most careful

^a France, R. (2002). *The New International Greek Testament Commentary, The Gospel of Mark*. (p. 556) Grand Rapids MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

^b My interpretation of France's intention

^c Ibid p. 163

^d Ibid

^e Joan Taylor, *The Name "Iskarioth" (Iscairiot)* JBL 129/2 (2010) 367–83, copyright © 2010 by the Society of Biblical Literature.

^f Str-B 1:536–37; Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1903); Haugg, *Judas Iskarioth in den neutestamentlichen Berichten* (Freiburg: Herder, 1930); and Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua: Studies in the Gospels* (trans. Paul Levertoff; London: SPCK, 1929; German orig., 1922).

^g Ibid

^h Ingholt, "The Surname of Judas Iscairiot," in *Studia Orientalia Ioanni Pedersen Septuagenario* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1953), 152–62.

ⁱ A. Ehrman, "Judas Iscairiot and Abba Saqqara," JBL 97 (1978): 572–73.

argument has been provided by Yoel Arbeitman.^a The reference is then simply to Judas's employment or appearance.^b

Anthony Cane in his work labeled "*The place of Judas Iscariot in Christology*" notes another possible interpretation of "Iscariot."

The relevant critical discussion involves understanding that in the New Testament Judas' name takes two forms, either having a Semitic ending (three times) or a Greek ending (nine times, in Matthew, Luke and John). Scholars differ as to which is the original, but the Greek ending seems to have the more convincing arguments in favor. C.C. Torrey (The Name "Iscariot" in Harvard Theological Review 36, 1943. p56) argues that a scribe would hardly likely to alter a good Hebrew ending for a Greek, whilst the converse move might be understood as an 'improvement'. Yoel Arbeitman ('The suffix of Iscariot' in Journal Biblical Literature 99, 1980, p. 123 argues that the name Iscariot was the product of authors familiar both with Aramaic and Greek putting an Aramaic actor noun for '(red) dyer' into Greek form. This suggestion from a Jewish scholar, is striking in its prosaic plausibility, especially when compared with the wide range of other proposals.^c

Thus, the apparent possible suggestions for Yehudah Ish Keriyoth are numerous. The whole list includes the idea of a robber and a liar and dagger man.

In favor of the leading opinion, Taylor^d remarks...

In favor of this suggestion is the fact that it may possibly be related to an early Western text manuscript tradition relating to the Gospel of John, which might satisfy the final criterion. So, for example, in John 6:71a the f13 family of manuscripts along with the uncorrected \aleph^* (Sinaiticus, fourth century) and Θ (Koridethi, ninth century) have ἔλεγεν δὲ τὸν Ἰούδαν Σίμωνος ἀπὸ Καρυώτου. This occurs also in a Greek marginal reading of the Harclean Syriac version. In John 12:4, for Ἰούδας ὁ Ἰσκαριώτης εἷς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, D (followed by its Latin part) has εἷς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ Ἰούδας ἀπὸ Καρυώτου. For John 13:2, D has Ἰούδα Σίμωνος ἀπὸ Καρυώτου; for John 3:26, Ἰούδα Σίμωνος ἀπὸ Καρυώτου; and likewise for John 14:22, Ἰούδας οὐχ ὁ ἀπὸ Καρυώτου. With the original hand of Sinaiticus attesting this interpretation, it must be traced as far back as the fourth century, and this opens up at least the possibility that some ancient tradition is reflected in the copyist's choice, which would have Judas's epithet relating to his provenance. A possible reflection of the same interpretation appears to be found in a couple of Latin manuscripts of the Synoptic Gospels so that the name "Cariotha" appears in Mark 3:19 (italic e: Palatinus, fifth century), and "Carioth" in Matt 10:4 (italic aur: Aureus, seventh century), though here there is no preposition and an upsilon would be rendered as Latin i.^e

Dale Miller,^f playing on the possibility of the "red man" suggests that the "red man" or "red headed man" is an association with Esau, the "red man" or redheaded brother of Yaakov.

^a Yoel Arbeitman, "The Suffix of Iscariot," JBL 99 (1980): 122–24

^b Joan Taylor, *The Name "Iskarioth" (Iscariot)* JBL 129/2 (2010) 367–83, copyright © 2010 by the Society of Biblical Literature.

^c Cane, A. (2005). *The place of Judas Iscariot in Christology*. (pp. 16-17) Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

^d The title can be misleading. Joan Taylor actually has another proposal, which she presents at the end of her paper.

^e Joan Taylor, *The Name "Iskarioth" (Iscariot)* JBL 129/2 (2010) 367–83, copyright © 2010 by the Society of Biblical Literature.

^f Miller, D. (1990). *The Gospel of Mark as Midrash on Earlier Jewish and New Testament Literature* (p. 129) (Vol. 21). Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press.

CONNECTING TO THE TORAH SEDER

Firstly, I concur with His Eminence Rabbi Dr Yoseph ben Haggai and the late Vendyl Jones on the title “Ish Keriyoth.” The title is most likely is derived from the Hebrew designating that Yehudah was from the Moabite town of Keriyoth.

Secondly, we note both Esau “the red man” and Moab are mentioned in the Torah Seder.

D’varim 2:4. And command the people saying, You are about to pass through the boundary of your kinsmen, the children of Esau, who dwell in Seir, and they will be afraid of you. Be very careful. ⁵. You shall not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land not so much as a footstep, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau for an inheritance. ⁶. You shall **buy food from them with money**, that you may eat, and also water you shall buy from them with money, that you may drink.

D’varim 2:8. And we departed from our kinsmen, the children of Esau, who dwelt in Seir, by way of the plain from Elath and from Etzion Geber, and we turned and passed through the way of the desert of Moab. ⁹. And the Lord said to me, Do not distress the Moabites, and do not provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land [as] an inheritance, because I have given Ar to the children of Lot [as] an inheritance.

The connection to the Torah Seder is through the verbal tally “money.” However, as noted above there may have been a possible conspiracy. The Moabites had reason to be angry with the Bne Yisrael as Rashi reveals.

God forbade Israel only to wage war against Moab. However, Israel did frighten them, appearing before them, armed for battle. Therefore, it is written, “And Moab was very frightened of the people” (Num. 22:3) because Israel plundered and looted them. Regarding the children of Ammon, however, it says (verse 19), “Do not provoke them”—with any kind of provocation, as a reward for the modesty shown by their ancestress [Lot’s younger daughter], who did not publicize her father’s conduct, as did his elder daughter, who named her son Moab [מוֹאָב like מֵאָב , from the father] (Baba Kamma 38b).

If Yehudah conspired it may well have been with the concept of revenge. At present this is all we can say about the matter not having more information to draw a better thesis.

Moab’s crime, along with that of the Ammonites, against the Bne Yisrael was failure to give them bread and water while traversing through the desert.^a Likewise, the Midianites and Moabites collaborated in the joint venture to have Bileam curse the Bne Yisrael. The desert is a place of hostility and death. While in the environment of G-d the Bne Yisrael were protected by the Divine Presence. When they rebelled and complained they were exiled from that Divine Presence feeling the full effects of the desert environs.

As noted above, a very interesting parallel is that of the Midianites and Moabites hiring the gentile prophet Bileam to curse Yisrael for them. This matches the Torah Seder and readings, in that judges, Priests and prophets are bribed with money.

Lot (father of the Moabites) was silent when Abraham entered Egypt and told the Pharaoh that Sarah was his sister. This has earned the decedents of Lot and inheritance albeit temporary. In this pericope, we have the antithesis of this scenario. Yehudah of Moab tells the Kohanim how they can take Yeshua conveniently.

Did the Bne Yisrael purchase “with money” bread and water from the Moabites. The Torah Seder clearly tells us that the Bne Yisrael were to purchase “with money” from the decedents of Esau. But, what does it say about the Moabites.

^a Cf. D’varim 23:5

D'varim 2:28 You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat; and give to me water for money, that I may drink; I will only pass through by my feet.²⁹ Just as the children of Esau who dwell in Seir, and the Moabites who dwell in Ar, did for me; until I cross the Jordan to the land which the Lord our God is giving us.

Here the text connects Esau with Moab suggesting that the Moabites received money as well as Esau. I will also note that the Bne Yisrael were not to set foot in the territory of Esau. Therefore, we must suggest that the traveled through the territory of Moab, purchasing bread and water from them with money.

It is also interesting to note that the Psalmist this week tells us that Moab is the “washbasin” (servant) for the Bne Yisrael.

All the readings together tell us of money being received in the form of bribes and Kohanim being paid for services along with prophets who prophecy for money. Overall, I believe the connection is perfectly clear. One cannot help but note, that it was money that secured the position of the false priests with Edom (Rome) which brought about the death of the Master. Here we note the weakness of Yisrael's Torah study and the strength of Edom's (Esau) hands.

BS”D (B’Siyata D’Shamaya)
Aramaic: With the help of Heaven
Paqid Dr. Adon Eliyahu ben Abraham

CONNECTIONS TO TORAH READINGS

TORAH SEDER

Hakham Tsefet connects with the Torah Seder through the idea of “money” D’varim 2:6, 28. The Torah Seder also connects with Mordechai through the fact that Yehudah is from Maob.

TEHILLIM

The Psalmist also connects with Mordechai through the name of Moab. Ps.108:10

ASHLAMATAH

Micah connects through the idea of Priests, judges and prophets all being bribed with money. Mic. 3:11

SPECIAL ASHLAMATAH

The Prophet notes that the rulers are all perverted and pervert justice. Isa 54:9-10